



Mentor-Teacher-Community Toolkit
Resources for Math, Science & Reading

Florida Mentoring Kit

**Developed for the Florida Independent College Fund
and
The Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida**

by

**Caliber Associates, Inc.
10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22030**

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MENTOR-TEACHER-COMMUNITY TOOLKIT
RESOURCES FOR MATH, SCIENCE & READING

FLORIDA MENTORING KIT

In support of the YesTeach! Math & Science – Mentor-Teacher-Community (MTC) Toolkit and Evaluation service agreement, Caliber Associates is pleased to present the Florida Mentoring Kit. Caliber shares the commitment of the Florida Independent College Fund (FICF) to recruit, prepare, place and support new math and science teachers throughout Florida. Moreover, the Caliber shares the YesTeach! belief that mentors, teachers and community members that support and coach students are an invaluable untapped resource. The purpose of the Florida Mentoring Kit is to add value to FICF’s investment in Florida’s future via equipping these agents of education to assist at-risk children and youth. In fulfillment of the aforementioned agreement (product #3), the Florida Mentoring Kit reviews selected mentoring/teaching/coaching programs in Florida, including the Governor’s Mentoring Initiative and Just Read, Florida programs and profiles their efforts.

The MTC Toolkit project is sponsored by the FICF. The Toolkit was prepared by Dr. Jeanette Hercik, Dr. Jackie Booth, Dr. Stephanie VanDeventer, Mr. Richard Lewis, and Ms. Tara Croan. All opinions are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of the sponsoring organization. Questions and comments should be directed to Dr. Jeanette Hercik at jhercik@caliber.com.



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FLORIDA MENTORING PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Florida provides a broad and comprehensive group of mentoring offerings, many stemming directly from large-scale statewide funding and initiatives from the state's governor. There is some type of mentoring programs in place in most communities and in all school districts. Two of the school districts featured here, Hillsborough and Pinellas, are in the top 15 school districts in the United States in terms of population. Many programs are one-on-one matching opportunities handled by school districts or coordinating agencies. A typical mentoring program can be found below in the description of the S.A.V.E. program in Duval County.

There are many volunteer and mentoring programs whose main mission is to coordinate mentoring efforts among schools, businesses and the community. A good example of one of these programs can be found in the description of the Kesler Mentoring Connection, also listed below. Finally, there are a number of comprehensive and extensive educational programs which target both teachers, schools and community agencies or leaders, such as scouts and Boys and Girls clubs, which label themselves as mentoring programs, but for which mentoring is one small part. Examples of these types of programs can be found below in Project WILD and the Florida Black Bear Curriculum.

This review, while not exhaustive, shows that mentoring is alive and thriving in Florida and that its position of prominence with Florida's governor makes it a front and center issue around the state. Because mentoring programs do not fall under a set of specific standards, but do generally appear to adhere to accepted theories and practices in mentoring, their quality is undoubtedly highly variable. An examination of the quality of all of these mentoring programs would give greater insight into where mentoring is having its greatest successes and where it is not meeting challenges.



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Name of Program:

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay
www.bbbsfl.org

Affiliated Organization(s):

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
Governor's Mentoring Partnership

Purpose/Overview:

Nationally, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America has been pairing volunteers with children for 100 years. In the Tampa Bay area, Big Brothers Big Sisters has been providing mentoring services since 1969, now serving Hillsborough, Pasco, and Polk counties in Florida. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay has developed some of the most comprehensive mentoring programs in the nation. Many Big Brothers Big Sisters programs have been honored nationally as "best practices" in mentoring services. Big Brothers Big Sisters programs are all based on one concept: that little moments make BIG magic. Big Brothers Big Sisters states the following:

- We believe that we can strengthen our community by providing high-quality, life-enriching mentoring relationships between adult volunteers and children.
- We know our programs make a difference in a child's life.
- We also know that volunteering as a Big Brother or Big Sister can make a big difference in a volunteer's life, too.

Recent Florida State University research reveals that among Big Brothers Big Sisters students, FCAT gain scores in reading showed an improvement compared to all Florida students in grades 4, 6, 7, and 8. Gain scores in math improved much more rapidly than that of all students in grades 4, 6, 8 and 9. The rate of behavioral incidences describes a positive trend for these at-risk children. Fewer than a quarter of the children had behavior referrals, a decrease of 4 percent from the previous year.



