

Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Training Manual Contents

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Portions Of Manual Are From Or Adapted From
Lighthouse Ministries Mentoring Program
Mentor's Training Manual

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Dear Mentor Trainee,

Welcome to the Elevate Your G.A.M.E. mentoring program!

Mentoring is a critical component for helping students develop their potential. In the words of Bill Milliken (founder and president of Communities in Schools), **"Programs don't change children - relationships do."** Proverbs 27:17 says, **"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another"** (NIV). Since mentoring is such a critical element of this program, it is imperative that we, mentors, understand this and fulfill our roles with a sense of extreme importance. We need to believe that what we do as mentors can have a lifelong and eternal impact on each mentee and those that are and will be in this person's sphere of influence: their friends, siblings, parents, future spouse and future children.

Mentoring can start a chain reaction of a multitude of lives being changed and directed down the path of wholeness, empowering them to fulfill all the potential with which they have been endowed. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that we take full advantage of the opportunity to not only shape a young person's life but the lives of many others.

It is for these reasons, that we have put together this training manual and training seminar to ensure that all of us are thoroughly equipped and empowered to be excellent mentors. We must first "elevate our game" before we will be able to help our mentees elevate theirs.

We look forward to working with you in this challenging and exciting work of developing young adults into leaders who pursue excellence in all areas of their lives and lead others to do the same.

For the Students,

The Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Team

The Mission

Mission Statement Of Elevate Your G.A.M.E.

**To lift urban students to a higher level in their
Grades, Attendance and Maturity
To Empower them to be leaders
Who bring about positive change
In their schools, communities
And the world.**

Program Goals and Outcomes

Motto: Lifting Students to a Higher Level

Goals:

1. **To motivate and challenge students to excel**, to rise to a level of excellence in attendance, academics and leadership.
2. **To motivate and challenge students to elevate others**, so that they encourage others to rise to a higher level in attendance, academics and relationships by word and example.
3. **To motivate and challenge students to affect change** in their families, campus and community through servant leadership.

Summary of Goals:

Students will improve in their Grades, Attendance and Maturity. This will give them Empowerment to elevate themselves, their families, fellow students and their communities.

Outcomes:

1. G - Grades

- 1.1 Raise grade level in at least one subject per semester (if student received a "C" grade or lower in the subject in the previous semester)
- 1.2 Strive to reach and maintain a 3.0 grade point average or higher each year
- 1.3 Identify a specific college, university or post-high school institution to enroll in (by the spring semester of the 11th grade)

2. A - Attendance

- 2.1 Demonstrate self-discipline and faithfulness by having no more than 2 school absences and 2 tardies per semester
- 2.2 Demonstrate employability by having no more than 2 club absences and 2 tardies per semester

3. M - Maturity

- 3.1 Grow in at least one positive character quality each year.
- 3.2 Maintain substance abstinence (cigarettes, alcohol, drugs)
- 3.3 Participate in at least one service project per semester

4. E - Empowerment

- 4.1 Grow in being empowered to be a leader who brings about positive change.
- 4.2 Share with mentor one way s/he has contributed to bringing about a positive change in the school campus at the end of the year
- 4.3 Share with mentor one way s/he has contributed to bringing about a positive change in her/his community at the end of the year

The Results of Mentoring

In a study of mentoring, Public/Private Ventures conducted an experimental evaluation of **Big Brother/Big Sister programs** and found that a mentoring experience made a tangible difference in the lives of young people. The study identified several positive results:

- **Higher Grades**
- **Improved Attendance**
- **70% Less Likely to Use Drugs**
- **27% Less Likely to Use Alcohol**
- **Less Assaultive**
- **Much Better Parental Relationships**

According to a survey of mentoring programs serving juvenile offenders completed by Prison Fellowship, mentoring is:

- **The single most effective strategy for building resiliency within at risk youth**
- **The single most effective strategy for curbing destructive behavior**
- **The attitude anecdote for youth - improves attitudes by 401%**
- **The active ingredient in curbing criminal behavior - reduces recidivism by 80%**

Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Improvement Results School Year 2014 - 2015

Grades:

Percentage of students who said they improved in at least one class: 86%

Classes in which they improved: anatomy, physiology, chemistry, earth science, economics, English, history, U.S. Government, geometry, science, AP Spanish, biology, calculus, AP Math, and Spanish.

