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INTRODUCTION

Being a mentor is a challenging but worthwhile effort. We hope this handbook will help you build a strong relationship with your youth. The handbook contains information about your role as mentor, the needs of youth today, and tips on effective mentoring. You can use it as a resource at different points in your relationship with your youth.

The Elder Mentor Handbook is based on the experiences of *Linking Lifetimes*, a national intergenerational mentoring initiative, and *Across Ages*, a Philadelphia-based intergenerational drug prevention program. Our thanks to the project coordinators, evaluators, technical assistance team, and foremost, the mentors and youth who participated in these projects for their assistance in compiling this handbook.





OVERVIEW OF INTERGENERATIONAL MENTORING

Changes in family structure, neighborhoods, work, and public institutions have made it difficult for young people to count on caring and consistent adult relationships so critical for healthy growth and development. “Many young people feel a desperate sense of isolation. Surrounded by only their equally confused peers, too many make poor decisions with harmful or lethal consequences.” (Carnegie, 1989) This isolation is particularly acute for young people who grow up in single-parent families or who live in neighborhoods increasingly segregated by race and by class. Many of these young people are labeled “at-risk” because they are emerging from school unprepared for further education or the world of work. Often they are ready only for lives of alienation and dependency.

Mentoring is a popular social intervention designed to address the needs of vulnerable youth. **Mentoring involves a one-to-one relationship of mutual commitment, caring and trust between a more experienced person and a younger person.** A mentor teaches, challenges, and supports a young person while serving as a role model and companion. Natural mentoring occurs when two people find each other, somewhat by chance, through mutual needs and desires. In “program-based mentoring,” mentors and youth who were previously unknown to each other are paired and supported by agencies. Mentoring activities are combined with other agency efforts for youth in order to maximize the positive effects on youth.

Why have elders serve as mentors to youth? As the fastest growing segment of the population, older adults constitute a community resource with tremendous potential. You have time to give, valuable skills to teach, and experiences to share. For young people who lack a future orientation and perceive they have few choices, an older adult who has experienced ongoing changes can offer a life perspective that is rooted in survival. For you, mentoring provides an opportunity to pass on the knowledge you have accumulated over a lifetime.

Intergenerational mentoring offers opportunities for elders and youth.

You can:

- expand your social network
- find new roles which give your life new meaning
- become familiar with youth culture

Young persons can:

- learn new skills
- gain a broader life perspective
- acquire a sense of belonging





WELCOME TO THE PROGRAM!*

Dear _____:

Thank you for becoming a member of the _____ Project. The mission of the project is to help at-risk youth become more productive and self-reliant members of society.

Becoming a mentor involves spending _____ hours a week with your assigned youth. Many of our targeted youth have a need for the companionship and guidance an elder like you can provide.

Through a one-to-one mentor relationship, you can help a young person gain self-confidence, set goals, and reach his or her potential. The knowledge, skills, and experiences you have acquired over a lifetime can be invaluable to a youth who is just beginning the journey.

Welcome to the team!

Executive Director

Project Coordinator

**Sample to be adapted.*



AGENCY BACKGROUND

Replace this page with agency information.)



GETTING STARTED

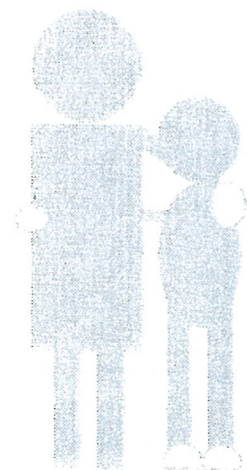
Mentor Job Description

Mentor Roles

Guidelines for Mentors

Program Procedures and Policies

Safety Tips





MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION*

Qualifications:

- age 55 or over
- a desire to work with and be accessible to youth
- warmth, openness, and patience
- willingness to listen
- ability to set limits and respond to supervision
- ability to travel to and from the site of activities

Responsibilities:

- serve as a friend, advocate, coach, and listener to youth on personal, school, career and other issues
- meet with youth a minimum of two hours a week
- participate in training and supervisory meetings with agency staff
- participate in special group events and activities
- complete project reporting forms



Benefits:

- giving and sharing your lifetime of experience
- free attendance to selected community cultural, sports and other events
- greater awareness of community resources and the needs of today's youth
- opportunity to have a positive impact in your community

Compensation: (e.g., monthly stipend, travel reimbursement, activity funds)

**Sample to be replaced*



MENTOR ROLES

Mentors assume various roles in their relationships with youth. These roles overlap and change over time. In successful relationships, the number of roles that a mentor takes on often increases as the relationship develops.

Some of the roles you may assume are:

- **teacher/trainer** providing learning opportunities and offering your experience as a guide
- **positive role model** demonstrating exemplary behavior and offering values that will increase chances for success and happiness
- **social supporter/guide** providing encouragement to the youth as s/he embarks on new experiences
- **resource supporter/advocate** speaking and acting on behalf of the youth and helping youth access community resources
- **challenger** encouraging the youth to maximize his/her potential
- **friend/companion** being consistently available and sincere; providing the youth with a caring and unconditional friendship

The roles you play at any given time are determined by the youth's needs, desires and interests.



GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

The primary goal of this project is to provide support to vulnerable youth through the development of a meaningful relationship with an older adult. Over time, your relationship will grow and trust will develop. The following are some basic guidelines that are further described later in the handbook.

1 Be Reliable.

Always try to visit your youth when you say you will or call to cancel if there's a problem. Try not to break a date with your youth. Trust is crucial to your relationship. Nothing undermines trust quicker than broken appointments.

2 Be Consistent.

Short, regular contacts (at least once a week) can often accomplish more than long and irregular ones.

3 Focus on your youth.

Your primary relationship is with the youth. Avoid including the youth's family members except on rare occasions.

