

Mentors, Mindsets & Role Models

COMMUNITY MENTORING

Spring Woods High School GEAR UP

Spring Branch, Texas



Texas GEAR UP Promising Practice

This program has been recognized as a Texas GEAR UP Promising Practice by the Texas Education Agency and Texas GEAR UP. The model is featured in the 2009 "Mentors, Mindsets & Role Models" toolkit designed to assist schools, districts, and community groups in their efforts to create or expand mentoring opportunities.

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Mentor Manual

Section I

SBISD SpringBoard Program
Overview and District Information

SBISD VOLUNTEER ETHICS, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Revised 8/20/2007

Introduction

The following procedures have been developed by the SBISD Volunteer Advisory Board and are designed to protect both students and volunteers. Acceptance of and adherence to these ethics, procedures and guidelines is mandatory to participation as a volunteer in Spring Branch ISD.

These volunteer guidelines are designed to protect students from harm and to prevent even the appearance of impropriety on the part of the individual mentors, volunteers, students and schools participating in Spring Branch ISD volunteer programs. Please know that we appreciate your participation and that we appreciate your adhering to these guidelines. If you have additional questions, ask your school principal, campus volunteer coordinator or the Community Relations Department.

Volunteer Procedures.

- **Criminal Background Check.** All SBISD volunteers must complete the SBISD volunteer registration process and authorize the SBISD Police Department to complete a criminal background check. The SBISD online volunteer registration is accessible through the district website. If you do not have web access, please complete a written application available through the SBISD campus volunteer coordinator or through the SBISD Community Relations Department.
- **Training.** Depending upon the volunteer role, you may be required to attend a campus or district training.
- **Sign In.** Sign in and out each time you volunteer on campus using the computerized check-in system as per your campus guidelines
- **Name Badge.** Wear the school-provided identification badge as per campus guidelines
- **Volunteer Hours.** Record any volunteer hours served off-campus and report monthly as per campus guidelines.
- **Dress Code.** Use common sense in your dress. Neat, conservative attire is preferred and casual dress is acceptable. Remember, you are a role model for students.
- **Non-School Age Children.** Only bring your non-school age children with you if a school permits and if childcare is available.
- **Dependability.** Maintain consistent and regular attendance. Contact the school if you are unable to attend as scheduled.
- **No Smoking.** All SBISD facilities are tobacco-free zones.
- **Respect.** Volunteers will be respectful of students' and staff's cultural, social, and religious differences. Openness, honesty and respect are expected.
- **Discipline or Other Concerns.** Report discipline, academic or social/emotional concerns to the appropriate administrator or teacher.
- **Calendars.** Stay informed of school holidays, field trips, testing etc.
- **Materials and Supplies.** Return any school supplies utilized in your volunteer role and advise the appropriate school personnel of needed supplies as appropriate.

Confidentiality.

All student information should be treated confidentially. Sharing student information with others may be a violation of the law. Do not make a promise to a student that you will keep confidential information secret for the welfare of the student and to protect you from violating the law. Although the student is free to share confidential information with you, there are certain things that you are required by law to tell the campus administrator. Any personal information learned from a student or student's files, should be held in strictest confidence **except:**

1. If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, chemical or physical abuse;
2. If a student confides that he or she is involved in any illegal activity;
3. If a student confides that he or she is considering homicide or suicide.

Should one of these exceptions arise, you are required by law to immediately notify the student's principal. Note on your calendar 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. If you have questions, please ask a campus administrator. Any student needs communicated to the volunteer should be referred to an appropriate staff person.

SBISD VOLUNTEER ETHICS, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Guidelines for Working with Students

Meeting with Students in your role as a volunteer.

4. All meetings and/or activities with students must take place on the school campus, or as part of a school-sponsored or school related activity such as a field trip.
5. All activities with a student or students must take place in a room with open visibility to the public or on the school grounds in sight of school staff representatives.
6. Off campus contact between volunteers and student is strictly prohibited unless under the direct supervision of a school official.

Transportation. Transporting a student in your personal car is prohibited.

- Students must be transported in a school district vehicle (field trips) or in the vehicle of a parent or legal guardian.
- Do not put yourself in the position of being alone with any student in any vehicle.
- Sometimes a parent may provide written consent for you to transport the parent's child. That may not protect you, the volunteer, from liability because you would not be acting within the scope of your duties as a volunteer.

Physical Contact.

- Restrict physical contact.
- Use common sense.
- Physical contact should be limited to holding a hand, giving a soft pat on the back or sharing a hug in full view of other school officials.
- Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between you and the student may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.

