

The Relatives



EMPOWERmentors Program Policies &
Mentor Training Manual

The Relatives is a system of resources that helps children and youth find shelter and support. Our Youth Crisis Center, On Ramp Resource Center, and Housing programs keep kids safe and families together.

The Relatives serves as the Safe Place agency for Mecklenburg County and the surrounding area, partnering with local businesses to ensure young people in need have access to immediate help and supportive resources.

The goal of each program The Relatives offers is to keep kids safe and families together. We believe every child deserves a safe place to sleep and a fighting chance to make it.

Thank you for signing up for The Relative's Mentoring Program to help our youth enrolled at our On Ramp Resource Center! Our goal at On Ramp is to assist clients with their needs, while empowering them to grow into independence. We have created this manual to assist you with being the best mentor you can be!

Guidelines and Expectations

Mentors Must:

- Be 26 years or older*
- Consent to a background check
- Complete a Diana Screening
- Provide a copy of your driver's license and auto insurance

**Youth enrolled at The Relatives On Ramp Center are able to access services up until the age of 24 and remain in aftercare until the age of 25.*

COVID-19 Policy:

- Please keep the health, safety and comfort-level of your mentee top of mind
- Some mentees may not feel comfortable meeting in-person, even in outdoor, socially-distanced settings. Please be respectful of your mentee's comfort level and comply if asked to wear a mask
- You have the right to insist your mentee wear a mask and respect social distancing guidelines when meeting in-person
- In-person meetings and opportunities are currently limited, so virtual meetings and phone calls will probably comprise the majority of your contact with your mentee
- Please see section titled *Communication is Key* to understand issues mentees may have around accessing technology

The Importance of Confidentiality and Respecting Confidentiality:

Confidentiality is an important practice in health care and social services. Agencies that have access to a client's private information are legally and ethically bound to keep information restricted to those who need to know. As a mentor, you are expected to uphold this responsibility to honor the privacy of your mentee.

Do not share names, addresses, phone numbers, or personal circumstances without consent. Even "little" stories shared with friends and family members could mean sharing personal information your new mentee may not want shared. Remember their privacy during all conversations.

Keep in mind, however, that if your mentee shares information regarding potential threats to harm themselves or others, this information must be shared with their Transitional Specialist and/or 911. Your mentee will open up to you and tell you about issues or tough situations they may be dealing with.

Communication is Key:

It is important to keep in contact with your mentee at least twice a month. That can be done by phone or in person. The mentee's Transition Specialist, if they have one, may reach out to you for participation in team meetings that take place monthly. We would like for you to participate in some of the team meetings if your schedule allows. We also ask that you keep an open line of communication with their Transition Specialist, and the Volunteer Engagement Officer.

If you are having issues getting in touch with your mentee, please reach out to their Transition Specialist. Many of our clients do not have cell phones, and if they do, there may be times when they do not have the funds to pay their phone bill. For those clients who do not have cell phones, or have it disconnected, we encourage them to check their email while they are at On Ramp. They will also be allowed to use their Transition Specialist's office phone.

Unfortunately, the Transition Specialist will not be available during the weekend or outside of business hours. If your mentee calls you with an emergency, encourage them to call 911. You may also use the resource list to guide them to appropriate services. Clients also have the resource list and have reviewed the resources with staff prior to joining the program.

Empower the mentee, don't enable them:

As easy as it may be to view mentees' as children, it is important to remember to empower them and assist them in reaching independence when possible. On Ramp's goal is for the client/mentee to be an independent young adult when they age out of the program at the age of 25.

Boundaries:

Do not exchange or give gifts outside of holidays or birthdays. Please understand that you are NEVER obligated or expected to give a gift, this is only if you choose to do so. Your mentor/mentee relationship is by no means transactional. We want you to be empowered to redirect your mentee to the purpose of the program. **Please NEVER give ANY form of money to mentees.** Mentees have been informed of and are aware of these boundaries, so feel empowered to say no. Taking your mentee out for a meal, or paying for an activity is completely acceptable but by no means is it expected.

