



How To Get Started as a “Big Friend” Mentor at Ford Early in our “Read With Kids” Program

To join our “Read With Kids” program as a volunteer, we ask that you become familiar with the following steps, and complete them before you start working directly with kids and teachers.

Note: This location requires covid vaccination. Masking may also be required.

1. Your first step in getting started is to meet our Executive Director, Tim Wilson. After you email Tim to let him know of your interest, he will contact you for a Zoom meeting. At that time you will also meet Amanda James-Bennett, our Volunteer Program Coordinator, who will walk you through steps 2-5!
2. Next, we ask that you select a date to join us and our partners from the Children’s Literacy Network via Zoom for a 45 minute orientation/training session. We offer four dates for the session, you need to choose only one. When you do, please email us with your choice and we’ll confirm with a return email. The available dates for orientation/training are:

Tuesday, October 4th at 5:30 pm
Monday, October 10th at 1 pm

Thursday, October 6th at 10:00 am
Wednesday, October 12th at 10 am

3. Next, we ask that you fill out three required forms and return them to us. You can find the forms at the link on our volunteer website page: “Forms to Fill Out Before Mentoring”. The first one is a WP waiver of liability and media release that requires only a small amount of information and your signature. The second form is a confidentiality agreement required by Ypsilanti Community Schools (YCS) and also needs only your signature. The third is a clearance form required by law that we submit to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). That one requires a copy of your driver’s license—both sides—and your signature, which must match the signature on your driver’s license!!
4. Next, it is very important that you view the three “Mentor Training Videos” found on the volunteer page on our website, within your first two weeks of volunteering. These training videos (less than two hours total) have been created by Katie Watson, Behavioral Specialist at Beatty Early Learning Center, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, Surgeon General of California, and our consultants from the Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD). While watching, please jot down any questions or thoughts you may have. We will be debriefing with you to discuss your reactions. We also strongly encourage you to review “Key Points from Trainings” on our volunteer website page.
5. Finally, please add your name, contact info, hours of availability, and any other optional info to the document, “A Little About You” found on the volunteer page. This information will be public to all our volunteers. It will help us get to know you better and to schedule your volunteer time. We will always contact you via email to answer your questions and to keep you informed of important info to come.

We’re very excited to be working with you and very grateful for your commitment! We’re also looking forward to meeting you in person at Ford and will be so happy to welcome you to the program. See you at the orientation/training!