

# VSAC Mentoring Manual

VSAC, through the Vermont State GEAR UP Grant, supports community-wide efforts to provide students with the opportunities and assistance to achieve success in high school and beyond.

Our goal is to provide students with experiences and relationships that will enhance their development and promote success in post-secondary education and beyond.

The mission of the VSAC Mentoring Program is to provide positive role models to support and nurture students' personal development and academic success. Mentors guide students in the following ways:

- field trip assistance
- one-on-one relationships
- academic support
- workshop presentations
- job-shadow opportunities
- on-line correspondence

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The VSAC Mentor Program is school-based. Any activities involving mentor and mentee outside of school are not part of the VSAC program and should be arranged independently between mentors and their students' families.

# Introduction

“ALL CHILDREN, AT EVERY AGE, SHARE BASIC NEEDS —  
FOR A DEEP CONNECTION WITH A LOVING PARENT OR OTHER CAREGIVER,  
GOOD NUTRITION, ADEQUATE HOUSING, SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS, AN ENVIRONMENT  
THAT ENCOURAGES EXPLORATION AND ADULTS TO TEACH THEM ABOUT  
HOW TO COPE WITH THE WORLD AND FIND THEIR PLACE IN IT.”

*- Standards for Success: Building Community Supports for America's Children*



# Mentoring Works

*“The number one indicator of success for a child is a good relationship with a caring adult.”*

— FORTUNE magazine

In its concluding report on adolescent development, *Great Transitions*, The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development:

- states that good programs give youth what they want: mentoring relationships.
- reports that mentors can “rewrite the future of youth.”
- calls on community organizations to connect youth with reliable adults who can offer them opportunities to “...learn about the world of work, earn money, build a sense of worth, and make durable friendships.”

A Procter & Gamble study on its mentoring programs in Cincinnati schools showed that the 133 young people with mentors were more likely to:

- **stay in school.**  
Not one student with a mentor dropped out of school; average daily attendance was higher.
- **achieve and aspire to better grades.**  
Grade point average was almost half a unit higher for young people with mentors.
- **go on to college.**  
Eighty-six percent, or 24, of the students from the senior class went on to college. Typically only 25 to 30 percent of students from these schools go on to college.

A Public/Private Ventures study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters one-to-one mentoring found that little brothers and sisters who met with their “bigs” regularly for about a year were:

- 46 percent less likely than their peers to start using illegal drugs and 27 percent less likely to start drinking.
- 52 percent less likely than their peers to skip a day of school and 37 percent less likely to skip a class.

- more trusting of their parents or guardians, less likely to lie to them, and felt more supported and less criticized by their peers and friends.

Sociologist William Julius Wilson, in *The Truly Disadvantaged*, said that a mentor “can help keep alive the perception that education is meaningful, that steady employment is a viable alternative to welfare, and that family stability is the norm, not the exception.”

In a study of 900 children, researchers Terry Williams and William Kornblum (*Growing Up Poor*) found that “the probabilities that teenagers will end up on the corner or in a stable job are conditioned by a great many features of life in their communities. Of these, we believe the most significant is the presence or absence of adult mentors.”

A Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Study showed:

- 64 percent of students developed more positive attitudes toward school.
- 58 percent achieved higher grades in social studies, languages, and math.
- 60 percent improved relationships with adults, and 56 percent improved relationships with peers.
- 55 percent were better able to express their feelings.
- 64 percent developed higher levels of self-confidence.
- 62 percent were more likely to trust their teachers.



# What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a one-to-one relationship over a prolonged period of time between a youth and an older person who provides consistent support and guidance. The goal of mentoring is to help mentees gain the skills and confidence to be responsible for their own futures, including, and with an increasing emphasis on, academic and occupational skills.

Mentoring is an act of community-building. It requires believing in and caring about young people—their future and ours.

## What is a mentor?

- A mentor, according to the American Heritage Dictionary, is “a wise and trusted counselor or teacher.”
- A mentor encourages his/her mentee to think, act, and evaluate.
- A mentor praises, prods, connects, and listens.
- A mentor helps a young person identify and develop his/her potential and shape his/her life.
- A mentor encourages the mentee to use his/her strengths, follow dreams, and accept challenges.

## Why mentoring?

Today, adolescents are an increasingly isolated population.

- Changes in the structure of the family, in community and neighborhood relationships, and in workplace arrangements have deprived young people of the adult contacts that historically have been primary sources of socialization and support for development.
- There are fewer “natural” opportunities for youth to sustain durable relationships with adults.

- Many young people lack nurturing and supportive primary adult relationships.

A mentor can provide that role and, perhaps more importantly, teach and guide the mentee to find others to fill that role as well.

While families bear the primary obligation to care for their children and to help them become healthy, contributing citizens, other institutions can help families accommodate to a rapidly changing world. A mentor can provide the nurturing, supportive adult relationship absent in the lives of many of our young people.

## Mentors & commitment

A mentor must be willing to make a specified commitment of time ... *and keep to it!*

A good mentor program requires time to enable a mentoring relationship to flourish.

While the chemistry between two people may be the real key to a good mentoring relationship, the *quality* and *frequency* of time spent together will enhance the potential for developing strong rapport.

## What do mentors gain from mentoring?

Mentoring helps mentors to:

- increase their regard and respect for people from different backgrounds.
- recognize that they can make a difference.
- feel part of a wider community.
- develop new friendships and relationships.
- give back to the community by sharing their strengths and abilities.





# The Mentoring Relationship



# What Are the Roles of a Mentor?

Mentor roles generally fall into two categories:

- Helping young people achieve educational or career goals.
- Enhancing young people's awareness of and belief in their own potential.

Mentors can engage in a variety of activities to develop a young person's full potential:

- Academic support.
- Career development.
- Development of self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Dropout prevention.
- Job-search strategies.
- Personal growth and development.

## A mentor encourages

Mentors can help mentees build self-confidence, self-esteem, and cultural pride to last a lifetime by focusing on mentees' talents, assets, and strengths.

You can be the one to help your mentee see the connection between his/her actions of today and dreams and goals of tomorrow. For example, if your mentee dreams of graduating from high school with classmates, be sure to point out how skipping school today will affect chances of completing school on schedule, if at all. Bring in examples of struggles that are real to your mentee—a hero or local community leader. Be as concrete and relevant as possible.

## A mentor turns everything into a learning experience

Keep an eye out for learning opportunities and “teachable moments.” If your mentee expresses an interest in someone or something, no matter how slightly, take advantage of the situation and help develop the interest further. You never know where this might lead. Over time, the mentee may learn to be aware of and creative with his/her own potential. For example, if the mentee mentions or ex-

presses an interest in a local politician, take him/her to hear the politician speak. From there, you can begin to think of other ways to transform casual interest into other learning experiences using your time, energy, and perhaps connections.

## Whenever possible:

- Identify your mentee's talents, strengths, and assets.
- Give recognition for effort or improvement—no matter how slight.
- Show appreciation for contributions and demonstrate confidence and faith in your mentee.
- Value your mentee no matter how he/she performs.
- Find and point out positive aspects of behavior.
- Suggest small steps in new or difficult tasks.
- Have reasonable expectations.
- Help your mentee use mistakes as learning experiences.

## What mentors are not!

A mentor should **not**:

- break promises.
- condone negative behavior.
- talk down to a mentee.
- force the mentee into anything.
- be inconsistent.
- become a crutch.
- expect too much.
- expect too little.
- cause friction.
- break confidentiality (except in cases of potential harm to the mentee or other people).

**Source:** This section was reprinted with permission from The Abell Foundation, Inc., Baltimore, MD.



# Getting Started

Before you begin your mentoring relationship, make sure you have the following:

- Copies of school handbook.
- Copies of school calendar.
- Policies regarding visiting the school.
- Mentor program procedures, including:
  - Meeting space.
  - Time commitment.
  - Frequency of meetings.
  - Absenteeism policy.
  - Confidentiality/reporting procedures.
  - Terminating relationships guidelines.
  - Policy regarding out-of-school visitation.
  - Physical contact policy.
  - What to do if a problem arises while meeting with your mentee.
  - Mentor/mentee matching.
  - Paperwork required.
  - Parental involvement.
- School contact people and phone number of school.
- Liability policies.
- Timing of visits at school.
- Familiarity with school grounds (mentees are great for that).
- Snow/inclement weather cancellations (radio stations).
- School resources available to assist you (guidance counselors, secretary, nurse).

Other topics to consider in the mentor/mentee relationship:

- Gift-giving.
- Appropriate mentor activities.
- Acknowledging birthdays and other accomplishments.
- Field trips.
- Adolescent development.
- Mentor program objectives.
- Access to student records.

## Beating the Odds

In their book, *Beating the Odds: How the Poor Get to College*, researchers from Columbia University and University of Massachusetts found that “those who overcome poverty to reach college often share a common bond: a mentor, or perhaps several, who shepherds students across unfamiliar terrain.”



# Confidentiality & Physical Contact

Your students need to know that they can trust you with personal information. It is effective practice to discuss the mentor program's confidentiality policy with your student.

