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*Special thanks to [Midlands Mentoring Partnership](https://www.midlandsmentoringpartnership.org) for the photos in this toolkit and accompanying graphics!*

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[www.nationalmentoringmonth.org](http://www.nationalmentoringmonth.org)
INTRODUCTION

National Mentoring Month (NMM) is the largest-scale mentoring campaign nationwide, culminating each year with the National Mentoring Summit. The campaign was launched by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership.

This year will reflect on the incredible growth of the mentoring movement, recognize the real life mentoring relationships that form and thrive each day, and offer opportunities to thank the mentors who inspired us.

We thank our National Mentoring Month and *In Real Life* supporters for their investment.

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THE MENTORING CONNECTOR

WHAT IS IT?

• Each year, mentoring programs leverage National Mentoring Month to initiate a dialogue on the importance of quality mentoring programs and to recruit volunteer mentors through MENTOR’s Mentoring Connector volunteer database.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

• The Mentoring Connector allows prospective mentors across the country to search for mentoring opportunities. Several of MENTOR’s national partners use the Mentoring Connector to support their commitment to young people, including Nike, LinkedIn, NBA Cares, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

• Searchers find a list of mentoring opportunities in their area, and can contact programs to inquire about becoming a mentor.

SUBMIT YOUR PROGRAM

• Tens of thousands of searches were completed during last year’s National Mentoring Month! Don’t miss out on this opportunity to recruit mentors for the youth you serve!

• Submit your program information today to get in on the action!

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THE CAMPAIGN

This January marks the third year of MENTOR’s public awareness and recruitment campaign, *In Real Life*. *In Real Life* focuses on the real life benefits of mentoring to young people, as well as the life-changing stories shared by mentors themselves.

THANK YOUR MENTOR

Your mentoring story can inspire others to mentor in real life!

Join the #ThankYourMentor campaign and show your appreciation for someone whose guidance you value! Simply take a picture or video with a message about your mentor and then share with us on social media.

[Click here](#) to get started!

“MENTORING FLIPPED” VIDEO SERIES

Launched during last year’s National Mentoring Month, the *Mentoring Flipped* video series features high-profile individuals being “mentored” by a young person on the thing they are best known for in the world. This approach is designed to make mentoring more accessible, encourage adults to become mentors, and elevate young people’s role in the relationship.

Follow our [YouTube channel](#) to see and share more videos coming this January!
Mentoring is a critical component in young people’s lives, helping them make the decisions and connections that lead to improved opportunities. You can help expand the mentoring movement by sharing the key speaking points below with your friends and followers during January:

WITH A MENTOR, AT-RISK YOUTH ARE:

1 in 3 kids are growing up without a mentor in their lives

- 52% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school
- 55% more likely be enrolled in college
- 46% less likely than their peers to start using drugs
- 81% more likely to report participating regularly in sports or extracurricular activities
- 78% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities
- 130% more than twice as likely to say that they held a leadership position in a club or sports team
- 90% Respondents who had a mentor said they are now interested in becoming mentors

9 million kids in America grow up without a mentor’s real life guidance.

- A mentor empowers young people to make smart choices that put them on a path to making better life decisions.
- Students who have mentors are more likely to stay in school.

Share these mentoring statistics on social media this National Mentoring Month. Find mentoring infobites and graphics here.

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There are five important dates to mark during National Mentoring Month that provide built-in hooks for online engagement, community outreach, and local activities.

Mark these dates on your planning calendar and see the online engagement guide on the following pages for tips and sample messaging to help you get started on planning!

January 4, 2018 – I Am a Mentor Day
• A day for volunteer mentors to celebrate their role and reflect on the ways mentees have enhanced their world.

January 11, 2018 – National Mentoring Month Kick-off Twitter Chat
(3 p.m. ET/12 p.m. PT)
• A social media opportunity to discuss all things National Mentoring Month and how mentoring is impacting local communities.

January 15, 2018 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service
• A day to share in the inspirational words of MLK, Jr. and elevate the spirit of service through volunteerism.

January 17, 2018 - International Mentoring Day
• A day of international conversations on social media where photos, video, and powerful mentoring stories messages are shared.

January 25, 2018 - #ThankYourMentor Day
• This day concludes the #ThankYourMentor campaign! Anyone with real life mentoring experiences can thank those who helped them on their path to adulthood and beyond.
ONLINE ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVATION

CAMPAIGN HASHTAG: #MentorIRL

Last January, #MentorIRL received over 653 million views on Twitter!

Turn social activism into real life social action!

