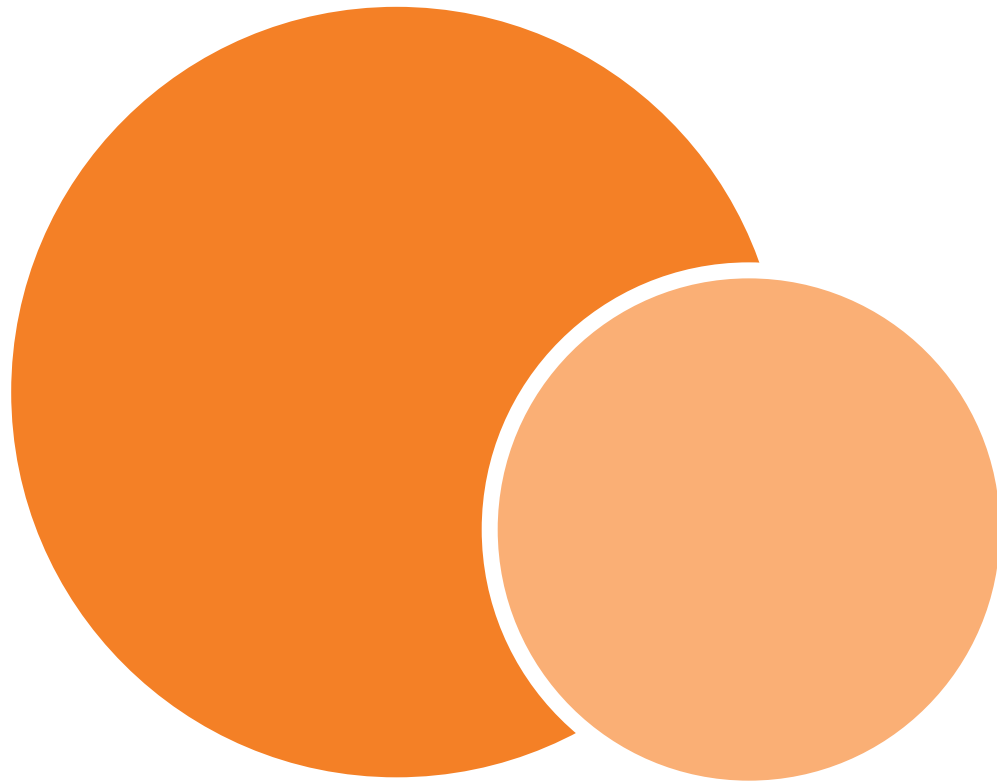


Everybody Wins! Iowa
**Reading Mentor
Handbook**





“With this program, everybody truly does win, especially the children. It is amazing to see the difference that one hour a week can make in a child’s life.”

Everybody Wins! Reading Mentor, Iowa Senator Tom Harkin

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Section One: Everybody Wins!

Welcome to Everybody Wins! Iowa A Message From the Executive Director

Thank you for signing up to be a Reading Mentor. We are very excited to have you with us and look forward to instilling the love of reading in children.

In 1991, Arthur Tannenbaum started EVERYBODY WINS! to ensure that New York City schoolchildren would be able to discover the magic that comes from books. Today, approximately 8,000 volunteers read to over 1,200 children in 184 schools through the Power Lunch program in cities across the U.S.

Everybody Wins! Iowa is a regional affiliate of Everybody Wins! USA, established in 2002 to serve children in Iowa. We recruit groups of reading mentors and match them with elementary school children, one-to-one, for weekly reading sessions in the Power Lunch program. You can learn more about us at www.everybodywinsiowa.org.

We hope you find this Reading Mentor Handbook helpful. Although much of this material was covered during your orientation session, we ask that you read through the entire handbook to gain a complete understanding of your role and responsibilities. You will find information about our program policies as well as good advice on reading aloud and working with children. If you have questions at any time, please don't hesitate to contact myself or your School Coordinator.

Thank you again for being a part of Everybody Wins! Iowa. Together, we can improve the lives of many children.

Amanda Fletcher
Executive Director
Everybody Wins! Iowa

Everybody Wins! Iowa

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Everybody Wins! Iowa Mission Statement

Everybody Wins! Iowa aims to increase children’s prospects for success in school and in life through one-to-one reading experiences with caring adults. Through our Power Lunch program, we reach children while they are young, stimulate their interest in reading and learning, and encourage them to believe that they can be successful.

Why read aloud to children?

“The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.”

National Commission on Reading, Becoming a Nation of Readers Report, 1985

In response to the National Commission on Reading’s landmark 1985 report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, Everybody Wins! created Power Lunch, a program in which adult volunteers are matched, one-to-one, with children to read aloud to them at their school during lunch. Read aloud, by definition, involves an adult reading out loud to a child or children in order to foster a love of reading and to expose the child/children to a variety of vocabulary, language patterns, story structures, genres and authors. When read to, children are exposed to more complex language and vocabulary than they encounter in their own reading and as a result their reading skills improve.