Maturity:

Percentage of students who said they improved in their maturity: 88%

Character qualities they developed included: respect, honesty, understanding, gratefulness, trust, determination, patience, responsibility, optimism, open-mindedness, confidence, tolerance, listening skills, attentiveness, sharing, kindness, etiquette, social skills, self-control.

Relationships that improved included relationships with: parents, siblings, teachers, and schoolmates.

Empowerment:

Percentage of students who said they were empowered to be leaders: 90%

The Mentor

Mentor Characteristics

▲Learns from failures
▲Enables others to develop their potential
▲Pursues excellence ▲Diligent ▲Serves others
▲Pace setter ▲Enthusiastic ▲Disciplined ▲Motivated
▲Compassionate ▲Excellent communicator ▲Goal setter
▲Builds others up ▲Encourages others ▲Influences others
▲Visionary ▲Confident ▲Bold ▲Upright character ▲Integrity
▲Honesty ▲Faithful ▲Trustworthy ▲Perseverance ▲Respectful

Mentor Expectations

Mentors will be expected to:

- Faithfully meet with mentees at appointed times
- Fulfill commitment to the program and to his/her mentees for a year
- Actively recruit others to be mentors
- Adhere to the guidelines of confidentiality and wisdom
- Attend the initial and ongoing training sessions
- Submit to the authority of program leaders
- Conduct oneself in a mature and professional manner
- Speak words of affirmation and encouragement to the mentees
- Submit periodic evaluations on students to the director

What is a Mentor's Role?

The overall role of the mentor in this program is to motivate and inspire students to move from point "m" (mediocre) to point "e" (excellent) in the area of their grades, attendance, maturity (character) and empowerment (leadership).

Being a Mentor has several role components, as follows:

Role Model. Your youth will not just hear your words. They will be watching everything you do. Actions really do speak louder than words. Your actions will be the real teacher for the youth. How you treat people, how trustworthy, consistent, and loyal you are, how hard you work, and how you enjoy your life will all speak volumes to your youth.

Coach. A good coach comes with experience, knows the rules of the game, knows how to win at the game, and has a deep desire for his/her team to win. In like manner, a Mentor comes with life experience, knows the rules of living wisely, knows how to "win" at life (living, working, and interacting), and wants his/her youth to be successful. A good coach knows his team's strengths and weaknesses, and with that empowers them to win. A good Mentor sees the youth's strengths and weaknesses, and empowers them to win.

Friend. This develops as the relationship blossoms. It is somewhat easy to be a friend to a 9 year old. It is unreasonable to go up to an 18 year old and say "I'm your new friend." In the mind of the 18 year old, that has yet to be determined. Show this young person that you are a person who cares about others, who is willing to invest time and focus on them, and that you have good things to offer in a friendship. It will develop from there.

Supporter. Storms will come into the lives of virtually all youth. There will be conflicts with friends, family, employers, home staff and school staff. There may be depression or fears (reasonable and unreasonable), and varying amounts of self-doubt. It is important at these times to listen to them without judging or criticizing them, and not try to "fix" the situation. Support means listening, encouraging and affirming them, providing wise counsel, and praying for them.

What A Mentor Is Not

- Parent
- A Social Worker
- A Legal Guardian
- A Probation Officer
- A Playmate
- A Professional Counselor
- A Financier
- A Law Enforcement Officer

The Guidelines

Mentor/Mentee Relationship Parameters

1. Mentors are not allowed to transport school students (including their mentees). From time to time the program will schedule field trips for the students. In this case, transportation will be provided by authorized personnel and vehicles of the hosting school district or professionally hired transportation.
2. The mentor is never allowed to be alone in a closed area with a student.
3. Mentors will be matched with mentees who are of the same gender. Mentors and mentees are not allowed to change partners. Only the program director in consultation with the mentor will make changes when necessary.
4. Mentors can and are encouraged to call their mentees on a regular basis.
5. Mentors can and are encouraged to send e-mail or mail letters to their mentees.
6. Mentors can visit the homes of their mentees when a parent or guardian is present (see note below).
7. Mentors can meet with their mentees in public places with permission from parents or guardians (see note below).
8. Mentors should not give money to mentees. Modest gifts given for appropriate occasions are acceptable.

