



Mentor Manual



Second Edition

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4-H Mentoring: Youth and Families with Promise
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SECTION ONE

Mentor Training

“Be the one to make a difference in someone’s life.”

Being a mentor will be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. It can also be one of the most challenging. If you approach mentoring without any tools or guides to help you, it may even be frustrating and difficult. This manual is designed to help you develop a good relationship with the youth you will be mentoring. The first section of this manual is designed to help you understand mentoring, your role as a mentor, and the program you will be working in. This manual follows the Mentoring Training workshop that is facilitated by your 4-H YFP Site Coordinator or other trained personnel.

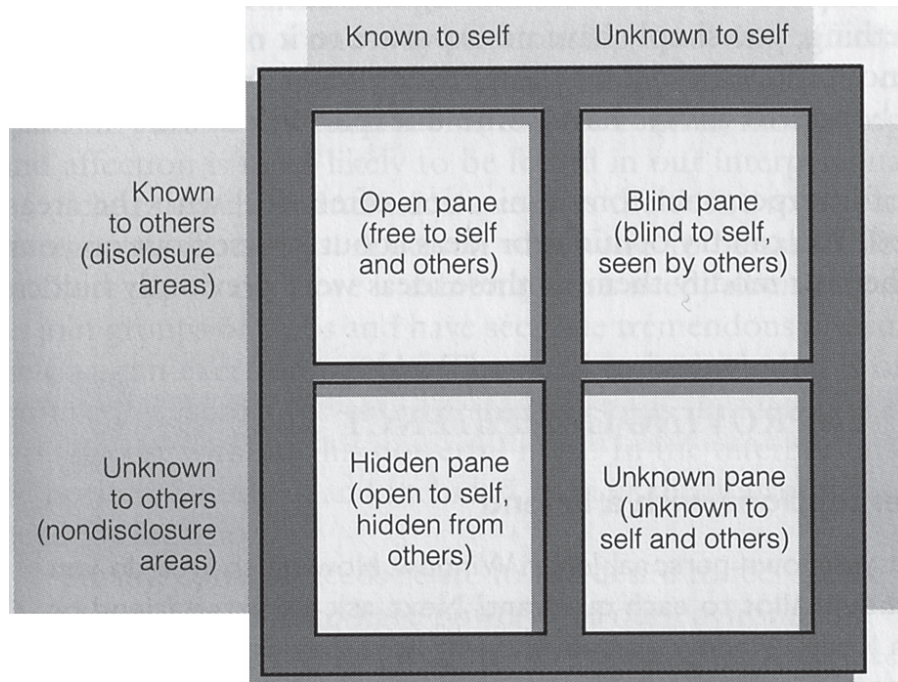
Mentoring: What You Should Know

1. The Relationship: The Basis of Mentoring
2. Understanding Youth
3. Understanding Your Role as Mentor
4. Using the Program

1. The Relationship

Any impact you have on youth will happen through your relationship with them. The relationship is the foundation on which mentoring is based. Building a strong relationship will take time and patience. A good relationship is not built on divulging deep secrets, but comes through empathy and understanding. Although in this relationship, there will be mutual caring, respect and understanding, the youth should always be the main focus.¹

Johari Window



The key to unlocking the door to a relationship with youth is trust. Don't expect him or her to trust you right away. Like any relationship, you need to give your youth time to discover that he or she can trust you. A way to visualize this process is through a model called the Johari Window².

Johari Window: The Process of Self-disclosure and Human Understanding in Relationships

The Johari Window is one of the most useful models describing human interaction because it helps us visualize four levels of knowledge that exist in our relationships. In each relationship, certain information is available to or hidden from each person. Information access or denial changes during the time spent together. This increases or decreases the amount of trust that develops in the relationship. What we know about others is gained mainly by self-disclosure and interpersonal communication.

The Open Pane represents your open self. It contains information that you are willing to share or is easily observable about you. During the first meeting, little is usually disclosed and this area is small. But as you spend time together and get to know each other, this area increases in size. Your name, physical characteristics, age, classes, likes, and dislikes are examples of the open area.

The Blind Pane represents your blind self. It contains information about you that others see, but you are not aware of. Some people are oblivious to their own faults and virtues or nervous habits.