4 Respect the family.

As much as your youth's family may appreciate and need your help, there may be points of disagreement between you and his/her parents regarding what is best for the youth. It is important to respect the parent's wishes; your role is not to replace them. You are not a mediator between the youth and his/her parents. Give periodic reports to your youth's parent(s) about his/her progress. In addition, it is essential not to share with outsiders personal information about your youth and his/her family.

5 Ask questions.

Everyone involved in the project is part of a team. We can help each other and our youth by asking questions.

6 Praise your youth.

Take every opportunity to give positive feedback to your youth.

7 Be safety-minded.

Be aware of your surroundings and dangers which may exist within your youth's environment.

8 Spend Wisely.

Choose activities that will not overextend your financial resources.

If you start to spend money too freely, the youth may develop unrealistic expectations.

9 Use your imagination.

Simple ideas are often the most fun and educational.

10 Respect cultural differences.

Your youth and his/her family may embrace different traditions and values than you. Be open-minded and understanding.

11 Set limits.

Establish norms of proper conduct without being harsh. Feel free to reject unreasonable demands by your youth. Discuss with him/her the basis of your differences.

12 Include youth in developing plans.

Ask your youth to share in making decisions about your joint activities.

Encourage creativity from your youth.

13 Fill out all program forms in a timely manner.

If you need help, ask your coordinator.

14 Call the project staff for advice if a difficult situation arises.

15 Keep your sense of humor!

Relax!

Be yourself!

Enjoy!



PROGRAM PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Confidentiality


As a mentor, you may learn private and personal information about your youth and his/her family. It is important to keep such information confidential and not discuss it outside of the agency.

During in-service sessions, you will be encouraged to share information about your relationship. Only share the information that is necessary to help you improve the situation or that you judge will not harm the family in any way.

You may be asked to sign a statement attesting to your understanding of the agency's policy on confidentiality.

Absences

It is very important that once you are matched with your youth you develop a regular meeting schedule. As your relationship grows, your youth will look forward to your meetings and may be disappointed when you have to cancel.



Illnesses, vacations and unexpected problems cannot be avoided and may interfere with your scheduled visits. The following are recommended practices for dealing with absences.

Planned Absences - (Vacations, appointments, etc.)

Let your youth know as far in advance as possible that you will be unavailable on certain dates. Remind the youth of that date as it approaches. Let the youth know when you plan to return and schedule your next meeting with the youth. Staff must also be informed of your planned absence and intended date of return.

Unexpected Absences - (Illness, accident, car trouble, etc.)

Call the agency or your coordinator as soon as possible to inform them of your difficulty. If possible, contact your youth before the scheduled visit to let him/her know of your inability to meet. Remember to tell the youth why you cannot meet. Let the youth know that you will contact him/her soon about your next meeting together.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency:

- Always call the program coordinator.
- If it relates to your youth, call the parent or guardian and/or call emergency or medical personnel (if appropriate).
- Complete agency incident report.

Grievance Procedures

Your agency will have its own process for handling grievances. If you have a grievance or complaint, you may want to handle it as follows:

- First, try to talk about your problem with the project coordinator.
- If, after sharing your concerns with the coordinator, you are still dissatisfied, make an appointment to talk to the coordinator's supervisor. If you still feel your grievance or complaint is not resolved, then consult the agency's personnel department.

Parental Permission

Obtain parental permission if you and your youth plan weekend, evening or overnight activities.



SAFETY TIPS



You may find yourself going into unfamiliar surroundings when meeting your youth. Although not all neighborhoods are dangerous, it is important to learn what to do to avoid and/or minimize problems. The following three A's are helpful hints that will make you safer in any environment.

AWARENESS

ALERTNESS

AVOIDANCE

Awareness


- 
- Be aware of your surroundings.
 - Plan ahead. Be prepared.
 - Know your route. Use well-lighted and well-travelled roads.
 - Let someone know the route you will take and when you plan to arrive.
 - Walk with a purpose. Don't walk aimlessly towards your car or public transportation.
 - Avoid wearing jewelry that is conspicuous.
 - Do not carry large sums of money or credit cards.
 - If someone tries to grab your purse, especially if s/he is armed, let it go! Keep a hand firmly on your handbag as you walk.
 - Have keys ready if you are walking to your car or house. Don't fumble in your purse or pocket for them.
- 



Alertness

- Be alert to potential dangers.
- Be alert to any activity near you.
- Be suspicious of people approaching your car asking for directions or change, or giving out flyers.
- Always give your car a quick inspection for any tampering.
- Check door handles, locks and back seat before entering.
- Always keep valuables out of view if you must travel with them. If you think someone has tampered with your car, don't enter.

Avoidance

- 
- Don't drive without first locking your doors and closing your windows.
 - Never leave keys in the ignition or the car running for any reason.
 - Avoid parking in secluded, poorly lighted areas, especially at night.
 - Have your keys out, ready to unlock and enter the car without delay.
 - Don't get out of your car if you see suspicious people. If you are in doubt, or are approached, drive away.
 - Don't leave your car unlocked, even when running brief errands. Always take your keys with you.

2 ABOUT YOUTH TODAY

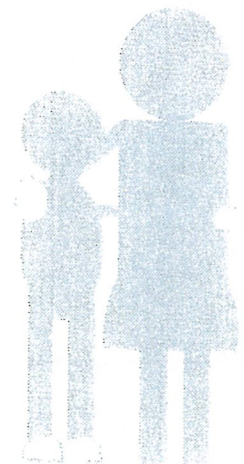
What's Happening to Young Adolescents


Influences on Youth

Youth in Trouble

What's Hot and What's Not

Youth Language — What Does It All Mean





WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOUNG ADOLESCENTS?

