

Part 2:
Training Mentors



JUMPstarting

Your Mentors

Module 2

Time: 2 hours
Limit: 20 participants

Introduction

Session Goals

Participants will prepare to deliver an introductory training session, called “Starting the Relationship,” to their program’s new mentors. By the end of the workshop, they should:

- Have identified the skills and knowledge their program’s mentors should possess
- Have practiced adapting and facilitating training activities for new mentors
- Have practiced reflecting on, and learning from, their experiences as facilitators

The Basics

1. Mentor-training materials should be adapted to address the issues most relevant to your program, the children and youth who participate, and the adults who serve as their mentors.
2. It is important for new mentors to define what their roles are and are not.
3. Understanding basic principles of positive youth development can help mentors identify effective approaches for building supportive relationships with their mentees.

Agenda

- 1. One Thing About Me** (20 minutes)
Participants meet in pairs to introduce themselves.
- 2. Training Mentors** (15 minutes)
Participants discuss skills and knowledge their programs' mentors should possess.
- 3. Planning an Introductory Training Session** (15 minutes)
Participants explore the material in "Starting the Relationship."
- 4. Preparing an Activity** (45 minutes)
Small groups adapt and facilitate training activities for new mentors.
- 5. Group Reports** (20 minutes)
Small groups report on their strategies for modifying the activities and on the facilitation experience.
- 6. Now What?** (5 minutes)
Participants reflect on their experiences during this session.

Connections to Other Training Sessions

This session is intended as the second of four sessions designed to help programs train their mentors. The information and strategies referred to in this session are related to these JUMP trainings:

- "Preparing to Facilitate"
- "Connecting and Communicating"
- "Keeping the Relationships Going"

If members of your training group have already attended any of those sessions, you may want to draw on information they have learned there. If they have not yet attended those sessions, you will want to, where appropriate, encourage them to attend in order to reinforce and add to the information that is covered during this "JUMPstarting Your Mentors" session.

Preparation

Note: “JUMPstarting Your Mentors” is a train-the-trainer module. Thus, one of your roles throughout the session is to model effective facilitation strategies and approaches. (Also note that the words “trainer” and “facilitator” are used interchangeably in this module.)

1. The materials for this module include “Starting the Relationship,” a curriculum unit that programs can use to plan and deliver an introductory training workshop for their new mentors. It is used heavily during this JUMP training session. If at all possible, you should get a copy of “Starting the Relationship” to your participants *before* the training session so they have time to read it in advance. Ideally, you can mail it to participants a week or two before the “JUMPstarting Your Mentors” training. Include a cover note explaining how it will be used during the session and emphasizing that it is essential they read “Starting the Relationship” before the session takes place.
2. Read the mentor training materials, “Starting the Relationship.” Much of this session is devoted to helping participants learn to use these materials in a training workshop for their program’s new mentors. Be prepared to give a brief (5 to 10 minute) overview of “Starting the Relationship” at the beginning of Activity #3.
3. Read the handouts.
4. Visit the Web sites listed on Handout #5, “Resources for JUMPstarting Your Mentors,” so you are prepared to describe to participants the kinds of information they can find there.
5. Review the trainer resource.
6. Review the three curriculum modules, listed on the previous page, that include information and strategies relevant to “JUMPstarting Your Mentors.”
7. Prepare a set of handouts for each training participant. (Copy the handouts onto paper with three-hole punches so participants can keep them in a binder.)

8. Prepare a copy of “Starting the Relationship” for each participant. Many of the pages are printed on both the front and back, so be sure to copy both sides. (Copy “Starting the Relationship” onto paper with three-hole punches so participants can keep it in their binder.)
9. Prepare transparencies of the two overheads.
10. Copy the goals of the session onto a flipchart. On a separate sheet of paper, copy the agenda.



Materials

Trainer Resource

- Trainer Resource #1: Principles of Adult Learning



Overheads

- Overhead #1: Possible Topics for Mentor Training (three pages)
- Overhead #2: Principles of Adult Learning



Handouts

- Session Goals and Basics
- Agenda
- Handout #1: Who I Am
- Handout #2: Checklist: Mentor Trainings
- Handout #3: Guidelines for Small-Group Practice
- Handout #4: Three Things I Will Use
- Handout #5: Resources for JUMPstarting Your Mentors

Mentor Training Materials

- “Starting the Relationship”

You Will Need To Supply

Flipcharts, easels, markers, and masking tape

An overhead projector

Index cards

Activities

1. One Thing About Me

Participants meet in pairs to introduce themselves.