The Hidden Pane is self-knowledge that is hidden from others. It contains personal and private information that you know about yourself, but do not want others to know. We are very selective about whom we share this information with. As a relationship grows, we share more information from this area. Embarrassing moments, fears, or events we regret are included in this area.

The Unknown Pane is information about which neither you nor others are aware. Education and life experience may help bring some of the mysteries contained in this pane to the surface. Things you didn't think you were capable of doing or reactions to incidents you did not expect are in this area.

When we gain more trust from someone or give more trust to someone, the size of the hidden and open areas vary. When disclosure increases, people reveal more information about themselves, but they also discover information about themselves. A mentoring relationship is dependant on mutual trust and on helping build a relationship that is capable of disclosure.

Who Do You Trust?

Think of someone you trust:

Why do you trust them? (List specific characteristics you can identify in the person you listed above.)

To Have an Effective Mentoring Relationship, Youth AND Mentors Need:

- **Commitment**
- **Mutual trust**
- **Understanding**
- **To feel liked**
- **Respect**
- **A connection**
- **A sense of humor**

A Mentor is a:

- guide
- friend
- cheerleader
- listener
- confidant
- self-esteem booster
- sounding board
- brother/sister
- partner
- wise and trusted teacher
- coach
- visionary “seer”
- link to other cultures, attitudes, and behaviors
- tutor
- role model

A Mentor is NOT a:

- savior
- foster parent
- therapist
- parole officer
- cool peer

“Make a habit of two things: to help, or at least to do no harm.”
– Hippocrates

2. Understanding Youth

Before you can teach me...you have to reach me.

For you to effectively help youth, you need to understand what he or she is going through in life. A mentor that understands youth has a better chance of connecting with them. If you connect with the youth, you will be able to help them connect with other adults, including their parents. The following is an outline of social, emotional, physical, and mental characteristics of youth between the ages of 8-13.

- **Social**
- **Emotional**
- **Physical**
- **Mental**

Social Characteristics

Outside Influences

8-10 years:

- Team games become popular
- Can be very competitive
- Worshipping heroes, TV stars, and sports figures is common

Personal Issues

8-10 years:

- Are very concerned about what others say and think of them

Friends are very important

8-10 years:

- Are choosy about their friends
- Being accepted by friends is very important

11-13 years:

- Interested in earning their own money

11-13 years:

- Have a tendency to manipulate others

11-13 years:

- Cliques start to develop outside of school
- Crushes on members of the opposite sex are common (girls first)
- Feel a real need to conform; to dress and behave like others to fit in

Emotional Characteristics

8-10 years:

- Are sensitive to praise and recognition
- Feelings are hurt easily
- Conflicts can arise between friends' rules and parents' rules

11-13 years:

- Are sensitive to praise and recognition
- Feelings are hurt easily
- Conflicts can arise between friends' rules and parents' rules
- Are caught between being a child and being an adult
- Loud behavior and showing off can hide a lack of confidence
- Look at the world more objectively
- Look at parents more subjectively; more critically

Physical Characteristics

8-10 years:

- Are very active and need frequent breaks from tasks for fun
- Bone growth is not complete
- Early maturers may be upset with their size
- May tend to be accident prone

11-13 years:

- Small muscle coordination is good
- Interests in art, crafts, models, and music are popular
- Early maturers may be upset with their size
- Are very concerned with their appearance and self conscious
- Diet and sleep habits can be bad, resulting in low energy levels
- Girls may begin menstruation and may begin sexual activity

Mental Characteristics

8-10 years:

- The idea of fairness becomes a big issue
- Are eager to answer questions
- Are very curious and are collectors of everything
- Interest may jump to other objects quickly
- Want more independence, but know they need guidance/support
- Wide discrepancies in reading ability

11-13 years:

- Tend to be perfectionists
- May try too much and feel frustrated or guilty
- Want more independence, but know they need guidance/support
- Can have a longer attention span

Social Issues Facing Youth

- Family: economic, lifestyle, single parent
- Teen pregnancy
- Gangs
- Drugs
- Pressure to fit in
- Pressure to succeed in school and athletics
- Eating disorders
- Bullies

Personal Issues Facing Youth

- Depression
- Physical appearance
- Suicide
- Losses
- Identity

The Asset Approach: 40 Elements of Healthy Development

The Search Institute³

External Assets

Support

Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, appreciate, and accept them.

