

# SMCHD Mentoring Connections Program



## BACKGROUND

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM



### What are ACEs?

**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** are traumatic or emotional disturbances experienced during a child's lifetime before the age of 18 that may increase risk for violence, chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance abuse in adulthood.



### What is resilience?

**Resilience** is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress (the ability to "bounce back").



### What is youth mentoring?

**Youth mentoring** pairs youth with a volunteer from the community with the goal of fostering a relationship that will contribute to the young person's growth opportunities, skill development, and academic success.



### How are they related?

Relationships with caring adults, in addition to parents or caregivers, can influence young people's behavioral choices and reduce their risk for involvement in crime, violence, alcohol/other substance use, and high-risk sexual behavior. Through positive interpersonal relationships and learning activities, youth can also develop broad and healthy life goals, improve their school engagement and skills, establish networks and have experiences that improve their future schooling and employment opportunities. These connections and experiences contribute to enhanced academic performance and prevent involvement in crime and violence.



### What do we do?

We screen youth for resilience before connecting to a youth mentoring program. Based on the screenings, we link the youth with an organizations and mentor that best suits the needs, personality, and history of the youth. 6 weeks after entering the mentoring program, we screen the youth again for resilience.



### Who is eligible?

Youth (7-17) who reside in St. Mary's County



### What organizations could my child be linked with?

- The COVE
- Divine by Design
- New Perception
- Building Bridges
- Gift 2 Uplift
- Basketball 4 Lyfe
- Tri-County Youth Services Bureau
- Knowledge Boxing (*cost associated*)
- *And many more!*

