

**upside**  
youth mentoring

**Mentors Information Pack**



## Who we are

Upside Youth Mentoring exists to support change in Aotearoa New Zealand's young people with adverse childhood experiences. We want to help them feel a little brighter and more loved than they did yesterday. Our dream is to change the future of our nation.

We've been matching young people with mentors since 2006 and with over 1,000 matches to date – that becomes over 7,000 hours of mentoring each year!

At Upside, we get the fun job of introducing volunteer mentors and young people to one another and watching the magic happen. It's hard to overestimate the power of safe, committed relationships to positively impact a young person's journey.

We don't pretend to have all the answers, but at Upside we're committed to jumping in because we believe that together we can be part of co-authoring a great story for Aotearoa's young people.

Right now we work in Auckland, Rodney, Whangaparāoa, and Tauranga.

## Who can mentor

- Aged 18+
- Full New Zealand driver's licence
- Car – with current WOF & registration
- Clean police check
- Have a few hours a week for at least 12-months
- Fun-loving attitude

## Our young people

Each of the young people (aged 9 – 13) we journey with have been referred to us by schools who believe a positive role model is what this young person needs to help navigate their current challenges.

## Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are major contributing factors for poor youth development that can lead to negative health and social outcomes in adulthood.

The World Health Organisation have identified 10 ACEs that can have serious implications for children and can continue to affect them in adulthood. These include being exposed to abuse, neglect and environmental challenges before they are 18 years old.

## Volunteering

As a volunteer, you are our most valuable partner. You're committing to meeting with a young person every week for at least 12 months. The focus of those times is building a quality relationship of unconditional love, care and support with your young person.

## Commitment

We're going to be honest here, being a volunteer mentor can be challenging. It's a commitment that tests most people who do it. It's normal to feel like giving up somewhere along the way – maybe because you don't feel like you've got anything to offer, or your young person doesn't want anything to do with you.

The good news is that most of these uneasy situations are totally resolvable, and we're always here to help! The most important thing we ask is that you stick by your commitment and keep showing up for a young person for a year. We are looking for stability, consistency, trustworthiness, communication and adaptability.

# What the year looks like

**1 young person**  
for 1 year

**2 hours**  
weekly hang out  
with young person

**Attend 6 events**  
throughout the year  
(including camp)

**Come alongside other mentors and  
young people on the programme.**

## Mentor supervision

Over the course of your match, you'll fill out a monthly feedback form online. This is for you to let us know about any concerns you have and to share the good stories too (which we love!).

There are also occasional skill development sessions where we get all current mentors together. We hang out, check in on how things are going with your young person, share some great ideas and get some training from a guest speaker/staff member on a relevant topic.

## Events

**There are a number epic events each year:**

- 3 x all-in events (mentor and young person)
- 1 x overnight camp
- 1 x beach day (which the whole whānau is invited to)

## 6 and 12 month check-ins

We also have face-to-face catch ups with you during the course of your match where we treat you to a coffee or lunch. Here we talk in-depth about any questions or concerns you have about the match, young person or their whānau environment.

We are also free to catch up at any time throughout the year if you have concerns or just want to chat about how things are going.

## Graduation

At the one-year mark for you and your young person, we celebrate this milestone achievement with a special meal on us.

## Where to from here?

Hopefully the 12-month milestone you and your young person have built a strong friendship and want to keep hanging out. Things might stay the same, or look a little different and you might hang out a little less, and that's all good. Let's talk about it!

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# The application process

## 1. Application

Fill out that application form! This form is comprehensive and we use it for police vetting, getting character references and our face-to-face interview with you.

## 2. Interview

The interview helps both you and us decide whether volunteer mentoring is the right fit for you. It's an opportunity to chat about who you are, what you have to offer a young person and for us to answer any questions you may have.

## 3. Induction

After the interview, we'll all know whether it's time to move to the next stage with you. If we do, you'll attend the next induction day scheduled in our calendar. These are run 3-4 times a year and we'll be in touch with a date.

## 4. Accept/decline

After the interview and induction day, a final decision will be made about whether you're the right fit to become an Upside mentor. You'll receive an email with our decision.

If we don't feel there's a suitable fit to become a mentor, we will do our best to explain why we feel this way.

## 5. Matching

Once your vetting form has come back clear, we get to work on matching you with a young person with similar interests.

When we have a possible match for you, we'll check in to be sure you're okay with it and then let the whānau know about you.

Once everyone involved is happy, we'll book in a time to all meet the young person at their home.

## 6. Match Day

On the day, we'll meet you outside and head in together. We'll introduce you to the whānau and spend some time getting to know each other. Commitment agreements are then signed by you, the young person and their caregiver. After this, we'll head out to grab a bite to eat with you and the young person. If everyone's comfortable, we'll leave you guys to hang out for a bit.

Once you both arrive back at the home, you're welcome to book in your next hang out by yourselves. Your Mentoring Coordinator will check in the next day with both you and the young person to see how it all went. We'll help if any issues pop up.

**"I love mentoring! I've gained a very special person in my heart and life. And over the last while, I've become a better person too."**

**—Sarah, Mentor**



## Questions?

[enquiries@upside.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@upside.org.nz)