Empowerment

Young people need to feel valued and valuable. This happens when youth feel safe and respected.

Boundaries and Expectations

Young people need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to do their best.

Constructive Use of Time

Young people need opportunities – outside of school – to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults.

The Asset Approach: 40 Elements of Healthy Development

The Search Institute³

Internal Assets

Positive Values

Young people need to develop strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices.

Positive Identity

Young people need to believe in their own self-worth and to feel that they have control over the things that happen to them.

Commitment to Learning

Young people need a sense of the lasting importance of learning and a belief in their own abilities.

Social Competencies

Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions, and to cope with new situations.

The Mirror

Imagine looking into a mirror that only showed your faults (real or perceived).

What would you start to believe about yourself?



When mentors view youth positively, their view can influence the youth's view of himself or herself. A mentor's view can even change the way youth think parents, peers, teachers, and friends view them.

A mentor's positive view can gradually be incorporated into the youth's belief of who he or she is.

What type of mirror will you be for the youth you mentor?



3. Understanding Your Role as a Mentor

“We may never achieve what we want to accomplish if we don’t have someone in our life who has already found what we are striving for.”

– Orel Hershiser

1,000 students were asked to name their hero:

- 21% no one
- 16% a parent
- 15% an athlete
- 6.8% a religious leader
- 6.4% a musician
- 5.5% a friend
- 4.7% an actor
- 3.2% a teacher
- 0.7% a business leader
- 0.3% a politician
- 0.2% an activist

Who was your role model?

Successful Role Models

Successful and enduring mentor relationships are defined less in terms of a mentor's positive virtues or any particular activities he or she engages in than by the **absence of disappointing characteristics**.

Qualities of a Good Mentor

- Is an advocate for youth
- Uses good communication skills
- Provides new experiences
- Shows empathy
- Has a sense of humor
- Is consistent

Advocate

Advocate: noun. intermediary, speaker, motivator, adviser, patron, vindicator. A person who pleads another's cause or in support of.

– Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

As an advocate you can:

- Stand up for youth
- Tell people positive things about youth (in front of them)
- Give them options

"He tells my parents how I took every class he taught. He tells them, 'You have a special boy here.' Embarrassed, I look at my feet. Before we leave, I hand my professor a present, a tan briefcase with his initials on the front. I bought this the day before at a shopping mall. I didn't want to forget him. Maybe I didn't want him to forget me."

– Mitch Albom, Tuesdays With Morrie

Communication

Good communication requires effort and practice. It is the basis for building good relationships. In mentoring, clear communication and understanding will make the difference in how successful your mentoring experience is.

An important part of communication is the ability to listen. Someone once said, "We have two ears and one mouth...that should let us know that we were made to listen twice as much as we talk." Your youth needs you to listen to him or her with good active listening.

How well do you listen?

COMMUNICATION CONTINUED

Traditional Responses

When you listen to someone, there are several ways you can respond. Some are less effective than others, such as giving unsolicited advice, or telling a similar story that has happened to you. These “traditional” responses can limit our communication and make the person talking feel misunderstood or unimportant. Traditional responses that limit communication are:

- **The Judge** - This person judges whatever is said. Youth may say, “I don’t have any friends” and Judge responds, “You have a bad attitude. If you were more optimistic, people would like you.”
- **The “Oh Yeah, I’ve Been There”** - This person always has their own story to tell. Youth says, “I got my leg cut once.” Oh Yeah says, “Wow, I tore my whole knee cap off.”
- **The Ignorer** - This person just doesn’t listen. They may say, “Oh that’s nice,” or they may even change the subject.
- **The Supporter** - This person agrees whether it is right or not. Youth says, “My teacher is a jerk.” Supporter says, “Yeah, teachers are jerks. You don’t need that.”
- **The Advice Giver** - This person likes to tell others what they should do. Youth tells of a situation at home and the Advice Giver is anxious to tell them how to solve it.
- **The Doctor** - This person responds by telling people “why” they do things or feel they way they do about what is happening to them.
- **The Questioner** - This person questions the person about what they think should have been done. Youth says, “I got an F.” Questioner says, “Well, did you study?”
- **The “It Will Be OK”** - This person responds by telling people they will feel better if they just don’t worry about the problem.