Power Lunch Program Description & Goals

Everybody Wins! Iowa’s Power Lunch is a lunchtime literacy and mentoring program in which adult volunteers travel to a nearby elementary school once a week, and read one-on-one to a student during the lunch hour.

Our goals are to:

- Generate enthusiasm for books and reading.
- Improve children’s listening comprehension, vocabulary, ability to articulate thoughts, and background knowledge (fundamental literacy skills).
- Increase children’s self-esteem through consistent weekly attention from their mentors.
- Provide flexible, convenient volunteer experiences for area professionals and community volunteers.
- Bring community support and resources into elementary schools and expose children to people of diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Students Win!

With the Power Lunch Program... Everybody Wins!

Students:

- Learn reading is fun and become more enthusiastic about books and learning
- Are exposed to new places and ideas through the reading materials their volunteers share with them.
- Learn to think more creatively.
- Improve their listening and vocabulary skills, which instills articulations and insightfulness.
- Are exposed to the world beyond school, through their volunteers.
- Become more confident because they know their volunteers make time for them and enjoy reading with them.

Volunteers:

- Give to their communities and make a difference through a well-supported, convenient “user-friendly” program.
- Form meaningful and rewarding relationships with young students.
- Create a link between schools and the community.
- Become more confident, more optimistic about the future, and more positive about the world around them.
- Learn more about their local communities.

Volunteers Win!

Reading Mentor Description

The Reading Mentor meets for approximately 30-60 minutes a week with an elementary school student matched one-to-one. Reading Mentors select books provided on-site or bring books to read while the student eats lunch. The Reading Mentor reports weekly to a School Coordinator at the school site.

The Reading Mentor talks with and listens to the child, reads aloud to the child, and encourages the child to share the volunteer's enthusiasm for books. The Reading Mentor is also a role model, providing positive, consistent, weekly attention.

Reading Mentors...

- Build relationships by talking about shared interests, reading aloud to their students, talking about books, and being positive and consistent.
- Make a commitment to volunteer for one school year and are encouraged to continue reading with the same child in following years.
- Receive support from Everybody Wins! Iowa, specifically from the School Coordinator and other Everybody Wins! Iowa staff.
- Provide structure in the Power Lunch session by bringing or helping select reading material, keeping their students engaged, and encouraging questioning and conversation.
- Stay with the student and other reading pairs during each session, and (where applicable) escort them at the end of Power Lunch to their next destination.
- Attend the kick-off and end-of-year celebrations each school year.

The School Coordinator's Role

The School Coordinator, a part-time Everybody Wins! Iowa staff member, is responsible for the daily operation of the Power Lunch program at the school. S/he is responsible for enforcing program policies and ensuring that volunteers and students are satisfied with their Power Lunch meetings.

School Coordinators...

- Support Reading Mentors and offer assistance when needed.
- Monitor reading sessions.
- Ensure comfort and safety of the Reading Mentors and students.
- Notify Reading Mentors if their student is absent.

Please bring any comments, ideas, problems, and suggestions to the attention of the School Coordinator. You are also welcome to contact the Executive Director at any time. Power Lunch should be enjoyable for both you and your student. Do not be afraid to ask for assistance; we will do whatever we can to resolve the situation!

Note: During Power Lunch the School Coordinator may check in with reading pairs to ensure sessions are running smoothly. Occasionally, the Coordinator may have to interrupt to give pairs information. Coordinators will try to keep interruptions to a minimum; we appreciate your understanding when interruptions do occur.

