

M A N U A L

for

Mentors

GUIDE TO A REWARDING
MENTORING EXPERIENCE

BY

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WELCOME

Congratulations on signing up to become a mentor and your interest in making a difference in the life of a young person.

I can assure you that this will be one of the most important and best decisions you will make in your lifetime. The relationship you establish with the youth will be as beneficial to you as it will be for the "mentee" with whom you have been matched.

Your training today is just the beginning. In the weeks and months ahead, you will receive ongoing support from the program staff. Do not hesitate to ask questions and look to staff for advice and support. This is an important part of mentoring. You are not supposed to know ALL the answers.

The pages which follow include many of the suggested procedures, tips and strategies which were discussed at your training session. Add ideas of your own as you explore the exciting journey of mentoring and get to know your "mentee."

Thank you for your time, your commitment and your caring. You will make a difference!

SUSAN

Dr. Susan G. Weinberger

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PERTINENT INFORMATION

About my Mentee

Name of my mentee _____

Information about the school/organization/agency:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Fax number: _____

Mentee's Grade in school: _____

Name of Program coordinator: _____

Telephone number: _____

Hours of program operation: _____

Miscellaneous:

BEFORE GETTING STARTED

Polícies and Procedures

Do not expect dramatic changes in your mentee overnight. This is a long and deliberate process to gain a level of trust and confidence. It may be years before the mentee recalls the important role you played earlier in their life.

Professional staff selected the youth who could benefit the most from this program. The goal is to provide support and friendship. Staff chose those mentees who needed an extra little push in their lives to become productive citizens.

Call your mentee by their first name - or nickname if they prefer - and use your first name as well. This is an informal relationship.

Physical contact with your mentee is not allowed. What you consider friendly affection may be misconstrued by others. If the mentee does something that is worthy of praise, you may wish to indicate your approval and delight with a soft pat on the back or half a hug. Do not meet in a room in which the door is closed behind you. There is no need for this.

This program may be taking place in a small community. IF this is the case, most likely everyone knows everyone else. Therefore, keep what you discuss with your mentee in strictest confidence unless you learn something that is life threatening about the youth, or their family or friends. If there is disclosure of abuses: (e.g. physical abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse, drug abuse), please let program staff know about it immediately. This is not a breach of confidence. Mandated reporting of abuses is the law!

Staff connected with the program will always be available to support and assist you. Do not hesitate to call on them at any time for help.

Please discuss with staff if you are thinking of terminating the relationship with your mentee for any reason. They will help you to reach a proper conclusion.

ESTABLISH SOME GROUND RULES

The first time you meet with your mentee, discuss some important rules to ensure a relationship of trust, friendship and positive communication.

- ❑ Talk about how often you will meet, location and the rules pertaining only to seeing each other at the mentoring site.
- ❑ In case you are unable to make a scheduled session, tell your mentee how and when you will contact them to let them know so they will not be disappointed. Call well in advance, if possible, if you have to cancel.
- ❑ Discuss what happens if you show up for your meeting and the mentee does not. That means that the mentee must now tell you the plan for contact, in advance, if they are unable to make the weekly meeting with you. They should call the program staff and leave a message for you.
- ❑ When you are with your mentee, what is expected of both of you? How long, hopefully will your relationship last? Discuss the answers to these questions and policies regarding gift-giving, rides in the car, and loaning of money
- ❑ It is important that you decide together each week what activities you will undertake. Start today and remember to always ask your mentee what they want to do. One of the keys to success in mentoring is when the mentor and mentee decide TOGETHER what they are going to do.
- ❑ Commitment in this program is key. If you say you will show up next Wednesday, your mentee will expect you. Some have had lots of disappointments in their lives. If you don't exhibit responsibility, mentees grow up to disappoint others. DO NOT BE A NO SHOW MENTOR!
- ❑ Let your mentee know that you care, show interest and appreciation.

LET'S GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

FIRST DAY INTERVIEW

MY MENTEE

My mentee's name is _____.

My mentee goes to school at _____.

My mentee lives at _____.