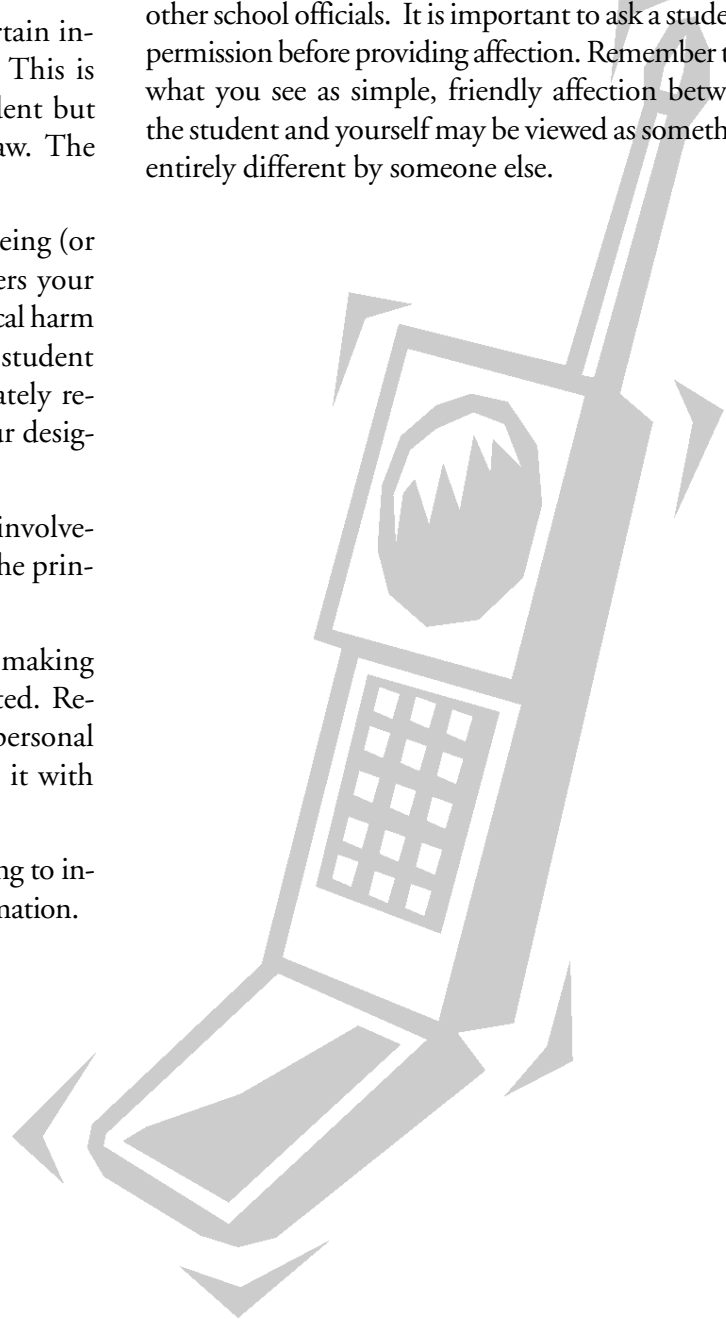
You are required, by law, to pass on certain information to the principal of the school. This is critical not only to the welfare of the student but also to protect yourself from violating the law. The following information must be reported:

- If your student shares that he/she is being (or has been) physically harmed, or others your student knows are threatened by physical harm (sexual or physical abuse), or if your student threatens suicide, you must immediately relay this to the school principal or your designated contact person.
- If your student tells you of his/her involvement in illegal activity, you must let the principal or designated contact know.

Document the information in detail, making sure to record the date that it was presented. Remember that this information is extremely personal and potentially damaging, so do not share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities.

Let your student know when you are going to involve another adult before you pass on information.

You are encouraged to be a positive role model. However, physical contact with your student should be limited to holding a hand, giving a soft pat on the back, or the sharing of a hug in full view of other school officials. It is important to ask a student's permission before providing affection. Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between the student and yourself may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.







# The Mentoring Relationship

## Developing rapport & building trust

Building trust takes weeks, sometimes months. One of the best ways to build trust is to help your mentee quickly accomplish something tangible that is important to him/her. For example, assist your mentee in following up on an interest, getting involved in a club, or meeting someone important in a career field of interest.

Testing may occur, particularly when mentees are from unstable backgrounds where adults have repeatedly disappointed them. Testing is a form of protection from further disappointment.

Your mentee may come from a family where nothing can be taken for granted:

- People living in the household come and go.
- Frequent moves occur during the course of a year.
- The phone may be turned on and off.
- Food may be unavailable at times.

**Mentees may be slow to give their trust. Perhaps based on past experience with other adults, mentees expect inconsistency and lack of commitment.**

During the testing period, mentors can expect:

- Missed appointments.
- Unreturned phone calls.
- Unreasonable requests.
- Angry or sullen behavior.

## What can mentors do?

- Predictability builds trust, so be consistent.
- Be on time for arranged meetings.
- Bring promised information and materials.
- Follow through on agreements and arrangements with your mentee.

Once trust has been established, you may experience:

- More productive visits.
- Better communication.
- Fun and humor.
- A sense that you are building a lasting relationship.
- A sense you are making a difference in your mentee's life.

## Not all mentoring relationships proceed smoothly.

When things are not working, you must explore these issues:

- The fit or match may not be right.
- Your mentee may have been so disappointed and damaged by earlier experiences that he/she is unable to risk taking advantage of a helping relationship.
- Some mentor pairs will get stuck in the testing stage.
- You may feel burdened by the relationship and frustrated by the youth's behaviors.

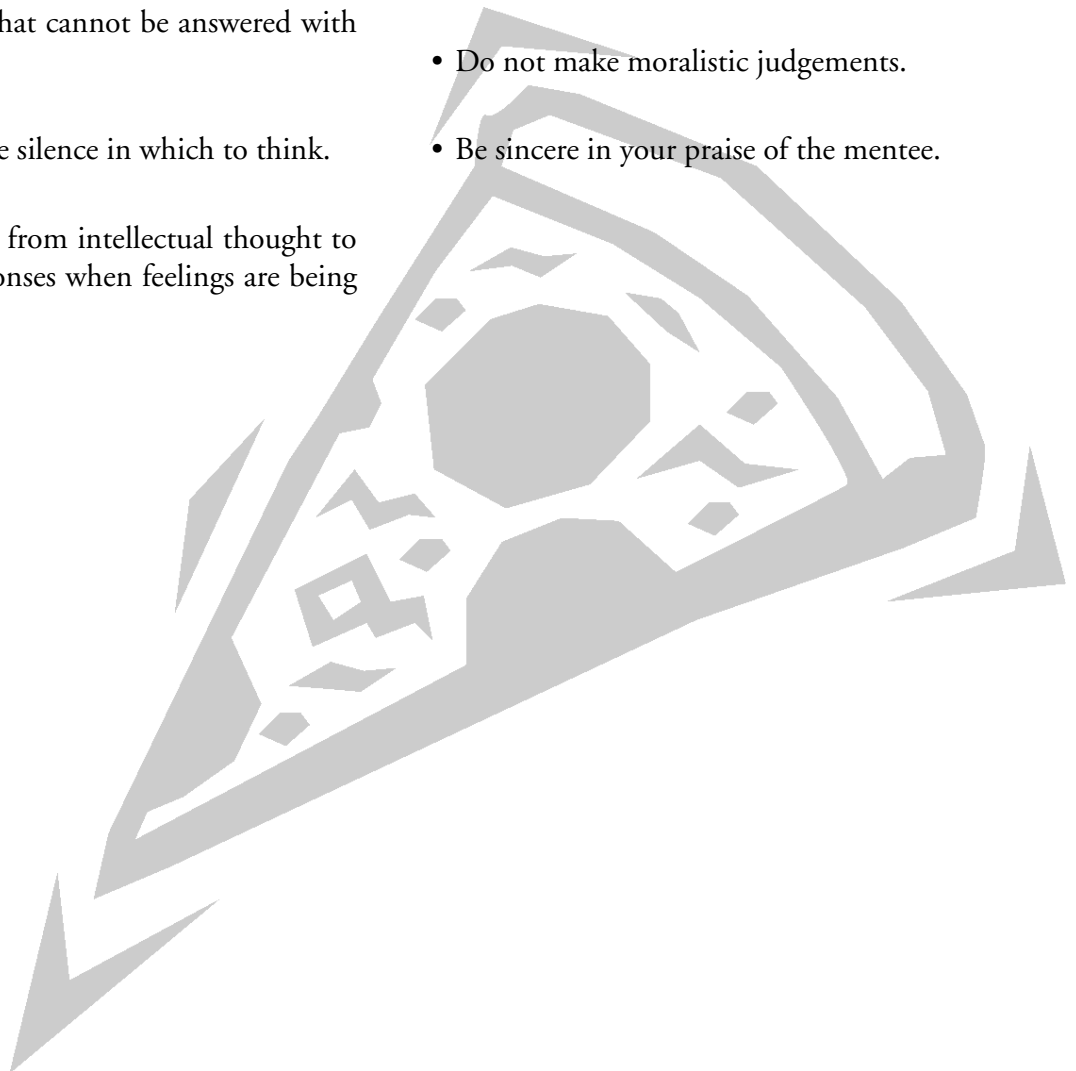
As a mentor, it is imperative that you share your experiences with and receive support from:

- Staff of your mentoring program.
- Other mentors.
- Resource persons and reference materials.