Section Two: Rules and Standards

Everybody Wins! Program Policies

- 1 **Be reliable and maintain a regular schedule, committing to the same lunch hour every week until the end of the school year.**
Power Lunch builds confidence and self-esteem. Students who are disappointed by inconsistent volunteers may have difficulty behaving or paying attention and will not benefit from the program. Please consider your ability to commit before you agree to volunteer.
- 2 **Call your School Coordinator if you must cancel or reschedule your session.**
We understand that unexpected things happen, but a child will be counting on you. You must contact the School Coordinator in advance of the scheduled time. If you permanently change your schedule, employment, or need to resign, please notify your School Coordinator immediately and schedule a goodbye session with your School Coordinator and student.
- 3 **Be considerate in the reading space.**
There may be many reading pairs sharing a small reading space and we ask mentors to be conscious of their reading volume and any other action that might affect another pair's reading session. Please help return the reading space to the condition it was in before Power Lunch began.
- 4 **Never be alone with your student.**
Please be sure you always share a room with other Power Lunch pairs. If you find yourself alone with your reading partner, please find your School Coordinator who will be able to help you find an appropriate reading space.
- 5 **Refrain from giving special gifts and foods.**
As a reading mentor, you are sharing your gift of time and attention with your student. Material gifts can shift the focus from interpersonal relations to one based on material rewards. Sometimes a volunteer can provide items that a student's parents or guardians cannot, and this can lead to difficulties at home. When volunteers give students material gifts or treats, other students feel left out. Furthermore, volunteers who follow rules and do not give gifts feel uncomfortable when other volunteers break the rules. Notes, cards, and letters are appropriate.
- 6 **Only see your student at school during Power Lunch.**
For the protection of students and mentors, contact between mentors and students outside of scheduled Power Lunch time is not permitted, including during summer break.
- 7 **No photographs.**
For the safety and privacy of our students and their families, mentors are not permitted to photograph their students at any time. Throughout the year, Everybody Wins! Iowa staff and approved photographers may photograph reading pairs for publicity purposes. Everybody Wins! Iowa is not able to provide copies of photos to mentors or students.

Physical Contact

Many of the young children we work with have a strong need and desire for positive physical contact with caring adults. You are encouraged to be a positive role model; however, your physical contact should be limited to holding a hand, giving a soft pat on the back or head, or sharing a hug in full view of other school officials. Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between the student and yourself may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.

Confidentiality and Reporting

All information you are told about your student (by teachers, Everybody Wins! Iowa staff, and other school staff) is confidential and sharing that information may be against the law. Similarly, there may be information about your student's background and medical history that Everybody Wins! Iowa is unable to share with mentors (e.g. ADHD diagnosis).

The student is free to share information with you; however, there are certain things that you are required to tell the School Coordinator. These are as follows:

- ➔ If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, or physical abuse, you **MUST** notify the School Coordinator who will inform the Principal and the Everybody Wins! Iowa Executive Director immediately. Make a note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Remember, this information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives. **DO NOT share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities (ie: School Coordinator).**
- ➔ If the student tells you of their involvement in any illegal activities you must tell the School Coordinator immediately. Again, make a note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given.

Please notify your School Coordinator immediately if you have concerns about your student.

Some
Serious
Items

Section Three: Mentoring & Read Aloud Tips

How to Spend A Power Lunch

When you arrive: Sign in, pick up name tag and reading folder (be sure name tag is visible!) greet your student reading partner with enthusiasm

For 5 minutes: Conversation: Catch up on what has happened in school over the past week and review what you read in your previous Power Lunch session

For 20 minutes: Read and discuss while your student partner eats lunch

For 10 minutes: Write in book log, complete activities from reading folder, draw a picture related to the story, or read another book or chapter

Before you leave: Clean up lunch trash and area; Return books, nametag and reading folder. Say goodbye, emphasizing any plans for the next session

Keys to Success: Selecting Good Books and Active Read Aloud

Book Selection:

Power Lunch sessions are more effective when Reading Mentors guide book selection.

Selecting books in advance gives mentors more control, as questions can be prepared in advance, more time for actual reading, and makes sessions more enjoyable because mentors can share their interests and enthusiasm with their student.

Try presenting your student partner with a limited choice. Before the session, select a few books that you think would be interesting to your student partner and at the appropriate level, and allow the student to choose between those. This strategy allows the student to participate in the process, but also ensures that you are able to select and read the best books.

Choose books on your student partner's listening level rather than their reading level.

Children can comprehend what they hear at a higher level than what they read, and exposure to these more sophisticated books will increase students' vocabulary and listening comprehension.

Active Read Aloud:

Before beginning a book, ask the child some questions to set the stage for the story.

If the child needs background information in order to appreciate the story, spend a few minutes talking about it. Invite the child to share experiences with emotions or themes that you think will be central to the story.

Have the child predict from the title, the picture, or the first page what the story is about.

Read with plenty of expression. Try to vary the tone of your voice when there is dialogue in the story, and vary the pace of your reading to reflect action in the story.

While reading, stop occasionally and ask questions, have the child predict what will happen next, or discuss what has happened so far. Many children have difficulty listening for any sustained length of time, and pausing to ask questions or recall what you have read can help to keep them engaged. See next page for suggested questions.

Follow up the reading with thought-provoking conversation starters and discussions.

Ask what the student would do in the same situation or how a character from the story would react in a different situation.

Be enthusiastic. You are serving as a role model for just how exciting books and reading can be; students will catch on to this enthusiasm.

Suggested Questions to Ask During Power Lunch

- 1 What do you think will happen next? Why?
- 2 Who is your favorite character in the reading? Why?
- 3 What do you think is the most exciting/interesting part of the reading?
- 4 Who would you recommend this book (poem/article/story) to? Why?
- 5 What would you like to ask the author if you met him or her?
- 6 What does the main character learn during the book? What did you learn?
- 7 How does the reading remind you of something in your own life?
- 8 If you were the main character, what would you do in the situation and why?
- 9 How is this reading like something else you have read?
- 10 If you are reading a picture book, talk about the details in the pictures and how they relate to the story.