Note: Elevate Your G.A.M.E. and the hosting agency is not responsible in any way (legal or otherwise) for any direct contact mentors may have with mentees outside of the confines of the program that is conducted at the site of the program.

Mentor Code of Conduct

Dos

1. Do strive for mutual respect.
2. Do take what your student says seriously.
3. Do report any suspected child abuse immediately to the program director.
4. Do be warm and relational and praise the student when deserved.
5. Do set an example of a healthy lifestyle.
6. Do share with the student and communicate. Be appropriately transparent.
7. Do appreciate any growth.
8. Do ask questions and obtain information. Be a good listener. Show attention and concern.
9. Do remember to be punctual.
10. Do be your mentee's friend, motivator, supporter, advisor, advocate and role model.
11. Do exhibit maturity and excellence in speech, dress and behavior.

Don'ts

1. Don't give into the student's pressure to do something you feel may be wrong or against the program or school's regulations.
2. Don't overreact when something offensive is said.
3. Don't share specifics about your student or specifics of what your student has communicated to you except with authorized school faculty (i.e., principal or counselor).
4. Don't have excessive physical contact with any of the students. Handshakes and side hugs are acceptable.
5. Don't use alcohol or tobacco products when you are with the students.
6. Don't use profane language when you are with the students.
7. Don't judge the student and her/his family.
8. Don't be late or absent. If you absolutely cannot come on a certain day, call the program director to leave a message for your mentee.
9. Don't try to be a parent, professional counselor, social worker, probation officer, or financier to the mentee.
10. Don't be your mentee's "buddy."

Crisis Situations

Immediately report information of the following to the Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Program Coordinator:

Child Abuse

Elevate Your G.A.M.E. is an organization that is covered under California's Penal Code, which identifies mandated reporters under the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (Penal Code Sections 11164-11174.3)." If you receive information about a student in Elevate Your G.A.M.E. that causes you to suspect the student is being physically, sexually or emotionally abused or neglected (for example, lacks food and clothing), you shall discuss your suspicions with the Elevate Your G.A.M.E. program coordinator (Coordinator) or his designee as soon as possible, but no later than 8 hours after you receive the information." It is critical for mentors to report their suspicions to the Coordinator in a timely manner. The Coordinator is mandated to report suspected child abuse/neglect immediately by phone and then in writing within 36 hours of receiving information that would lead a reasonable person to conclude the child is/has been abused or neglected.

Excerpt from California Department of Social Services Website Regarding Suspected Child Abuse:

Mandated reporters must report (suspected child abuse) to a county child welfare department or to local law enforcement (police or sheriff's department) immediately by phone (800-540-4000). A written report must then be sent within 36 hours by fax, or it may be sent by electronic submission, if a secure system has been made available for that purpose in your county. Written reports must be submitted on the California Suspected Child Abuse Report Form 8572. This form can be downloaded at http://ag.ca.gov/childabuse/pdf/ss_8572.pdf.

Other Situations to Report to the Coordinator

1. If a student confides in you that she/he is harming herself/himself (i.e., cutting) or thinking about harming herself/himself (i.e., suicidal).
2. If a student confides in you that she/he has harmed someone or planning to harm someone.

Safety Guidelines

I) General Safety Precautions

- a) Always park and lock your vehicle in a designated area.
- b) Always walk in groups when leaving the meeting location at night.
- c) Always secure your valuables in your vehicle or designated place.

II) How to Handle Situations or Problems You May Encounter

- a) Establish a dress code with your teens and discourage gang attire.
- b) If you have a teen that is gang affiliated, discourage it.
- c) If you detect a situation that may develop into a fight, ask them to stop. If they do not comply, call for assistance.

