



"You were like a friend, I could share with you anything. I don't know how to thank you, but any time you want I'll be there for you."

– C4K Student

Exceptional Mentoring: Making a Difference One Student at a Time

Mentoring is a powerful tool for helping youth believe in their own abilities and meet their potential. Computers4Kids (C4K) recognizes this and has created a winning combination: after-school mentoring that enables students to develop the technology skills essential to success in academic and career settings. Our mentors are dedicated volunteers and caring role models that support and encourage at-risk middle and high school students as they challenge themselves to acquire new technology skills and create personally meaningful technology projects.

- Every C4K student meets one-on-one with their mentor for an hour a week for at least 9 months. Last year, 113 dedicated volunteer mentors provided over 2,800 hours of mentoring to 132 students.
- The structure of C4K's mentoring program is based on best practices espoused by the National Mentoring Partnership. C4K mentors receive training before and after being matched, students and mentors meet frequently over a long period of time, a high level of supervision is provided by staff, and the program is driven by the needs and expectations of our students.
- Research shows mentored youth are more likely to have fewer absences from school, better attitudes towards education, fewer incidents of hitting others, less drug and alcohol use, more positive attitudes towards their elders, and improved relationships with their parents.
- C4K was honored to receive the Virginia Mentoring Partnership's 2006 award for Best Mentoring Program in Virginia.

What do Computers4Kids Mentors Do?

We laugh, we joke, we play games, we have fun. We also learn, discuss, and sometimes we even debate. Sometimes I'm a friend, sometimes I'm a big sister, and sometimes I'm an instructor. I laugh at the jokes I'm told, I answer "why" a LOT, I try to challenge intellectually, I even have had to have discussions about manners. But whatever else I am during the visits, my main hope and goal is that I will always be a positive influence. Even after our sessions are over, even after graduation, even after they are all grown up... my positive influence will always be there. And maybe, one day, they will be a mentor too. – Kar, C4K Mentor

Meeting a Community Need

In a locality where there is a demonstrated lack of adequate after-school programming for older, low-income youth, C4K is meeting a critical need. An astonishing 54% of youth living in Charlottesville qualify for free or reduced price school lunches, and according to the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families, this number is growing. Youth who live in homes with fewer resources have less access to technology, are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, and are more likely to drop out of high school. Local and national experts, as well as parents and youth in our community, have recognized that access to after school programming is a much needed protective factor for our youth. Mentoring in particular, is a powerful tool for helping students believe in

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their own abilities and meet their potential. C4K recognizes this as well, and has created a winning combination: after-school mentoring that enables students to develop the technology skills essential to success in academic and career settings

Community Support: Your Impact

You can make a direct impact on the life of a local student by investing in C4K. In addition to a track record for program success, C4K has a history of effectively drawing on community resources to both raise funds and keep costs low through donations of in-kind services. C4K's annual operating budget is below \$500,000. 90 cents out of every dollar donated to C4K goes directly to program costs and services provided to deserving students. The dedication and generosity of our supporters is what sustains our efforts to give students a vibrant learning environment and knowledgeable support system so that they have every chance of success. We need your help to continue actively breaking the cycle of poverty, not only preventing students from dropping out of high school to face unemployment, low wage jobs, or worse, but also helping students to realize their full potential and make a positive contribution to our local community.

