



818 Butterworth Ave SW | Grand Rapids, MI 49504

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Welcome

Welcome to Affinity Mentoring and thank you for joining our team of volunteers!

To ensure both your success and that of the organization, it is critical that all volunteers understand and observe Affinity Mentoring's policies and procedures. This handbook was created to assist you in the navigation of being a new volunteer and to be a resource for existing volunteers.

This volunteer handbook contains important key policies, goals, benefits, and expectations of Affinity Mentoring as well as other information that you will need. It is not a contract nor is it an invitation to contract. This manual supersedes all previous manuals, policies and memos that have been issued on policies covered in this manual.

The policies in this handbook are subject to change and may change at any time at the sole discretion of Affinity Mentoring. From time to time, you may receive updated information as to changes in policies.

If you have any questions on anything contained in this manual, please contact your Site Coordinator.

1.2 Organization Mission + Background

At Affinity Mentoring we work towards the mutual liberation of all community members and believe that youth are already leaders and community members, but need equitable access and platforms to use their voice. Students are matched with a mentor that meets weekly with them throughout the school year. Adding to the team of support around the youth, the mentor gets to know the students strengths, interests and assets and works collaboratively with the student and other caring adults in his/her life to address the challenges [i.e., academic, socio-emotional or behavioral] that he/she might have.

Mentoring occurs in a dedicated classroom ("Mentor Center"), or virtually if mentors are not allowed into school, where matches read, play games, do homework and build socio-emotional skills. Through this meaningful relationship, youth are given the additional support they need to succeed.

Affinity was started through a partnership with Burton Elementary School, Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, MI and Kids Hope USA. With 14 years of experience under the umbrella of Kids Hope USA, combined with a deep desire to be more inclusive and diverse, Affinity was born as a 501c3 in 2016 and became independent of Mars Hill. Affinity now partners with more than 20 local businesses and organizations to provide mentoring to students in three Grand Rapids Public Schools [Burton Elementary, Burton Middle School and Southwest Community Campus] and in Godfrey Lee Public Schools at the Early Childhood Center.

The investment community partners make by encouraging their constituents to volunteer and/or financially investing in mentoring is part of what makes Affinity unique and effective. Affinity partners with local businesses and organizations such as Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Gordon Food Service, Mars Hill Bible Church and many more.

Affinity is also unique in the way the organization links administration, staff and parents at each school with the community to meet the school's needs. Working together with Community School Leadership Teams and the Kent County Mentoring Collaborative, Affinity fosters a positive environment where families feel comfortable, engaged and supported.

1.3 Mentor Position Description

PRIMARY PURPOSE + FUNCTION

The mentor will provide one-to-one mentoring and affirmation for one child at his/her school.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Be at least 16 years of age
- Complete and pass the screening process [i.e., application, background check, references]
- Be an approved volunteer through the school district
- Participate in an interview and required training
- Be faithful—participate in mentoring sessions for one hour per week for one school year
- Be a positive role model
- Have his/her own transportation
- Maintain a confidential relationship

SKILLS AND ABILITIES: Write legibly, good listener, work well with others, faithful/committed, good communicator, willing spirit, openness to cultural differences, good listening skills, patience, sense of humor

KNOWLEDGE NEEDED: Basic math, ability to read at a middle school level or above, Internet use is a plus

SPECIFIC TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Responsible for meeting with the assigned mentee for the agreed-upon time frame (weekly meetings for at least one school year)
- Act as a resource and guide
- Work closely with Affinity Mentoring and school staff through phone contact, personal conferences and group meetings
- Serve as an example/role model
- Accept and relate to youth who may not share the volunteer's lifestyle and values
- Respect the mentee's right to self-determination and independence
- While relationship is the focus of the mentoring relationship, it can be beneficial to the student to spend some time working on academic work either given by the teacher, found in the classroom, Mentor Center or from the Classroom Connections form. The mentor may use materials provided by the teacher to help the child achieve a specific objective
- Complete a Progress Report after each mentoring session and document contact with the mentee
- Abide by program policies and procedures

TIME COMMITMENT: A minimum of one hour each week with one child at the school for the school year.

ORIENTATION/TRAINING PROVIDED: Mentors will be fully trained to develop a successful mentoring relationship with a child. All new mentors are required to attend a 3-hour Skill Building training [various scheduling options available in August and September]. Additional training opportunities will be offered to all mentors at least once a year. The Affinity Mentoring Staff will be available daily in the Mentor Center to advise and assist all mentors.

POSITION REPORTS TO: Each mentor will be under the supervision of and report to the assigned Affinity Mentoring Program Staff. The mentor also agrees to cooperate/collaborate with the student's teacher and parents, as appropriate.

SECTION 2: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

○ Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

PURPOSE

To provide vision for diversity, equity and inclusion within Affinity Mentoring and to hold the organization accountable to its core beliefs, Affinity Mentoring employees, partners, and volunteers

work towards the mutual liberation of all community members and be founded in the belief that youth are already leaders and community members, but need equitable access and platforms to use their voice Affinity Mentoring will promote inclusion, celebrate diversity and uphold equity in its business partnerships, mentoring relationships and every aspect of service delivery, materials, activities and environment.