Positive, Respectful Role Model.

- Do not criticize parents, teachers, school personnel or guidelines publicly or with your student. If a problem arises, consult with your volunteer coordinator or the campus principal.
- Do not discuss your students and their problems publicly or with others. If you need help with a student, discuss the matter professionally with the teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or principal.
- Address the student directly and with sensitivity, be honest and model an appropriate manner
- Use discretion in giving gifts to students in alignment with your campus volunteer program policy.

What you should know about Potential Liability.

- A volunteer directly serving a school district is immune from civil liability – not personally liable – for conduct that is (1) incident to or (2) within the scope of your duties as a volunteer and involves the exercise of judgment or discretion on your part.
- You are NOT protected from personal liability if you use excessive force in disciplining a student or act with negligence resulting in bodily injury to a student.
- For purposes of liability a "volunteer" is a person providing services (1) on behalf of the school district (2) on the premises of the district (3) or at a school sponsored or school related activity on or off school property.
- The law concerning volunteers does not limit the volunteer's liability for intentional misconduct or gross negligence. That is, a volunteer can be liable for intentional misconduct or gross negligence.

A person who does not provide services for or on behalf of the school district on the premises of the district at a school sponsored or school related activity on or off school property is not considered a "volunteer". If you are not considered a "volunteer", you may be subject to liability. A volunteer may be subject to liability on federal charges for abuse of children



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Section II

Campus Information
and Program Logistics



Section III

Your Role as a Mentor

Mentors are...

- Caring adults who spends 30 - minutes weekly with a student “mentee” as an advocate, advisor, role model and friend.
- Committed to helping a student “on the brink of success – academically, socially, mentally, and physically—get his/her life heading in the right direction and focus on the future.
- Providers of guidance and support to enable a student to become whomever he/she chooses to be.

Mentors Serve Students “on the brink of success”

Mentors in Spring Branch ISD support students “on the brink of success.” These are students who may be identified as “at risk” and whose environment, circumstances, and resulting attitudes may discourage them from completing high school or from going on to a productive adulthood in society and the workplace.

Factors Identifying Youth “On the Brink of Success”

- Two or more grades behind in school
- Emerging sexual behavior, early parenting
- Home where one or both parents didn’t finish school
- Discipline problems, detention, suspension
- Economically disadvantaged
- Drug or alcohol abuse by youth or parent(s)
- Emotional or physical disabilities
- Unable to get along with teachers
- Truant
- Outside employment competes with schoolwork
- Welfare or single-parent household
- Criminal justice offender
- Struggling with language barrier

Having one or more of these factors implies that the youth has needs that may or may not be met in school, home or in-school counseling. The purpose of mentoring is to empower a young person with the skills to close the gaps in unmet needs in their lives. With a mentor as a role model or guide, mentored students can begin to address personal, school and home issues and begin to close these gaps.

Mentors Should Be...

- **Effective Listeners** – A mentor may be the only adult the student has identified as one who will listen to his/her concerns and problems.
- **Encouragers of Goal Setting** – A mentor should not impose his/her goals for the student, but should help his/her mentee learn to be a goal setter of short- and long-term goals.
- **Identifiers of the Positives** – A mentor may be the only voice for encouragement a student has. Help the mentee identify the positives in his/her life.
- **Role Players** – A mentor should employ role play as a technique for solving problems
- **A Window to the World** – A mentor should help the mentee develop personal interests outside of school.
- **Encouragers of Extra/Co-Curricular Activities** – A mentor should help the mentee become more involved in all aspects of school life.
- **Trustworthy** – A mentor should be honest, open and trustworthy and abide by the *SBISD Volunteer Ethics, Guidelines, and Procedures* for confidentiality.
- **Sincere, Committed and Punctual** – Mentors not only impact students through their words, but also through their actions. By modeling reliability and dependability, mentors build developmental assets and set a good example.

Mentors Maintain Confidentiality

All information shared by the mentee, or about the mentee (as legally permissible or approved by parent or guardian) is to be kept confidential, unless the mentee confides:

- Mentee is the victim of physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- Mentee intends to hurt him/herself or someone else
- Mentee is involved in any illegal activity.

If you suspect your mentee is in danger of any of these circumstances, please follow volunteer ethics, guidelines and procedures and contact school official immediately.

Mentoring Do's...

Do...

