

AJAX KIDS PLACE : MENTORING PROGRAM POLICIES

Recruitment Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that there be ongoing recruitment activities for new volunteers, tutors, mentors and program staff. As such, an Annual Recruitment Plan will be developed and will include recruitment goals, strategies to achieve those goals, an annual timeline, and budgetary implications. This plan will be kept current with any ongoing adjustments. Additionally, a detailed Quarterly Recruitment Activity Plan will outline specific tasks and activities.

The Director of program assumes lead responsibility for the recruitment of new volunteers, instructors, tutors, mentors and all program staff. The executive director, and advisory board members will support the program director in these activities as required

Inquiry Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that all inquiries regarding participation in all programs are responded to within one business day.

Superb public relations and customer service must be provided to all potential program participants at all times, from first contact throughout the screening process and beyond, regardless of the final screening outcome. All program staff handling calls must be patient, courteous, and respectful in all interactions.

A backup support system and staff training, are in place to ensure this policy is enforced.
























Confidentiality for all potential participants will be upheld from this initial point of contact forward.




Eligibility Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that each participant must meet the defined eligibility criteria. Kids Place staff should be knowledgeable of and understand all eligibility criteria required for volunteer, tutor, instructor, mentor, all program staff and child participation in the program.











Extenuating circumstances may be reviewed at the discretion of the program director and acceptance may then be allowed with the written approval of the executive director and representative of the board of directors when all eligibility requirements are not clearly met. These instances are expected to be rare.

Mentor Eligibility Requirements:

-  Be at least 21 years of age
-  Reside in the GTA area
-  Be willing to adhere to all KIDS PLACE policies and procedures
-  Agree to a one-year commitment to the program
-  Commit to spending a minimum of eight hours a month with the mentee
-  Be willing to communicate with the mentee weekly
-  Complete the screening procedure
-  Agree to attend mentor trainings as required
-  Be willing to communicate regularly with the program director and submit monthly meeting and activity information
-   Have access to an automobile or reliable transportation
-   Have a current driver's license, auto insurance, and good driving record
-   Have a clean criminal history
-   Have never been accused, arrested, charged, or convicted of child abuse or molestation
-   Not be a convicted felon. If the applicant has been convicted of a felony then they may be considered only after a period of seven years with demonstrated good behavior and an appropriate and corrective attitude regarding past behaviors.
-   Not be a user of illicit drugs
-   Not use alcohol or controlled substances in an excessive or inappropriate manner

-  Not be currently in treatment for substance abuse. If a substance abuse problem has occurred in the past the applicant must have completed a non-addictive period of at least five years
-  Not currently be under treatment for a mental disorder or have been hospitalized for a mental disorder in the past three years
-  Not have falsified information during the course of the screening process

Mentee Eligibility Requirements:

-  Be 11–18 years old
-  Reside in the GTA area
-  Demonstrate a desire to participate in the program and be willing to abide by all KIDS PLACE policies and procedures
-  Be able to obtain parental/guardian permission and ongoing support for participation in the program
-  Agree to a one-year commitment to the program
-  Commit to spending a minimum of eight hours a month with the mentor
-  Be willing to communicate with the mentor weekly
-  Complete screening procedure
-  Agree to attend mentee trainings as required
-  Be willing to communicate regularly with the program director and discuss monthly meeting and activity information

Training Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that all staff complete the schedule staff training session prior to being engaged. .

It is the responsibility of the program director to plan, develop, and deliver all training sessions with assistance from other engaged external agencies staff, board members, Evaluation forms will be collected from each training session for the purposes of evaluating/improving the content of the trainings and trainer performance. Certificate must be awarded for the training completion

Matching Policy for Mentoring Program

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that the program director will follow the guidelines outlined in the match procedure prior to creating a mentor/mentee match. The program director should use the factors outlined in the matching procedure to determine the suitability of a mentor/mentee match.

The program director will determine the suitability based on the following criteria:

- Preferences of the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian
- Similar gender/ethnicity
- Common interests
- Geographic proximity
- Similar personalities

Matches must be either male adult to male youth or female adult to female youth. In special circumstances and with board or director approval, it is acceptable for female mentors to be matched with male youth. It is never acceptable for male mentors to be matched with female youth.

