

MENtors Driving Change for Boys, Men & Dads

OUR SOLUTIONS

We believe that boys, men and fathers can have a healthier social and emotional development that enriches their awareness, engagement, and connection, and helps build lasting relationship with themselves, their family and our community.

One in three young people today grow up without a positive mentor. Research shows that compared to girls, boys are more likely to fail out of school, use an illegal substance, binge drink, commit a violent crime, be diagnosed with a behavior disorder, be prescribed stimulant medications, and take their own lives. Boys are twice as likely to drop out of school and four times as likely to be expelled. We believe this disparate reality for boys is caused by the “toxic” notion of masculinity prevalent in society. As early as elementary school, boys confront messages about masculinity that lead them to suppress emotions, deny their need for close friendships, objectify and degrade women, and resolve conflicts through violence.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2018

- School year-length classes in three middle schools and one high school in Santa Cruz County for 109 at-risk boys and young men to be aware of their thoughts, motivations, and actions while exploring their social-emotional development.
- Held our second community conference “Love, Trauma, and Two Generations” with 30 participants (2 students, 4 fathers, 2 Judges, and 22 professionals) from 10 government and nongovernment organizations.
- Award of a grant through AB 109 California prison realignment fund to work with re-entry fathers.
- Partnered with 6 organizations to create accessibility to our boys and fathers programs (Luma Yoga, Santa Cruz Probation, California State Parks, Pajaro Valley School District, Santa Cruz City Schools and Living Evolution).
- Enrolled 15 mentors for our **100 MENtors Who Care**, Santa Cruz County Initiative. Each donates \$1/day and 1 hour/week for 365 days to support our boys, men, and fathers.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

We use interactive small group sessions and a supportive environment to create a safe and welcoming place for boys and their families to learn, share, and grow.

Our curriculum, and **peer-to-peer education** supports mental health and social well-being. A **community engagement** component connects young people and their families to local resources and other families, fosters excellence in parenting roles, and avoids or eliminates isolation behaviors.

Monthly speaker roundtables invite local professional men to share personal and professional experience, insight, and wisdom.

Bi-monthly field trips expose youth to higher education (college camp), fun and adventure (e.g. camping, hiking, sports, Exploratorium), internships, career pathway exploration, and job shadowing.

Our three-pronged approach provides: **1.** Individual direct service of our curriculum; **2.** Creating systemic change by providing consultation and assessment support to government agencies, educational systems, and nonprofit organizations who serve boys, young men, men, and fathers; **3.** Engage the community by hosting conferences, transformational film screenings, and public presentations.



GOALS & DREAMS

- Annual boys and family camping trip to incorporate nature and healing as key part of building resiliency and support for families.
- Annual Father’s Day Community 5K/10K Run to promote physical, emotional and mental health and well-being.
- Serve as community catalyst and convener for issues impacting boys, men and dads.
- Lecture series regarding boys, men, dads and families to promote intergenerational dialog and cross-community conversation.
- MENtors club on every Santa Cruz County middle and high school campus to support boys and young men in their journey and transition to manhood.
- Improve educational, health and social well-being outcomes for boys, men and dads toward sustainable change and transformation of current narrative.

BY THE NUMBERS

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| Staff | .75 FTE |
| Volunteers | 19 |
| Middle school students | 94 |
| High school students | 15 |
| Fathers engaged | 36 |
| Stakeholders engaged | 85 |
| Year founded | Oct. 2017 |