My mentee has _____ brothers.

My mentor has _____ sisters.

What things does my mentee like/dislike?

My mentee's favorite food is _____.

My mentee's favorite color is _____.

My mentee's favorite book is _____.

My mentee's favorite TV show is _____.

My mentee has a pet. Yes No Pet's Name _____.

My mentee is sad when _____.

My mentee is happy when _____.

My mentee's favorite sport is _____.

My mentee's birthday is _____.

Now reverse the questioning and answer the same as above for you, the mentor!

A GOOD MENTOR

The most critical role for a mentor is to be an adult who has time for the youth, who cares about that child, who believes in that child. This relationship may provide the ONLY stability a young person knows, and the only time anyone spends quality time with the mentee. That is mentoring!

Mentor Roles & Responsibilities

A MENTOR:

- Engages in a positive relationship with the child
- Gives attention to the mentee
- Has positive self-esteem
- Reacts well to stressful situations
- Tolerates frustrating situations
- Does not engage in alcohol or drug abuse
- Listens well
- Communicates on a level the mentee can understand
- Is stable
- Provides leadership
- Respects alternate lifestyles
- Is a positive role model
- Has an outstanding record of employment
- Meets on a weekly basis with the mentee
- Shows up on time for sessions
- Has no criminal record
- Is willing to serve a minimum of one year in the program
- Cares about helping a deserving youth
- Is not a judgmental person
- Is committed
- Nurtures a relationship that respects the mentee's dignity
- Accepts responsibilities
- Reinforces student's successes

THE MENTOR'S ROLE IS NOT TO:

- Replace the role of a parent/guardian
- Interfere with the organization's policies and procedures
- Tutor the mentee in academic subjects as a means of improving grades
- Expect dramatic changes in attitude, self-esteem, or attendance quickly
- Provide solutions to all the issues facing students today
- Break the trust they have established unless life threatening

Developing Self-esteem in Youth

Mirror Image: Children see themselves through the eyes of others. They are often told they are bad. If you see them as lovable and capable. It is a terrific first step.

Empathy: Find a common bond and empathize with how your mentee is feeling.

No Negativism: Praise your mentee. Give positive reinforcement. Try to find something they did well.

Teach about teasing: Do you remember the nicknames you had when you were a kid?

Opportunities and Options: Teach your mentee about the opportunities you had in life.

Round-table: Children of alcoholics and from poorer families learn three things very well - not to talk; not to trust; not to feel. Share feelings and discuss comforts.

Show affection: Gentle pat on the back and half a hug.

DEVELOPING SELF-ESTEEM

a feeling that *"I'm Okay"*

Self-esteem is closely tied to family and environment, including social and economic background.

When young people feel listened to, are taken seriously and genuinely cared for, their self-esteem will be high.

HOW CAN MENTORS HELP?

- **Offer friendship**
- **Teach career skills: how to apply for a job, how to work well with others, how to accept criticism, how to take initiative**
- **Offer positive reinforcement for participation and achievement**
- **Teach life skills: how to open a savings account, how to cook**
- **Be available to listen**
- **Teach citizenship through a shared service project**
- **Show trust by increasing mentee's responsibilities**

DEVELOPING SELF-ESTEEM IN YOUNG PEOPLE

Four Conditions- The following four conditions that affect self-esteem can be utilized by the mentor to assist the mentee develop self-esteem:

Connectiveness: *Being a part of a family, community and being in touch with self, personal history, and culture enhances self-esteem.*

Share your interests, hobbies and life concerns;
Do something special for your mentee that meets his/her needs;
Encourage participation in cultural programs and community service.

Uniqueness: *Developing a special sense of self and recognizing uniqueness is important to self-esteem. A young person may be unique in appearance, talents, vocational interests, hobbies or interests.*

Notice and affirm special characteristics;
Encourage your mentee to express ideas, even if they are different from your own;
Ask your mentee to use his/her special talents or interests to benefit others.