Advanced Listening Skills

Where “traditional” responses limit communication, advanced listening skills enhance communication and help the person talking feel like he or she is really being listened to. In mentoring, good listening skills can enhance development of the relationship and be a very positive influence on youth. A good listener should:

- **Use Empathy: Listening and Restating**
Restate what you think the youth said to make sure you understood.
- **Request Clarification**
Ask the youth to explain vague statements.
- **Own Thoughts and Feelings: “I” Statements**
Say “I feel frustrated when you are late,” instead of “You make me mad because you are always late.” Using “I” statements helps you take responsibility for your own feelings.

Providing New Experiences

The Zone of Proximal Development⁴

The Zone of Proximal Development theory explains a psychological stretch. It's beyond what a young person can do on his or her own, but within range of what he or she can do with the help or guidance of an adult. That is what mentoring is all about. You will have opportunities to provide youth with new experiences and possibilities.

Humor

“You can turn painful situations around through laughter. If you can find humor in anything, you can survive it.”

– Bill Cosby

Your relationship with your youth will grow and develop if you can add a sense of humor to your qualities. When working with youth, a sense of humor is essential.

Prescription for Developing Your Sense of Humor by Dr. Laurence Peter⁵

1. Adopt an attitude of playfulness.
2. Think funny. See the funny side of every situation.
3. Laugh at the incongruities in situations involving yourself and others.
4. Only laugh with others for what they do rather than what they are.
5. Laugh at yourself, not in derision (disdain), but with self-acceptance.
6. Take yourself lightly. Take your responsibilities to others seriously.
7. Make others laugh.
8. A sense of humor is more than laughter. It delivers greater rewards than merely being entertaining. A sense of humor sees the fun in everyday experiences. It is more important to have fun than to be funny.

Empathy

Another important quality of a good mentor is empathy. There are many situations in working with youth when empathy is absolutely necessary for the survival of the relationship. Developing empathy requires knowing what empathy really is.

- **It is not sympathy.** Most people do not want anyone to do things with or for them because they feel sorry for them. Youth are no exception.
- **It is understanding.** Youth want mentors who can see and feel what they see and feel. That does not mean agreement with everything, only understanding and patience.
- **It requires a balance between emotion and thought.**
- **It involves restating.** Youth need to hear what you think they are going through so they know you are trying to empathize and understand their feelings and views.

Consistency

Specific qualities youth want in role models may change from youth to youth. However, what is always listed as the most important characteristic is **consistency**.

Many of the youth you will work with have had numerous disappointments in their lives. Your youth needs you to keep appointments and to give him or her a constant and consistent relationship that he or she can count on.

Hippocrates' wise advice applies especially to your role as a mentor of youth. "Make a habit of two things: to help, or at least to do no harm." Be consistent for your youth.

4. Using the Program

4-H Mentoring: Youth and Families with Promise Goals

- Improve academic performance
- Increase interpersonal skills
- Strengthen family relationships

Components

- One-to-one mentoring
- 4-H clubs and activities
- Family Night Out with families and mentors
- Grandmentors

Program Expectations/Commitments

- Meet once a week, one-to-one
- Family Night Out once a month
- 4-H once a month
- Monthly reporting
- Monthly training sessions

Program Tools

- Mentor Manual
- Youth Manual
- Parent Guide
- CONNECT! Curriculum
- Bi-monthly group activities planned by 4-H YFP staff
- 4-H materials for projects

Mentor Protection

- Insurance to, during, and from all 4-H YFP activities (secondary liability insurance)
- Additional training as needed
- Continual staff support

Mentor Legal/Liability Issues Awareness

- Confidentiality - Respect and keep information confident
- Don't take youth to your home
- Respect the values and privacy of your youth's family
- Notify parents and get their permission for each activity or interaction
- Be wise in planning activities
- Exercise caution
- Report any suspicion of the following to the Site Coordinator:
 - abuse
 - threat of suicide
 - threat of homicide or threat to another

