



When Adults Read With Children
www.everybodywinsdc.org

*Power Lunch
Reading Mentor
Information Guide*

2009-2010



Everybody Wins! DC is a privately funded, non-profit organization devoted to promoting children's literacy and a love of learning through shared reading experiences with caring individuals. These experiences enhance children's self-esteem, expanding their possibilities for success in school and life, and enable adult volunteers and communities to experience the rewards of enriching young lives.

Our Mission

The mission of Everybody Wins! DC's Power Lunch program is to pair students with Reading Mentors to instill a love of reading and learning and foster a sense of self-esteem.

Fourteen Years of Winning

The U.S. Senate helped launch the Power Lunch program at Robert Brent Elementary School on March 7, 1995. This year, Everybody Wins! DC will operate its three programs in 33 Title I public elementary schools, impacting over 4,000 children in at-risk communities throughout the Washington Metropolitan area. A Title I school receives federal funding to help students who are under-resourced and at risk of falling behind academically. Funding is based on the number of children from low-income families in a school, which is generally determined by the number of students eligible for the free lunch program.

Our Programs

Power Lunch

Power Lunch is a unique literacy and mentoring program that partners professionals with elementary school children one-on-one for conversation and good books during the students' lunch hour. Power Lunch benefits children academically, as well as socially, by bringing a diverse selection of children's literature into the schools and pairing students with caring adult Reading Mentors. Power Lunch operates in 11 schools throughout the Washington area, including Montgomery County and Arlington.

Readers Are Leaders

Readers Are Leaders pairs older elementary school students with younger elementary students in nine Washington, DC elementary schools.

StoryTime

StoryTime brings storytellers, local authors, and other performers into **eight** Washington, DC schools to share the joy and magic of storytelling with children in first through third grades.

Why We Need You

One of the most critical problems facing our country today is functional illiteracy. Our national standard of living and the ability for our country to compete in a global economy are at stake if American young people are unable to read.

The Crisis

- 51% of our high-school students are graduating functionally illiterate, according to a 1993 national education study.
- The effects on the American workforce are staggering, with American businesses spending over \$200 billion annually to teach remedial reading and math skills to their employees.

The social costs of incarceration and welfare are directly related to functional illiteracy.



What are the Goals of Power Lunch?

1. To encourage a child's interest in reading by...

- Generating enthusiasm for books and reading
- Helping the child overcome apprehension of reading
- Building listening, comprehension and vocabulary skills
- Increasing attention span and ability to concentrate
- Encouraging the child to read at home

2. To expand a child's opportunities for success by...

- Providing a mentor who will act as a positive role model
- Exposing the child to new information and experiences
- Helping the child articulate thoughts
- Enhancing imagination, insight and independent thinking
- Building self-esteem and confidence

3. To facilitate meaningful volunteer contributions by...

- Matching children one-to-one with caring adults within a structured relationship
- Creating a link between schools and organizations
- Preparing Reading Mentors through quality trainings and orientations

Note: Improving the child's ability to read aloud or to decode words lies beyond the scope of Power Lunch goals. Power Lunch is a mentoring, not a tutoring, program.

Power Lunch is simple.

A Reading Mentor is matched with an elementary school student who has also expressed interest in Power Lunch. The Reading Mentor selects a day on which they meet weekly at the student's school during the student's lunch and recess hour. The program is flexible: we're happy to occasionally reschedule your reading day if necessary. Onsite School Coordinators supervise the reading hour and offer any needed support. Books are provided.

Being a mentor can be one of the most satisfying and rewarding experiences you'll ever have. With just one hour a week, you **can** make a positive difference in the life of a child.

A Reading Mentor...

- Has lunch, talks with and listens to the student, reads aloud with the child, and encourages the child's interest in reading by exploring and discussing books together.
- Provides positive, structured, consistent, and weekly attention.
- Builds a relationship with the student.
- Makes a commitment to volunteer for **one school year** and is encouraged to continue reading with the same child in subsequent years.
- Comes to Power Lunch **as a representative of participating companies and organizations**, which recognize and support the program. Individuals join only through these partnerships. (Reading Mentors must notify the School Coordinator(s) of changes in employment status or other contact information.)

Too Busy for Once a Week? Do You Travel Often? Share a Student!

Many of our mentors pair up with a colleague to share a student, and each mentor reads with the student **every other week**. Reading Mentor Alternates are responsible for communicating their schedules to each other to ensure consistent weekly coverage.



Power Lunch Reading Mentor Standards

(Violation of these standards may jeopardize your participation in the program.)

1. Be reliable and maintain a regular schedule, committing to the same lunch hour every week until the end of the school year

One of the greatest benefits of Power Lunch is the confidence and self-esteem that weekly visits give to participating students. Students benefit most from the program when their Reading Mentors are consistent in their attendance. Evaluations show that consistency results in a greater interest in reading and learning.