Power: *Having the resources, opportunities and capabilities to control one's own life enhances self-esteem. Young people are empowered when they are taught to make decisions set personal limits, take responsibility, solve problems, and teach others.*

Encourage personal responsibility-being responsible for what you feel;
Help your mentee become aware of his/her own decision-making process;
Take your mentee through the steps of problem solving;
Encourage your mentee to set goals-short and long-term;
Set standards for achievement, but allow for mistakes;
Emphasize strengths, not weaknesses.

Models: *Good role models can affect self-esteem. Models serve as examples to help young people establish their own values, goals, ideals and personal standards. Being in contact with someone that you admire can make you feel good about yourself.*

Expose your mentee to people you admire;
Help your mentee think through what is important to him/her;
Help your mentee face the consequences of his/her behavior;
Spend time teaching the how and why of tasks that your mentee hasn't learned yet;
Share your own values, goals, ideals and personal standards;
Encourage discussions around values, beliefs and interests

MENTORING SKILLS

Tips For Effective Communication

Talking and communicating are not the same! There are three basic skills: *Listening, Looking and Leveling.*

Listening-Listening does not have to be passive. It can be as active as talking, if you do it right. To listen effectively, you should:

Pay attention

Don't think ahead to what you are going to say (Ignoring the youth while rehearsing your own comments)

Don't interrupt

Listen for feelings underneath the words

Keep an open mind-don't judge immediately

Encourage the speaker to continue, and clarify what has been said

Looking-People communicate with verbal and body language. Pay attention to the whole person. Take note of facial gestures and body movements. There are clues that will help you more fully understand what the person is saying. Some helpful tips:

Make eye contact

Show that you are listening by leaning forward in your chair, saying "Uh huh" or "Go on"

Check out what you are understanding-repeat back what you heard. Ask if that's what the mentee "said"

Leveling-Leveling means being honest about what you are feeling and thinking. Tips include:

Be honest in what you say

Speak for yourself. Use "I" statements instead of "you" statements

Deal with the other person's feelings. Don't give unwanted advice or try to change someone's feelings. Just listen and try to understand.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Many of the youth whom we work with have a strong need and desire for positive physical contact with caring adults. You are encouraged to be a positive role model; however, your physical contact should be limited to giving a soft pat on the back or the sharing of a hug in full view of staff. Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between the mentee and yourself may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information you are told about your mentee is confidential and sharing that information with others may be a violation of the law. Do not allow yourself to make a promise to a youth that you will keep confidential information secret. Tell the student that they are free to share confidential information with you; however, there are certain things that you are required by law to tell your staff contact. There are expectations to this requirement of confidentiality, and it is critical, not only for the welfare of the youth, but also to protect yourself from violating the law, that you adhere to these expectations:

If a mentee confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional or physical abuse you **MUST** notify the program coordinator at the center immediately. In some states, for example Texas, you may also be required to notify the youth's school and sponsoring agency and may be subject to criminal prosecution if you do not.

Make a note on your calendar of when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Remember, this information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives. So **DO NOT** share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities. This includes your best friend!

If a student tells you of their involvement in any illegal activity you must tell *The Program* immediately. Again, make a note on your calendar of when this information was reported and to whom it was given.

SETTING GOALS

A GOOD GOAL SHOULD HAVE THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS

IT SHOULD BE:

- **R**ealistic (if it is too difficult, it will lead to frustration and defeat).
- **C**hallenging (if it is too easy, there is little incentive to achieve it and little reward in getting there).
- **C**onnected to a deadline (or there may be a tendency to put off completing it).
- **S**pecific (so that you know what it is you want to do).
- **O**btainable (so that you know when you have gotten there).

Be committed to your goal. The best-laid plans will never be achieved unless there is a real commitment.

WHEN SETTING GOALS:

1. Draw up a contract with your mentee
2. Each week, assess your progress and pitfalls
3. Chart the results
4. Reassess or reaffirm the values of the goals you have set
5. Remember that your mentee's goals must be their own!

And An Example:

Mentees who decide that they want to live in a mansion one day can learn how a good education will lead to job opportunities in which they could earn enough money to live in a mansion.

