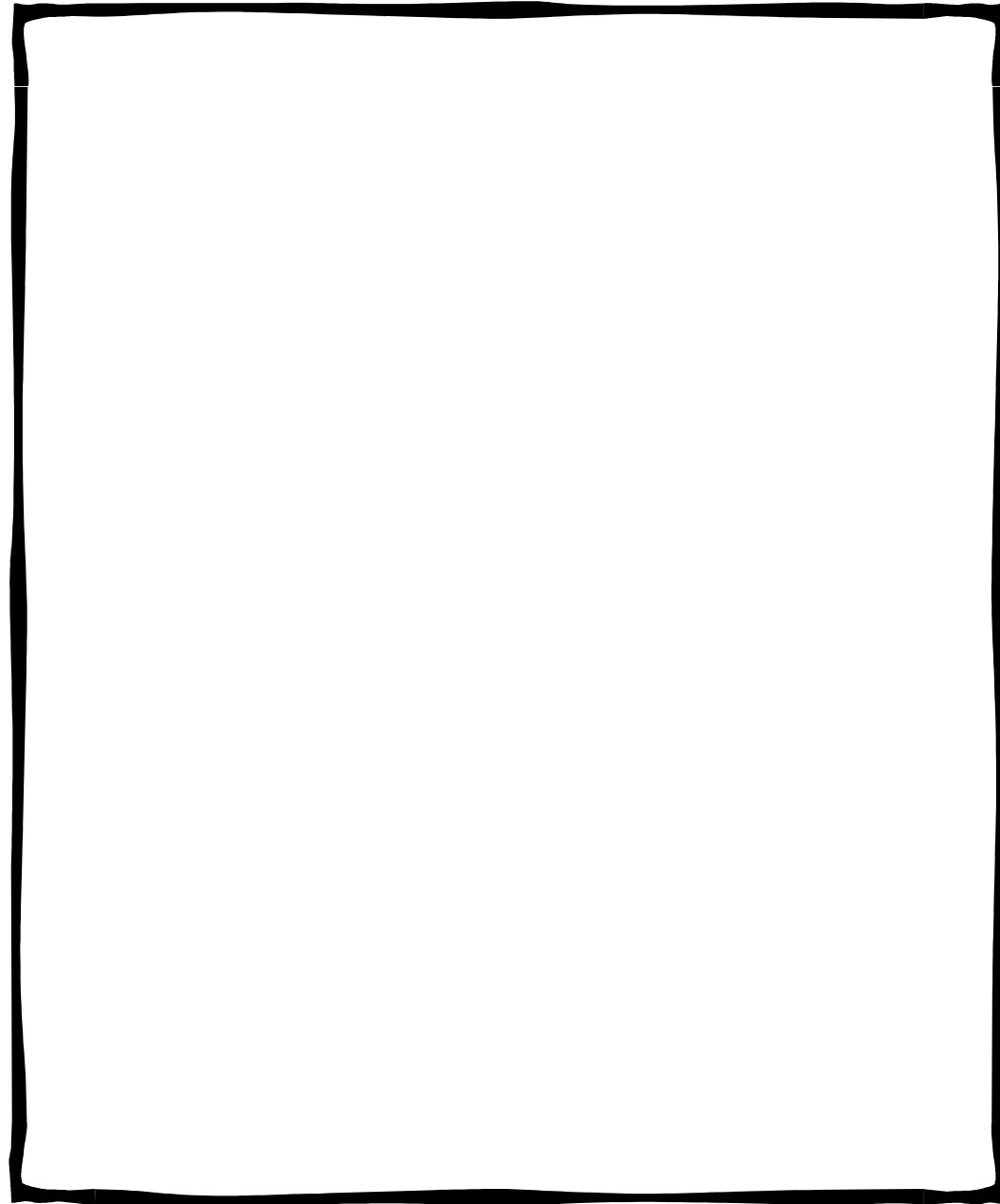


Notes



RSVP

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What is a mentor?

- a friend
- a caring and supportive adult
- a good role model
- a cheerleader
- a coach
- a confidant
- an advocate
- a confidence builder
- all of the above



A mentor is not a tutor. Although some mentors might occasionally do some tutoring during their weekly sessions, this is not their main purpose.



What is the single most important skill a mentor can have?

Being a good listener!

Strategies for Beginning the Relationship

- Be consistent and reliable
- Show you are willing to listen
- Focus on doing things *with* rather than *for* your mentee
- Be aware of your own feelings about age, cultural, and lifestyle differences
- Be nonjudgmental
- Reach out, be available
- Be open and honest about what you can, cannot, or have to do

Strategies for Building Trust

- Be patient
- Expect setbacks
- If you think your mentee is becoming too dependent, set limits and encourage him to broaden his support network
- Be involved, yet keep perspective
- Continue to be consistent and reliable
- Continue to treat your mentee as capable

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Why Does Culture Matter?

