



## FY 2022 OJJDP Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative Grantee Profile

# Partners for Youth with Disabilities

### Program Overview and Background

Mentor Match is the flagship program of Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD), serving youth with disabilities ages 6-24 since 1985. Through one-to-one mentoring, the program helps young people with disabilities meet their full potential for personal development and independence by matching them with a caring adult mentor. Over the course of a year, matches meet in person or virtually for at least four to six hours a month and are in touch on a weekly basis by phone or email. Mentees and mentors engage in a variety of activities together: work on personal goals, visit museums, attend sporting events, play games, do art projects, and more. To ensure quality outcomes, Mentor Match is structured according to the best practices for mentoring as established by MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership. As a result of having these strict standards, the Mentor Match program was selected as an inaugural member of the Massachusetts Mentoring Partnership's quality-based mentoring initiative in 2008, certifying that the program meets the highest standards in the field.



### Program Services

PYD aims to help young people with disabilities meet their full potential for personal development and independence by matching them with a caring adult mentor. Matches work on goals relating to building positive and healthy relationships, community involvement, self-esteem, independent living skills, and educational/career skills. PYD matches each youth with a caring adult mentor using a best-fit model and is expected to meet for 4-6 hours a month, in-person or virtually (depending on comfort level due to the pandemic), over the course of a year. Mentors and mentees work on goals related to independent living, self-esteem, community involvement, healthy relationships, and educational or vocational advancement and do all sorts of things together: work on personal goals, go to museums, play games, and more. Matches also have access to PYD's online mentoring program, which focuses on career development and includes group mentoring opportunities and skills-building workshops to improve career readiness.

-  **HQ: Boston, MA**
-  **Founded in 1985**
-  **103 Youth Served**
-  **2 Sub Grantees**

**Grant:** JJ FY22 Mentoring: Multi-state

**Award Number:** 15JDP-22-GG-03827-MENT

**Award Amount:** \$900,000

#### Mentoring Model & Structure

- Community-based
- One-to-one, group, and community-based
- Partnering with substance abuse providers, juvenile justice agencies, schools, corporate sector, and faith-based organizations
- Programs focus on Youth with Disabilities

### Target Population

We aim to provide mentoring under this grant to Youth with Disabilities.

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## Mentor Recruitment & Training

- 194 matches and youth served under this grant
- 184 mentors recruited under this grant
- Peer Mentoring included in programming
- For mentor recruitment, we target Adult Volunteers
- Duration of program services: 1 year
- Expected intensity of match contact: 4-6 hours per month
- Expected length of a match: 1 year
- Expected frequency of match contact: 1 time per week
- Number of training hours required before a mentor is matched with a youth: 4 hours
- Access to Partner's for Youth with Disabilities online learning platform, LEARN

## Additional Program Information

Mentor Match runs on an ongoing timeline, continuously recruiting, orienting, training, and supporting adult volunteers and youth participants. Participants are recruited through conferences, hosting recruitment events, corporate outreach, and maintaining a strong social media presence. All mentors complete an interview to introduce them to the program and discuss their interest in mentoring. The screening process for adults involves a statewide and national criminal background check through Verified First and two reference checks. Mentors then complete a comprehensive training that provides an overview of mentoring, program expectations, goal setting, and the particularities of mentoring youth with disabilities. When enrolling youth, our staff interviews each mentee to learn about their interests, family dynamics, goals, disability, and mentor preferences. All interview materials are available in a visual format for nonverbal and/or visual mentees.

Mentors complete a comprehensive training that includes program expectations, a discussion of the disparities that exist for people with disabilities, and a discussion of the following topics:

1. Elements of successful mentoring relationships: the role of a mentor, qualities that contribute to a positive relationship, and the three stages of the mentor/mentee relationship. Mentors practice using inclusive communication tactics and person-first language.
2. Goal setting with mentees: matches are encouraged to pursue goals related to community involvement, education and employment, healthy relationships, independent living, and self-esteem. Strategies are shared for setting and achieving goals and implementing goal setting in the mentoring relationship.
3. Boundary setting with mentees: strategies for setting boundaries, effectively communicating with the mentee and their family, and positive behavior management.
4. Disability etiquette and disclosure: tips around inclusive communication including "person first" versus "identity first" language. Tools for supporting mentees in disclosing disabilities are included.
5. Mentor Match, program staff support, matches by checking in monthly.

Matches are provided with additional resources: free or discounted tickets to local attractions; program events; transition-to-adulthood workshops for youth; a monthly newsletter, and a mentor support series entitled, "Mentor Community Forum."



## Additional Resources

- [Partners for Youth with Disabilities](#)
- [Mentoring Programs](#)

*This data is accurate as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.*

**For more information on our OJJDP grant:**

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