EARLY ADOLESCENCE

(begins at age 10 or 11 and merges with mid-adolescence at age 14 or 15)

Physically

- Girls' growth begins and peaks earlier than boys'
- Reproductive system begins to develop
- Secondary sex characteristics begin to develop

Intellectually

- Beginning to move from concrete thinking (what is) to abstract thinking ("formal operations" — what might be true if...)
- Can't always perceive long-range implications of current decision
- Expanded interests; intense, short-term enthusiasm

Socially & Emotionally

- Self
 - ★ Preoccupation with rapid body change
 - ★ Self-absorption, self-consciousness
 - ★ Diminished self-esteem
- Family
 - ★ Redefining relationship with family; moving toward more independence while still looking to family for guidance and values
 - ★ Few major conflicts over parental control
- Peers
 - ★ Increasing importance
 - ★ Seeking to become part of group to hide insecurities from rapid changes
 - ★ Comparing own normality and acceptance with same-sex peers
 - ★ Moving toward more intimate sharing of feelings

Sexuality

- Defining self in terms of maleness and femaleness
- Learning how to relate to opposite sex

MID-ADOLESCENCE

(Begins at age 14 or 15 and merges with late adolescence at about age 17)

Physically

- Growth slowing, stature reaches 95 percent of adult height
- Secondary sex characteristics well-advanced

Intellectually

- Growing competence in abstract thinking
- Capable of perceiving future implications of current acts and decisions, but not always applied
- Reverts to concrete thinking under stress

Socially & Emotionally

- Self
 - ★ Re-establishing body image as growth slows
 - ★ Preoccupation with fantasy and idealism as abstract thinking and sense of future develops
- Family
 - ★ Major conflicts over control (rules, homework, curfew)
 - ★ Struggle for emancipation, greater autonomy
- Peers
 - ★ Strong identification with chosen peers to affirm self-image
 - ★ Looking to peers for behavioral codes

Sexuality

- Testing ability to attract and parameters of masculinity and femininity
- Developing sexual codes of behavior, personal value system

Source:

Robert Johnson, M.D., University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Abell Foundation: Mentoring Manual




INFLUENCES ON YOUTH

To understand what is going on with one's youth, mentors should have some idea of the environment (both neighborhood and family) in which their youth live, typical behaviors of that age group, and pressures that they face. The following are key factors influencing the behavior of today's youth. Mentor training will expand on each of these topic areas, especially as it relates to your community.

POVERTY

Many mentoring programs target youth who are poor. Economic realities often make it difficult for poor youth to perform well in school. Your youth may also be very cautious about establishing a relationship with you. S/he may have difficulty trusting others, especially adults. Your youth may project a feeling of hopelessness and be cynical about the future. If you are aware that these characteristics may be a means of coping with the stress of poverty, you will be better prepared to help your youth.

TOBACCO, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL




Substance abuse is a serious problem affecting all populations in a community. Cigarette smoking is declining among males, but not among females. Many youth have tried marijuana, cocaine, crack, etc. Some have even sniffed glue to get a "high." Alcohol abuse is probably the most prevalent intoxicant of choice for youth.

INJURIES

Accidental injuries are the leading cause of death for persons 15 to 21 years of age. Automobile accidents account for most of these deaths, and the driver is often under the influence of alcohol.

VIOLENCE

Adolescent males are frequent victims and perpetrators of crimes. Homicide is the leading cause of death for African-American males 15 to 21 years. There is also an alarming increase in youth carrying guns and knives for both attack and protection purposes. Escalating street crime raises a myriad of fears for a young person about his/her personal safety. Such fears often curtail extracurricular activities that occur in the evenings. This violence is not only present within the neighborhoods, but has also spread to the school environment. Metal detectors and security guards are now part of the landscape of many schools.



SUICIDE

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for our youth. It is often difficult for youth to express their feelings of depression to adults, particularly their parents. Youth are also very reluctant to share their concerns about the potential suicide of a friend.

AIDS/STD

Many teens have misconceptions about how to avoid sexually transmitted diseases (STD). STDs include herpes, syphilis, and most seriously, AIDS. Most teens know that AIDS is usually transmitted by sexual intercourse, drug needles, and contact with HIV contaminated blood. Many youth know that condoms can provide some protection from AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. While many youth feel condoms should be used, those who are sexually active are not always responsible enough to use them consistently. Knowledge does not necessarily transfer into action. Currently, the second highest rate of HIV infection is among adolescents.

SEXUALITY/TEEN PREGNANCY

More young teen boys and girls are becoming parents. Young women who are poor are more likely to become unwed mothers than affluent teens. This topic is often a very difficult one for mentors and youth to discuss. Parents of your youth may have some specific feelings about the mentor's role in talking about this sensitive issue, particularly as it relates to birth control. While using contraceptives correctly certainly decreases teen pregnancies, their use is controversial with some. Additionally, the role of the teen father is often not discussed. Males are sometimes not aware of their responsibility in protecting themselves from Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) or unwanted pregnancies.

PEER PRESSURE

Adolescence is a time when approval from peers is very important. Young people look to each other for approval. Youth need to understand that peer-influenced decisions can have lifelong consequences. A mentor can help by working with youth on problem-solving skills that will develop their own sense of competence and responsibility.



YOUTH IN TROUBLE

Mentors are not professional counselors and are not meant to be. Knowing your limitations will add to your comfort level. A staff person should be available to help you during emergencies. The following is a list of symptoms which may signal that your youth needs immediate attention.