DIVERSITY POLICY

Affinity Mentoring will recruit and retain Partnerships, Board, Staff, Committee Members and Volunteers that are reflective of the diverse population served. Differences in race, color, nationality, religion/culture, gender identity, gender expression, immigration status, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, military status, and ability ensure mentor relationships that are shaped by rich varieties of experiences and perspectives.

INCLUSION POLICY

Affinity Mentoring will provide an environment and a service delivery system that is welcoming and safe to all members of the community (students, volunteers, board, staff and community partners) by embracing, honoring and celebrating differences in race, color, nationality, religion/culture, gender identity, gender expression, immigration status*, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, military status, and ability. Comments or behaviors that are humiliating, isolating or otherwise create an unsafe environment for others will not be tolerated.

*All staff must be eligible to work in the United States. Both staff and volunteers must pass background checks required by Affinity Mentoring.

MENTOR/STUDENT MATCHES

Affinity Mentoring students and mentors will experience safety and belonging through inclusive and diverse efforts. Students and mentors will enter a space that allows them to build authentic relationships and that meets them where they are. Students will have the opportunity to build trust with a caring adult who will journey with them. It is through these relationships that at-risk school children are given the additional emotional, social and academic support they need to succeed.

Affinity Mentoring will evaluate data annually, ensuring that the board, staff and volunteer recruitment efforts support providing varied relationships and development opportunities by being representative of the diversity of the school community.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Affinity Mentoring values diversity in staff in order to create a space that is influenced by a variety of experiences throughout the organization. Diversity among staff further ensures that policies and procedures are equitable and inclusive. Affinity Mentoring also recognizes that student interaction with individuals who share identities positively impacts relationship building and equitable service delivery. Students will see their value as contributing members of the school community by seeing people who look like them in a variety of vocations.

Affinity Mentoring commits to hiring individuals who demonstrate a passion for and commitment to children and their potential. Working to establish equitable recruitment and hiring practices in accordance with the Affinity Mentoring Inclusion Policy, Affinity Mentoring will hire and promote people to reflect the demographics of the students and school community in which it serves. Additionally, Affinity Mentoring will send postings to community organizations and networks dedicated to the advancement and professional development of underrepresented populations.

Training and Professional Development related to inclusion and diversity will be integrated into Affinity Mentoring's annual training plan.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS + LEADERSHIP COMMITTEES

The Board's role is to set the vision and strategic direction for the organization; therefore it is important

that the board of directors reflects the diversity of the students and individual school communities involved. The Board of Directors has a commitment to recruit, review and support board members from diverse populations.

MENTOR RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Affinity Mentoring will create quality experiences that foster a sense of belonging and purpose for mentors that ultimately impact the student/mentor relationships. Affinity Mentoring will offer appropriate training to enhance the academic and social emotional growth and development of each student. It is important that mentors are equipped with a variety of skills and experiences to ensure that students receive the support needed.

All mentors go through a specific training curriculum that discusses what it means to participate in a nurturing and supportive environment. Regular mentor support meetings/trainings will be held to engage mentors in further learning and growth. Affinity Mentoring will conduct an annual review of demographic information of active mentors as well as recruiting efforts to create a robust recruitment process.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Affinity Mentoring believes that healthy interdependence with high-quality community and business partners as well as quality relationships between caring dedicated adults and students are essential to success. Therefore, we will pursue and grow partnerships with organizations that demonstrate inclusive practices. To ensure diverse, equitable and inclusive access, community partners working with Affinity Mentoring will engage in and agree to the policies pertaining to diversity, equity and inclusion.

- **Training**

SKILL BUILDING TRAINING FOR NEW MENTORS

Before being matched with a student, new mentors must attend a Skill Building training. This training is developed in accordance with the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring Programs and equips mentors to be successful in their mentoring relationship. Topics covered include, but are not limited to, the following: children's developmental needs, impact of poverty, successful mentoring techniques and roles, cultural responsiveness, boundaries, confidentiality, the Separation of Church and State, the prevention and reporting of suspected abuse and/or neglect, the mentoring life cycle and closure. The curriculum shall be reviewed regularly and updated to adhere to changing best practices. Evaluation forms will be collected from each training session for the purposes of evaluating/improving the content of the trainings and trainer performance.

ORIENTATION

Both new and returning mentors are required to participate in an orientation, which is held at the assigned school [i.e., during Open House or prior to the first mentoring session]. This time is used to explain school procedures for volunteers and review frequently asked questions. Mentors may have the chance to meet their student's teacher and schedule their mentoring time. They also are able to tour the school and find the classroom of their student.

ONGOING MENTOR TRAINING

Affinity Mentoring will provide mentors with the opportunity to receive ongoing training on relevant topics [i.e., literacy skill building, domestic violence, and poverty, etc.] at least 1 time a year. All mentors are strongly encouraged to participate in additional training annually. Some specific trainings may be required; mentors will be notified which trainings are required and afforded every opportunity possible to participate. Affinity Mentoring staff will also provide ongoing training on a one-on-one basis or in small groups as needed throughout the year.