Separation of Church and State

Excerpt from "Public Schools and Religious Communities: A First Amendment Guide" (published jointly by American Jewish Congress, Christian Legal Society and First Amendment Center):

I. General Principles for Cooperative Arrangements

In these guidelines, a "cooperative arrangement" is defined as a shared participation in specific programs and activities in accordance with a written agreement. Before entering into a cooperative arrangement, public schools and religious communities should understand and accept the following principles:

1. Under the First Amendment, public schools must be neutral concerning religion in all of their activities. School officials must take the necessary steps to ensure that any cooperative activities that take place are wholly secular. Persons invited to address students during the school day shall be advised of this requirement and must agree to abide by it before being allowed access to students.
2. Students have the right to engage in, or decline to engage in, religious activities at their own initiative, so long as they do not interfere with the rights of others.

The Students

Characteristics of Adolescence Development

Youth can be labeled for actions that are part of the “normal” human developmental process. Some common labels are: delinquent, abused, neglected, emotionally disturbed. Many behaviors are tied more to typical adolescence than they are to being socially or emotionally deficient.

Consolidating one’s identity, learning to establish meaningful relationships, overcoming doubts about ethnicity and sexual identity, and dealing with emotions are challenges that any adolescent can have.

Characteristics:

1. Adolescents try to sever previous dependent emotional ties with parents.
2. Adolescents tend to become involved less in family activities.
3. Adolescents tend to downgrade adults.
4. Adolescents become reluctant to accept advice or criticism.
5. Adolescents tend to discard hobbies which tied them to childhood.
6. Adolescents may not be compliant or agreeable.
7. Adolescents desire independence and yet long for the dependent needs for love, shelter, food, clothing, and emotional support.
8. Adolescents rely on strong peer group allegiance. There is a natural allegiance to the adolescent subculture.
9. Adolescents adopt peer group ideas and values. (Fads of dress, language, music, and dance are clear indications.)
10. Adolescents participate in behavioral experimentation as a result of peer group pressure.
11. Many adolescents try to prove they are fearless, powerful, and sexy.

Needs During the Adolescent Years

The Development of a Positive Identity:

- To feel significant, important and unique.
- To interact positively with others and have a sense of belonging.
- To experiment with their own identity by trying out various roles without irrevocable commitment.
- To love and be loved, trust and be trusted, respect and be respected.

The Development of a Sense of Engagement:

- To have opportunities for making contributions to their world and for making decisions.
- To experience others being affected by their actions and decisions.
- Being able to move beyond the restrictive boundaries of childhood.

The Development of Critical Choice:

- To reflect and to talk through needs and feelings.
- To introspect, analyze and deal with uncertainties.
- To have an opportunity to discuss conflicting values and then formulate their own.
- To gain experience in decision making.

Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Principles

1. Respect the receiving culture. Don't come across as snobbish, looking down on those you are mentoring.
2. Always maintain a humble attitude. Convey to the students that you are still a student too in the classroom of life and that you have a lot to learn from them about life as a teenager and about life on the campus of the school.
3. We should not allow our mentees to put us up on a pedestal. We are not superior to them. Our culture is not superior to theirs.
4. Look for opportunities for those we are mentoring to serve us. Asking another to meet a need (not demanding service) can help them feel accepted by you and elevated by you to a place of importance. This is important when society is saying that you are more important than the person you are mentoring because of your race or socioeconomic status (i.e., middle-class).
5. Be culturally neutral. We need to convey an attitude of acceptance and respect for the teens we are mentoring. (Even though they may have less economically and a different lifestyle, we need to communicate with words and body language that we love and accept them).
6. We should not try to force the teens we are mentoring to, to become like us in culture (i.e., insisting that they dress like us).
7. We need to recognize the sub-culture that our teens belong to, help them appreciate their sub-culture and help them become bi-cultural so that they can function in mainstream society.

