

Testimony of Darrell Thompson
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Minneapolis and St Paul
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Thank you for your time on this important matter.

Mentoring facts:

- **184,438** youth are benefiting from mentoring through a network of 500+ mentor programs across the state
- Approximately 180,000 additional children could benefit from mentoring but are not being served (kids that live in poverty, not doing well in school, involved in corrections, etc..)
- We know from research that young people that have access to quality mentoring experiences are less likely to be involved in negative behavior and activities
- The return on investment for mentoring is substantial=approximately \$7400 per child (saves taxes, reduces involvement in corrections or truancy, enhances school achievement, & increased lifetime earnings)
- The greatest challenges to connecting more kids with mentors is lack of adult mentors and the financial resources to support quality programs
- Mentoring takes many forms in Minnesota...one on one, group, family, team, & peer mentoring, to name a few. The program that I run is an activity based mentoring program that focus's on first time offenders and truant youth 10 to 14 years old that need a positive adult in there life. I have been at Bolder Options for 17 years, and we have a proven track record. I would like to tell you about Demario.

I sincerely appreciate your time and energy on this extremely important issue.