

YOUTH SUCCESS MOVEMENT

Welcome to the village

What happens next, what we ask of you, and what we promise

We are glad you are here.

If you are reading this, you have decided to do something for your child that most families never get the chance to do — not because they do not care, but because nobody ever offered them a plan.

This packet explains how it works. It is short, and there is nothing hidden in it.

Your Family Ambassador	
Their phone	
Their email	
Your village	
Date you joined	

What you have joined

A village is a group of neighbors who have decided to look after the children in one place, and to help each other do it. It is not a school program and it is not a service. It belongs to the families in it, and that now includes you.

You have also been given one person. Your Family Ambassador is a trained volunteer who lives nearby, who has passed a background check, and whose job is to walk beside your family. They will be in touch every week.

They are not a tutor and they will not teach your child. They are the person who helps you work out what is actually going on, points you to the right things, and keeps showing up.

You may or may not have an Ambassador

Ambassadors are volunteers, and there are never as many as we would like. Many families work through the system on their own, at their own pace — the courses, the tools, and the community are all there for you whether or not someone is assigned to you.

That is not a lesser version. It is how most families do it, and it works. What it means is that you set the pace, and you ask when you want help rather than waiting to be asked.

If you have an Ambassador, their name is on the front of this packet. If you do not, and you want one, say so — and if you are working alone and get stuck, say that too. Either way, ask in the community space, where other parents who have been through it will answer.

What it costs

Nothing. Not the programs, not the guidance, not the gatherings. There is no bill coming later.

What we ask for instead is your effort, and we are specific about how much. That is on the next page.

Your first month

Nothing is rushed and nothing happens without you. Here is the shape of it.

Week 1	Someone from the village gets in touch to say hello and learn about your family. No forms, no tests. Just a conversation. If you are working on your own, this is where you get shown around.
Weeks 1–2	You talk about how things are at home — sleep, food, money, stress, whatever is going on. This comes first because a child under a lot of stress cannot learn well, and because we would rather help with that than pretend it is not there.
Weeks 2–4	You start looking at your child. What they can do, what gets in the way, whether anything about how they see or hear or focus is making school harder than it should be. You go through this a piece at a time — with your Ambassador if you have one, or step by step on your own.
Week 4 or so	You end up with a plan. One to three things to actually do — not a list of twelve. You keep a copy.
After that	You do the work at home. The plan gets adjusted as you learn more. If you have an Ambassador, they check in weekly.

You are in charge of your child.

Nothing here overrides your judgment. If something in the plan does not fit your family, say so and it changes. You know things about your child that no assessment will ever show.

What we ask of you

Free help that asks nothing gets treated as though it is worth nothing, and it produces nothing. So we ask for real effort, and we tell you exactly how much before you agree to it.

What	How much
Training	15 to 20 minutes a day, 4 or 5 days a week, until the program is finished.
Reading aloud	At least 15 minutes a day with your child — you reading to them, them reading to you, or both.
Learning	Watch the short materials on mindset and how children learn, and use them.
Staying in touch	Answer your Ambassador when they check in. Tell them when something is not working.
Showing up	Come to village gatherings when you can. Not every time — when you can.
Sharing results	Share your child's reading scores from school, before and after. See below.

How long this takes

Bringing a child up to grade level usually takes one to two years of steady work. Not weeks. Not a summer.

We say that plainly at the start because families who expect a quick result stop in March and blame themselves. It is not their fault — they were told the wrong thing. Now you have been told the right thing.

At about 90 days your Ambassador will sit down with you and look at how it is going. That is a checkpoint, not a finish line. If something is not working, it changes.

And when your child does reach grade level, the village does not disappear. We stay with your family through graduation and whatever comes next.

Why we ask for the school scores

We ask you to share your child's reading results from school before you start and again later on. Two reasons, and we would rather be straight about both.

The first is for you. It is the clearest way for you to see whether this is working, rather than guessing.

The second is for the Movement. To ask anyone to fund this, or to spread it to other communities, we have to be able to show it works. Nobody has to take our word for it and nobody should.

Your child's name never leaves your village.

Results are reported only as group numbers — how the families in a village did overall. No names, no individual children, ever.

What we promise you

- Someone who contacts you every week, and keeps doing it

- Straight answers, including when the answer is that we do not know
- Everything at no cost — the programs, the guidance, the gatherings
- Your information kept private, and shared with nobody without your say
- No judgment about your household, your schedule, or what you have or have not managed so far
- Help finding the right professional when something needs one
- A village that stays with your family for the long haul

Things you should know

We do not diagnose anything.