- **Be consistent**
- **Be yourself**
- **Be a listener**
- **Be honest, patient & forgiving**
- **Be encouraging**
- **Be a friend. Not a parent, authority figure or teacher**
- **Work for gradual progress**
- **Take time to establish rapport**
- **Respect the trust placed in you**
- **Focus on one thing at a time**
- **Respect cultural, social and religious differences**
- **Maintain confidentiality (understand exceptions)**
- **Remember that everyone has strengths – some are more obvious than others!**
- **Be realistic in your goals for the relationship and expectations of your mentee**
- **Avoid physical contact other than handshake or other business-like greeting**
- **Engage the mentee in decisions about activities and direction of the relationship**
- **Realize that everyone needs to feel valued to act responsibly**
- **Realize your mentee's value system may be different from yours**
- **Realize that responsibility for change lies within the student – not you**
- **Help your mentee see the practical advantages of school**
- **Remember you are not alone – call on school personnel whenever necessary**
- **Remember that you are responsible for building the relationship**
- **Where appropriate, make contact with mentee's teachers, counselors and parents**
- **Have fun!**

Mentoring Dont's...

Don't...

- Feel awkward about silence, especially at the start of the relationship
- Get discouraged if you offer love and concern, but mentee doesn't respond immediately
- Get discouraged if your mentee's progress does not meet your expectations
- Take ownership of your mentee's problems. They belong to the student
- Feel you have to have all of the answers. It's ok to admit you don't know.
- Allow your mentee to manipulate you in any way
- Leave student alone or leave school with the student
- Meet with student behind closed doors
- Expect to change mentee's life overnight
- Overstay your visit
- Hesitate to ask for help from campus personnel
- Join in with a mentee's criticism of family, school or friends
- Accuse your mentee of something negative unless you have 100% proof of wrong-doing
- Give out personal information until you are ready
- Give gifts

Mentoring Considerations

- **Focus on the Mentee!**
Devote your time with your mentee to his/her needs and concerns. Be flexible, and be sure the relationship is about your student, not yourself. Questions like, "How do you feel about that," elicit emotional responses that help mentee's problem solve.
- **Mutual Respect!**
Both you and your mentee have experiences unique to yourselves. Celebrate your uniqueness, respect your differences and do not judge your mentee for things not known or skills not yet acquired.
- **Don't be Authoritative!**
Offer non-judgmental help and guidance when asked. Offer suggestions when asked, but do not judge. Speak for yourself using "I" statements, not "You" statements. Don't give unwanted advice.
- **Don't try to be the Parent!**
Remember, your role is to be a friend and guide, not to assume the role of the parent.
- **Sit Side by Side!**
Relationship building is more comfortable and communication happens more easily when you sit next to rather than across from your mentee. Make eye contact!
- **Let the Mentee do the Talking!**
Help your mentee explore his/her feelings, but don't be an interrogator! Be an active listener; pay attention. Don't think ahead to what you'll say next. Don't interrupt. Clarify what's been said and encourage your mentee's conversational skill development.
- **Silence is Golden!**
Don't be uncomfortable with silence. Give your mentee time to think, and know that it's okay to pause from time to time before or after a comment or question.
- **Be Attuned to Communication Cues!**
Watch for a mentee's tone of voice, choice of words, pitch or tone, as well as body language to determine if a topic being discussed has emotional significance and/or warrants further exploration. Don't force the mentee to have conversation around an uncomfortable topic.
- **Mentees Can Be Decision Makers!**
Guide, suggest and work together to examine consequences, but let the mentee articulate final decisions for him/herself.
- **Communicate with Teachers!**
Be in touch with your mentee's teacher(s) if you have information to share that can support the mentee's academic or social success.

Mentors...Meet Kids Where They're At!

More than ethnic identity, culture is a framework through which a person views the world. This framework includes beliefs, values, traditions, experiences, education, gender, and social status—all of which work together to guide behavior and decision-making.

A mentoring pair from very different cultural backgrounds may have difficulty communicating effectively. Cultural competence—the ability to recognize the value of a culture different from one's own—is required. Cultural competence acknowledges that cultures are neither inferior nor superior to one another, implying appreciation for differences. A healthy mentor/mentee relationship includes respect, empathy, genuineness, and warmth.

Before working with your mentee, examine your thoughts and beliefs about your own and other cultures. This includes not only ethnicity and belief systems, but also popular culture, and the generation gap.