# Tips for Mentor-Mentee Relationships

- Put your mentee first.
- Approach your mentee on a basis of mutual respect.
- Take time to get to know your mentee.
- Try to have a positive influence on your mentee.
- Drop the authoritative role.
- Be yourself.
- Listen, listen, and listen more!
- Ask questions that cannot be answered with “yes” or “no.”
- Give the mentee silence in which to think.
- Move the focus from intellectual thought to emotional responses when feelings are being discussed.
- Observe and interpret nonverbal clues.
- Be alert to changes in the rate of speech, the volume of speech, or the pitch or tone of voice.
- Don't give lectures on ways to behave.
- Share common experiences with your mentee.
- Clarify and interpret what the mentee is saying.
- Do not be alarmed at remarks made by the mentee.
- Do not make false promises or reassure the mentee that things will be all right.
- Do not make moralistic judgements.
- Be sincere in your praise of the mentee.





# E-Mentoring

Using e-mail correspondence to mentor students is becoming increasingly popular, especially in rural areas. E-mentors are required to participate in the same screening process as other mentors (applications, references, training) and to build relationships with their students through written communication.

## E-mentor expectations

- Mentors will fill out a mentor application and provide three references.
- Mentors will participate in training prior to working with students and will receive ongoing support from the program.
- Mentors and students will exchange weekly e-mails.
- Mentors will maintain a professional tone in all communication with students.
- Mentors will respond within 24 hours to students' messages.
- Mentors will take the initiative to resolve all communication problems promptly and seek out support when necessary.
- Mentors will commit to their students for a specified period of time (agreed upon during training).
- Mentors will keep student e-mails confidential (unless safety issues are involved).
- Mentors will participate in at least one initial face-to-face meeting with students.
- Mentors will keep track of their correspondence with students.
- Mentors will participate in a group closure activity at the end of the academic year.
- Mentors will participate in program evaluation at the end of the academic year.

## Parameters & boundaries

- Do not exchange addresses or phone numbers or meet with your student without first discussing it with your VSAC mentor coordinator. (Parent permission is required.)
- Address any issues that arise promptly; speak with your VSAC mentor coordinator for advice.
- Maintain consistent contact with your VSAC mentor coordinator via e-mail, voice mail, or through support meetings and trainings.

## Remember the goals

- Establish a positive relationship.
- Help students develop life skills.
- Assist students in obtaining resources.
- Increase students' abilities to interact with other social and cultural groups.

## E-mentoring suggestions

- Learn about your student by asking open-ended questions and through dialogue. Be aware that it could take time for your student to become comfortable with the medium. For some, it is their first experience with e-mail.
- Provide some technology tips (how to send a file, print an e-mail, perform a Web search).
- Provide tips on how to develop good study habits.
- Share your experiences with applying to colleges. How did you choose? What were some of your considerations?
- Share career interests or your career path.
- Encourage students to share poetry, essays, or short stories they've written.
- Assist students with subjects they might be struggling with in school.
- Exchange opinions on popular movies.
- Exchange thoughts on current events.



# Terminating Relationships

When the time comes to end your mentoring relationship, it must be done carefully and thoughtfully. The way the relationship ends can shape what your mentee thinks about and learns from the experience. Keep the following in mind when you approach the end of your formal mentoring relationship:

- Terminating the mentor/mentee relationship may recall the ending of other important relationships in participants' lives.
- It must take place gradually.
- Terminations sometimes include grieving, depending on the relationship.
- It can be a time for growth; you can work to regard the situation as a "graduation" rather than a loss.

While working with your student on termination issues, please use the following guidelines:

- Be clear about the date of your last meeting and be sure to inform your mentee of this ahead of time.
- Be honest, candid, and supportive, regardless of the reason for the termination. Encourage open discussions about feelings associated with this transition.
- Be prepared for your mentee's anger or denial (often in the form of missed appointments); help him/her anticipate these feelings.
- Be aware of and monitor your own feelings of guilt, sadness, relief, etc.
- Use the termination process as a means to recall your mentee's strengths and progress. Reassure your student about your confidence in him/her.
- Plan a fun activity together.
- Mutually agree on how and when you will stay in touch.
- Follow through on that commitment.
- Don't make promises that you cannot keep.

Source: *Mentoring Manual: A Guide to Program Development and Implementation*. The Abell Foundation, Inc., Baltimore, MD.





# The Students We Are Mentoring



# Diversity and Mentoring

One of the most critical training needs for mentors is help in dealing with diversity. Some mentors use the term “culture shock” to describe their initial lack of familiarity with or understanding of the world in which their students live. It is normal to feel a certain amount of apprehension when meeting someone for the first time. Add to that a significant difference in age, socioeconomic status, and/or racial and ethnic background, and it’s easy to see why this is such an important issue for mentors.

## Toward a broad definition of cultural diversity

Many programs prefer to match mentors with students who come from similar racial or socioeconomic backgrounds, but often this is not possible. Mentors may be matched with youth whose backgrounds and lifestyles are very different to theirs.

Culture is more than race or ethnicity. It encompasses values, lifestyles, and social norms, including such things as communication styles, mannerisms, ways of dressing, family structures, traditions, views of time, and responses to authority. These differences may be associated with age, religion, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background. When mentors lack understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, they may become judgmental and thereby undermine the chance to develop a trusting relationship.

Knowledge is the key to understanding. There are different types of diversity issues, and each has the potential to cause misunderstanding. However, you can’t learn cultural understanding just from a textbook. Talk to your student about his/her background and ancestry, about what life is like at school or home or with friends. Find out why your student does and says certain things. Your program director, other mentors, friends, and co-workers may have insights into cultural differences.

As you begin to learn and understand more about your student, you will be less likely to make negative value judgments. The following examples may help you to explore the cultural context in which your student lives.

## Ethnic diversity

If your student comes from a different ethnic background, learn about the values and traditions of that culture. This could include the role of authority and family, communication styles, perspectives on time, ways of dealing with conflict, and marriage traditions, among other things. It is your task as a mentor to learn about ethnic diversity from your student, from your observations, and from discussions with program staff so you can better understand the context of your student’s attitudes and behavior.

## Socioeconomic diversity

Mentors and their students might come from very different socioeconomic backgrounds. The mentor may have grown up on a farm, while the student has never been outside the city. The mentor may own a house, while the student may not know anyone who owns a car, let alone a house. A student’s family may move frequently, perhaps every few months. A student may have to share a very small apartment with many people. A mentor must learn that many things he or she takes for granted are not necessarily common for the student. These types of cultural differences are commonplace; appreciating their significance takes time and understanding.

Chronic poverty can have negative psychological effects, such as stress and depression. Some students may develop a “culture of survival.” One mentor talks about how her student, who comes from a very poor family, spends huge sums of money on what appear

to be frivolous things, like a \$100 pair of jeans. Poverty often prevents people from believing their future will be better. Thus, they have no motivation to save for the future. It becomes realistic to believe in “taking what you can while you can get it.”

## Youth culture

Many adolescent characteristics are normal developmental traits and don't vary significantly from one generation to the next. Rebellion, for example, is common, although it may be expressed differently from generation to generation. As teenagers, most of us dressed very differently – perhaps even outrageously – by our parents' and grandparents' standards. We did things our parents didn't do; we talked differently.

Take the time to remember what it was like to be your student's age. Think about the following questions:

When you were in your student's grade:

- What was a typical day like?
- What was really important to you?
- What were your parents like? Did you get along? Were you close?
- Were friendships always easy or were they sometimes hard?
- In general, did you feel as though adults typically understood you well?

At the same time, it is important to remember that some things do change dramatically from one generation to the next:

- There may be significantly more alcohol and drug abuse today than when you were growing up.
- Sexually transmitted diseases are more common and, in some cases, more dangerous today.
- Crime and violence have dramatically increased, particularly in urban areas.

- Guns are widely available and everywhere in the population.
- Violence in the media and in “games” is commonplace.
- Single parent families have become more common, while greater demands are being placed on all families.

One mentor talks with his student about school dances, which, for the mentor, brings up fond memories of music, dancing, and fun. For the student, school dances were dangerous events in which fights, or even gunfire, were a common occurrence. It's important to understand the context of your student's life so you can understand the issues he/she is facing.

## Dealing with diversity

**Remember that you are the adult – the experienced one.** Imagine what your student must be thinking and feeling. In general, young people of all ages, but particularly teens, believe they are not respected by adults and worry about whether a mentor will like them or think they're stupid. They are coming to you for help and may already feel insecure and embarrassed about the problems in their lives. It is your responsibility to take the initiative and make the student feel more comfortable in the relationship.

**Remember to be yourself.** Sometimes, with the best of intentions, we try to “relate” to young people by using their slang, etc. Students can see through this and may find it difficult to trust people who are not true to themselves.