Mentor Goals

- Meet on a regular basis, once a week, for approximately one year
- Provide "asset" specific activities for each visit
- Help youth complete at least one 4-H project that has county fair involvement
- Bring youth to the quarterly service projects
- Have youth and family attend monthly FNO
- Become fully trained by attending monthly training sessions

Reports

- Internet or hardcopy monthly report of time spent with youth
- Yearly mentor survey

Your 4-H YFP Staff

Place contact/address label for
the 4-H YFP Site Coordinator

Place contact/address label
for the Extension Agent

SECTION TWO

Mentor Companion to the Youth Manual

The Mentor Companion Section will give you tips and guidelines to help youth with each section of the Youth Manual they will receive. It is designed to help you both become better acquainted and to start building friendship and trust. In using this section, you will also gain insight into how to work with youth and how to start becoming a good mentor. The next page outlines the layout of the Companion Section and defines how to use it.

Mentor Companion Section Layout

Description of Youth Manual Page/Directions for Use

Tips or information to help you use the Youth Manual

Additional tips or information to help you use the Youth Manual

Actual Youth Manual Page

Further information or instructions

Make sure your youth has your contact information. Together, you need to set up your first meeting and plan what you will do.

Mentor Contact Information

My Mentor's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

The First Meeting

Date of first meeting with my mentor: _____

Time of meeting: _____

What we will do: _____

DISCUSS with youth that the word “mentor” is synonymous with “friend” and that is what you hope to be. You will help and support him/her. You can tell youth the history of King Odysseus, Mentor, and Telemachus if you want.

When the youth trusts you, he/she will see you as an advisor and teacher. This will not happen without a trusting relationship.

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is someone who believes in you and wants to help you become who you want to be.

What I Want from My Mentor

2

“A mentor is an individual, usually older, always more experienced, who helps and guides another individual’s development. This guidance is not done for personal gain.”

– F. John Reh
Management Specialist

ASK the youth how he/she came to be in the mentoring program. Did he/she request a mentor? Why? Or, why was he/she referred to this program?

ASSURE the youth you are excited to be a mentor and “hang out” with him/her. If your youth did not want a mentor, it could take some time to open up to you. The youth may even be resentful that you are working with him/her.

What You Can Expect from 4-H Mentoring: Youth and Families with Promise

A Mentor

Your Mentor will:

- Meet with you at least three times a month, which could include Family Night Out, 4-H, or other community activities.
- Keep appointments and be on time to pick you up and drop you off.
- Talk to and work with your parent(s)/guardian(s) to help you.
- Provide opportunities for you to build assets (skills) and help you be successful in school, with friends, and at home.
- Be consistent! He or she will be someone you can count on for help, advice, and friendship.
- Notify you if there are changes in their life that will affect you or end your meetings with them.
- Plan safe activities that are always in public places.

One-to-One Activities

You and your mentor will plan your activities together based on your wants and needs. They may help you with school work, take you to sports games or other activities, or just hang out with you.

3

SHARE with youth why you wanted to become a mentor.

ASK yourself what you have to offer this young person. Look at the list of qualities a mentor is supposed to have. Do you fit the profile? Where do you need to improve so that you can be the best mentor possible?

CHALLENGE yourself to improve in one or more of these areas and practice with the youth.

USE resources (such as books or the Internet) to find out more about mentoring.

DISCUSS with the youth some examples of things you will be doing in each of the areas. Be sure to remind them their families will be invited to Family Night Out and maybe other activities. Be positive and excited about what is planned through the program.

TALK about realistic vs. unrealistic expectations. Remind them that you are a friend, a support, and someone to help them with school and with their family and friends. You are not a substitute parent or school counselor.

Family Night Out

About once a month, your whole family is invited to Family Night Out for fun activities that might include a light meal. Family Night Out helps strengthen family relationships and allows you to get to know other youth in 4-H YFP. Your mentor is also invited to attend these activities with you and your family.

