Imagine 2025...

What will youth mentoring look like in the year 2025? We’ve spent the past eight months utilizing human-computer interaction methods in order to realize that future. For the first four months, we researched ongoing ways to ensure mentoring quality and availability. We then built a roadmap and prototypes based on the opportunity areas we identified.

In this report, we’ll reveal our framework for the future of mentoring. Our vision projects what Everyday Mentoring could look like in the year 2025, a roadmap we call EM2025. We will delve into essential components of our solution and explore how to expand the reach of mentoring.

We envision a world with a seamless support structure of caring adults for every child — a world in which all adults have the tools they need at an arm’s reach to be more impactful in their relationships with young people.
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In January 2017, The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania (TMP) came to us with a challenge: find a way to scale quality mentoring and reduce the shortage of mentors. We spent four months researching different areas of the national mentoring landscape that we could improve with technology. To ensure that we had a holistic view of mentoring, we expanded our research beyond official mentoring organizations and talked to many different types of youth mentors.

We distilled these four months of research in our report *Unpacking Mentoring*, which highlights our most compelling insights. The journey map on the right shows some of the pain points that were revealed through this research.

We identified the opportunity to more effectively train adults who already work with youths and help them recognize their potential as Everyday Mentors. Everyday Mentoring is a concept coined by TMP, which recognizes that people can make a mentoring difference in their everyday interactions with young people. Our research revealed that we are not doing enough to help realize the full potential and reach of Everyday Mentoring.
THE CURRENT EVERYDAY MENTOR JOURNEY

**Phases of the Journey**

**Awareness**
- In this phase, an adult is introduced to Everyday Mentoring by a program in which they are involved.
- **Touchpoints:** Program staff from organization the adult has joined, in-person training workshop with TMP
- **Breakdowns:** Have to be involved in a program first before receiving this training. Few people know that this training exists or that they could be mentors with very little change to their daily actions.

**Buy-In & Learn**
- In this phase, the adult begins to identify as a mentor and practice the skills he/she has learned.
- **Touchpoints:** Program staff from organization the user has joined, TMP Everyday Mentoring Newsletter, youths
- **Breakdowns:** Adults have trouble practicing mentoring skills when they feel isolated and unguided.

**See Impact**
- In this phase, the adult attempts to see the impact he/she is having and has trouble.
- **Touchpoints:** Program staff from organization the adult has joined, youths
- **Breakdowns:** In mentoring, it’s hard to see or track the impact you are having both immediately and over time. Likewise, TMP currently has no ongoing way to track the impact or frequency of these interactions.

**Actions & Feelings**

- Searches out and joins a program
- Feels motivated to give back
- Feels excited, ready to take action
- Receives training in Everyday Mentoring workshop
- First uses skills learned in training
- Feels intermittently confused or unsupported
- Reads email newsletter
- Feels refreshed and more confident
- Continues to use skills learned in training
- Feels isolated and unsure
- Attempts to keep track of mentee over time
- Feels frustrated and not sure efforts were “worth it”
After conducting our research, we spent the next four months crafting a concrete solution. We followed Google Ventures’ design sprint process to rapidly test our core assumptions and iterate on our designs. The big question and overall mission we started with was “How can we make Everyday Mentoring a household name and trusted practice?” With each design sprint we tackled a new problem, such as understanding user motivation to log data, or gauging efficacy of the training content.

IDEATING
We started the design process by rapidly generating concepts to address the breakdowns uncovered in our research. We initiated each ideation session by listing our assumptions—the key questions and risks we needed to address in order to ensure our solution was successful. Each member of the team contributed a wide variety of ideas, from which we narrowed to build and test.

PROTOTYPING
We used prototypes to test the assumptions embedded in our designs. We grouped and prioritized each set of assumptions before choosing the right prototyping method that would solicit the kind of feedback we needed. We
crafted many different types of interactive prototypes, including clickable storyboards and videos for concept validation and mobile applications for usability testing. Our goal in testing was to solicit authentic reactions from users by showing them prototypes that were as realistic as possible.

**TESTING AND REFINING**

Getting real feedback from our target users was essential to our design process. We used a number of different methods for testing: Interviews, speed dating, and think-aloud usability testing. We took what we learned from each testing session and refined our prototypes. This way, over eight weeks, we were able to gain a full picture of our user and better understand how our solution could fit in a user’s world.

