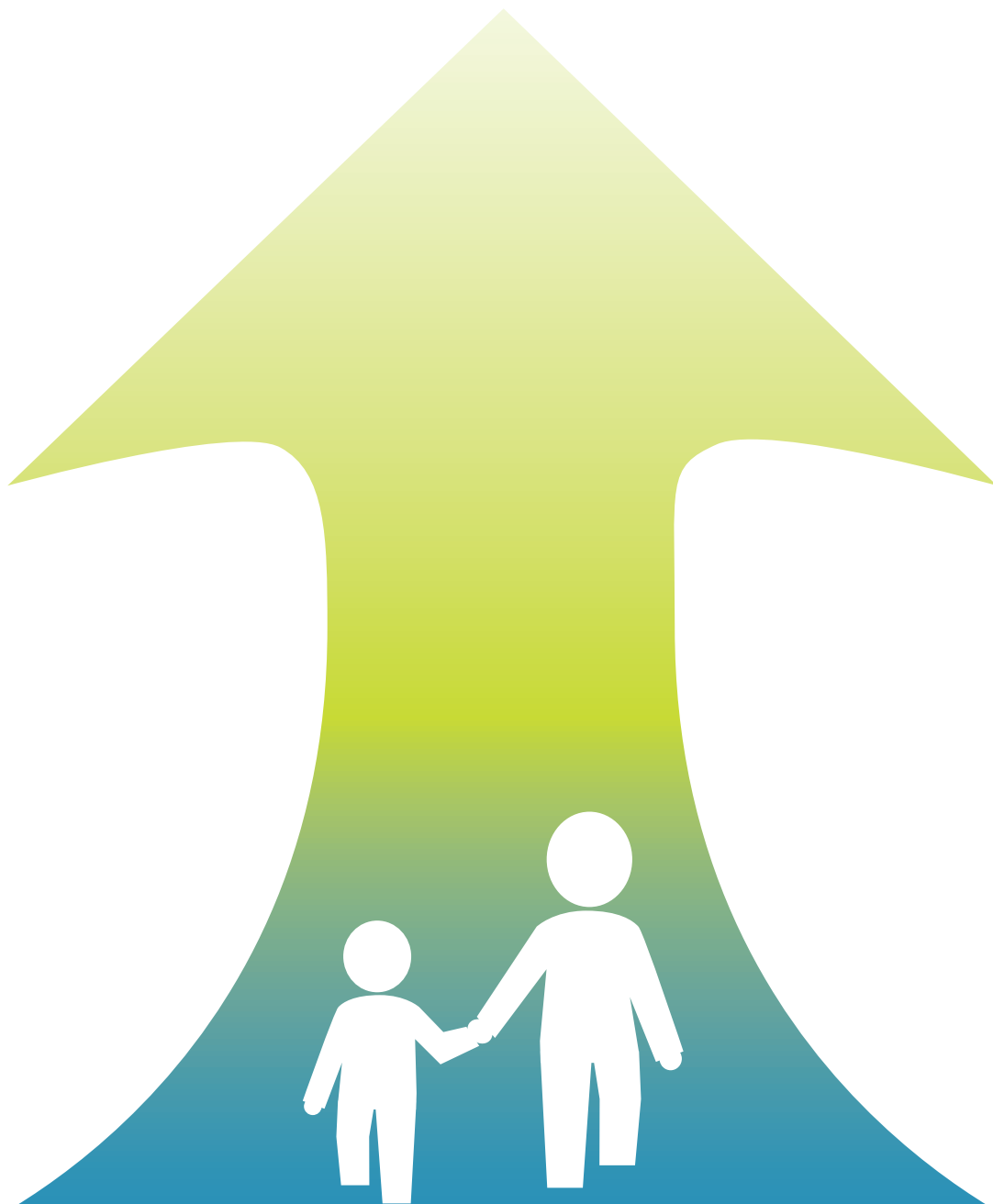


KidsEcoClub

MENTOR MANUAL



KidsEcoClub

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PART 1 – Introduction to Mentoring

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SECTION 1: What is Mentoring?