The questionnaires and screens we use tell you where to look. They never tell you what your child has. If something suggests a closer look, your Ambassador will help you get to a doctor, an eye specialist, or whoever the right person is. Referring you to a professional is a good outcome, not a failure.

Your record belongs to you.

Everything found and tried gets written down in one place, so that you never have to tell the whole story again to every new teacher and every new specialist. That record is yours. You decide who sees it. You can take it, move it, or close it whenever you want.

Some questionnaires are yours alone.

A few of the things we make available — including the one about difficult childhood experiences — are for you to complete privately, on your own, if you choose to. Your Ambassador will tell you it exists and give you the information about who to contact if something comes up. They will not go through it with you and they will not raise it unless you do.

Hard days are normal.

Your child will not want to do this some evenings. Progress will stall somewhere in the middle, for almost every child. Neither of those means it is failing, and neither means you are doing it wrong. Tell your Ambassador when it happens. They have seen it.

If you disappear for a while, the door stays open.

Life happens. People stop for a month, or three. If you go quiet, your Ambassador will check in gently and will not make you feel bad about it. Come back whenever you are ready. You will not have to explain yourself.

We are not against your child's school.

Most teachers are working hard on a problem they did not create and cannot fix from where they stand. We work on the part of it that happens at home, which schools cannot reach. If you have trouble with your school, your Ambassador will help you prepare for the conversation — not fight it for you.

If your child is not yet in school

Then you are in the best possible position, and this section is the most important one in the packet.

Almost nobody is told this: the foundation for reading is not built in a classroom. It is built at home, out loud, in the years before your child ever sees print. Through talking. Reading aloud. Singing. Telling stories. Answering the four hundredth question of the day.

A child who arrives at kindergarten with that foundation does well in almost any school. A child who arrives without it struggles, however good the school is. And the difference is built by you, in ordinary days, mostly for free.

So for families with young children, the village works a bit differently:

- You may be paired with a Mother Mentor — an experienced mother from the village who has been through it and can be texted at two in the morning
- You start a record for your child from the beginning, tracking the milestones as they come. Most parents have never seen this information. It exists, and it is useful.
- If a milestone is missed, you get simple things to try at home
- If something keeps looking off, we point you to Child Find — a free evaluation your school district is required by law to provide, from birth, at no cost to you. Most parents have never heard of it.
- Every quarter, your village throws a celebration for the babies born in it. You will be welcomed by name.

If reading is hard for you too

A lot of parents in a village struggle with reading themselves. Almost none of them say so.

If that is you, it is worth knowing two things. You are not unusual — a great many adults were moved through school without anyone ever finding out what was actually in the way. And the same approach works for adults. Nobody ever found the cause for you, and it can still be found.

The same goes for a grown son or daughter who left school unable to read well. They are not too old for this.

Tell your Ambassador, or ask quietly in the community space, or just start the adult materials yourself. Nobody will make anything of it.

Getting help, and giving it

Ask your Ambassador anything. If they do not know, they will find out and come back to you.

You can also ask the whole village. The Ask the Village page lets you post a question — about school, sleep, behavior, benefits paperwork, anything — and other parents who have been through it answer. It is often faster than searching, and better, because these are people who dealt with it last month.

One day, you will be the one answering.

The strongest Family Ambassadors and Mother Mentors in any village are parents the village already helped. Nobody is asking you for that now. But it is worth knowing that this is where it goes, and that what you learn will be worth something to the family down the street.

Family Participation Pledge

I want my child to succeed, and I understand that what happens at home matters more than anything else I can control. I am ready to do the work.

- ☐ I will make sure my child can get online in a way that lets them train consistently.
- ☐ I will see that my child trains 15 to 20 minutes a day, 4 or 5 days a week, until the program is complete.
- ☐ I will read aloud with my child at least 15 minutes a day.
- ☐ I will watch the materials on mindset and how children learn, and put them to use.
- ☐ I will stay in contact with the village — my Family Ambassador if I have one, or the community space — and say honestly when something is not working.
- ☐ I will take part in village gatherings as best I can.
- ☐ I will share my child's reading results from school, before and after, understanding that these are reported only as group numbers and never by name.
- ☐ I understand this usually takes one to two years, that we will review progress at about 90 days, and that stalling and hard days are a normal part of it.

If your circumstances change and you cannot keep this up, that is not a failure and you are not in trouble. Tell your Ambassador. We would rather adjust the plan than lose your family.

Parent or caregiver — printed name

Children — names and ages

Signature

Date

Best way and time to reach you

Phone

Family Ambassador

Email

Students old enough to understand this are encouraged to sign it too. It is their work as much as yours.

Student — printed name

Student — signature

Youth Success Movement · Village Series, Document 7 of 10 · Family Welcome Packet and Participation Pledge ·
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