COMMUNITY TRAININGS

Mentors will be informed of local training opportunities and encouraged to attend. The Kent County Mentoring Collaborative, MSU-Extension, Youth Development Network and Mentor Michigan are some of the local organizations that often provide quality trainings.

- **Supervision and Match Support**

SUPERVISION

Affinity Mentoring staff will make regular personal contact with all parties in each match including the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian. Staff must gather information including a description of the match's mentoring activities and assess the success of the match from all party's perspectives. In the case of match difficulties, discord, or concerns, appropriate discussion and intervention will be undertaken to improve or rectify problem areas.

Mentors are required to sign-in at the School's Main Office every time they enter and exit the school building. Additionally, they must have their school volunteer badge on them at all times. They are also required to sign-in at the Mentor Center [the program's dedicated space within the school building].

An Affinity Mentoring staff or representative is available in the Mentor Center, or by phone, during mentoring hours. After the completion of their mentoring hour, mentors must fill out a Progress Report, whether the mentoring took place in-person or virtually. The completed progress reports are then reviewed within 1 business day and shared with the student's teacher weekly. Progress Reports are used by both school staff and Affinity Mentoring staff to monitor and support the match.

MATCH SUPPORT

Program participants will receive ongoing support from Affinity Mentoring staff. Staff will be in the Mentoring Center during school hours and/or available via email and phone, and helpful resources can also be found on the Affinity Mentoring website. It is important that mentors, parents and students voice questions or concerns they have concerning any part of the mentoring process.

- **Confidentiality**

Affinity Mentoring will protect the confidentiality of its participants and their families. With the exception of the limitations listed below, program staff will only share information about mentors, mentees, and their families with other Affinity Mentoring staff and school staff [per permission slip signed by the parent]. Further, all prospective mentors, current mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians should be informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality by program staff. Additionally, mentors are required to keep information about their mentee and his/her family confidential, including all medical information.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT [FERPA]

Affinity Mentoring Staff and volunteers who have access to student records will sign the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) agreement outlining his/her commitment to the privacy of student confidential educational records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

In order for Affinity Mentoring to provide a responsible and professional service to participants, it is necessary to ask mentors, mentees, parents/guardians, and other outside sources to divulge personal information about the prospective participants and their families, including:

- Information gained from mentors and mentees, written or otherwise, about themselves and/or their families, in application to and during program participation
- Participant's names and images gained from participants themselves, program meetings, training sessions, and other events
- Information gained about participants from outside sources including confidential references,

school staff, employers

Records are, therefore, considered the property of the agency.

LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Information from mentor and mentee records may be shared with individuals or organizations as specified below under the following conditions:

- Information may be gathered about program participants and shared with other participants, individuals, or organizations only upon receipt of signed "release" forms from mentors, mentees, or parents/guardians.
- If referred by an Affinity Mentoring Partner, the mentor's name and status in the program [i.e., active match, closed, screening in process] may be released to the partner organization. The individual may opt out of this information sharing by informing an Affinity staff in writing of their desire to limit this information sharing.
- Identifying information (including names, photographs, videos, etc.) of program participants may be used in agency publications or promotional materials only upon written consent of the participant and/or parent/guardian, if that individual is a minor.
- Information may only be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.
- Information may be provided to legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the agency. Such information is considered privileged information, and law protects its confidentiality.
- Affinity Mentoring staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters and as such they must disclose information indicating that an individual may be dangerous or intends to harm him/herself or others. Staff and volunteers are required to report the suspicion of child abuse or neglect. All staff and volunteers must be trained on the prevention of and reporting of child abuse and neglect.
- If a program staff receives reliable information at any point that a staff or volunteer is using illegal substances, there is a criminal history of any kind, or is inappropriately using alcohol or other controlled substances, the individual's involvement in the program will be terminated.
- For large group events, a general photo release will be posted. Participants will be given the opportunity to opt-out of the use of their image or identifiable information at that event. An opt- out must be documented in writing.

Safekeeping of Confidential Records

- The Executive Director is considered the custodian of confidential records. It is his/her responsibility to supervise the management of confidential information in order to ensure safekeeping, accuracy, accountability, and compliance with program policies.

Requests for Confidential Information by Other Agencies

- A mentee's or volunteer's right to privacy shall be respected by the agency. Requests for confidential information from other organizations or persons shall be accompanied by a signed release from the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian.

Violations of Confidentiality

- A known violation of the agency policy on confidentiality by a program participant may result in a written warning or disciplinary action such as suspension or termination from the program.

o **Commitment + Attendance**

A very positive benefit, when working with students, is the relationship developed between the volunteer and student. Volunteers are expected to take seriously the relationship that will be formed. Mentors are expected to make a minimum one school year commitment to a child and will be faithful in mentoring weekly during the school year.

Attendance is recorded weekly by the Program Staff. If a participant [mentor or student] is absent and has not contacted staff, the individual will be contacted. If the individual has four absences, they will be reminded of the Attendance Policy and the importance of faithfulness in mentoring. Staff should also assist the mentor in problem solving any issues that are leading to excessive absences. If lack of attendance continues to be a problem, the match may be closed.

○ **Independent Outings**

Affinity Mentoring is primarily a school-based program. Staff and volunteers should not leave school grounds or have face-to-face contact with students outside of school without the expressed authorization of the parent and Executive Director or authorized staff.

