

Wichita Public Schools



Volunteer Manual



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Mentoring gives students matched with adult volunteers the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of positive, developmental experiences.

RESOURCES

Bluestein, Jane, Ph.D., *Mentors, Masters, and Mrs. MacGregor* (Deerfield, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 1995).

Partners in Education – Generations Together: Mentor Program Handbook (Columbia, Mo.: Columbia Mo., Public Schools, 1994).

Faber, Adele, and Mazlich, Elaine, *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* (New York: Wade Publishers, 1980).

Faggella, Kathy and Horowitz, Janet, *Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Who's the Greatest One of All? A Book for Mentors and Students* (Westport, Ct: Ideas "R" Popping, 1994).

Pipher, Mary Bray, *Reviving Ophelia* (New York, Ny., Ballantine Books, 1995).

Stock, Ph.D., Gregory, *The Kids' Book of Questions* (New York: Workman Publishing Company, Inc, 1988).

Weinberger, Susan, and McGrath, Phyllis, *Q/A: Mentoring* (Norwalk, Ct.: Norwalk Mentor Scholarship Fund, 1993).

National Mentoring Center
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 SW Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, Oregon 97204
www.nwrel.org

MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership
1600 Duke Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
www.mentoring.org

The Mentoring Institute
4625 Lindell Boulevard, Suite 520
St. Louis, Missouri 63108
www.volunteermatch.org

•••••
• **Do you know someone** •
• **who would be interested** •
• **in becoming a volunteer?** •
• **Or do you belong to an** •
• **organization or are an** •
• **employee of a business** •
• **that would be interested** •
• **in a program presenta-** •
• **tion? If so, please call** •
• **your program staff.** •
•••••



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ABOUT MENTORS

Mentoring gives students matched with adult volunteers the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of positive, developmental experiences. While the focus on one-to-one mentoring, there are also opportunities for small and large group activities that include reading, academic tutoring, school-to-work transition, career and college coaching, job skills and resume building.

- Young people repeatedly state that they need additional caring adults in their lives in order to succeed.
- Mentoring has proven to result in positive outcomes for young people.
- A growing body of science-based research shows that mentoring can create positive changes in youth with regard to decreased negative behaviors and drug and alcohol use.
- This program provides a safe, structured framework for mentoring activities.

Having a mentor gives kids the resiliency they need to be successful today and gives them the confidence to:

- Pursue healthy behaviors and habits.
- Reach out to others.
- Become positive role models for each other.

- • • • •
- Values students would most like to see in adult volunteers:
- Ability to listen.
 - Honesty.
 - Trustworthiness.
- • • • •

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

Appreciate small signs of success.

For some, it may be ten years before a former student looks back and says, "You know who made a difference in my life? YOU."

What to look for:

- Improved attendance.
- More smiles.
- Improved eye contact.
- More participation in the classroom.
- Improved appearance.
- Increased consideration of others.
- More enthusiasm.
- Improved interaction with peers.
- Decreased hostility.
- Less time spent in principal's or nurse's office.
- Less time in detention.

- Other students sit in with you and your young friend or your student introduces you to classmates.
- Improved grades.
- More attentive.
- More confidence shown.
- More willingness to express thoughts and feelings.
- Other students ask for mentors.

"The most important thing you can do is listen."

Volunteer

ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

Volunteer Orientation Checklist.

Student Name:

School Name:

School Office Phone:

Program Staff:

Phone:

Personal Responsibilities.

Checking in and out (locate sign-in folder)

Nametag (make sure to wear on each visit)

Procedures for absence or schedule change (name and number to call)

Appropriate use of school equipment

Confidentiality between volunteer and student

Contact person if problems arise

Name _____ Number _____

Tour of School.

Introduction to school support system (secretary, librarian, counselor, principal, etc.)