SIGNS THAT AN ADOLESCENT NEEDS OUTSIDE HELP:

SUICIDE


- Giving away possessions
- Making a will
- Talking about death or dying
- Prolonged depression
- Saying his/her family would be better off without him/her
- Being suddenly at peace
(may indicate a decision to end the pain by ending life)
- Evidence of a plan and method



DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSE

- Irrational or “spaced out” behavior
- A sudden increase in accidents
- Lying
- Loss of interest in school
- Secretiveness
- Spending a lot of time alone
- Severe mood swings
- Alcohol on breath
- Sleeping a lot

PHYSICAL ABUSE/SEXUAL ABUSE/NEGLECT (including incest)

- Non-accidental physical injury
 - Frequent “accidents”
 - Abrupt changes in personality
 - Withdrawal
 - Physical defensiveness
 - Running away
 - Sudden onset of compulsive and/or self-destructive behavior
 - Reluctance to be with a particular family member
- 



OTHER GENERAL WARNING SIGNS

- Major weight loss
- Poor self-image
- Problems at school
- Serious depression
- Law-breaking behavior



WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT

Understanding the world in which young people live is important for the development of a meaningful relationship. Keeping up with teen fads is a challenge. Just when you thought you understood the latest styles, they change on you. Brainstorm with your youth "What's Hot and What's Not," regarding:

Clothing

Music

Entertainment (movies, video games, books, magazines, etc)

Hairstyles

Food

Transportation

Other:

As soon as you get these down, they will probably change!



YOUTH LANGUAGE - WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Sometimes you may feel that your youth is talking a foreign language. Just as you had certain slang phrases when you were young, so will your youth. On this page keep a “dictionary” of the current “in” terms that are being used by youth in your area. Share these with other mentors. Think about what you said in your youth that meant the same thing. Share these with your youth. That should be lots of fun!

Don’t forget...the same word may have different meanings depending on the context of the situation and the inflexion of the voice. Here are a few examples.

Word	Pronunciation	Meaning(s)
yo!	yō	stop, hello, wow!
def!	dēf	exciting, good, fine
bad!	bad	good, good looking
wzup?	sŭp	What is up? What’s happening?
dis	dīs	to be disrespectful towards another
chill	chill	be calm
chillin	chillin	taking it easy, resting

Add more here:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

3

BUILDING THE MENTOR-YOUTH RELATIONSHIP

Meeting Your Youth

Effective Mentoring Relationships

Stages of the Mentor-Youth Relationship

Goal-Setting

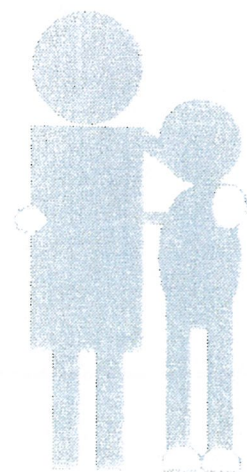
Developing Effective Communication Skills

Cultural Sensitivity

Establishing Relationships with Your Youth's Family

Suggested Activities

Community Service Ideas





MEETING YOUR YOUTH

Now that you and your youth have been matched, the next challenge is to develop your relationship. The following are some suggestions to help you get started.

Meet with key professionals involved with your youth.

- Discuss with the appropriate counselor, teacher, or caseworker how your activities will fit into the overall plan for your youth.
- Find out how ongoing communication between you and other professionals will occur.

Have the program coordinator introduce you to your youth.

- The coordinator should introduce you to your youth at the agency, school, or other surroundings that are familiar to you and your youth.
- Talk about what you both like to do and the things you have in common.
- Take turns answering questions about your interests and hobbies. Discuss favorite music, movies, sports, books, school subjects, food, heroes, heroines, etc.
- Discuss basic expectations that you have about the relationship. Ask the youth to do the same.

Try to make an initial contact with the youth's parents prior to your first outing.

- If possible, meet the youth's parents prior to your first outing with your youth, or arrange for a brief chat with them when you pick up the youth for the first time. If this is not possible, give the parents a call to introduce yourself. If the youth's family does not have a phone, drop them a short note.

Carefully plan your first outing with your youth.

- Focus activities around the youth's interests.
- If the coordinator has a list of the things your youth likes to do, ask for a copy of it.
- Think ahead about what you will say to your youth.
- Do not force your youth to talk about intimate details of his/her life, family or problems.
- Meet in a neutral setting (shopping mall, restaurant, library, community center, agency, etc.) until you feel comfortable and safe in each other's environment.
- Call your youth the day before to verify the date and time of your meeting.



- Focus on the positive accomplishments of the youth, no matter how small they might be. Provide compliments regularly.
- Keep alert for clues about what motivates your youth. This will help you plan for future activities.

Share Information About Yourself to Stimulate Conversation

- In order to “jumpstart” a conversation with your youth, you may want to share some personal details about yourself (e.g., your age, your neighborhood, information about your family).
- Try to discover similarities between your family and his/hers. Feel free to discuss those “strange” people in your family. This can help your youth feel that he or she is not the only person who has family members who are “different”.
- Discuss your career and what kind of education and training was needed to do your job. If you feel comfortable, also talk about your growth in salary over the years, working hours and your feelings about your job environment. This is a good time to throw in the “work ethic” notion without preaching to the young person about responsible behavior. Use this discussion to initiate conversation about your youth’s career plans and how s/he can get there.
- Talk about your regrets in life as well as those things that make you proud.
- Talk about your faults and your strengths.
- Talk about successes that were not easily obtained and hardships you’ve faced and overcome.



EFFECTIVE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS*

What is an effective mentoring relationship? In a recent study of four Linking Lifetimes programs, Public/Private Ventures attempted to define effective adult/youth relationships and determine if such relationships do in fact develop in an intergenerational setting.

Based on this study, the following are recommended strategies for interacting with your youth.

- *Understand the youth's reluctance to trust.*

Many of the young people in this program have been disappointed by previous relationships with adults. Be patient. It may take a while for your youth to overcome his/her hesitance and begin to trust you.

- *View your purpose in the program as being available to give, understanding that, at least initially, the relationship will be one-directional.*

- *Offer reassurance and support.*

It's important to offer reassurance and kindness to your youth and remind him/her that you're available to talk at any time. Don't be afraid to tell your youth that you care about and believe in him/her. Too many young people rarely hear those words.

- *Suggest ways to solve problems.*


Try to listen carefully and offer possible solutions without passing judgment. Practical suggestions rather than criticism or preaching are usually most helpful for your youth. Whenever possible, try to think together of ways to solve a problem, rather than lecture your youth about what you think s/he should do.

