



The Mentoring **IMPACT**

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I began volunteering with 1 On 1 Mentoring in 2010. I can still remember my first meeting and anxiously waiting to meet my mentee. Towards the end of the meeting I was paired with a beautiful, curly haired, talkative, and energetic 8th grade girl, Tia.

We connected instantly. Our relationship began with a short conversation in the BMS cafeteria, grew to lunches at our favorite restaurants, and on to shopping for school clothes in town after school. I established a relationship with her parents so we could visit after school hours and eventually continue our mentoring experience after it ended that year.

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I wanted to provide encouragement and support through the various transitions in her life. Tia's circumstances were not typical and she had more difficulties and responsibilities than the average teenager. She did not fall victim of her circumstances. On the contrary, she was motivated to finish high school and begin college.

Tia excelled academically and had impressive social skills. She didn't allow statistics to determine her future. She overcame numerous hardships and remained her joyful self through the years. I am incredibly proud of the young lady she has become today! She is married to her high school sweetheart, attending Bainbridge State College, and responsibly maintaining a household.

Tia has become a part of my family, no longer just a mentee. She has watched me get married and have two children of my own that adore her and her husband. I have achieved personal growth, gained better understanding for other people, and enhanced my own life with the joy that bubbles from her!

I am very passionate about helping children. 1 On 1 Mentoring opened the door for me to begin helping children in our community. I became a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in 2014 to continue helping children. I was able to apply my knowledge and experience from mentoring to become a great CASA. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with 1 On 1 Mentoring and I commend all the volunteers who work so hard in our community to ensure our children have a formal mentoring program.