



Program Report

Program Name: Stand Up! Help Out! – Woodlawn
Program Location: University of Chicago – Woodlawn Charter School
Teaching Organization: Loyola University Chicago
Program Instructors: Gabriella Pehanich / Michelle Cain
Contact Person with Phone and email. Gabriella Pehanich and Michelle Cain

How many teens finished the program? 25

What were the main activities throughout the length of the program? What did the teens do?

- The teens mentored and tutored elementary students (grades 4-5) at Wadsworth Elementary School for one hour per week. Part of the mentoring preparation included educational sessions on child development and training sessions on how to manage behavior and build positive relationships with younger students.
- The teens filmed a documentary about their experiences mentoring Wadsworth youth
- The teens participated in discussions on topics such as dating, violence, and peer pressure.
- The teens participated two small groups after each mentoring session with an instructor to process their mentoring experiences, what they learned about themselves, and how better to address challenges that accompany mentoring youth in the future.
- Individual counseling and small group discussions were provided as needed.
- To enhance their experience mentoring youth, the teens were exposed to speakers in the fields of child psychology, social work, and lawyers who protect and defend child welfare both nationally and internationally.

What discipline-specific skills (with regard to the focus of the program) did the teens learn?

The teens learned a number of skills to prepare them for their roles as mentors. Training on child development and relationship-building were provided to the teens. The instructors coached them on how to be effective mentors – before, during, and after - each mentoring session. An emphasis on self-awareness, self-control, and empathy were at the forefront of these sessions.

What critical-workplace skills (applicable to any job) did the teens learn?

Several workplace skills were presented during orientation and throughout the program, such as conflict management, promptness, articulation of ideas and feelings in a mature manner, as well as addressing situations with respect. If a pre-apprentice did not meet job expectations, then an instructor met individually with the student to discuss and find a solution to the situation.

What was the final project or final outcome of the program?

The final product of our program was a documentary focused on mentoring, the importance of mentoring to the pre-apprentices, and how mentoring can make a difference in the lives of children at any age. The documentary is currently in the editing process and should be available at the end of the summer.

Our website (www.StandUpHelpOut.org) will contain the final version of this documentary.

Were there any other notable highlights? (Field trips, master classes, competitions, closing celebrations, community service, teens receiving internship offers or college scholarships, etc.)

Highlights include:

- A field trip to the Art Institute of Chicago where the teens learned about various pieces of art and artists. They also participated in a scavenger hunt at the Art Institute, requiring them to navigate the building on their own and offer personal feedback and opinions on particular paintings.
- A field trip to Loyola University Chicago where the teens completed their documentary; engaged in personal discussions with a speaker about their own perceptions and experiences of dating, community violence, and peer pressure; and were presented and engaged in a discussion with fellow Stand Up! Help Out! program teens from CRIME.

Did the teens have an impact on the community? For example, teens performed for 30 community members at the Park Field House.

The teens made a significant contribution to the Wadsworth youth involved in our mentoring program. They engaged the Wadsworth youth in weekly activities, helped them with their homework, and built relationships of trust and reliability.

How did teens help plan your program activities? Describe a specific activity that teens planned.

-Input from the teens was an integral part of the program. The teens were part of the planning process each week for the mentoring activities. This eventually led to planning the final day of mentoring. This was a special day for the mentors/mentees because they were saying good bye. As a group, the teens planned the final day. They decided to write letters to the mentees about the experience and have a celebration that included treats and games.

-The instructors also periodically asked for program feedback. The students provided ideas about activities, fieldtrips and the final project. As a group, through a sharing circle the teens were able to brainstorm, problem-solve, and plan for the final documentary. The filming of the documentary went smoothly because the teens had planned and prepared beforehand. As a group, the teens decided which mentoring topics were the most important to include in the documentary.

What challenges have you encountered?

-The instructors were faced with the challenge of planning two fieldtrips that the teens would enjoy in addition to being productive and cost effective.

- The instructors felt at times they needed extra support with such a large group. The two instructors were not always able to provide enough one-to-one or small group support because the needs of managing the larger group were too great.

-The teens were able to explore areas that they needed extra support within the mentoring process. Specifically, a challenge that several teens faced was working with difficult behaviors in the youth.

-The instructors were both new to the ASM system and faced many challenges trying to navigate the forms, guidelines and expectations. The instructors felt it was difficult to reach ASM personnel to help with these questions and concerns.

What support or resources did you find / need to address these challenges?

- The instructors were able to plan a great trip to the Art Institute that was free for the students and staff. The students participated in a docent led tour and then paired off to complete a scavenger hunt that the instructors prepared. Professor Tyson was then kind enough to treat the group to pizza after the scavenger hunt.

-The 2nd field trip provided the students an opportunity to work on the documentary final project at Loyola University Chicago's Water Tower Campus. The day also included a student-led presentation on the CRIME project and a presentation from a helping professional.

-The instructors took every opportunity possible to work with the students individually to address specific program and behavioral concerns. This usually took place when the students were engaged in another activity that could be monitored by one instructor. The instructors worked together to manage the group effectively and provide the most support possible.

-There was an opportunity for the teens to share their mentoring experiences, questions and concerns every Tuesday. Part of this process included a time and space for the teens to explain to the instructors and peers what their specific needs were. The teens were able to explore areas that they needed extra support within the mentoring process. The instructors provided a safe space to problem solve, process and discuss any challenges that the teens faced while mentoring the Wadsworth students.

Tell us about a teen's success story.

One of our teens (a 15 year-old girl) was very anxious about the idea of mentoring. She was worried about engaging the youth and building the mentoring relationship. She came in one day and decided to quit the Stand Up! Help Out! program. The instructors were able to see that she was really anxious and provided support to the teen. Together, the instructors and the teen talked about the specific concerns and came up with ideas to make the process a success. The teen was matched with a youth and they hit it off right from the start. They were able to build a meaningful relationship. She was a role model for the other mentors in the program. The teen was really proud of her accomplishment and thoroughly enjoyed participating in the program.

Tell us about another teen's success story.

A male sophomore student came into the group eager for a new challenge and experience. This is a student who is trying to make positive changes in his life by making good choices at school and in the community. He is faced with tough choices each day and has been working hard to finish school and stay out of trouble. This student was a positive force within the larger group each day. He came in open to learning about the mentoring process. He was excited to share with a younger student some of the difficult life lessons he learned at a young age. It was a tougher challenge than he had originally thought. The student he was paired with was resistant to the mentor/mentee process and was having difficulties with the

other Wadsworth students. The teen continued to work with him each week, despite the challenges. He would turn to his peers and instructors for support in working with the youth. His hard work and dedication paid off as he ended the program with a great relationship with his mentee. He spent time talking and listening to the youth until they were able to come to a mutual understanding and respect. It was apparent that the experience was both valuable to the mentor and the mentee.