The Relationship

Building Trust

Relationship building is the key ingredient in mentoring. A student can be matched with a mentor, but if the mentor does not develop a relationship with the student, the goals of mentoring will not be achieved. "Programs don't change people, relationships do" (Bill Millikan, founder of Communities in Schools). Healthy relationships are built on trust and good communication. With teenagers in general, building trust can be slow and bumpy.

Some items to work on that will build trust:

- 1. Being fully present with them.** In other words, when you are with your youth, you are with **them**. You are not there to fulfill an obligation, to make yourself feel good ("I'm a giver"), or even because you want to be the "best" mentor. You are also not distracted by thoughts of work, home, or your own family.
- 2. Seeing your youth as a person.** Your youth is not a project, and you are not there to "straighten them out." This means getting to know them first, and respond according to who they are, not who you are. Discover their uniqueness as a person, and listen to them in such a way that they know they are being heard. Again, no agenda.
- 3. Consistency.** A big trust-builder is consistency. Keeping your visits with the youth consistent, even when they are being inconsistent, is key. If something does come up, call at least a day or two in advance. It's also very important that you always follow through with things you say you will do. If you say you'll help them with something on your next visit, do it.
- 4. Be yourself.** Don't try to come off as the "perfect adult" in the youth's life. On the other hand, don't dump all your "dirty laundry" on the youth. Just be authentic. Be transparent enough so that the youth sees that you make mistakes, too. The important thing is that you learn from mistakes. Avoid phrases like "I would never..." or "I always..."
- 5. Be trustworthy.** Don't divulge information that others told you in confidence, except with those in authority who need to know.

Communication and Listening

Communication is of high quality if both people in the conversation are engaged, and care about what is being communicated. Good relationships require open lines of communication where ideas are free to move back and forth between individuals in a **non-threatening** manner. **The youth should never expect a lecture in response to any shared information.**

As a mentor, it is important to have good listening skills which will encourage a youth to use you as a sounding board so he or she can clarify ideas without being told what to do. It is important to remember that one of the main purposes of the mentor is to enable young adults to make their own decisions. **We cannot emphasize enough the importance of learning the skill of asking good, thought-stirring questions.**

A mentor must give the youth ownership over his or her decisions and learning experiences. This is important for two reasons. First, you will not always be available to assist in the decision making process. Secondly, if the mentor makes the decision then he or she also has the responsibility for the consequences. This allows the youth to turn to the mentor and say, "It's your fault, it didn't work."

Don't forget, if you say it, you own it, but your youth may not. If you get them to say it, by asking good questions, they own it.

Listening Skills

Active Listening is a process of actively listening to another person — hearing not only their words **but also being sensitive to the underlying messages accompanying the words.**

Have questions that invite the other person to share his or her thoughts and feelings.

Practice silence. Listening is the best way that you can be there for your youth.

- Suspend judgment.
- As a listener, reflect their words back to them.
- Ask for clarification Paraphrase what you think the student has said to see if you have understood what your mentee has said.
- Listen to their body language.
- Read between the lines to discover your mentee's feelings. Learn to say, "How did that make you feel?"
- Ask the right questions, the ones that will lead them to examine the issue and how they feel about it.
- Ask open-ended questions, not "yes" or "no" questions.
- Acknowledge that you are listening by occasionally nodding your head and saying things like, "I see."

Barriers to Communication

Judging

- Criticizing
- Name-calling
- Praising conditionally

Commanding

- Ordering
- Threatening
- Preaching
- Excessive/inappropriate questioning

Avoiding the Other's Concern

- Diverting the issue to other topics
- Logical argument versus addressing the inner feelings
(pat answers, not getting to the root of the issue)

“You” Messages

These are messages that put others down, make them feel guilty, and/or make them feel their needs are not important.

“You” messages are orders or commands such as:

You really need to change the way you....
You would have been so much better off if you had....

Or they are blaming and naming statements that do not give solutions:

You are acting like a baby!
You are driving me crazy!

Or they are statements that give solutions, insensitively:

You should forget that idea.
You'd better reconsider that.

Perhaps the worst of all “you” messages is the “if—then” threat:

If you don't do that _____ then I will _____!