Match Support and Supervision Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that mentoring staff will make monthly phone or personal contact with all parties to each match including the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian. Staff must gather information for that month including the dates and times spent participating in mentoring activities and a description of those activities, and assess the success of the match from all party's perspectives. In the case of match difficulties, discord, or concerns, appropriate discussion and intervention must be undertaken to improve or rectify problem areas.

Mentoring program staff must follow the steps outlined in the Match Support and Supervision Procedure. Beyond monitoring the match relationship and activities, program staff must undertake other efforts that support participants, such as regular group activities for matches, ongoing training events, a formal support structure for mentors, and the attainment of admission to community events/activities for match participants.

Recognition Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that all participants—including staff, and parents/guardians—be recognized as important to the success of our programs. Particular emphasis will be placed upon recognizing the program's volunteer .

It is the responsibility of the program director to, at minimum, plan and implement the following recognition activities:

- Host an annual recognition event including selection of a program staff, child and parent/guardian of the year along with other outstanding service or performance acknowledgments
- Feature a program staff, child, parent/guardian, or general match success story in each quarterly newsletter
- Establish a staff recognition award system for length of service
- Utilize outstanding program staff and mentor to help deliver orientation and training sessions for the recruitment and matching of new mentors and staff.

Record-Keeping Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that each step of all registrations, applications, match supervisory and other process be documented by creating a case file for each . All forms for managing all volunteer instructors tutors , participants. mentor and mentee case files are included within our procedures manual.

All records are to be kept confidential and are to be covered by the conditions outlined in the confidentiality policy. Archival records or those records of past applicants and participants will be maintained and kept confidential for a period of seven years after the close of their participation in the program. After seven years, the records will be shredded and discarded with approval from the executive director and destroyed only by approved individuals.




The program director must keep stringent records of all program activities, utilizing approved forms. All files should be regularly maintained and updated within an electronic database and/or hard copy filing system.

The creation of new forms or the revision of existing forms must be documented and kept within the policy and procedure manual.

Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE to protect the confidentiality of its participants and their families. With the exception of the limitations listed below, program staff will only share information about program staff, children, and their families with other Kids Place professional staff and the Board of Directors. Further, all prospective staff, participants, and parents/guardians should be informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality by program staff. Additionally, staff are required to keep information about their participants and his/her family confidential.



In order for the Kids Place to provide a responsible and professional service to participants, it is necessary to ask staff, participants parents/guardians, and other outside sources to divulge extensive personal information about the prospective participants and their families, including:

-  Information gained from staff and participants, written or otherwise, about themselves and/or their families, in application to and during program participation
-  Participants' names and images gained from participants themselves, program meetings, training sessions, and other events
-  Information gained about participants from outside sources including confidential references, school staff, employers

Records are, therefore, considered the property of the Kids Place and are not available for review by staff participants, or parents/guardians.

Limits of Confidentiality

Information from staff and participant records may be shared with individuals or organizations as specified below under the following conditions:

-  Information may be gathered about program participants and shared with other participants, individuals, or organizations only upon receipt of signed "release" forms from staff, participants, or parents/guardians.
-  Identifying information (including names, photographs, videos, etc.) of program participants may be used in the Kids Place publications or promotional materials only upon written consent of the staff, participant and/or parent/guardian.

- Members of the Board of Directors have access to participant files only upon authorization by a formal motion of the board. The motion shall identify the person(s) to be authorized to review such records, the specific purpose for such review, and the period of time during which access shall be granted. Such members of the board granted access shall be required to comply with the agency policies on confidentiality and may use the information only for purposes stated by the approved action of the Board of Directors. Known violations shall be reported to the Board chairman. A violation of the agency's confidentiality policy by a Board member shall constitute adequate cause for removal from the Board.
- Information may only be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.
- Information may be provided to legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the agency. Such information is considered privileged information, and its confidentiality is protected by law.
- Program staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters and as such must disclose information indicating that a mentor or mentee may be dangerous to or intends to harm him/herself or others.
- If program staff members receive information at any point in the match process that a volunteer is using illegal substances, there is a criminal history of any kind, or is inappropriately using alcohol or other controlled substances, the information will be shared with the parent and they will have the option to reject the prospective mentor or close the existing match.
- At the time a mentor or mentee is considered as a match candidate, information is shared between the prospective match parties. However, the full identity of the prospective match mate shall not be revealed at this stage. Names and addresses are shared with match mates only after the involved parties have met and agree to be formally matched. Each party shall have the right to refuse the proposed match based on the anonymous information provided to them. The information to be shared may include:
 - Mentors: age, sex, race, religion, interests, hobbies, employment, marriage or family status, sexual preference, living situation, reasons for applying to the program, and a summary of why the individual was chosen for the particular match. Results of driving records and criminal histories may also be shared.
 - Mentees: age, sex, race, religion, interests, hobbies, family situation, living situation, a summary of the client needs assessment, and expectations for match participation.

