

Welcome to the A.E.A.O.N.M.S., Inc. Mentoring Program.

You have joined a very dedicated and growing group of adults across the United States who understand the importance of mentoring youth. There are hundreds of mentoring programs across the country and a good number right here in the Washington area. Some address the needs of children as young as first grade; many others concern themselves with junior high or high school students.

What precisely is mentoring?

The term mentoring comes from Greek mythology, in which a character named Mentor was the trusted counselor of the hero Odysseus and his son Telemachus. The Latin word “mens, mentis” means mind. (Think about derivative words like “mentality” or “mental.”) So a mentor is a trusted friend, someone who is available consistently and someone who uses his mind to give good advice to another person. This is different from being a teacher, a parent or a social worker. Many of us have had mentors in the work place or mentors who supported us through the growing-up process. You might find it helpful to remember an adult who had a strong positive influence on you as you were growing up.

We call the students who are being mentored “mentees.” Although this word cannot be found in the dictionary, it is in common use today.

Why is mentoring important?

Many young people growing up in America are “at risk”. They have negative feelings about themselves, perform poorly in school and often engage in dangerous behaviors. Many of them live in families where parents are coping with their own problems or are not available to provide guidance and support. Many do not live with parents at all. Mentoring programs offer these youth the potential to overcome hurdles, cope with problems and learn the basic skills they will need to become healthy and productive adults.

Although the concept of mentoring has been around since the time of the Greeks, the growing need of the disadvantaged in this country prompted new interest in mentoring in the late 1980's.

What is the A.E.A.O.N.O.M.S., Inc. Mentoring Program?

The mentoring program started at Birney Elementary School located in Washington, DC in February, 2000. We partnered with the Washington, DC Public Schools and Experience Corp which now operates six tutoring programs as well as the mentoring program. This program achieve high acclaim and had a half page article written about the Prince Hall Masons helping at-risk-youth through their mentoring program (see article on next page).

What makes the A.E.A.O.N.M.S., Inc. mentoring program different from other mentoring programs?

- Our mentoring program is school and community-based; that is, the mentors can see their mentees in school and out side of school.
- Our program is only for males this is relatively rare among mentoring programs.
- Our program serves fifth graders to junior high school students.
- Our mentors serve in two different ways. All mentors meet one-on-one with boys on a weekly basis.
- Our mentors are encouraged to reflect on their experiences. All volunteers are given a journal, in which they are expected to keep ongoing notes about what worked and what didn't, and how they feel about their mentee(s) and the job they are doing.
- All the volunteers meet once a month to share reflections and figure out how to do their jobs better.
- A.E.A.O.N.M.S., Inc. mentors know how school is going for their mentees. The program coordinator are in close touch with the boys' parent and teachers.

How does the mentoring program work?

Mentors meet with their mentees on a one-to-one basis after school 1-1/2 hours a week. Some volunteers may want to serve in the classroom work with students in need of extra academic help individually or in small groups. From time to time, all the mentors and mentees take part in special events - field trips, parent gatherings, etc.

All mentors receive training at the beginning of the year and additional training as needed (training materials will be provided by the Imperial Director of Mentoring).

Mentors and mentees sign an agreement at the beginning of the year outlining the basic terms and conditions of the program. (See Mentor/Mentee Agreement Form in the Appendix.) Mentors and mentees also agree on an ongoing Action Plan, specifying objectives they will work toward, how they hope to achieve the objectives, a time line and ways in which they will measure outcomes. The Action Plan is revisited monthly.

GOALS OF THE A.E.A.O.N.M.S. MENTORING PROGRAM

Improved Social Skills and Behavior **Educational Improvement** **Wider Horizons**

The A.E.A.O.N.M.S., Inc. mentoring program has three major goals. What do these goals mean? What outcomes are we looking for and how will we be able to measure those outcomes?

Improved- Social Skills and Behavior - The social and behavioral outcomes we will look for are improved feelings of self-worth, development of self-confidence, decrease in discipline problems at school and movement toward positive social attitudes and relationships.

By establishing a warm, trusting relationship with a youngster, a mentor can help him deal with problems regarding peers and family. A mentor's caring can often defuse a boy's anger and help him look at new ways to resolve tough situations. Just a few conflict resolution skills can go a long way toward giving a youngster the tools he needs to improve his personal interaction with family, peers and adults in general. Talking about problems can minimize them, allowing youngsters to concentrate more on school work and less on negative behaviors. A trusted mentor can also help a boy make better choices.

Educational Improvement - We expect that, as a result of mentoring, students will improve their study skills and homework habits. By showing boys how to approach tests, coaching them on study skills (note taking, memorization), or guiding them through a difficult homework assignment, mentors can have a positive effect on mentees' academic performance.

Some of the students need extra help with academics; others simply need consistent encouragement in doing their work. Through the one-on-one relationship, a mentor can assess a particular youngster's needs. The mentor can assist with finding tutoring help if it is needed, can suggest family or friends who might help the student with homework on a regular basis, or just give the youngster some much-needed confidence in his ability to do the work. Mentors who work with small groups in classrooms can help the students overcome negative peer pressure. As they begin to perform better, we expect that the mentees will develop a more positive attitude toward school, improve their attendance rates and hand in their homework consistently and on time. Our hope is that mentoring will be one of the factors that will lead these youngsters toward improved grades and test scores, and a better outlook about academic achievement.

