About Us: Tutor/Mentor Connection (T/MC)
A program of Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC http://www.tutormentorexchange.net

Local/Global mission – The Tutor/Mentor Connection (T/MC) was created in late 1992 by seven volunteers, who were starting a new Cabrini Connections tutor/mentor program in Chicago, as a commitment to help teens living in the Cabrini-Green area connect with adult volunteers who would help these teens move through school and into jobs and careers. **While launching this tutor/mentor program, the organizers also created the Tutor/Mentor Connection (T/MC), to provide leadership to efforts that would help programs like Cabrini Connections get the resources they need to thrive in every poverty neighborhood of a big city like Chicago. Through the Internet, the T/MC is now connecting with mentoring and career development program organizers throughout the world. In 2011 the T/MC became part of Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC, which is creating products, services and events to support T/MC type organizations in Chicago and other cities.**

Areas of high poverty and poorly performing schools are where volunteer-based tutor/mentor programs are needed. Light pink areas have poverty concentrations of 20% or higher. Dark red areas have poverty levels of 40% and above. Icons show schools on the 2007 No Child Left Behind poorly performing schools list. Other icons show locations of existing organizations offering tutoring and/or mentoring in non-school hours. This map is one of the products/services developed by the Tutor/Mentor Connection to support the growth of tutor/mentor programs in different parts of Chicago. Through the Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC tools like this can be developed and used by any leadership and community network in Chicago, or any other city with high concentrations of urban poverty.

If you would like to become a partner or volunteer of any tutor/mentor program in Chicago, you may search the interactive program map at [http://www.tutormentorprogramlocator.net](http://www.tutormentorprogramlocator.net) or the links library at [http://tinyurl.com/TMI-ChiProgramLinks](http://tinyurl.com/TMI-ChiProgramLinks) to locate programs near where you live or work.

If you would like to help the T/MC support this work, visit [http://www.tutormentorexchange.net](http://www.tutormentorexchange.net) or email tutormentor2@earthlink.net
Q – What is the mission of the Tutor Mentor Connection (T/MC)?
A – The mission of the T/MC is to provide an organized framework that empowers and encourages adult volunteers to contribute their time, effort, ideas and advocacy toward creating life-changing solutions for children in educationally and economically disadvantaged areas. Through the T/MC we seek to gather and organize all that is known about successful non-school tutor/mentor programs and share that knowledge to expand the availability and enhance the effectiveness of these services to children in inner city Chicago and other high poverty areas. View strategy map showing vision of helping kids in poverty move through school and into jobs and careers. [tinyurl.com/tmc-strategy-map]

Q – How is our mission accomplished?
A – We use a four part strategy. First, we collect knowledge from key stakeholders about volunteer-based tutor/mentor programs: how programs succeed, where programs are located, and where more programs and resources are needed. Then, we aggressively share this knowledge through the Internet, using email marketing, social media and public awareness campaigns. We continually extend this knowledge and collaboration among stakeholders in business and the non profit sector. This leads to a better understanding of the long-term, integrated actions needed to help children and youth move from a birth in poverty to jobs and careers. The result is a more consistent flow of volunteers, dollars, and other needed resources to every K-12 tutor/mentor program in the Chicago area, as well as in other cities with this strategy. View 4-Part Strategy map - [tinyurl.com/TMI-4-Pt-Strategy]

Q – What impact can you have in your community?
A – We are helping to expand the network of adults supporting children living in high poverty areas, as a strategy to improve education outcomes and help prepare youth for jobs and careers. In many places, tutors and mentors are acting as extended family, helping these children stay in school until they graduate. Programs that keep volunteers connected to kids also help kids have a network of adults who can provide access to jobs and help with careers, as youth reach this stage in their lives. By helping these young people, we are helping the community by providing safe places for youth to gather during non-school hours and keeping them from making the wrong choices that a lot of these kids are tempted to make.

Q – What do we do to attract businesses and professionals to become mentors?
A – We help tutor/mentor programs recruit volunteers from Chicago area companies and give them support so many will stay with the program for two or more years. Many then become leaders who recruit other volunteers. Through this strategy, we aim to recruit “champions” in every industry who will use their advertising and visibility to encourage employees, customers, and suppliers to become involved in tutor/mentor programs throughout the region. We also organize events throughout the year that promote visibility and encourage volunteers to join tutor/mentor programs. We also have a large email database with good contact information. We use this network to let business and professional leaders know how they can impact Chicago area communities by volunteering to be a tutor/mentor and how they can develop relationships with students over several years to become key employees for their business. See how CEOs can support this strategy. Read Role of Leaders PDF - [tinyurl.com/TMI-RoleOfLeaders]

Q – How do the businesses/professionals benefit from participating?
A – A company develops public good will by giving something positive to the community. They help underprivileged children become successful in their education and guide them towards a better future. In return these children may end up working for the tutor/mentor’s company. Volunteering enriches the life of a mentor as much as that of the child. Many companies recognize that volunteer involvement increases employee productivity, helps to build leadership skills, expands informal networks and helps develop new talents. As volunteers learn new skills and network with others in their companies and industries, they become more valuable employees. Read more articles showing benefit to business and employees. [tinyurl.com/TMI-BenefitsToBusiness]

Q – How long should businesses/professionals commit to mentoring the students?
A – The Tutor/Mentor Connection focuses on building strong, long-lasting programs or places in a neighborhood where youth and volunteers can connect and where many other learning and enrichment activities can be offered. Such structures support longer term involvement of youth and volunteers. They also enable youth to have a sequence of tutors over the five to ten years in a program and make it possible for volunteers who may only be active for one or two years to stay involved with the youth and the program for a lifetime. This structure expands the network of adults who can help youth finish high school or college and look for job interviews and career support. Companies who understand the role of long-term programs will reap greater benefits. See Ideas for Supporting Tutor/Mentor Program Growth in Multiple locations. [tinyurl.com/TMI-TippingPoint]

Q – How is the Internet used to support the work of the Tutor/Mentor Connection?
A – The T/MC uses the Internet as a library to support innovation and process improvement, as well as a meeting place for networking and collaboration. The T/MC links library includes information that shows how and why tutor/mentor programs are needed, how volunteers can be more effective tutors and mentors, and shows program models that provide effective support to youth in various parts of the world. This information is intended to be used to benchmark programs against other programs, and to stimulate on-going efforts that lead to a constant improvement of the quality of every tutor/mentor program in the Chicago region. By hosting this information on the Internet, the T/MC makes it available to millions of users, including business, media, philanthropy, and education leaders. By using the Internet as a meeting place, the T/MC connects leaders from many parts of the city and the world with each other in an on-going process of learning and collaboration which enables greater resource sharing and increases problem solving capacity. View T/MC Library Concept Map - [tinyurl.com/TMI-library]

Q – What is the role of Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC (T/MI)?
A – The Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC was created in 2011 to support continued growth of the T/MC in Chicago and to help similar structures grow in other cities. T/MI is a business that collects and organizes information and provides strategies that are used by a T/MC network. The T/MI builds platforms like the Chicago Tutor/Mentor Program Locator, the Tutor/Mentor Institute library, the OHATS documentation systems, etc. that can be adopted in many cities without the costs of building such platforms. In addition, the T/MI seeks to incubate other businesses who develop products and services that support youth tutoring, mentoring programs and family support systems in high poverty neighborhoods or who will partner with T/MI to offer events such as the May/June and November Tutor/Mentor Leader’s Day and Network Sessions, and/or support on-line learning and social media strategies, that draw attention to tutor/mentor programs while drawing programs together to network and learn from each other. See [tinyurl.com/TutorMentorInstitute]

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