We recommend creating a Google phone number so that the mentee does not have your personal cell phone or home phone number. Your mentee may attempt to contact you late at night or outside of the contact hours (8AM-8PM), but with the Google phone app, you can control when you receive calls/text by using the do not disturb feature. We will go over how to create your Google phone number in the webinar. Mentees are aware that if they attempt to contact you outside of contact hours, they will need to leave a message for you. Mentees have been briefed on a resource list they can use and have been informed of who to call in an emergency.

We understand you may want to share photos of your mentee with family and friends. Please make sure to ask for your mentee's approval before doing so. Some of our clients do not feel comfortable having their photo taken. For your privacy and safety, we strongly encourage you to not connect with your mentee on any social media platforms.

Many of our young adults are battling homelessness. We understand that you want to help them as much as possible, but for your safety and privacy, we ask that you please do not take your mentee to your place of residence, nor offer them money to pay for a hotel stay.

Setting Goals for you and your mentee:

We ask that during your first or second meeting, you and your mentee come up with a few goals to work towards during the 12 months you have together. Whether they be employment goals, financial goals, or health goals, it will be best for both parties if specific goals are in place. Your mentee should come up with 2-3 goals based on one of our five domains which are housing, education, employment, community life, and health and safety. You will be provided with an agreement for you and your mentee to sign where you can list your goals.

Acknowledge and learn from differences:

Everybody has a different story. Actively listening to your mentee's story, experiences, and backgrounds will help them grow to trust you. Sharing your own with them (when you feel comfortable and when you feel it is right) will also build your relationship with your mentee.

It is important to remember that because of potential differences, you and your mentee may not see eye to eye in some situations and that's okay. Validating their feelings/views while keeping an open mind will build rapport and respect for one another.

No client participating in the EMPOWERmentor program is a victim. While some of our clients may have experienced trauma or difficulties, they are in need of guidance, not in need of 'saving.' Please keep this in mind when working with your mentee.

Mentees have also been encouraged by our staff to keep an open mind throughout the program so they are able to learn and grow as much as possible. These conversations can be difficult, so feel free to reach out to the Volunteer Engagement Officer or Transition Specialists for assistance with them.

Practice self-care:

You may have heard the idea "You can't pour from an empty cup" to show why self-care is important. Throughout your participation you should...

- Consider your own well-being. How is the mentorship experience affecting you?
- Ask yourself: Are you feeling stress from the mentor/mentee relationship? Is your mentorship experience taking away too much time from your family or other things that are important to you?
- Reflect: Is this experience giving you feelings of anxiety?
- If you have any of these negative feelings, speak with the Volunteer Engagement Officer. It is important to address these feelings to avoid getting burnt-out. Our Volunteer Engagement Officer and Transition Specialists will be able to assist you in addressing these feelings and advise you on what may be best to do in the situation.

Self-Care is very personal, so please do what's best for you. Popular self-care practices include:

Meditation, prayer, physical exercise, reading, and taking time away.

Soliciting Feedback:

To ensure the EMPOWERmentors Program is a positive experience for you and your fellow mentors, a member of The Relatives staff will contact you once a month to check-in on your program satisfaction and participation. You will also receive an anonymous survey in the middle of your participation (6 months) and at the end (12 months). Your feedback will be used to improve, both, the program and your experience, so please be honest!

Clients Backgrounds and Mental Health

Understanding the background of some of our clients:

A majority of the clients we serve have some form of trauma or are experiencing other mental health issues which can manifest itself at times in challenging behaviors and, what appears to us, as poor decision making. Please be patient with the mentees and understand that you are making a difference even if it doesn't appear so at times.

Many of our clients are also experiencing homelessness and lack of natural supports, which can also affect their behaviors, and decision making.

Situational Trainings:

Listed below are examples of uncomfortable situations and how to appropriately respond to them should you find yourself in one.

Mentee is angry at you and is escalated. (If you are the Trigger)

1. Remove yourself from the scene and inform Transition Specialist & Volunteer Engagement Officer.
2. Do not interact with client again until speaking with one of the above.
3. If client is in/on your property, call the police and inform one of the two above.