Mentors and mentees can explore careers and the education required for these career choices. In this way, a goal that may seem unrealizable can be transformed in to smaller, realizable goals; and mentees still feel that they are their own goals. Every goal set down by a mentee can be an access to learning.

MENTEE GOALS

Signed: _____
(Mentee)

Signed: _____
(Mentor)

Date this plan is made: _____

Date we will review this plan: _____

I. Academic Goals

My Goal is:

I will do these activities to reach my goal:

I will know I have reached my goal when:

II. Personal Goals

My Goal is:

I will do these activities to reach my goal:

I will know I have reached my goal when:

III. Behavior Goals:

My goal is:

I will do these activities to reach my goal:

I will have reached my goal when:

IV. Attendance Goals:

My goal is:

I will do these activities to reach my goal:

I will have reached my goal when:

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MENTORING

MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS

Put your mentee first: During the session, concentrate on his/her needs and problems. Leave yours at the door. Be flexible in your planning. If your mentee has something on his/her mind, drop your plans for the session and focus on the immediate need.

Be your mentee's friend, but not a buddy: A "friend" is a person who looks out for your best interest. Therefore, a friend never allows you to do less than your best; a friend does not allow you to shirk responsibilities; a friend does not allow you to do things that will be harmful to you; a friend is not a "back-scratcher".

Approach your mentee on a basis of mutual respect: Your mentee has experienced many things you have not and has knowledge you do not have. Show respect for these things and do not belittle them for things not known or skills not yet required.

Take time to get to know your mentee: Some mentees will be very open; others will not. In order to be of the most help, you must gain an insight into behavior. Some questioning techniques that may help and will elicit more than the variations of "yes" or "no" include: descriptive: what is it like? What kind of a situation is it? Comparative: how are two or more things different or alike?

Try to have a positive influence on your mentee: The way you feel about life and yourself influences the way you treat other people, and the way you treat other people influences the way they feel about themselves.

Drop the authoritative role: Be an interested human being.

Communicate by transmitting attitudes and feelings: Do this by being yourself; it is more effective than simply to use words.

Arrange the physical setting to be close to the mentee: Do not sit behind a desk or across a table. Rather, share a table by having the mentee sit beside you.

Talk ideally about one-third of the time when the mentee discusses a problem: This gives the opportunity for the mentee to do most of the talking and shows that you are interested.

Ask questions that cannot be answered with yes or no: Instead of saying, "do you like the class?" say "What do you like or dislike about the class?"

Ask questions which show a personal interest in the mentee: Do not sound like an interrogator.

Do not interrupt the mentee when he/she is talking: This communicates that what is said is important. However, if the mentee digresses from the subject, say "How does this apply to the subject we started talking about?" or "What does this mean to you?"

Give the mentee silence in which to think: Realize that there will be periods of silence while thinking occurs. This takes practice, for in normal conversation, silence produces a feeling of awkwardness. Realize there are different kinds of silence. Pause before talking. The mentee may wish to make additional remarks. A pause of a few seconds may enable conversation to continue.

Move the focus from intellectual thought to emotional responses when feelings are being discussed: Ask such questions as, "What does this mean to you?" and "How did you feel about that?"

Observe and interpret nonverbal clues: Notice body movement, finger tapping and other obvious clues.

Be alert to notice the change in the rate of speech, a change in the volume of speech, or a change in the pitch or tone of voice: Such changes may indicate that there are emotional feelings connected with the subject being discussed and that the subject needs further exploration.

Use brief remarks: Do not confuse the student with long complicated questions or comments.

Don't give lectures on ways to behave: Ask the mentee to suggest alternatives. But allow the mentee to make the decision. Together look at the consequences of the alternatives.

Share common experiences with your mentee, focusing more on the mentee and the mentee's problem.

Clarify and interpret what the mentee is saying: use such remarks as "What you are saying to me is..." at other times, make a summarizing remark. But be sure to make these brief interpretations only after the mentee has presented the idea.

Do not be alarmed at remarks made by the mentee: Instead focus on the reason behind what was said or done.