Prejudice or bias stems from a set of beliefs involving stereotypes and negative emotions about a group of people. These beliefs predispose a certain attitude or manner of action toward that group (Hraba, 1994). No one is bias-free. We all make unquestioned assumptions. These biases can lead to discrimination, which is the act of showing favor for or unfairness against a group of people. Thus, bias is the *belief*; discrimination is the *action* based on that belief.

Cultural Competency Skills

Cultural diversity can challenge a mentoring relationship. Mentors should:

- Be open with the mentee and initiate conversation about issues related to their culture as well as being honest about issues related to their own. Appreciate the difficulty of sharing such beliefs and experiences with others and remember to listen without becoming defensive.
- Research the mentee's culture. Magazines and newspapers targeted to particular communities can provide insight into that community.
- Take on the task of learning a language native to the mentee's culture, if appropriate. The mentee can teach you, or you can learn it together.
- Participate in cultural traditions with the mentee.
- Watch MTV, purchase teen magazines, listen to teen-focused music and be aware of the 21st century pop culture which today's youth experience.

Understanding the Millennials

Remember that culture not only refers to your mentee's ethnic or religious background. Generational differences may be the most important factor that separates you from your mentee. Technology has revolutionized the ways in which the 8-18 age group communicates, regardless of socio-economics. Cell phones and computers play a much more important role in daily communication than ever before. Electronic communication is used for everything. Teens use texts, IMs, etc. (for an explanation of these mediums see below) to break up, make up, set dinner plans, complain about tests, and maintain almost constant contact with their friends. Here is a quick breakdown of popular means of communication with which you may be unfamiliar:

Instant Messaging

Chat programs through services like AOL and MSN allows users to communicate in real-time. Instant messaging (also known as IMing) is much more akin to a real conversation than email. While both conversations occur online via computer, instant messaging allows users to chat back and forth. Most teens use chat programs to carry on multiple, simultaneous online conversations with friends.

Social Networking

Social networking sites like Myspace and Facebook allow users to create profiles, upload pictures and network with friends. The websites have become a popular way to both communicate with friends and meet strangers with similar interests.

Text Messaging

Text messaging or texting allows cell phone users to send messages to mobile phones. Text messages or texts may only consist of 160 characters or less. They are commonly used to make plans and communicate in noisy/quiet places (a noisy concert or a classroom). Text messages are fast replacing cell phone conversations as the preferred medium of communication.

The Impact of Electronic Communication

Electronic communication is all about speed and brevity. To accommodate these

abbreviated mediums, language is being truncated—"iluvu" (I love you), "lol" (laugh out loud), "gr8" (great), "R u there?" (Are you there?). To your mentee, a three-minute voicemail may already seem a long-winded, waste of time. When interacting with your mentee:

- Recognize that your mentee is accustomed to short messages and rapid responses.
- Do not be surprised if he/she seems unfamiliar and uncomfortable with the seemingly basic art of conversation. Many spend more time communicating via computer/phone than face-to-face.

Mentors Build Self Esteem

Mentors should observe their mentee's sense of self, talk to them about how they feel about themselves and help them find a way to see their own self-worth. Students with a strong sense of emotional well-being typically display the following types of characteristic attitudes;

- I feel comfortable with myself
- I can take life's disappointments
- I have self-respect. I can laugh at myself
- I respect the differences I find in other people
- I am able to meet the demands of my life
- I am able to give love and to consider the feelings of others
- I set realistic goals for myself
- I am not overwhelmed by my emotions
- I can accept my shortcomings
- I feel a sense of responsibility to others
- I can think for myself and make my own decisions
- I welcome new experiences and new ideas
- I feel good about the relationships I hold with other people
- I put my best effort into everything I do

Page & Page, 1992

Academic Demonstratives of High/Low Self Esteem

Behaviors Commonly Seen in Students with High Self-Esteem	Behaviors Commonly Seen in Students with Low Self-Esteem
1. Active, curious about surroundings, wide variety of contacts	1. Mildly passive, tends to avoid new experiences, has limited contacts
2. Makes friends easily, talks and laughs, gets into trouble now and then	2. Shy, bashful, quiet and withdrawn
3. Has a sense of humor, is a good sport, can laugh at themselves	3. Tends to be overly serious, hypersensitive, afraid to be laughed at
4. Asks questions, defines problems, willingly does his/her part in planning for solutions and carrying out plans	4. Avoids getting to the problem, grumbles that what is wanted is not clear, plans in terms of wishful thinking
5. Takes risks in classroom; contributes to discussions and is able to stand up for beliefs	5. Unsure, backs down easily, frequently asks others: "Do you think this is right?", "What do you think?"
6. Takes modest pride in own contributions; is not overbearing and does not cheat	6. Aggressively asserts own ability and contributions, finds it difficult to share, undermines others when possible
7. Works and plays well with others. Cooperates easily and naturally	7. Overly competitive, finds it difficult to share
8. Usually happy, confident, does not whine for what cannot be had	8. Usually gloomy and fearful, worries as matter of course, complains a lot