Our iterative design and testing process meant that every new prototype was built on feedback from previous tests. The succession of prototypes and tests are illustrated in the diagram above.
THE VISION: EM2025

EM2025 is the framework that empowers adults to be mentor-like in their everyday interactions with youths. We believe it has the potential to increase the number of mentoring relationships in Pennsylvania and nationwide. EM2025 is not just about making Everyday Mentor training accessible to everybody, it is about creating the right incentives and environment to foster a habit of mentoring. The four stages of EM2025 are: awareness, buy-in, learn by doing, and see results.

THE EXECUTION: MAGNIFY

Magnify is a mobile application that places Everyday Mentor training within the context of people’s lives. While EM2025 is a blueprint that can take on many different implementations over time, Magnify is our vision of how EM2025 can be implemented within the next 2 years. It builds a steady habit of mentoring, all the while making users aware of the impact they are making and gathering general data for TMP about mentoring interactions nationwide.
**MAGNIFY’S TARGET USER**

**MAX**

“I used to be a Big Brother, but I just don’t have the time now or ever am around kids with my new job.”

**DEMOGRAPHICS**
31-50, Male
Software Developer in Pittsburgh
Spends most of his time at work

**GOALS**
Wants to feel a part of the community, but needs to focus on his job.

**FRUSTRATIONS**
Doesn’t feel like there is enough time in the day for him to do everything he wants, such as volunteer work. His new job also doesn’t have any opportunities to interact with youths.

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**SARAH**

“Sometimes the students can be so challenging. I know I need to step in, but I don’t even know where to begin.”

**DEMOGRAPHICS**
18-30, Female
Middle School P.E. Teacher in Pittsburgh
Spends her time with students in the gym.

**GOALS**
Wants to have more mentoring training to improve her interactions with all youth, not just the ones who behave well.

**FRUSTRATIONS**
Doesn’t have the time to go to a 2-hour training session or the network to know how to get involved.

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**SHAUN**

“I have a new coach who doesn’t quite know how to better interact with the players. How can I help her?”

**DEMOGRAPHICS**
51+, Male
Baseball Club Director and Head Coach
Spends most of his time coaching and organizing other coaches

**GOALS**
Wants to show others the value of mentoring, and help the new coaches he mentors strengthen their relationships with youth.

**FRUSTRATIONS**
He struggles with saying no to people or opportunities, and often overcommits himself.
We envisioned that in the year 2025, a potential Everyday Mentor can seamlessly move through the mentoring journey. She becomes aware of her potential as a mentor through campaigns led by TMP or when drafted by her own social or professional circles. She learns to self-identify as a mentor and becomes a member of an active mentoring community. She learns and intentionally practices mentoring skills. Finally, she is able to see and track her impact, and others are able to interact with this data as well.
THE EM2025 JOURNEY

**Phases of the Journey**

- **AWARENESS**
  - In this phase, an adult is introduced to Everyday Mentoring by a peer, organization they are a part of (teaching department, professional society, etc.), or awareness campaign.
  - **Touchpoints:**
    - Awareness campaign and/or message from friend or colleague
    - Application landing page (website)

- **BUY-IN**
  - In this phase, the adult begins to align personal goals with mentoring goals, buys into the process, and joins a community of adults working together to increase the impact they are having.
  - **Touchpoints:**
    - Magnify (mobile application)

- **LEARN BY DOING**
  - In this phase, the adult moves through modules and challenges, learning, reflecting, and practicing new skills.
  - **Touchpoints:**
    - Magnify (mobile application)
    - Youths (real-life interactions)

- **SEE IMPACT**
  - In this phase, the adult sees the results of their hard work and shares the application with others.
  - The Mentoring Partnership has access to a birds-eye view of this real-time data.
  - **Touchpoints:**
    - Magnify (mobile application)
    - Magnify (web application for program staff)

**Actions & Feelings**

- Feels motivated to increase impact
- Feels compelled and excited to start using the app
- Feels determined to improve
- Feels supported and encouraged to share
- Feels reflective and ready to start practicing
- Feels confident in new skills
- Feels validated, like efforts were "worth it"
- Feels desire to share with others in community and social circles

**Emotional Experience**

- Happy
- Sad
The overarching goal driving our work is to make Everyday Mentoring a common, trusted practice. In order to increase awareness of Everyday Mentoring, we explored five different awareness campaigns that showcased a different solution to attract someone’s attention. The prototypes fell on a spectrum from personal to public outreach, with varying levels of integration with data generated from Magnify. Two prototypes really resonated with our target users.

