

Federal Legislative Platform – 119th Congress

MENTOR National's Federal Legislative platform is designed to advance the mission of expanding the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships for young people and close the "mentoring gap." These priorities are informed by partners in the Youth Mentoring Advocacy Coalition and MENTOR's Affiliate network.

PRIORITY I: PROTECT AND GROW INVESTMENT IN RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED SUPPORTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- **Mentoring continues to be an effective prevention and intervention strategy** to combat juvenile delinquency and violence. By providing young people with positive role models and engagement in prosocial activities, thousands of young people have successfully achieved positive personal, academic, and professional outcomes. MENTOR supports investment in the following programs in the **Department of Justice**:
 - **Youth Mentoring Program grant**, managed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This is the only mentoring-specific line item in the federal budget and is a critical support for young people who are at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. It also funds the **National Mentoring Resource Center**, which offers free training and technical assistance to any program that requests it. **We call for \$130 million in FY26.**
 - **JJDPA Title II State Formula Grants Program.** **We call for \$220 million in FY26.**
 - **JJDPA Title V Youth Promise Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention.** **We call for \$100 million in FY26.**
- **Robust investments in education programs** that help provide young people with adults who have a "mentoring mindset" before, during, and after school supports positive academic, social, emotional, mental and physical development of young people. MENTOR supports investment in the following programs funded via the **Department of Education**:
 - **21st Century Community Learning Centers.** **We call for \$2.1 billion in FY26.**
 - **Full-Service Community Schools program.** **We call for \$500 million in FY26.**
 - **Title II-A Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants.** **We call for \$3 billion in FY26.**
 - **Title IV-A Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants.** **We call for \$2 billion in FY26.**
- **Mentoring is recognized as a key tenet of federal youth workforce development policy** because quality relationships provide young people the career exposure, skills, and confidence that launches a successful career – with particularly strong impacts on youth in industries where their identities are not highly represented. MENTOR calls for **maximum funding for the Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Formula Program (Title I) in FY26.**



- **As the country faces an ongoing youth mental health crisis**, mentoring programs can complement and integrate with mental and behavioral health systems to develop a stable community infrastructure of services. The **Department of Health and Human Services** supports these partnerships through the Project AWARE program. **We call for robust funding for Project AWARE for FY26.**
- **National Service** programs such as **VISTA, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund at AmeriCorps** (formally CNCS) provide critical support and capacity-building opportunities to hundreds of mentoring and youth-development organizations across the country. **We call for robust funding to help meet the goals of the Partnership for Student Success for AmeriCorps in FY26.**

PRIORITY 2: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF YOUTH MENTORING SPECIFIC FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

- **Support the Foster Youth Mentoring Act** which establishes a discretionary grant for mentoring programs that serve youth in the foster care system. The bill seeks to provide foster youth with consistent, trained mentors to support their emotional, academic, and career development.
Lead House Sponsors: Mary Gay Scanlon (PA-05) and Don Bacon (NE-02)
- **Support the Youth Workforce Readiness Act** which establishes a competitive grant for eligible national, youth-serving out-of-school time organizations. Mentoring is incorporated throughout the required programming, which is focused on four key pillars: essential-skills development, career exposure, employability and certification, work-based learning.
Lead House Sponsors: Rep. Josh Harder (CA-10), Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (PA-01), Rep. Don Bacon (NE-2), and Rep. Lucy McBath (GA-7)
- **Support the Transition to Success Mentoring Act** which establishes a grant program to support partnerships between school districts and community mentoring programs focused on helping youth facing risk of dropping out before graduation. Participating students within this program would be assigned a “Success Coach,” who would help them develop and execute a plan for success in high school and beyond, among other activities.
Lead Senate Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (NJ)
- **Support the Mentoring to Succeed Act**, a school-based mentoring bill for youth facing risk in communities with high rates of violence that emphasizes high quality, trauma-informed training for mentors and establishes goals of improving college access and attainment, skill development and career exploration.
Lead Senate Sponsors: Sen. Dick Durbin (IL), Sen. Tammy Duckworth (IL), and Sen. Cory Booker (NJ)
Lead House Sponsors: Rep. Jan Schakowsky (IL-09), Rep. Lori Trahan (MA-03), and Rep. Jesus “Chuy” Garcia (IL-04)

To join the Congressional Youth Mentoring Caucus, House and Senate offices may contact:

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