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Name of Program:

Career Academies School Partners Programs

<http://www.mentoringconnection.org/CareerAcademiesSchoolPartnerProgram.cfm>

Affiliated Organization(s):

Kesler Mentoring Connection

Purpose/Overview:

Career Academies help students to prepare for the workforce by partnering businesses with students and schools. Students operate in small learning communities organized around specific careers or professional themes. The primary goal is to help students prepare for success in high-skill, high-wage jobs in the region, while also helping to enhance overall academic success and achievement. This program is offered to students in grades 9-12 and involves one hour per week of participation throughout the school year.



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Name of Program:

Communities in Schools of Florida, Inc.
www.cisfl.org/

Affiliated Organization(s):

Governor's Mentoring Partnership

Purpose/Overview:

Communities in Schools (CIS) works to help at-risk students by connecting resources from public and private sectors. CIS utilizes the power of partnerships to serve students, schools and communities. The mission of CIS is to serve as a champion for the connection of community resources with schools in order to help students stay focused, learn, remain in school and prepare for life. This program coordinates the delivery of community resources directly into the schools and helps to identify and procure additional resources needed to meet the needs of individual schools. CIS has a demonstrated record of improving student academic achievement and behavior patterns, showing increased promotion and graduation rates, improved attendance, fewer discipline referrals and improved FCAT scores for participating schools and students.



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Name of Program:

Florida Black Bear Curriculum Program
www.floridaconservation.org/Educator/blkbear.htm

Affiliated Organization(s):

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Defenders of Wildlife

Purpose/Overview:

The Florida Black Bear Curriculum includes a curriculum guide and an extensive set of lessons on the history and conservation needs of the Florida black bear. The program is designed for teachers and students in grades 3-8. Interdisciplinary in nature, the lessons address reading, language arts, history, geography, social studies, math, art and science. Educators attend a 4-6 hour workshop to learn about the topics and content and receive the curriculum guide.

Study of the Florida black bear, which is of intrinsic interest to students, introduces them to broad concepts such as limiting factors, carrying capacity, and biodiversity in very real and relevant ways. The curriculum has been designed to teach thinking skills rather than simply discrete knowledge and has been carefully reviewed by biologists as well as teachers and has been tested with teachers and students across Florida. Numerous instructional methods are employed to target a variety of learning styles and teaching suggestions are included for small groups, teams, and whole class work. The black bear curriculum is highly flexible and easy to modify, requiring minimal teacher preparation time and including assessment activities. The program is also appropriate for after-school programs, scout and community programs, and home schooling situations.



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Name of Program:

Florida Campus Compact
www.floridacompact.org/

Affiliated Organization(s):

National Campus Compact
www.compact.org

Purpose/Overview:

National Campus Compact is a thriving organization with over 900 member institutions in 47 states and is a national coalition of college and university presidents committed to the civic purposes of higher education. Campus Compact promotes learning through service that develops students' citizenship skills and values, encourages collaborative partnerships between campuses and communities and assists faculty who seek to integrate public and community engagement into their teaching and research.

Florida Campus Compact (FCC) is a part of a growing number of higher education institutions in Florida, comprised of State Universities, Community Colleges and Independent Colleges and Universities. FCC works with these campuses to integrate service with academic study and provide a collegial experience for inter-campus and community collaborations.



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Name of Program:

Florida Guardian ad Litem Program
www.gal.fl.gov/

Affiliated Organization(s):

Other Guardian ad Litem and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Programs

Purpose/Overview:

The Florida Guardian ad Litem Program (FGALP) is a partnership of community advocates and professional staff providing a powerful voice on behalf of Florida's abused and neglected children. For many years the goal of the program has been to represent 100 percent of children involved in dependency proceedings. In addition to advocating for each and every dependent child, FGALP provides volunteer and legal resources, supports local programs, and seeks systemic changes necessary to protect at-risk children and youth.



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Name of Program:

Florida Mentoring Partnership (Formerly Governor's Mentoring Initiative)
www.volunteerfloridafoundation.org/about_mentoring.php

Affiliated Organization(s):

State of Florida

Purpose/Overview:

First called the Governor's Mentoring Initiative and recently renamed the Governor's Mentoring Partnership, this Florida program connects and organizes mentoring programs throughout the state. It works with the Volunteer Florida Foundation to manage and fund site-based, community-based and progressive mentoring programs. The Florida Mentoring Partnership promotes collaboration among state agencies, municipalities, businesses, nonprofit organizations, individuals and schools. By 2005, the number of active mentors has risen to over 204,000 statewide.

