



# How do we know?

Bridges Kinship Mentoring has been matching children and youth with adults for over 17 years. So generally, we think about those who we have met and matched, graduated from our program. Do you still see your mentor? Do you think that having a mentor made a difference? We have national studies and parents, to name a few, who tell us mentoring works. But how do we know for sure? We went to the source. We asked a few of our past mentees what they have to say about mentoring. This is one story.

Patrick was matched with David Storrs for almost 7 years. Their friendship didn't take long to become strong and Patrick remembers one of the first times they got together. David took him canoeing and Patrick saw his first bald eagle. "We had a blast. I got a paddle from him with my name on it. I still have that!" Another project they worked on was a model airplane—a F-14 Tomcat. He remembers going ice fishing, too. It wasn't about getting things, or doing stuff, but it was about a fatherless boy hanging out with a guy.

Even though Patrick is 21 years old and they haven't been officially matched in 3 years, he still chats with David. Patrick even gave him a call of Easter just to say, "Hey." There has been a significant difference in Patrick's life since David came along, "David is still a positive role model and he has taught me a lot of new things. He pushes me to strive for better things."

This match that started when Patrick was a young boy and grew into a friendship will continue for years to come. Patrick feels like he could call David if he were in a bind or in trouble. "He would be there for me." When asked what he would say to someone who is thinking about becoming a mentor, Patrick stated, "There are a lot of kids like myself who don't have their dad and are lonely. You could really make a change in that kid's life. Be a positive role model."