
Mentor Tips

What is a Mentor?



WHAT IS A MENTOR?

A mentor is a friend, a resource, an advisor or coach, someone a child can talk to and ask questions when they need guidance or advice. Mentoring is a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee.

Mentors are good listeners, people who care and want to help young people bring out strengths that are already there. A mentor is not a foster parent, therapist, parole officer, or peer.

All young people have the potential to succeed in life and contribute to society. However, not all children get the support they need to thrive. Estimates of 18 million young people between the ages of 6-18 live in situations that put them at risk of not living up to their potential. Mentoring has proved to be a powerful tool that helps young people fulfill their potential.

WHY MENTOR?

- Research shows that for all teen students, having an adult mentor meant a 50% greater likelihood of attending college.
- A volunteer mentor is someone who is taking time out of their busy schedule to get to know a child and be a part of your success.
- A youth can never have too many friends or too much support.
- Mentoring works and it changes lives.

MENTORING CAN HELP BY

- Improving young people's attitudes toward their parents, peers, and teachers.
- Encouraging students to stay motivated and focused on their education.
- Providing a positive way for young people to spend free time.
- Helping young people face daily challenges.
- Offering young people opportunities to consider post secondary education, career path, and acquire much-needed self-help skills, and knowledge.

WHAT DOES A MENTOR DO?

- **Effective Listener:** In many cases, the mentor is the only person that the mentee can identify as a person who will listen to his/her concerns or problems.
- **Help set short or long term goals.** If they fail to plan, they plan to fail.
- **Identify positive things in a mentee's life.** Concentrate on the mentee's strengths to overcome their weaknesses.
- **Convey that there is always "HOPE".** However, hope depends on their efforts and attitude.
- **Employ role playing** as a technique for solving mentee's problems. "Put the shoe on the other foot."
- **Help the mentee develop personal interests and hobbies.**
- **Help the mentee become more involved in school.**
- **Help the mentee learn where to go for help.**
- **Be sincere and committed.** A mentee can sense when you are NOT.
- **Develop a level of trust with your mentee.** This is the most important for a successful relationship with your mentee.
- **Serve as a responsible role model for your mentee.**
- **Be DEPENDABLE!**

"Children need models more than they need critics."

-Joseph Joubert