Wider Horizons - By exploring new interests, we hope the boys will widen their horizons, raise their ambitions and set higher educational goals for themselves. Mentors serve as role models, showing the boys that they can succeed, even against substantial odds. By reading to the youngsters, taking them on field trips, discussing career opportunities and sharing hobbies and interests, the mentors can broaden mentees' worlds and help them envision a more positive future.

While it is easy to set down goals on paper, it is not always easy to accomplish them. We certainly do not expect every goal to be met perfectly by every mentee in the program. In fact, there may be many challenges and failures along the way. However, our hope is that, with a mentor's assistance, each boy will be able to make some progress toward the goals by meeting at least some of the objectives that each mentor-mentee team has laid out in its Action Plan.

Measuring progress -- By the middle of the year, mentors should begin to see some progress toward the three goals. Mentees may be changing their attitude about schoolwork, may be involved in fewer fights or arguments or may have acquired some new interests. By the end of the year, mentors and others may see some real changes. At that time, teachers will be surveyed about the boys' progress. Mentors who have been in contact with their mentees' families will be able to hear verbal reports about improvements in attitude or academic skills. And the boys themselves will be surveyed to see what progress they feel they have made and how they feel about it.

A SUCCESSFUL FIRST MEETING

When you are meeting with your youth for the first time, it is important for the meeting to go well. Here are some ideas to think about:

1. Try to draw out your student as best you can. Some boys are shy or resistant, so this may not go too well at first. Don't worry about it. Some questions to ask:

What is your school day like?

What do you like best about school?

What do you like least about school?

How do you like to spend your free time?

What kinds of things do you like to read? (Books? Magazines? Comics?) On what subjects?

What would be the perfect job for you?

What is your greatest strength?

What would you like to improve?

Who do you most admire?

What are some things you would like me to know about you?

What would you like to know about me?

2. Briefly tell the student something about yourself and what you were like at his age.

3. Explain the mentoring program, its goals and what you might be doing during the year. Show him the Action Plan and possible objectives and ask him to think about them. Ask if he has any questions. Also, ask him what else he would like to see included in the program.

4. Read the Mentor/Mentee Agreement together and discuss it. Ask the mentee to take it home and think about it. Tell him that at the next meeting he can raise any questions he wishes about the agreement, and then you will both sign it.

5. The first session does not need to last the full 1 1/2 hours, especially if your mentee seems to be losing interest or seems uncertain or even hostile. End the session on a positive note. Close with warmth and expectations for a successful year.

Be sure that you have worked through the Mentor/Mentee Agreement by the end of the second week and the Action Plan by the end of the first month.

AT EACH SESSION

Identify your mentee's talents, strengths and assets, and build your sessions around them.

Give recognition for effort or improvement, no matter how slight.

Show appreciation for the mentee's contributions and demonstrate confidence in him.

Value your mentee no matter how he 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, not put-downs.

Listen carefully to what your youngster tells you, and listen for unspoken messages. Repeat back what you have heard to be sure that you understand each other.

Do not immediately suggest solutions for problems. Talk through ideas and let the youngster arrive at solutions for himself. Allow him to do this gradually.

PUTTING TOGETHER AN ACTION PLAN

After you have worked with your mentee for about a month, you will need to develop an Action Plan with him. Such a plan will help both of you focus on what you want to accomplish and how you will do it. The plan should be looked at monthly and can change at any time if objectives are met or if needs change. We ask that you and your student discuss the goals of the mentoring program (outlined on page 3) and the sample objectives listed below. These should just be a starting point for your discussion. The student can add any objectives he would like to accomplish. **It is extremely important that the student make this decision so he has buy-in.** Then you can both work on action steps to take, a reasonable timeline, and ways to measure progress. It is probably a good idea to start with easy objectives and go on to more challenging ones.

You will find a blank Action Plan in the Appendix. Please feel free to copy it, add to it or rework it to suit your needs. A sample plan can be found on the next page. You should have an Action Plan for each mentee. You may make copies of the plan and give them to his parent and/or teacher, but if your mentee does not wish to do this, it isn't necessary.

Please review the Action Plan with your mentee at least monthly to check on his/her progress. Make any changes you and your mentee agree upon.

Goal 1 - Improved Social Skills and Behavior

Sample objectives:

- Improved attitude toward schoolwork and assignments
- Improved record with regard to attendance and tardiness
- Improved behavior in the classroom and in/around school building (helping and sharing, fewer "put-downs" of others, fewer discipline issues)
- Improved self-esteem and self-discipline (ability to admit and fix mistakes, ability to find ways for managing anger, ability to ask for help)
- Improved leadership skills (ability to make good decisions, ability to work with others, peer mediation, conflict resolution, taking the lead in school activities)
- Reduction in risky behaviors (fights, drug involvement, sexual activity, gangs)

Goal 2 - Educational Improvement

Sample objectives:

- Improved study skills (note taking, memorizing, organizing and prioritizing work)
- Improved homework skills (organizing homework, doing homework, handing in homework on time)
- Improved basic skills (better understanding of reading, math and other subjects, better performance on tests and in classroom)
- Improved grades and test scores

Goal 3 - Wider Horizons

Sample objectives:

- Exploration of one new hobby or interest each semester
- Exploration of at least one new extra-curricular activity (Boy Scouts, band, chorus, church, clubs, sports)
- Improved knowledge about future choices (middle and high school choices, course of study leading to possible careers)

IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

Once your mentoring relationship is established, you may find that you and your mentee have enough to do or enough to talk about each time so that your mentoring sessions go quickly. However, there may be days when the student has no immediate problems to discuss or is tired of the usual routine. Here are some projects that you can start or work on when something new is needed. Some of these were suggested by Experience Corps mentors; others are from a book called *My Mentor and Me* by Dr. Susan G. Weinberger. Several copies of this book are available in the office for your ongoing use.

