



MENTORING COLLECTIVE



Big Brothers
Big Sisters®
OF GREATER
CHATTANOOGA



MENTOR TRAINING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

It's important to note that this training will not cover everything you will encounter as a potential mentor, but it will provide you with core information and guidelines required for a safe and healthy relationship with a child or youth.

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THE MENTORING COLLECTIVE



THE MENTORING COLLECTIVE IS A MENTORING INITIATIVE FORMED BY KINGDOM PARTNERS.

Kingdom Partners mission is to provide kingdom transformation with kingdom solutions. Mentoring is a kingdom solution that has always been practiced formally and informally. Kingdom Partners and local community partners aim to create mentoring opportunities for our youth by empowering the church to move into more formal mentoring relationships so that outcomes may be measured and achieved.

The Mentoring Collective goal is to mobilize Christians to mentor youth in Urban areas of Chattanooga. Kingdom Partners will partner with local churches and local non-profit organizations to move toward a "critical mentoring" model and to create partnerships between youth, families, churches, schools and communities.

WHY MENTOR?

WHAT MENTEES HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THEIR MENTOR

"Here I am, getting ready to graduate and it had a lot to do with her."

"When I'm feeling down, my Big Sister can make me happy."

"I also plan to go to college and become the kind of man that Wade is, so I can help another kid when it's my time to help him."



IMPACT OF A MENTOR

WHAT IMPACT DO YOU HOPE TO MAKE?



WHAT KIND OF POSITIVE IMPACT DO YOU WANT TO HAVE ON YOUR MENTEE?

[illegible]

MENTOR MOTIVATIONS

Mentors all sign up for different reasons. Your motivations or goals are your reasons for deciding to become a mentor to a child. It is important to be aware of your motivations because they can influence the longevity, quality, and success of your relationship.



1

TO GIVE BACK TO SOCIETY

Many people want to be a mentor so they can "pay it forward" and give back to their community. Just like you have a reason for wanting to be a mentor, your mentee will also have reasons for wanting a mentor.

When your motivation differs from your mentee's you need a solution somewhere in the middle of your two goals. You may see that your mentee needs to focus on schoolwork but they want to have fun. Try a compromise and after a little homework, you can play basketball.

2

TO HAVE FUN

Some people want to be a mentor because they enjoy spending time with kids and want to have fun together. While most kids also want to have plenty of fun, this motivation can become difficult when things get hard.

When your Little has issues or problems that can be serious and you are focused on fun and just hanging out, it is important they know they have someone they can talk to. After your mentee shares about their life, they will be more likely to relax and have fun with you.

3

TO ENHANCE YOUR OWN LIFE

Some mentors decide they miss having kids around or are lonely and with time on their hands, they want to be a mentor. If your mentee doesn't seem to be enjoying time with you all the time, this motivation may be difficult.

A mentor-mentee relationship is not designed to meet the needs of the mentor. What's most important is that by understanding your mentee's goals, you will promote a healthy relationship. When you focus on their needs instead of yours, you can really focus on the mentoring relationship.

YOUR MOTIVATIONS

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BE A
MENTOR?

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR
MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?

A vertical red line is positioned to the right of the two questions. To the right of this red line are several horizontal light blue lines, providing a space for writing answers.

Regardless of what your motivation is for mentoring, there will be times when you do not feel like you are making a difference or you worry that your mentee is not having fun. During these times, it is important to stay motivated. If you find you are not motivated use these steps:

- 1: Identify your goals
- 2: Try to really learn and listen to your mentee's goals
- 3: Try solutions to meet in the middle of you and your mentee's goals.

EXPECTATIONS OF A MENTEE

We all have expectations in any relationship. You have them. Your mentee has them. Positive expectations are thoughts about what you believe will happen in the future. Some mentors expect certain behaviors or outcomes right away.



1

CHANGE RIGHT AWAY

A mentor may feel that their mentee is having some behavioral or academic problems and needs to change something. These feelings may be well intentioned, but high expectations for immediate change can result in everyone being disappointed and the relationship ending too soon leaving your mentee feeling rejected.

2

TRUST ME RIGHT AWAY

No matter how "cool" you may be, it takes time for children to trust new adults. Be patient. It takes time to build a relationship. The relationship may feel one-sided at first. You may think you're the only one making an effort. Remember, kids are not used to being "friends" with an adult and this type of relationship may be very new to them.

3

AGE APPROPRIATE

The agency you work with will pair you with a kid who matches your interests and expectations. Please keep an open mind and be aware of different interests and developmental stages of kids.

