

## Mentor Application/Screening Process Overview

Once a prospective mentor is recruited, the formal application process begins. Prior to acceptance in the program, it is critical that applicants be properly screened. While volunteers have the best of intentions, it is the responsibility of the mentoring program to ensure maximum protection for the mentoring experience. Steps in the application/ screening process include the following:

1. **Applicants complete an application**, which includes their choices of days and times for their meetings with youth and the preferred grade level, age and gender of young person with whom they wish to work. Some programs match mentors only with individuals of the same gender and ethnic group. Others do not. You will decide this early in your program design. The application should include:
  - Statement of the applicant's expectations;
  - Strengths and special interests, which are helpful in matching mentors with youth;
  - A complete list of personal references; and
  - Employment history.

Applicants are asked to sign a release statement, agreeing to a background check and to abide by the rules and regulations of the program and fully discharging the program from liability and claims.

2. **Applicants sign an agreement to:**
  - Make a one-year (orschool year) commitment;
  - Attend training sessions;
  - Engage in the relationship with an open mind;
  - Be on time for scheduled meetings;
  - Keep discussions with youth confidential (except where youth's safety or well-being is at risk);
  - Ask for help when needed;
  - Accept guidance from program staff or their mentee's teacher;
  - Notify staff if they are having difficulty in their mentoring relationship;
  - Notify the program coordinator if they are unable to keep their weekly mentoring session;
  - Notify the program coordinator of any changes in their employment, address and telephone number;
  - Notify the program coordinator of a significant change in their mentee; and
  - Refrain from contacting or seeing the mentee outside of the established parameters and supervised sites where the program takes place.
3. **Applicants are invited for a personal interview with the mentoring program staff.** This is an opportunity to get to know the applicant better.

Discussion includes questions that will provide information about:

  - The applicant's family relationships and history;
  - Interests and leisure time activities;
  - Attitudes and beliefsystem;
  - Experiences working with children and adults;
  - Reactions to stressful situations;
  - Use of alcohol and drugs;
  - Level of flexibility, time commitments and ability to sustain relationship;
  - Education;
  - Transportation requirements; and
  - Strengths and weaknesses.

4. Mentoring program staff conducts a check on all employment and personal references.
5. Criminal record and child welfare checks, through city police or the RCMP and Alberta Children Services, must be performed on all prospective mentors. Applicants must sign a release agreeing to have these checks done. Results of these checks are reviewed by the mentoring program coordinator, who keeps them confidential.
6. Applicants who pass all the screening processes are notified, congratulated and invited to become mentors in the program.