Entrances and exits, fire drill routes and locations

Restroom locations for students and adults

Availability of instructional materials

Eating and beverage facilities

Parking

School information (brochure, map, calendar and newsletters)

Discipline procedures

Use of school phone

Volunteer Activity Information.

Copy of activity description for my role

Location of activity

Start date and scheduled meeting times

Where I meet my student

Length of commitment

Introduction to teacher and student

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Who are our Volunteers?

- Mentors are positive persons who are non-judgmental listeners and friends.
- A mentor's role is simply to be a friendly and encouraging presence to a student.
- Mentors are not teacher's helpers, counselors, therapists, special education teachers or substitute parents.

What you can accomplish.

As a mentor you can:

- Encourage and reinforce positive behavior, attitudes and ambitions.
- Enhance students' self-confidence and feelings of self-worth.
- Broaden students' knowledge of future education, lifestyle and career options.
- Help students set and achieve educational and personal goals.
- Help students develop problem-solving skills.
- Share a lifetime of experience.
- Be what a young person needs most: someone to listen.

Caring is the main requirement.

The most important requirement for being a mentor is a sincere desire to be a caring adult role model for a young person. The people who make a difference in our lives are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most rewards. They are the ones who care. Think back to a caring adult who shaped your life. Who was that role model?

A successful mentor:

- Gives time and support unselfishly.
- Shares a skill or experience.
- Is willing to share knowledge.
- Fulfills time commitment.

Three things to consider before meeting with your student.

1. Talk to friends and acquaintances with children the same age as your student. Parents are rich sources of information on what to expect.
2. Feeling anxious is normal. Remember that your student is probably just as nervous as you are.
3. Don't expect immediate results. Building a friendship takes time.

QUICK TIPS FOR MENTORS

Do

Be consistent and dependable. Trust is earned.

Give praise liberally. Praise reinforces the students' pride in themselves, making them less dependant on the praise of others.

Ask questions to get to know your student.

Share with the student — communicate.

Be a good role model.

Follow program guidelines and school rules.

Show attention and concern. Be a friend.

Recognize the student's values and lifestyle.

Use positive comments.

Respect your student's privacy.

Plan each session.

Be honest.

Look for small signs of success.

Don't

Forget to tell your student if you are unable to meet, or make promises you can't keep.

Judge the student or family.

Forget that positive relationships are built on trust.

Forget that communication means listening, too.

Speak or dress inappropriately.

Allow students to talk you into things counter to program guidelines.

Be a parent or a babysitter.

Force your beliefs or values on your student. Demonstrate by example.

Allow rudeness or foul language.

Share your student's confidences with anyone.

Come unprepared.

Be insincere — your student will know.

Think your student will change overnight.

GUIDELINES

Student absences.

If you meet with an individual student, it's a good idea to phone ahead to make sure your student is in attendance on the day of your visit. You may want to ask your program staff how to confirm this. Don't forget to check the school calendar for early dismissal days or special school holidays.

School Policy.

Check with your program staff about rules specific to your district.

Relax.

Let your sense of humor show. Have fun. If you aren't enjoying your participation, please call your program staff to discuss your options.

.....
• You are a supporter who •
• is a non-judgmental •
• listener, a positive •
• person and an •
• overall friend. •
.....

Responsibilities.

- Be open, honest and receptive to your student.
- Encourage your student to reflect upon experiences.
- Set your boundaries.
- Use self-disclosure as a tool to pass on experience; yet, be judicious in what you choose to share.
- Know when to refer a student to other resources.
- Keep the partnership focused, committed and respectful.

GUIDELINES

**All volunteers
are screened
and trained.**

Program activities take place on school grounds, during school hours.

You will meet with your student before, during or after school. Non-sponsored, off-site activities are outside the confines of the program initiative.

Sign-in and nametags.

Sign the program notebook located in the school office. Check for any notices concerning schedule conflicts, special school activities or information related to your student. Be sure to wear your nametag on every visit.

Gifts.

Gift giving is not expected or encouraged. Remember your most valuable gifts are your time and interest.