The partnership funds numerous programs operating in school districts throughout the state, connecting communities, businesses, and schools with volunteer and mentoring opportunities. The partnership also maintains an advocacy council whose task is to keep mentoring at the forefront of statewide policy and practice. Florida has a strong and vital commitment to mentoring, with a recent study by the National Mentoring Partnership showing that ten percent of all mentoring programs nationwide exist in the state of Florida. The Florida Mentoring Partnership funds its programs with over \$14 million for program development and training, with additional corporate and individual donations of time, money and materials.

Florida is making a long-term commitment to mentoring and the most recent research on statewide programs shows that mentored students have marked gains in learning and are enrolling in continuing education at higher rates than students not mentored.



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Name of Program:

Hillsborough Education Foundation

www.educationfoundation.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Grants_Scholarships.Mentors_Home

Affiliated Organization(s):

Hillsborough County Schools

Purpose/Overview:

This district-based program pairs volunteer mentors from the community or businesses with students in schools throughout the county. Working one-on-one or in small groups, mentors work with students to provide guidance and assistance in academics and in life. Mentors help students to build a foundation of values and to take responsibility for their own actions, to set goals and to stay in school. Mentors make a commitment to meet with their mentee at least one hour a week throughout the school year, encouraging them to attend school, earn good grades, and work on developing and pursuing goals. They may help students with academic work or they may simply serve as a listening ear.

Mentoring sessions take place during school hours on the school grounds and a schedule is arranged in advance for regular meetings. Mentors attend orientation and training sessions where they learn about their role as a mentor, following which they meet with the student's guidance counselor or teacher to learn about the individual needs of the students. Mentors are also provided with a handbook to help them in the process of mentoring.



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Name of Program:

H.O.S.T.S. Help One Student to Succeed

www.hosts.com

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/18/86/1886.htm>

Affiliated Organization(s):

HOSTS Learning

Governor's Mentoring Partnership

Purpose/Overview:

Since 1971, HOSTS Learning has helped more than one million children who needed personalized instruction to improve their reading, writing, language development, and math skills. By using HOSTS Learning systems, classroom teachers are provided with high quality professional development, superior teacher tools for making data-driven decisions, and effective intervention systems guaranteed to produce results. HOSTS Learning was identified in the report language of the No Child Left Behind Act as a national model.

Recent Florida State University research reveals that among HOSTS students, FCAT gain scores in reading showed an improvement compared to all students in grades 4, 5, and 8. Gain scores in math improved for fourth grade much more rapidly than for all Florida students. HOSTS students also had substantially fewer behavioral incidences reported (12 percent) than the total population (19.8 percent). Attendance rate for HOSTS students (96 percent) was above the state average by more than 2 percent.



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Name of Program:

Just Read! Florida
<http://www.justreadflorida.com/>

Affiliated Organization(s):

Governor's Office and Florida Public Schools

Purpose/Overview:

Just Read, Florida! is Governor Jeb Bush's statewide reading initiative that prioritizes reading in Florida's public schools and among all the community groups and volunteer organizations that support them. Just Read, Florida! is based on the latest reading research that includes emphasis on phonemic awareness (knowing that words are made up of sounds), phonics (the link between sounds and letters), vocabulary (what words mean and how to say them), fluency (the ability to read words accurately and quickly), and comprehension (the ability to understand what you read).

Charged with establishing reading as a core value in this state, Just Read, Florida! was launched in 2001 with the unequivocal goal of every child being able to read at or above grade level 1 by the year 2012. With that goal in mind, Just Read, Florida! focuses on three main components.

Educators

In the summer of 2003, over 8,000 teachers statewide attended Just Read, Florida! reading academies to learn the latest in scientifically-based reading research. Federal and state grants have also provided for the hiring of over 500 new reading coaches in K-12 schools. Florida was awarded \$300 million over the next six years in Reading First funds, the reading component of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation. During the 2003-04 school year, \$52 million went to professional development, teacher materials, reading coaches, and classroom library improvement. Reading First in Florida affects 33 school districts, 327 schools, 8,000 educators, and over 200,000 students.

Parent Involvement

In the summer of 2003, workshops for parents of struggling third grade readers convened in six key cities. The Families Building Better Readers workshops were a product of partnerships between Just Read, Florida!, the Department of Education's Office of Family Involvement, and the University of West Florida. The workshops continued to take place in 20 more cities during the 2003-04 school year, specifically in the communities designated as Front Porch Florida communities, an initiative of Governor Bush.