1. A Scrapbook of Memories

Begin a scrapbook that will last throughout the year. Buy a disposable camera or use your own. Let your mentee take some photos of you, pictures of himself, his family or meaningful school events. During the year, add stories about things you have done together, drawings, mementos, stickers or anything else that might be significant. Write captions for the pictures. At the end of the year, let your mentee keep the scrapbook.

2. A Crossword Puzzle About Me

Get a sheet of graph paper with a large grid. Together, compile a list of words that describe your mentee. Enter your mentee's name horizontally across the mid section of the graph paper. As you and he discover a word that could intersect vertically, place it there in pencil and check it off the list. Add as many words as you can, either horizontally or vertically. When you have entered enough words, number the answered spaces. Then you and your mentee can come up with clues for each word. Create the final puzzle by counting off the boxes on new graph paper. Darken the unused boxes and transfer the numbers to their places on the grid. This becomes the master for the unsolved puzzle, which can be photocopied and given to the mentee's family or friends. The mentee will have fun thinking of clues and seeing how much people can learn about him by solving the puzzle. Put the puzzle and solution in the scrapbook.

3. School and Community Involvement

Check out all the activities offered after school in your mentee's community and in the school. (e.g. boys' clubs, Boy Scouts, chorus, band, sports). Ask your mentee if he participates in any of these activities. If he does not, ask him which activities he would like to participate in and encourage him to try one or two, especially something new. If there is a cost attached to an activity, discuss how he might earn enough money to meet the cost. If transportation is involved, discuss possible ways to solve that problem. If he would like to participate in an activity that is not available, talk about how he might start a new club or group. Discuss with him the value of being involved in extra-curricular activities.

4. Enjoying Geography

Ask your mentee if there is a foreign country that interests him. If not, tell him about or show him pictures of several countries and try to encourage his interest in

at least one. (This might be a country that is in the news, such as Afghanistan or Iraq, a country that someone he knows is from, or any other place that attracts his interest.) Ask him to do some research about the country in the school library. Bring in maps and pictures. Talk about the geographical features of the country, its people and its customs. Ask the mentee to write a letter to the embassy of that country asking for more information. (Every country has an embassy or at least a small *office* right here in Washington.) He will be delighted to receive lots of pamphlets and other material in the mail. When you both have learned a lot about the country, call the embassy and see if you can arrange a group visit. Ask your mentee to serve as a host for the occasion and tell all the other mentees about that country.

5. Community Service

Decide on a service that you, your mentees and others could do to benefit the school (picking up trash from the playground, planting flowers, decorating a bulletin board, inviting a guest, starting a "buddies club" in which older students help younger ones, etc.) Involve the mentees in planning and executing this service project. Explain why community service is so important.

6. Reading Together

With input from your mentee, pick a book that the two of you will enjoy reading, either fiction or non-fiction. It is preferable (but not necessary) to choose a book that is more *difficult* than the mentee might choose for himself. Buy two copies or borrow two copies from a library. Each of you can read a few chapters a week and then discuss the book when you come together. You can also read it together from time to time.

7. Researching New Activities

If a computer is available, explore the Internet together and research new activities and interests. If something really captures your mentee, ask him to write a brief report about it.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

Mentors are expected to follow all policies and procedures that apply to it as a whole. These can be found in the basic A.E.A.O.N.M.S., Inc. manual. In addition, there are some specific guidelines that apply only to mentors:

1. Mentors will be expected to meet with their mentees for 1-1/2 hours each week. Please arrive at least ten minutes early so you can be available to greet your mentee when he arrives, or to look for him if necessary. Be sure to sign the attendance sheet.

2. Consistency is extremely important. In order to establish a good, trusting relationship with your mentee, **you must come consistently each week**. If your mentee is absent one day and you haven't been notified, you may be able to work with another mentee when you arrive. If you find that you will have to be absent, please **notify the child's parent or teacher as early as possible**. You may be able to ask another mentor to take your youngster, or at least will be able to let your mentee know the reason for your absence. Plan your schedule well in advance, so that you can reschedule your mentoring session for another day if you know you will be gone on your regular day. Your mentee will feel much more comfortable if he knows you will be unavoidably absent the next week, but that you will make up the time somehow.

3. Plan your mentoring session ahead of time, keeping your student's needs and interests in mind. Do not wait to see if he arrives with homework questions or a specific problem. Be prepared with an activity such as those outlined on pages 8-9 of this manual. Bring all necessary materials with you. If your mentee has a problem that he wants to discuss that day or a homework assignment with which he needs or wants help, you can always put your plan aside.

4. All mentors are should attend peer group meetings once a month to share their experiences. Please bring your journals to meetings so you can take notes and share your experiences and observations with others.

5. Be sure you are never alone with your student. This applies to activities outside of school as well. Schools are very concerned about child abuse. This rule protects you as well as the child.