Showing affection.

The best way to show a student you care is a warm smile. Physical contact should be limited to a pat on the back or shoulder. If your student hugs you, be sure to respond with a side-by-side hug and not a front hug. Following these guidelines allows you to let your student know you care and protects both of you.

Mandatory confidentiality.

Your student may share private information. This should not be discussed with anyone else. If your student reaches out to you with problems that require outside help, contact the program staff, counselor or principal for assistance and guidance. If your student tells something that causes you to suspect that the student is being mistreated or is endangering others, you are required to report this information to your program or school staff as soon as possible. Always tell your student about what you plan to do with the information shared and invite him or her to come with you to report it.

Reliability.

Your student is depending upon you, and the teacher has planned on your participation. If you must be absent, call the school and ask that your student and teacher be told why you cannot come that day.

STUDENTS

Stages of Development

Here are some general characteristics of young people at different ages to give you an idea of what to expect. As a general rule, in determining the attention span of a student, use one minute per year of life. For example, a six-year-old would have an attention span of about six minutes.

Grades K-1 (Ages 5 1/2 to 8):

- Physically active—more likely to run than walk.
- Learn best through action.
- Take things literally.
- Have short attention spans and enjoy a variety of activities. Need frequent breaks and changes in location and position.
- Use simple reasoning.
- Do little or no planning.
- Work for praise and attention rather than a right answer.
- Are starting to learn how to get along with others, learning to resolve conflicts without fighting.
- Can usually tell right from left.
- May reverse letters such as p, q, b and d.
- Have difficulty making decisions and do best with limited choices. (More than two choices can confuse and frustrate.)
- Are still somewhat self-centered and want immediate attention from adults.
- Are very eager to learn and have a high energy level.
- Mimic people they admire.

Grades 2-3 (Ages 7 1/2 to 10):

- Are aware of body movements and posture and can be very dramatic in activities.
- Work and play hard. May do one thing until exhausted.
- Are very enthusiastic, which sometimes results in action before thought.
- Enjoy sports and boisterous games.
- Are alert, friendly and interested in people and their ideas, beliefs and attitudes.
- Like to help the teacher.
- Understand value of money.
- Favor reality over fairy tales.
- Still need to be active while learning.
- Have capacity for self-evaluation.
- Can reason and accept the idea of rules.
- Understand logical principles as long as they can be applied to specific or concrete examples.
- Have passed through the confusions of the previous stage, but not yet reached the complications of adolescence.

STUDENTS

Grades 4-5 (Ages 9 1/2 to 12):

- Act in a more adult manner.
- Like games involving mental competition.
- Still enthusiastic about learning, but are more easily discouraged.
- Understand right from wrong and will accept blame when necessary, but offer excuses.
- Beginning to show increased interest in friends and decreased interest in family.
- Like definite responsibilities.
- Able to consider more than one conclusion to situations.
- Understand more about truth and honesty.
- Complain a lot.
- Worry about everything.
- Have definite likes and dislikes.
- Enjoy team play and activities.

Grades 6-7 (Ages 11 1/2 to 14):

- Able to think and reason through their own problems.
- Have need for warm affection and patience from adults.
- Like to plan and execute plans for the group.
- Have improved social skills and show more tact, patience and friendliness to other young people.
- Often self-conscious and sensitive. Feel desire to conform to peers in dress and behavior.
- Are able to grasp math concepts and apply to daily activities.
- Like active learning—such as reading aloud and science projects.
- May allow peer relationships to affect school work.

- Like group projects and classes based on cooperative effort.
- Begin to enjoy adult conversation.
- Identify themselves as adolescents and do not want to be called little kids.
- Are experiencing changes in physical and hormonal development.
- Begin to experience romantic feelings and attractions.