Safekeeping of Confidential Records

The executive director is considered the custodian of confidential records. It is his/her responsibility to supervise the management of confidential information in order to ensure safekeeping, accuracy, accountability, and compliance with Board policies.

Requesting Confidential Information From Other Agencies

A mentee's or volunteer's right to privacy shall be respected by the agency. Requests for confidential information from other organizations or persons shall be accompanied by a signed release from the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian.

Violations of Confidentiality

A known violation of the agency policy on confidentiality by a program participant may result in a written warning or disciplinary action such as suspension or termination from the program.



Mentoring Program Transportation Policy






It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE to allow mentors to transport mentees in their own private vehicles. The program coordinator must ensure that all mentors meet the following criteria prior to transporting the mentee:

- 1 All mentors must own a car or have access to *reliable* insured transportation; all safety equipment including blinkers, lights, brake and back-up lights, seat belts, tires, and brakes must be in good operating condition.
- 2 All mentors must possess a valid driver's license and present proof of auto insurance; a record of insurance will be maintained in the mentor's file and will be updated on an annual basis.
- 3 All mentors must undergo a driving record check and have a clean driving record for the last three years.
- 4 The Kids Place requires that mentors obey all traffic laws, and use seat belts and headlights at all times.
- 5 Mentors must also avoid taking medication or using any other substances that might impair their ability to drive.
- 6 If an accident occurs while the mentor is engaged in mentoring, it should be reported to the program director promptly.
- 7 The mentor must carry a copy of the mentee's health insurance information in the transporting automobile at all times in case of emergency.

If any of the above policy is not followed, the mentor will not be allowed to transport the mentee in a private automobile or may face other consequences.

Mentoring Program Overnight Visits and Out-of-Town Travel Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE Mentoring Program to encourage mentor/mentee visits within their own community and limit overnight visits. However, overnight visits and out-of-town trips are permitted under the following conditions:

-  Overnight visits and out-of-town travel are only permitted after six months participation with a match.
 - 1 Between six months and one year, overnight visits and out-of-town travel may occur only with approval from both the program coordinator and parent/guardian. Out-of-town travel may occur only with the accompaniment of the parent/guardian or other person designated by the parent/guardian.
 - 2 After one year, both overnight visits and out-of-town travel may occur with permission of the parent only, and the mentee and mentor may travel alone out of town with parental permission. All parties must report all such occurrences during their monthly contact with mentoring staff, the nature of the activity, and the purpose.
-  For any and all admissible out-of-town travel, the parent/guardian must write and sign a permission slip stipulating:
 - 1 Their child is permitted to travel with the mentor to the predetermined destination, specifying names and the location(s) being traveled to.
 - 2 Permission for medical treatment in the case of a medical emergency.
-  For any and all admissible out-of-town travel, the mentor must write out or type a detailed itinerary of the trip, and provide this to the parent/guardian prior to leaving, and include the following:
 - 3 The destination(s)
 - 4 Phone numbers of their cell phone (optional), places being visited, and lodging
 - 5 Times and dates of departure and arrival at each location being visited
 - 6 Expected time of return
-  For out-of-town trips of more than one day's duration, the mentor must check in with the parent/guardian daily by phone, if possible.
-  During permissible out-of-town travel, the mentor should review and abide by all terms outlined in the transportation policy.

Mandatory Reporting Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that all staff, mentors, and other representatives of the program must report any *suspected* child abuse and/or neglect of clients or program participants immediately. All such suspected reports must be made to appropriate state and/or local authorities. Program staff must follow the mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect procedure.