“Changes in families, work demands, and communities have left many adolescents without the adult supports that were available just a few decades ago. Both natural and assigned mentors have the potential to modify, or even reverse, the negative developmental trajectories of at-risk youth set in place by these changes. Although researchers, practitioners, and policy makers should acknowledge the potential benefits of both natural and assigned mentoring, we should be aware of its limitations. Mentoring programs are not a substitute for a caring family, community support, or a concerted youth policy agenda. With this in mind, we should ensure that mentor programs are adequately implemented and evaluated, while broadening our efforts to strengthen the caring capacity of adolescents’ families, schools, and communities.”

– Jean Rhodes, 2001 –

1.1 What does mentoring look like?

“Mentoring relationships (mentorships) are dynamic, reciprocal, personal relationships in which a more experienced person (mentor) acts as a guide, role model, teacher, and sponsor of a less experienced person (protégé).” Brad Johnson & Charles Ridley, *The Elements of Mentoring*

“Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.” Eric Parsloe, *The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring*

KEC views mentoring as a way to help youth gain new skills and confidence to help them reach their greatest potential. KEC Mentors are not considered substitutes for teachers or parents but rather an additional resource to students for motivation, support, and encouragement.

1.2 What is a mentor?

“Mentors are advisors, people with career experience willing to share their knowledge; supporters, people who give emotional and moral encouragement; tutors, people who give specific feedback on one’s performance; masters, in the sense of employers to whom one is apprenticed; sponsors, sources of information about and aid in obtaining opportunities; models, of identity, of the kind of person one should be to be an academic.”

– Morris Zelditch, 1995 –

KEC Mentors are:

- People who help and support a youth's development
- A coach, guide, facilitator, counselor, or trusted advisor
- Someone willing to spend his or her time and expertise to lead, challenge, and inspire young people
- Someone who provides opportunities and encourages creative thinking, constructive questioning, active learning, and action taking
- Someone who is accessible to his or her mentee, and makes time and interaction with the mentee a priority

“Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.”

– John Crosby –

1.3 Benefits of KEC Mentoring

Mentees will benefit by:

- Learning leadership skills from mentors with knowledge in education, leadership, business, psychology, sociology, history, law, organizational development, experience among many others
- Learning from people of different cultural, educational and economic backgrounds
- Working with mentors to select KEC projects that promote individual growth and enhance their skills
- Receiving guidance with project planning, finding resources, networking with influential community members, and testing strategies aimed at increasing environmental awareness and sustainability practices
- Improving communication and public speaking skills
- Increased self-esteem
- Learning from adults with a shared desire to positively impact the community and planet

Mentors will benefit by:

- Internal satisfaction and fulfillment caused by helping others
- Taking positive action to spark and help create a youth led movement to sustain the earth's resources
- Developing relationships with KEC youth, KEC staff, educators, policy makers, volunteers, colleges, other mentors and collaborating organizations
- Generativity – pleasure associated with shaping future generations
- Spending time with youth from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds that want to make a difference in their communities and schools

The Schools and the Environment will benefit by:

- Having a group of Mentors who are interested in making their community and the world a better place

SECTION 2: Does Mentoring Work?

Mentoring is not just a new fad or trend, but a well-researched helping relationship. Research suggests:

- Mentoring engenders a sense of identity, greater academic competence, increased life satisfaction, and decreased stress for mentees.
- Volunteer mentoring relationships can improve peer and parental relationships, self-concept, and academic achievement.
- Mentees are more likely to stay in school, achieve better test scores, and go on to college.
- Mentored individuals are more likely to mentor others.
- Parents of mentees report improved self-confidence, decision-making skills, and ability to communicate their feelings.

An article published in *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* in August 2011 reports, “Current research confirms that mentoring programs not only seem to improve outcomes for young people in the areas of academic achievement, behavior, and social and emotional health, but they also can improve these outcomes simultaneously.”

A 2007 report of mentoring outcomes found by Big Brothers/Big Sisters one-on-one school-based mentoring programs found:

- 69% of teachers reported improved grades in at least one subject
- 77% of teachers reported improvement in self-confidence
- 65% of teachers reported improvement in attitude toward school
- 86% of mentors reported improvement in self-confidence
- 76% of mentors reported improvement in Little’s’ relationships with peers

“A lot of people have gone further than they thought they could because someone else thought they could.”