- Introduce yourself. Tell participants that, in a few minutes, they are going to introduce themselves to each other.



Refer them to Handout #1, “Who I Am.” Allow a few minutes for them to silently read it and think through (or write notes about) how they would complete each of the items.

Then organize the group into pairs. (Pair people together who do not know each other.) Ask each pair to use “Who I Am” as a guide for having a conversation in which they learn about one another. Tell them that each person will use the information to introduce his/her partner to the whole group.

Allow about 6 minutes for pairs to complete their conversations.

Ask for 3 or 4 volunteers to introduce his/her partner, allowing about 1 minute per introduction.

- Now ask, “If this activity were done with new mentors, how could it begin to prepare them for starting a relationship with their mentee?” (The word “facilitator” would be changed to “mentor” on the “Who I Am” handout.)

*What communication skills would it help new mentors think about?
How might it help them think about their roles as mentors?*

- Note that this session helps participants get ready to provide an introductory training workshop to their program’s new mentors. Using the flipchart you have prepared, describe the goals of this session. Then briefly review the agenda.

Check to be sure each person has the handouts for this session and a copy of “Starting the Relationship.” Note that “Starting” contains materials for an introductory mentor training workshop, and you will be focusing on those materials during much of the session.



Refer participants to page 1 of their handouts, “Session Goals and Basics.”

Review the three “basics” that are listed there. This session will be examining those points more fully.

2. Training Mentors

Participants discuss skills and knowledge their programs' mentors should possess.

- Note that this is the first of three JUMP sessions that are intended to help programs plan and deliver training workshops and ongoing support groups for their mentors. (In addition, the “Preparing to Facilitate” session provides an introduction to training strategies.)

Before starting to look at the materials for the mentor training workshops, this is a good time to take a few minutes to talk about programs' current training efforts.

Lead a discussion about the training that participants are offering, or plan to offer, for their mentors. The discussion should address at least these points:

1. *What training—including training in skills and providing information—do their programs currently provide?*

Is the training (if any is provided) required? If so, how many hours of training are required? Is the training optional? Who facilitates the training—for example, program staff? staff from other agencies? professional trainers?

2. *When is the training given?*

Before mentors begin to meet with the children/youth? Soon after they begin the relationship? Ongoing during their mentoring experience?

3. *What are the most successful current components of their mentor training?*

4. *Are there areas where they would like to provide training for their mentors but don't?*

What are those areas? Why aren't they providing the training? Are there external obstacles? Have other participants found effective ways to overcome those obstacles?

As participants speak, record their major points on the flipchart.

- Refer participants to Handout #2, “Checklist: Mentor Trainings,” and allow a few minutes for them to review it. (Major items on this handout are reproduced on the three pages of Overhead #1, “Possible Topics for Mentor Training.”)



Note that the handout can serve as a tool for programs as they define and organize their mentor training efforts. Very briefly review the items on the list of potential training topics, pointing out that some of the workshops could be facilitated by program staff while others might best be led by an outside person.

For example, someone from an agency that provides services to battered women could be invited to give a training on domestic violence; someone from a local Planned Parenthood agency could give a training on teen sexuality; a school DARE officer (a police officer who participates in the national Drug Abuse Resistance Education program) could offer information on signs of drug use and ways to get help.

Emphasize that programs need to decide which issues/training topics are relevant to their particular circumstances. Ask if there are items they want to add to the list of training topics.

3. Planning an Introductory Training Session

Participants explore the material in “Starting the Relationship.”

- Refer participants to “Starting the Relationship,” materials for planning and delivering an introductory training workshop for new mentors. Note that the workshop would cover most or all of the first five mentor training topics on the handout they have just discussed.
- Give the 5-to-10 minute overview of “Starting the Relationship” that you have prepared. Allow opportunities for questions and discussion throughout your presentation.

Ideally, your participants should have received and read “Starting the Relationship” in advance of this session. If they have, you can move more quickly through the overview.