4-H Activities

4-H YFP is part of the 4-H program through Cooperative Extension. If you think of 4-H as things like cows and cooking, you are partially right. 4-H has grown to include many more projects such as computers, art, aerospace, health, and lots more! You and your mentor will be invited to regular 4-H activities to learn new skills and have fun! You may even enter a project in the county fair to earn ribbons and money.

Community Activities

Your 4-H YFP Site Coordinator will organize service projects in your community where your participation is expected. There may also be opportunities to participate in sports, arts, or other activities that will help you learn new skills and have fun.

4

Ask what your youth expects you to do for him/her. Compare your expectations and discuss what will or will not happen.

REVIEW the list in the youth's manual. Keep the list positive and explain any items they may not understand. Be sure both of you know what the rules and expectations are.

EXPLAIN to your youth this will not be a one-way relationship. It will take work and cooperation from both of you to make your relationship successful and enjoyable.

DECIDE together if there are any additional do's or don'ts you want to add to your lists.

What 4-H YFP and Your Mentor Expect from You

- Help your mentor plan activities and keep in mind you have a budget.
- Come to Family Night Out and the other planned activities.
- Be willing to try new things and have new experiences.
- Keep appointments with your mentor and be on time.
- Call your mentor in advance if plans change. Do not cancel at the last minute without a good reason.
- Show interest in your mentor and appreciate the time volunteered to you and the program.
- Only invite friends if you and your mentor are planning a group activity and your mentor agrees a friend can come. Your friends are not covered under our insurance policy, and your mentor is volunteering to spend time with you, not your friends.
- Respect yourself, your mentor, and others with appropriate words and actions at all activities.

DISCUSS these three “rules” with youth and explain why they are important. It is also important that parents know you will adhere to these guidelines and that the safety of both the youth and the mentor are of utmost concern to the 4-H YFP program.

Some Things You Should Be Careful to Observe

1. No overnight activities (camping or slumber parties).
2. Don't be alone with your mentor unless you are in a public place with others nearby.
3. Spend time doing constructive things that allow you to talk and learn from one another. Movies and video games should be kept to a minimum.

Contact your parents or 4-H YFP Site Coordinator if you have any problems or concerns.

ESTABLISH some specific ground rules for your scheduled meetings and activities as appropriate. The rules on the previous page are the beginning of setting the ground rules for your mentor/youth relationship.

KEEP in mind this is a team exercise to complete with dual input from both of you. WRITE down class schedules, work commitments, after-school activities, etc. on a blank calendar to compare where each of you have free time to choose from for meetings. SHARE a copy of your schedules with each other.

Establishing Ground Rules

Complete the following questions with your mentor:

- How often will we meet? _____
- When will we meet (time/day)? _____
- What happens if one of us has to cancel? _____

- What is appropriate behavior while we are together?

Music _____

Language _____

Attitude _____
- What activities are appropriate for us to participate in together?

Have youth answer these six questions. Then tell them the correct answer.

You and Your Mentor Getting to Know Each Other

First impressions are interesting things. Have you ever met someone thinking they were a certain way, then as you got to know them, they turned out to be totally different? You really can't judge a book (or a person) by its cover!

Answer the following questions about your mentor. In the first column, guess the answers based on your first impression of him or her. Then interview your mentor and fill in the correct answer in the second column.

Question	The Answer You THINK is Right	The CORRECT Answer
1. What is your mentor's favorite type of music?		
2. What is your mentor's favorite kind of movie?		
3. What is/was your mentor's favorite subject in school?		
4. What is your mentor's favorite food?		
5. What kind of car would your mentor like to drive?		
6. What does your mentor do in his or her spare time?		

Fill out the six questions on page 9 of the Youth Manual. Do this without the youth giving any input. Then have the youth write the correct answers.

DISCUSS with the youth the answers. Emphasize the importance of not making judgements based on first impressions.

You and Your Mentor Getting to Know Each Other

Have your mentor answer the following questions about you. In the first column, your mentor will guess the answers based on his or her first impression of you. After your mentor guesses, have him or her interview you and fill in the correct answers in the second column.