– Unknown –

PART 2 – Mentor-Mentee Relationship

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SECTION 1: Roles & Responsibilities of a Mentor

1.1 Roles of a KEC mentor

A KEC Mentor will interact with his or her mentee in a number of ways. These include:

- **Friend/Companion:** Young people do not get much of an opportunity to be friends with adults, especially adults who listen to them. The mentor must establish a climate of trust in order to ultimately bond with the mentee.
- **Facilitator:** The mentor should understand the mentee's objectives and assist them in creating a plan to achieve those objectives without giving them the answers or doing the project for them. This role includes asking questions to help them think through different components of the project or plan, supporting the mentee with encouragement and positive feedback, and supporting the mentee to do his or her best thinking.
- **Advisor:** The mentor can offers advice based on individual's current plans and goals, make suggestions about his or her goals, and help them through any roadblocks the mentee may encounter along the way.
- **Role Model:** A mentor role model is someone who offers to help the mentee be whoever he or she wants to be. It is important to remember that mentors are very visible to the mentees and they need to consider what they say and how they act.
- **Thought Partner:** The mentor can be a thought partner or sounding board; someone to talk through ideas with and who shows mentees how to access services and resources they need rather than providing them.

1.2 Qualities of Great Mentors

Mentors can help mentees in a variety of important ways, but there are a number of characteristics and behaviors that are common among great, effective mentors. These include:

- Having a positive, can-do attitude
- Being consistent and present
- Being a good listener and strong communicator
- Being willing to share life experiences, wisdom and expertise
- Being good observers
- Being able to identify opportunities that will help the mentee learn and develop
- Being empathetic,
- Providing help in looking at situations from different perspectives and viewpoints
- Being comfortable pushing outside his or her own comfort zone, so they can help their mentee step out of theirs
- Possessing supervisory skills
- Being independent, allowing the youth to develop goals, plans and a vision that may differ from those of the mentor
- Having solid self-esteem
- Being motivated to help others
- Being non-judgmental
- Being optimistic
- Being encouraging
- Liking youth work
- Being of good character

1.3 Primary Responsibilities of a Mentor

- Establish a positive, personal relationship with mentee
- Keep your heart and mind open
- Help mentee strengthen his or her less developed skills
- Assist mentee to obtain additional resources for KEC projects (assist in connecting them to needed contacts and resources but also helping them learn they can rely on themselves and be independent)
- Enhance mentee's self-awareness
- Increase mentee's knowledge of ecological and environmental issues faced by their community and the world at large
- Help students design and complete club projects
- Help students start and maintain a school based environmental club

- Develop self-confidence and self-esteem in mentees
- Help mentees through encouragement, listening, teaching, and guided reflection on goals and actions
- Provide opportunities for mentees to interact with people and groups from various cultural, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds

1.4 Mentor Requirements:

- Be at least 18 years of age (no upper age limit or degree required)
- Pass a background check
- Have at least 6-10 hours per month available for mentoring

1.5 Mentor Disqualification:

If a state criminal record check indicates an applicant has a record with the state criminal record agency or the applicant has provided information of past criminal charges in their mentor paperwork, KEC will conduct a review to determine whether the criminal background check includes any convictions that require the mandatory disqualification of the applicant. If no mandatory disqualification exists, in order to be a mentor, the application must be approved using the review process described below under “Discretionary Disqualification.”