Mentor Manual

Section IV

Building Relationships

The Mentoring Relationship

Any successful mentoring relationship will move through four definite stages. The time spent in each one of these areas differs from relationship to relationship, but the progression is uniform. ***Healthy mentoring relationships are evolutionary rather than static.*** Over time, the relationship changes as the mentee grows and develops new knowledge, skills, and standards of social competence.

Getting Acquainted – The First Stage

Mentors may feel nervous or uncomfortable in anticipation of the mentee introduction. In addition to age differences, you and your mentee may come from very different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and have very different life experiences. Your mentee is probably equally nervous! Go out of your way to make the first experience as comfortable as possible.

Relationships get off to a better start when mentors and mentees take time to become acquainted with one another's interests, values, and goals. In the early stages, 1-6 meetings, communication may be awkward or difficult. Mentees may have trouble learning to trust an adult and may attempt to manipulate the mentor

Suggested First Meeting Activities

- **Introductions:**
 - Greet the student with a smile and a handshake.
 - Introduce yourself to your mentee and let him/her know how to address you. Be confident and smile!
 - Ask the student if s/he has a nickname and by what name s/he would like to be called. Learn how to pronounce your mentee's name. Write it down correctly and phonetically.

- **Dependability:**
 - Give your mentee the confidence that you will be dependable and will visit regularly.
 - Talk with your mentee about your role in the mentoring relationship.
 - Ask the mentee to tell you what s/he expects of you and his/her hopes for the relationship
 - Discuss how you'll let hm/her know if you are unable to attend a scheduled appointment.

- **Acceptance:**
 - Let your mentee know that you intend to be non-judgmental.
 - Get to know your mentee by talking about shared interests.
 - Maintain composure if s/he initially acts in a shocking manner. S/he may try to test your limits.

- **Be a Friend:**
 - Express the desire to be an encouragement, support, and friend.
 - Explain that you will keep everything that he/she says confidential, unless it s about something that might harm him/her in any way, as his/her safety and well-being come first.
 - Emphasize the relationship over specific goals.
 - Establish your own match traditions.

- **Activities Help Break the Ice:**
 - Consider a game such as a simple card game, and chat while you play.
 - Ask the student to give you a school tour--- walking and talking might be more comfortable than sitting and talking. Also, this activity lets the mentee be in charge!
 - Consider an icebreaker to tell about yourselves. You might bring some questions to get things started. Examples can be found on the following page:
 - Make family trees -- a GREAT way to learn about a child's background!

- **Closure:**
 - End your first session on a positive and encouraging note.

What's in a Name?

Here are some great questions to help you and your mentee get acquainted:

1. What is your name?
2. What is the origin of your name?
3. Who picked out your name?
4. Are you named after anyone special? If so, whom and why?
5. If you don't know where your name came from, that's a great thing you can find out before we meet again next week!
6. Do you know the definition of a mentor? Let's look it up in the dictionary!
7. How would you describe yourself?
8. What do you think you are really good at?
9. What do you like to do in your spare time?
10. What are your hobbies? Wonder if we have some in common?
11. What kinds of books, magazines and newspapers do you read?
12. What's your favorite t.v. program?
13. What do you like to do on the computer? Do you have access to a computer?

After the First Meeting

After the first meeting, the relationship is ready to begin. Do not be alarmed if the next few meetings continue to be awkward. The mentor-mentee relationship takes time to grow! Just keep trying to get to know your mentee and build trust. Continue to set parameters for the relationship including when to meet and for how long, what kinds of activities will take place, etc.

Common Pitfalls of Stage I:

As a mentor, you can get off on the wrong foot if you forget that mentor-mentee relationships are a partnership like all friendships. If you try to make all of decisions, your mentee is more likely to clam up and resist sharing his/her thoughts.

Spending time at your first few meetings brainstorming a few activities to do in the future can help break the ice and make the mentee realize that you value his/her opinions. If you cannot agree upon activities, try taking turns picking within the guidelines of the program.

