

TOUCH POINT CONNECTION

COACHING SUPPORT FOR AT-RISK TEENS

October 2008

Re: Overview of Touch Point Connection Coaching Program & Typical Collaboration Frameworks

Overview

Touch Point Connection (TPC) is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit coaching organization dedicated to supporting underserved teens and young adults by providing them free, on-going coaching support using community volunteers trained in professional coaching methods.

- We provide this coaching to at-risk teens during their high school years and we continue to offer them coaching support after graduation, to help ensure a successful transition into continuing education and/or job training.
- We provide these services through collaborations with youth-serving organizations such as high schools and community colleges.
- We fund, manage, and facilitate the entire program for our collaboration partners, providing the trained community volunteers and coaching expertise, thus minimizing the time and resources impact on our collaborators.

Our goal is for underserved teens to graduate from high school and for them to complete enough education and/or training to be able to attain sufficient life and workplace skills to earn a living wage.

The Touch Point Connection Vision

Touch Point Connection's vision is for all students who need a coach to have a coach.

Our plan for growth:

- 2008-2009 school year: Conduct 1 well-executed and well-supported demonstration site to collect data and prove the impact of coaching. Also, to establish the transition links at the community college level.
- 2009-2010: Expand the program within the demonstration site school and school district, as well as regionally in the demonstration site area.
- 2010-2011: Begin offering the program nationally through affiliated chapters

The Case for Coaching

We believe that many dropouts are *capable* kids who simply stop coming to school when life becomes overwhelming or school no longer makes sense to them.

Many teens are living in unstable environments and encounter overwhelming situations daily.

- Teachers cannot teach students who are not focused, motivated, nor even in school.
- Many teens fall behind in their studies and lose all hope of catching up.
- Many teens set no goals because they see no future.
- Many teens consider school irrelevant, not seeing the connection between choices they make now and their future possibilities.

The Case for Skilled Community Volunteers

Often community members are willing school volunteers, but unable to contribute with impact without significant training and coordination by schools/districts. TPC and its staff have a history of working in collaboration with schools and districts and assumes these training and coordination functions for this coaching program.

Through this collaboration, schools receive the benefits of skilled, capable volunteers who serve a clear and defined role that supports academic achievement. Additionally the schools and staff benefit from a high level of community engagement by volunteers who typically are active community members and business leaders.

The Role of the Coach

A TPC coach is a trained community volunteer that believes in the teen and is there to support his/her success. A coach can help a teen uncover goals, create an action plan, and provide support and accountability along the journey.

Within a trusting relationship, a coach is someone who listens and someone to talk to in confidence. Coaches are honest in their feedback, while not judging. A coach may offer a new insight for a teen to see a situation differently or to see additional choices. A coach is there each week, keeping the goal in focus and supporting each step along the journey.

The Teens We Coach

We support teens that need coaches the most:

- Teens who lack safe, stable homes and parental involvement in their lives;
- Teens in the foster care system;
- Teens living in poverty (the Federal free/reduced lunch guidelines);
- Teens who are capable, but not successful in the traditional high school setting; many may already be enrolled in alternative education.

What Touch Point Connection Provides

- Coaching expertise
- Program management
- Volunteer recruitment, training, and monitoring
- Insurance for the program and program volunteers
- Data analysis that is shared with the school/district
- Program funding and collaboration on fund raising for program funding

Volunteer Recruitment, Training, and Program Management

We believe in supporting the work of our public schools by building the skills of community volunteers to enable community volunteers to become involved with the schools as competent Volunteer Coaches for at-risk teens.

- Each Touch Point Connection program is staffed by a regional Program Manager and certified Coach Managers.
 - The Program Manager supervises regional programs, program staff and interfaces with our regional collaborators.
 - TPC Coach Managers are responsible for training, supporting and monitoring Coach Volunteers. Each is a TPC staff member. Each is a professionally

trained coach, certified either by the International Coach Federation (ICF) or is a graduate of an accredited ICF coach training school.

- Touch Point Connection staff screen (in coordination with the district) and train Volunteer Coaches.
 - Each volunteer applicant is required to attend a full day of orientation and training
 - Each volunteer must complete application forms and all procedures that are required by *both* Touch Point Connection and the collaborating school/district. This process involves both the school/district and TPC and is accomplished in coordination. This includes application forms, passing a background check, and typically fingerprinting as well. TPC guides the volunteers through the process.
 - TPC also requests and checks 2 references and conducts a personal interview with each volunteer before any volunteer is matched with a teen.
- Each Volunteer Coach is matched with one teen that is identified for coaching by our school collaborators.
- Each Volunteer Coach is assigned to a certified professional TPC Coach Manager who provides on-going support and monitoring of the coaching progress and teen/volunteer match-up.
- Each actively matched Coach Volunteer is required to submit a monthly report to Touch Point Connection and to hold a monthly check-in call with their Coach Manager.
- Volunteer Coaches are encouraged to attend skill-building workshops that are offered at least monthly during the school year. These workshops have topics such as: establishing a trusting coaching relationship; creating a coaching plan; goal setting; time management; self management; making good choices; and building a network of support.

The Volunteer/Teen Coaching Meeting Logistics

- The Volunteer Coach meets with his/her teen weekly for a 30-45 minute coaching session. These meetings are during the school day, on the school site, during the months when school is in session.
- Volunteers are prohibited from meeting their teens outside of this construct. They are also instructed to restrict all communications to their weekly school-site meetings, with the exception of communications that might be required (by phone, text message or email) to cancel or to change an appointment.
- Volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum of 1 school year of volunteer service.
- Schools may choose to eliminate or restrict coaching meetings during test-prep and test weeks.
- Coaching is suspended during school breaks and summer vacations.