6. Field trips or group activities (a basketball game, picnic, hike etc.) are fine as long as there are at least two mentors present and involved. Group activities should be over and above the regular mentoring sessions and should not be substituted for regular sessions.

7. Because insurers are also concerned about abuse, you are cautioned not to "lay hands on a child." This includes both hitting and hugging. Sometimes it is difficult to draw lines regarding what is and what is not proper. If you have any questions about physical interaction with your mentee, please consult your Coordinator.

8. You may want to get in touch with your mentee's parent(s) or guardian from time to time. (We also try to plan at least one event for youngsters' parents/guardians.) Discuss this first with your Coordinator and then make sure you have your mentee's and the school's permission to call the family.. If you do make contact, be sure to speak positively about the youth and remain neutral concerning any inter-family disputes. You may give your mentee and/or the family your home phone number if you wish.

9. You may, but you are not expected to contact your student during the summer. Do not hold out the possibility of further contact with your mentee because it may not be realistic and will just disappoint him.

10. Do not use your own personal vehicle to transport mentees to group activities. Most insurance does not cover liability for private vehicles. One mentor and mentee must never be alone in a vehicle involved in a field trip outside of school.

11. Giving students money, even a small amount, is strictly forbidden. Gifts or material rewards of any kind should not be given except at designated times (e.g. Christmas holidays, graduation).

12. Because of the relationship of trust inherent in mentoring, confidentiality is vitally important. Respect the privacy of your mentee and his family and friends. Do not use their names or discuss issues raised in mentoring sessions. Always consult with your Coordinator on confidentiality issues.

13. This is designed as a one-to-one mentoring program. While activities involving a second mentor or a group may be appropriate occasionally, the vast majority of your time should be spent working one-on-one with your mentee.

HELPFUL REFERENCES FOR MENTORS

Web Sites:

<http://www.mentoring.org>

The National Mentoring Partnership offers a wide variety of resources, from written materials (some free, some paid) to suggestions for better mentoring and better programs. On this site you can also find out about mentoring programs around the country.

<http://nwrel.org/mentoring>

The National Mentoring Center is a project of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. It was created and funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Its web site offers many resources and links to other useful sites, plus an interactive list through which mentors all over the world can communicate with each other and share ideas.

<http://www.ppv.org/content/mentoring>

Public/Private Ventures, a national non-profit that works to improve social policies and programs for youth and young adults, has a special mentoring section on their web site which lists many research studies and technical assistance packets that can be downloaded (PDF format).

<http://www.bbbsa.org>

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America is the largest mentoring organization in the country. Their web site identifies local chapters and activities.

<http://www.CreateNow.org/tips>

Create Now! Provides creative arts programs to high-risk children and youth. Their web site offers some interesting tips for mentors.

Books and Publications

**My Mentor & Me: The Elementary School Years*, by Dr. Susan G. Weinberger, The Governor's Prevention Partnership, Hartford CT, 2000.

A short booklet of activity ideas written for the Connecticut Mentoring Partnership, the oldest school-based mentoring program in the country.

**SameRace and Cross-Race Matching*, written by Linda Jucovy for Public/Private Ventures, May 2002. An interesting study about the pros and cons of same-race or cross-race matching of mentors and mentees.

**The Potential Role of an Adult Mentor in Influencing High-Risk Behaviors in Adolescents*, a medical journal article reprinted by the American Medical Association, 2000. Brief overview of a study which showed that adolescents with mentors were significantly less likely to participate in certain measured risk behaviors.

References (contd.)

**Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors*, written by Linda Jucovy for Public/Private Ventures, April 2001. Many useful hints for building good relationships.

Everyday Heroes: A Guidebook for Mentors by J. Kavanaugh, Wise Men & Women Mentorship Program, Santa Fe NM, 1998.

**Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development*, by S. Jekeliak, K. Moore, E. Hair and H. Scarupa, Child Trends Research Brief, Washington DC, February 2002. Studies of ten youth mentoring programs.

**Prime Time: How Baby Boomers Will Revolutionize Retirement and Transform America*, by Marc Freedman, Public Affairs Press, 1999. Freedman's book explains the philosophy behind Experience Corps and Civic Ventures.

**The Two of Us: A Handbook for Mentors*, by Marilyn Smith for the Maryland State Mentoring Resource Center, 1998. This book contains many useful ideas for mentoring activities.

**The Kindness of Strangers* by Marc Freedman, Cambridge University Press, 1993. An interesting history of mentoring and overview of the philosophy behind adult volunteering.

**Understanding How Youth and Elders form Relationships: A Study of Four Linking Lifetimes Programs*, by Melanie Styles and Kristine Morrow. 1992. Extensive studies of four different mentoring programs.

APPENDIX

SECTION I – RESOURCES

18 TIPS FOR MENTORS

Put the youth first. Concentrate on his problems and needs; leave yours at the door.

Be flexible with your own plans.

Approach youth with respect; let him help set the agenda.

Take time to really get to know your mentee. Drop the authoritative role.

Talk one-third of the time; listen two-thirds.

Use brief remarks.

Ask questions that cannot be answered with yes or no.

Do not interrupt your student; use active listening.

Give youth silence time in which to think.

Observe nonverbal cues.

Don't lecture on how to behave.

Do not be alarmed at remarks made.