Do not make false promises or reassure the mentee that things will be alright: This will be recognized as superficial. Instead communicate a feeling for the mentee and a desire to see and understand the problem; do not appear to be overly concerned or to assume the mentee's problem.

Do not make moralistic judgments: Instead focus on what is behind the mentee's behavior. Ask yourself: "What is there about this person that causes the behavior to occur?" As a mentor do not blame the mentee for failures; try to understand why there has been a failure, accept the failures, and go on from there.

Be sincere in your praise of the mentee: Always praise the attempt as much or more than the right answer. Give positive reinforcement whenever possible.

Do not reject the mentee through your remarks or nonverbal clues, but instead attempt to be accepting: Try not to show impatience! Do not threaten or argue; guard against any act that might appear to belittle.

Do not ignore a problem: Seek immediate help from the program staff. You do not need to handle areas which require expert assistance from staff. Leave tough areas to them. When in doubt, ask!

Do not become quickly discouraged: Some of the mentee's behavior patterns have taken a long time to develop. Although some improvements may appear, permanent changes in behavior come slowly. Mentors become impatient and want change overnight. You must be patient. It may take ten years before a mentee says: "do you know who made a difference in my life? My mentor when I was in fourth grade."

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PREVENTION Healthy Lifestyles

Here are some tips that you can use when discussing topics relating to prevention of substance abuse and ensuring good healthy lifestyles:

Health and wellness are not terms that only apply to our physical self, they apply to all areas of our lives: our emotions, our thoughts, and our actions.

When youth drink alcohol or use other drugs, they affect the whole body. Once alcohol enters the bloodstream, it enters all of your body's organs within minutes. Alcohol is toxic and kills healthy cells in our bodies and alters our perception of reality. We cannot be well or healthy if we drink too much alcohol or take other drugs such as marijuana, cocaine/crack, PCP, amphetamine, heroin, and/or hallucinogens.

If you believe that your mentee is experimenting with alcohol or other drugs, offer to get them some help. This can come by discussing the problem first with your mentor coordinator. Tell your mentee you will accompany him to speak with someone you know (the professional directing the mentoring program!) in order to get help.

The strengths that keep youth away from abusing drugs are what you are doing to encourage your mentee. These include:

Self-esteem, good body image, comfort with feelings, healthy peer group, life values including honesty, respect, responsibility, accountability, good communication skills and being a good listener and positive role model.

TERMINATING RELATIONSHIPS

If you are thinking about ending your mentoring relationship, talk to your mentor coordinator first and get some advice. Then

- **S**et a specific date for your last meeting and inform your mentee of this ahead of time.
- **B**e honest, candid and supportive regardless of the reason for the termination.
- **T**alk about the reasons for ending the relationship.
- **T**alk about your thoughts and feelings for the mentee and your feelings about the termination.
- **E**ncourage your mentee to do the same.
- **B**e positive and supportive, especially about what the future may hold for your mentee.
- **I**f it seems appropriate, talk to your staff liaison about a replacement mentor for your mentee.
- **D**on't make promises you may not keep (e.g., that you will always keep in touch).

ADOLESCENT ISSUES AND NEEDS

What new issues are raised when young people become teenagers, and what are the most effective ways to address these issues? While all teenagers face peer pressure and emerging sexuality as part of normal adolescent development, such behavior too often escalates to self-destructive behavior, such as substance abuse, or to early parenting. In addition, public awareness has been raised recently on such issues as family violence and teen suicide. While mentoring programs are not intervention programs, they can help young people to make decisions or seek professional help regarding these serious issues. The following list discusses the degrees and kinds of help that mentors can provide.