Mandatory Disqualification:

Any conviction for homicide, sexual assault (of a minor or adult), incest, sexual activity as a caretaker, sexual exploitation of children, child abuse, cruelty to children, displaying obscene materials to minors, or drug sales or delivery will disqualify the applicant from serving as a mentor. These are in addition to the following:

- Any conviction of a felony of any kind (defined as any crime punishable by one year or more in jail, even if the individual was actually sentenced to lesser time)
- Any lesser crime (i.e. misdemeanor or citation) in which sexual relations and or content is an element, including pornography and prostitution
- Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (i.e. drugs), including any DUI where drugs were involved, but does not include strictly alcohol-related offenses
- Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person
- Any lesser crime involving cruelty or abuse to animals
- Any arrest for a crime against a minor
- Any conviction for a hate crime
- Any conviction for aggravated assault
- Any conviction for careless and negligent driving resulting in a fatality
- Any conviction for burglary, or grand larceny

Discretionary Disqualification:

If an applicant has provided information of past criminal charges in their mentor paperwork or if the criminal record information received from the criminal records agency indicates that an applicant has a criminal record for an offense other than those listed under “Mandatory Disqualification,” the conditional offer to the applicant to serve as a mentor may be withdrawn. In making this decision, the applicant’s role as a role model for mentees will be among the factors considered.

KEC’s decisions regarding disqualification of a mentor shall be final.

1.6 Inappropriate Mentor Roles:

- **Therapist/Psychologist:** A mentor is not a formal counselor or therapist.
- **Foster or “second” parent:** The role of a parent or legal guardian (governed by law) is to provide food, shelter and clothing. It is not the mentor’s role to fulfill these responsibilities. If the mentor believes his or her mentee is not receiving adequate support, he or she should contact the mentor program coordinator rather than trying to meet the needs of his or her mentee.
- **Savior**
- **Parole Officer/Disciplinarian**
- **Cool Peer**
- **Babysitter**
- **ATM**
- **Social worker/Case Manager:** A social worker is a licensed professional with the skills and training to assist in family issues. If a mentor believes there is something wrong in the mentee’s home life, the mentor should share this concern with the mentor program coordinator and not assume the role of a social worker and attempt to solve the problem.
- **Coddler**
- **Doctor**
- **Lawyer**

Remember: It is not appropriate for the mentor to give out money or devote every waking moment to the mentee.

🔗 SECTION 2: The Do’s and Don’ts of Mentoring

DO:

- Respect your mentee’s time as much as your own
- Help move your mentee toward his or her goals
- Set ground rules about meetings, roles and limits of the mentor-mentee relationship
- Keep the mentor-mentee relationship appropriate and positive

- Gently push your mentee to think about the world and his or her place in it, in different ways
- Be yourself
- Get to know the mentee's family without getting over involved; mentors are NOT substitutes for parents
- Utilize the KEC mentoring staff for help and support in working with your mentee
- Allow your mentee to reach for their dreams, regardless of how impossible it may seem
- Instill self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-advocacy in your mentee
- Encourage your mentee to stand up for what they believe in

DON'T:

- Expect your mentee to agree with everything you say, do everything you do, or believe in everything you believe in
- Take the mentor-mentee relationship for granted
- Discuss inappropriate or irrelevant topics
- Inappropriately terminate the mentor-mentee relationship
- Assume your suggestions or ideas will be necessarily liked or followed
- Show up late or miss mentor meetings: always tell the mentee when you have to miss a scheduled meeting and try to have some form of communication (i.e., phone call, text or e-mail, in order to avoid disappointment)
- Speak in an authoritative tone when communicating with your mentee
- Put more emphasis on changing the mentee's behavior than on developing a warm relationship based on trust and respect
- Try to transform the mentee by imposing a set of values inconsistent with the mentee's life circumstances
- Forget to pay attention to the mentee's need for fun!

🔗 SECTION 3: How to Begin a Mentoring Relationship

Developing rapport with your mentee can take a few weeks to a few months, depending on the frequency of your interactions. Make sure you establish the following ground rules to ensure a great start to the mentoring engagement.