Another common issue mentors report is that the mentee will not “open up” or is very quiet. This can be frustrating for mentors who view their mentee’s reluctance as boredom, ambivalence, or dislike. In reality, the mentee is probably still adjusting to the presence of a mentor figure in his/her life. Do not ask too much too soon; allow your mentee to disclose personal information when s/he is ready.

Many mentees have been hurt in past relationships with adults, and they need time to build trust in their mentor. Mentee living in poverty are also more accustomed to a non-verbally cued world. Finding an activity that you both enjoy doing is a good way to break the silence. Try board games, shooting hoops in the school gym, or a collaborative art project.

Beginning questions with phrases such as what, who, when, where, and why is a tried and true way to encourage conversation. Be patient—your mentee may never have had an adult in his/her life who wants to sit and talk or who truly cares about what he/she has to say.

Building the Relationship: The Second Stage

After a few weeks or months, your relationship will hopefully develop momentum and trust. You may (or may not) feel comfortable sharing very personal information with each other, and the original awkwardness of the first few meetings hopefully will have dissipated. You may already feel that you are ready to help your mentee set some goals and focus your activities on helping him/her achieve them. In this stage of the relationship, there is more listening, sharing and confiding. Values may be compared and personal concerns are often expressed. This stage typically lasts from one – three months.

Common pitfalls of Stage II:

Once your mentee feels comfortable sharing the details of his/her personal life, you may begin to feel overwhelmed. Do not feel that you have to “fix” your mentee’s life, that you need to be a counselor or social worker in order to really make a difference.

Remember that as a champion and friend of your mentee you can do a lot to improve your mentee’s self-esteem and that you are a valuable asset in his/her life.

If your mentee is unloading his/her problems on you on a regular basis, talk to your program staff about getting extra help.

You may also start to feel underappreciated by your mentee in this period. Often mentors feel unrecognized for the time and energy that they are committing to the relationship. Don’t expect to be thanked by your mentee. Many students lack the maturity to thank their mentors. Sometimes it is a shyness issue; he or she might speak highly of you to teachers, friends, and family, but feel embarrassed to express this admiration directly. Try modeling courteous behavior when you are with him/her and tell him/her how much you appreciate him/her.

Acceptance, Influence and Change: The Third Stage

As you move to the next level of the mentoring relationship, you may find your relationship becomes more accepting, but may also be a period of potential change. Your mentee is maturing, experiencing new things and developing as a young adult. New challenges are presented, goals are set, and hopefully, achieved.

At some point in your relationship, your mentee might try to find the limits of your relationship. He or she might also attempt to test the extent of your dedication. Despite the trust that you have built between yourself and your mentee, s/he might still attempt to measure the extent of your commitment to the relationship.

Common pitfalls of Stage III:

If your mentee starts to miss meetings, shows resentment, or withdraw within himself/herself, it is important to realize that this behavior is not a personal attack against you, the mentor, but rather a manifestation of a fear of abandonment by yet another adult. While this phase might be tough and is a period in which many matches fail, stick through it and continue to affirm your commitment to the relationship. ¹

Closure /Redefining a Relationship: Stage Four

Sometimes a relationship must come to an end. It is very important for both the adult and the mentee to have formal closure. Should a relationship draw to a close, take time together to reflect on the benefits/challenges of the relationship, lessons learned from one another and opportunities to remain in touch. Consider sharing a picture of the two of you, or some other memento of time spent together.

¹ Adopted from "Overcoming Relationship Pitfalls" from the U.S. Department of Education's Mentoring Resource Center, <http://www.edmentoring.org/publications.html>.

What Will the Future Bring?

Answer each of these questions about your future.

What Do You Want to Achieve *Five* Years from Now?

High school diploma? _____

Part-time job? _____ Doing what? _____

Full-time job? _____ Doing what? _____

Have your own apartment? _____ Where? _____

Own a used car? _____ Paying for a new car? _____

Accepted into college? _____ College choice? _____

A one-week vacation in _____

A longer trip to _____

What Do You Want to Achieve *Fifteen* Years from Now?

College degree? _____ From _____ Major _____

Master's degree? _____ From _____ Major _____

Full-time job? _____ Occupation _____

Own your home? _____ Location _____

Salary range:

\$10,000–\$20,000 _____

\$21,000–\$40,000 _____

\$50,000–\$75,000 _____

\$? _____

Married? _____

Children? _____

How many? _____

Two-week vacation each year _____ One-month trip to (location) _____

Own new car (no payments) _____ Help in the community? _____

How? _____

Getting to Know Me...

