

Project One-on-One



Academic Mentor Orientation

Children's Restoration Network



Introduction

- Project ONE-ON-ONE began as a partnership between Children's Restoration Network and the Junior League of DeKalb County, Inc. to address the problem of academic underachievement of homeless children.
- This is a tutorial program focusing on math and reading, and it is also designed to pair caring adults with young people on a one-to-one basis.
- Project ONE-ON-ONE matches teams of volunteer tutors with appropriately sized shelters/group homes.
- The volunteers meet weekly with the children at safe and convenient locations.



Our Mission Statement

- The Mission of Children's Restoration Network is to offer hope and support enabling children and their mothers to break the cycle of homelessness by empowering them to become part of mainstream society as active productive citizens through programs and special events designed to address their spiritual, emotional, and physical needs.
- Project ONE-ON-ONE promotes healthy development by linking adults and at-risk children through positive relationships that enrich lives.



Program Goals

- To motivate struggling students to want to learn and to participate in the learning process.
- To provide models of appropriate behavior through interaction with responsible and successful adults.
- To impart to students the importance of education and the relationship between learning and achieving.
- To provide students with personal attention that is vital to their development.
- To aid students' social development through positive interaction with their peers and with adults in a safe group setting.



How a Child Learns

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, she learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame, she learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement, she learns confidence.

If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness, she learns justice.

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval, she learns to like herself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.

(Dorothy Law Nolte)



Kid Facts

- The tutoring takes place primarily with children who reside in group homes. A group home is a place where children who cannot live with their families are placed through DFCS or DJJ. They come from all types of situations: their parents may be abusive, neglectful, or in jail; the children may get into trouble and the family environment is deemed harmful or not structured enough; a few may be orphaned.
- Children stay in group homes for various durations. Some may run away or be moved within weeks of placement, but most will stay for a year or several years. They may be returned to their families, placed with a foster family, or adopted.
- These students often have to switch schools, causing gaps in learning. They often come from situations where no one has emphasized the importance of education, and many are not accustomed to others having expectations of them. Like most kids, they have trouble seeing themselves ten years down the road. For these reasons they need motivation and reassurance, and an explanation of how doing well in school can create possibilities for their future.
- They may not be interested in school, homework, or tutoring. You may have to be creative in finding ways to get them engaged in the learning process. The following information will help you along the way.



Characteristics of Great Tutors

Patience
and
Understanding
Be sensitive to their situation

Dependability
and
Accountability
Your students and fellow tutors rely on you!

and

UNDIVIDED ATTENTION

Zig Ziglar said, “We love what we spend time with.”



The Team Approach Works!

- People or organizations are matched with kids from group homes or emergency shelters.
- Our goal is to have one child matched with one tutor in a group setting.
- Over time, tutors form their own informal support structure: Get to know each other, share ideas and frustrations, remind each other of sessions.
- Children enjoy working in groups where they can learn to interact with different types of people. Try to balance consistency with one student and having group activities (celebrate birthdays, play games, reward progress). Or, you can rotate who is paired with whom if that is comfortable for you.
- Have a planning session before or a breakout session after tutoring; just a few minutes discussing your sessions can make a huge difference in their effectiveness.



Getting Started

Volunteer Leaders are assigned to each group to:

- Train and welcome new tutors
- Keep Rebecca informed of the situation and relay information to tutors
- Keep attendance records
- Give weekly reminders to the tutors via phone or e-mail if necessary.
- Promote awareness in the community
- Collect data on student progress

Tutor Responsibilities

- Bring your patience, understanding, and YOUR UNDIVIDED ATTENTION each week.
- Work on remedial skills. Help with homework or check homework if needed.
- Work with your student. Explain concepts or have your student explain their understanding. Take it slow and be thorough.
- Bring paper and pencils (just in case). Bring books or articles that you think your student would find interesting.
- Contribute to a “safe” atmosphere by withholding judgment, criticism, and negativity.
- Be a Leader! Help pair tutors and students or suggest subjects to work on.
- If you find it helpful, you may bring a snack for the kids to have after they have done a good job in the session (check with shelter staff).