- *Identify the youth's interests and take them seriously.*

Try to include your youth in determining both the activities you engage in and the areas in which you offer help.

- *Do not force the youth to talk about personal issues.*

Delving into your youth's personal or family life, particularly early in the relationship, is usually not productive. It's unwise to ask youth to discuss information they may be ashamed of, such as poor school performance, criminal record, or abusive family behaviors. If your youth resists sharing information, don't push. Silence does not necessarily mean rejection. It's important not to measure a relationship's success by the extent of the youth's disclosure.



On the other hand, you may be surprised by how much your youth shares with you early on without any prompting or inquiry from you. It's important to determine why this information is being given so early and fully. There is the possibility your youth may be testing you to see if you are "shock proof".


- ***Have realistic expectations***

Many mentors get discouraged when they feel their youth aren't "turning their lives around" or making huge improvements. Although you certainly will have an impact on your youth, it is unlikely that s/he will be totally transformed by this relationship. Gains may seem small (e.g., showing up for meetings, expressing appreciation, missing fewer school days), but they are nonetheless signs of progress. Adjusting your expectations and understanding that your youth may not always express gratitude directly will prevent mentor "burnout" and frustration.

- ***Try to relate to your youth's personal experiences.***

Although you may not have faced the same problems as your youth, try to remember some of the difficulties you had growing up.

- ***Attempt to understand your youth's family, social class, and culture.***



* Adapted from "Understanding How Youth and Elders Form Relationships: A Study of Four Linking Lifetimes Programs," Melanie B. Styles and Kristine V. Morrow. *Public/Private Ventures (P/PV)*, June 1992.



STAGES OF THE MENTOR-YOUTH RELATIONSHIP

The mentor-youth relationship often goes through at least three major stages. It is important to understand these stages so you can be prepared to respond appropriately.

The first stage of a mentoring relationship is Familiarization and Testing; the second stage is Commitment and Work; and the last stage is Termination and/or Closure. Since each relationship is unique, the amount of time spent in each of these stages will vary.

Stage One: Familiarization and Testing

In this stage you and your youth are trying to get to know each other. Many youth may be uncommunicative, answering questions with shrugs or one-word answers. There may be some jousting between you and your youth to test the limits of the relationship. This is particularly true of youth who really want to see how far they can “push” you or trust you to be there for them. This pushing or testing might be demonstrated by the youth:

- missing appointments
- giving the mentor the silent treatment
- making unreasonable demands
- having angry outbursts
- cursing to get a reaction

In Stage One the tone for the relationship is set. You should:

- be on time for meetings
- request that your youth be on time as a matter of respect for you
- express realistic expectations of the youth
- try only to make promises that you can keep
- provide unconditional friendship and support
- engage in activities that the youth suggests
- understand that your youth may not be comfortable just talking
- let the youth know how his or her behavior is affecting you.

While you should respect the confidences shared by the youth, you should apprise your youth that information that may be detrimental to him/her should be shared with the project coordinator. Encourage the youth to share such information with the coordinator or other proper authorities.

Stage Two: Commitment and Work

In Stage Two there is a deepening of the relationship. You and your youth may begin to spend more than the required time together and may call each other frequently on the phone. You may notice visible signs of caring for one another, such as remembering special occasions. However, it's possible that as your relationship proceeds, your youth may exhibit behavior that is problematic. Stage Two is a time for the hard work that can really make a difference for your youth in the long run.

Goal setting is particularly important during this stage. The most successful mentoring relationships involve helping youth develop specific skills and competencies. It's important to work *with* your youth in developing goals, even if *you* think s/he should be working on certain things. Otherwise, you will be just another adult telling him/her what to do.

Stage Three: Termination and/or Closure

It is hoped that this formal mentoring relationship will grow into a more natural one that will sustain itself without agency supports. However, some relationships will not continue and others will end prematurely due to geographic moves, illness, incompatible relationships, youth confinement, etc. How a relationship ends is key to how you and especially the youth think about and value the experience you shared.

Planned Terminations can be facilitated in the following ways:

If you initiated the termination:

- The youth should be alerted well in advance of your departure from the relationship.
- The reasons for the departure should be discussed with the youth by you and reinforced by the project's coordinator.
- Youth may feel they are being abandoned and may demonstrate anger. Allow them to grieve and be appropriately angry. In those relationships that were less intimate, this process will of course be less painful to the youth.
- If possible, continue contact with your youth by phone or letters.

If your youth initiated the termination:

- Don't view this separation as a failure but as an opportunity to continue the relationship at a new level.
- Engage in letter writing and phone calls.

In both instances, focus on the:

- progress you made
- fun you had
- new ways you plan to keep in contact.



GOAL-SETTING

After you and your youth have gotten to know each other, you should meet with your program coordinator to discuss developing short- and long-range goals.

A goal should be:

- **realistic** (*If it is too difficult, it will lead to frustration.*)
- **challenging** (*If it is too easy, there is little incentive to achieve it.*)
- **specific** (*You need to know what you want to do.*)
- **measurable** (*You need to know when you have accomplished it.*)
- **timely** (*It should have a deadline so you won't put it off.*)

Steps in Goal Setting

- 1 *Have the youth identify some positive things s/he would like to accomplish.*
This might be something like getting a driver's license, finding an after-school job, passing an English course or attending school every day.
- 2 *Select one or two goals to work on.*
Help your youth select goals that are realistic and achievable. You want your youth to set his/her sights high but also be assured of some success.
- 3 *Discuss with your youth how his/her parent or guardian may feel about these goal plans.*
If a parent counts on your youth for babysitting during the school day, regular school attendance may not be a goal supported by the family. If the youth's efforts are not supported or understood by the family, achieving the goal will be more difficult.
- 4 *Brainstorm ways to reach the goal.*
Brainstorming is a process which involves thinking of as many ideas as you can for reaching a goal, even if some may seem silly or unrealistic. You and your youth should write down all of your ideas. Later, you can help him or her select the best ones.
- 5 *Identify small steps for reaching the goal.*
Most goals require more than one step to complete. Recognize the youth's attainment of each small step to reach his or her goal.