Exceptions may be granted for:

- Program events
- School field trips
- Events in which the student's parent/guardian is present
- Learning opportunities in the community

Permission for independent outings may be granted through either a one-time independent outing permission slip or by obtaining School Based Plus Status.

Independent Outing Permission

- The staff/volunteer must have completed all background checks as required by Affinity and the school district. [The individual will contribute a portion of the associated fees.]
- For each outing, the Independent Outing Permission Slip must be signed by the parent. [A copy of the completed form will be kept on file. The parent is given a copy and the volunteer/staff will take a copy of the completed form on the outing.]
- Outings must occur in public places or the match must be within sight of at least one other adult
- Anyone over the age of 18 that will be accompanying the match on the outing [except the student's parent/guardian] must have a background check on file [ICHAT]
- The volunteer/staff must agree to and be in compliance with the Transportation Policy
- No overnight visits are permitted
- For as long as COVID-19 remains a threat in the community and the State of Michigan and/or federal governments continue to put in place safety measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, all volunteers/staff must strictly abide by the restrictions outlined for appropriate settings for all independent outings: [MI Safe Start Restrictions by Category](#)

School Based Plus Status

If a student/mentor match is interested in having regular contact outside of school on a regular basis, they may apply for School Based Plus [SBP] status.

Criteria for match eligibility for SBP Status:

- Have been meeting at school consistently for a minimum of three months
- Mentor is in compliance with the Affinity Mentoring Transportation Policy
- The mentee's parent(s)/guardian provide consent
- Mentor, Mentee and Parent(s)/guardian participate in a match meeting with a program staff to discuss SBP status as well as review and sign the SBP match agreement
- No overnight visits are permitted
- Regular communication with student, parent and mentor are required [monthly with students and mentors, bi-monthly with parents]

All contact outside of school between a staff/volunteer and a student will be documented. No new matches will be approved for School Based Plus Status during virtual mentoring.

○ **Transportation**

Affinity Mentoring will allow staff and volunteers to transport students in their own private vehicles only if approved to do so by authorized program staff and the parent/guardian. Such approval may be granted under the Independent Outings policy. All staff/volunteers must meet the following criteria prior to transporting a student:

- The volunteer/staff must own a car or have access to reliable transportation. All safety
- equipment including blinkers, lights, brake and back-up lights, seat belts, tires, and brakes must be in good operating condition.
- The volunteer/staff must possess a valid driver's license and present proof of auto insurance.
- Copies of these documents will be maintained in the mentor's file and will be updated on an annual basis.
- The volunteer/staff must undergo a driving record check and have a clean driving record for
- the last three years.
- The volunteer/staff must obey all traffic laws and use seat belts and appropriate child safety seat at all times.
- The volunteer/staff must avoid taking medication or using any other substances [including tobacco products] that might impair his/her ability to drive.
- If a collision or other event occurs while the volunteer/staff is engaged in a program related activity, it should be reported to the program staff immediately.
- The volunteer/staff must carry the student's emergency contact information in the transporting automobile at all times in case of emergency.
- The volunteer/staff will not use a cell phone while driving with a student or for program activities.
- The parent/guardian must sign a waiver and written consent to transport the student. Verbal parent permission may be given only in emergency situations and must also be approved by the Executive Director.

○ **Transportation Emergency Procedures**

The steps outlined below must be followed in response to incidents that occur while operating a motor vehicle for Affinity Mentoring purposes, while the vehicle is parked and unattended, or involved in a collision on or off road:

1. Determine the safety of any passengers and contact emergency assistance if needed. If injuries are minimal, staff will use best judgment to determine the safest place to wait for emergency personnel depending on the location and accident conditions. If injuries sustained are severe, the injured individual must not be moved unless it is necessary to move them (i.e. the car might explode). For a person with an injured head, neck or back, it is especially important that they do not move their head, neck or back until emergency assistance arrives.
2. Assess damage to vehicle. Call 911 if necessary and document the damage with photos, if possible to do so safely.
3. Collaborate with emergency personnel when appropriate.
4. Notify appropriate staff, including the Site Coordinator and/or Executive Director, by phone, as soon as possible after the incident.
5. If a student is involved, parents should be notified by an Affinity staff member or volunteer as soon as possible.
6. Complete and submit a Critical Incident Report to the Site Coordinator and Executive Director within 24 hours of the incident.

○ Abuse and Misconduct Prevention And Reporting

Affinity Mentoring prohibits and does not tolerate physical, mental, or sexual abuse or misconduct of any kind in the workplace or during any organization-related activity, including whether abuse is suspected to have taken place in-person or in a virtual setting. Affinity Mentoring provides procedures for employees, volunteers, mentors, board members and any other victims of abuse or misconduct to report such acts. Those reasonably suspected or believed to have committed abuse or misconduct in-person or in a virtual setting will be appropriately disciplined, up to and including termination of employment or membership, as well as criminally prosecuted. No employee, volunteer, board member or other person, regardless of his or her title or position has the authority to commit or allow abuse or misconduct.

