

Communities Working to Unite Youth
BENCHMARK RITE OF PASSAGE RESPONSIBILITY
EDUCATION PROGRAM

MOTTO: I'm Responsible for doing my part --at all cost!

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“BENCHMARK”

(Bold Enough Now to Come to Him with a Meaningful Attitude and Responsible Knowledge)

INTRODUCTION

Across the country, schools, churches, families, and other institutions are responding to the cry for help and the growing need for someone to take a stand before it is too late to help our youth. Increasing teen pregnancies, drug abuse, suicide, high illiteracy rates, school drop out rates, crime and general apathy among our youth are all indicators of the crisis at hand. Some of these have reached epidemic stages.

All institutions that seek to respond to this crisis among our youth, have taken many approaches. One of the primary approaches is the adoption of *mentoring* in cooperation with *Rite of Passage Education*. Neither, mentoring or rite of passage programs are original American concepts, but they are two of the most exciting modern movements to penetrate American communities in recent years. Research shows that a mentoring relationship can have life-long, positive effects in the lives of *mentees* (those being mentored) *and mentors*. This program offers a mentoring opportunity as one means of encouraging growth and maturity for the youth of your church.

This Benchmark Rite of Passage Responsibility Education Program is a unique ‘responsible young adulthood’ mentoring program, designed to give young people a complete and comprehensive start on their journey to responsible adulthood. This program has a 9-Hour Candidate Period. Each candidate must complete 9-hours of instruction, including a Rite of Passage Ceremony to be promoted to the status of ROPE Junior Mentor, then Senior Mentor then ultimately Mentor Instructor. Participants should be 12 years old or becoming 12 on or before December 31 of the present year. Students up to 17-years old may participate at the onset of the program.

This Benchmark Mentoring program was created because there is a grand need for Christian boys, girls, young men, and young ladies to have a **benchmark or jumping off point** whereby they realize their change in growth from boyhood and girlhood to responsible manhood and womanhood. There is also a coexisting need for mentors, comprised of men and women, to spend more quality time teaching and modeling behaviors characteristic of ‘responsible adulthood’.

WHO IS CWUY?

Communities Working to Unite Youth (CWUY) has been serving the Rankin County, Mississippi community since 1987 as one of its primary non-profit 501C3 youth and family resource organization. Because of a vision from the hearts of two ladies, Mrs. Connie Tate and Mrs. Linda Taylor, we now take a holistic approach to uniting the youth in Rankin County communities, especially minority populations. Through positive reinforcement of family values and preventive education, CWUY offers Rankin and surrounding counties ways of actively combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is the act of confidently advising as a teacher and friend by taking a keen and direct interest in the personal development of someone younger and /or less experienced.

WHO IS A MENTOR?

A mentor can be a trusted tutor, teacher, friend, counselor, coach, and/or role model who is willing to share his or her wisdom, experiences, and resources. ***Also, one who must be willing to provide Inspiration, Perspiration, and Passion for those that they mentor.***

RITE OF PASSAGE RESPONSIBILITY EDUCATION DEFINED

Rite of Passage Responsibility Education is the simple act of helping a person, usually a boy or girl, learn information and practices which will take them from one level of understanding to a higher level; thereby enabling them to participate in a ritual ceremony which begins their journey from childhood to 'responsible adulthood'.

MISSION SCRIPTURE OF THE BENCHMARK ROPRE PROGRAM

The Apostle Paul once said that, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child. I understood as a child. I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things. (I Corinthians 13:11-12 Memorize)

GOALS OF THE BENCHMARK ROPRE PROGRAM

The **goals** of this program are to:

- 1) Build a sense of self-worth, which is necessary to developing moral standards and develop an understanding of purpose***
- 2) Encourage mental growth and responsible behavior***
- 3) Increase knowledge and understanding of Christian character and societal code of conduct***
- 4) Improve problem solving and decision-making skills.***

These specific goals will be achieved through a parent awareness/mentoring team approach. This approach will assure parents that mentors are only present ***to help*** with youth, ***not to take the parents' place.***

PARENTS ARE THE GLUE TO THIS MENTORING PROGRAM

Caring parents will prove to be the adhesive that will hold mentees in place during the course of the mentoring program. The inclusion of parents as essential components of the CWUY BENCHMARK ROPRE Program will foster a working relationship between mentors and parents. This partnership should insure that the mentees will receive at home support for the standards and suggestions offered by mentors. Parents are a constant in the life of a child and represent the most consistent means of meeting the security, love, belonging and freedom needs that all humans share. The developer of the CWUY BENCHMARK ROPRE Program strongly believes that parental involvement (active parental participation) is the proven core component to the success of adult mentoring to youth mentoring programs.

CASE FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION – EIGHT GOOD REASONS

1. Clear, urgent need. Young people are increasingly hurting themselves and others and are decreasingly concerned about contributing to the welfare of their fellow human beings.
2. Transmitting values is the work of civilization. A society needs values education to survive and thrive. Such education will serve to keep the society intact and will insure that conditions exist which support the development of all its members. Three institutions have, historically, taken the lead in the values education. They are: (1) the home, (2) the church and (3) schools.
3. Mentors to the rescue. While many parents are holding true to the time-honored tradition of teaching morals and values to their children, in this age, many others are not. Therefore, the role of schools and communities becomes much more critical. Communities must help bridge the growing gap between troubled youth and parents who feel incompetent for the task of parenting.
4. America's common ethical foundation. Although there is great diversity in our society, we share basic values that afford us the opportunity to provide community assisted moral education.
5. Democracy's need for moral education. Democratic societies are governed by the people, themselves. Therefore, it is vital that the people care about the rights and needs of others.
6. Values free education does not exist. Every system in your child's life teaches values. Schools teach values in the way teachers, principals, and other adults treat students, the way the principal treats the teachers and the way students are allowed to treat others.
7. Moral questions are many and great. The most important question for the human race is "Can we just get along with each other?"
8. Character education can be successfully accomplished. The education of America's children in character and values has been successfully undertaken by many school systems. As our children develop in moral attitudes and behaviors towards themselves, other students and teachers, their daily environment becomes conducive to reaching greater levels of academic success.