Do not make false promises.

Be sincere in your praise.

Be accepting.

Do not ignore a problem.

Set realistic goals and do not become discouraged quickly.

Do not expect dramatic changes overnight. Be yourself.

From Guidebook to Mentoring, by Dr. Susan G. Weinberger

THE ROLES OF A MENTOR

Not everyone makes a good mentor. Experience indicates that successful mentors have certain characteristics in common. Successful mentors:

give attention

tolerate frustrating situations

listen well

communicate

nurture the relationship

provide leadership

turn everything into a learning experience

are positive and encouraging

build on the positive

are committed

are tolerant; not judgmental

serve as youth advocates

are role models

accept responsibility

are mature and reliable

are confidential

do not replace role of parent or guardian

do not interfere with school policies or procedures

have a good sense of humor!

ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

Active listening is the most important skill of a good mentor. When you talk to your mentee, remember to:

Clear your mind of unnecessary thoughts and distractions, so you can give your undivided attention.

Sit when you talk, so you are at the same level as the student. Make eye contact.

Be aware of your body language.

Pay attention to your mentee's facial expressions, gestures and body language.

Read between the lines for your mentee's feelings. Learn to say, "How did that make you feel?"

Ask open-ended questions (How do you feel about school? How are you doing? You seem upset - what's up?), not questions that can be answered with yes or no. Then ask non-threatening follow-up questions.

Restate in your own words what you think the mentee has said. When your paraphrasing is accurate, your mentee will feel understood. If it is off the mark, it invites him to clarify and reminds you to listen more closely.

Ask questions when you don't understand.

Put yourself in your mentee's shoes and try to understand the world from his perspective.

Put aside preconceived ideas and refrain from passing judgment.

Acknowledge that you are listening by occasionally nodding your head and saying things like "I see."

Give your mentee the same respect that you desire when you are talking to someone.

From "Training New Mentors," written by Public/Private Ventures

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

The Search Institute, a nonprofit organization that works to support the healthy development of all children and adolescents, identified 40 building blocks that help youngsters grow up healthy, caring and responsible. You may find that, for one reason or another, your mentee does not have some of these assets, and you will see the importance of the role you play in supplying him with others. When you are structuring your Action Plan with your mentee, you might think about some action steps that can be taken to help him construct some of the building blocks he needs.

EXTERNAL ASSETS

Support

1. Family support - Family life provides high levels of love and support
2. Positive family communication - Young person and parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
3. Other adult relationships - Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults.
4. Caring neighborhood - Young person experiences caring neighbors.
5. Caring school climate - School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. Parent involvement in schooling - Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.

Empowerment

7. Community values youth- Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. Youth as resources - Young people are given useful roles in the community.
9. Service to others - Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
10. Safety - Young person feels safe at home, at school and in the neighborhood.

Boundaries and Expectations

11. Family boundaries - Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
12. School boundaries - School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. Neighborhood boundaries - Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young person's behavior.
14. Adult role models - Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. Positive peer influence - Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
16. High expectations - Both parent(s) and teachers encourage young person to do well.

Constructive Use of Time

17. Creative activities - Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theatre or other arts.
18. Youth programs - Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs or organizations at school and/or in the community.
19. Religious community - Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. Time at home - Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.

INTERNAL ASSETS

Commitment to Learning

21. Achievement motivation - Young person is motivated to do well in school.
22. School engagement - Young person is actively engaged in learning.
23. Homework - Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.

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24. Bonding to school - Young person cares about her or his school
 25. Reading for pleasure - Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

40 Developmental Assets (cont'd.)

Positive Values

26. Caring - Young person places high value on helping other people.
27. Equality and social justice - Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
28. Integrity - Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or hi beliefs.
29. Honesty - Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.
30. Responsibility - Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
31. Restraint - Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol and other drugs.

Social Competencies

32. Planning and decision-making - Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
33. Interpersonal competence - Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills.
34. Cultural competence - Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
35. Resistance skills - Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
36. Peaceful conflict resolution - Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

Positive Identity

37. Personal power - Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."
38. Self-esteem - Young person reports having high self-esteem.
39. Sense of purpose - Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."
40. Positive view of personal future - Young person is optimistic about his or her personal future.

AGES AND STAGES - 8 TO 10 YEAR OLDS

General Characteristics

1. Interested in people, aware of differences, willing to live more to others but expects more.
2. Busy, active, full of enthusiasm, may try too much, accident-prone, interest in money and its value.
3. Sensitive to criticism, recognize failure, capacity for self-evaluation.
4. Capable of prolonged interest. may make plans on own.
5. Decisive, dependable, reasonable, strong sense of right and wrong.
6. Spend a great deal of time in talk and discussion, often outspoken and critical of adults although still dependent on adult approval.

Physical Characteristics

1. Are very active and need frequent breaks from tasks to do things that are fun for them and involve use of energy.
2. Bone growth is not yet complete.
3. Early maturers may be upset with their size. A listening ear and your explanations will help.
4. May tend to be accident-prone.

Social Characteristics

1. Can be very competitive.
2. Are choosy about their friends.
3. Being accepted by friends becomes quite important.
4. Team games become popular.
5. Worshipping heroes, TV stars, sports figures are common.

Emotional Characteristics

1. Are very sensitive to praise and recognition. Feelings are hurt easily.
2. Because friends are so important during this time, there can be conflicts between adult rules and friends' rules. You can help by your honesty and consistency.