1. Talk about confidentiality
2. Determine how you will communicate, when you will meet and how often
3. Be consistent and predictable to build trust in the relationship
4. Discuss your role as mentor
5. Set goals together
6. Be non-judgmental

SECTION 4: How to Build the Mentor Relationship

4.1 Ways to Develop the Mentor Relationship

- Affirm the uniqueness of the relationship
- Think about ways to help your mentee spread the word about KEC and design realistic community and/or school projects
- Keep the mentor-mentee relationship fun and uplifting
- Encourage and ensure your mentee is involved with KEC activities, meetings and club projects
- Help and support them in ways that will foster an interest for KEC's mission and vision
- Understand the relationship will have ups and downs
- Be positive and optimistic
- Be helpful
- Be kind
- Be a resource
- Be a great listener

4.2 Testing of the Mentor Relationship

Remember that the mentor relationship may have ups and downs. Depending on the mentee's circumstances he or she may test your loyalty or commitment by missing appointments, failing to return phone calls, asking for things outside of the capacity of the mentor, or acting upset or withdrawn during mentor meetings. To help build the rapport and develop trust in the mentor-mentee relationship you must keep your appointments with your mentee, be on time, and follow-through with things you have agreed to. If you work with your mentee to co-create a safe space for learning and participation you will begin to build a relationship based on trust and respect. If you are struggling to build your relationship with your mentee, be sure to consult with other KEC mentors and mentor leaders for relationship building support and advice.

SECTION 5: How to End a Mentoring Relationship

In ending any mentoring relationship, it is important to do so carefully and thoughtfully. By guiding your mentee through a positive transition, you are also actively teaching them about the changes and trajectories of healthy relationships. Please take the following suggestions into consideration as you begin transitioning out of your mentoring role.

- Start discussing the stop date of the mentoring relationship several months beforehand to give your mentee warning and allow the transition to happen gradually.
- Help your mentee to mentally prepare for the termination of the relationship; help him or her anticipate any feelings they may have (i.e., anger, sadness, loss, denial, fear, etc.) and create a safe space for your mentee to discuss any thoughts or feelings they have about the situation.

- Plan a fun activity to end the mentoring engagement.
- Make sure to help your mentee reflect on the changes and achievements he or she has had over the course of the mentoring engagement.
- If both your mentee and their family are supportive of further communication, stay connected (by email or phone). If you mutually agree to remain in each other's lives, make sure you follow through on this commitment and monitor your role in your mentee's life.
- Make sure to follow through on any loose ends before the engagement comes to an end.
- If possible introduce the mentee to their new mentor prior to the end of the relationship.

“The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own.”

– Benjamin Disraeli –

“One of the things I keep learning is that the secret of being happy is doing things for other people.”

– Dick Gregory –

“What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us. What we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.”

– Albert Pine –

Part 3 - Who Are The Mentees?

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SECTION 1: Child and Adolescent Development

As a mentor, it is important to consider the stages of development your mentee may be experiencing. Keep in mind that not everyone develops at the same rate or has the exact same experiences but it is helpful to have an understanding of the various developments your mentee is or could be going through at a given time. Remember, each mentee is a unique individual whose specific experiences may not conform to the norm and whose development is also affected by their environment.

1.1 Early Adolescence

Between the ages of ten and fourteen children are experiencing an enormous amount of development, which affects them both physically and cognitively. As such, mentees of this age and developmental stage are likely experiencing cognitive, social, and emotional changes that may have an impact on their behavior and actions. Adolescents at this stage tend to think in concrete terms but are also beginning to grasp moral concepts. The influence that friends and peers have on children at this age is extremely significant. Lastly, this age is a time when your mentee may be adjusting to a new body image and adapting to an emerging sexuality. It is important as a mentor to be aware of what your mentee may be experiencing in these various areas of development to be better able to understand their methods of thinking and to help them when challenges arise.

1.2 Middle Adolescence

This stage roughly spans the ages of fifteen to seventeen. Similar to those going through early adolescence, mentees going through this stage are also experiencing an enormous amount of cognitive, social, and emotional behavior that will have an impact on how they understand and operate in the world. This stage marks the emergence of abstract thinking and therefore, the ability to think in hypothetical terms. There is also an increase in verbal abilities and an expansion of conventional morality. As students in high school your mentee will also be adapting to the rigors of a more intense school schedule and the demands that that entails. In social terms adolescents in this stage are generally also becoming interested in their peers in a sexual manner and engaging in behavior that may be considered a health risk (i.e. sex, alcohol and/or drug use, etc.). Additionally, they are starting to think about their future and beginning to separate emotionally from their parents.