6 *Identify obstacles that might prevent completion of the goal.*

These will need to become part of the action plan for accomplishing the goal. For example, if a parent objects to the youth getting a driver's license, your youth will have to think of ways to approach the parent to obtain permission. If no one can teach your youth to drive and s/he does not have money for lessons, what else can be done to accomplish this step?

7 *Decide on a deadline for accomplishment and re-evaluation of the goal.*

This is an important step. If the process drags on too long, your youth may get discouraged and quit. A deadline gives him/her something to work toward. Opportunity for re-evaluation gives you a chance to check his/her progress. It may be that encouragement from you is all that is needed to keep your youth on course.



DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Talking and communication 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 speaker 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 youth "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.






CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

You may or may not come from a similar background as your youth. If not, how you handle economic and cultural differences will greatly effect how your relationship develops.

Ethnic Diversity

Learn about the values and traditions of your youth's culture. Such things as the role of authority, communication styles, perspectives on time and ways of handling conflict vary greatly among different ethnic groups. You might ask your youth to teach you things about his/her traditions and culture. Discussions with your program coordinator and other mentors can further your understanding of your youth's behavior.

Socio-Economic Diversity



Your youth may live very differently from you. S/he may share small living quarters with a lot of people, may not have a phone, or may not be able to go outside because safety in the neighborhood is such a serious problem. Your youth may move frequently or may move in with different relatives, perhaps every few months. This could make it difficult for you to stay in contact.

It's important to be supportive of your youth and not judgmental about the way s/he lives. Modeling values and behavior will be far more productive than lecturing your youth about what s/he "should" do. Remember also that you cannot rescue your youth. Family connections can be very strong, even if they don't fit into your idea of how they are "supposed" to be. It's more important to provide a relationship that will nurture self-development and a sense of dignity and self-worth.

Youth Culture



From generation to generation adults have viewed the young as being more rebellious and outrageous than they were at the same age. Although you may not approve of your youth's appearance or speech, it's important that you respect the youth's individuality while insisting on certain standards. Try to determine why your youth's behavior troubles you. Is it because it's not how you would do something, or because there is something more serious going on and s/he is really in trouble?




ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR YOUTH'S FAMILY


Developing appropriate relationships with your youth's family is often quite difficult. Parents don't always understand the mentor's role and therefore may not know how to relate to you. Parents may be threatened and try to prevent you, even in very subtle ways, from developing a relationship with their child. Sometimes the opposite may occur. Families may feel so overwhelmed with the task of childrearing that they may ask more and more of you in terms of helping out. It's important to build trust with your youth and the family, as well as strike a balance with regard to your involvement.

In the beginning ...

- **Work with your program coordinator** in making your initial contact with the family. The sponsoring agency has developed ways of informing parents about the program. Read any material that might have been sent out and talk with your coordinator about what has been said to the parents about the program.
 - **Call and introduce yourself.** Make arrangements to visit with the family. It's possible the family may not be comfortable having you come to their home. If that is the case, you may want to suggest meeting for coffee or going for a walk.
 - **Talk with the family** about the program and about your role as a mentor. Most people don't know what mentoring really means and there may be a fear that you will take over their role as the parent.
 - **Share some information about yourself.** You could talk about what you did before you retired, what your hobbies and interests are, perhaps a little about your family, such as children and grandchildren.
 - **Explain what kinds of things you and your youth will be doing together** and how much time will be involved. Ask the parents what kinds of ground rules there are in the household, and make it clear you will respect them. Discuss how you will make contact with the youth. Ask parents what kinds of goals they have for their child.
 - **Let the family know how they can get in contact with you** and work toward establishing regular lines of communication.
- 
- 



As the relationship develops ...

- **Respect and be sensitive to the family.** If your youth is from a different ethnic background, make an effort to learn about and understand that culture. If the family's style of discipline and communication is different from yours, do not be critical or judgmental. Be yourself and model the values and behavior you believe in.
 - **Stay focused on your youth.** Although you may want to help other members of the family, your primary goal is to be supportive of your youth.
 - **Maintain confidentiality.** Don't compromise your relationship with your youth by revealing to the parent what your youth disclosed to you.
 - **Stay out of family disputes, if possible.**
 - **Set goals primarily with your youth.** You may use the family's goals to help understand your youth, but don't allow them to take over the relationship. Remember, goals that are imposed from the outside probably won't be achieved.
- 

If there are problems...

- Do not hesitate to ask for help. You and your program coordinator can do some problem-solving together. Preserving the relationship with your youth is the most important thing you want to do.



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

You can offer a wide range of assistance to your youth. It is critical that you involve your youth in determining the activities you do together and the areas in which you will help your youth. Many youth are reluctant to express their interests. Listen carefully for clues or try a few different activities and see how your youth responds. Showing your youth that you're willing to participate in a good time may also affect his/her perspective of older people. The following is a list of areas in which you can offer assistance:

Social and Emotional Support

- Offer friendship and guidance.
- Talk and listen.
- Provide sympathetic counseling.
- Be a companion.

Information Sharing and Advocacy

- Help youth identify and learn how to use community resources.
- Serve as a troubleshooter in the event of problems between a service provider and the youth.
- Advocate for necessary services.

School

- Help the youth learn how to take notes, study for a test, and improve study habits.
- Teach youth how to use the resources at a library.
- Provide assistance on specific homework or classroom assignments.
- Teach youth how to use computers.
- Attend a parent-teacher meeting with the youth's parents.
- Schedule a meeting with the youth's teacher. Make sure to get the parent's permission first.
- Find books that reflect the youth's interests.
- Do crossword puzzles together as a way of expanding the youth's vocabulary.
- Discuss the drawbacks of being a school dropout.
- Keep track of the youth's school attendance.
- Help youth with time management.
- Help youth select school courses based on post high school interests.