Grades 8-10 (Ages 13 to 15):

- Extremely self-conscious.
- Do not like to be talked down to.
- Need adults to show confidence in their judgment.
- Have strong need to belong and be accepted by peers, who greatly influence their behavior.
- Appearance is very important to their self-image.

Grades 11-12 (Ages 16 to 18):

- Begin to develop a sense of independence.
- Behavior still greatly influenced by peers.
- Spend much time thinking about romantic relationships.
- Begin to think and worry about their future.

DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Specific situations you may encounter.

- You don't agree with the teacher's approach to disciplining youth.
- Your student doesn't seem to care if you show up or not.
- Your student does not have necessities such as school supplies or even a winter coat.
- Your student is disruptive or behaves in a way that is unacceptable to you.
- Your student shares information with you that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Your student shows signs of abuse or neglect.

What to say when your student asks about drugs, alcohol or sex.

- Be honest.
- Avoid providing more information than is actually sought by the student.
- Ask clarifying questions to understand why and what the student is really asking.
- Discuss aspects such as the dangers of peer pressure, why it is dangerous, and why you want the student to avoid making a mistake.

Techniques for handling difficult situations.

Face the problem.

Ignoring it won't make it go away.

Think before you speak.

Change places – how would you want someone to deal with a sensitive issue or situation?

Separate the behavior from the person.

Stay serious.

Avoid humor but remain supportive.

Respect privacy.

Discuss sensitive issues in a private place.

Relate something personal and relevant from your past.

Share a similar incident that occurred in your youth and describe how you handled it. Be positive.

Reinforce a positive behavior.

Emphasize that the issue was about behavior, not personality.

Review stages of development.

Your student's behavior may be age-appropriate.

Seek advice from qualified sources.

Try to let your student solve the problem.

As a friend, listen. When appropriate, offer to go with the student to see the counselor.

Report suspected abuse or neglect.

If your student tells you something that causes you to suspect that he is being mistreated or may be endangering himself or others, you are required to report this information to your Building Liaison as soon as possible. Always tell your student about what you plan to do with the information shared and invite him to come with you to report it.

TIPS FOR TUTORS

Sit side by side.

Sit next to your student facing the same direction.

Know the material.

Familiarize yourself with the lesson as quickly as possible.

Be articulate.

Speak slowly and clearly.

Encourage responsibility.

Once the student understands what to do, encourage the student to work independently with your support.

Be patient.

Let your student have time to think and organize thoughts. Students will take great pride in being able to figure out the answer or a problem on their own.

Use positive praise.

After every right answer, congratulate your student. Try to vary the phrases you use to praise.

Allow students to master a task.

Students require a great deal of drill and practice with any new task, and they have considerable tolerance for practice exercises if they are having success. A student should be allowed to master one concept completely and then be given the opportunity to practice it numerous times before another is introduced.

Review important facts.

Students may know something one day and then forget it another.

Be flexible with time.

Students have their own particular attention spans beyond which learning is not effective. Be flexible with your time frame.

RELATING

Keys to effective mentoring relationships.

- Keep your expectations in line with the student's age.
- Think ahead. Talk about what behavior you expect before you begin activities.
- Encourage your student to help set the boundaries of your interactions and establish guidelines.
- Be consistent. Don't change the rules from day to day. Young people like structure. It gives them security. Set up a schedule for your visits and follow through with your plans.
- Expect respect. If respect is not there, or the student does not want to participate, talk to the program staff.
- Be prompt. Being prompt tells students they are important.
- Remember you are not a substitute teacher, parent or counselor. Your role is to be a FRIEND.

What kids say they need to succeed:

- Positive adult role models
- Respect
- Support
- Time to be kids

Remember what it was like to be your student's age.

Think about:

- What a typical day was like.
- What was really important to you at that time.
- What was your parent/guardian like? Did you get along? Were you close?
- Think of your friends. Were friendships always easy or were they sometimes difficult?
- In general, did you feel as though adults understood you well?

STARTING THE FRIENDSHIP

As you start your relationship, keep these tips in mind.