PEER PRESSURE

Adolescence is a time of socialization. Young people are gathering information, advice, ideas, and signals from people other than their parents and teachers. They look to their peers for approval, comparison, sources of self-esteem, and their own identity. It is important to instill a sense of self into young people if they are to learn to make educated decisions in situations where input from authority figures differs from peer input. Mentors should avoid trying to replace either the authority figures or the peers: scolding or playing savior will hinder trust-building, while transferring the source of approval from the youth's peers to yourself will end up making you partly responsible for the youth's decisions when they backfire, and will detract from the youth's ownership of his/her successes when those decisions prove effective. The role of mentors is to equip adolescents with decision-making skills, so that young people can learn to feel responsible for the outcome of their decisions.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Peer pressure, family history and popular culture can all contribute to a young person's experimentation with alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Encouraging young people to discuss and ask questions about substance abuse is an important step towards engaging their trust and allowing them to educate themselves regarding its dangers. Your role as a mentor is to make literature and other resources available to them and help them to use those resources. In addition, explaining to them why you have chosen not to abuse these substances - if they ask - gives them a role model for a non-substance abuser, without preaching. A mentoring program is not an intervention service, however. Young people who already have substance abuse problems require more rigorous intervention than a mentoring program can offer.

EMERGING SEXUALITY AND TEENAGE PARENTING

Body changes and social changes – not to mention popular culture’s influence – make sexuality an issue at a very young age in our society. In the age of AIDS, other sexually-transmitted diseases, and high teen pregnancy rates, sex education that incorporates sensitivity to emotional needs as well as physical causes and effects is essential. Young people in need of intimacy, emotional support, or personal prestige may turn to, or seek out, sexual relationships to fulfill these needs. For this reason, effective education on sexual issues should include skills for making decisions, setting goals, setting limits for relationships, fulfilling emotional needs without sex, and taking responsibility for decisions and their consequences.

CHILD ABUSE AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Physical abuse detracts from a youth’s self-esteem in ways that sometimes only professionals can help change. A youth may become withdrawn; may turn to peers for support and away from authority figures –no matter how well-meaning. The youth may recreate a family history of violence or abuse in other relationships, thus continuing a cycle of self-hatred, shame, and hatred or suspicion of others. These problems require professional help, and mentors should contact program coordinators to find such help, without breaking the youth’s trust in the mentor. A mentor may need to say: “I’m concerned for you and I have to report what is happening to so-and- so.”

DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE

Depression and suicide are often related to one or more of the issues above, compounded by a young person’s inability to find answers to serious questions, or emotional support for difficult problems. It is important, first of all to acknowledge the “seriousness” and the “difficulty” because adolescents are often encountering such problems for the first time. Telling them “It’s just a phase” or “You’ll grow out of it” only verifies any beliefs they may have that you just don’t understand. Suicide counseling is a matter for professionals, and mentors should contact program coordinators for referrals, with the adolescent’s knowledge. In addition to seeking professional help for the youth, mentors can listen, provide resources and help the youth to use them and provide a support system for the youth while the youth and professional counselor seek answers.

In a case where a young person’s friend or school mate has committed suicide, or died unexpectedly, counseling and emotional support are necessary to prevent others from following suit, for whatever reasons – as a “solution” to problems, as a cry for help or attention, as a form of “revenge”, or as a way to resolve feelings of helplessness over the first death. School counselors, psychologists and social workers can organize and implement school-wide or area-wide counseling in such cases.

TIPS

STRATEGIES

IDEAS

for
mentoring
sessions

WHAT WILL WE DO EACH WEEK?

Below is a partial list of some tips and strategies for your mentoring sessions. Check to see that they are age appropriate. Remember to ask youth what they would like to do. Plan together. Don't be too structured, though... spontaneity is important! Add some good ideas of your own. Make a list of the ideas that you really liked and share them with other mentors. Good luck!

