

# Consider becoming a mentor to a youngster

## FACTS

- Three million children are currently enrolled in a mentoring program, yet 15 million more still are in need.
- These youth are:
  - 73 percent more likely to begin using alcohol
  - 63 percent more likely to skip a class
  - 54 percent more likely to begin using illegal drugs
- Mentors help children develop self-confidence, relationship skills, and a positive attitude toward school and life.
- Nearly 70 percent of inner-city fourth-graders are unable to read at a basic level.
- Three million youth ages 12-15 are at risk of suicide annually, and more

than 35 percent will actually attempt suicide — approximately 2,700 attempts per day.

## TAKE ACTION TODAY

1. Find a mentoring program near you and apply to become a mentor. Most mentoring programs will pair you with a child based on your skill set and the child's needs.
2. If you have your own children or know children who could use a mentor, be a self-starter and create your own mentoring program.
3. Once a week, spend an hour or two with your mentee doing everyday activities such as homework, sports or having simple conversation.
4. Set goals with your

**EVERY** →  
**monday**  
**MATTERS**

mentee and share in the excitement of their achievement and growth.

Children are just as capable of doing great things as any other person, but many times they are not equipped with the right foundation, knowledge, encouragement and tools to make the right choices. The decisions they make today can change the entire course of their future. You may not know what to say or do, but you will quickly realize that

what matters most is that you care.

## YOU MATTER

Mike Pollard, a 58-year-old consultant in Chicago, has been making his Mondays matter for nearly 10 years. Every Monday Mike and Jesse get together for three hours and just "do what guys do," according to Mike.

Jesse is a high school senior in the suburbs of Chicago. Like so many children today, Jesse grew up without guidance from his parents. Actually, Jesse never really had parents. He has never met his father and his mom has been in and out of jail and rehab clinics his whole life. Being an only child, Jesse's future was in significant jeopardy, had it not been for Mike.

"My two children had grown up and left the house for college. My wife and I were 'empty nesters.' One day I saw a program on local television about these beautiful children who were growing up without any supervision, role models or someone who believed in them. It made me sick. I had to get involved."

For the past 10 years, Mike and Jesse have met every Monday. Missing a single Monday is just not an option. And the results have been overwhelming. Ten years ago Jesse consistently missed school, was already drinking and experimenting with drugs, and was going down a road of destruction. Today, he carries a B

SEE PAGE D-2, MONDAY

Posted on Mon, Oct. 27, 2008

## Consider becoming a mentor to a youngster

*last updated: October 27, 2008 05:56:36 AM*

### FACTS

Three million children are currently enrolled in a mentoring program, yet 15 million more still are in need.

These youth are:

73 percent more likely to begin using alcohol

63 percent more likely to skip a class

54 percent more likely to begin using illegal drugs

Mentors help children develop self-confidence, relationship skills, and a positive attitude toward school and life.

Nearly 70 percent of inner-city fourth-graders are unable to read at a basic level.

Three million youth ages 12-15 are at risk of suicide annually, and more than 35 percent will actually attempt suicide -- approximately 2,700 attempts per day.

### TAKE ACTION TODAY

1. Find a mentoring program near you and apply to become a mentor. Most mentoring programs will pair you with a child based on your skill set and the child's needs.
2. If you have your own children or know children who could use a mentor, be a self-starter and create your own mentoring program.
3. Once a week, spend an hour or two with your mentee doing everyday activities such as homework, sports or having simple conversation.
4. Set goals with your mentee and share in the excitement of their achievement and growth.

Children are just as capable of doing great things as any other person, but many times they are not equipped with the right foundation, knowledge, encouragement and tools to make the right choices. The decisions they make today can change the entire course of their

future. You may not know what to say or do, but you will quickly realize that what matters most is that you care.

## YOU MATTER

Mike Pollard, a 58-year-old consultant in Chicago, has been making his Mondays matter for nearly 10 years. Every Monday Mike and Jesse get together for three hours and just "do what guys do," according to Mike.

Jesse is a high school senior in the suburbs of Chicago. Like so many children today, Jesse grew up without guidance from his parents. Actually, Jesse never really had parents. He has never met his father and his mom has been in and out of jail and rehab clinics his whole life. Being an only child, Jesse's future was in significant jeopardy, had it not been for Mike.

"My two children had grown up and left the house for college. My wife and I were 'empty nesters.' One day I saw a program on local television about these beautiful children who were growing up without any supervision, role models or someone who believed in them. It made me sick. I had to get involved."

For the past 10 years, Mike and Jesse have met every Monday. Missing a single Monday is just not an option. And the results have been overwhelming. Ten years ago Jesse consistently missed school, was already drinking and experimenting with drugs, and was going down a road of destruction. Today, he carries a B average, plays on his high school football team and has plans to attend junior college next fall.

"I really don't know that I have done that much. I honestly feel like he has brought more to my life than I have brought to his. I just made sure I always showed up with a smile and it just went from there," Mike says, humbly. "Jesse has been a bright light to my family."

Mike, we are pretty sure Jesse would say the same about you and your family. Thanks for taking the time to let Jesse know how much he matters. As do you.

Visit [EveryMondayMatters.com](http://EveryMondayMatters.com) to get involved, buy the book, and share your stories about making a difference in the world. You matter.