REPORTING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR APPROPRIATE CHILD OR ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Affinity Mentoring is committed to following the state and federal legal requirements for reporting allegations or incidents of abuse or misconduct to appropriate law enforcement and child or adult protective services organizations. It is the policy of Affinity Mentoring not to attempt to investigate or assess the validity or credibility of an allegation of misconduct or abuse as a condition before reporting the allegation to proper law enforcement authorities or protective services organizations. At no point should an employee, volunteer, board member, or other person directly confront the person who is the source of the report, question or complaint before notifying any of the individuals listed.

Upon suspicion of abuse, neglect or misconduct, the reporter must make an immediate oral report to the appropriate agency followed by a written report within 72 hours. The reporter needs to only obtain enough information to make a report. The reporter is not expected to investigate the matter, know the legal definitions of child abuse and neglect, or even know the name of the perpetrator.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

All employees, volunteers or board members must IMMEDIATELY REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE OR MISCONDUCT to Affinity Mentoring Site Coordinator and/or Executive Director and the school representative.

Affinity Mentoring requires staff or volunteers who are mandated reporters to also:

1. Make a report to the appropriate agency within 24 hours of gaining knowledge or suspicion of maltreatment (or sooner if required by state law). Note: The initial report must be made orally and in writing to either the child protective services or law enforcement (as state procedure guides).
2. Provide the level of information and cooperation as is required by state statute.

Affinity Mentoring requires personnel who are not mandated reporters to also:

1. If deemed appropriate by the supervisor/director, make a report to the appropriate agency within 24 hours of gaining knowledge or suspicion of maltreatment (or sooner if required by state law). Note: The initial report must be made orally and in writing to either child protective services or law enforcement (as state procedure guides).
2. Provide the level of information and cooperation as is required by state statute.

Retention of Reports:

Written reports regarding clients of Affinity Mentoring will be placed in the client's service file. If the report involves a student at the school, the Principal will be given a copy of the report.

Written reports regarding non-clients will be sent to Affinity Mentoring's Executive Director for retention.

ANTI-RETALIATION AND FALSE ALLEGATIONS

Affinity Mentoring prohibits retaliation made against any employee, volunteer, board member or other person who lodges a good faith complaint of abuse or misconduct or who participates in any related

investigation. Making knowingly false or malicious accusations of abuse or misconduct can have serious consequences for those who are wrongly accused. Affinity Mentoring prohibits making false or malicious misconduct allegations, as well as deliberately providing false information during an investigation.

Anyone who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or membership and criminal prosecution.

INVESTIGATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Affinity Mentoring will take all allegations of abuse or misconduct seriously and will promptly, thoroughly and equitably investigate whether misconduct has taken place. Affinity Mentoring will take every reasonable measure to ensure that those named in the complaint of misconduct, or are too closely associated with those involved in the complaint, will not be part of the investigative team. Affinity Mentoring may utilize an outside third-party to conduct an investigation of misconduct. Affinity Mentoring will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory/protective service agencies. Affinity Mentoring will make every reasonable effort to keep the matters involved in the allegation as confidential as possible while still allowing for a prompt and thorough investigation.

EMPLOYEE AND WORKER SCREENING AND SELECTION

As part of its abuse and misconduct prevention program, Affinity Mentoring is committed to maintaining a diligent screening program for prospective and existing employees, volunteers and others that may have interaction with those employed by, associating with or serviced by Affinity Mentoring. Affinity Mentoring may utilize a variety of methods of screening and selection, including but not limited to applications, personal interviews, criminal background checks and personal and professional references. Affinity Mentoring requires all staff and volunteers to receive training on mandatory reporting, including identification of clinical indicators of suspected abuse and neglect as applicable.

SUPERVISION OF YOUTH

To provide a safe environment for minors, Affinity Mentoring strives to have a minimum of two adults be in attendance with minors during organization related activities, whether these take place in-person or virtually. The purpose is to avoid one-on-one interactions between adults and minors that are not easily observable by others. If individual meetings with a minor must be held in an office, keep the door open. Only conduct closed door meetings when another adult is put on notice of the meeting and the door remains unlocked. If individual meetings with a minor take place virtually, both parties should be located in areas with other adults and/or with the ability for other adults to hear the interaction taking place virtually. A volunteer or staff may not be unsupervised with a minor unless the Independent Outing policy is followed.

○ **Use of Alcohol, Drugs and Firearms**

Affinity Mentoring discourages the use of drugs, alcohol, and firearms. Program participants are prohibited from using drugs or alcohol or possessing firearms while engaged in the mentoring activities. Any suspected violations should be reported to the Executive Director.

Alcoholic Beverages: No participant will possess or consume beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages while actively engaged or prior to actively engaging in mentoring, nor shall any participant endorse the use of alcohol. Mentors and mentees may go to a location where minors are allowed and alcohol is served provided that the mentor and youth do not consume any alcohol during the mentoring session.

Drugs: No participant will manufacture, possess, distribute, or use any illegal substance while engaged in mentoring.

Weapons, Firearms, and Other Dangerous Materials: The possession or use of firearms, firecrackers, explosives, toxic or dangerous chemicals, or other lethal weapons, equipment, or material while participating in mentoring activities is strictly prohibited.

Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate suspension and/or termination of the mentoring relationship. In addition, violations of this policy may result in notification being given to legal authorities that may result in arrest or legal action, and may be punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.

- **Bullying and Other Unacceptable Behaviors**

Bullying and other unacceptable behaviors will not be tolerated on the part of mentors or mentees while participating in the program. This policy is in addition to behavioral requirements stipulated in other policies or procedures within this manual. This policy in no way is intended to replace or take precedence over other policies or procedures including, but not limited to, the following:

- Confidentiality Policy
- Transportation Policy
- Independent Outings Policy
- Abuse and Misconduct Prevention and Reporting Policy
- Use of Alcohol, Drugs and Firearms Policy

A number of behaviors are regarded as incompatible with Affinity Mentoring goals, values, and program standards and therefore are considered unacceptable and prohibited while participants are engaged in mentoring activities:

- Physical bullying and/or unwelcome physical contact [i.e., inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching, and physical assault]
- Unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or behavioral mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or aversion toward any individual
- Nonverbal or relational bullying - when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. [i.e., social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.]
- Cyberbullying – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs).
- Demeaning or exploitive behavior of either a sexual or nonsexual nature, including threats of such behavior
- Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material
- Known sexual abuse or neglect of a child
- Denigration, public or private, of any student, parent/guardian or family member
- Denigration, public or private, of political or religious institutions or their leaders
- Intentional violation of any local, state, or federal law
- Driving under the influence of alcohol
- Possession of illegal substances

Any individual aware of such behavior is responsible to report it immediately to the Site Coordinator and/or Executive Director. Any unacceptable behavior, as specified but not limited to the above, will result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension or termination from participation in the mentoring program.

- **Match Closure**

It is the policy of Affinity Mentoring that all mentors and students participate in closure procedures when their match ends. Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship regardless of the circumstances of the match ending or whether they intend to have future contact informally beyond the match duration.

Closure can occur for any number of reasons including that the contracted match duration has ended, one or both participants do not want to continue the match, there are changes in life circumstances in one or both of the match partner's lives, or an individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation. Hence, the match may end at the discretion of the mentor, student, parent/guardian, and/or program staff. It is left to the discretion of the program staff whether an individual will be reassigned to another match in the future based upon past participation performance and current goals and needs of the program.

While no party is expected to continue the relationship beyond the formal end of a match, future contact is possible when at the mutual and informal agreement of the mentor, the mentee and parent/guardian. Even if future contact is agreed upon by these parties, Affinity Mentoring will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has formally ended. Program Staff will verbally and in writing inform all parties—the mentor, student, and parent/guardian—that the formal match has ended and that Affinity Mentoring will not be liable for any incidences that occur after the match has closed.

- **Social Media**

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contract employees, volunteers, and board members.

Definition

Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content on the Internet. This includes your own or someone else's blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) etc. This applies whether or not it is associated or affiliated with Affinity Mentoring, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

Policy

Affinity Mentoring's employees and volunteers will represent themselves and the Agency with a high level of integrity and professionalism in the workplace and in public, including social media, internet and online conduct, during both professional and personal use.

Employees and volunteers are solely responsible for what they post online, understanding that regardless of personal privacy protection efforts- the content is still public. Any conduct that adversely affects one's job performance, the performance of fellow employees or otherwise adversely affects participants, partners, people who work on behalf of Affinity Mentoring or the organization's legitimate interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

In compliance with the Social Media Policy, Agency employees, independent contractors, volunteers, board and advisory council members will:

1. Adhere to all agency policies and federal requirements.

- a. Follow the organizations' Confidentiality Policy, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and all other policies. Comply with FERPA and HIPAA regulations at all times. Refrain from posting confidential and identifiable information, including pictures or videos, about a current or former Affinity Mentoring staff member, volunteer, student/student family, or constituent without their expressed or written approval.
- b. Obey financial disclosure laws. It is illegal to communicate or give a "tip" on inside information regarding Affinity Mentoring or business partners in your role as an employee or volunteer of Affinity Mentoring.
- c. Do not use Affinity Mentoring trademarks or other intellectual property for commercial use without permission.
- d. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for Affinity Mentoring unless you have

been expressly authorized to speak on behalf of the company. If you do publish a blog or post online comments related to the work you do or subjects associated with Affinity Mentoring, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of Affinity Mentoring.

- e. Do not use Affinity Mentoring email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use. Please be aware that our Monitoring in the Workplace Policy applies to all communications on company provided computer systems, telephone systems, mobile phones, tablets or other communication devices.
- f. All CPS and APS state and federal policies for reporting suspected abuse also apply to all online content, whether recorded and/or not.

2. Post only appropriate and responsible content.

- a. Always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, constituents or people who work on behalf of Affinity Mentoring. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, cyber bullying and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- b. Complaints are more likely resolved by speaking directly with the appropriate employee, supervisor, manager or HR representative than by posting complaints to a social media outlet.
- c. If you do post complaints or criticism avoid using statements, photographs, video, or audio that could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage Affinity Mentoring constituents, or that might constitute prohibited harassment. Examples include offensive or maliciously false posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment as stated in the organization's Anti-Harassment Policy.