**SHARABLE VIDEO**
We created a curated video, designed to be auto-generated by Magnify and shared on social media. It incorporated personal testimonies and mentoring statistics to show impact. It’s crafted to pique interest from a user’s connections and lead to a landing page with more information about the product.

**GIVING BACK TREE**
This solution was an ambient display in the form of a tree placed in a popular neighborhood with lighting that was driven by data from our product. For example, as a new user would join the service or post an interaction, the tree would light up in real time to attract the attention of a passerby to come up and find out more. On the tree is a sign with a scannable code directing the potential user to the product’s landing page for more information.
JOY INDUCING
Most users reacted positively to an entry point that brought them immediate joy and sparked their interest through meaningful metaphors.

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT
Users are drawn in by seeing what others had done. They appreciate the personal connection or having someone in their network post or send them something.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Users loved a public display that reached out and engaged their entire community. This could be in the form of an art display or an endorsement from a local sports team.

KEY FEATURES OF AWARENESS
Connects to data generated in Magnify
Sparks interest with joy and meaning
Engages through real user stories
Reaches communities through shared spaces and experiences
USER TESTING
We tested all five prototypes with five participants of varying ages and experience levels. We found that while users preferred the curated video and Giving Tree concepts above the rest, age differences were an important consideration when targeting certain groups. A younger demographic seemed to prefer social media engagement, while an older demographic preferred connecting on a more personal level.

“I would share my own video in hopes that it would glorify mentoring and inspire others.”
112 T.A. (Female, 18-30) reacting to the Sharable Video

“I love this because it’s really creative, but also really informative about its purpose.”
Former Music Teacher (Male, 31-50) reacting to the Giving Back Tree
Sarah is browsing her favorite social media site when she sees a video posted by her friend that recaps his achievements using Magnify.

Seeing all of the personal stories and videos of her friend being a mentor to the youth around him inspires her to learn more about the app.

Sarah comments on the video congratulating her friend and inquiring more about his experience.
BUY-IN

In order to help potential Everyday Mentors understand their role and the purpose of training, we front-loaded foundational information to ground them in the purpose of Magnify. An easy, personalized onboarding process caters to two different, identified target personas: the beginner and experienced Everyday Mentor. Magnify collects demographic and location data in order to connect users to a like-minded community and for TMP to learn more about the mentoring landscape.

BUY-IN USER FLOW

User inputs goals and experience level ➔ Beginner or Experienced?

Beginner ➔ Explain Micros & direct to beginner Micros ➔ User inputs demographic information ➔ Show similar users ➔ Join community?

YES ➔ Show user how they can see community stats

NO ➔ Show user where they can see their own stats

Experienced ➔ Explain Micros & direct to advanced Micros

We know why you’re here.
Now we want to know more about you.

Enter your name

During the day I’m a…

Teach

Volunteer

Police Officer

Bus Driver

Other

I interact with youth when…

Teaching

Coaching

Volunteering

Working

At church

Other

Enter your city or town

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

By gathering this data during the onboarding survey on Magnify, we can connect the user to a community of similar users. At the same time, it provides The Mentoring Partnership with a wealth of information about who is becoming an Everyday Mentor, from which they can draw other insights.
PERSONAL GOALS

Training on Magnify allows each user to grow development skills and set personal goals. Users can choose what character development goals they would like to develop while improving their mentoring skills through Magnify.

SKILL LEVEL

Each experience level of an Everyday Mentor requires different training material. A simple slider allows a user to identify as either a beginner or experienced mentor. This identifier helps determine the appropriate starting point for the user based on their level of experience.

KEY FEATURES OF BUY-IN

Onboards with quick and simple screens
Allows users to set personal goals
Personalizes lesson content based on skill level

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USER TESTING

After testing our onboarding prototype with a variety of users, we solidified the two main personas our product is targeting. Sarah is the beginner, someone who is just starting out in their daily interactions with youth such as a new teacher or coach. Shaun is the experienced mentor, someone who has been interacting with youth daily for a while and most likely organizes or oversees other mentors. Each user we talked to appreciated a simple, yet powerful introduction to help them understand what they will get out of using Magnify.

