



YouthFriends®

Executive Summary

YouthFriends Overview

YouthFriends, a United Way agency, partners with school districts to connect young people, K-12, with caring adult volunteers in schools to give them a better chance to succeed. YouthFriends is a nationally recognized school-based mentoring program in the Greater Kansas City area and throughout Kansas. YouthFriends works closely with businesses and school districts to narrow the mentoring gap. Currently, more than 18,000 youth in 30 local school districts and Charter Schools have a YouthFriends mentor.

Benefit to kids

Science-based evaluations conclude that students in a YouthFriends relationship have a higher level of community and school-connectedness, improved academic achievement and higher aspirations for the future. School staff and parents report improvements in interaction with adults and peers, school attendance and overall happiness. In the Greater Kansas City area, nearly 40,000 young people need or want a mentor but do not have one.

Benefit to community

YouthFriends helps school districts meet their mission to develop youth into successful future adults and employees.

Benefit to company

For a small investment of your employees' time Employer Partners cause so many good things to happen: valuable human resources are applied to community needs, employees feel pride in their employer and have increased enthusiasm for their workplace, company image is enhanced through public recognition and an annual Employer Partners event. And all of this is around helping children succeed.

Benefit to employees

YouthFriends mentors say they feel a greater sense of self worth. They believe that as a Youth Friend they truly make a difference in a life and in the world. They also say mentoring is a mutual benefit—for them and their YouthFriend.

How YouthFriends works

Mentors meet one-on-one or in small groups at school, one hour a week, often over lunch. E-Mentoring is an option for those who cannot regularly get to a school. Your company may choose to adopt a nearby school or let employees choose where to volunteer. YouthFriends connects your company to a school district coordinator who matches mentors to schools and to a child who wants or needs a mentor.

Introducing YouthFriends to employees

Host a 20-30 minute informational meeting presented by YouthFriends. Once a commitment is made, YouthFriends provides at no cost a 2-hour on-site training/orientation, background screening and placement. In addition, YouthFriends tracks volunteer activity, reported quarterly to your company.