Have your mentee complete the following prompts:

I hate...

I wish...

I love...

I fear...

I hope...

I am embarrassed when...

The thing that bothers me most is...

The thing I'm most afraid of is...

I want most to be...

I am happiest when...

My greatest interest in life is...

I have great respect for...

My hero is...

When I am the center of attention, I feel...

When I am angry, I...

I Can Change...

Consider :

"Grant me the strength to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Discuss

- My most important strengths are...
- My most serious challenges are...
- Things I can change for the better are...
- Things I am going to have to accept are...

Mentoring Activities

Below are some tips and strategies for mentoring sessions. Make sure that they are suited to the age and maturity level of your mentee before trying them. Also, feel free to be creative. This list is just a springboard to help get you thinking of good activities. And finally, do not be too structured. Spontaneity is an important part of any mentoring relationship!

1. Start by telling your mentee why you decided to become a mentor.
2. Play games—board games such as chess, checkers, and Monopoly, and Sudoku and crossword puzzles.
3. Select books you like and read them together. Get to an exciting part and finish it the next time you are together.
4. Pick a book and decide how many chapters/pages you will read a week. Discuss what you read at each visit.
5. Review previous tests and homework.
6. Do research on the Internet.
7. Learn effective study habits.
8. Exchange favorite recipes.
9. Use a disposable camera to capture special moments.
10. Construct and kite together and fly it.
11. Create a holiday, get-well, or greeting card for a special occasion.
12. 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 into college? What high school courses should be taken? It is never too early to begin planning.
13. Start a pen pal project with a group of young people in another country.
14. Listen to popular music.
15. Talk about your first job.
16. Talk about planning a career.
17. Write a resume.
18. Have a pretend job interview.
19. Figure out how to program an electronic item.
20. Create a design and carve a pumpkin on Halloween.
21. Discuss proper etiquette and social graces.
22. Plan for a sound financial future. Discuss opening a savings and checking accounts and the concept of good credit and the meaning of plastic credit cards.
23. Talk about friends—those that the mentee would like to have and those that he/she does have.
24. Decorate t-shirts and wear your creations proudly.
25. Play sports, shoot basketball in a school or organization's gym.
26. Connect with the community. Research what after-school programs are offered in the community in which the youth might engage.
27. Research the history of music, and write a biography of a favorite musician or instrument.
28. Walk outside on a nice day, sit outside and just talk.
29. Research ways that you both can be more environmentally friendly in your daily lives. Start a campaign to educate the school.
30. Discuss travel and dream vacations. Make a budget and discuss how much it would cost to take such a vacation AND ways to save for it.
31. Usher at the school play or musical concert.
32. Help with homework. Make sure that the mentee takes the lead in making this decision.
33. Discuss people you admire. Compare heroes and research your favorites.
34. Ask your mentee—if you could go back to middle school/elementary school what would you do differently?
35. Swap photos of mentees and mentors.
36. Bring pictures of each other's families and discuss similarities and differences.
37. Play hangman.
38. Practice how to get the point across.
39. Design and paint a mural on the wall of the school. (With permission, of course!)
40. Discover ways to make spelling fun. Have a new word of the week that you explore together.
41. Read the newspaper together.