4

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

There are many different expectations you have for your mentoring relationship. Some unrealistic expectations are:

- Expecting your mentee to be as committed to the relationship. Expecting them to call you, offer activity ideas, always say thank you.
- Expecting them to disclose a lot of information about their personal life.

MANAGING YOUR EXPECTATIONS

If you do find that your expectations for your mentee or your mentoring relationship are not being met, then you can follow these steps to manage your expectations.

- 1: Be objective when thinking about your mentee and your relationship.
- 2: Initially, keep your expectations modest.
- 3: Don't focus on changing your mentee.
- 4: Focus on building your relationship and getting to know each other.
- 5: Be patient. Relationship building takes time.

ROLES OF A MENTOR

A mentor is a non-parental adult who is a role model to a mentee. Mentors come from diverse backgrounds just like mentees.



1

A TRUSTED ADULT FRIEND

On the most basic level, all your interactions with your mentee demonstrate that you are someone who they can trust: their safety and well-being is your top concern, you are consistent and reliable.

In many cultures, it's unusual for a non-parental adult to be friends with a child. Differences in age, interests, backgrounds, and experience can distinguish you being an adult friend from a peer friend.

One important difference between adult friends and peer friends is power and authority. Your age, experience, and background give you more perceived power. Here are some things you can do to create a relationship with equal power.

- Ask your mentee for their opinion.
- Don't dominate the conversation
- Respect your mentee's opinions/ideas
- Make decisions together
- Set goals together

2

A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

What does it mean to be a role model? A role model is someone that people imitate or look up to for guidance. The key in being a positive role model is that your beliefs, actions, and words are all in alignment. Here are some tips for being a positive role model.

- Make positive choices and appropriate decisions.
- Follow through with your commitments.
- Be confident and proud of who you are.
- Treat others with respect, compassion, and kindness.
- Apologize and admit mistakes.
- Think out loud so your mentee can learn how you work through problems and come to a decision.

3

AN IGNITER OF POTENTIAL

Being an igniter of potential means you help your mentee identify their interests and help them grow those interests. You can also expose them to things they have never done before.

One useful way of thinking about this role is that you can help your mentee discover their spark or passion. Look for what sparks your mentee's interest and build on that as your relationship develops.

You can do that by being a good listener and suggesting new experience that might introduce your mentee to something they have not done before. You might also expose them to experiences that inspire them to take action and make a difference.

SAFE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

THE MENTORING COLLECTIVE PARTNERS ARE COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT ALL MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS ARE SAFE.



VALUES IN A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

RESPECT

Be Honest
Really listen
Consider their thoughts and feelings
Celebrate accomplishments

BE YOURSELF

Be Yourself
Provide a space for your mentee to be themselves
Be open to your mentee's likes/dislikes
Accept your mentee for who they are

HANDLING DISAGREEMENTS

Listen to their point of view
Acknowledge difference of opinion
Work toward a solution without hurtful language or violent behavior

FEELING SAFE FROM HARM

It is essential that your mentee feels safe in every aspect of the relationship.

- Safe from physical harm
- Safe from emotional harm
- Safe from sexual harm

BOUNDARIES

Focusing on the roles that are appropriate for you to play as mentor and avoiding the roles you should not play will help you maintain appropriate boundaries. Here are 5 guiding principles.



-
- 1** Consider boundaries prior to the start of the relationship. Think about how you will respond to requests.
 - 2** Establish boundaries from the onset, because what you do in the beginning of your relationship sets the tone.
 - 3** Take time to think if you feel you need it. Avoid feeling pressured to act before you are ready to do so. It's always acceptable to ask for time to consider a request or question.
 - 4** Seek support and guidance. Discuss any concerns you have about potential boundary violations with your support at the partnering agency.
 - 5** Ask yourself some guiding questions, such as whether or not your actions will be good for your mentee and your relationship.

CHILD/YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Understanding your mentee's development can help make sense of their needs and behaviors. Throughout childhood and adolescence, children experience growth in many ways.



1

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Physical development is a child's ability to use and control their bodies. It relates to the growth and skill development of the body, including the brain, muscles and senses.

Children and youth undergo significant physical changes that not only transform their bodies, but also impact their social and emotional wellbeing. The physical development includes: Fine motor skills, Gross motor skills, and physical growth and maturity.

2

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cognitive development is the way the brain processes information. It is the development of knowledge, skills, and problem solving, which help children think about and understand the world around them. Cognitive development begins very early in life and continues through adulthood.

One way to support your mentee's cognitive development is to model good problem solving. When it's time to make a decision with your mentee, share your decision-making process out loud in a way they can understand. Though they may not be hanging on the edge of their seat – they are learning from you.