The Results

For the children

75% of program participants had improved grades during this program year(2003-2004).

G. entered the program failing 5 out of 7 classes. During his first semester he brought all grades up to passing, and earned a 2.3 GPA in summer school.

R. experiences anxiety when working on Math. With help from tutors, he has brought his grade up eleven points and is becoming more comfortable performing math operations.

S. was from a non-English speaking family and had never gone to school. He was eager for help and flourished in tutoring, earning a semester of high school credits during his semester in the program.

84% of participants had improved attitudes about school.

D. has been in state care since the age of 1 and is now 15. He routinely disrupts placement every four months. He earned no high school credits before entering the program and was in special education classes. He has been participating in Project One-on-One since February and since has had perfect attendance, only one instance of misconduct, and has set a goal to enter regular classes. He looks forward to tutoring each week and has gained motivation to do well. He has not disrupted his placement.

C. was placed in an alternative school due to disciplinary problems. He eagerly brings homework to tutoring for help, and has decided he wants to be in regular school. He says, "Tutoring makes me feel like a student."

97% of participants had fewer absences during program participation.

D. had a history of truancy, with 23 and 48 absences in previous semesters. The tutoring program has motivated him to go to school; he has perfect attendance.



The Results (continued)

For the tutors

- Feel good about making a difference
- Put worries aside for a couple hours each week
- See gradual improvement and share triumphs
- Help students learn and grow
- Develop attachments and relationships
- Brush up on all of that school stuff you forgot
- Keep young at heart (increased life expectancy)
- More smiles



How to be effective as a tutor

Demonstrate Reliability:

- Be there each week. This demonstrates “I want to be with you.”

Provide Encouragement:

- Work on building your student’s self-esteem.

Cultivate Good Habits:

- Help your student keep track of assignments and grades.
- Help your student learn to budget his/her time.
- Demonstrate appropriate behaviors. As appropriate, discuss interactions with your student – for example, how to show remorse, how to accept compliments, and how to please your teachers.
- Use goal-setting procedures – identify one or more long-range goals in addition to short-range goals.

Establish Trust:

- Get to know your student: ask what they aspire to be, what they are interested in, what they like and don’t like about school.
- Begin to establish rapport.



Tutoring Tips

DO'S and DON'TS

Reliability

- DO show up every week at the appointed time and place.
- DO phone your student personally ahead of time if you cannot keep the appointment. Make sure to let Rebecca or your fellow tutors know so that they can find a substitute or be prepared to have an extra student.

Encouragement

- DO ask open-ended questions rather than “yes, no” questions.
 - “What do you think about ...?”
 - “How would you do ...?”
- DO review your child’s grade card/progress report during a tutoring session.
- DO reserve gifts for special occasions only. Your time and attention are tremendous gifts! It would be appropriate to acknowledge birthdays and other holidays as agreed on by your team. Keep in mind that books are a good gift.

Good Habits

- DO help your student keep track of assignments.
- DO help your student learn to budget his/her time.
- DO encourage your student to read. Read with your student.
- DO make or use “flash cards” when you need them (multiplication tables, vocabulary, facts, etc.)



Tutoring Tips (Continued)

DO'S and DON'TS

Trust

- DO NOT reject the children due to their youth culture - music, clothing styles, slang, and/or hair.
- DO keep a positive outlook, even if you are not getting good signals at first - they will come in due time.
- DO be sensitive to the children's possible fear that they will not meet your expectations.
- DO NOT make the first physical contact; let the child touch you first. Many of the younger children crave physical contact (hugs, leaning against you when reading, etc.).
- DO sit next to your student rather than across the table from them. Make eye contact when possible.
- DO be aware that children are expecting adults to come to them with typical stuff like lectures, criticism, rules, condemnation, disapproval and discipline. Be cautious and use good judgment regarding constructive criticism.
- DO be yourself.
- DO be careful not to say or do things that signal rejection such as looking or turning away, closing your eyes, speaking too quickly or too slowly, yawning or using a loud voice.
- DO let the child initiate personal stories about their life. DO NOT share your life stories and experiences until a high level of trust is established.