Your overview should cover:

1. The way the materials are organized.

Note that there is introductory material (workshop goals, the agenda, information about what is provided and what facilitators need to provide, preparation tips for this workshop and general facilitation tips, and some useful quotations); information for facilitating five activities (and for two optional activities); and handouts to use during the session and/or to distribute at the end of the session, and an evaluation form.

2. *The content of a mentor training workshop based on these materials.* Review the four goals on page 1 of “Starting the Relationship.” Describe how the materials contain an icebreaker (the same one your participants did earlier), and activities geared toward meeting these goals. The activities are intended to help new mentors explore their roles; understand special qualities of the children/youth in the program; and become familiar with youth development principles and how mentors can apply them.

Tell participants that in a few minutes, they are going to meet in small groups to work with some of the activities in “Starting the Relationship.” Ask if they have any additional questions or comments about the materials.

IN ADDITION: If people attending this session have not previously attended the training on “Preparing to Facilitate,” you might want to cover a few key points from that session. These might include a brief review of principles of adult learning (they are summarized in Trainer Resource #1 and on Overhead #2, “Principles of Adult Learning”) and of the “Facilitation Tips” that are included in the introductory pages of “Starting the Relationship.”

However, keep this review limited to a few minutes—it is important for participants to move quickly into the small-group work. The adult-learning principles and facilitation tips can be referred to again, and applied in a specific context, later in the session when the small groups report back on their work.



4. Preparing an Activity

Small groups adapt and facilitate training activities for new mentors.

- Explain that now you want everyone to get some experience working with the material in “Starting the Relationship.”

Organize participants into small groups of 4 or 5 people. Each group is going to work with one of these two activities in “Starting the Relationship”:

Activity #2—Roles of a Mentor, or

Activity #4—Supporting Children and Youth.



You might decide to organize groups randomly and then assign each group one of these activities to work on, or you could ask participants which activity they prefer to work on and then organize the groups around their preferences. In either case, make sure that at least one group is working on each of the activities.

Refer participants to Handout #3, “Guidelines for Small-Group Practice,” and briefly review it. Make sure each group knows which activity it will be working on.

Also make sure that each group has index cards, a flipchart, an easel, markers, and masking tape.

Allow about 40 minutes for each group to meet and complete its work. (Give a “5-minute warning” after 35 minutes so the groups know they have to begin to wrap-up.)

5. Group Reports

Small groups report on their strategies for modifying the activities and on the facilitation experience.

- Bring the entire group back together.

Ask each small group to give a 3-to-5 minute presentation on its work. Have each group that worked on Activity #2, Roles of a Mentor, present their reports. Then have groups that worked on Activity #4, Supporting Children and Youth, present.

Each group should:

1. Describe the characteristics of the mentoring program it identified for the purpose of modifying the activity.
2. Talk about any modifications it made in the activity and why they were made.
3. Discuss their experience of role-playing the activity. What worked well and why? What would they change in doing the mentor-training activity again?

Each group’s facilitator should also talk briefly about his/her experience—what went well and what felt uncomfortable.

AS AN ALTERNATIVE: If there is time, and if any of the activities lend themselves to immediate presentation, some of the small groups might choose to present part of their activity as a role-play. In this case, one of the small-group members would be the facilitator, and all of the other participants in this training session would play the role of new mentors who are taking part in the activity.

As each small group and its facilitator makes its presentation, encourage questions and comments from other participants.

If more than one small group worked on each of the activities (for example, if two small groups practiced facilitating Activity #2, Roles of a Mentor), have the whole group discuss the ways in which each small group approached the activity differently and the impact of those differences.

In addition, as appropriate, ask questions that help everyone focus on principles of effective facilitating and adult learning.

These might include, for example, questions about the use of flipcharts, the facilitator's ability to involve everyone in the group and to draw on people's "real life" experiences, and the atmosphere in the group while the activity was taking place.

- As time allows, have participants look at Activity #3, Youth in the Program, in "Starting the Relationship." Lead a brief discussion about whether that activity would be useful for the mentors in their particular program and, if so, how they would approach it. What people would they invite to make the presentation?

6. Now What?

Participants reflect on their experiences during this session.

- Refer participants to Handout #4, "Three Things I Will Use."