How To Kill A Conversation

1. Tell the speaker that the way he or she feels is wrong. “It’s silly to feel that way.”
2. Don’t look at the person who is speaking to you.
3. Sit slouched over, look distracted, drum your fingers on the table, or use some other body language to signal to the speaker that you’re not really interested.
4. While the person is speaking, thinking about what you’re going to say in reply. It’s not possible to be forming your own words and concentrating on the speaker’s at the same time - so the response you’re planning is unlikely to be very useful.
5. Be judgmental and challenging. Ask questions that put your mentee on the spot: “Why didn’t you do better on the test?” “Why did you say that to her?” How could you possibly think that?
6. Interrupt the person who is talking. Finish his or her sentences.

Ways to kill a conversation on the telephone:

1. Be totally silent for minutes at a time while your mentee is talking. Don’t say, “I see,” or “OK,” or ask any questions. That way, your mentee will wonder if you’re even there.
2. Do something else while the conversation is taking place: work at your computer, read your e-mail, do dishes, fold laundry, pay bills.

Mentor's Personal Information To Share With Mentee

Building a trusting relationship between a mentor and a mentee will involve sharing personal information about each other as the relationship grows. Just how much personal information should the mentor share is a major issue that has no specific answer, but several general guidelines have been found to be helpful. Intimate personal, family or financial information is considered to be private and confidential information and should not be shared. It is very common, however, to share limited personal information and general information about your family, your community and your job.

Information about the mentor's past experiences is normally useful to help start and build a relationship. In addition, insights about how the mentor thinks and his or her views about the future are excellent ways to invite mentees to think and begin to envision what their own future might offer. Specific information will vary in different relationships but as a guide the following categories are usually acceptable items to share with mentees.

They are:

- Job description ● Job related responsibilities
- Previous jobs and experiences ● Likes/dislikes about jobs
- Career goals ● Community responsibilities
- Family names and interests ● Family histories
- Family vacations ● Personal habits ● Likes/dislikes
- Personal hobbies and leisure time activities
- Personal accomplishments in education, business, sports, music, arts, etc.

Seven Strategies for Encouraging Youth

- **Show appreciation for contributions at school and home.** Be sure to recognize teens' positive efforts. Show that you appreciate these efforts.
- **Ask teens for their opinions and suggestions.** Teens probably know things that you don't, especially in the areas of fashion, computers, and music. Find out what teens have to offer, you'll learn something!
- **Encourage participation in decision-making.** Show your respect for teens' opinions by getting them involved in making decisions about such things as their plans after high school, which electives they will take in school, career choices, etc.
- **Accept mistakes.** Without mistakes, there would be no learning. Mistakes can occur anywhere, and can be made by anyone. Don't catastrophize when they occur. Help teens learn from their mistakes.
- **Emphasize the process, not just the product.** Focus on the effort, progress, or movement (process), not just on the goal, achievement, or accomplishment (product). Remember, it takes time to accomplish any goal; by encouraging efforts and progress, you can help increase teens' self-confidence.
- **Have positive expectations.** If you expect the worst, chances are you'll get it! However, don't expect perfection. Instead, expect positive things and increasing effort. Teach them that failure is only an event – success is a process.
- **Develop alternative ways of viewing situations.** Use your creativity and sense of humor to discover different ways of seeing the same situation. Help teens see the silver lining in any situation.

Words of Encouragement

Phrases that demonstrate acceptance

- I like the way that you handled that.
- How do you feel about this?
- Since you are not satisfied, what do you think you can do so you will be pleased with it?

Phrases that show confidence

- You will make it!
- I believe you can handle it.

Phrases that recognize effort and improvement

- I can see you put a lot of effort into that.
- I can see a lot of progress.
- You are improving in _____ (be specific).
- You may not feel you have reached your goal yet, but look how far you have come.

Phrases that focus on strengths, contributions, and appreciation

- Thanks for helping — it took a load off me
- You have talent for _____ (be specific).
- Would you help me with this?
- I really appreciate your help on _____.

Helping Your Youth in Decision Making

Sometimes, youth have not learned the steps in wise decision-making or finding their own way through problems. Teach your mentees how to make good decisions through a series of well-worded questions. Be sure to let them discover the answers for themselves.

