

May 25, 2023

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of over 420,000 youth in foster care in the United States, we, the undersigned youth-serving organizations, urge you to support the bipartisan *Foster Youth Mentoring Act of 2023*.

Studies have proven that mentoring services for foster youth are effective prevention and intervention strategies that have a positive impact on a wide range of factors. A 2017 research synthesis of over 30 research studies on mentoring youth in foster care concluded that mentoring services had a positive impact on mental health, educational functioning and attainment, peer relationships, placement outcomes, and life satisfaction. Additional research has demonstrated that mentoring at the time of emancipation can have a positive impact on several transition-related outcomes, such as employment, housing stability, and avoidance of involvement with a criminal justice system.

The *Foster Youth Mentoring Act of 2023* would establish a competitive grant through the Department of Health and Human Services to support enhancing and expanding mentoring programs to better serve additional youth in foster care. Funds can be used for critical mentor recruitment, screening, and evidence-backed training to ensure long-term and quality mentor-mentee relationships, in addition to the incorporation of peer-to-peer experiences and youth voice in program development.

A recent study funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) found that mentoring programs potentially provide a benefit of three times the public expenditure, for every day in jail that program participants avoid. This evidence-based innovative practice has proven outcomes that represent potentially substantial cost savings for the child welfare system, if implemented at scale.

This bipartisan bill, supported by the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth and Congressional Youth Mentoring Caucus, has the potential to meaningfully impact some of our country's most vulnerable young people. As an organization committed to improving the lives of youth in our community, I urge you to support it. Thank you for your consideration of this critical request.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

Ahhiminc

American Youth Policy Forum

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America

Child Welfare League of America

Children's Advocacy Institute

Children's Defense Fund

CoGenerate

College Mentors for Kids, Inc.

Detroit Leadership Foundation

Disability EmpoweHer Network

Friends of the Children

Girls Inc.

Girlstart

Kinship Mentoring of Columbia County

Multicultural Council of America

National Association of Counsel for Children

National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)

National Foster Youth Institute

National Juvenile Justice Network

National Organization of Concerned Black Men, Inc.

National Recreation and Park Association

The Forum for Youth Investment

Youth Guidance

Youth Villages

### Statewide and Local Organizations

Anacortes Family Center (Anacortes, WA)  
A'sani Heartbeat Foundation (New Orleans, LA)  
Autism Mentorship Program (Minneapolis, MN)  
A WORLD FIT FOR KIDS! (Los Angeles, CA)  
Better Youth, Inc. (Los Angeles, CA)  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Nebraska (Grand Island, NE)  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware, Inc. (Dover, DE)  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands (Omaha, NE)  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Lake Michigan (South Bend/Elkhart, IN)  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Idaho (Boise, ID)  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Westchester County (Port Chester, NY)  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Mississippi (Jackson, MS)  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Mississippi (McComb, MS)  
California Youth Connection (CYC) (Emeryville, CA)  
Catholic Community Services of Utah (Salt Lake City, UT)  
Colonial Heights Youth & Human Services (Colonial Heights, VA)

Community Bridges, Inc. (Silver Spring, MD)  
ForKids Inc. (Norfolk, VA)  
Foster Together Network (Los Angeles, CA)  
Girls Inc. of Omaha (Omaha, NE)  
KY/WV YMCA State Alliance (Union, KY)  
LUK Mentoring (Fitchburg, MA)  
Mass Mentoring Partnership (Boston, MA)  
Mentor Me of Ulster County (Port Ewen, NY)  
MENTOR Nebraska (Omaha, NE)  
MENTOR Washington (Bellevue, WA)  
New Pathways for Youth (Phoenix, AZ)  
Nonviolence Institute (Providence, RI)  
Peace4Kids (Los Angeles, CA)  
Project Optimism, Inc. (Sacramento, CA)  
Rainbow Labs (Los Angeles, CA)  
Rogers County Volunteers for Youth (Claremore, OK)  
Save Our Youth (Denver, CO)  
Student Sponsor Partners (New York, NY)  
Talbot Mentors (Easton, MD)  
United Way of Yellowstone County (Billings, MT)  
Windsor County Mentors (Windsor, VT)  
YMCA Alliance of Northern New England (Boothbay Harbor, ME)  
YMCA of Greater Boston (Boston, MA)