1. Start by telling the youth why you decided to become a mentor.
2. Engage in games – board games such as chess, checkers, and monopoly and cross word puzzles. Hang man, too!
3. Select books you like and read them together. Get to an exiting part and finish it next time you are together.
4. Start a book club.
5. Exchange favorite recipes. Put them in a book and use it as a neighborhood fundraiser for the program.
6. Research the history of music and learn to play a musical instrument together.
7. Teach the beginning alphabet, words and phrases of a foreign language.
8. Create a scrapbook of memories that last the entire year.
9. Use a disposable camera to capture special moments.
10. Work on the computer. Create calendars, poems and search the web. Write a story.
11. Set up e-mail correspondence between mentors and youth if you are permitted and if the youth has access where the mentoring program is located. Write to each other and touch base between visits.
12. Construct a kite together and fly it.
13. Build and launch a rocket. Don't forget to take photos.
14. Create a design and carve a pumpkin on Halloween.
15. Help research and design an extra credit project for the youth's school.
16. Create a time capsule and bury it. Determine when it should be opened.
17. Create a holiday, get well or greeting card for a special occasion.
18. Discuss safety precautions such as wearing helmets when riding bikes and fire safety in the home.
19. Write an original storybook together.
20. Discuss personal hygiene, health, exercise, and healthy habits. Remember that we are what we eat! Manage a diet plan together.
21. Teach how to give a good handshake. Practice makes perfect!
22. Discuss proper etiquette and social graces. Plan a field trip to a fine restaurant after youth pass ALL the tests. Make sure to get permission and invite a chaperone. Get approvals from the program first!
23. Connect with the community. Research what after-school programs are offered in the community in which youth might engage.
24. Encourage youth to try out for school activities such as the band, chorus, drama production and sports.

25. Play sports, Shoot basketball in a school or organization's gymnasium.
26. Explore what to do in an emergency. Create a contact list and discuss 911 procedures.
27. Plan for a sound financial future. Discuss opening savings and checking accounts and the concept of good credit and the meaning of plastic credit cards. Invite a banker to speak with youth.
28. Plan for future careers. Conduct mock interviews for a job, read the want ads, discuss dress codes and fill out a sample application for a job.
29. Discuss opportunities for post-secondary education. Research two and four year colleges, technical schools and the meaning of financial aid. What does it take to get to college? What high school courses should be taken? It is never too early to begin.
30. Take a career interest inventory. Discuss entry-level positions.
31. Decide on a community service project together with mentors and youth and carry it out. Perhaps it is to plant a garden in front of the local school or remove graffiti from school walls. Maybe it is to collect food and deliver it to the homeless. Take credit for the project as part of your mentoring program. Ask the program what are their needs.
32. Start a pen pal project with a group of young people in another country.
33. Talk about friends - those that youth have and those they would like to have.
34. Decorate t-shirts and wear your creations proudly.
35. Discuss what youth want to be when they grow up. Invite guest speakers in who represent the careers of choice.
36. Arrange to shadow corporate executives on Ground Hog Job Shadowing Day, a national event in February.
37. Have a game of basketball, football or volleyball with mentors against youth.
38. Design and paint a mural on the wall of the school.
39. Act out a scene from a favorite book and make a production out of it. Invite the school to attend.
40. Discover ways to make spelling fun. Use alphabet cereal or flashcards.
41. Play hangman.
42. Discuss the positive activities youth can get involved in during the summer.
43. Walk outside on a nice day; sit under a tree and just talk.
44. Research and talk about famous people who use their abilities to get ahead.
45. Read the newspaper and magazines together.
46. Share your life experiences.
47. Share your career experiences. How did you get to where you are today?
48. Remember youth on their birthday with a card.
49. Share your school and other experiences at the same age as the youth.
50. Share a proverb each time that you meet.