3. Maintain an appropriate audience to protect personal and professional boundaries.

- a. Employees and volunteers are discouraged from giving access to their personal account (e.g. "friending") to the following: current or former students/mentees, mentors or donors. If possible and appropriate, try to encourage the student to communicate to Affinity staff or volunteers outside of their personal social media account.
- b. When using social media as a communication tool with current or former Affinity Mentoring staff, student/student family, or constituents - employees and volunteers will:
 - i. First obtain expressed permission from the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) to use the social media account to communicate or be "friends" with the student.
 - ii. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Affinity Mentoring."
 - iii. Document in the case records when communication has taken place over private social media accounts with a student/student's family, volunteer, or constituents
 - iv. If there is any question about appropriateness the employee or volunteer will seek the guidance of their supervisor.

4. Ensure that online activities do not interfere with the job or constituent commitments.

- a. Excessive or inappropriate use of social media in the workplace that inhibits

work performance and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

All allegations of inappropriate conduct or content will be thoroughly investigated.

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact Human Resources or the Site Coordinator.

2.14 COVID-19 Related Policies and Procedures

As long as COVID-19 safety policies continue to be established by the federal government, the State of Michigan government, and/or the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Executive Director and/or the administrative team in an off-site location is responsible for disseminating the most up to date information to employees, volunteers, community members and partners. All employees and volunteers are required to follow all policies established, and any employee or volunteer participating in activities at a remote site agrees to abide by all COVID-19 related policies at the remote site. Failure to comply with these policies given by Affinity Mentoring employees and/or by on-site administration and staff can result in an employee or volunteer being asked to leave the site, and/or the employee or volunteer no longer being allowed to participate in mentoring activities.

For general information regarding COVID-19 policies and procedures at Affinity Mentoring locations, please refer to the following documents:

- [Godfrey-Lee Public Schools Preparedness and Response Plan](#)
- [Grand Rapids Public Schools Preparedness and Response Plan](#)
- [State of Michigan Return to School Roadmap/Recommendations](#)
- [COVID-19 Preparedness & Response Plan For Lower and Medium Exposure Risk Employers provided by MIOSHA](#)

Based on the most up to date information, we recommend that all volunteers plan to:

- Bring a mask and/or be prepared to receive and wear a mask
- Regularly wash hands for at least 20 seconds
- Practice safe social distancing practices
- Bring 60% or higher alcohol content hand sanitizer and/or regularly use hand sanitizer provided on site
- Complete a symptoms checklist and/or provide contact information in the case of a suspected outbreak before entering the site

2.15 Critical Incident Management Plan

Purpose

A Critical Incident is any situation that is threatening or could threaten to harm people or property, seriously interrupt business, significantly damage reputation and/or cause the organization financial harm.

Prior to Allegation/Incident

The Critical Incident Management Team includes the Executive Director, Site Coordinator, Development Director and, if necessary, the Board President.

All employees and volunteers are educated on what to do should a critical incident occur.

Immediate Safety

Staff and volunteers will follow all safety plans, mandated reporting requirements and contact the authorities as appropriate.

If the accused person is an employee or volunteer, follow progressive discipline procedures accordingly. This may involve suspending the accused during the investigation.

When applicable, notify other employees or school staff.

Emergency Procedure

Type of Emergency	Standard Procedure(s)* (See below)
Community/External Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Closing / Delayed Opening • Lock Down • 911 • AM Incident Report
Hazardous Materials / Infection Control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodily fluid spill • Infestation / Exposure • Poison Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure Reduction • Safe Clean-Up Practices • 911 • AM Incident Report
Medical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid • 911 • AM Incident Report
Motor Vehicle Collision during a program related activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek safety and First Aid, as necessary • 911 • AM Incident Report
Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow Abuse Prevention and Reporting Policy and Procedure • File DHS-3200 • AM Incident Report, if accused is an employee or volunteer
Student/Staff/Volunteer Emergency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fight on the property of AM Mentor Center • Threat to staff/volunteer/student with a weapon • Suicidal Ideation/Threat/Attempt • Individual refusing to leave • Firearm on premises • Police Involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis Intervention • Early Closing / Delayed Opening • Evacuation • Lockdown • 911 • AM Incident Report
Weather / Disaster <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood • Fire • Power outage • Severe Weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Closing / Delayed Opening • Weather Emergency Procedure per building requirements

Note: The Site Coordinator should be informed of all emergencies as soon as it is safe/possible to do so and a written incident report, if applicable, (see below) should be written within 24 hours. The Site Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the Critical Incident Management Team is notified of all incidents in a timely manner.

[Volunteer Responsibilities]

Volunteers are to use their best judgment in emergency situations to ensure the safety of volunteers and participants. When a crisis is developing, or a situation is escalating, volunteers are expected to notify the Site Coordinator or another Affinity staff member as soon as possible. Volunteers should follow instructions from Affinity staff.

[Employee Responsibilities]

Affinity Mentoring Employees hold the primary responsibility for assessing the potential for an emergency and creating a proactive plan to address it. During Mentoring hours, the Site Coordinator will coordinate incoming information and be the final decision maker, with input from the team, when possible. During other operating hours, all staff on duty should consult, if possible, and intervene as necessary. The Executive Director should be informed and consulted, as soon as possible, and may step into the decision maker role.

