

What are the characteristics of a good Student Mentor?

A "Good Mentor" is someone who:

- Engages in a positive relationship with the child.
- Gives attention to the child.
- Has a positive self-esteem about himself/herself.
- Reacts well to stressful situations.
- Tolerates frustrating situations.
- Listens well.
- Communicates on a level that the child can understand.
- Is stable.
- Provides leadership.
- Is a positive role model.
- Meets on weekly basis with the mentee
- Shows up on time for sessions.
- Cares about helping a child.
- Is not a judgmental person.
- Is committed.
- Nurtures a relationship that respects the child's dignity.
- Accepts responsibilities.
- Reinforces student's success.

What should the Student Mentor NOT expect to do?

The Mentor should not expect to:

- Replace the role of a parent/guardian.
- Expect dramatic changes in attitude, self-esteem or attendance quickly. Mentor is a process that takes time!
- Provide solutions to all the issues facing student.
- Break the trust they have established, unless it is life threatening to the student.

What are the benefits of a Student Mentor Program?

Students benefit by:

- Receiving the support and guidance of a caring adult.
- Receiving assistance with academic endeavors.
- Experiencing greater self-esteem and motivation to succeed.
- Receiving encouragement to stay in school and graduate.
- Receiving encouragement to avoid the use of drugs and alcohol.
- Improving interpersonal relationships, such as with teachers and family.
- Receiving assistance in choosing a career path.

The Four Primary Tasks of a Mentor

Establish a positive, personal relationship with mentee:

- Establish mutual trust and respect;
- Maintain regular interaction and consistent support; and
- Make your meetings enjoyable and fun.

Help mentee to develop or begin to develop life skills:

- Work with your mentee to accomplish specific program goals (e.g., achieving eligibility and being involved in school events); and
- Instill the framework for developing broader life-management skills, (e.g., decision-making skills, goal-setting skills, conflict resolution, money management).

Assist mentee in obtaining additional resources:

- Provide awareness of community, educational and economic resources available to youth and their families, and how to access these resources. Act as a resource broker as opposed to a resource provider;
- Act as a guide and/or advocate, coach and/or model; and
- Avoid acting as a professional case manager. View the role of a mentor as a friend rather than a counselor.

Increase mentee's ability to interact with people/groups/things from various backgrounds (cultural, racial, socioeconomic, etc.):

- Respect and explore differences among people/groups from various backgrounds. Do not promote values and beliefs of one group as superior to those of another; and
- Introduce mentee to different environments, such as workplace vs. school setting; discuss differences in behavior, attitude and style of dress.