**You may learn a lot about another culture, lifestyle, or age group – but you will never be from that group.** Don't over-identify with your student. Your student realizes you will never know exactly what she/he is feeling or experiencing. Your student may actually feel invalidated by your insistence that you “truly know where she or he is coming from.”

Source: Adapted with permission from material in *Mentor Training Curriculum*. 1991. National Mentoring Working Group, convened and staffed by the National Mentoring Partnership and United Way of America. Originally appeared in *Guidebook for Milestones in Mentoring*. 1990. The PLUS Project on Mentoring, National Media Outreach Center, QED Communications, Inc.

## Cultural sensitivity

“Culture,” in its broadest sense, is the underlying fabric that holds a person’s world together – or just about everything that binds one to a particular group and place in time. This includes language, values, beliefs, customs, rituals, oral and written history, art, music, dance, food, and much more.

**Cultural Sensitivity** refers to an attitude of respect, openness, and acceptance, whatever the culture. All truly supportive relationships are built on a sense of trust and safety, which comes from being appreciated the way we are. Therefore, our primary job as mentors is to honor the inherent worth that each child brings into the world and to respect students’ special cultural backgrounds. Some reminders:

- Honestly examine your own mind for prejudices and stereotypes. Almost all of us have learned some.
- Think about where your biases come from and try to see them as learned misinformation.
- Make a personal commitment to be culturally sensitive as a mentor.
- See your student, first and foremost, as a unique and valuable person.
- Approach cultural differences as an opportunity for learning.

Source: Adapted with permission from *Everyday Heroes: A Guidebook for Mentors*, pg. 23. 1998. Jim Kavanaugh. Wise Men & Women Mentorship Program. “Los Sabios,” and Injury Prevention and Emergency Medical Services Bureau, Public Health Division, New Mexico Department of Health.

## Being an effective ally

- Within and between groups, we are all different. That should be both understood and celebrated.
- We all are capable of being effective allies for people from groups other than our own.
- You are critical in fighting for your own and other people’s freedom from oppression.
- Apparent rejection of your offer(s) to be an ally to another group frequently stems from larger social issues, and not your specific offer.
- Allow for, and be patient about, differences in communication styles between your own and other groups.
- Understand that people are the experts on their own life experiences. This doesn’t mean you can’t understand their experiences or use your own to find solutions, but they know their own experiences and environment better than you do.
- Whenever possible, actively seek to understand the oppression experienced by members of other groups.
- Appreciate and, when appropriate, help others take pride in the history of their own group.
- In your quest for better understanding, allow for and learn from disagreements. Do not allow this process to prevent or inhibit you from being an effective ally. Remember: Your intent and the outcome you receive don’t always match.
- Language and behaviors that are comfortable for you are often cultural. Understand that what may be comfortable for you may not be for people from different groups.

## Concluding thoughts

The important point is that we can be allies for each other in spite of our differences. Becoming allies moves us beyond description and stereotyping. Taking action in support of others, and being supported in return, is essential to making positive change within a diverse community.

**Source:** *Diversity in Action* (pg. 127) by Sharon Chappelle & Lisa Bigman. Printed by permission by Project Adventure.

# Adolescent Development

It is important as mentors to value your mentees and to understand what they might be going through, based on their age and history. Remember that each individual is unique and develops at a different rate. Also, adolescent development is greatly influenced by environmental factors, such as home-life and societal pressures.

## Our mentees:

- are wonderful and loving.
- want to believe in themselves.
- are adventuresome.
- are skeptical about adult relationships.
- experiment with styles of behaving and dressing.
- think they are invulnerable.
- are testing limits and boundaries.
- want to be independent but, in spite of what they say, need responsible adults more than ever.

## Most of all they:

- are special.
- need love, support, understanding, and affirmation.
- will never be this age again.

We ought to make the most of this time—for them and for ourselves.

As mentors, it is important to understand mentees' developmental tasks.

Adolescence is a time for rapid growth and change and is characterized by three stages:

- Early adolescence (age 10-14).
- Middle adolescence (age 14-17).
- Late adolescence (age 18-21).

## Cognitive & psychosocial development

### Early adolescence

- Thinking is characterized in concrete terms. If a student is asked, "What brought you here today?", he/she might answer, "the bus."
- Young teens understand events or problems in terms of their own experiences. Hypothetical situations may be difficult for them to comprehend.
- Self-consciousness peaks, rendering young teens particularly vulnerable to criticism and opinions of others.



- Young teens are beginning to separate from adults and develop their own identities.
- Their bodies are changing and sexual organs are beginning to develop. This may lead to anxiety and heightened sexual curiosity and may fuel self-consciousness. ("Am I too developed or not developed enough?")
- Peer relationships are of utmost importance. There is commonly great concern about what peers think and about being accepted by the group.

## Middle adolescence

- These students exhibit an increasing ability to think and plan ahead (abstract thought).
- They increasingly see the relation between present action and future consequences.
- They have a stronger need for independence, which may or may not cause family conflict.
- They may reject family values and explore unique interests.
- Hormones are quite active. Sexual experimentation may intensify.
- Peer group remains extremely important. Friends may be used more for advice and feedback (maturing relationships).

## Late adolescence

- The older adolescent better understands and incorporates abstract thinking.
- Older teens are often more settled in their identities and comfortable with their independence.
- Older teens can listen to parental or adult advice while making their own decisions.
- Family tensions often decrease at this time and there may be a return to family values.
- Relationships (both sexual and non-sexual) may become more intimate.
- Peer groups continue to be important, but the young person can often better evaluate peer influences and opinions.

Source: *The Two of Us: A Handbook for Mentors*. The Abell Foundation, Inc., Baltimore, MD.



# Adolescent Issues and Needs

There are specific issues that many young people face in adolescence. All teenagers experience peer pressure and intensifying sexuality as part of normal adolescent development. However, some may engage in risky and self-destructive behavior. While mentoring programs are not designed as intervention programs, they can help young people make appropriate decisions or seek professional help when necessary. The following illustrates some common adolescent issues and how a mentor might help:

## Peer pressure

Adolescence is a time of socialization. Teens often look to their peers for approval and to affirm who and what they are. A strong identity and high self esteem are essential for teens to be able to make sound and healthy decisions about their lives, especially when their peer groups may support unhealthy or destructive behaviors. Mentors, as role models, can help equip adolescents with decision-making skills so that young people can learn to be responsible for their decisions. Mentors can affirm positive decisions and point out their students' successes.

## Emerging sexuality

Physical development, socialization and popular culture make sexuality an important issue for adolescents in our society. In the age of high teen pregnancy rates and sexually transmitted diseases, early sex education is essential. Young people in need of self-esteem, emotional support, or intimacy may seek out sexual relationships to fulfill those needs. Effective education on sexual issues should include skills for making decisions, goal setting, setting limits for relationships, fulfilling emotional needs without sex, and taking responsibility for decisions and their consequences. Mentors can model healthy and appropriate boundaries.

## Gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gender & questioning youth

Growing up is a demanding and challenging task for any adolescent, but it can be even more so for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (GLBTQ) youth due to the social stigma they often encounter. Gay and lesbian youth are two to three times more likely than other students to attempt suicide and also are at increased risk for depression, alcohol and drug use, and sexually transmitted diseases. In order to be perceived as an ally, the mentor should be free of judgment and assumptions. GLBTQ students need to feel very safe and to have a trusting relationship with mentors before they even consider disclosing their sexual orientation. Be aware that gay and lesbian students may:

- feel different from their peers.
- feel guilty about their sexual orientation.
- worry about the response from their families and loved ones.
- be teased or ridiculed by peers.
- fear discrimination when joining clubs or sports teams, or seeking admission to college or employment.

## Substance abuse

Peer pressure, family history, and popular culture can all contribute to a young person's experimentation with alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Encouraging adolescents to discuss and ask questions about alcohol and drugs is an important step toward engaging their trust and allowing them to educate themselves regarding substance abuse. Your role as a mentor is to inform them about the issues relating to substance use and abuse. Remember that a mentoring program is not an intervention service. Please notify your school contact person if you suspect a problem with drug or alcohol abuse.

## Child abuse & family violence

Obviously, physical abuse is extremely detrimental to an adolescent's development. A student may become withdrawn and may turn to peers and away from adults for support – no matter how well-meaning adults are. An adolescent may recreate a family history of violence or abuse in other relationships, thus continuing a cycle of self-hatred, shame, and suspicion of others. These issues require professional help, and mentors should contact their program coordinator without breaking the student's trust in the mentor. A mentor may need to say: "I'm concerned about your well being (or the well being of another) and I have to report what is happening to your principal."

## Depression & suicide

Depression and suicide are often related to one or more of the above issues, compounded by a young person's inability to find answers to serious questions or emotional support for difficult problems. It is important to acknowledge the seriousness and difficulty an adolescent might be experiencing. Mentors should contact program coordinators immediately for referrals, with the adolescent's knowledge. In addition to seeking professional help, mentors can listen, provide resources and help the student to use them, and provide the student with a support system.

