Mentoring is the highest calling for a Domus volunteer. A successful match has been shown to improve a mentee’s grades, attendance, and relationships with peers, other adults and family members. It is often one of the most meaningful relationships in a mentor’s life as well. At Domus we approach our young people’s needs holistically, focusing on their social and emotional issues as well as academics. Using the Governor’s Prevention Partnership Best Practices Model, the Domus Mentoring Program is able to take advantage of Domus family and education advocates. Because of their intimate knowledge of the mentee’s circumstances, they act as the liaison for the mentor, mentee, and parent; guide goal setting; and are available to address concerns or challenges throughout the relationship. Domus mentors support children in elementary and middle school.

Requirements:
- One hour a week (four hours a month) for one school year
- A background check
- 5-hour training. In addition, ongoing training and networking opportunities are offered.
Domus Mentoring Program

When one person mentors, two lives are changed.

What is mentoring? It is a structured relationship over a prolonged period of time between two people, where an older, caring, more experienced individual provides love, support, and guidance to the younger person as he/she/they go through life. Research shows mentoring:

- Improves academic performance
- Improves attendance
- Improves attitudes towards schoolwork
- Improves communication skills
- Improves peer/family relationships
- Improves self-esteem
- Reduces depressive symptoms

Because mentoring is about building a long-term, close, and caring relationship with a struggling young person, the steps to becoming a mentor are thoughtful and intentional. Below helps explain the process.

The mentor commitment is a school year, though we hope the relationship continues beyond one year. Mentors meet with their mentee at least 1 hour a week for at least 30 weeks beginning in October. Mentors who begin in the spring are expected to meet their mentee once or twice over the summer and begin mentoring at the site in October. Instructions and support are provided.

- Elementary and middle school youth mentoring is site-based and meets once a week for an hour between 10a and 5p at a Domus operated site.
- Male mentors mentor boys exclusively. Female generally mentor girls but may mentor a boy. Pairings are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For youth questioning their gender/sexuality we seek mentors who are LGBT or have a special affinity for the search for self.
- Personal characteristics are a willing heart, a non-judgmental attitude, active listening skills (it’s not about you), and a commitment to the mentee on par with other personal and professional obligations.
Becoming a Mentor
The first step is to schedule an hour plus orientation and interview appointment with Julia Wade, Director of Volunteers and the Domus Mentoring Program. You will complete an intake profile and background check forms. The questions cover a wide range of topics including some that are personal. For the first visit, a driver’s license or other picture identification and a social security number are required. Mentors must also attend a Domus led 5 hour mentor training. Trainings are scheduled twice a year in September and February/March.

The Program
Each child Domus serves is assigned an advocate. The advocate helps match the mentor, is the liaison with the mentee and the connection to the family. They guide and support the mentor/mentee relationship. The Director of Volunteers is also a resource and will provide educational materials and networking opportunities on an ongoing basis.

Mentor/Mentee Matching
Post the training, the Domus team meets to review applications for the first round of matching. Once matched, the advocate schedules a meeting with the mentor applicant to discuss the mentee and his/her goals as they relate to behavioral, social or emotional issues. At this point the mentor can elect not to continue, but once the agreement is signed, the mentor is committed to the Domus Mentoring Program. Brief, weekly email updates to the advocate are expected and a monthly phone call or in-person meeting with the advocate strongly suggested. From the orientation to the introduction to the mentee may take as long as three months.

The Commitment (approximate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
<td>Domus orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 hours</td>
<td>Mentor training (2 evening sessions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Initial meeting with the advocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Introductory meeting with the advocate and the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td>Meeting with your mentee between October 1 and May 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>Meeting with your mentee over the summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 hours</td>
<td>Mentor trainings, external events, networking opportunities, and mentee centered activities are offered occasionally.</td>
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</tbody>
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