All employees, volunteers, and mentors of the Kids Place are required to undergo training as to what constitutes child abuse and neglect, what the law requirements are, and how to properly report such cases.

Any staff, volunteers, or mentors accused of child abuse or neglect will be investigated by the Kids Place. Contact with program youth will be restricted or constrained and/or the person in question suspended from employment or program participation per the decision of the executive director and board of directors until such investigation is concluded.

Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Firearms Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE to prohibit and discourage the use of drugs, alcohol, and firearms. Staff and participants are prohibited from using drugs or alcohol or possessing firearms while engaged in any of our program. Any suspected violations should be reported to the program coordinator.

Alcoholic Beverages: No participant of any of the Kids Place Program will possess or consume beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages while actively engaged or prior to actively engaging in the program, nor shall any participant endorse the use of alcohol. .

Drugs: No participant of the Kids Place will manufacture, possess, distribute, or use any illegal substance while engaged in any of our program.






Tobacco: The intent of the Kids Place is to create a smoke- and tobacco-free environment. To that end, smoking and the use of all tobacco products is prohibited on the premises of Kids Place and those involved with the program must refrain from the use of such products while engaged in our program. The use of tobacco products includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or other matters or substances that contain tobacco.

Weapons, Firearms, and Other Dangerous Materials: The possession or use of firearms, firecrackers, explosives, toxic or dangerous chemicals, or other lethal weapons, equipment, or material while participating in any of our program is strictly prohibited.












Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate suspension and/or termination of the program participation. In addition, violations of this policy may result in notification being given to legal authorities that may result in arrest or legal action, and may be punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.

Unacceptable Behavior Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that unacceptable behaviors will not be tolerated on the part of staff and participants while participating in the program. This policy in no way is intended to replace or take precedence over other policies or procedures including, but not limited to, the following:

-  Confidentiality Policy
-  Transportation Policy
-  Overnight Visits and Out-of-Town Travel Policy
-  Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Policy
-  Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Firearms Policy

A number of behaviors are regarded as incompatible with Kids Place Program goals, values, and program standards and therefore are considered unacceptable and prohibited while participants are engaged in our program:

-  Unwelcome physical contact, such as inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching, and physical assault
-  Unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or behavioral mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or aversion toward any individual
-  Demeaning or exploitive behavior of either a sexual or nonsexual nature, including threats of such behavior
-  Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material
-  Known sexual abuse or neglect of a child
-  Denigration, public or private, of any child parent/guardian or family member
-  Denigration, public or private, of political or religious institutions or their leaders
-  Intentional violation of any governmental law
-  Drinking while driving under the influence of alcohol
-   Possession of illegal substances

Any unacceptable behavior, as specified but not limited to the above, will result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension or termination from participation in all of our program.

Mentoring Program Closure Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that all mentors and mentees must participate in closure procedures when their match ends. Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship regardless of the circumstances of the match ending or whether they intend to have future contact informally beyond the match duration. While no party is expected to continue the relationship beyond the formal end of a match, matches may continue in the program beyond the contract period (one year for New Insights matches) and receive ongoing support and supervision.

Closure can occur for any number of reasons including: the contracted match duration has ended, one or both participants do not want to continue the match, there are changes in life circumstances of either the mentor or mentee, or an individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation. Hence, the match may end at the discretion of the mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, and/or program director. It is left to the discretion of the program director whether an individual will be reassigned to another match in the future based upon past participation performance and current goals and needs of the program.

Future contact will be at the mutual and informal agreement of the mentor, the mentee, and the parent/guardian. If future contact is agreed upon, the KIDS PLACE will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended. The director will verbally and in writing inform all parties—the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian—that the formal match has ended and that the Kids Place will not be liable for any incidents that occur after the match has closed.

Evaluation Policy

It is the policy of the KIDS PLACE that evaluation will be a key component in measuring the success of all its program and for making continuous improvements in the effectiveness and delivery of services.

Evaluation data will be collected every six months for our confidence program, including the following general measures: youth self-esteem, academic performance, peer and parent relationships, moods, alcohol and substance use, and sexual activity.

Kids Place program staff will be responsible for evaluation efforts.