## Families & communities under stress

We speak of young people being "at risk" for pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, failure in school, and myriad other social problems. Many mentoring programs are initiated to respond to problems that result from people, families, and communities being under stress. How can a mentor assist a young person who faces these problems? What is the role of the mentor in these situations, especially when the situation is very unfamiliar to the mentor?

## Be knowledgeable

Be aware of the environment in which your mentee lives. Try to begin to understand the special stresses he/she may face and how these stresses may potentially affect different aspects of your mentee's life: home, school, aspirations, friendships, and behavior.

- Academics
- Health
- Home environment
- Neighborhood environment

## Don't judge

Don't limit your mentee based on his/her environment, peer group, or physical appearance.

## Find the strengths

Identify your mentee's strengths and those of his/her family and community. Do everything you can to help your mentee see and believe in these strengths; build on them. For example, your mentee's immediate family may be in turmoil, but there are often one or more very positive, stable role models in the extended family, perhaps an uncle or grandparent.

## Teach life skills

- **Help** your mentee learn as much as possible about the world and his/her own potential to continue learning and growing long after you are gone.
- **Advocate** for your mentee in school, in your mentoring program, in the community, and even at home when appropriate.
- **Find positive role models** next door or in the next town.
- **Support** your mentee all the way.

SOURCE: Reprinted with permission from the Abell Foundation, Inc., Baltimore, MD.

# Signs that an Adolescent Needs Outside Help

## Suicide:

- Giving away possessions.
- Making a will.
- Talking about death and dying.
- Prolonged depression.
- Saying the 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 the breath.
- Sleeping a lot.

## Physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, 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 warning signs:

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

Source: Reprinted with permission from Abell Foundation, Inc., Baltimore, MD.

Your role as a mentor is an important one. Your advice and guidance can help teens make healthy and productive decisions.



# What is Self-Esteem?

Self-esteem begins to develop in infancy and is shaped by the feedback children receive from parents and other significant people in their lives.

Some believe that self-esteem is the single most important element in young people's lives. It affects everything they do.

## Young people with high self-esteem:

- are physically healthier.
- are more motivated to learn.
- get along better with others.

## Young people with positive self-esteem are more willing to:

- tap into their creativity and risk expressing it.
- approach life with energy, enthusiasm, and curiosity.
- stretch themselves to reach their full potential.

## Positive self-esteem facilitates:

- self-confidence.
- self-direction.
- self-reliance.
- responsibility.

## How can a mentor help?

- Listen to and acknowledge your mentee's thoughts and feelings.
- Let your mentee experience success no matter how small.
- Show your mentee he/she is loveable and capable.
- Model your own healthy self-esteem.
- Treat your mentee as an individual.
- Help your mentee understand that although you may dislike a specific behavior, you do not disapprove of him/her as an individual.
- Recognize and value cultural diversity.
- If your mentee fails in an endeavor, help him/her understand that there are many ways in which he/she has been successful.
- Teach your mentee that he/she can turn failure into success by trying again.
- Encourage your mentee each time you are together. Identify and acknowledge his/her strengths.
- Identify the problem or symptoms.
- Seek help from the family, your program or a community service.
- Advocate to make sure your mentee continues to receive the help he/she needs.
- Support your mentee through the hard times.

Source: *Mentoring Manual: A Guide to Program Development and Implementation*. The Abell Foundation, Inc., Baltimore, MD.



# Tips for Effective Communication

How you communicate with your student will greatly affect your relationship. It is important that you be yourself, not talk down to your student, and listen attentively. Listening is the most essential component of communication. Here are some common points regarding effective listening skills:

- Pay attention to the speaker. Do not look off, shuffle through papers, or merely pretend that you hear what is being said. The listener will know.
- Don't think ahead to what you are going to say (ignoring the speaker while rehearsing your own comments).
- Do not interrupt.
- Listen for feelings underneath the words.
- Keep an open mind; don't judge immediately.
- Ask for clarification if you're unsure of the speaker's intent.
- Check in with the speaker to be sure you are following him/her by paraphrasing what you heard.

When responding to your mentee, be sure to:

- Be honest in what you say.
- Speak for yourself using "I" statements instead of "you" statements. "I" statements are more honest and clear and less blaming than "you" statements.
- Be open and objective. Do not judge what your student is saying or try to change what he/she is feeling. Just listen and try to understand.







# Guidelines for Goal Setting

One of the most important areas in which the mentor can assist the student is in setting short- and long-term individual goals. There are several things to consider:

- Before attempting goal-setting, spend time with your student to establish a relationship of trust and confidentiality.
- Involve your student in setting goals. With your guidance, your student must articulate each goal. It must be his/her goal, not yours.
- A short-term goal that your student can immediately achieve is a good starting point. (A short-term goal could be to complete all math homework assignments for the next week.)
- Goals must be specific and measurable. (Joe will complete and turn in all math assignments for the next week.)
- To assure meeting the goal, have your student make a commitment to you to carry out the goal (a handshake, a written agreement, etc.).

If your student fails to achieve his/her goal, the following points should be examined:

- The goal may have been too difficult.
- The goal may have been developed without the active involvement and commitment of the student.
- The student may be fearful of achieving a goal. Many “at-risk” students believe themselves to be “losers” and become accustomed to making poor choices, which reinforces their negative self-image.

A long-term goal may need to be articulated before a short-term goal can be explored with a student. A student may not see the need to work toward a short-term goal unless the student sees the relationship of the short-term goal to a long-term goal. (Graduating from high school may be the motivating factor to help a student work toward short-term goals, such as completing homework, attending classes regularly, etc.)

Remember, a goal should be:

- conceivable.
- believable.
- achievable.
- controllable.
- measurable.
- desirable.
- stated with no alternative.
- growth-facilitating.

**Source:** Reprinted with permission from *Vermont Initiative for Mentoring Training Manual*, Vermont Business/Education Partnership, program of Vermont Chamber of Commerce.



# Sample Activities



# My Goals

## I. Academic Goals

My goal is:

I will do these activities to reach my goal:

I will know I have reached my goal when:

## II. Personal Goals

My goal is:

I will do these activities to reach my goal:

I will know I have reached my goal when:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Mentor)

Date this plan is made \_\_\_\_\_



# Topics and Ideas for the School Visit

1. Set your mentoring goals.
2. Tackle some homework.
3. Make popcorn and talk.
4. Shoot some hoops.
5. Go to the library.
6. Just hang out.
7. Learn about pop music.
8. Talk about life.
9. Talk about your very first job.
10. Talk about planning a career.
11. Use career planning software.
12. Get together with friends.
13. Do a college search on the computer.
14. Have your friends talk about their lives.
15. Sit in on some classes.
16. Work on applications together.
17. Explore financial aid options.
18. Work on a resume.
19. Talk about dressing for success.
20. Do a pretend job interview.
21. Explore another culture.
22. Talk about where to look for a job.
23. Find a summer job.
24. Talk about health and wellness.
25. Set up a work internship.
26. Talk about networking.
27. Talk about what it takes to get ahead.
28. Talk about health insurance.
29. Talk about taxes.
30. Talk about balancing work and life.
31. Talk about balancing a checkbook.
32. Talk about balancing a budget.
33. Talk about living within one's means.
34. Talk about credit cards.
35. Plan a week's work of meals.
36. Do a craft.
37. Talk about current events.
38. Talk about voting.
39. Talk about volunteering.







# Career Scrapbook

## Goal:

To encourage your mentee to think about future career choices.

## Materials:

Magazines, paper, glue or paste, stapler.

## What to do:

- Help your mentee create a career scrapbook that includes pictures cut from magazines showing people working at various jobs.
- Divide the scrapbook into sections such as:
  - careers that interest your mentee.
  - careers your mentee did not know about or that are unusual.
  - pictures that show men and women in non-traditional roles.
- Add to the scrapbook as you and your mentee find new career pictures.

## Follow-up:

- Use other activities in this section to explore the details of the careers your mentee has identified.



# Reading the Sunday Paper

## Goal:

To become accustomed to, and to enjoy, reading the newspaper.

## Materials:

The Sunday newspaper.

## What to do:

- In many mentoring programs, the mentor and the mentee spend time together on Sunday afternoons. You and your mentee could begin this time together by reading sections of the newspaper. Your mentee might like a certain comic strip or the sports, business, or style section.
- If you are discussing careers and employment opportunities, read the employment section.

## Follow-up:

- Create your own comic strip.
- Write an article about a professional sports activity.
- Write a letter to the editor on a topic about which your mentee feels strongly.
- Compare a news story you saw on television to a newspaper article on the same story.
- Discuss careers related to the newspaper industry. Visit your local newspaper with your mentee and a group of mentoring pairs from your mentoring program.



## Everyday mentoring:

- Read the newspaper together every time you meet.
- Use the newspaper to select movies or to discover current events in your community. Explore other ways that the newspaper is a resource to you and your mentee.



# Future Fantasy

## Instructions:

Tell the students that you are going to ask them a series of questions about their future lives. They may dream or they may be realistic as they picture the answers.

## Process:

Ask students to share parts of their fantasies. Point out answers that reveal abilities, interests, values, and personalities.

## Script:

You are going to describe a typical day in your future life. Feel free to dream and picture your ideal situation. Relax and enjoy yourself. This is what *you* want in your future!