Mental Characteristics

1. Their idea of fairness becomes a big issue.
2. Are eager to answer questions.
3. Are very curious, and are collectors of everything. However, they may jump objects of interest after a short time.
4. Want more independence, but know they need guidance and support.
5. Wide discrepancies in reading ability.

Developmental Tasks

1. Social cooperation.
2. Self-evaluation.
3. Skill learning.
4. Team play.

AGES AND STAGES 8 TO 10 YEAR OLDS

Suggested Volunteer **Strategies**

1. Recognize allegiance to friends and "heroes."
2. Remind child of responsibilities in a 2-way relationship.
3. Acknowledge performance: "Hey. watch this."
4. Offer enjoyable learning experiences. It's a great time to teach about different cultures.
5. Provide frank answers to questions about upcoming physiological changes.

Suggested Activities

Little League
Video Games
Board Games
Craft Projects and Drawing
Miniature Golf, Swimming
Horseback Riding

AGES AND STAGES - 11 TO 13 YEAR OLDS

General Characteristics

1. Testing limits. "know-it-all attitude".
2. Vulnerable. emotionally insecure, fear of rejection, mood swings.
3. Identification with admired adult.
4. Bodies are going through physical changes that affect personal appearance.

Physical Characteristics

1. Small-muscle coordination is good, and interests in art, crafts, models and music are popular.
2. Bone growth is not yet complete.
3. Early maturers may be upset with their size. A listening ear and explanations will help.
4. Are very concerned with their appearance, and very self-conscious about growth
5. Diet and sleep habits *can* be bad, which may result in low energy levels.
6. Girls may begin menstruation.

Social Characteristics

1. Being accepted by friends becomes quite important.
2. Cliques start to develop outside of school.
3. Team games become popular.
4. Crushes on members of the opposite sex are common.
5. Friends set the general rule of behavior.
6. Feel a real need to conform. They dress and behave alike *in* order to "belong**".
7. Are very concerned about what others say and think of them.
8. Have a tendency to manipulate others ("Mary's mother says she can go. Why can't I?").
9. Interested in earning own money.

Emotional Characteristics

1. Are very sensitive to praise and recognition. Feelings are hurt easily.
2. Because friends are so important during this time, there can be conflicts between adults' rules and friends' rules.
3. Are caught between being a child and being an adult.
4. Loud behavior hides their lack of self-confidence.
5. Look at the world more objectively, adults subjectively. critical.

Mental Characteristics

1. Tend to be perfectionists. If they try to attempt too much, they may feel frustrated and guilty.
2. Want more independence, but know they need guidance and support.
3. Attention span can be lengthy.

AGES AND STAGES - 11 TO 13 YEAR OLDS

Developmental Tasks

1. Social cooperation.
2. Self evaluation.
3. Skill learning
4. Team play.

Suggested Volunteer Strategies

1. Offer alternative opinions without being insistent
2. Be accepting of different physical states and emotional changes
3. Give frank answers to questions
4. Offer money-making opportunities
5. Share aspects of professional life and rewards of achieving in work.
6. Do not tease about appearance, clothes, boyfriends, sexuality. Affirm often.

Suggested Activities

Trivial Pursuit
Take to your Workplace
Help with Homework
Build a Go-Cart or other Model
Creative Writing
Skating
Bicycle Trip
Movies
Music - especially current style or group

AGES AND STAGES - 14 TO 16 YEAR OLDS

General Characteristics

1. Testing limits, "know-it-all attitude".
2. Vulnerable, emotionally insecure, fear of rejection, mood swings.
3. Identification with admired adult.
4. Bodies are going through physical changes that affect personal appearance.

Physical Characteristics

1. Are very concerned with their appearance and very self-conscious about growth.
2. Diet and sleep habits can be bad, which may result in low energy levels.
3. Rapid weight gain at beginning of adolescence. Enormous appetite.

Social Characteristics

1. Friends set the general rules of behavior.
2. Feel a real need to conform. They dress and behave alike in order to "belong".
3. Are very concerned about what others say and think of them.
4. Have a tendency to manipulate others ("Mary's mother says she can go. Why can't I?").
5. Going to extremes, emotional instability with "know-it-all" attitude.
6. Fear of ridicule and of being unpopular.
7. Strong identification with an admired adult.
8. Girls usually more interested in boys than girls, resulting from earlier maturing of the girls.

Emotional Characteristics

1. Are very sensitive to praise and recognition. Feelings are easily hurt.
2. Are caught between being a child and being an adult.
3. Loud behavior hides their lack of self-confidence.
4. Look at the world more objectively, adults subjectively, critical.

Mental Characteristics

1. Can better understand moral principles.
2. Attention span can be lengthy.

Developmental Tasks

1. Physical maturation.
2. Formal operations.
3. Membership in the peer group.
4. Heterosexual relationships.

AGES AND STAGES - 14 TO 16 YEAR OLDS

Suggested Volunteer Strategies

1. Give choices and don't be afraid to confront inappropriate behavior.
2. Use humor to diffuse testy situations.
3. Give positive feedback, and let know affection is for them and not for accomplishments.
4. Be available and be yourself, with strengths, weaknesses, and emotions.
5. Be honest and disclose appropriate personal information to build trust.

