

Family Selection FAQ's

Q: How will I know when Horizons for Youth is accepting applications?

A: We encourage you to fill out the waitlist form. When we are ready to send out applications, we will work from waitlist and contact parents. Please note that we typically hold required information sessions in Dec-Feb, send out applications in Feb and they are due in March for applying for the following fall.

Q: Do my child's grades need to be excellent to apply to your program?

A: Horizons for Youth accepts students of all academic abilities. We understand that every child learns differently and has the ability to reach their own potential.

Q: What school does my child need to attend?

A: Our mission is to find the best quality school for your child(ren). We have a list of elementary partnership schools that we can share as we contact families on the waitlist.

Q: How are your Big Sibs (mentors) selected?

A: We take the safety of our students very seriously. All volunteers must complete an interview with our Volunteer Manager and pass a background check. For the first three months, all 1:1 outings between your child(ren) and mentor(s) are required to be supervised by one of our staff members or parent. Please note that students 3rd-8th are matched with 1-1 mentors. K-2nd graders are not matched with 1-1 mentors, but engage in activities focused on the family bond.

Q: How long can my child(ren) stay in the program?

A: Horizons for Youth is proud of our long-lasting relationships. So long as parents and students abide by the yearly contracts, students stay at Horizons for Youth an average of 17 years, from kindergarten through post-secondary. Students entering high school are required to interview for the Horizons for Youth High School Program at that point.

Q: What proof of income is required?

A: Applicants must show proof of financial need with income no greater than 80% of Chicago Area Median Income. (First two pages of 1040 tax return preferred, or signed letter from employer stating salary. If not currently working include a copy of Medicaid I.D. card, current food stamp voucher, proof of SSI (Supplement Security Income) or proof of Special Population Group (i.e. Social Security).

Q: Can my children who are older than K-4th grade be accepted? How about younger than kindergarten?

A: Older siblings through 8th grade for the upcoming school year will also be accepted. Only children who have previously been in our elementary program are eligible for the high school and post-secondary programs. Children younger than kindergarten are not eligible for the program, but if a family is in good standing, those children will enter the program when starting kindergarten