Question	The Answer You THINK is Right	The CORRECT Answer
1. What is your youth's favorite type of music?		
2. What is your youth's favorite kind of movie?		
3. What is/was your youth's favorite subject in school?		
4. What is your youth's favorite food?		
5. What kind of car would your youth like to drive when old enough?		
6. What does your youth do in his or her spare time?		

Together, discuss ideas of some things that the youth and you would like to do together. Include some new, positive activities the youth may not have experienced. You are giving the youth a chance to expand his or her interest level and find new skills where he or she can find success. This also helps with social skills to give the youth more “common ground” with other people.

Planning Activities with Your Mentor

Having a mentor is a great opportunity to try new things and learn many new skills. Expect your activities to be positive, productive, and fun!

Discuss with your mentor things you would like to do together.

Recreational Interests

Some ideas of active things you might do together are: archery, roller-blading, baseball/softball, basketball, hiking, fishing, theater arts, volleyball, music, snow sports, swimming, football, tennis, or bicycling.

What are you and your mentor interested in doing together?

Let the youth fill out the questions on page 11. After he or she has completed the page, ask them to share with you if they want. The Personal Goals section will help you know which of the CONNECT! Curriculum activities will be best to start doing together.

Planning Activities with Your Mentor

Personal Interests

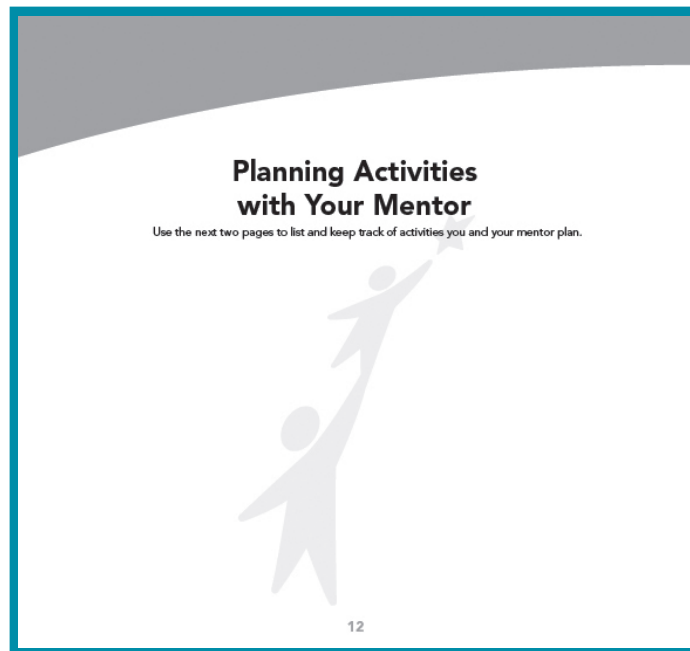
Some ideas of other interests or hobbies you could do with your mentor are: auto mechanics, cooking, ceramics/pottery, computers, crafts, electronics, gardening, collecting (insects, cards), leather crafts, art, animals, photography, model building, scrapbooking, sewing, wood working, and writing. What activities would you like to do with your mentor?

Personal Goals

- Do better in school?
 - Get involved in school activities?
 - Receive help completing homework?
 - Learn to enjoy reading more?
 - Plan ahead and make better decisions?
 - Receive help in making and keeping good friends?
 - Get help in avoiding negative peer pressure and fights?
- What other ways would you like your mentor to help you?

Together, plan some activities and have the youth write them down. Refer to these two pages during the time you spend together to list more activities and to let the youth have an opportunity to look back over some of the things that you have done together.

You may want to keep a record of activities in this manual, so the youth can see record keeping, or journaling, is important. This will also help you keep track of what you have done for future planning with your youth and reporting to the 4-H YFP program.



At this stage in your relationship, neither of you may be prepared to answer these questions. If it is uncomfortable, talk about how you think other people would respond or any other possible answers you can think of to the questions.

Problems?

If any of the following problems arise, you **NEED TO CONTACT** your 4-H YFP Site Coordinator or County Extension agent immediately!

- If your mentor repeatedly misses appointments.
- If you are moving or have a new phone number.
- If you, your parents, or your mentor is confused or worried about what is expected.
- If you are offended or uncomfortable by something your mentor or someone in 4-H YFP has said or done. Get help with this, don't just pull away.

