



# YouthFriends®

Mentors Make Great People Possible

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How much time will volunteering take?**

YouthFriends emphasizes volunteer flexibility, so that even those with the most hectic schedules can readily participate. On average, YouthFriends volunteers spend one hour, once a week with a young person. YouthFriends offers a wide menu of volunteer activities, with commitments ranging from a semester, full school year or longer. YouthFriends volunteering occurs on school grounds, but many opportunities are available before school, over lunch or during extended after-school hours.

### **Am I qualified? Can I succeed?**

YouthFriends makes every effort to help volunteers make the most of their YouthFriends experience. YouthFriends volunteers attend a two-hour training that focuses on building a mutually worthwhile student/adult relationship. Additionally, ongoing continuing education opportunities are available to volunteers at no charge. These sessions are offered each semester at the school district level and metro-wide. Volunteers can also access the YouthFriends web site ([youthfriends.org](http://youthfriends.org)) for training and staff contact information.

### **How long is the commitment?**

YouthFriends focuses on building strong mentor/mentee relationships. The typical commitment is one hour per week for one school year. Depending on the school district, however, there are activities that require a shorter time commitment. Also, once YouthFriends are screened and trained they can complete an assignment, and, if need be, take a break and then return to active YouthFriends volunteering as their schedules permit.

### **What about safety?**

YouthFriends volunteers are quadruple screened, including motor vehicle record, child abuse and neglect, criminal background and sex offender registry screens. YouthFriends are trained and offered free continuing educational opportunities after their placement begins. YouthFriends activities take place on school grounds before, during and after school under the direction of school personnel, enhancing safety for both the adults and young people involved.

### **Who are the YouthFriends students?**

YouthFriends believes that all students can benefit from time with a caring adult role model—not just those typically deemed “at-risk.” Students who participate in YouthFriends want to be involved, and, in fact, many students have asked for a YouthFriends volunteer to meet with them at school. Additionally, written parent/guardian permission is required for all students prior to meeting with their adult YouthFriend.

### **Where do I go to volunteer?**

YouthFriends volunteers are encouraged to select a school district and school that are most convenient to their home, work or daily activities. There are more than 70 participating school districts across Kansas and Missouri from which volunteers can choose.

### **Once I sign up, when will I start?**

Once a prospective volunteer returns a completed application, the average time until placement is four weeks, which includes completing an interview and the screening, training and matching processes.

### **Where should I go if I want to learn more?**

For additional information contact the YouthFriends Central Office at 816.842-7082 or 877.842-7082 or visit the YouthFriends web site [www.youthfriends.org](http://www.youthfriends.org).