“It feels like it should say some very basic rules for when you are mentoring. Remember you are helping others. Every single small interaction can be magnified greatly.”

University Professor (Male 51+)

“Identify. I get it. It’s what I need to get started. The key points.”

LeapCMU T.A. (Male 18-30)
Sarah downloads the app Magnify after learning about it from her friend.

She inputs some basic information about herself, like that she’s a new coach in the Pittsburgh area who wants to improve her interactions with her players.

With her personal goals set, Sarah can focus on applying the new skills she learns to the aspects of her relationships that are most important to her.
LEARN BY DOING

Magnify is centered around helping users develop new mentoring skills and motivating them to practice these skills in their everyday lives. Micro lessons within Magnify are crafted from the Mentoring Partnership’s existing Everyday Mentor training material. Each lesson focuses in on a single skill of Everyday Mentoring and is delivered in four interactive steps. At its core, each lesson motivates users to reflect on their own experiences, view stories from others, complete a challenge, and log the results of their actions.

LEARN BY DOING USER FLOW

User action  User decision  App function

Choose a Micro that interests them → Prompt user to reflect on past experiences → Give a real life example of the skill in use → Lesson about the skill and why it’s important → Prompt for the challenge → Do activity now? → YES → Log attitudes and story of the result → SAVE → NO → Save in Challenges tab to return to later

REFLECTION

In Magnify, simple prompts help the user to reflect on a past experience related to the Micro. This step sets the user’s mindset to think about where the lesson can be applied in their own life.
REAL-WORLD APPLICATION

Each Micro in Magnify concludes with an actionable challenge that nudges users to apply the skills they’ve learned to their everyday lives. These challenges help motivate users to take the step towards becoming Everyday Mentors through simple actions.

KEY FEATURES OF LEARN BY DOING

- Teaches basic skills proven to be effective practice for mentoring
- Helps people connect new skills to past experiences through self-reflection
- Creates actionable next steps for people to start practicing their skills every day

LEARN FROM OTHERS

Within each Micro, Magnify provides real-world examples of how the lessons were put into action by members of a user’s community. Reading these scenarios from others helps ground the user and strengthens their ability to apply the lesson in their own life.

Stories

Theresa
Talking with one of my students after class today, I noticed him crossing his arms or looking down when he talked about his other classes. I realize now that my class might be where he feels most confident.

Charlie
Wow, making a concerted effort to make eye contact is hard! I really saw a difference in how the players on my team responded to feedback when I looked them in the eye today.

A Challenge: Focus Focus

In a conversation you have today focus on your body language and tone of voice, and notice the other person’s reactions.
Did you have a better conversation with someone by listening with your eyes?

The progress bar lets users know how far along they are in the Micro, so they know how much time they need to commit.

If the user completes the Micro at a time when they are not around youth, they have the option to come back and finish the challenge later.

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USER TESTING

Testing the flow of the Micro lessons and the relevance of the content was imperative for creating an effective mobile Everyday Mentor training solution. Based on user feedback, we iterated on this flow and content multiple times in order to craft a comprehensive experience for our users.

From user testing with a range of participants that had varying levels of experience working with youth, we were able to better understand which lessons, activities, and challenges resonated with each user. We discovered that the act of reflection is an important step in getting users to see how new skills can be applied within their own lives and that users were more willing to complete challenges if they could return to them later at their own pace.

“I think it’d be useful. I haven’t had any formal mentoring training and this would be far easier than going some place to get formal training — to just be able to do it from my phone, whenever I had time.”

LeapCMU T.A. (Male 18-30)
When Sarah finishes a Micro in Magnify on how to be a better listener, she is challenged to observe the body language of her players during their next practice.

At practice she sees one player sitting on the sidelines. She puts these skills she’s recently practiced in Magnify to work and is able to connect with the girl in a way she never has before.

She feels confident that her new listening skills will help her be a better coach and role model.
Magnify is able to track mentoring interactions and provide a data-driven view of the impact of mentoring. A personalized stats page in Magnify shows users their personal growth and mastery of the Everyday Mentoring content. Additionally, a public website connected to Magnify posts aggregated statistics to help raise awareness and track the overall impact of mentoring nationwide.

SEE RESULTS USER FLOW

User completes the challenge. → How’d it feel?

User decision:

- Good
- Bad

User action:

- We’re glad to hear it!
- We’d use your feedback to improve.

Would you do it again?

