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**For Immediate Release:**

## **MENTOR Rhode Island receives \$1.1 Million to prevent violence in Providence through Relationships at the Center Mentoring Initiative**

MENTOR Rhode Island will join in the effort to help prevent violence in Providence by working to expand mentoring opportunities throughout the city. The organization has received a \$1.1-Million investment from the city. It will distribute \$750,000 of that funding to community programs that want to incorporate mentoring in their work or expand the mentoring opportunities they already offer, through a grant request process. More information and a link to the grant application can be found at [www.MentorRI.org/relationships-at-the-center](http://www.MentorRI.org/relationships-at-the-center).

“We are calling this initiative Relationships at the Center,” says MENTOR Rhode Island President & CEO Jo-Ann Schofield. “The pandemic has shown us that we are all vulnerable. We need each other. In these times of increased violence and lack of social connection, the city of Providence is leading the nation by affirming its dedication to our young people. This is a moment in the life of American children that has seen untold consequences as a result of social isolation, fear, disruption of routines, and a tremendous sense of loss. Many have lost people they knew and loved. We lack the normalcy and safety that we all took for granted before March of 2020. We were designed to need one another to survive and thrive. The lack of social connections has taken its toll not only on adults but in particular, our young people. They lost so much and need positive, caring adults in their lives now more than ever.”

MENTOR Rhode Island will use its expertise in youth mentoring to create a community of practice with the agencies selected for funding. It will support mentoring professionals and increase the web of support for the youth served through this initiative. As an affiliate of MENTOR National, MENTOR RI is the sole provider of technical assistance for the National Mentoring Resource Center, funded through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. MENTOR RI also has access to the latest research, and employs two nationally recognized Master Trainers in the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring – which is the evidence-based best practices for mentor program operations.

MENTOR Rhode Island is also calling on anyone interested in supporting a young person to step-up and volunteer as a mentor. The organization can work with you to find a mentoring program that meets your needs and give you the opportunity to have a positive impact in the life of a young person.