2. Share a Room with Other Reading Pairs

Reading Mentors and students must share a room with other reading pairs during Power Lunch. Mentors may not be alone with their students at any time. DC, Maryland, and Virginia state laws prohibit unsupervised contact between mentors and students. Pairs may be asked to move into a reading area where there are other pairs. Because you are sharing a room, be mindful of what you do and how it may affect the other reading pairs.

3. No Outside Contact

Mentors and students may not see each other outside of the Power Lunch program. See the student only on school grounds during Power Lunch hours or special EW! DC activities. This includes exchanging phone numbers and home visits on weekends.

4. No Game Playing

Reading Mentors and students should not play games during lunch. Crossword puzzles, word searches, and other acceptable activities will be provided at each site.

5. No Gifts or Food Exchanged

Reading Mentors and students may not exchange gifts or food. Gifts other than time, attention and friendship detract from the true purpose of the program: sharing and enjoying books. Bringing gifts or special foods causes other students to feel left out and confused and puts pressure on other volunteers. If you give your student a gift, other students begin to expect gifts from their mentors.

If you want to reward your student for an accomplishment or honor a birthday, we suggest that you give a book to the EW! DC library inscribed with the child's name.

Notes, cards and letters hand delivered at the school to your student, or delivered via the on-site School Coordinator, are *always* appropriate.

6. No Taking Pictures

Mentors are not allowed to take pictures of students without an authorized release from the parent or guardian.

7. One-to-One

Each Reading Mentor must read with the same student each week. "Substitute mentoring" is not allowed, except for Mentors who alternate with a colleague. Additional students (for example, students without mentors that day) may not join your reading pair. Power Lunch is about building one-to-one relationships between a student and a mentor.

8. Students Stay in Room

Students should not leave the reading rooms for any reason without permission from their Mentor or the School Coordinator. Mentors should not accompany their students to the restroom.

9. Faithfully notify the School Coordinator *before* your scheduled lunch if you must cancel or change your schedule

If you cannot meet your student reading partner on your assigned day, inform the School Coordinator(s) and they will make every effort to reschedule your reading for another day that week.

We ask that Reading Mentors do not come to the school on an unscheduled reading day, as the School Coordinator may not be able to locate your student for you, or your student may be involved in other activities during the lunch and recess hour which prohibits him/her from meeting you that day.

It is very important that the student knows when to expect you. Otherwise, the student will have trouble building trust in you.

Also, make an effort to contact your student if you cannot reschedule; send a personalized note with a co-worker, fax a note to your School Coordinator(s), or if your school is in Maryland or Virginia, email a note to your student via the School Coordinator(s).

If you permanently change your schedule or employment status, will be absent for several weeks, or need to resign, please notify the School Coordinator. Mentors are encouraged to have a final meeting with their student before he or she is matched with a new Mentor. It would also be of great benefit if you assist the School Coordinator to identify a replacement Mentor for your student, if possible.

If your student is absent from school, you will be notified by phone before your scheduled reading time.



How to Participate in Power Lunch

To join other caring professionals who mentor students through Power Lunch programs in the DC metropolitan area, simply visit the Everybody Wins! DC website at:

www.everybodywinsdc.org

and follow the directions below.

1. Put your mouse over the “For Mentors” tab on the home page.
2. Click on the “Mentor Applications/Info Update” selection.
3. If you have not mentored with us before, click on the first selection. If you are a returning mentor, click on the second selection. The third selection can be used to correct or change your personal information after you have completed an application.
4. If you are new to mentoring, enter your name and email address, and choose a user ID and password that you can use when returning to our site. You will receive an email containing your user ID and password for safekeeping.
5. If you are a returning mentor, enter your name (capitalize the first letter of your first and last name) and optionally your business email address, if it is the same as it was last year. The system will attempt to locate your information. If your information is located, please verify the email address and choose a user ID and password. You will receive an email containing your user ID and password for safekeeping. If you receive a message that we cannot locate your information, please contact us at 202-347-9467, extension 19 and we will help get you set up.
6. Provide all information on the application. The entries marked with a red asterisk (*) are required.
7. After you successfully complete the application you will be presented with a media release and consent form, which you must sign electronically. This is a required step – we cannot process your application without your electronic signature.
8. Your application will be reviewed by our staff. We will contact you if we have any questions.
9. You will receive a detailed email once you have been assigned a student. The email will contain all of the information you will need to begin mentoring your student.

Please feel free to call the Everybody Wins! DC office at 202-347-9467, extension 19, if you have any questions. We will be happy to assist you in any way possible!

Happy Reading!

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