

## **Our Legislative Agenda: Mentoring**

*12/22/2010*

In this time of year, as we think even more about the connections between children and adults, this seems an especially good moment to introduce the fifth and final element of the 2011 five-part legislative agenda for [The Children's Movement of Florida - that being mentoring](#).

Often, people think of "mentoring" for others, and not about ourselves. In fact, I've had wonderful mentors and "role models" all my life...as I am sure you have had.

Mentoring programs connect children with caring adults and create the structure for nurturing relationships. Our state once was the national leader in mentoring, creating more than 200,000 relationships through the Governor's Mentoring Initiative launched in 1999 by Gov. Jeb Bush. This effort was embraced widely throughout the state by the public and private sectors. In more recent times, mentoring has become a lesser priority for many in Tallahassee. That simply doesn't make sense.

We at The Children's Movement believe that Florida must begin to regain its leadership in mentoring through a reallocation of existing funds, a partnership with business leaders, and modest funding that would improve mentoring programs substantially.

If you take this proposal --- and all four of our other agenda items - the total cost would be about \$300 million a year. That is less than 1 percent of the state's annual revenues.

You have heard me say this before - and I repeat this for emphasis -- The Children's Movement of Florida's [full first-year agenda](#) is affordable, realistic and achievable.

[If you click here](#), you will find the agenda's rationale, details and a just-finished five-minute video.

This completes the series of messages about our legislative agenda, but I promise to stay in touch in the months and years to come as we press ahead with this vital work on behalf of Florida's children -- all of Florida's children.

I wish for you a blessed and peaceful season...

Dave Lawrence  
President  
The Children's Movement of Florida