1. Help your youth find words that define the real problem.

What would you say is the problem? Does something need to change?

2. Help them articulate their ultimate goal.

What do you want to happen? What do you want to accomplish?

3. Brainstorm various solutions.

How many ways can you think of reaching your goals?

4. Help them evaluate each possible solution.

What are the pros and cons of the first solution?

The second?

The third?

5. Let them choose the best solution.

Given the pros and cons of the solution, what makes sense to you?

6. Guide them as they develop and implement a plan.

Re-articulate the ultimate goal.

What is the first thing you will have to do to carry out your idea?

What are the remaining steps needed to get there?

7. Help evaluate their plan.

What happened when you tried to carry out your plan? What did you learn? What might help next time?

Three Pitfalls To Avoid

“Santa Clausing”

When we say "avoid this at all costs," cost is the operative word. Bringing gifts with every visit can create several problems:

1. It changes the relationship from mentor/mentee to supplier/user. The student may even start taking gifts for granted, or worse yet, start expecting gifts. This sets up a model of "You give, I take- I'm getting a free ride."
2. It creates problems for the other students in the program. It is unfair for one student to keep receiving things that the other students are not receiving. It also sets up a false expectation in the other students of what mentoring is all about.
3. It is expensive. You are already giving generously of your time, the one thing the youth needs the most. Stick with that.

Gift giving should be a very small part of mentoring, and should be done at appropriate times, like birthdays and graduation.

“Enabling”

"Enabling" is a commonly used term in psychology which means taking another's responsibilities upon yourself, thereby enabling them to live irresponsibly. The classic example is the parent who continues to supply the child with all the money he/she needs to live. Problem? The child is 35!

Examples of a Mentor enabling:

- The mentor doing the youth's homework assignment for them, because they complain that it's difficult.
- The mentor buying a skateboard for the youth, when the youth has the opportunity to save up their money and buy it themselves.

Your assignment as a mentor is to be an encourager, not an enabler. Remember, we are working towards successful independence for the youth, not dependence. Model for them responsibility for one's own actions, and be an example of diligence, hard work, and enjoying the fruits of your labors.

“Siding”

Always seek to maintain a balance of having a sympathetic ear to the complaints of the youth, while not “siding” with the youth against the authorities or rules of the school or his/her home. The following are some suggestions for maintaining this fine balance:

- Always listen to the complaints, and don’t put the teens down for feeling what they feel. You’re hearing about the world they live in.
- Use as much empathy as possible, saying things like “that must be difficult” or “I know that’s difficult, I have to obey similar rules at work.”
- Do not say things like, “I can’t believe they would do that to you” or “How can anyone be so mean.”
- Reinforce the idea that the school has been around for a long time, has tried many strategies to maintain order and has found certain things that work - like consequences.
- Encourage youth to respect and submit to authority, but in a sensitive way that respects their feelings and opinions. If the person in authority is abusive, then help the youth find someone else in authority to intervene.

Sample Mentoring Session Format

Refreshments and Fellowship (large group, 10 minutes)

Announcements and Opening Activity (large group, 15 min.)

Mentoring Discussion or Project Assignment (mentoring groups, 30 min.)

Closing (large group, 5 – 10 minutes)

Frequency of sessions: Once a week

Mentor to Student Ratio: Could vary between 1 on 2 to 1 on 6
(small group)

How to Use Discussion Questions

Discussion questions are meant to serve ***as a guide*** for mentors to foster conversation with their mentees. Mentors do have the autonomy to veer from the discussion questions by generating relevant follow-up questions. Below is a list of guidelines to help mentors utilize the discussion questions to create stimulating conversation and to encourage relationship building.

Do:

- Think of follow up questions as you go along
- Share examples from your life that are relevant to the discussion questions
- Read the questions in a conversational way

Don't

- Interrogate
- Lecture

The Procedure

How To Get Started As A Mentor

The Process:

- Orientation and Initial Training
- Application
- TB Test
- Fingerprint/Background Check

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