42. Share your life experiences.
43. Keep a journal.
44. Practice the answers to questions for the driver's license test.
45. Help your mentee write a resume.
46. Discuss people you admire.
47. Work on a community service project.
48. Complete a personality inventory.
49. Help your mentee design a personal business or calling card.
50. Help your mentee craft a personal mission statement.
51. Help your mentee learn about the Covey Seven Habits for Highly Effective Teens.
52. Help your mentee organize his/her binder and develop a system for keeping a calendar.
53. Cook something together in the school home-ec room.
54. Plan a dream vacation and discuss travel.
55. Put together a cook book of each of your favorite recipes.
56. Help your mentee learn about good study habits and strategies for making effective use his/her time.
57. Do an arts and crafts project.
58. Make something out of modeling clay.
59. Make a scrapbook of the year together.
60. Research the history of the school.
61. Write a book review
62. Make a collage out of cut outs from a magazine.
63. Teach a lesson each week about etiquette such as how to arrange silverware for a place setting, or how to make proper introductions.
64. Invent a new board game.
65. Investigate careers.
66. Explore your college website and teach your student about your job.
67. Take an imaginary trip around the world and study about each place you might visit.
68. Invent something!
69. Do a fun science experiment.
70. Grow a plant together.
71. Stay up-to-date on current events.
72. Make a family tree.
73. Write poems or rap songs together.
74. Work on a crossword puzzle
75. Read the newspaper and magazines together.
76. Invite a guest from a local labor market office to discuss market requirements and the fastest growing jobs today.
77. Share your dreams.
78. Discuss current events and news.
79. Plan a random act of kindness (such as putting chocolate kisses in every teacher's box).
80. Cook a meal together if it is allowed.
81. Ask your mentee where he hopes to be in five years? In ten?
82. Plan a game of basketball, football, or soccer with mentors against youth.
83. Design and paint a mural on the wall of the school.
84. Teach the alphabet, words and phrases of a foreign language.
85. Build and launch a rocket. Do not forget to take pictures.
86. Discuss personal hygiene, health, exercise, and healthy habits. Make a nutrition plan together.
87. Teach how to give a good handshake. Practice makes perfect!
88. Discuss safety precautions such as wearing helmets when riding bikes and fire safety in the home.
89. Write and illustrate an original storybook together.
90. Try to memorize all of the words to Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire." Look up all of the historical events referenced.
91. Explore what to do in an emergency. Create a contact list and discuss 911 procedures.
92. Decide on a community service project together with mentors and students and carry it out.
93. Plant a garden in front of the school, coordinate a food drive, hold a bake sale with proceeds benefiting a local charity or non-profit. Ask the program staff what needs there are.
94. Write an editorial and send it to the school paper or a local publication.

95. Share thoughts and feelings between meetings in a small journal.
96. Make summer plans like finding a summer job.
97. Practice spelling with alphabet cereal or flashcards.
98. Make up a card game.
99. Remember your mentee on his /her birthday with a card.
98. Make a scrapbook.
99. Teach how to ask a boss for a raise.
100. Discuss managing time effectively.
101. Talk about disappointments at school.
102. Help your mentee practice networking.
103. Write "thank you" notes.



Mentor Manual

Section V

Working with School and Home

Making Connections to the School

The more you can learn about your mentee's school, his/her teachers and friends, the more effective you can be.

Here are some topics that you might wish to learn more about or share with campus staff if your mentee shares information that might help school staff better work with the student.

- What subjects/units is my mentee learning about this week/month/grading period?
- Difficulties mentee shares with specific content being covered.
- Long-term projects that I might be able to help with?
- How can I help my student with study habits and test-taking strategies?
- How can I help my student with an academic problem he/she is having?
- What special services might be beneficial to my student? For example, are there after-school programs, or clubs?
- How's my mentee's behavior in the classroom?
- My mentee's home and family life might be impacting school performance. How can I help?
- Peer interactions – new friends, trouble with friends and gang involvement
- Mentee' attitude about school
- Mentee's attitude about the mentoring relationship
- Upcoming events that I can attend?
- Assistance with basic needs such as clothing, etc.
- Any problems you may have encountered with mentee's parents

Making Connections with Parents

As a mentors, you are a great partner with parents in the education, growth and development and well-being of the student you mentor. You will have opportunities to meet your mentee's family during the year, and you should feel comfortable contacting the parent/guardian to introduce yourself. All parents/guardians must provide permission for their child to participate in the mentor program.

Here are some tips for communicating with your mentee's family:

- Confirm that your primary role is as a friend and helper, not a tutor and certainly not to replace or dispute a parent in his/her decision making process.
- Share information with parents about resources available at school that would be of benefit to your mentee.
- Remind your mentee to tell his/her parents about upcoming school events.
- Only if asked, help parents with advice on encouraging good study habits, help with homework and educational resources.
- Keep parents informed of projects you and your mentee are working on. Offer to help, if appropriate, with school related projects where you can be of help.
- Advocate for special services, if appropriate, to help parents with barriers to school involvement find ways to get support.
- Praise the mentee to parents when their child accomplishes a goal or achieves an academic success.
- Keep any meetings brief and to the point.
- Be friendly and respectful.
- Share information about yourself in terms of interest and background
- Ask parents if there are any areas on concern, issue or goals that parent has.
- Affirm how you will meet and work with the mentee during school hours on school grounds.
- Do not share confidences about parents or family that your mentee has shared, or risk losing his/her trust.
- Don't get overly involved. Remember, your relationship is with the child, not the family.
- Don't try to become the family social worker.
- Don't get involved in taking sides between your mentee and parents or other family members. If family conflicts occur, offer to listen non-judgmentally, and help your mentee become a problem solver.
- Don't talk with the parent about concerns in front of your mentee.