As a mentor, you will likely find many ways that your background differs from your mentee's background. At a minimum you will discover generational differences. Perhaps you will also be from different ethnic and religious heritages, or from different socio-economic groups. It might be tempting to want to just look past the differences and focus on what you have in common, but that's not the road to a strong relationship. Rather, the more you can learn about and appreciate your differences *and* similarities, the better.

Makes You Think

Research by Search Institute (www.search-institute.org) shows that only 20% of young people think that adults in the community value youth. You can strengthen your mentoring relationship by demonstrating how much you value your mentee's ideas, perspectives, and companionship!

What to do when you first meet:



Hi!

- Smile!
- Introduce yourself and let your mentee know how to address you
- Learn how to spell and pronounce your mentee's name
- Encourage him/her to give you a tour of the school
- Use positive reinforcement:
 - *"You are a great guide."*
 - *"You made me feel welcome."*
 - *"I'll be looking forward to next week"*
- Try an icebreaker activity
- Tell your mentee that you will come every week, but, if for some reason you can't come, you will call the school office and ask that they let him/her know
- Accept your mentee as he or she is —do not be judgmental or try to "fix" them
- Let your mentee know when your next meeting will be
- Remember to end the session on a positive note!

What Do I Do After I Say Hello?

What if my mentee won't talk to me?

- ☺ Try talking about yourself.
- ☺ Tell them about your own kids, your pets, or your hobbies.
- ☺ Give them paper and crayons or markers and ask them to make you a picture.
- ☺ Try an ice-breaker such as:
 - My favorite color is _____
 - My favorite animal is _____
 - My favorite food is _____
 - My favorite ice cream flavor is _____
 - If I had 3 wishes they would be _____You can improvise other 'favorite' categories.
Take turns sharing your favorites.
- ☺ Try a card game such as Go Fish. Or build houses with the cards!
- ☺ Bring along a magazine with lots of pictures and make a collage together by cutting out pictures and gluing them onto paper.

- ☺ Your mentee may not feel comfortable enough to share information until he/she gets to know you better. Don't try to rush the process. Be patient! They will come around once they realize that *you* will stick around.

Boundaries

- Q.** If my mentee looks as if he/she could use some new clothing, would it be OK to give them some?
A. This is a tough call—some parents may perceive a gift of clothing as an insult.

- Q.** What should I do if I suspect my mentee is being abused?
A. Report your suspicions immediately to the school counselor. If the counselor isn't available, tell the teacher or someone in the school office.

- Q.** What should I do if my mentee confides that he/she is involved in some undesirable behaviors?
A. If what your mentee confides in you could be dangerous/harmful to him/her or to another, you must let someone at the school know.

- Q.** What should I do if my mentee swears or uses derogatory language with me?
A. Your mentee may be "testing" you. Depending on his/her age, you may try ignoring it, letting them know that certain language can be very hurtful to others, or asking them how they feel when others talk to them in a disrespectful way.

Boundaries



You have been screened and approved for school-based mentoring, meaning that you may only meet with your mentee at school during your regularly scheduled times.

You may request to be screened for community-based mentoring which would enable you to meet with your mentee outside of the school setting. If you are interested in being screened for this, please let the RSVP Mentor Coordinator know.

Q. What if my mentee asks for my phone number?

A. It's best to tell your mentee that the mentor program does not allow you to do this.

Q. Is it OK to give my mentee a gift?

A. An age appropriate, inexpensive birthday, holiday or end of the school year gift is fine. Some mentors have given books, a set of colored pencils or crayons, a journal, or even a photo of themselves. The decision whether or not to give a small gift is totally up to you.

Ice Breakers



Ask leading questions like:

- What would you do if you won \$100?
- If you could have only one toy, what would it be?
- If you could change into an animal for a day, which animal would you choose to be? Why?
- If you could have a super power, which one would you choose?

Play I spy:

One of you says, "I spy something red" and the other has to look around the room and guess what the red object is.

Guess how many times you can fold a piece of paper in half and then try it.

20 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MENTORING

1. Give the mentee a choice and a voice in deciding on activities
2. Listen
3. Don't push—be patient
4. Listening and talking are the heart of your relationship
5. Let the mentee have much of the control over what the two of you talk about
6. Assist with school work in a way that helps build self-confidence
7. Be positive
8. Be supportive—don't be critical
9. Offer frequent expressions of confidence
10. Praise and encouragement help build self-esteem
11. Remember that *you* are responsible for building the relationship
12. Emphasize friendship over performance
13. Set realistic goals/expectations
14. Don't preach about values
15. Don't try to be an authority figure
16. Don't act like a parent
17. Be a friend—a role model who can provide support and gentle guidance
18. Remember that your relationship is with the youth, not the youth's parent
19. Respect the trust your mentee places in you
20. Have fun together

