

INFOCUS



Liz Ryan, OJJDP Administrator

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Mentoring Youth

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) invests in mentoring programs and services to help ensure positive outcomes for youth. Successful mentoring relationships have been shown to increase youth's self-esteem, improve academic achievement, and steer them away from delinquency, substance use, and other high-risk behaviors.

The Office works with its partners to boost mentor recruitment, enhance mentor-mentee matches, and increase the number of youth who have mentors.

Diverse populations of youth benefit from OJJDP's mentoring programs, including those impacted by opioids and drug addiction, youth in rural communities, American Indian and Alaska Native youth, children of parents on active military duty, and children of incarcerated parents.

Programs

National and Multistate Mentoring Programs

These programs support one-on-one, group, and peer mentoring to youth who are at risk for delinquency, victimization, and involvement with the juvenile justice system. The programs emphasize family engagement and promote positive relationships between youth and law enforcement.

Mentoring for Youth Affected by the Opioid Crisis and Drug Addiction

Grants awarded under this program fund support services and interventions—as part of a prevention, treatment, and supportive approach—for children and youth who have been impacted by substance use.

Training and Technical Assistance

National Mentoring Resource Center

Guided by a board of nationally renowned mentoring researchers, the center offers comprehensive resources, evidence-based practices, tools, and research to improve the quality and effectiveness of youth mentoring. The center's services are available at no cost to all youth mentoring providers.

For More Information

Learn more about OJJDP's mentoring programs at ojjdp.ojp.gov/programs/mentoring.

Funding

Between fiscal years 2020 and 2022, OJJDP awarded more than \$262 million to increase mentoring opportunities for youth and to improve the quality of the mentoring they receive.

- ▶ Fiscal Year 2022—\$87.9 million
- ▶ Fiscal Year 2021—\$89.4 million
- ▶ Fiscal Year 2020—\$84.9 million

From the Field

When Colby WhiteThunder first joined the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas youth council, he was a “real shy” teen who kept to himself. Now a youth ambassador and mentor to his Tribe's children, Mr. WhiteThunder says he owes thanks to “almost a tapestry” of people—from his mother, aunts, and uncles to leaders at OJJDP partner UNITY (United National Indian Tribal Youth) and OJJDP's Tribal Youth Resource Center. Their guidance helped Mr. WhiteThunder identify his strengths, develop confidence, and deepen his identity as a Native person.

As an aide for his Tribe's youth programs, Mr. WhiteThunder knows the kids “watch me, the stuff I do.” He sums up his approach to life simply: “We're here to be good people, to be kind to one another—to be good stewards of our own families and treat others good.”



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Delinquency Prevention
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