Community and Corporate Involvement

In September 2003, letters were mailed to mayors of Florida cities by the Governor encouraging them to implement One Book, One Community programs in their areas. This program works to inspire whole communities to read the same book with the goal of promoting reading, sparking discussion, and building community. Local chambers of commerce and public libraries were copied on the letter.

In May of 2003, Governor Bush kicked-off a new summer program, Just Read, Families! which provides information designed to help parents take an active role in reading with their children during the summer. The Just Read, Families! website offers parents the tools they need to nurture a reading-friendly environment at home. This campaign was a product of Just Read, Florida! partnerships with the Florida Department of State's Division of Libraries and the Panhandle Area Education Consortium.



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Name of Program:

Kesler Mentoring Connection
www.mentoringconnection.org/akmc.cfm

Purpose/Overview:

This mentoring resource center aims to increase the quantity and enhance the quality of adult/child mentoring relationships. The center supports mentoring in the community by doing the following:

1. Raising public awareness about mentoring
2. Recruiting new volunteer mentors
3. Training and screening new mentors
4. Helping existing mentoring programs maintain best practices
5. Helping to facilitate the development of new mentoring programs

The Center recruits, screens and refers adults to mentoring agencies and programs throughout the county and provides a comprehensive training curriculum for all volunteers. Volunteers are taught about mentoring and assisted in selecting mentoring opportunities best for them. They then attend a basic training session where they are taught hands-on ideas and solutions to prepare them for the one-on-one relationship with a mentee. Finally, they are referred to a specific program to be matched with a child. This program also provides extensive background and fingerprint screening of all mentors.



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Name of Program:

Partners in Education, Florida
www.flpie.net/

Affiliated Organization(s):

Governor's Mentoring Partnership

Purpose/Overview:

This program works to develop and maintain community, business and school partnerships, bringing resources from business and the community directly into the schools. Partners in Education (PIE) offers a single link between schools and community and business leaders. PIE connects students and teachers with corporate, education, volunteer, government, and civic leaders who can provide actual services to the classroom. There are volunteer coordinators in each district who work to bridge schools, the community and businesses. This program also has several resources such as summer reading kits, newsletters and reports of happenings around the state, and toolkits for volunteers.



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Name of Program:

Pinellas County Education Foundation - Mentoring Program
<http://www.pinellaseducation.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Mentoring.Home>

Affiliated Organization(s):

Pinellas County Schools

Purpose/Overview:

This district-based program works one-on-one with students to help them stay motivated and focused on school. Mentors may work with students academically or simply serve as role models, encouraging students to develop goals, values and self-esteem. Mentors attend a Pinellas County Schools mentor workshop where they learn what is expected of them as a mentor and how to perform in their role. Typically, mentors provide a few hours weekly or biweekly reading, helping with studies, eating a meal, playing a game or just talking and listening. Mentors include a wide variety of individuals from the community including retirees, mothers and fathers and business people.

Students who are selected to receive mentors have usually been referred by a teacher or guidance counselor, or a request may have been initiated by a parent. Mentoring takes place at the school during the school day and is scheduled in advance. The county program provides regular checkups in the form of feedback instruments, surveys and asking mentors to contact and talk with them about the experience. Most mentors work with a child for a single school year; however, some situations involve mentors working with a single student throughout their years in the school system.



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Name of Program:

Project Wild

www.floridaconservation.org/Educator/projwild.html

Affiliated Organization(s):

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Purpose/Overview:

Designed for K-12 students and their teachers, Project WILD emphasizes wildlife through an interdisciplinary conservation and environmental program focusing on wildlife and habitat. Project WILD provides hands-on activities designed to be used singly, sequentially, or in clusters. All activities have been extensively tested with students and teachers and provide all the information necessary for teachers to easily implement them. Project WILD activities are provided to educators through interactive workshops and are promoted to K-12 teachers, scout leaders, park rangers, and home schooling parents.

Workshops are six hours long and participants receive hands-on training in five or more activities and are given Project WILD curriculum guides for later use with students. An aquatic theme is also available, emphasizing aquatic wildlife and aquatic ecosystems. Students engage in activities around three topic areas focusing on ecological knowledge, social and political knowledge, and sustaining fish and wildlife resources. They learn concepts surrounding issues such as interdependence, biodiversity, cultural perspectives, economic, commercial and recreational considerations, historical and geographic development, attitudes and awareness, human impacts on resources, and wildlife management. Interdisciplinary skills in science, math, and social studies are woven throughout the activities.