Suggested Activities

Aerobics Class
Tennis or skiing lessons
Ethnic Restaurants
Long quiet walks and talks
Cooking
Movies
Shared Community service projects
Car Repair
Rock Concert
Career visits
Help with homework

ROADBLOCKS TO COMMUNICATION

Blocks are behaviors that hinder rather than facilitate communication. We should be alert to, them in ourselves and others. Common blocks are accusations, rationalizations (ignoring the emotional content of an issue). Irrational statement (sabotaging the conversation), pacifying statements (covering over the other's feelings), and rhetorical questions (pressuring the others to agree to the opinion hidden in the question). Generally, a block in any form tends to discount 'the validity of the feelings, opinions *and* rights of the other person. Blocks may sabotage open communication and get in the way of building self-esteem.

The following common forms of responses to children, employees, friends, intimates and other, usually have negative effects on relationships and communications. When used they deny feelings and lower self-esteem. A person using a roadblock will have a tendency to focus away from the issue at hand and instead invest their energy in a power struggle. Positive alternatives to these roadblocks are active listening techniques such as door openers, probing, paraphrasing and reflective listening. These are only starting points. Each of us has our own style. Be aware of responses that feel most comfortable for you.

DIRECTING. ORDERING. COMMANDING

These messages produce fright, resistance, defensiveness, resentment, and arouse retaliation revenge, and/or rebellion. Such responses teach authoritarianism through discounting the other person's feelings. "You must..." "You have to..." "You will..." "Stop crying." "Try harder."

THREATENING. WARNING, PUNISHING

These messages invite testing and sabotage, while producing anger, resentment, and resistance. They also teach authoritarianism. "If you don't then stop crying. I'll give you something to *cry* about." "You had better or I'll tell your mom."

MORALIZING, PREACHING. OBLIGING

These messages induce guilt, reduce self-esteem, and build generalized resistance to authority. "You should..." "You ought to..." "It is your duty to go to school and do your best."

PERSUADING WITH LOGIC, ARGUING, INSTRUCTING. LECTURING

These invite counter-arguments, imply you're right and they are wrong, increase defensiveness, and reduce openness. "Do you realize..." "Here is why you are wrong..." "That is not right..." "The fact is...." "You must not get involved with drugs because *they* are harmful." "You'll have to get a good job and support yourself."

ROADBLOCKS (contd.)
ADVISING, RECOMMENDING, PROVIDING ANSWERS OR SOLUTIONS

Statements of this nature imply superiority, deprive the receiver of the esteem-building experience of solving their own problem and may encourage dependency. "What I would do is..." "Why don't you talk to your mom about it." "Let me suggest..." "It would be best for you to do your homework before you watch TV." ~

CRITICIZING, NAME-CALLING. BLAMING, EVALUATING. JUDGING NEGATIVELY. DISAPPROVING

These messages lower self-esteem, induce guilt feelings, reduce openness, arouse resentment and retaliation. "You are lazy..." "You are bad..." "You are not thinking straight..." "You really are fouled up..." "You dummy..."

KIDDING, TEASING, MAKING LIGHT OF, JOKING. USING SARCASM

These messages may arouse feelings of rejection, resentment, and hostility. "You think you know it all." "Why don't you burn down the school!" "When did you last read a newspaper?" "Get up on the wrong side of the bed?"

DIAGNOSING, PSYCHOANALYZING, INTERPRETING, READING-IN

These messages are experienced as threatening to privacy and rejecting of the other person's self-perception, arousing anger and defensiveness and possibly causing serious insecurity. "What you need is..." "What's wrong with you is..." "You're just trying to get attention." "You don't really mean that..." -

WITHDRAWING, DIVERTING, AVOIDING, DIGRESSING. SHIFTING

Here one may communicate lack of respect for the other. anxiety *in* the sender. The 'silent treatment' has, *in* addition, a punishing effect. "Let's not talk about it now..." "Not at the dinner table..." "Forget it..." "That reminds me..." "We can discuss it later..."

CROSS-EXAMINING, INTERROGATING, QUESTIONING, PROBING, PRYING

These messages may show interest in what the person is saying, but in fact they ignore the other person's feelings and may communicate distrust. They feel like the "third degree." "Why did you do that?" "Where were you...?" "When are you going to...?"

PRAISING. JUDGING POSITIVELY, APPROVING

These messages are usually well-intended when they are not manipulative. However_ when they are misused they imply that the speaker is in a position to judge the other person's performance. They imply that the next performance may be disapproved, if only by the sender's failure to express approval for the next deed or act. "You've done a good job on that model." "You are a good boy today." "That is a very good drawing..."

ROADBLOCKS (cont'd.)

REASSURING, CONSOLING, EXCUSING, SYMPATHIZING

Though usually intended to reduce the other's pain, this type of message neglects the expression of understanding and empathy for the very pain they are intended to reduce. With very young children, if the reassurance is over optimistic, trust is reduced or the child may learn not to acknowledge pain. "It'll feel better tomorrow." "Don't worry..." "It's not so bad..."

Understanding how we communicate is important. Recognizing the roadblocks we use in our daily conversations is a start in building effective communication skills. Using a reflective listening technique, being open to what the other person is saying, taking time to listen to their words and their body language, and understanding our own biases and perceptions can bring us closer to building strong matches with our Littles. Listed below is important positive communication skill information to substitute for the roadblocks.