Names are important.

Ask your student how to say and spell his/her name correctly. Make sure your student knows what you would like to be called.

Show you are interested.

Listen carefully to what the student has to say and remember the details. Ask open-ended questions about favorite activities, family members, good friends and personal hopes and dreams. Try to summarize what the student tells you to make sure that you understand it and to demonstrate that you are listening. By your words and actions, let your student know that you care.

Define your relationship together.

Set the boundaries to the friendship. Discuss acceptable behaviors.

Be tolerant of mistakes.

Students will make mistakes. You will, too. That means you are both trying; that you are acquiring new information. Let your student know that making mistakes is a part of learning. A healthy attitude toward failure is a great tool for success.

Build the student's self-confidence.

Praise your student honestly and frequently. Remember that attentiveness and effort can be as important as performance. Accentuate the positive. Minimize the negative. Make sure that your praise is sincere. Find something real to compliment, especially when students are having difficulties.

Let the student make choices.

Ask specific questions. Let them choose where to sit. Let them help to define the guidelines of your interactions. Providing options helps teach decision-making skills.

Plan ahead.

Young children, especially, have very short attention spans. Be sure to plan a change of activity every few minutes—a short break, stretch or a change in conversation or activity.

Change will come slowly.

Your patience may be tested. Some volunteers report that it has taken several months before their students began to trust them. Students often don't express their appreciation. If you're feeling uncertain about whether you are making a difference, ask the teacher.

When you don't know, ask.

If you don't know an answer or are unsure of what to do, admit it to your student and work it out together. Feel free to ask the student's teacher for help as it relates to academics. If you are uncertain about anything else, ask your program staff.

AS THE FRIENDSHIP GROWS

Resist the temptation to talk students out of expressed feelings or emotions.

Try helping them define their emotions more clearly by asking them to talk about their feelings and what they plan to do about them.

Encourage students to do their own thinking.

Give them plenty of time to answer. Don't be afraid of silence.

Solicit suggestions and ideas from your student.

Encourage and accept feedback. Ask your student what he likes about the time you spend together or what other activities he might prefer.

Try not to preach or lecture.

Your student is used to being directed by adults and will be sensitive to words like *must*, *should* and *ought*. Mentors are there to listen. When giving feedback, use phrases like "have you thought about...?" or "one option might be...."

The swarming effect.

Other young people may want to spend time with you and your student. Make sure you are comfortable together before including others in your activities. If you feel including additional students hampers your friendship, you might suggest that others join you once a month.

Expect to be tested.

It's natural for young people to test boundaries. They may be suspicious that adults will not keep their promises. They may also act in offensive ways just to see how committed you are to them. Don't take it personally. Focus on being a positive role model.

Show appreciation.

If your student shows appreciation for your interest and friendship in any way, tell her how much this means to you. Explain that adults as well as children need encouragement, and a word of appreciation means a lot. Thank the student for her time, interest and friendship.

GOAL-SETTING

Setting realistic and achievable goals is an effective way to help students succeed.

First determine what the student wants to accomplish. By asking students questions, you can help them define something specific they want to work on, like improving their grades, getting along with classmates or being better at a sport. Helping students identify what they want to achieve and how they are going to measure progress will enable your students to develop a plan for success.

Starting the process.

To help start the planning process, ask the student to complete the following:

- Something I'm good at is:

 - I wish I were better at:

 - Someday, I would like to be:

 - Something I'd like my mentor to help me with is:
- To understand the student's time frame ask:
- By the end of our time together today, I'd like to:

 - By the end of this grading period, I'd like to:

 - By the end of the school year, I'd like to:

 - After I graduate, I plan to:

 - To me, success means:

Setting the goal.

Then, ask the student about specifics he/she would like to accomplish based on your discussion. Have your student write the goal. Then help your student refine his/her goal by asking:

- What do you need to accomplish your goal?