[Standard Procedures] Crisis Intervention

Prevention and early intervention are key to avoiding escalation between participants. Employees and volunteers may engage in a variety of techniques designed to distract, de-escalate or intervene. This may include removing the audience (other participants), asking the involved participants to move into another part of the building, taking the individual for a walk outside, etc. Employees/Volunteers should not physically intervene by touching or using their body as a blockade. The Site Coordinator is to be included in all decision making around crisis intervention, as soon and as safely possible.

If the physical altercation is deemed too unsafe to intervene, all efforts should be made to secure the space and await school security personnel and/or law enforcement. If a weapon of any kind is observed or threatened, employees/volunteers will not intervene, and this should be immediately communicated to law enforcement.

Employees/volunteers cannot physically force a member from the Mentor Center. If a member refuses to leave and continues to escalate, the school security personnel or law enforcement has the only authority to remove them from the Mentor Center.

911

Any Affinity Mentoring employee/volunteer should feel empowered to make the decision to call 911 in an emergency. No pre-consultation is required.

Evacuation

In some situations, it may be appropriate for everyone to evacuate the building. When directed by PA system or staff, everyone must move quietly to the appropriate exit. Do not stop at lockers for coats or other personal property and do not lock room doors. Staff/volunteers should assemble at the designated area, away from the building (predetermined site). When all staff has been accounted for, proceed to the designated evacuation site and take attendance. Keep record of all students who are released to their parents. Check with Public Safety/Security Department to verify site location.

Lock Down

In the case of a community safety issue or other emergency, a lock down may be necessary. Employees/volunteers/participants will follow the building's lock down procedure. An announcement from PA system will be made. All external doors should be locked and remain closed to incoming traffic. Staff will turn off lights. Students should be instructed to get on the floor in a sitting or crouching position, away from windows and doors. Keep students quiet and do not make any phone calls. Do not leave the classroom or allow students to leave. Staff will remain in place until the "All Clear" is given. Staff briefing and assessment will take place at end of the day.

Early Closing / Delayed Opening

Early closing or delayed opening may be used for a variety of reasons but the benefits and costs should be weighed out carefully and the decision should be clearly posted (front door, social media, etc.) with specific re-opening details. Typically, all Affinity Mentoring events will be cancelled when the affiliated partner school is closed.

Tornado

Employees/volunteers/participants will follow the building's tornado procedure. When directed by PA system of staff, turn off lights and close doors and windows. Take class attendance books and walk to designated area. Staff and students will get down on their knees, face the appropriate wall, and place their hands over their heads. If outside and unable to get indoors, seek shelter in a ditch, ravine, or open field. Return to room when the "all clear" is given. If warning is given at dismissal time, hold all students until all-clear is given.

On-Call Structure

When the Site Coordinator is not available (vacation, illness, etc.), the Executive Director should be notified of all incidents requiring supervisory notification. If the Executive Director is also not available, the responsible party shall contact the Development Director or other designated individual.

Abuse/Neglect of a Minor

See Affinity Mentoring Volunteer Handbook- 2.9 Abuse And Misconduct Prevention And Reporting Policy.

Exposure Reduction

When there are concerns about exposure to infectious disease staff/volunteers/students should report immediately to the school nurse and be sure to use universal precautions.

Employees/volunteers/participants will follow the building's exposure reduction procedure. This could include wearing gloves or long sleeve shirts, washing all clothing/soft items in hot water, encouraging students to shower, using disinfectants and/or sanitizer, etc. Open sores should be washed and covered with a bandage or clothing. Bed bug infestation can be prevented by washing all soft items in hot water, encouraging Students to shower and sealing all exposed items in a plastic bag. Sharps should be placed in a designated sharps container. Universal clean up practices should be used in any situation where bodily fluids are present. This includes wearing gloves, covering exposed skin and using disinfectant cleaners. Cleaning materials should be bagged individually, sealed and immediately removed to the external trash receptacle.

First Aid

In the event of a life-threatening accident or condition, immediately dial 911. Do not assume that someone else has already called 911. Notify the Site Coordinator or other Affinity staff member immediately in the case of any accident or illness, even if it seems to be minor. Affinity staff will administer first aid, if trained. The school First Aid policy/procedure should also be followed. For example, school staff [i.e., school nurse or security staff] should also be notified if the incident occurred at the school.

[Recovery After Emergency]

External Communications

Some emergencies may require a coordinated response to the community. This could include anything from signage on the door, a changed voicemail or communication with the media. External communication plans should be made by, or in coordination with, the Site Coordinator, Executive Director, and/or Development Director.

Incident Reports

A written incident report is required following any emergency or incident. The staff who observed the initiation of the incident is responsible for ensuring the completion of an accurate incident report. This may require consultation with all staff/volunteers involved. Reports are due to your direct supervisor within 24 hours of the incident.

Communication Plan

The Executive Director or other authorized person will respond to all inquiries from parents, the media, and other stakeholders.

All employees and volunteers should refer media inquiries to the Executive Director or Development Director.