



Become a Mentor to a Getting Ahead Graduate!

Getting Ahead Overview

Individuals leave poverty for one of four reasons:

- A goal or vision of something they want to be or have
- A situation that is so painful that anything would be better
- Someone who 'sponsors' them (an educator, spouse, mentor) showing them a different way, or convincing them they could live differently
- A specific talent or ability that provides an opportunity for them

People in poverty need a safe space to analyze how poverty impacts individuals and communities and the opportunity to explore economic realities. This is a starting point both for reasoning and developing plans for transition. Using mental models for comprehension and reasoning, people can move from the concrete to the abstract. Using Ruby Payne's definition of the resources necessary for a full life and her insights into the hidden rules of economic class, people can evaluate themselves, choose behaviors, and make plans to build resources and climb out of poverty.

Our participants (referred to as investigators) will complete a ten-week **Getting Ahead in-a-Just-Gettin by World** curriculum series led by certificated facilitators.

Getting Ahead Mentors

When offering Getting Ahead classes to people in poverty, a promise is also made that the sponsor and the community will provide long-term support while graduates are building resources and transition out of poverty.

Being a Mentor for a Getting Ahead Graduate will require a time commitment and will be a rewarding experience. Getting Ahead graduates will develop personal plans to guide them as they build their resources to become self-sufficient. Through this process the Mentor is to act as a coach and a connector to community resources, and to provide a positive role model and relationship for the graduate. They acknowledge, validate, question and affirm the graduate's actions, but never do what the graduate is capable of doing for themselves. The primary role of the mentor is to facilitate community connections that empower a graduate to build personal resources and implement his or her personal plan.

Mentor Training

- Complete Getting Ahead Mentor training (1.5 Hour session)

Partnering with OBC Bridges Out of Poverty (OBC)

- A Mentor Application must be completed.
- A signed Good Faith Agreement must be completed. This agreement outlines the expectations for both OBC and its mentors.

Time Commitment

Research shows that it takes 3-5 years for an individual to build their resources to truly become self-sufficient. We are asking our Mentors to walk through this journey with a graduate for up to one year following the completion of their Getting Ahead class.

The Mentor will commit to attending the Graduation Ceremony of their designated graduate and will have a phone conversation on a quarterly basis for one year. We will also host an annual Staying Ahead event for our graduates and encourage the Mentors to attend this as well.

Boundaries

One of the important lessons we are teaching our graduates through connecting them with a mentor is positive relationship boundaries. It will be discussed with the graduate that their mentor is there to assist them as appropriate but is not meant to be a problem solver each time the graduate faces a crisis. The mentor will 'Be responsible to them, not for them.'

Mentors will need to set their own boundaries regarding their graduate. The graduate will need latitude to choose their own course and make their own mistakes. The mentor's job is to share what he/she knows and respect the rights of the graduate.

A graduate should realize that a mentor's advice will not always work. It is better to offer possible solutions than to give direct advice. A mentor who gives advice such as "If I were you I would move on" or "Go in tomorrow and tell your boss you deserve a raise" is setting up an environment in which he/she may "own" the graduate's problem. What the graduate needs is someone who is adept at questioning techniques and can offer personal experience and/or assists in helping reframe potential power struggles. Leading the graduate in a discussion of options and potential consequences is the optimal strategy.

For More Information

For more information on our local Bridges Out of Poverty Initiative, visit www.OneBodyCollaboratives.org.

For more information about the national Bridges Out of Poverty organization, visit www.ahaprocess.com.