Example: A mentee is yelling or cursing at you for not being able to give them a ride to an appointment. Don't speak with client again until speaking with the Transition Specialist or the Volunteer Engagement Officer.

Mentee is angry at something else and is escalated.

1. You CAN leave the scene if a client is escalated and you feel uncomfortable
2. You can offer to talk with them, if you feel comfortable doing so
3. You can ask them to calm down so that you're able to help them.
4. If they're unable to calm down, you can tell them you'll talk to them later (Speak with Transition Specialist before making contact with client again)

"I'm unable to have this conversation with you while you're escalated, we'll talk at another time"

Mentee informs you of a heavy topic/ situation

1. Empathize with the mentee

"I'm sorry you had to go through that", "I've never experienced that, but I can imagine how hard that must be on you"

2. Encourage speaking with Transition Specialist about the topic

"I see that this is a struggle for you, let's talk with your transition specialist more about it"

Client is trying to get you to do something specifically prohibited

1. Refer back to the rules of the program.

"I'm sorry, I understand where you're coming from, but remember? that is prohibited by the rules of the program and I could get in trouble for doing that."

Client is trying to get you to do something you are not comfortable with or unsure of.

1. Don't do anything you are uncomfortable with.
2. Talk with Volunteer Engagement Officer or Transition Specialist if unsure about something

"You know, I hear what you're saying, let me talk with your transition specialist to get that cleared"

"Let me talk with the volunteer team first and we'll go from there."

Client threatens to harm themselves or someone else

1. Call 911 or mobile crisis (Client has been informed that you have the duty to call)

"Would you like for me to call 911 or mobile crisis with you?"

"I'm going to call 911, this is an emergency and I am mandated to do so"

Client shares something with you, but doesn't want you to tell anyone else

1. Share with transition specialist or volunteer team.

"I would never want to break your trust, but I have to inform your transition specialist about this",

"I wouldn't be doing the right thing if I didn't mention it to your transition specialist"

"I'm only telling them because I have your best interest at heart"

Resources:

Shelter

The Relatives Youth Crisis Center (Ages 7-17)

A Crisis Shelter for youth ages 7-17 who have run away from home, are homeless, or just going through a rough family situation with nowhere else to turn.

1100 East Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28203

(704) 377-0602

Men's Shelter of Charlotte (Ages 18 and older)

Provides shelter for men ages 18 and older.

1210 N Tryon St, Charlotte, NC 28206

(704) 334-3187

Salvation Army Center of Hope

Provides shelter for single women and women with children.

534 Spratt St, Charlotte, NC 28206

(704) 348-2560

Domestic Abuse

Safe Alliance

Provides safe shelter for those impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault.

601 East Fifth Street Suite 400, Charlotte, NC 28202

(704) 332-9034

LBGTQ Services

Time Out Youth

Offers support, advocacy, and opportunities for personal development and social interaction to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LBGTQ) youth ages 11-20.

3800 Monroe Road, Charlotte, NC 28205

704-344-8335

Mental Health/ Addiction

Cardinal Health Innovations

Helps people with mental and behavioral needs get the services and supports they need to be well.

550 S Caldwell St, Charlotte, NC 28202

704-939-7700

Monarch

Provides services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance use disorders statewide.

5700 Executive Center Dr Ste 110, Charlotte, NC 28212
704-525-3255

Innervisions

Specializes in providing comprehensive recovery oriented resources, services and supports in the areas of employment, education and wellness to meet the needs of individuals with trauma, mental health and addiction challenges

415 E 4th St, Charlotte, NC 28202
704-377-5042

Amara Wellness

Empowering individuals with severe mental illness & developmental disabilities so they can drive their own recovery to achieve their individual goals, increase self-sufficiency live successfully within their community.

5108 Reagan Dr, Charlotte, NC 28206
704-567-0790

Carolina Outreach

Providing high-quality mental health services across the state of North Carolina.