What We Expect from our School/School District Collaborators

A school liaison named to interface with TPC to establish the program, make decisions

with TPC pertaining to the program operations within that school, and then for interface for program operations on an on-going basis.

- We prefer liaison be an administrator or counselor. This person serves as our go-to person, and our single point of contact within the school.
- This person will also serve as our guide and liaison for any interfaces required with students' parents/guardians, e.g. for parental permission for coaching, access to student data, etc.
- This person will be expected to attend and participate in the volunteer training days as the representative of the school administration/counseling staff or to ensure an equally qualified representative does. It is important that the school representative meets potential volunteers and provides training-day instruction to the volunteers on the school's policies and procedures.

Note: All counselors and school staff are invited to attend the volunteer orientation/training days. All counselors and school staff are also invited to attend the monthly skill-building workshops offered to volunteers.

Screening of volunteers: Typically the district assumes the responsibility and costs for background checks and fingerprinting. The volunteers must meet all of the school/district application procedures as well as TPC's application procedures. TPC guides the volunteers through the steps and coordinates as needed with the school/district. (If the district does not require fingerprinting and does not assume that cost, fingerprinting will become a part of the funding and insurance conversation between the District and Touch Point Connection, as we prefer to have volunteers clear both background and fingerprinting checks.)

School/District policies and procedures pertinent to and required of your school/district volunteers, including reportable situations, un-acceptable interaction with minors, campus parking, the school year calendar, etc. Someone from the school who attends each volunteer training to instruct the volunteers on applicable school/district policies and procedures.

Selection of teens appropriate for the coaching program.

Interface with the Program Manager and Coach Managers:

- For any operational issues
- In order to match appropriate teens with a volunteer coach
- Pertaining to any teen/volunteer issue that may arise during the coaching program that needs to be taken back to the school administration or counseling staff

A brief, but intentional periodic check-in with each coached teen to provide a teen an opportunity to surface any issues with their participation in the program.

Attendance check-in person: A contact person for any volunteers who wish to check if their teen is absent before traveling to the school for their coaching meeting.

Hold the Volunteer sign-in/sign-out log in the school reception area for TPC to track volunteer meetings and volunteer hours.

Reception/Hall Pass Person: As may be necessary, someone to call the student from class when their coach arrives and to direct them to their meeting location.

Coaching space in the school for the teen/volunteer coaching meetings conducive

to holding private conversations, absent of interruptions, and without conversations being overheard. (There are several options that can work, while ensuring visual oversight.)

Use of and coordination with TPC on events held at the school and donated use of school/district facilities when possible, e.g. for:

- The 1-hr group meetings where the teen and volunteer coach are introduced. (required and on the school site)
- The volunteer orientation/training day(s); typically 2 per school year (Requested; optimal)
- Monthly volunteer skill-building workshops - 2.5 hours in the evening or on a weekend day. (Requested as possible)
- End of year celebration event with the teens and their coaches (required on the school site)

Note: TPC requests a space contribution from the school/district for these events, but otherwise assumes the costs to conduct these events and activities.

Student Data

To successfully fund this program, potential funders require evidence of results and impact.

For our first year of operation under the Touch Point Connection umbrella (the 2008-2009 school year), we will conduct 1 well run program for which we can:

- Collect student data on attendance, grades, and behavioral/discipline referrals on the coached students for this coaching program year and for their prior school year.
- Conduct one end-of-the-coaching-program written survey (probably on-line) with each of the students who participated in the coaching program.
- Conduct three on-line surveys with each of the volunteer coaches (pre-coaching, mid-year, and end of year).
- And to gather qualitative data, conduct one end-of-year focus group with a few selected students, and another focus group with a few volunteer coaches.

The student surveys and student focus group scripts would be submitted to the district for IRB review and approval. We would also strictly abide by any district requirement for conducting those surveys and for obtaining parental permission for survey and focus group activities.

There will be data collection requirement for future program years, but the specifics have not been determined yet. We expect that we will need to track student results and graduation rates over the long term.

Funding

We believe that coaching programs will improve academic performance by creating relationship and motivation, and by keeping students focused and working toward goals. We also know that district budgets alone cannot fund such programs.

Touch Point Connection works nationally and regionally through staff and local community volunteers to assume the lead position to secure funding to introduce and maintain the TPC coaching programs that serve our school/district collaborators.

We request that our collaborators join with us to identify, apply for, and make approaches to possible funding sources, as is possible. At the least, the school/district must support these fund raising efforts through letters of support and testimonials, and in others ways as possible.

TPC does not cover any school/district costs associated with what we have outlined in the section outlining expectations of our school/district collaborators. If there is additional resource needed to cover those expectations, it will be important for the school/district to also (and possibly jointly) seek funding resources for those.

Costs per student to operate this program are projected to balance out at \$1500 per student per year once we reach a caseload of about 200-300 students, permitting us to amortize fixed costs across a larger service population. Also annual costs decrease with the retention of trained and experienced volunteers. As a result, our initial year-one costs on a per-student basis appear quite high.

Volunteer Match Goals for Year One:

- Amphitheater High School: 30 students (male and female program)

Contacts: www.TouchPointConnection.org