More Tips For Success

Give structure to your reading session—Set goals. You can discuss what you both want to achieve from Power Lunch. Write down your goals and keep referring to them.

Examples of goals:

- “Let’s try to read at least 10 books by Marc Brown this fall.”
- “Let’s learn about two new animals.”
- “I’d like to find a new favorite author and learn more about him/her.”

Find a topic and think beyond books. Use your imagination and bring in a wide range of reading material.

Example:

If you and your student both like race cars, you can:

- read non-fiction books about cars • read biographies of race-car drivers
- read official race programs • read articles in the newspaper sports section
- write a letter to your favorite race-car driver • read race-car magazines
- write a story about your student as race-car driver
- label a diagram of a race car • write a review of a race you both saw
- rewrite “The Tortoise & The Hare” with race cars

Build trust and self confidence.

Build trust by being consistent. If you come to Power Lunch irregularly, you may find that the student is disappointed or uncooperative. If you must miss a session, call the School Coordinator. To build confidence, praise your student honestly and frequently. Remember—attentiveness and effort can be as important as performance at times.

Learn more about your student, and be respectful of their identity and preferences.

Understand your student in terms of his/her own background and values and show interest in your student as a person. Listen carefully to what s/he says. Having a conversation meets the goals of helping the child articulate thoughts and exposing the child to new information. Ask questions about favorite activities, family members, friends, hopes and dreams. By your words and actions, let your student know you care.

Power Lunch Frequently Asked Questions

What is the best way to structure my Power Lunch reading session?

Reading mentors direct the reading time, providing clear expectations. Power Lunch should be structured and predictable with an emphasis on the mentor reading aloud to the student. Whenever possible, the mentor guides the student in book selection or brings reading material. Conversation, questions about a book, and a shared writing activity can complete the session.

Saying “no” is OK. Teachers repeatedly remind us that students respect and appreciate limits. Students may ask to go outside, walk around, play games, see their friends...remember your goals. Advice and assistance are always available; please speak with your School Coordinator.

Why are gifts or special foods not permitted?

Reading mentors give the gift of time and attention. Bringing gifts or special foods causes other students to feel hurt and confused and puts pressure on other volunteers. Students misunderstand the purpose of the program when reading mentors bring gifts. If you want to reward your student for an accomplishment or honor a birthday, we suggest that you give a book to Everybody Wins! Iowa inscribed with the child’s name.

Will Everybody Wins! Iowa pair me with another student if my partner is out sick?

No. Each reading mentor is matched one-to-one with a student to ensure the development of a healthy relationship and bond. We do not allow the student’s friends to join in the reading session, and the reading mentor should not read with another student if his/her student is absent. In the past feelings have been hurt by the casual matching of students with volunteers. Students should know there is one special person (or two alternating mentors) just for them and feel confident with that unique relationship.

Why do mentors read aloud to students?

Reading mentors encourage children’s interest in reading as they model reading for pleasure. No matter what a student’s ability, reading aloud to the student and talking together will benefit the student academically and socially, and achieves the literacy outcomes Power Lunch aims to reach more effectively than if students read aloud to their mentors.

How are students chosen to participate in Power Lunch?

Students are referred to Power Lunch by their classroom teachers for one or more of the following reasons. The student 1) is behind in fundamental reading skills, 2) is an English language learner, or 3) would benefit from one-to-one interaction with a caring adult.

Why are students and mentors not permitted to see each other outside of Power Lunch?

For the protection of students, mentors, your company, and Everybody Wins! Iowa, contact between mentors and students outside of scheduled Power Lunch time is not permitted, including during summer break.

Other things you can do to help Everybody Wins! Iowa

1

Recruit other reading mentors.

Your friends and colleagues may be waiting for an invitation to join you as a Reading Mentor. Tell your colleagues, neighbors, alumni associations, churches, and community organizations about the opportunity to read and mentor a student. Many students are waiting to participate because we currently do not have enough reading mentors to serve all the students who could benefit from this program.

2

Tell us your ideas.

We are eager to hear from you. We want to ensure the program is positive and successful for everyone involved.

3

Help us raise money.

Everybody Wins! Iowa is supported by donations from individuals, corporations, organizations, and foundations. We can use the help of everyone in securing funding. Donations and assistance finding sources of funding are greatly appreciated.

4

Donate books to Everybody Wins! Iowa.

If you wish, we will inscribe the first name of your student, as well as your name, into any books you donate to our program.

Thank you
for volunteering!

Everybody Wins! Iowa

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