In January, you can help unite the mentoring field! Post on your social platforms with #MentorIRL and add your voice to the mentoring movement.

Share your favorite memories, videos, and graphics with your friends and followers to spread the power of mentoring and inspire new volunteers!

• National Mentoring Month Logos and Graphics – Download our great digital asset package for use on social media, marketing emails, printed guides, posters, and more!

• In Real Life videos – Find your favorite videos promoting the power of mentoring in this playlist to share with your friends and followers!

• Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series “National Mentoring Month In Real Life” – In November 2017, several mentoring recruitment resources will be shared as part of this compelling webinar. Register now!

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Social media should not be a burden on your organization! Don’t have time to tweet or monitor your feed, but still want to contribute to the national conversation? Now you can post with just a few clicks!

**Click to Tweet:** *Click one of the messages below to open your Twitter! Make desired changes and post immediately!*

- Thank you @... for being my mentor. This #MentoringMonth I hope you’ll join me in #ThankYourMentor! #MentorIRL

- I am a proud #MentorIRL! I hope you’ll also become a mentor this #MentoringMonth. bit.ly/BeAMentorIRL

- This #MentoringMonth, you can be the difference a young person needs to succeed. Become a #MentorIRL. bit.ly/BeAMentorIRL

**Share Posts from MENTOR:** *Click one of the messages below to view it on MENTOR’s Twitter and retweet instantly!*

- 1 in 3 American youth don’t have a mentor’s support. Become a #MentorIRL today to provide the guidance they need. bit.ly/BeAMentorIRL

- January is National #MentoringMonth! Celebrate the mentors who made a difference in your life and #ThankYourMentor! #MentorIRL

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MEDIA OUTREACH

These tips will help you engage with local, regional and national media outlets to cover mentoring and report on youth issues.

- **Track media outlets** that cover mentoring stories and feature articles in support of youth success.
  - *Ex. Google search “mentoring + [outlet name] to see which reporters have public contact information.*

- **Send a social media message to reporters** who are interested in writing about mentoring and youth.
  - *Ex. Thanks for this great article on mentoring [reporter]! I’d love to connect with you to share more about our work at [organization name].*

- **Write an op-ed/press release** on mentoring and submit to several local/regional outlets.
  - *Ex. Pick a relevant topic that ties into the current local mentoring/youth landscape to appeal to the outlet.*

You can use & customize the sample press release template to reach out to local and regional media outlets to gain traction and celebrate your work during National Mentoring Month.

**NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE**

- **Ask your local/regional outlet** for donated airtime or print-ad space for use during National Mentoring Month.
  - *Ex. Come up with creative copy on a relevant topic, highlight an event you’re doing to discuss on air, or generally discuss why mentors support healthy communities.*

- **Invite media contacts** to any special events or activations you are doing in the local community.
  - *Ex. Gaining coverage for special events will provide an opportunity to elevate mentoring and volunteer recruitment!*

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Getting to know elected leaders and other VIPs in your community can result in building relationships that can support mentoring policy and advocacy. You can help your elected officials publicly celebrate mentoring programs by encouraging them to use their platform to elevate National Mentoring Month in January!

6 Ideas for Connecting with Elected Officials

1. Reach out to your governor and mayor and request they issue a proclamation honoring National Mentoring Month.
   • TIP: Use the template proclamation form included in this toolkit!

2. Invite your Members of Congress, state and local elected leaders to visit community mentoring programs.
   • TIP: Take photos, share them on social media, and tag your official!

3. Invite the mayor or other local or state officials to present awards to outstanding volunteers for their contributions to youth and their community.
   • TIP: Holding a community event in January? This is the perfect opportunity to present an award!

4. Tweet your public officials a note, or thank them for their work on mentoring by sending a message on your preferred network!
   • TIP: You can use MENTOR’s Advocacy Platform to directly send a message to your Member of Congress!

5. Request a meeting with your Members of Congress to talk about your organization’s efforts, and the community need for mentoring.
   • TIP: See the toolkit for how to schedule a meeting and don’t forget to take photos during your visit!

6. Mayors for Mentoring is a campaign recognizing the outstanding contributions of mayors to mentoring. Learn more about what mayors are doing and see if you should nominate your mayor!

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Engaging elected leaders on multiple fronts contributes to developing close working relationships with these officials and their staff that can lead to increased support, funding, and other vital engagement opportunities.

