



Are you looking for ways to expand your reach and serve more children?

If so, here's an exciting new initiative that can provide your organization with additional funding and resources to serve a unique population—children with incarcerated parents...

Mentoring Children of Prisoners: Caregiver's Choice

An innovative project connecting children of incarcerated parents to quality mentoring programs.

How Does Caregiver's Choice Work?

In Caregiver's Choice, MENTOR brings mentoring programs and children with incarcerated parents together to establish quality new mentoring relationships.

Mentoring programs that meet quality standards in mentoring and working with families of the incarcerated are eligible to apply. Once approved, mentoring programs are able to accept vouchers from children enrolled in Caregiver's Choice.

At the same time, caregivers or parents of eligible children (from age 4 up to age 18) with a parent in a federal or state prison) can submit an application for their child. They will receive a list of approved mentoring programs in their city or state, and a voucher that can be redeemed for mentoring services. Caregivers then select the mentoring program that best fits their needs.

The selected mentoring program is responsible for recruiting, screening and training a mentor and supporting the mentoring match. Each program will receive \$1,000 paid in four installments, linked to key milestones in the mentoring relationship, over a twelve-month period.

How Do Caregivers and Parents Learn about Caregiver's Choice?

MENTOR is working with national organizations and networks to spread the news about Caregiver's Choice to incarcerated parents and caregivers around the country. In addition, we are actively recruiting caregivers and incarcerated parents in several targeted locations: the metropolitan areas of Atlanta, Chicago, and Philadelphia; and the states of Arizona, Connecticut, Idaho, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Washington. These areas will likely see the heaviest volume of enrolled children.

Mentoring programs, particularly those outside of the above geographic areas, may wish to increase enrollment by encouraging eligible children and their parents or caregivers to join Caregiver's Choice.

Five Reasons Your Mentoring Program Should Join Caregiver's Choice

1. Access Funding to Serve More Children: Approved mentoring programs will receive \$1,000 for every Caregiver's Choice mentoring match that lasts at least one year. This financial support helps cover many of the costs associated with starting and sustaining a mentoring match. By joining Caregiver's Choice, your program will help ensure that more children with incarcerated parents benefit from the support mentors provide.
2. Tap into Federal Funds: Applying for and managing federal grants can be especially demanding, and grant sizes are often too large for smaller programs. Because Caregiver's Choice focuses on an individual child, reporting and tracking is based only on that child's mentoring relationship. This makes federal funding more accessible and manageable for your program.
3. Manage Your Participation: Approved mentoring programs can choose to serve as many or as few Caregiver's Choice mentoring relationships as they want – from one child to dozens. Regardless of how many children your program chooses to serve, the essential requirement is that your program is committed to ensuring high quality and long-lasting mentoring relationships.
4. Leverage National Efforts to Recruit Children of Prisoners: A common challenge for programs serving children of prisoners is finding and enrolling the children. In Caregiver's Choice, MENTOR's team will be engaging caregivers and incarcerated parents through national networks, plus through prison visits and caregiver organizations in selected geographic areas. Your program will also have access to Caregiver's Choice recruitment materials if you want to directly engage children of prisoners in your area.
5. Benefit from Cutting-Edge Training and Tools: Approved mentoring programs will receive training from experts on fostering mentoring relationships that meet the unique needs of children of prisoners. Approved programs will also receive access to MentorPRO™ Basic, an online tracking and evaluation tool that allows programs to assess the quality and outcomes of Caregiver's Choice matches. These resources will help your program stay at the forefront of mentoring practice.

For these reasons and many more, **Caregiver's Choice** benefits both mentoring programs and children with incarcerated parents.

How Can My Program Join Caregiver's Choice?

Step 1: Review the Eligibility Requirements

The program's eligibility requirements reflect key program standards and practices based on the *Elements of Effective Practice*[™]. A complete list of eligibility requirements and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) can be accessed at [INSERT WEBSITE].

Step 2: Apply to Join

After reviewing the eligibility requirements, apply online at [INSERT WEBSITE]. You will be asked for information about your program's model and practices to ensure you meet the eligibility criteria.

Step 3: Complete Final Steps

Once your program has received provisional approval, complete the following steps in order to receive final approval:

- Participate in a training session on serving children of prisoners;
- Participate in a webinar on MentorPRO Basic; and
- Submit a signed document attesting to your program's ability and commitment to meet the project guidelines.

Serve More Children!

As soon as these steps are complete, your program will appear on the list of approved Caregiver's Choice mentoring programs that parents or caregivers select from. You will be able to redeem vouchers, foster new high-quality mentoring relationships, and receive voucher funds.

Please visit www.mentoring.org/caregiverschoice for more information including a complete list of eligibility requirements, FAQs, the milestones and related payments, and a link to the Caregiver's Choice application.