Personal Development

- Help youth learn effective problem-solving and decision-making strategies.
- Help youth learn to communicate better with family and friends.
- Help youth set and work on specific goals.
- Discuss with youth healthy lifestyles. Talk about drug abuse, smoking, alcohol, safer sex, no sex, eating habits, etc.
- Help the youth identify his/her strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- Discuss how the media (television, radio, newspapers, magazines, etc.) influence thinking.
- Discuss rules of good etiquette and manners.
- Talk about difficulties of teenage parenthood.
- Discuss how to handle peer pressure.

Career Development

- Discuss career options.
- Visit businesses that have jobs related to careers of interest.
- Help youth learn how to fill out a job application.
- Practice employment interview skills.
- Help youth find out how to apply for college financial aid.
- Discuss good work habits.
- Help youth develop a resume and a cover letter.
- Have the youth identify people they can use for references for jobs or college.
- Write for college brochures and literature on vocational training programs.
- Help college-interested youth study for entrance exams.
- Take youth on a tour of college campuses or vocational schools.
- Explore financial aid available to the youth for college or vocational schools.

Culture and Recreation

- Socialize with other mentor-youth pairs.
- Go shopping.
- Go to dinner.
- Go hiking.
- Play sports (e.g., baseball, pool, bowling).
- Go to a sports or cultural event.
- Go to the movies, a concert, or a play.
- Listen to music together.
- Go to a museum or zoo.
- Take a walking tour of the neighborhood.
- Go on a picnic.
- Work on an arts and crafts project.
- Develop a mutual hobby.
- Learn a new sport together.

Other

- Develop a personal video or slide presentation.
- Make a personal collage on family, friends, likes, etc.
- Worship at a religious institution.
- Develop and perform a project of service to the community.
- Help youth learn how to budget money.
- Make a handmade gift or card together for another person.
- Take out a subscription for the youth to a magazine of his/her interest.
- Talk generally about the costs of living on your own.

Additional for Pregnant and Parenting Teens

- Select appropriate toys for babies and help teen parents learn how to play with infants and children.
- Help youth prepare grocery list with budget and nutrition in mind.
- Identify community resources for pregnant, low-income women.
- Talk about the role of fathers.
- Help the teen father establish rapport with the mother.




COMMUNITY SERVICE IDEAS

You can become involved with your youth in a variety of community service activities or can help him/her identify opportunities to explore on his or her own. Providing an opportunity for youth to give as well as receive service is a wonderful way to build their self-esteem. Often there are projects sponsored by schools, clubs, or community organizations. Your agency may decide to organize a series of visits to a local nursing home or a center for children with disabilities. This is a particularly good activity for the summer months.

The possibilities for community service projects are endless. You and your youth can decide together what is a good project. The following list, developed by the National Youth Leadership Project for use by high school students, will give you other ideas for projects elders and youth can do together as a pair or a group.

Artwork:



Design posters for non-profit organizations or for public information. Design artwork for display at parks or other public spaces. Paint murals in downtown areas. Create cards or gifts for senior citizens and hospitalized children.

Blood Drive:

Help run blood drives for the Red Cross.

Clothes Collection:

Collect clothes, food, toys, and other goods for public pantries and other organizations.

Community Education Classes:

Teach classes to the public in subjects such as computers or performing arts.

Community History:

Research oral history or other local history projects for communities. The researchers could also present the information to the community through books and videos, or by acting out historical events.

Community Repairs:

Build houses, public facilities, parks, playgrounds, school materials, or other structures. Put up snow fences, bleachers, and other temporary structures.

Crisis Intervention:

Support the staff of battered women's shelters and emergency shelters.

Meal Preparations:

Cook meals at soup kitchens or for community dinners.

Day Care:

Care for young children in day care centers, pre-schools, and facilities such as battered women's shelters.

Emergency Services:

With appropriate training, give medical aid as Emergency Medical Technicians on volunteer ambulance services. Fight forest fires. Build dikes and fill sandbags to prevent flooding.

Environmental Cleanup:

Clean up rivers, lakes, and parks and otherwise beautify the environment.

Friendly Visiting:

Provide companionship for hospital patients, prisoners, or residents in nursing homes or institutions for the mentally or physically handicapped.

Gardening and Horticulture:

Develop and help maintain community gardens. Plant trees, shrubs, flowers, and other plants. Wild bird or other habitat enhancement are also needed.

Homebound Care:

Daily or weekly, check in on homebound people to make sure they are all right; also run errands for them.

Home Chore Service:

Paint houses, check and/or replace smoke detectors, put up storm windows, rake leaves, move heavy items, and other work for senior citizens or disabled people who live alone.

Meals on Wheels:

Deliver Meals on Wheels or distribute government commodities, toys, or other goods to people in need.

Media Production:

Produce newsletters, newspapers, cable TV programs, or other public information sources.

Paint-a-thons:

Organize large-scale community service projects, possibly with pledges to raise money for charity.

Performing Arts:

Perform music, theater, dance, puppetry, and other arts for young people. Performances are best if they promote audience interaction.

Public Awareness:

Convey information about health issues, current events, public safety, social and environmental issues, academic issues, or other subjects to young people and to the public through the arts, videos, lectures, written works, or experiential activities.

Reading for the Blind:

Read written materials for blind people. Assist others with disabilities.

Recycling:

Increase public awareness about recycling, then collect and process recyclables.

Voter Education:

Distribute voter registration information. Assist with voter registration.