5108 Reagan Drive Suite 14, Charlotte, NC 28216
704-332-8787

Anuvia

Provides compassionate treatment and prevention services for addiction.

100 Billingsley Rd, Charlotte, NC 28211
704-376-7447

Promise Resource Network

Assists adults with recovery, employment, healing, and wellness-self management. Works with people suffering from mental health and substance use challenges, people in local jails, homeless shelters and other local service providers.

1041 Hawthorne Ln, Charlotte, NC 28205
(704) 390-7709

Health Care/ Health Clinics

Charlotte Community Health Clinic

Offers primary care, behavioral health services, health and wellness education, preventative services, acute and chronic disease management and dental services for pediatric and adult patients. Offers a sliding scale program for costs.

8401 Medical Plaza Dr suite 300, Charlotte, NC 28262
(704) 316-6561

CW Williams Community Health Center

Offers Primary care, behavioral health, dental, and HIV specialty care and testing services. Offers a sliding scale program for costs.

3333 Wilkinson Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28208
704-393-7720

Charlotte Mecklenburg Health Clinic

249 Billingsley Road, Charlotte, NC 28211
704-336-6500

General Resources

Charlotte Mecklenburg Department of Social Services
Protects the health and safety of all North Carolinians and provides essential human services.
301 Billingsley Rd, Charlotte, NC 28211
704-336-3000

Staff Contact Numbers		
Name	Phone Number	Position
Georgetta Bouie	704-501-8273	Transition Specialist
Dawn Haynes	704-501-8276	Transition Specialist
Savoui Graham	704-501-8249	Transition Specialist
Joshua Haynes	704-501-8248	Transition Coordinator
Genine Donovan	704-501-8245	On Ramp Supervisor
Lynette Bradford	704-501-8246	Employment Readiness Specialist
Christina Nunez	704-501-8258	Volunteer Engagement Officer

Transporting Clients

By no means are you required to provide transportation to mentees. However, many of our clients at On Ramp do not have their own vehicles and rely on public transportation, so keep that in mind when planning off-site meetings/events. Throughout the duration of the program, there may be times where you may find it more convenient to transport your mentee, so below are the driving record requirements to transport On Ramp clients:

You are required to have a valid North Carolina driver's license, proof of insurance, and maintain a satisfactory driving record throughout your year in the mentoring program. We will be processing a background check on all mentors every year that they are a part of this program. While operating your vehicle, you are expected to observe all laws and regulations including wearing seat belts at all times and refraining from all forms of cell phone use.

You cannot have one or more of the following on your driving record:

- DWI/DUI
- License Suspension (Hit and Run)
- Conviction of speeding in excess of 25 miles over any posted speed limit
- Criminal conviction of DMV
- Conviction of reckless driving
- Conviction of passing a stopped school bus
- Any combination of four or more convictions for moving violations or chargeable accidents

Friendship Building Activities

- Meeting for coffee/ light refreshments
- Sharing a meal
- Going on a walk in the park
- Visit the library
- Attending free events/festivals in the city of Charlotte
- Attend a local sporting event

Mentoring Program Agreement

I have received and read a copy of The Relatives' Mentoring Program Training Manual and agree to abide by the policies contained therein. I have had the opportunity to ask questions in order to clarify anything that I do not understand, and know how to contact should I have any additional questions in the future.

Signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

What's Next?

To join the EMPOWERmentors Program you must:

- Attend Webinar

- Fill out paperwork for Background Check
- Complete Diana Screening at On Ramp
- Provide copy of driver's license and auto insurance
- Attend a Virtual Pairing Party
 - Due to COVID restrictions, The Relatives has currently suspended all on-site volunteer programs. Pairing Parties will be held virtually with mentees switching computers to meet with potential mentors. Please allow up to 5 minutes in between each pairing session for On Ramp staff to wipe down and disinfect the individual laptops and workspaces. We appreciate your patience.
 - The first, post-pairing party meeting with your mentee is designed to ensure you and your mentee are a good match and to determine goals moving forward.