- First of all, this is a workday. What time do you get up?
- What kind of clothes are you putting on for work?
- What do your living quarters look like?
- Do you live alone or with someone? Are you married? If so, do you have children?
- How do you get to work? If you drive, what kind of car do you have?
- What are the surroundings like on your way to work?
- Now that you have gotten to work, what does your place of employment look like?
- How many people are there, if any?
- Are you supervising others? Are you being supervised?
- What do you do?
- Do you enjoy your work?
- What activities are you involved in outside of work?
- Ten years beyond this future fantasy, how will your life be different?





# Many (But Not All) of Your Transferable Skills And Personal Traits

Circle all of the skills and traits that you think you have.  
Don't be modest!

My Personal Traits: *I am...*

honest	logical	alert
friendly	creative	flexible
independent	imaginative	compassionate
aggressive	cheerful	courteous
trustworthy	athletic	sympathetic
dependable	graceful	understanding
reliable	respectful	generous
neat/tidy	self-disciplined	conscientious
organized	humorous	punctual
expressive	capable	confident
intelligent	responsible	intuitive
considerate	concise	tolerant
life of the party	articulate	careful

My Transferable Skills: *I am good at...*

persuading	speaking	questioning
organizing	starting	reading
gathering	creating	memorizing
operating	analyzing	making
driving	arranging	reciting
ordering	socializing	meeting
planning	developing	observing
preparing	deciding	completing
entertaining	enjoying	following
fixing	drawing	inventing
communicating	shaping	interviewing
coordinating	sharing	understanding
leading	singing	sorting
learning	taking instructions	showing
remembering	giving instructions	thinking
representing	accommodating	solving

Other skills not listed above:





# Adjective Checklist – Holland's Personality Types

## Self Evaluation:

Underline each word that *you* feel describes an aspect of your personality. There is no limit to the number of adjectives you may underline just as there is no limit to the number of aspects of any one person's personality.

- |                  |                   |                      |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. shy           | 21. complicated   | 41. self-confident   |
| 2. conforming    | 22. imaginative   | 42. optimistic       |
| 3. direct        | 23. impulsive     | 43. ambitious        |
| 4. persistent    | 24. intuitive     | 44. talkative        |
| 5. practical     | 25. original      | 45. pleasure-seeking |
| 6. thrifty       | 26. nonconforming | 46. domineering      |
| 7. aloof         | 27. emotional     | 47. extroverted      |
| 8. materialistic | 28. unorganized   | 48. spontaneous      |
| 9. steady        | 29. moody         | 49. conscientious    |
| 10. genuine      | 30. cooperative   | 50. efficient        |
| 11. analytical   | 31. kind          | 51. orderly          |
| 12. critical     | 32. generous      | 52. calm             |
| 13. curious      | 33. friendly      | 53. obedient         |
| 14. independent  | 34. insightful    | 54. self-controlled  |
| 15. intellectual | 35. persuasive    | 55. structured       |
| 16. passive      | 36. responsible   | 56. conforming       |
| 17. methodical   | 37. tactful       | 57. persistent       |
| 18. precise      | 38. understanding | 58. practical        |
| 19. reserved     | 39. helpful       |                      |
| 20. cautious     | 40. energetic     |                      |

## Instructions:

1. Divide list into groups of 10 (1-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40, etc.).
2. Count the number of words underlined in each group.
3. Identify the personality types that most describe you by using the scale on the following page. ②

## Scale:

1-10	Realistic
11-20	Investigative
21-30	Artistic
31-40	Social
41-50	Enterprising
51-58	Conventional

## Process Questions:

1. Discuss surprises/patterns that emerge as a result of identifying a personality type.
2. How could this information have an effect on future career decision-making in your life?
3. Look at the competencies listed for your personality type. Do you notice any barriers? How could they be overcome?
4. How might this information affect your personal life? Are there activities that you might pursue as an avocation?

# Interest Inventory

What you know about and what you're interested in may surprise you. Fill out this page to find out more about the real you.

1. If I could have any kind of pet, I would have a \_\_\_\_\_
2. The best movie I ever saw was \_\_\_\_\_
3. On Saturdays I like to \_\_\_\_\_
4. If I could be anyone for a day, I would like to be \_\_\_\_\_
5. My favorite book character is \_\_\_\_\_
6. I like to draw \_\_\_\_\_
7. When I grow up, I want to be a \_\_\_\_\_
8. My two favorite television shows are \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_
9. When it rains, I \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. I like to collect \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
11. I like learning about \_\_\_\_\_
12. I often wonder about \_\_\_\_\_
13. If I had three wishes, I would wish for \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
14. I have always wanted to visit \_\_\_\_\_
15. The two toys I like best are \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_
16. Three of my favorite foods are \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_



# Ideas for Different Grade Levels

*There are times when your student will say,*

*I have absolutely no work for today!*

*Ah ha, do not fret, your needs will be met*

*I have come prepared for your stay!*

The following activities are arranged from easier to more challenging:

## Word-by-Word Studies

Start off with a word such as “once.” Have your student add the next word, repeating your word: “Once I.” Continue going back and forth until you have completed a sentence. If the student is young, just make sentences. For older students, build on each sentence to make a complete story.

## Fill in the Ending

Read, tell, or make up three or four lines of a story, but omit the ending. Have your student supply the ending. **Example:** “*Winston was a very big dog. He was very kind, but everyone was afraid of him. Winston had no friends. But one day...*”

## My Book

Staple sheets of paper together, or, if you prefer, use a notebook. Decide with the student on the title, and have the student decorate the cover. Inside, the student can paste pictures cut from a magazine and write a word or phrase that tells about the picture, or write new vocabulary words and draw a picture to illustrate each one.

## Pen Pal

Write a letter with your student to another student, a relative, or a friend. (Have the younger student dictate to you.) Provide stamps.

## Word Choices

Read a word or phrase aloud and give your student a choice of three words, from which he/she must pick the two that best describe it. **Example:** *Which words best describe the beach? Sand? Water? Cold?*

## Opposites

Make a list of words that have antonyms/opposites. Have your student write the antonym and define it for you.

## Pairs

Write several sentences using a pair of words. Leave out the second word of the pair. On the side, list, in mixed order, all of the omitted words. Have your student match up the missing words with their sentences. **Examples:**

*I must wash my hands and \_\_\_\_\_. socks*

*I bought new shoes and \_\_\_\_\_. face*

## Groups

Make several lists of four or five words each. In each group, make all the words related, except one. Have your student find the unrelated word. **Examples:** *dog, cat, bird, hamster, skunk; or, Bush, Kennedy, Lincoln, Schwarzkopf, Washington.*

## Read Aloud

Have your student read a short story to you. Ask questions to be certain he/she comprehends what was read. If there are difficult words, help the student figure out their meaning, either by sentence content or with a dictionary.

## Library

Have your student learn how to use the library for pleasure, reference or schoolwork. For the younger child, ask the school librarian to suggest appropriate books to read with/to your student.

## Role-Reversal

Have your student be the “teacher,” asking you questions about something you have just read together or leading a discussion about a current event.

## Twenty Questions

Write down the name of a hobby, job, and so on, and have your student guess – in 20 questions – what it is. Take turns being the “guesser.”

## Newspaper/TV Specials

Read articles or watch TV shows and discuss such issues as impact, values, and reality versus fiction. Read the classified ads and discuss what skills are needed for the advertised jobs, what the ad is really looking for, how to apply, how to write a resume, and so on.

## Letter Writing

Write (and send) a letter regarding a specific topic of interest to your student. Discuss how to format a business letter and how to write a good letter. Provide stamps.

## Free Catalogs/Information

Everyone loves to get mail. Send away for free things. Catalogs that relate to an interest, career option, or college selection can broaden horizons and possibilities.

## Write a Star

Encourage your student to write to a famous person, a favorite singer or an important figure. Show how to find the person’s proper title and address (library, related magazines, and so on).

## Write a Politician

Encourage your student to write a local politician on an issue that is important to him or her. Help your student to better understand our political process -- locally, nationally and globally.

## Tape Recorder

Interview each other; tape some of your student’s best-loved stories; recite favorite poems, prose, raps, or nursery rhymes. Hearing their own voices on tape encourages students’ language development and listening skills.

# Who Are You?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Two of my best talents are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

My most prized possession is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Two goals I have for this school year are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Something I am proud of is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Two accomplishments I would like to achieve in my lifetime are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Two important people in my life (other than my parents) are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Three words to describe me are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_





# Understanding Abilities, Interests, Values, Personality

## Activity 1:

Students write down three things or events in their lives that have made them feel good about themselves. How are they similar? What abilities or skills are evident from these events?

## Activity 2:

Students brainstorm ways to develop abilities, such as volunteer work, traveling, trying something new, and job-shadowing.

## Activity 3:

Students are asked to come up with three careers they might be interested in researching based on their own assessment of their values, abilities, personality, and interests.

## Activity 4: "Who you admire" exercise

- List one person from the community whom you admire (parents' friend, teacher, club leader, or relatives).
- Name three personality characteristics they possess and which ones you admire.
- Are they employed in jobs that are compatible with their personalities?
- Which of these personality traits do you possess?



