

Community Connections - Learning Together Frequently Asked Questions for Parents, Teachers, and Legal Guardians

What is Learning Together?

We are health professional students (medicine, dental, public health, etc.) who want to provide mentoring and additional academic support for children and teens during this time of uncertainty and change. We are working with various community organizations such as School in the Square, Nido de Esperanza, and Coalición Mexicana as well as New York Presbyterian's Center for Community Health Navigation (CCHN).

Who are the “tutors/mentors”?

Currently tutors and mentors are **student volunteers** from Columbia University. Our pool of volunteers are health professional students, including medical, dental, public health, occupational therapy, physical therapy and public health students. **Please note that we are NOT certified childcare professionals.**

What are our expectations for Parents/Teachers?

Parents and teachers should make sure that their children attend scheduled tutoring/mentoring sessions and are prepared with their own learning materials. This includes making sure that your child has the proper books, worksheets, online learning tools etc. for their tutoring/mentoring session. Parents and teachers are expected to attend the first meeting with tutors/mentors and partnering organizations (Nido de Esperanza, Coalición Mexicana, School in the Square, CCHN) prior to the start of tutoring/mentoring sessions.

What ages do you tutor/mentor? What kind of services can the tutors/mentors provide?

Currently, we are offering academic and tutoring services for children ages 6-18. However, our tutors and mentors may not necessarily be certified teachers. We aim to provide academic assistance in a variety of subjects including math, science, reading, writing etc. Additionally, we would like to foster mentoring relationships by supporting your child with personal development, higher education, and career planning tools. Our tutors and mentors are not trained in childcare, so we are unable to provide babysitting services. If you would like more clarification on the specific role of our tutors and mentors please contact Silvia Arora, Isabel Genecin, Fran Chou, and Peter Kentros at sa3667@cumc.columbia.edu, iag2114@cumc.columbia.edu, flc2112@cumc.columbia.edu, and pak2137@cumc.columbia.edu, respectively.

How much does this cost?

This is a free service. Payment from parents for tutors and mentors is not accepted. Our tutors and mentors are made aware that their work is voluntary.

How long can my child be involved with Learning Together?

We aim to support your child during this period of adjustment as they shift to an online learning environment. In an effort to provide consistency, we aim to match your child to a volunteer for the duration of the school-year. Please let us know if your plans change.

How do I apply?

Please fill out our Learning Together [Parent Interest Form](#) (Spanish version [here](#).)

What happens after I submit the Parent Interest Form?

After your child has been matched with a tutor/mentor, Learning Together will reach out to you based on the contact information you listed on the form. We will then set up a meeting between parents, the designated tutor/mentor, and either Nido de Esperanza, Coalición

Mexicana, School in the Square, or CCHN depending on where you heard about us. During this meeting we will discuss your child's needs and how we can best meet those needs. Scheduling for tutoring/mentoring times will also be planned during this meeting. After the meeting, tutors and mentors will begin sessions with your child.

Should there be a change in schedule, how does the family communicate this to Learning Together coordinators?

Tutors and mentors will provide their contact information to the families they will be working with. Families will coordinate a tutoring/mentoring schedule with the tutors and mentors directly and notify them if a scheduled session will be missed. Additionally, tutors/mentors know to contact Learning Together and families if they are unable to meet with their mentee/ tutee at the scheduled time. Learning Together will then work with the tutors/mentors and their families to find a substitute tutor/mentor or make up the session at another time.