SECTION 2: Cultural, Racial and Socioeconomic Diversity & Mentoring

It is important as a mentor to recognize that your background and life experiences may be very different than those of your mentees. While attempting to discover areas of common interest and shared experiences with your mentee, it is also crucial for mentors to learn about, and seek to understand, their differences. These can include cultural, racial, socioeconomic, and even age-related circumstances. It may be difficult at first for mentors to understand what life is like for their mentees. Mentors who take the following factors into consideration will have a better ability to connect with their mentees.

2.1 Cultural Sensitivity

Culture is a broad category that is often simplified to race and/or ethnicity. However, culture is extremely complex and also refers to lifestyles, traditions, values, and social norms. It is important for mentors to learn about these various aspects of a mentee's background because without understanding the underlying reasons behind various behaviors, mentors may come off as judgmental or insensitive. Simply not making an attempt to learn about your mentee and their background will undermine the mentor-mentee relationship and the trust it is built upon. Also keep in mind that asking your mentee about their life is the best way to learn about your differences and simultaneously strengthen your relationship. Additionally, engaging directly with your mentee decreases the potential for misunderstandings and offers an opportunity to clarify information in a causal manner.

2.2 Ethnic and Racial Diversity

“A fully functional multiracial society cannot be achieved without a sense of history and open, honest dialogue.”
– Dr. Cornel West –

While culture is more complex than simply race and/or ethnicity, both of these factors are still extremely important in terms of different life experiences. The United States, while making strides toward racial equality and ethnic diversity, continues to be a very segregated country; therefore, oftentimes people from different ethnic or racial backgrounds have very disparate life experiences. Mentors should keep this in mind when working with a mentee from a different racial or ethnic group and should seek to learn more about their mentee's background. Some other factors you should keep in mind include, but are not limited to:

- Remain aware of your own race and ethnicity and how that has affected your life experiences and your view of the world
- Understand how your racial or ethnic background has afforded you certain privileges or has denied you certain rights and how this might relate to the experiences of your mentee
- Don't be afraid to talk about these issues with your mentee but make sure you are doing so in a respectful manner which ensures that your mentee feels comfortable; do not isolate your mentee by asking him/her too many questions – this has a tendency to highlight differences and might make your mentee feel like an outsider
- Do not make assumptions and do not rely on stereotypes to fill in your knowledge gaps – when in doubt, discuss issues with your mentee
- Be cognizant of the effect that negative stereotypes have on different groups of people and be mindful of what you say and how you say it

- Research has shown that expectations have the power to increase the likelihood of a person actually confirming your expectations of them – this so-called self-fulfilling prophecy often centers around expectations for poor performance when referring to people from underrepresented backgrounds; be aware of your own expectations and be prepared to challenge your thinking in order to better serve your mentee

2.3 Socioeconomic Diversity

Cultural differences also extend to one's position in the class system. While rarely discussed in the United States, one's socioeconomic status has a significant impact on their perspective of the world and of those around them. Furthermore, the dominant narratives of rugged individualism and the "American Dream" have combined to create a culture that, to a large extent, equates one's character with the size of their bank account. It is therefore important for mentors to understand the negative psychological effects associated with being a part of the poor and working classes. You should understand that many things that you take for granted might seem out of the ordinary for your mentee. Be sensitive to this and be considerate of your mentee's background when discussing issues of class or money. This position could also be reversed with your mentee coming from a more privileged background than yourself. If this is the case try to help your mentee to understand that most people do not live in the manner to which they are accustomed and how to be sensitive to that fact.

2.4 Youth Culture

Depending upon who your mentee is there may only be a couple of years or there could be a whole decade between the two of you. Regardless of the age difference, youth culture (high school and middle school culture in particular) is going to be different to some degree from your own. It will be useful for mentors to think back to their own days as an adolescent and ask themselves the following questions when trying to connect with their mentees:

- What interests did I have when I was that age?
- What did I do for fun? What was really important to me?
- What kind of relationship did I have with my parents? Did we get along? Were we close?
- How were my interactions with other adults? Was I respectful? Did I find it difficult to follow rules/directions?
- Did I feel misunderstood by most people? By adults only? By my peers and/or friends?
- Was it easy to make friends? What made it easy or hard? How were my overall relationships with them?
- Was I self-conscious at that age? How did I deal with my insecurities?
- Did I believe there were people in my life that cared about me and wanted to see me succeed? How did that make me feel?

