

Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Peer Mentor's Training Manual

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Lighthouse Ministries Mentoring Program
Mentors' Training Manual

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Lifting Students to a Higher Level

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. Therefore, 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 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 help shape another 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.

Pursuing Excellence,

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

The Mission

**To motivate students to excel 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 **G**rades, **A**ttendance and **M**aturity. This will give them **E**mpowerment 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 Begin to identify a post-secondary plan of action (college/university, military, trade/vocational school, etc.)

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
- 2.3 Be able to articulate why faithful attendance and punctuality in school are important

3. M - Maturity

- 3.1 Use appropriate language at all times (no degrading words or comments, even within cultures i.e., the “n” word)
- 3.2 Grow in at least one positive character trait
- 3.3 Maintain sexual abstinence
- 3.4 Maintain substance abstinence (cigarettes, alcohol, drugs)
- 3.5 Participate in at least one service project per semester

4. E – Empowerment

- 4.1 Share with mentor one way her/his life has changed at the end of a year
- 4.2 Share with mentor one way s/he has brought about a positive change in her/his family at the end of the year
- 4.3 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
- 4.4 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 recent study of mentoring, Public/Private Ventures conducted an experimental evaluation of Big Brother/Big Sister programs and found that a one-to-one 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 in 1991, 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%**

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 semester
- 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

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 mentees 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 mentees. 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 mentees.

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. A good coach knows his team's strengths and weaknesses, and with that empowers them to win. A good Mentor sees the mentees' 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 student 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 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 Priest or Minister
- 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, text, facebook, or communicate on twitter with their mentees.
5. Mentors can visit the homes of their mentees when a parent or guardian is present (see note below).
6. Mentors can meet with their mentees in public places with permission from parents or guardians (see note below).
7. 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 mentees say seriously.
3. Do report any suspected child abuse immediately to the program coordinator.
4. Do be warm and relational and praise the mentees when deserved.
5. Do set an example of a healthy lifestyle.
6. Do share with the mentees 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 mentees' 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 mentees' 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 mentees or specifics of what your mentees communicate to you except with the program coordinator or with authorized school faculty (i.e., principal or counselor).
4. Don't have excessive physical contact with any of the mentees. Handshakes and side hugs are acceptable.
5. Don't use profane language.
6. Don't judge a mentee and her/his family.
7. 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.
8. Don't try to be a parent, professional counselor, social worker, probation officer, financier or minister to the mentee.
9. Don't be your mentee's "buddy."

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 mentees, 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 mentee as a person.** Your mentees are not projects, 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 individual uniqueness, 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 you.** Don't be fake, be real, but also strive to be an excellent role model. Admit when you make a mistake and show your mentees how you learn from your mistakes.
- 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 mentees 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 student 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 mentees 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 student 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 mentee 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 mentee 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 mentee.

- 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.

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 school experiences.

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:

- School experiences
- 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, sports, music, arts, etc.

Seven Strategies for Encouraging Your Mentees

- **Show appreciation for contributions at school and home.** Be sure to recognize your mentee's positive efforts. Show that you appreciate these efforts.
- **Ask your mentees for their opinions and suggestions.** Find out what your mentees have to offer. They will feel significant if they have an opportunity to help you in some way.
- **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 mentees 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 mentees' 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 your mentees 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 Mentees in Decision Making

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 mentees 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?

Two Pitfalls To Avoid

“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!

Example of a mentor enabling:

- The mentor doing the mentee's homework assignment for them, because they complain that it's difficult.

Your assignment as a mentor is to be an encourager, not an enabler. Remember, we are working towards successful independence for the mentees, 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 mentees, while not “siding” with your mentees against the authorities or rules of the school or his/her home. The following are some suggestions for maintaining this fine balance:

- Listen to the complaints, and don't put the mentees down for feeling what they feel.
- 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 in my classes or at home.”
- 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 your mentees to respect and submit to authority, but in a sensitive way that respects their feelings and opinions

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 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3

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

- Rush through the questions
- Treat the questions like questions on a test
- Let mentees create follow up questions that would cause the discussion to veer off topic

Example of a Follow-up Question

Discussion question:

What can you do to settle your disagreements in a peaceful way?

Response from mentee:

“Normally, I just yell at whoever is yelling at me. For example, when my mom and I argue, we both yell and we go back and forth but the next day, it’s almost like nothing happened.”

Follow-up question (s):

- *So are you saying that arguing is a peaceful way to solve the problem between the two of you?*
- *There has to be a better way to communicate than yelling back and forth, don't you think? What would be a better way?*
- *How do you know if the conflict is resolved since you both argue back and forth in the heat of the moment?*
- *Do you think your future relationships might be negatively affected if you develop a pattern of acting as if nothing happened when you get into conflicts?*