BODY LANGUAGE

"Actions speak louder than words." That old saying can remind us that communication is not just words. Our nonverbal language is also very important for effective communication and successful relationships. Show an interest in the speaker and what they are saying by having eye contact and an open face. Do not "fidget" with objects while the other person is speaking. When you are speaking maintain eye contact and use appropriate gestures and smiles. For example, folding your arms across your chest and frowning while a person is speaking to you signals a closed and doubtful attitude towards the speaker or topic.

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a fundamental communication skill. It tells the child you are interested. It involves listening carefully to the words and feelings expressed and repeating these facts in such a way that the speaker knows he or she has been understood. Active listening takes energy. This means "listening to" rather than just hearing. Concentration is vital. Open body language is necessary. Active listening attempts to identify the emotion underlying the words. What is the other person really experiencing? What are they really saying? Active listening requires that the listener reflect back the feelings heard. It means letting the speaker know what you believe they are saying. The listener suspends judgment and prejudice and focuses on the feeling underlying the message. Responding in this way shows you care about the person to whom you are listening.

Active listening includes the following techniques:

PARAPHRASING. The listener, in their own words, states their understanding of what has been heard and asks the speaker to verify or correct this interpretation. Paraphrasing everything is impractical, but it should be practiced when the listener has an uncertainty. Paraphrases may employ such words as, "Do I hear you saying...?" "I believe you mean ...right?" "Sounds like..."

ROADBLOCKS (contd.)

DOOR OPENING. The listener invites the speaker to elaborate. The listener must show interest, and must not allow their own viewpoint or judgments to contaminate the invitation. Examples of door openers are: "Give me an example." "Please tell me more about it." "I'd like to hear more about this." "I'm not sure I understand..."

PROBING. The listener raises a topic that is related to the speaker's statement and asks the speaker to elaborate on that topic. For example: Little: "I like math. The only reason I got a D is that I can hardly hear the teacher." Big: "Have you noticed having trouble catching what other teachers are saying?"

PERCEPTION CHECKING. The listener also pays attention to what is not being said to reach new insights and hunches, then checks the accuracy of these with the speaker. Body language, eye contact, topics systematically avoided and the unmentioned feelings that lie behind the words, are some of the things worth noticing. "Every time you've mentioned your sister today, you've clenched your *fists* and gritted your teeth. I sense a lot of anger. Are you mad at her?"

"I" STATEMENTS

The way we talk to others can either destroy or build their confidence and self-esteem. For most youth, self-esteem is virtually non-existent or is easily destroyed. How we talk to our youth therefore will be an important factor in reinforcing how they feel about themselves.

A good way to think about the difference between ineffective and effective communication is to think of sending either "You" messages or "I" messages

"You" messages are belittling and blaming. They put the responsibility for your feelings on the other person "You make me so mad." "You disappoint me." "Don't talk back to me."

"I" statements are more effective. They let you express your feelings and thoughts directly, honestly and clearly. They are especially helpful in expressing feelings without blaming, accusing or labeling. They allow the listener to assume responsibility for their own behavior. They set an example for effective communication. An "I" message states how you feel, a specific behavior, the effect of the behavior on you and/or what you want. "I felt disappointed when you lied to me about going to school because I thought you trusted me." "I get nervous when you ride your bike without a helmet." "I feel frustrated when..." "I feel happy when..."

PROBING

After the initial "I" statement, reflective response, or nonverbal encourager, what do you say? It is important to remember that children and teenagers do not have the same communication patterns as adults. *Children* do not respond in the same manner. A sigh of relief, a complete change of topic, the beginnings of a smile, an interest in an object, will be the only sign you receive. There are no rules in communication to tell you

when to keep "probing" and when to stop. Each situation is unique as is each individual.

Adultism

If we are to be successful in our work with young people, we have to tackle the pervasive existence of "adultism." Young people's lives are controlled more than those of any other group in society. Children are, by and large, considered the possessions of parents. The adult world also does not consider this treatment of young people as oppressive because we are soaked with it ourselves. We were raised being treated the same way, and therefore we need to hold "adultism" up to a strong light.

Definition

Adultism -, all those behaviors and attitudes which flow from the assumption that adults are better than young people, and entitled to act upon young people in myriad ways without their agreement.

APPENDIX

SECTION II – FORMS

NOTES

**A.E.A.O.N.M.S.
MENTOR/MENTEE AGREEMENT**

MENTOR _____

MENTEE _____

MEETING TIME & DAY _____

BASIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS

COMMITMENTS OF THE MENTEE

- I will meet with my mentor every week.
- I will arrive at the scheduled time.
- I will follow through on the assignments that I agreed to do as part of the Mentoring Program.
- I will conduct myself in an acceptable manner at all times.
- I will follow all the rules and regulations.
- I will see that all parental consent forms are completed and returned as required.
- I will keep my parent(s)/guardian(s) informed about the ways in which my mentor is helping me.

Other _____

COMMITMENTS OF THE MENTOR

- I will meet with my mentee every week.
- I will arrive at the scheduled time.
- I will come prepared to work with my mentee on our agreed upon goals and objectives.
- I will keep an updated journal on my mentee's progress.
- I will make sure that our Action Plan is updated regularly.

Other _____

This is a one-on-one partnership. In order for our work to be successful. We do hereby agree to work diligently to live up to the commitments listed above.

Mentor _____ Date _____

Mentee _____ Date _____