This list is by no means exhaustive but it is helpful for mentors to attempt to revisit the mindset of their adolescence to better understand the types of things their mentees are going through on a daily basis. The substantial impact of media and technology on today's youth must also be understood by mentors especially as it serves as a potential, and the most likely means, by which mentees will interact with their peers, learn about new and interesting things, be entertained, and engage with broader societal issues that

concern them. Additional factors that should be taken into consideration are alcohol and drug use/abuse, sexuality and sexual activity, bullying and other types of violence, and issues regarding self-esteem and other mental health concerns.

2.5 Being an effective ally

You and your mentee may come from completely different backgrounds and be absolutely clueless as to one another's life experiences. This doesn't mean, however, that you are not well suited to be his/her mentor. Learning from one another is the first step in any relationship and is especially important for building trust between mentor and mentee. You want your mentee to feel comfortable with you so that you can help them discover and exploit their strengths and improve in areas in which they are weaker. Some things to keep in mind in order to be an effective ally include:

- Be aware of diversity and celebrate differences.
- Remain open to learning about things with which you may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable.
- Be patient. Learning about and from someone else does not happen overnight. It takes time to build rapport and it also takes open-mindedness to be willing to accept opinions and perspectives different from your own.
- Help your mentee to appreciate and take pride in their history and background.
- Allow for questioning from both sides; learn to accept that disagreements are not necessarily negative and can be an important tool for learning from and engaging with your mentee.
- Be considerate and respectful always.
- Seek to understand the oppression experienced by members of other groups; don't feel like you cannot speak out against oppression simply because you are not a member of the oppressed group.
- Don't over-identify with your mentee or try to be someone you are not. Be sincere and let your relationship develop naturally.

SECTION 3: Youth Issues: Recognizing Needs and Taking Appropriate Action

Besides the normal developmental issues that all adolescents experience, there are other factors that can play a role in your mentee's life that may not be obvious or easy to understand. It is important, however, as a mentor to be able to recognize the signs that your mentee may be dealing with issues other than those that we, as a society, think of as normative. Understandably, however, you might not know how to deal with a specific issue when it first arises and you should not feel like you are supposed to know everything about a particular subject. This section will help you to identify an issue that might be affecting your mentee but it is by no means exhaustive or definitive. Do not be afraid to go to another resource, particularly someone with knowledge on the topic, in order to learn more and be able to better help your mentee through their struggles.

3.1 Peer Pressure

Developmentally adolescence is a period of intense socialization where peer acceptance and approval is extremely important. So important it often has a direct impact on teenagers' moods and behaviors. While mentoring is not an intervention program, as mentors you can help teach your mentee about how to make well-informed decisions and how to ask for help when needed. Being a good role model for your mentee will positively influence their behaviors and actions and will help them make positive decisions and achieve success.

3.2 Sexuality, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity

Adolescence is a very confusing time for many teenagers both developmentally and emotionally. One of the most important changes that occurs during this period concerns emerging sexualities. For most adolescents this is confusing and stressful time but for those who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity it can be a time of extreme self-doubt, self-consciousness, fear, and isolation. Gay and lesbian youth are two to three times more likely to attempt suicide and also are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, sexually transmitted infections, and alcohol and drug use. Talking about these issues with you may be very difficult for your mentee as they may not feel entirely comfortable or safe. It is crucial to reassure your mentee that your relationship is one free from judgments and assumptions. Mentors should be a source of support. Create a safe space in which you both feel comfortable talking about these and other important, but oftentimes sensitive, issues.

3.3 Substance Abuse

A number of factors, including the media and popular culture, friends and peers, and family history, all play a part in a teenager's relationship with and use of alcohol and drugs. As a mentor you should encourage your mentee to ask questions and attempt to inform them about the issues related to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.