Presenting elected officials with a variety of ways to engage with you – from celebrating NMM on their social media platforms to releasing a proclamation honoring the contributions of mentors and mentoring in their state or city – increases the odds these leaders can find a way to celebrate NMM in a way that feels most comfortable to them while connecting this important campaign to the work you are doing in their communities.

Use National Mentoring Month to your favor and reach out! To learn more about MENTOR’s policy and advocacy efforts go to http://www.mentoring.org/get-involved/advocacy/.

Using the sample public official templates we’ve developed, you can help your elected leaders celebrate the outstanding efforts to support young people happening throughout the country.

 Invite Elected Officials on a Site Visit Guide  
 Schedule an In-District Meeting with your Member of Congress Guide  
 Proclamation Declaration Letter Template  
 “Dear Colleague” Support Letter For Public Official  
 Elected Official Proclamation Template  
 Elected Official Press Release Template  
 Social Media Guide for Public Official

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Corporate engagement is a critical component to closing the mentoring gap in our country. Companies of all sizes and industries are looking for meaningful ways to engage their employees and ensure future generations are prepared for the 21st century workforce.

You can work with companies to strategically leverage their employees, customers, financial resources, and marketing reach to scale quality youth mentoring initiatives aligned with their social responsibility goals. These initiatives dramatically increase the supports and opportunities for young people while also positively contributing to corporate culture, employee satisfaction, and brand experience.

1. **Express your gratitude.** Whether you tweet a thank you message to your corporate partners or send them a handwritten note, they will appreciate being recognized for their commitment to mentoring.

2. **Provide sample content.** Make it easy for companies to celebrate National Mentoring Month by sharing sample messages that they can post on their social media channels and intranet sites.

3. **Spotlight mentoring stories.** Work with companies to collect mentoring stories and photos from their employees and/or customers that they can promote through their communication channels. Further amplify the stories on your social media, your website, or in newsletters and blog posts throughout the month.

4. **Celebrate employee mentors.** Plan an event to recognize the engagement and impact of employee volunteers during National Mentoring Month. Invite mentees to present the awards and share what they value most in their mentoring relationships.

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**10 Ways You Can Engage with Companies During National Mentoring Month**

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10 Ways You Can Engage with Companies During National Mentoring Month (Continued)

5. **Highlight the diversity of mentoring opportunities.** Pitch a “Mentoring Monday” feature to a local TV station, newspaper, or radio host in collaboration with other mentoring programs to feature the diversity of mentoring opportunities available in your community (i.e. virtual mentoring, sports mentoring, STEM mentoring, college prep mentoring).

6. **Create a picture book.** Assemble a book of pictures and quotes from mentors and mentees in your program and present the books to corporate partners to display in their lobbies and waiting rooms. Personalize the book with a handwritten thank you message inside the front cover.

7. **Host an open house.** Recruit new corporate partners by inviting them to an open house where they can meet mentors and mentees in your program. Facilitate a few mentoring activities so prospective partners can see and experience mentoring in action.

8. **Coordinate a Balloon Drop.** Work with a company to recognize employee mentors by placing a balloon at their desk during National Mentoring Month with a thank you message. It draws attention to the employees’ commitment to mentoring while raising awareness of mentoring programs.

9. **Facilitate an info session.** Host a brown bag lunch or happy hour with prospective employee mentors to raise their awareness of your local mentoring gap and opportunities to connect with youth.

10. **Issue a challenge grant.** Work with a corporation to offer a challenge grant during National Mentoring Month to inspire others to engage in your efforts (i.e. $1 for every #ThankYourMentor post that tags your program or a 1:1 match for every dollar raised during January up to a certain amount).
In any campaign, goal setting is important to measure your success, track progress toward those goals, and evaluate strategies and tactics that worked and those that didn’t.

Sample Measurements of Success

• One-to-one interactions at events
• Phone calls from people seeking information
• Website traffic
• New volunteers from the Mentoring Connector
• Donations
• Sign-ups for email list
• New fans and followers on social media platforms
• Earned Media impressions
• Number of elected officials demonstrating public support for mentoring

By recording milestones on a weekly basis and writing a brief analysis of the results you will be able to refine your efforts year-to-year for maximum effectiveness.

Use Google Analytics, TweetDeck, or Buffer to manage and track your online successes for free!
CONCLUSION

National Mentoring Month not only offers us a chance to celebrate the mentoring relationships essential to creating sustainable futures for our youth, but also provides a chance for all of us to recognize those who devote their energy to recruiting, training, and matching the mentors our young people require.

Thank you for elevating the mentoring movement through your work each day to ensure every young person has a caring adult in their life.

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