

Mentoring Works: Congressional Priorities for Capitol Hill Day 2026

Why Mentoring Matters

Too many young people in America grow up without a stable, supportive adult in their lives – and the consequences show up in mental health, education, and workforce outcomes.

- **40% of young people** grow up without ever having a mentor
- **67%** recall a time they needed a mentor but didn't have one
- **1.8 million** young adults report having virtually no adult support outside their family

Mentoring is a proven, cost-effective, bipartisan solution.

Quality mentoring improves mental health and wellbeing, increases educational attainment, strengthens workforce readiness, and supports healthy transitions into adulthood. It is one of the few interventions that addresses multiple risk factors at once.

Bonus: 83% of Americans support government investment in youth mentoring.

Mentoring is a bipartisan, evidence-based investment in young people and communities.

What We're Asking Congress to Do

1. Fund the Youth Mentoring Program housed within DOJ

The Ask: Fund the Youth Mentoring Program at **\$130 million in FY27**

- Supports direct mentoring services for underserved and high-risk youth nationwide
- Funds the **National Mentoring Resource Center**, improving quality and outcomes across thousands of programs through training and TA at no cost to the program
- Congress increased funding in FY26, even as many youth programs were cut – this demonstrates strong bipartisan support for this effective strategy
- Increased funding in FY27 is needed to meet demand and reduce waiting lists

Why it matters: Mentoring is a smart, preventive investment that strengthens communities and saves costs over time.

2. Co-Sponsor the Foster Youth Mentoring Act (Reps Bacon & Scanlon)

The Ask: Please co-sponsor the bipartisan **Foster Youth Mentoring Act**

- Establishes a grant program to provide foster youth with consistent, well-trained mentors
- Improves stability, educational outcomes, emotional wellbeing, and long-term success
- Builds on existing child welfare investments with a proven relational support
- Seeking Republican lead in Senate ahead of bipartisan introduction

Why it matters: Foster youth face some of the highest risks – and mentoring provides stability where systems often fall short.

3. Co-Sponsor the Mentoring to Succeed Act (Sen Durbin, Rep Schakowsky)

The Ask: Please co-sponsor the **Mentoring to Succeed Act**

- Builds school-based mentoring in high-need schools
- Supports trauma-informed, violence-prevention strategies
- Strengthens workforce readiness through partnerships with local businesses
- Allows funding for evaluation and continuous improvement

Why it matters: Mentoring supports safer schools, stronger career pathways, and better long-term outcomes.

4. Co-Sponsor the Transition to Success Mentoring Act (Sen Booker, Rep Carson)

The Ask: Please co-sponsor the **Transition to Success Mentoring Act**

- Supports mentoring during the critical transition from middle to high school
- Partners school districts with community-based mentoring organizations
- Helps prevent disengagement and dropout before it becomes a crisis

Why it matters: Early intervention keeps students on track to graduate and succeed.

Relationship-Building Opportunities

National Mentoring Month Resolution (Reps Bacon & Scanlon, Sens Mullin & Whitehouse)

The Ask: Sign on as an *original sponsor* before February 5

- Raises awareness of mentoring's impact
- Supports local recruitment and engagement efforts

Congressional Youth Mentoring Caucus (Rep Scanlon)

The Ask: Join the bipartisan Youth Mentoring Caucus

- Hosts briefings and events on mentoring outcomes
- Keeps Members informed and engaged