Don't Hesitate!

Be sure to talk to your parents if you have concerns!

You or your parents should also call the Site Coordinator.

Place contact/address label for the 4-H YFP Site Coordinator here.

14

Many youth have had people close to them leave them. Sometimes, young people can become very attached to their mentors and will have a difficult time letting go. Whatever their feelings are about making this change, please do all you can to make the experience a positive one.

Changing

Eventually, you may feel less interested in having a mentor. One or both of you may start to see the need for a change in the mentoring relationship and look forward to something different. This does happen and it is actually a very good sign. It is an indication that you are growing.

If or when this happens, here are some things you might do:

TALK with your mentor about how you are feeling and how your relationship is changing.

TALK about the ways you have gained confidence, what you have learned, and how you can handle new situations.

GIVE your mentor feedback. Tell him or her what you like or don't like about mentoring.

KEEP in mind that the relationship is progressing as it should.

Review the suggested guidelines on the following page for Ending Positively. Use this page to emotionally prepare yourself and your youth for ending or changing.

Moving On

Most mentoring relationships end sometime. You and your mentor may go separate ways. You both may want to keep in touch. Here are some ideas that will help you say, "So long".

TALK with your mentor about what happens next and how your relationship can be in the future.

IDENTIFY other formal or informal mentors for yourself.

THANK your mentor and celebrate all the good things the mentoring relationship has brought into your life.

WRITE a thank you note/letter expressing your feelings about your experience in the mentoring program and how you feel toward your mentor.

Ending Positively

Suggested guidelines for terminating relationships with the youth:

1. As soon as you know when you are leaving, tell the youth. Share with the youth some of the feelings you have about leaving. Help him/her to understand you are not leaving because you do not like him or her. Help the youth to see you are leaving to go back home, take a job, get married, or whatever the situation might be.
2. When you get within about a month of the time when you will be leaving, start to gradually lengthen the time between your visits and telephone contacts.
3. During your last several visits, discuss the youth's perception of the goals you have accomplished together. After the youth has shared his or her perceptions, share some of your own.
4. As appropriate, share some of your feelings of sadness as the time comes closer for the active relationship to end.
5. Discuss with the youth some possible future, hypothetical situation, asking them how they might handle a specific situation, i.e., peers offering them alcohol or drugs, invitations to participate in some unlawful activity, or feeling like Mom and Dad do not care.
6. Invite your youth to discuss with you their future plans.
7. Arrange to have someone take photos of the two of you together. Get the photos developed and give one to your youth.

8. Discuss with the youth and possibly the parents/guardian, where they might get assistance in the future, if the need arises.
9. During the last visit with the youth, try to be very upbeat. Review accomplishments he/she has made. If you are willing and able to continue contact, share that information with the youth and their parent/guardian.
10. If by chance the youth does not show up for the last visit, try every way you can to have a last face-to-face visit.

Some behavior you might see exhibited by the youth as they try to manage their own feelings about the relationship terminating:

- Some regression in acceptable behaviors.
- Anger that might be directed toward you as a mentor or the 4-H YFP program.
- Missing some appointments.
- Wanting to terminate the relationship prior to your leaving.

(Ending Positively by Dr. Glen O. Jenson)

It is best to know, up front, how long you plan to be around as a mentor. Make sure the youth knows how long they can count on you. Be honest and direct with them. This will make transitions in the relationship more acceptable.

Talk about some of the “change” issues listed in the Youth Manual. Discover together the best way to change or end your relationship. Send a note or have a celebration. Make it special so the youth knows you care and wish them the best.

Notes

1. Rhodes, J. (2002). *Stand by me: The risks and rewards of mentoring today's youth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
2. Luft, J. (1970). *Group processes: An introduction to group dynamics*. Palo Alto, CA: National Press.
3. Benson, P. L., Galbraith, J., & Espeland, J. (1998). *What kids need to succeed: Proven, practical ways to raise good kids*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.
4. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher mental processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
5. Peter, L. J. (1987). *The laughter prescription*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

Youth Contact Information

My Youth's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name(s): _____

Family Address: _____

Grandmentor's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____



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