User decision:

- Yes
- No

User action:

- We’re glad to hear it!
- Tell us more.

Share story of challenge?

User decision:

- Yes
- No

User action:

- User speaks or types story.
- Activity logged for personal stats.

Story shared publicly.

Story shared with community on Magnify.

Activity logged for personal stats.

PERSONAL PROGRESS

Simple questions at the end of every Micro help track the user’s confidence with the material. Data visualizations of the user’s progress and mastery help motivate the user to keep progressing through the app.
COMMUNITY MOTIVATION

Based on the demographic information provided by the user, Magnify invites users to join communities of other Everyday Mentors facing similar challenges. Members of these communities can offer support to one another, share stories, and engage in friendly competition.

THE DATA BEHIND MENTORING

A public website pulls data from Magnify to visualize mentoring interactions nationwide. The Mentoring Partnership can use this tool to track high engagement areas. Magnify users can see their impact and the actions of those around them.

KEY FEATURES OF SEE RESULTS

- Quickly records user feedback to track personal stats and stories.
- Motivates trainees by sharing experiences of similar users.
- Gathers and displays public data about the state of Everyday Mentoring.

Scrolling over a dot reveals the story submitted by a Magnify user.
USER TESTING
From our early research, we discovered that mentors need to know the impact they are having in order to grow as mentors. We used this insight to guide the design of our personal and community progress pages. We conducted multiple rounds of testing where we asked each user what they need to see in order to feel like they are making progress and having an impact. Many wanted to see the journey they have made and a composite of all the different aspects of their mentor training. For community statistics, we added a leaderboard to show overall progress and shared stories to help Everyday Mentors learn from other’s experiences.

“I like doing things for my own sake. This would help me keep track of my own progress through the app.”

LeapCMU T.A. (Male 18-30)
After completing a challenge in Magnify, Sarah quickly logs her interaction to pull ahead on her community’s leaderboard.

Her activity log automatically appears on the public Magnify site, where a Mentoring Partnership employee sees it appear on her screen.

The Mentoring Partnership can use these national statistics to better understand Everyday Mentoring, and Sarah feels a sense of accomplishment looking at her personal stats.
Our team believes Magnify and the end-to-end EM2025 journey can positively shape the mentoring landscape nationwide. By maintaining high-quality mentoring while increasing the quantity of Everyday Mentors, we envision a future that benefits the youth, adults, and mentoring programs.

SEAMLESS SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR YOUTH
Youths are the true beneficiaries of Magnify. As more adults within a community become involved with Magnify, the youths of that community gain a seamless support system of mentor-minded adults. This allows all youth in a community, not only those in formal mentoring relationships, to experience the benefits that caring adults have to offer.

CONNECTED COMMUNITY OF CONFIDENT EVERYDAY MENTORS
Through completing challenges, sharing stories, and reading examples of mentoring from others, users of Magnify can be confident that they will make a positive impact through small, everyday interactions. By connecting Everyday Mentors together, Magnify creates a community that allows users to learn from the expertise of others, and to contribute their own stories as guidance for the less-experienced.
COMMUNICATING EVERYDAY MENTORING WITH DATA

EM2025 has the potential to propel Everyday Mentoring to national recognition. This solution acts as the glue that brings together disjointed Everyday Mentoring efforts around the country. With this new wealth of data, The Mentoring Partnership can better understand the mentoring landscape, supervise the quality of Everyday Mentoring, and provide appropriate resources for mentoring programs. Additionally, an increase of identified mentors could help expand the reach of formal mentoring programs.

With the data produced by Magnify users, The Mentoring Partnership will be able to track location, frequency, and demographics to better understand Everyday Mentoring.
Acknowledgments

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ABOUT THE MENTORING PARTNERSHIP
The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania helps youth by delivering resources to mentoring programs. They promote the importance of quality mentoring, present best practices and research, and deliver training. They also provide technical assistance and professional development for the staff and volunteers of local programs.

ABOUT MHCI
The Masters of Human-Computer Interaction (MHCI) program at Carnegie Mellon University is the first program in the world dedicated to preparing professionals for careers related to human-computer interaction, user experience design, and user-centered research. The MHCI program integrates service and design thinking into a rigorous curriculum that prepares students to guide the future of human and technology interactions.

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Primary Research Report
Speed Dating Storyboards
Considerations for Future Solutions
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Prototypes

Recordings of User Study Sessions
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