51. Build a model.
52. Swap photos of youth and mentors.
53. Bring a scrapbook or photo album in from home and share photos of your family, travels and pets.
54. Share thoughts and feelings between meetings in a small journal.
55. Practice the answers to the questions for the driver's license.
56. Help youth write a resume.
57. Discuss people you admire. Compare heroes and research your favorites.
58. Discuss leisure activities.
59. Plan a leadership project with youth and carry it out.
60. Tell your youth - if you could go back to high school what would YOU do differently?
61. Complete a personality inventory to find out who the youth are.
62. Help youth to design a unique and original calling or business card.
63. Help youth to craft a personal mission statement.
64. Ask the youth where do they hope to be in five years? In ten years?
65. Help your youth to get organized. Write out what your youth does every day and what they would like to change.
66. Practice how to get the point across.
67. Research volunteer opportunities and adopt a project. Giving back through community service is so important.
68. Discuss travel and dream vacations.
69. Discuss the pillars of character including pride, punctuality, honesty, and responsibility.
70. Help to arrange a mini career fair and invite other youth to attend.
71. Cook a meal together if it is allowed. Ask to use the school kitchen or home economics class if there is one at your local school.
72. Put a cook book together of favorite recipes of mentors and mentees.
73. Explore careers over the Internet.
74. Teach how to ask a boss for a raise.
75. Invite a guest from the local labor market office to discuss market requirements and the fastest growing jobs today.
76. Share your dreams.
77. Discuss current events and the news.
78. Help with homework. Make sure that the youth take the lead in making this decision.
79. Plan a random act of kindness.
80. Learn about how newspapers write the news and invite a reporter in to a session.
81. Usher at the school play or musical concert.
82. Arrange a field trip to visit a senior citizen home. Read to the seniors.
83. Hold a spelling bee and crown the winner.
84. Try clay modeling.

VALUE OF PLAY

If it appears that your mentee would rather play every time you are together than pursuing any other activities, just remember that it is not the location nor the amount of time you spend together that is as important of doing something you both enjoy. While we may think that PLAY is wasting time, please remember its value.

PLAY:

- tool for learning
- active, hands-on multi-sensory experience
- part of the overall development process
- promotes mental capacities
- stretches the attention span
- builds vocabulary
- develops perseverance
- develops problem solving skills
- emotional equalizer
- provides defenses against realities of life
- provides sense of importance, power, protection
- turns children into social human beings
- encourages sharing, listening, persuading
- encourages negotiating, speaking up for one's ideas
- develops physical skills, muscle coordination
- develops healthy body image, balance and sensory awareness
- reduces anxiety
- learning how to learn
- development of distinction between reality and fantasy
- discovery of competence

WHEN MENTORS PLAY WITH MENTEES

- helps to understand how to think and feel
- helps to feel special through recognition
- gives message they are important
- communicates respect
- validates a child's worth

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN MENTORS AND HIGH SCHOOL AGE YOUTH

Time line for after high school - in 5 years, 10, 15, 20, 25
Realistic and attainable goals
Examination of personalities and style of functioning
Personal interests - your and theirs
Financial independence - personal credit cards, budgeting, ATM machine and setting up a bank account
Balance TIME - time management
Get organized - does the youth have a calendar and organizer?
People you admire - your heroes
Communication skills
Workplace readiness skills
Employability indicators - attendance, punctuality, appearance, initiative, maturity, courtesy, attitude, quantity of work, quality of work, flexibility and cooperation
Job opportunities - job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships
Career interest inventory
Job exploration
Mock applications for work and post-secondary education
Applications for financial aid, scholarships and awards
Create a resume
Practice interviewing skills
Exercise and eating right
Personal mission statement
Driver's License
Well-rounded youth - involvement in school clubs, community activities
Review report cards
Appreciate cultural differences
Manners - the code of etiquette (including cell phone and pager)
Visit a local college
Design a business card
Advice regarding risky business (alcohol, drugs, sex, cigarette smoking, gang activity, peer pressure)
Getting ready for the prom
Summer plans

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Susan G. Weinberger is an international consultant on mentoring. She is the founder and President of the Mentor Consulting Group in Norwalk, CT.

Susan was a pioneer in designing and developing a one-on-one school-based mentoring program, the Norwalk Mentor Program more than two decades ago. She served as its Director for 12 years.

Dr. Weinberger has been recognized for her expertise in establishing, maintaining and evaluating school, after-school and community based mentoring programs. Her publications include the My Mentor & Me Series for mentoring in the elementary, middle and high school years; Strengthening Native Community Commitment through Mentoring; Guidebook to Mentoring; The Mentor Handbook; Q/A: Mentoring.

Susan is the Chair of the Public Policy Council and member of the Board of Directors of MENTOR The National Mentoring Partnership; a trainer for the Department of Justice, OJJDP; and a consultant to hundreds of school districts, government agencies, communities, and corporations across the USA and Canada.

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