



WHAT IS TOUCH POINT CONNECTION?

Touch Point Connection is a youth-serving organization that uses well-known and proven coaching techniques from the business world to support young adult students for successful outcomes in school, the workplace, and in life.

Touch Point Connection (TPC), a 501c3 non-profit organization was incorporated and received its IRS tax-exempt designation in November 2007. TPC is headquartered in Tucson.

TPC's founder, a certified professional coach, ran an informal two-year coaching program in Seattle, WA. That program coached 40 female students in a small alternative high school.

WHAT WE HOLD TO BE TRUE

- Students want to achieve and to be successful. If they cannot find how to be successful in healthy ways, often they will choose unhealthy ways.
- Many of the issues interfering with a student's focus, motivation, and success are things they see as out of their control. This is what we hear:
 - Mom made me stay home from school to take care of my younger brother and sisters.
 - My mom says I need to quit school and get a job to help support our family.
 - My boyfriend broke up with me and is now dating my best friend. I can't even think about school right now.
 - I have no friends. I hate going to school.
 - I never understand the assignments.
 - I got a D; it is because that teacher has it out for me.

- Many students have lost hope.
 - Many students face these challenging issues alone. They feel powerless over circumstantial issues that interfere with school and then cause them to fall behind. Believing there is no way to recover, many then give up and drop out.
 - Many adults in a student's life have no hope and pass that message on to their children.
 - Some adults dictate a goal that is not the student's goal. The impasse may be insurmountable and disheartening for a youngster.
 - Many students feel that the adults in their lives see them for who and what they are now, not what they believe they can become.
- Many students do not see a way to rise above this dangerous trap and simply give up in resentment and anger, locking those emotions and consequent patterns in, perhaps for life.

THE ROLE OF A COACH OR MENTOR

The role of Touch Point Connection's coaches and mentors is to:

- First and foremost, establish trust and understanding with the teen.
- Help students see they may have broader choices.
- Help students understand their existing strengths.
- Help students regain hope, goals, and vision.
- Help students develop perseverance, first tackling the little bumps and then over time, seeing that what looked like mountains too high to climb can be climbed one step at a time.
- Help students practice and master skills and competencies that will serve them well in the academic environment, as well as in the workplace and in life.
- Be that trusted person in their lives whose purpose is to help them see their choices, to take control of their own lives, to be successful in their dreams, and to help celebrate their successes along the way!

WHAT TOUCH POINT CONNECTION HAS ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE

In November 2008, TPC launched Personal Success Coaching as a pilot project at a single Tucson school, Amphitheater (Amphi) High School, in collaboration with Amphi High School and the Amphitheater School District.

In November 2010, TPC enhanced the program by adding a Coaching Office within Amphi High School for students who had an immediate need for a coaching session, or who wanted to try the program before requesting their own personal Coach, or had issues and problems that they felt would not require a long-term, weekly commitment with a particular coach.

In just under three school years, while working at Amphi High School, TPC:

- Provided Personal Success Coaches to 112 distinct students, some for all three school years.
- In the final semester using the new Coaching Office, coached an additional 30 students in 52 sessions. Five Coaching Office teens transitioned to weekly meetings with their own Personal Success Coach.
- Trained, qualified, and supported more than 50 community volunteers who have served as Volunteer Coaches.
- Provided additional specialized coaching training to eight advanced volunteers who served as staff coaches in the new Coaching Office.
- Designed and tested various student-recruitment, intake, program-delivery, and record-keeping methodologies and processes.
- Collected and analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data on program outcomes and program delivery methods.
- Secured program funding through grant applications and individual appeals.

THE QUANTITATIVE DATA

The analysis is under way. Initial results show that the teens who embraced coaching have consistently higher GPA's than those that did not stay in coaching, and also those in a control group.

TOUCH POINT'S STRENGTHS INCLUDE

- Helping students set goals and remain focused on those goals – removing the distractions of the rampant chaos and drama intruding into adolescent lives.
- Helping students develop essential life, school, and work-readiness skills.
- Providing students support so they attend school and remain motivated, focused, and ready to learn.
- Supporting students to develop critical-thinking, decision-making and advocacy skills, so that once they set goals they learn the essential skills for achieving them.
- Supporting students in developing an understanding of who they are and how to relate effectively with others, developing communication, teamwork, and leadership skills, all of which are essential for success in life and the workplace.
- Recruiting community volunteers to work with young adults as coach/mentors.
- Training adults to coach and mentor teens and young adults in ways that students find comfortable and helpful and develop the student's skills and competencies.
- Providing on-going professional support to volunteers as they continue their work with students.
- Working in partnership both within the school environment and in a manner that honors the interests of the schools and parents.
- Collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, monitoring our progress, and incorporating new ideas and practices when available and helpful.

Please view TPC's 3-minute video on You Tube to see what TPC teens and Amphi High School representatives say about Touch Point's work with them.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC1WKY5Eu4Q>

WHAT'S NEXT?

TPC's Board is now exploring ways of taking what we've learned and expanding our reach and our impact.

We are looking for partners and collaborators who have a commonality of interest or mission and with whom we can offer our skills and expertise to more young adults in a manner that will help to prepare our students to be fully successful against the challenges of higher education and the workplace.

QUESTIONS AND POTENTIAL ROLES FOR PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

- What are the particular work place and life skills employers find under-developed in young adults. Which of those skills do we believe we can impact through coaching?
- Which students would be well served with coaching and how would TPC and its collaborators best meet those needs?
 - Should we also offer coaching in private, charter and even on-line schools?
 - Should we consider coaching students in higher education and maybe even graduates as they step into the workplace?
- Will higher education see the value TPC-trained coaches can provide to impact the important pipeline of qualified and motivated college applicants?
- Will higher education see the potential value of coaches working with university students to enhance the success and retention of their enrolled students, especially programs created to impact retention of targeted groups?
- Will the leaders in higher education see the value of their own students becoming Success Coaches to teens? *"We learn it best by doing it and teaching it."*
- Will community and business collaborators support and participate in coaching programs that would benefit the young adults who will eventually enter the workplace in our community?
- Will corporate employees step forward to be trained as Volunteer Success Coaches to coach students or to provide leadership and coordination in school-based coaching programs?
- Will corporate leadership desire coach training for employees and managers who interface with interns and new hires that are recent graduates?
- Shall we not all dare to dream to create an integrated collaboration of industry, higher education, secondary education and trained community and corporate volunteers to help our students see the possibilities, believe in themselves, and receive the support they need to develop the life, academic, and workplace skills required for success?

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Participate in a TPC brainstorm to share your experiences, ideas and expertise.
- Connect TPC with organizations that may share a common mission.
- Volunteer with TPC if you have enthusiasm and expertise to share.
- Contribute financially to keep this mission moving forward.