3.4 Family Violence and Child Abuse

It goes without saying that any form of physical, verbal, or emotional abuse experienced by an adolescent has a serious effect on their physical and mental well-being. Children from violent or abusive homes are often withdrawn and will most likely be unwilling to talk about their situation freely. It may be hard for these youth to establish trusting relationships with adults and if you suspect that your mentee is suffering from abuse you must take the appropriate steps to report it without breaking the bond of trust you have worked so hard to establish with your mentee. If your mentee is in danger or being abused, you must act to ensure their safety.

3.5 Depression, Anxiety, and Suicide

Depression and anxiety can be caused by any of the above issues and may also occur in and of themselves along with a variety of other mental health issues. As a mentor you should not attempt to solve these problems by yourself but you can be a valuable tool for your mentee by listening and providing them with support. You are also important in terms of supplying them with appropriate resources and getting them the professional help they need.

3.6 Additional Resources on Adolescent Issues

www.stopbullying.gov

www.advocatesforyouth.org

www.pflag.org

www.pamf.org

www.nationalyouth.com

www.teenzeen.org

teenlineonline.org

www.yellowribbon.org

SECTION 4: Successful Communication

4.1 Useful Communicating Tips

Communicating with your mentee is a large part of the mentor engagement and it is important to communicate effectively to get the most out of mentor-mentee interactions. Some suggestions for successful communication include:

- Use “I” Statements: taking ownership of feelings and opinions helps contribute to effective communication
- Monitor your emotions: maintain a high level of emotional intelligence
- Be an active listener
- Be attentive to non-verbal cues: eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, yawning, behavior, body movements
- Strive for equal talk-time: make communication between yourself and your mentee a real dialogue
- Paraphrase to show understanding: restate what you heard and ask your mentee if that is what he or she meant to make sure you are on the same page
- Ask questions: If you have questions, are confused, or feel your mentee is being unclear about what they are saying, follow-up
- Make communication constructive not destructive

4.2 Communicating Through Texts, Email and Social Networking Sites

Know your audience. Many teens and adolescents today communicate through texts, email, and social networking; set ground rules early in the mentoring engagement about the types and appropriate frequency of communication you want to use.

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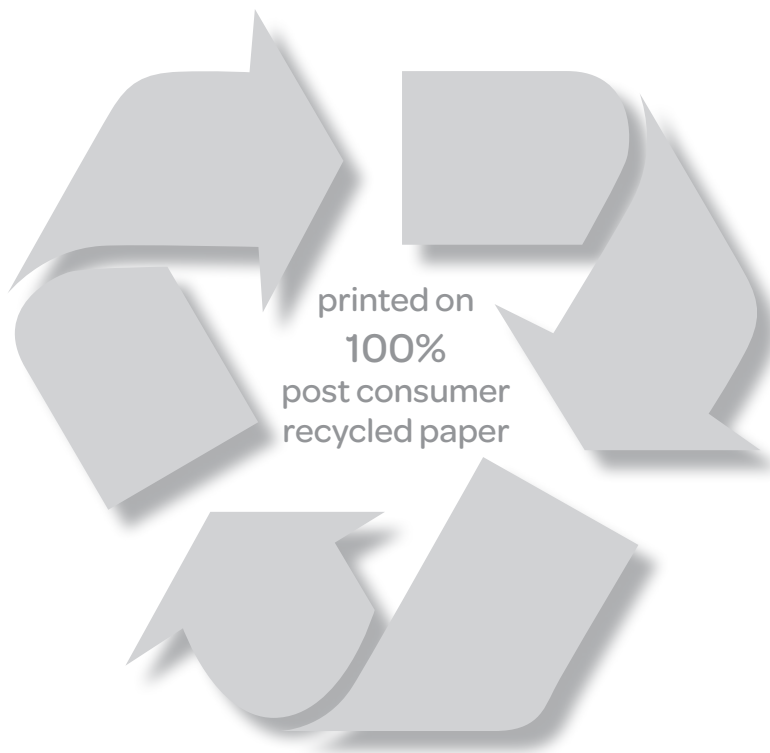
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