- Are there any external factors that need to be assessed?

- How long do you think it will take you to meet your objectives?

- How will you know if you have reached your goal?

Following through.

Setting goals and determining steps needed to accomplish the goal take time and energy. Use encouraging words and compliment your student for staying on task.

• • • • •
• **Mentors help students** •
• **set reasonable and** •
• **achievable goals.** •
• **Through their own** •
• **success, students learn** •
• **setting goals will help** •
• **them in all aspects of** •
• **their lives.** •
• • • • •

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Culture is more than race or ethnicity.

Culture encompasses values, life-style and social norms, including traditions, communication styles, mannerisms, dress, family structure, orientation to time and response to authority. These differences may be associated with age, religion, ethnicity and socioeconomic background. Good mentoring relationships find similarities and appreciate differences.

Find common ground.

You may come from a different culture or background than your student. But perhaps you both enjoy sports or computers or like spicy foods or the color orange. Discovering common interests and shared preferences can help bridge differences.

To bridge differences:

- Talk about background and ancestry.
- Draw pictures of things in your lives that are important to you.
- Talk about something you may have brought with you that represents an aspect of your lifestyle.
- Discuss how what you value can influence the way people live and the decisions they make.
- Share traditions.
- Find out what your student values and share your values as an adult.

Diversity can be reflected in:

- Accent.
- Behavior and attitude.
- Physical appearances.
- Customs observed.

Suggestions for dealing with diversity.

Remember that you are the adult — the experienced one. It is your responsibility to take the initiative and look for ways to find common ground.

Remember to be yourself. Don't try to relate to your student by using his/her slang.

Learn about your student's culture, life-style or age group.

By taking the lead in caring about your student, in a non-judgmental way, you can make big strides in bridging your differences.

Remember that building a friendship will take some time.

Your relationship with your student may go through many different stages as you learn and grow together.

• • • • •
• **Help a student understand** •
• **that what people** •
• **value can influence** •
• **important decisions** •
• **about education, work,** •
• **friends, sexual relationships** •
• **and parenting.** •
• • • • •

GETTING ACQUAINTED

Questions you can ask each other to help break the ice with your students.

- Do you have a nickname? What is your middle name?
- When is your birthday?
- What is your favorite song?
- What is your favorite color?
- Do you have brothers and sisters? How many? What are their names?
- What is your favorite TV show or favorite movie? Who is your favorite movie star?
- What is your favorite book or magazine?
- If a genie granted you one wish, what would it be?
- What is your favorite food?
- What was your favorite trip or vacation?
- What places would you like to visit and why?
- Do you have any pets? Describe them.
- Are you right- or left-handed?
- What is your favorite subject in school? What do you like about it?
- What subject do you dislike the most? Why?
- What is your favorite sport?
- Who is your favorite athlete?
- If you could be any kind of animal, what would you be and why?
- Do you have a hobby? What is it?
- What careers interest you?
- What college would you like to attend?

THINGS TO DO

- Allow the student to interview you and vice versa using the "Get Acquainted" questions.
- Share school experiences when you were the same age.
- Check out books in the school library.
- Make a greeting, get-well or holiday card to give to other people.
- Research and talk about famous people who used their abilities to get ahead.
- Read the newspaper together. Talk about current affairs. Get your student's views on what is occurring. Students with low reading skills may enjoy looking at magazines.
- Ask about the career goals of your student. What do they hope to be and how did they make that choice? If you work, tell your student about your work and how you reached your position.
- Teach a skill such as sewing, embroidery, painting, model building or wood working.
- Play games like chess, dominoes, cards or Scrabble®.
- Write a poem together.
- Practice math facts.
- Work on a computer.
- Play a musical instrument or talk about your favorite types of music.
- Exchange photos of family, house or pets.
- For older students, help them study for their drivers' license.
- Review job opportunities in the want ads or fill out college applications together.
- **Listen. Listen. Listen.**