



## Help Protect Kids — 9th Gear Program Looking for Mentors

Sitting inside every community in Chicago are great kids. We often hear people ask what they can do to help those who live in communities struggling with violence and trauma. One practical way is to mentor. If you've ever thought of being a mentor to promising young men and women, 9th Gear may be the program for you. We are looking for 30 adults to help students get ready for high school over the summer. Through activities, games, trips, and personal interaction, 9th Gear mentors and JPA therapists provide a strong foundation for students facing the challenges of new schools, new friends, and new neighborhoods.

Our first summer last year was a great success, with students and parents praising mentors' dedication and students glad to have had the support of caring adults. Through their interactions, students learn how to approach new situations and people, make friends, and be organized and ready for the new demands of high school. We meet primarily in North Lawndale and the program is free for participants.

Mentors receive training from JPA's licensed social workers, working in teams with small groups of students. The program lasts for eight weeks in the summer, with meetings on weekends and some evenings. We encourage mentors to join with friends; we guarantee you'll meet an amazing group of students and families. In the process, you'll help ensure that vulnerable students have the tools to succeed in high school and beyond.

You should have a college degree, be at least 21 years old and pass a background check. If you're interested in submitting a mentor application, please contact [Erin Vanden Brook](#).