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Name of Program:

S.A.V.E. Program
www.mentoringconnection.org/SAVEProgram.cfm

Affiliated Organization(s):

Duval County Schools
Kessler Mentoring Connection
www.mentoringconnection.org/akmc.cfm

Purpose/Overview:

This program, operating at Southside Middle School in Duval County, is a typical example of a mentoring program offered in this county. Its goal is to help “at-risk” students, ages 12-16 to achieve successful school performance and to build the life skills needed to enter the workforce. S.A.V.E. (Selected Alternatives for Vocational Education) is a self-contained special education program for students with severe deficits in academic and social skills. The program offers site-based mentoring so that these students can improve academically and socially in order to obtain and keep jobs and become satisfied, contributing members of society. The students in this program need one-on-one attention, listening, and the recognition that they are cared about. Volunteers are matched with students and work with them at the school for one hour per week for the duration of the school year.

Prospective mentors attend a mentor orientation session that provides basic mentoring information. Following orientation, prospective mentors participate in a background screening and Basic Mentoring Training to learn about diversity, communication skills, youth culture and ideas for activities.



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Name of Program:

SERVE Volunteers in Education
<http://www.servevolunteers.org/index.html>

Affiliated Organization(s):

Hillsborough County Schools

Purpose/Overview:

Founded in 1969, SERVE recruits and works with community volunteers to serve the county's public schools through working with individual students, helping administrators, and enriching the curriculum. Volunteers are involved in a wide variety of activities throughout Hillsborough county schools. The SERVE program maintains a current database of individuals interested in volunteering in the schools. This might include speaking to classes, serving as role models, and providing demonstrations of decision-making and problem solving strategies. Volunteers also tutor students on a weekly basis in helping to develop and reinforce math and reading skills, particularly in grades K-3. SERVE also helps to develop and coordinate partnerships with business, industry and community groups in helping to provide human resources and facilitating school improvement goals.



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Name of Program:

Take Stock in Children
www.takestockinchildren.com/pages/mentors/overview.jsp

Affiliated Organization(s):

Governor's Mentoring Partnership

Purpose/Overview:

Take Stock in Children (TSIC) is a program that matches volunteer mentors one-on-one with students. Mentors include the governor of Florida, local and state government officials, community members, businesses and employees and private citizens. Mentors are trained in the principles and guidelines of school-based mentoring at an orientation session and are given a manual containing tools for helping students improve grades, prepare for college, make career plans, and develop life skills. Mentors also have access to the weekly Mentor Minute and online resource center to provide additional support services targeting specific student needs. All mentoring sessions occur on the school grounds during school hours and most sessions are one hour per week for the duration of the school year.

Recent Florida State University research reveals that TSIC students outperformed students nationally in both reading and math in all grades from 5 onward for both FCAT (for state comparison) and the norm-referenced tests (for national comparison). Additionally, 63 percent of the 2001 TSIC high school graduates have enrolled in continuing education, while the rate for all Florida grads from 2001 that would enter post-secondary programs was 56 percent, according to the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP).



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Name of Program:

Teen Trendsetters Reading Mentors
http://www.flamentoring.org/ttrm_overview.php
www.floridahumanresources.org/mentoring/

Affiliated Organization(s):

Volunteer Florida Foundation
Florida Trend NEXT Magazine

Purpose/Overview:

The Teen Trendsetters Reading Mentors program, a major anchor of the Governor's Mentoring Program, trains and recruits teens as reading mentors for third graders. The program uses a specially designed mentor curriculum along with three Scholastic readers.

By the summer of 2005, the program will be established in over 50 percent of Florida's high schools, with hundreds of high school mentors now actively engaged. During the past school year, Florida fourth graders posted the nation's highest reading gains, due in part to the mentoring made available through the Trendsetters program in third grade.

A training program held yearly provides mentors with background information and techniques useful in working with younger readers. Approximately 200 teen mentors around the state attend the all-expenses paid training summit.



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Name of Program:

Volunteer Florida!
www.volunteerflorida.org/

Affiliated Organization(s):

State of Florida
Governor's Mentoring Partnership

Purpose/Overview:

Volunteer Florida helps to develop, promote and implement volunteerism, including mentoring, throughout the state. The program has twenty-five appointed commissioners working with counties to promote volunteerism and service. Volunteer centers around the state serve as focal points for local communities, giving access to volunteer opportunities in local areas. Volunteer Florida serves as a partner with these local centers to provide training for programs such as AmeriCorps, national service participants, community volunteers, and volunteer program staff and directors.