BRIDGING FUTURES MENTORING PROGRAM

a.g.bell Association for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

BRIDGING FUTURES
Mentoring Program

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's **Bridging Futures Mentoring Program** empowers middle and high school students who are deaf or hard of hearing and use Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) to build confidence, strengthen communication and self-advocacy skills, and prepare for college, careers, and leadership. Through structured, one-to-one mentoring with experienced adult mentors, participants explore personal goals, develop leadership skills, and gain tools to succeed—and give back to their communities.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Who It's For:
Students ages 12 to 16 who are deaf or hard of hearing and use LSL as their primary mode of communication.

Program Purpose:
To support students' success in school, college, careers, and the community by building:

- Confidence
- Communication skills
- Self-advocacy
- Leadership skills

Mentorship Model:
One-to-one mentoring with trained adult mentors who are also deaf or hard of hearing and use LSL.

Program Format:
- Monthly virtual group meetings (February to November 2027)
- Ongoing mentor–mentee communication via a secure online platform (Mentornity.com)

Curriculum Topics Include:
- College and career readiness
- Goal setting
- Self-advocacy
- Identity development
- Leadership skills

Time Commitment:
Approximately 1-3 hours per month, including one required monthly Zoom meeting.

Cost:
Free for participating students and families.

Program Support & Safety:
- All mentors complete background checks and child safety training
- Students and parents participate in mentoring safety training
- Ongoing support and check-ins provided by the Youth Programs Manager

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Meeting Dates & Times (Required)
All meetings are held on Zoom from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

- Wednesday, February 17: Mentornity Training and BeKidSafe Training
- Wednesday, March 17
- Wednesday, April 21
- Wednesday, May 19
- Wednesday, August 25
- Wednesday, September 15
- Wednesday, October 20
- Wednesday, November 17: wrap up

Required Safety Training*
- Wednesday, February 17, 2027, from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time (Zoom)

** Required for all mentors and mentees*

** Parents/guardians are required to attend with their child*

WHO ARE THE MENTORS? APPLY NOW

Mentors are dedicated adults who serve as trusted guides and role models, helping mentees navigate academic, social, and personal growth.

Mentor Qualifications:

- At least 23 years old
- College degree or equivalent life/professional experience
- Deaf or hard of hearing and uses LSL as primary communication
- Enjoys and understands working with teens
- Willing to complete:
  - Criminal background check
  - Child safety training

Mentor Responsibilities:

- Build a supportive, respectful mentoring relationship
- Meet regularly with assigned mentee
- Help mentees set goals and plan for future success
- Serve as a positive role model
- Participate in mentor trainings, support sessions, and program evaluations
- Commit 1-3 hours per month

Mentor Support:

Mentors will receive:

- Structured training
- Curriculum tools
- Ongoing guidance and check-ins from the Youth Programs Manager

WHO ARE THE MENTEES? APPLY NOW

Mentees are motivated students ages 12 to 16 who want to grow as confident communicators, strong self-advocates, and future leaders.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Currently in:
  - 7th or 8th grade (middle school), or
  - 9th or 10th grade (high school)
- Has either:
  - Pre-lingual bilateral hearing loss (mild to profound), or
  - Pre-lingual unilateral hearing loss (moderate to profound)
- Uses LSL as primary communication method
- Willing to actively participate in mentoring activities

Mentee Commitment:

- Attend monthly Zoom meetings (February – November 2027)
- Communicate regularly with mentor using Mentornity
- Complete mentoring safety training (with a parent/guardian)
- Commit 1-3 hours per month
- Complete monthly check-in surveys



If you have any questions about Bridging Futures or need assistance, email us at bridgingfutures@agbell.org

FAMILY & PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Family engagement is essential to student success.

Parents/guardians agree to:

- Attend required mentoring safety training (February 17, 2027)
- Support their child's participation in the program
- Regularly check in about the mentoring relationship
- Complete bimonthly support surveys
- Communicate with program staff as needed

APPLICATION INFORMATION

- Application Deadline: February 5, 2027
- Notification Timeline: Applicants are reviewed by a committee. Admitted students are notified in mid-February 2027.
- Important Application Note: After submitting the application, you must receive a confirmation email from Jotform. If you do not receive a confirmation, your application is not complete.