3

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Social and emotional development includes how children start to understand who they are, what they are feeling, and what to expect when interacting with others. This includes but is not limited to:

- Ability to experience, manage and express emotions
- Development of empathy
- Ability to form and maintain positive relationships
- Making good and healthy decisions

All of these skills involve complex reasoning. As a child's cognitive development progresses, their complex reasoning skills increase. However, social and emotional development is very dependent on the child's relationships and experiences.

EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA

In the United States, children and youth are more likely to be exposed to violence and crime than adults.

– 2015 National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence



Trauma: Any experience that causes intense physical and psychological stress reactions.

Protective Factors: Social conditions or personal attributes that help lessen the risks of trauma.

The single most common factor for children who develop the skill of resilience: Presence of a stable, caring adult.

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES – ACES

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?
ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in a child's life:

			
Physical Abuse	Emotional Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Domestic Violence
			
Parental Substance Abuse	Mental Illness	Suicide or Death	Crime or Imprisoned Family

Causing lifelong medical, mental & social suffering



American
SPCC
American Society for the Positive Care of Children

americanspcc.org
The Nation's Voice for Children
*Center for Disease Control

MENTORING PRINCIPLES

These are five core principles for youth mentoring relationships.



- 1** Promote the welfare and safety of the young person. Respect their space and ensure their physical and emotional safety.
- 2** Be trustworthy and responsible.
- 3** Act with integrity. Conduct yourself with integrity in their community, school, and home and be sensitive to cultural differences and your mentee's expectations.
- 4** Promote justice for young people. Be aware of differences between you and your mentee such as race, culture, religion, sexual orientation. Be aware of how these differences have the potential to impact relationships. Even well-intentioned mentors are susceptible to their own biases.
- 5** Show respect at all times for your mentee and their family. Never come between a parent and their child. Understand that you will learn personal information about your mentee and their family which you will keep confidential.

CHILD ABUSE

CHILD ABUSE IS ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS CHILD SAFETY ISSUES. CHILD ABUSE CAN BE PERPETRATED BY FAMILY MEMBERS, OTHER ADULTS, OR PEERS. ABUSE OF A CHILD IS A CRIMINAL ACT, PUNISHABLE BY LAW.



Children can be exposed to safety risks in a variety of ways, including being the victim of or witnesses to abuse, neglect, or violence in their homes, schools or communities.

For example, children may be exposed to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, domestic violence, or neglect. Neglect includes being deprived of food or shelter.

Another safety risk may come from self-harm. Self harm can include burning or cutting oneself, or attempting suicide.

REPORTING ABUSE

In the State of Tennessee, we are all Mandatory Reporters. This means that if you suspect or have reasons to believe a child has been abused or neglected, you are required to make a report to the Department of Children's Services.

If your mentee discloses abuse, it is a sign they feel they can trust you. You should:

- 1- Listen calmly. Be open and understanding.
- 2- Reassure them that you're glad they could tell you and it was not their fault.
- 3- Let them know that you are going to help them and that you will need to share this information with your partnering agency.
- 4- Don't attempt to question them about the abuse.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

As you prepare to meet your mentee, it is a good time to think about potential cultural differences between you and your mentee.



Culture is the lens through which you view and interpret all other cultures, as well as their values and practices. When your cultural values and practices are the same as the people with whom you interact, there will be fewer misunderstandings and you are likely to feel a strong connection quickly. This may be true for you and your mentee, but it may not be true as well. Cultural competence starts with being aware of your own values, beliefs, and realities.

What are some of the similarities that may exist between you and your mentee?

What are some of the differences that may exist between you and your mentee?

CLOSURE/TRANSITION

All relationships go through phases. It may seem odd or pessimistic to discuss closure but research shows that when mentors are trained in handling closure, it can be a process that allows for growth for the mentor and mentee.



When closure is done unplanned or abruptly, mentees can be harmed and mentors can be left with guilt and sadness. The most important thing to remember about transitioning and closing your mentoring relationship is that you should never stop communicating with your mentee and or disappear. This can have negative consequences. Although your relationship may not end, you must plan for the transition and possible closure of the relationship.

There are many reasons why mentoring relationships come to an end. Can you think of some reasons why?

- Change in where you or your mentee live.
- Feeling that you have successfully guided them through a critical stage.
- Your mentee has changed schools.
- Your mentee's interests decline as they grow older.
- Challenges in the relationship.

If/When your relationship does end, hopefully this is very positive for both of you. By working through feelings and problems when a relationship is ending, you're showing your mentee that your relationship was worth the effort. Furthermore, this sets an example for how to end future relationships in a positive way.

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