



# Country Boys

A film by  
David Sutherland

## Fact Sheet: Mentoring

### Quick Facts:

- 57 million Americans would consider being a mentor.
- 88% of these potential mentors would like to choose from a variety of different ways to mentor.
- 84% want orientation, training and access to expert help when they need it.
- 59% of mentors in formal mentoring relationships got involved as a result of being asked by a friend, family member or business associate.

### At a Glance: Mentoring in the United States:

- 17.6 million young Americans not only need mentors, they want mentors.
  - 2.5 million are already in mentoring relationships.
  - 15.1 million kids make up what we call our nation's "mentoring gap" – that is, they are still waiting for mentors.
- Mentors are caring individuals, who, along with parents or guardians, help young people build character by offering support, counsel and friendship.
- Mentoring is not a "one-size-fits-all" proposition.
  - Each child's needs are unique and require unique approaches.
  - Mentoring today offers many options: Traditional one-to-one \* Team \* Group \* Peer \* E-mentoring
- Today, more than 4,100 mentoring initiatives across the U.S. are helping young people. They can be found in: Schools \* Faith communities \* Communities-at-large \* Workplace \* Online
- The best mentoring programs subscribe to the *Elements of Effective Practice*, which include a complete commitment to child safety.
- In May 2003, MENTOR launched SafetyNET, a pilot program of the PROTECT Act signed into law by President Bush that same month. SafetyNET ensures greater safety for children by enabling mentoring programs across the country to access FBI fingerprint background checks.
- Adults find being a mentor very rewarding: 99% of mentors in formal mentoring relationships would recommend mentoring to others.
- Anyone can be a MENTOR! Find your local mentoring organization by entering your ZIP code on Mentor's national database [http://www.mentoring.org/mentors/find\\_an\\_opportunity/index.php](http://www.mentoring.org/mentors/find_an_opportunity/index.php) or call 1-888 432-MENTOR.

Information provided by Country Boys National Partner: MENTOR. For more information on the Country Boys Community Engagement Campaign and National Partners go to [www.itvs.org/outreach/countryboys](http://www.itvs.org/outreach/countryboys).



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## Fact Sheet: Disconnected Youth

An estimated 2.8 million Americans between the ages of 16 and 24 face major barriers to employment, and are therefore at risk of long-term disconnection from the communities in which they live. This figure includes high school dropouts who are jobless, high school graduates who are unemployed and have stopped looking for work, and youth whose employment prospects are bleak because they are incarcerated, homeless, or exiting foster care.

### This group of young people faces many challenges:

**Education:** Between 20 and 25 percent of today's 14-year-olds will drop out of high school; approximately half of them will return to school and earn their diploma or obtain a GED by the time they reach age 25. The median income of a high school dropout is \$18,000, compared to \$25,000 for a high school graduate.

**Employment:** In 2003, a total of 5.7 million youth between the ages of 16 and 24 (including the 2.8 million disconnected youth described above) were both out of school and out of work. The proportion of all teens (ages 16-19) who held jobs in 2003 was at its lowest level since the end of World War II; only two-thirds of young adults (ages 20-24) were employed during the year.

**Foster Care:** About 20,000 youth ages 16 and older make the transition from foster care to legal emancipation each year. Four years after leaving foster care, 46 percent of young people lack a high school diploma, 25 percent have experienced homelessness, 42 percent have become parents, and fewer than one in five is completely self-supporting.

**Justice System:** Nearly 100,000 young people are incarcerated in the juvenile or adult corrections facilities, and many others in the community are on probation or parole. Sixteen percent of all high school dropouts between the ages of 18 and 24 (and 30 percent of all black dropouts in this age group) are incarcerated or on parole.

**Teen Parenting:** An estimated 18 percent of today's 15-year-old girls will give birth before age 20. In 2002, there were 431,988 births to teens in the United States, a decline of nearly 20 percent since 1990. Approximately one in every three teen mothers is a dropout.

**Mental Health:** Between 50 and 75 percent of incarcerated youth are estimated to have a diagnosable mental health disorder.

**Information provided by Country Boys National Partner:** National League of Cities. To view NLC's Action Kit for Municipal Leaders for Reengaging Disconnected Youth go to <http://www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF-Action%20Kit-DY%20Youth.pdf>



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## Fact Sheet: Teen and Family Substance Abuse

- Teenagers whose parents talk to them regularly about the dangers of drugs are 42% less likely to use drugs than those whose parents don't, yet only 1 in 4 teens reports having these conversations. <sup>1</sup>
- Alcohol is the most commonly used drug among young people. <sup>2</sup>
- 40% of those who started drinking at age 14 or younger later developed alcohol dependence, compared with 10% of those who began drinking at age 20 or older. <sup>2</sup>
- 65% of the youth who drink alcohol report that they get the alcohol they drink from family and friends. <sup>2</sup>
- By the 8th grade, 52% of adolescents have consumed alcohol, 41% have smoked cigarettes, and 20% have used marijuana. <sup>2</sup>
- In 2000, more than 60% of teens said drugs were used, kept, or sold at their school. <sup>3</sup>
- 50% of high school seniors report drinking alcohol in the past 30 days with 32% report being drunk at least once in the same period. <sup>2</sup>
- Most people begin smoking as adolescents. Among youths who smoke, the average age of initiation is 12.5 years of age. <sup>2</sup>
- Children of alcoholics (COAs) are four times more likely than non-COAs to develop alcoholism. <sup>4</sup>
- Almost 1 in 5 adult Americans (18%) lived with an alcoholic while growing up. <sup>4</sup>
- One in 4 children under 18 years old in the United States lives with a chemically dependent parent. <sup>5</sup>
- Children of substance abusers are the highest risk group for alcohol and illicit drug dependence and are exposed to a variety of ills such as depression, anxiety, problems with cognitive and verbal skills, parent abuse or neglect, and school failure. <sup>5</sup>
- 14 million Americans are considered problem drinkers (including 8 million who have alcoholism) and 76 million people who are exposed to alcoholism in family settings. <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Partnership For A Drug-Free America

<sup>2</sup> Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health Problem

<sup>3</sup> National Survey of Substance Abuse Attitudes, Feb. 2001

<sup>4</sup> National Association for Children of Alcoholics <http://www.nacoa.net/impfacts.htm>

<sup>5</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services and SAMSHA's National Clearing House for Alcohol and Drug information.  
<http://www.health.org/features/kidsarea/harrypotter/>

<sup>6</sup> National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence NCADD  
[http://kidshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/families/coping\\_alcoholic.html](http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/families/coping_alcoholic.html)