# The “All About Me” Journal

## Goal:

To create a journal or scrapbook that can be a valuable resource for reflection, celebration, and learning.

## Materials:

A loose-leaf binder that includes writing paper, plain paper, and pockets for souvenirs to allow you to add to it as you go along.

## What to do:

- As you and your mentee complete activities, add written work, goals, progress reports, pictures, souvenirs, etc. in the appropriate section of the journal.
- Take the journal with you whenever possible so that your mentee can enter ideas, observations, new vocabulary, etc. while participating in activities.
- Use the journal for the activities in this handbook and for creative writing.
- Look through the journal with your mentee on a regular basis to:
  - review goals and objectives.
  - note progress and personal growth.
  - recall good times.
  - review content.
  - plan follow-up activities.

## Every-day mentoring:

- Encourage your mentee to write in the journal freely and creatively, to express emotions, and to help clarify things.



# This is Your Life: Scrapbook and Photos

## Goal:

To get to know the people and experiences that are important in your mentee's life.

## Materials:

Scrapbook, photo album, or the "All About Me" journal; souvenirs from your mentee's life; photographs or drawings of people in your mentee's life; camera and film.

## What to do:

- Help your mentee create a scrapbook that reflects some of the events in his/her life using photographs or drawings of people in your mentee's life.
- Begin by asking your mentee to collect about 10 pictures or souvenirs he/she has acquired while growing up. If these are not available, have your mentee draw some pictures from magazines or begin taking the pictures now. These pictures and souvenirs will be used to illustrate the scrapbook.
- Take pictures of family, friends, teachers and neighbors, or any other significant people in your mentee's life or from your mentee's past.
- Place the pictures in the scrapbook or photo album. You and your mentee may want to arrange the pictures in a particular order. For instance, pictures may be arranged chronologically according to a particular event, such as a church picnic, or organized to put friends in one section and family in another.
- Help your mentee think of captions to put under each photograph. These captions may be humorous or simply describe what is happening in the picture (for example, "John and I Go Roller Skating").

## Follow-up:

- Have your mentee write, or dictate as you write, a story that relates to the pictures and/or souvenirs.
- Paste the pictures alongside the text of the story that makes reference to them. For instance, if your mentee's story includes recalling the time he/she attended a special event, such as the circus, include a picture or souvenir from that experience near the section of the story about the circus.
- If your mentee has a favorite picture, you may wish to have it framed or enlarged.
  - Visit a photography studio.
  - Interview a photographer about his/her work.
- Have someone draw your mentee's and/or your portrait.
- Take a camera with you on other activities.
- Collect souvenirs from your time together and put them in the scrapbook.

Source: *Megaskills: How Families Can Help Children Succeed in School and Beyond*, Dorothy Rich. Houghton-Mifflin Co., Boston, 1988.



# My Family Tree Poster

## Goal:

To help you and your mentee better understand and appreciate your mentee's family structure.

## Materials:

Markers, poster board, paints, and other selected materials.

## What to do:

- Start by writing your mentee's complete name in the middle of the poster board.
- Draw a circle around your mentee's name if a female and draw a triangle if a male. Follow this pattern of circles for females and triangles for males throughout the poster construction.
- Next, list your mentee's parents directly above his/her name, with the mother's full name in a circle and the father's full name in a triangle.

*Note: Nuclear families are no longer the norm.*

- Draw connecting lines from the parents' names to your mentee's name.
- List your mentee's siblings on the left and the right of her name. Use connecting lines to join the names.
- Follow this basic process for the entire family. Remember to include stepparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, as well as nieces and nephews. If people in your mentee's family are not actually related, include them in the poster also.
- When the family tree poster is completed, you may wish to take it to be printed or laminated.
- In the process of doing this activity with your mentee, you may also want to ask him/her to tell you the names, nicknames, or ages of family members, or one interesting thing about each person included in the poster.





# Whose Decision Is It?

All of us make decisions throughout our lives.  
Think about the decisions you have made in the past or the ones you will make in the future.

Name some decisions that are difficult for you to make.

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Name some important decisions that may change your whole future.

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Name some decisions that affect only yourself.

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Name some decisions that affect other people.

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---

Name some decisions you make by yourself.

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---

Name some decisions you make with other people.

---

---

Name some decisions that someone else makes for you.

---

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Now think about one of your own goals. List some possible action plans.  
Then write as many consequences (both good and bad) as might come from each plan.



# Making a Plan

1. State your goal: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Review obstacles and ways to deal with obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Consider what you need: more information? money? other resource people?  
approval from? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are you willing to do to move toward your goal?

a. Tomorrow I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Next week I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Within six months I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

d. Within the next year I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What might you or others do to sabotage your efforts to reach your goal?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What are some of the implications, good and bad, that might result if you do attain  
your goal? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Structured Journals: Forms of Deliberate Thought

A diary allows for spontaneous accounts of daily events. It is free-flowing, full of “everything.” A structured journal is more demanding and more complex. It is a deliberate reconstruction of experience toward personal and professional growth. The successful journal enables catharsis, integration, self-acceptance, and change. Think of the structured journal as a laboratory in which your task is to discover something useful for yourself and for others.

Hints: Write on a regular basis, sometimes in response to a previous entry and sometimes without re-reading. Use the journal as a working document: Re-read, circle and underline, write in the margins. Different formats for the structured journal are listed below; experiment with several to determine which is most productive given your specific purpose(s).

## Brainstorming journal

Identify a specific theme, conflict, event, word, or image and choose one of the following brainstorming techniques to explore it:

- **Structured free-writing.** Write on the topic non-stop for a specified amount of time.
- **Listing.** List everything that relates to the topic.
- **Questioning.** Write a question about the topic, respond to the question, write a question about the response, respond to that question, etc.
- **Looping.** Write a paragraph about the topic, then “start over” with the topic, returning several times to begin again.
- **Mapping.** Write the topic in the middle of the page and construct relationships with other themes, conflicts, events, words, or images in a tree-like format.

## Research journal

Articulate a specific question related to personal and professional growth and devote an entire journal to that question. Proceed as a researcher would: Determine a research plan, identify sources, document findings, and culminate with a theory, resolution, or direction for further study. Use the journal as a tool for action research, that is, investigating an issue in the process of resolving it.

## Dialogue journal

Identify a specific “other” with whom you have unfinished business. Engage in ongoing dialogue related to a specific issue. The task is to write with at least two voices, for example:

- Self and other actual person.
- Self and other imagined person.
- One aspect of self and other aspect of self (intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual, social, etc.).
- Self and past.
- Self and society.

## Dream journal

Start by documenting sleeping and/or waking dreams. Capture as much specific detail as possible. Return to the dream several times. Analyze from a variety of perspectives, for example:

- Memory, imagination, and consciousness.
- Metaphors and symbols.
- Recurrent themes, characters, or stories.
- Self in guise of other (person, place, or thing).

## Autobiographical narrative journal

Examine your life as one would examine a piece of literature. Choose specific periods or stages, document them thoroughly, then analyze literary elements (character, plot, setting, theme, conflict, symbolism, etc.) to interpret the story. This may take the form of a back-and-forth analysis, that is, documenting a current story and relating it to a story from the past. Determine central conflicts or paradoxes in the story. Examine ways of revising or reframing recurrent forces.

Source: Karrin Wilks, 11/95

# Helping Young People With Decision-Making Skills

Outlined below are questions the mentor can ask the mentee to help him/her talk through the decision-making process. If a young person goes through these steps with assistance often enough, he/she will become familiar with the process and be able to use it independently.

- Step 1. Look for signs of different feelings.  
*How are you feeling? Am I right in thinking that you are upset?*
- Step 2. Tell yourself what the problem is.  
*What would you say is the problem? Does something need to change? Does something need to happen that is not happening?*
- Step 3. Decide on your goal.  
*What do you want to have happen? What do you want to accomplish?*
- Step 4. Brainstorm the solutions.  
*How many ways can you think of reaching your goal?*
- Step 5. Evaluate each possible solution.  
*What are the pros and cons of each solution? The second solution? The third solution?*
- Step 6. Choose the best solution.  
*Given the pros and cons of each solution, what makes the most sense to you? Which solution will best help you achieve your goal?*
- Step 7. Develop and implement a plan.  
*What is the first thing you will have to do to carry out your idea? The second thing? The third?*
- Step 8. Evaluate your plan.  
*What happened when you tried to carry out your plan? What did you learn that might help you next time? Do you need to try another solution? Rethink your plan?*

Source: *Mentoring: What's It All About?*, Dorothy Ansell. Independent Living Resources, Inc., Edenton, NC, March 1999. (Reprinted with permission: *The Mentoring Guide*, New York State Mentoring Program)





# Resources



# Resources on the Web

Educational Development Center/Center for Children and Technology  
<http://www.edc.org/CCTG/telementoring/>

Hewlett Packard Telementoring Program  
<http://www.telementor.org/hp/>

Cyber Sisters  
<http://www.cyber-sisters.org/>

Women in Science Project, Dartmouth University  
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~wisp/>