4

RESOURCES

Names and Numbers to Know

Mentor-Youth Participants' List

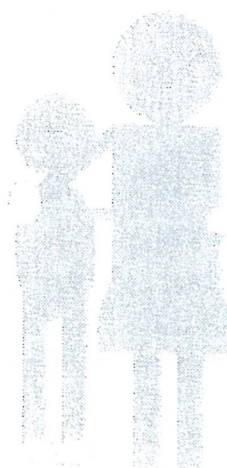
Hotline Numbers

Human Service Agencies

Cultural/Recreational Resources

Calendar of Events

Training Handouts





NAMES AND NUMBERS TO KNOW

Youth's Name _____

Age _____ **Birthdate** _____ **Grade** _____

Home Address:

Street _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone Number _____



Parent/Guardian Name _____

Home Address (if different):

Street _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____





NAMES AND NUMBERS TO KNOW

School _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Teacher _____

Principal _____



Sponsoring Agency _____

Address _____

Project Coordinator _____

Phone _____

Social/Case Worker _____

Phone _____





MENTOR AND YOUTH PARTICIPANT'S LIST

(Include the name, address and telephone number of all mentors and youth.)



HOTLINE NUMBERS

NATIONAL:

Childhelp USA Hotline **1-800-4-1-CHILD**
Call for help, counseling and referrals if you suspect a child is a victim of any kind of abuse.

AIDS Hotline **1-800-342-AIDS**
Call for information about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

Alcohol and Drug Helpline **1-800-821-4357**
Call for referrals to alcohol and drug abuse clinics.

U.S. Department of Education **1-800-433-3243**
Call to get a free copy of the Student Guide that advises students on how to get loans and grants for colleges, universities and trade schools.



LOCAL:

Child abuse hotline	Phone #: _____
Peer counseling hotline	Phone #: _____
AIDS Information & Counseling	Phone #: _____
Runaway	Phone #: _____
Parenting hotline	Phone #: _____
Homework hotline	Phone #: _____
Police	Phone #: _____



HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES

Hospitals

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address: _____

District Attorney's Office Phone # _____

Public Defender's Office Phone # _____

Department of Human Services Phone # _____

Address _____

Department of Juvenile Services Phone # _____

Address _____

Department of Protective Services Phone # _____

Address _____

Alcoholics Anonymous Phone # _____

Address _____

Local Health District Phone # _____

Address _____

Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation
Phone # _____

Address _____





CULTURAL/RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

Recreation Center

Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____

Park Services

Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____

Amusement Parks

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Museums

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

OTHER

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address: _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

Hours _____ Cost _____



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Schedule of mentor meetings, agency events, group meetings, etc, should be included here.)



TRAINING HANDOUTS



ABOUT THE CENTER FOR INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

The Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University was created in 1980 to foster cooperation and exchange among persons of different generations and to find creative intergenerational solutions to community problems. The Center serves as a national resource center and clearinghouse for information concerning existing intergenerational programs, develops and evaluates a variety of demonstration projects, collects and designs written and audiovisual resource materials, and provides technical assistance and training to organizations interested in developing intergenerational programs.

CURRENT PROGRAMS

Full Circle Theater Troupe: An intergenerational ensemble of teens and elders addresses social issues through improvisational theater.

Project LEIF (Learning English through Intergenerational Friendship): College students teach English to elderly refugees and immigrants.

Project W.R.I.T.E. (Writing and Reading through Intergenerational Teaching Experiences): College students help elders enhance their reading and writing skills.

Homefriends: High school students provide friendly visiting and chore services for homebound elders.

Time Out: College students provide respite to families caring for frail elders or impaired older adults.

Family Friends: Older adult volunteers (55+) provide in-home support to families of children with disabilities.

Partners in Time: Older adults provide respite care from 2 to 10 hours a week for families who have children with mental retardation.

ECHO (Elders and Children Helping Each Other): Training in child development is given to adults age 55+ for employment in the child care field.

HealthLink: Training is given to older adults 55+ interested in employment as healthcare aides.

Across Ages: A drug prevention program for high-risk middle school youth involves older people as mentors to students, engages students in community service activities, and provides life skills training in the classroom.

Learning Retreats: An annual 5-day residential retreat brings together 75 persons ranging in age from 14-100 to foster communication across ages.

DELVIN (Delaware Valley Intergenerational Network): Training and technical assistance in intergenerational programming is provided to community organizations, museums, schools, senior centers, nursing homes and religious institutions.

Urban Initiatives: Designed to help community organizations, churches, and schools develop intergenerational programs and engage university students in service-learning projects that benefit North Philadelphia residents.

Linking Lifetimes: A national multi-site research and demonstration project that involves older people as mentors to at-risk middle school children and young offenders.

Project ARC: Retirees from the ARCO Chemical Company volunteer with Southeast Delaware County School District middle school students to enrich the Math, Science and Technology curricula and engage in environmental projects.

Our Elders, Our Roots: Multi-cultural teams of college students provide a range of support services to elderly refugees and immigrants.

Executive Director: Nancy Z. Henkin, Ph.D.

For more information contact:

**Center for Intergenerational Learning, Temple University
1601 North Broad Street, Suite 206, Philadelphia, PA 19122
(215) 204-6970**

W

*hen I ask you to listen to me
And you start giving advice,
You have not done what I have asked.*

*When I ask you to listen to me
And you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way,
You are trampling on my feelings.*

*When I ask you to listen to me
And you feel you have to do something to solve my problem.
You have failed me, strange as that may seem.*

*Listen! All I asked was that you listen.
Not to talk or do, just hear me.
Advice is cheap;
25 cents will get you both Dear Abby and Billy Graham in
the same newspaper.
And I can do for myself.
I'm not helpless.
Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.*

*When you do something for me
That I can and need to do for myself,
You contribute to my fear and weakness.*

*But, when you accept as a simple fact
That I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational,
Then I can quit trying to convince you
And can get about the business of understanding what's
behind this irrational feeling.
And when that's clear,
The answers are obvious and I don't need advice.*

*Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's
behind them.*

Author- unknown