Tutoring Tips (Continued)

■ Things your student should hear:

- I like the way you handled that.
- You can do it.
- I'm glad you're pleased with your work.
- I have confidence you'll be able to do that.
- Try a little harder.
- Talk to your teacher about your feelings.
- Don't give up.
- You've made good progress. I'm sure you'll be able to finish.
- It looks like you've really worked hard.
- You are improving in _____.
- I've enjoyed talking with you today.
- You do a good job of _____.
- You have improved in _____.
- Could you help me find _____?
- Let's do it together.
- I'm not sure of the answer to that, but I will find out.
- I think you can handle it even if you don't.



How to get to know your student

You can ask about and give the following information:

My name is _____.

I like to be called _____.

My birthday is _____.

I am _____ years old.

I am in the _____ grade at _____ school.

My favorite food is _____.

My favorite sport or activity is _____.

My favorite music or artist is _____.

Something I do well is _____.

I want to improve on _____.

People think I am _____.

I think I am _____.

My friends are _____.

My favorite subject at school is _____.

My least favorite subject at school is _____.

My brother's and sister's ages are _____.



Elements of Trust

Building trust with your students is essential to making progress. Some children may initially be very open, but many will have a wall to break down before you can really help.

- When the relationship is beginning, students may use clichés – They will say things they think you want to hear.
- To see how you will react, the child may report facts about others (sneaking out, etc.) that could be about themselves – They are testing you to see your reaction to this information.
- They may appear not to care or may act like they don't want you there. In reality, it is exactly the opposite: they care so much, but are afraid to risk the attachment. Take it slow, be persistent. They will appreciate that you keep coming back each week.
- In time, they may reveal personal truths – True things about himself/herself (getting in a fight, lying to their teacher about homework, etc.).
- Hopefully, they will eventually share feelings and emotions – How they feel about what is really happening in their lives.
- Trust involves you being consistent and reliable, even if your student is not. They are doing the best they know how!
- As long as there is trust in a relationship, it will continue to grow.



Confidentiality

- Confidentiality is extremely important in the success of Project One-on-One. Information learned about a student must not be shared outside of your team and shelters. The students have a legal right to this protection.
- Generally, you will not know anything about the students' situation unless they tell you. DO NOT ask personal information (why they are in a group home, about their family). If they offer the information, discuss it without judgment. These students are young and still learning about the world, and may need to hear that their family situation is not their fault.
- The house parents, house director and CRN Program Director are the only persons with whom it would be appropriate to discuss confidential matters.
- While confidentiality is the norm, certain exceptions should be referred immediately to the professional staff, such as the shelter director or CRN Program Director:
 - Situations involving real or potential danger to the safety or well-being of the tutors, students or others.
 - Child abuse, sexual abuse, and other situations involving legal requirements of disclosure.
 - Severe family dysfunction, psychotic behavior, extreme drug or alcohol abuse, and any other problems beyond the experience and/or expertise of the tutor.



More Information about Tutoring

Websites

- The San Francisco School Volunteers Tips on Tutoring <http://www.sfsv.org/tutor.html>
- Tutoring Tips from Fresno State U. School of Education <http://www.csufresno.edu/scs/reads/tips.html>
- Tips for a college peer tutoring program (Still relevant!) http://www.mnu.edu/mabee/kresge/tutoring/top_ten_tips.html

Books

Tutoring Matters: Everything You Always Wanted to Know about how to Tutor (Author: Jerom Rabow)

See the reading list at <http://www.tutornation.com/base/books.html>



Thanks and enjoy your experience!

- Thank you for your time today.
- Please call CRN at any time with questions or suggestions! 770-649-7117
- Have a great time with the children.
- You will have a positive effect on a child's life.
- Have fun and enjoy!