Mentornet  
<http://www.mentornet.net/>

Techs4Schools-Tech Corps VT  
<http://www.techcorps.org/techs4schools/>

“E-Mentoring: A Model and Guide for a New Concept in Mentoring”  
Youth Trust, 81 South 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200,  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
Phone: (612) 370-9185  
Fax: (612) 370-9195  
[www.youthtrust.org](http://www.youthtrust.org)

Source: Susan Johnson, [sjohnson@sover.net](mailto:sjohnson@sover.net), 12/7/99

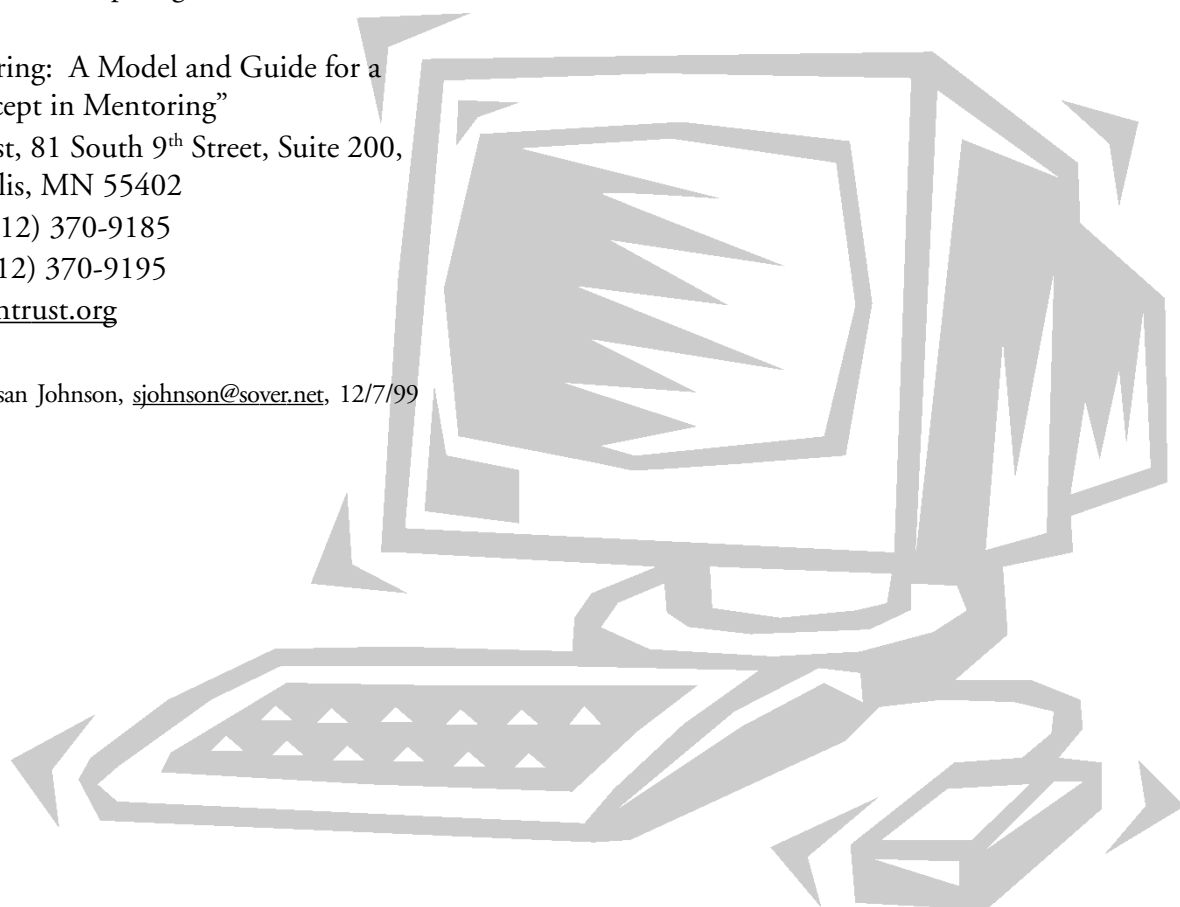
The National Mentoring Partnership  
[www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)

National Association of Partners in Education  
[www.partnersineducation.org](http://www.partnersineducation.org)

The Partnership on Family Involvement  
in Education  
[www.pfie.ed.gov](http://www.pfie.ed.gov)

The National Youth Development Information  
Center  
[www.nydic.org](http://www.nydic.org)

The National Mentoring Center at the Northwest  
Regional Educational Laboratory  
[www.nwrel.org/mentoring](http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring)





# Additional Mentoring Resources

- *The Mentor Handbook*, Susan G. Weinberger, Ed.D., Educational Resources, Inc., Norwalk, CT, 1990, 1992, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.
- *Mentors Help Students Stay in School*, Susan G. Weinberger, *New York Times*, Sunday Edition, September 1990.
- *Mobilizing for the Next Generation*, One-to-One Partnership, Inc.
- *Mentoring Involvement Options*, National One-to-One Mentoring Partnership.
- *Connections: Linking Youth with Caring Adults*, John Walsh, Urban Strategies Council, Oakland, CA, 1989.
- *Bridging the Gap: What Happens Now?*, Printed Matter, Inc., Atlanta, GA, 1983.
- *Mentoring: What's It All About?*, Dorothy Ansell, Independent Resources, Inc., Edenton, NC, March 1989.
- *Society by Agreement*, Earl R. Babbie, Wadsworth Publishing Co., Belmont, CA, 1997.
- *Anthropology: The Cultural Perspective*, James P. Spradley and David W. McCurdy, Macalester College, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2nd edition, 1975, 1978.
- *Mentoring At-Risk Students (MARS)*, Philip A. Williams, Mentor 2000, Long Beach, CA, 1992.
- *The Kindness of Strangers: Adult Mentors, Urban Youth and the New Volunteerism*, Marc Freedman, Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1993.
- For an online catalog of resources, check the VSAC Web site ([www.vsac.org](http://www.vsac.org)).





# Resources on Adolescent Issues

## Sexuality education

Planned Parenthood Education Department  
23 Mansfield Avenue  
Burlington, VT 05401  
(802) 862-9638  
[www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org)

Advocates for Youth  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

## Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender & questioning youth (GLBTQ)

Outright Vermont  
1-800-865-9677  
[www.outright.org](http://www.outright.org)

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays  
(PFLAG)  
[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

## Drug & alcohol prevention

Vermont Addiction Education Center  
*Vermont Alcohol and Drug Information  
Clearinghouse*  
(802) 651-1572

Vermont Department of Health  
Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
Programs  
108 Cherry Street  
P.O. Box 70  
Burlington, VT 05402-0070  
1-800-464-4343x1550  
[www.state.vt.us/adap/](http://www.state.vt.us/adap/)

Al-Anon Family Groups  
[www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)

## Suicide prevention

Headrest Teen Line  
(24 hour teen crisis, information and  
rap line)  
1-800-639-6095

Samaritens  
1-800-252-TEEN





# Recommended Reading

*Mentoring, the TAO of Giving and Receiving Wisdom*, C.A. Huang & J. Lynch, Harper Collins, New York, NY, 1995 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.).

The main purpose of this book is to define the attitudes that best nurture giving and receiving relationships. The book revolves around Chinese proverbs, which offer wisdom and spirituality to both the mentor and mentee. It is a quiet method for reaching and learning life's lessons. This book is written for educators, CEOs, family members, religious leaders, and anyone who is willing to learn. The book is calming, relaxing, reflective, and easy to read. It is a powerful spiritual book, yet it is not religious.

*The Mentor's Spirit*, M. Sinetar, St. Martin's Press, New York, NY, 1998 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.).

This book encourages people to learn from each other, help each other, and be confident. It encourages gentle inner spirits, kindness, love, patience, and giving when working with others. This book inspires productiveness, growth, and community. The author, who is a teacher, principal, and student, writes the book from her own perspective. In this book, she reflects on her own experiences to encourage great leadership skills and relationships through the inner being. It is written through the eyes of an educator who feels that we need to be aware of corporate-style mentoring.

*The Inner Principal*, D. Loader, Falmer Press, U.S., 1997 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.).

This book explores educational leadership and reform through personal exploration. Through anecdotal reflections, author David Loader analyzes, reflects, and changes his practice. His purpose is to effect positive educational reform by taking risks based on his inner reflective beliefs. His goal is to encourage educators to take charge of change and to work in communities. This book only takes into consideration the personal points of view of this author, but it is thought-provoking. The target audience is anyone who wants to step out, take a chance, and work toward educational reform.

*Everyday Heroes: A Guidebook for Mentors*, Jim Kavanaugh, 1998.

Developed by the founders of Wise Men & Women Mentorship Program, "Los Savios," in New Mexico, this guide was written to help adults become caring and supportive mentors. It is available through the Wise Men and Women Mentorship Program, 1016 Juan Tabo Boulevard NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112 (505) 271-2066.

*How To Be A Great Mentor*, 1999.

This is a guide in magazine format produced by Kaplan, Newsweek, and The National Mentoring Partnership. It is available through The National Mentoring Partnership, (202) 338-3844.