



Mazie Mentoring Program – FAQ's

What makes the Mazie Program different from other programs at BBBS?

While all BBBS programs aim to strengthen community and uplift youth through one-to-one mentoring relationships, the Mazie program specifically matches volunteers with high school students. As a goal-oriented program, Mazie mentors help foster students' ambitions by supporting them on both short and long-term goals. Depending on the mentee, these goals may range anywhere from participating in a community service event, trying out for a sports team, or applying for college scholarships. Mazie mentors and staff members help prepare youth for life after high school graduation.

Why should I apply to be a Mazie Mentor?

Everyone needs support and trusting relationships to grow into confident adults. Whether you did or did not have these aspects growing up, the power that encouragement holds is immeasurable. This program is not required or obligatory for students to participate in. Every Mazie mentee wants to be in the program because they aspire to grow and lead successful lives. Many of our mentees are the first in their family to attend higher education, come from low-income backgrounds, and/or live in one-parent households.

Both mentors and mentees benefit from the Mazie program. Strong mentorship leads to an increase in graduation rates, decreased risks for suicide, decreased crime and incarceration rates, and increased mental, emotional, social, and psychological well-being. It only takes one person to make a positive, lifelong impact.

What makes a good candidate for becoming a Mazie Mentor?

Mazie mentors **must be at least 21 years of age, be a high school graduate (or equivalent), and have a driver's license.** An ideal mentor is someone who understands the power of investing in youth, believes that stronger communities lead to brighter futures for all, and can provide support for children to grow into authentic and capable individuals. Volunteers who are committed to forming genuine connections and providing empathy have an amazing opportunity to make a substantial impact in a youth's life.

Volunteers do not need to be experts in youth development or education to be excellent mentors. Mazie staff members provide training before and during the match; moreover, mentors have the option to receive additional training and support if needed. Being present, consistent, and showing up as one's genuine self are the most important qualities as a mentor.

What is the time commitment as a Mazie Mentor?

After completing the application and interview process, mentors are matched with a sophomore student. Since we want to ensure that our youth are receiving adequate, long-term mentorship, volunteers are asked to commit until their mentees graduate, making it a 2.5/3 year commitment. Although volunteers generally meet with their mentee 4 hours a month, mentors and mentees decide when and where they want to meet. With this flexibility, many volunteers balance full-time jobs and family responsibilities while being a Mazie mentor.

What does a typical week as a Mazie Mentor look like?

For the first year of the match, Mazie staff members contact the mentor every month via phone call, text, or email to check in to see how things are going. Since Mazie participants have monthly commitments rather than weekly commitments, no two match relationships look the same! While some matches are in contact every week, other matches schedule to meet every other week. Mazie matches engage in community service events together, plan out personal and academic

goals, and attend staff hosted events such as Senior Celebration Night. Although this is a goal-oriented program, the most important aspect is bonding and relationship-building. Many of our matches go on nature walks, play sports together, go out to eat, or drive around and talk. The opportunities are endless and like any relationship, it takes time, patience, and fun.