Ask them to write down three things they learned during this session that they will apply at their programs. These might be facilitation strategies, content for mentor training sessions, or anything else.

Ask for a few volunteers to read one of their items.





Remind the group that two additional JUMP training sessions (“Connecting and Communicating” and “Keeping the Relationships Going”) focus on helping programs train their mentors in other areas, including developing communication skills, building trust with their mentee, and understanding and respecting cultural differences.

- Refer them to Handout #5, “Resources for JUMPstarting Your Mentors,” for information on other mentor training curricula and materials, and Web sites that are useful sources of information on youth development.



Principles of Adult Learning

Learning results in a change in knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. Some of the factors that contribute to adult learning are not very different from those that contribute to learning by children and youth.

1. **Adults learn what they are motivated to learn.**
Adults want to see a reason for learning something. The learning has to be applicable to their work or other responsibilities to be of value to them. Adults learn in order to solve perceived problems.
2. **Adults are practical and goal-oriented.**
They focus on aspects of a training that are most useful to them.
3. **Adult teaching should be grounded in learners' experiences.**
Adults have accumulated a foundation of knowledge and life experiences that is a valuable resource. Adults learn best when new information and concepts are built on this foundation.
4. **Adults learn best when they are in a supportive environment.**
They want guidance, not competition. They don't want to be put on the spot or feel like they are being tested. They learn best when they are both psychologically and physically comfortable.



Possible topics for mentor training:

- **Mentors' responsibilities, and available resources**
- **Characteristics of children/youth in the program**
- **Child/youth development**
- **Mentors' roles and expectations**



- **Ideas for mentor/mentee activities**
- **Listening skills**
- **Cultural sensitivity/diversity training**
- **Goal Setting**
- **Skills for setting limits with their mentee**
- **Problem-solving skills**
- **Conflict resolution**



- **Potential issues with mentees' families**
- **Child abuse, including neglect**
- **Teen pregnancy/sexual activity**
- **Alcohol and other drug issues**
- **Domestic violence**
- **Ongoing mentor support groups**



Principles of Adult Learning

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Handouts

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JUMPstarting

Your Mentors



Session Goals

- To identify skills and knowledge your program's mentors should possess
- To practice adapting and facilitating training activities for new mentors
- To practice reflecting on, and learning from, your experiences as facilitators

The Basics

1. Mentor-training materials should be adapted to address the issues most relevant to your program, the children and youth who participate, and the adults who serve as their mentors.
2. It is important for new mentors to define what their roles are and are not.
3. Understanding basic principles of positive youth development can help mentors identify effective approaches for building supportive relationships with their mentees.



Agenda

1. One Thing About Me

Notes: _____

2. Training Mentors

Notes: _____

3. Planning an Introductory Training Session

Notes: _____

4. Preparing an Activity

Notes: _____

5. Group Reports

Notes: _____

6. Now What?

Notes: _____



Who I Am

1. My name is...
2. My most important role in life is as a...
3. At work, I...
4. My favorite way to spend my free time is...
5. One thing about me that is important for people to know is...
6. Some of the strengths I will bring as a facilitator of mentor trainings are...
7. One of my worries about being a facilitator is...

(Adapted with permission from the Volunteer Development Seminar, "Relationship Building."
Volunteer Education and Development Manual. 1991. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.)



Checklist: Mentor Trainings

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Does your program require training for mentors? If so, how much training is required?

When does the training occur? Before the mentor and child or youth first meet? Early in their relationship? Ongoing throughout their mentoring experience? What topics does the training include? Who delivers the trainings?

Does your program offer optional training sessions for mentors? If so, when do these occur? Before the mentor and child or youth first meet? Early in their relationship? Ongoing throughout their mentoring experience? What topics does the training include? Who delivers the trainings? Are the sessions well attended?

What Trainings Do You Give? What Would You Like To Offer?

	Currently offer	Would like to offer
1. Mentors' responsibilities to the youth and to the agency, organization, and/or school district; and resources available to help mentors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Characteristics of children/youth who participate in the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Child/youth development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Mentors' roles and expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Ideas for mentor/mentee activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Checklist: Mentor Trainings
page 2 of 2

	Currently offer	Would like to offer
6. Listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Cultural sensitivity/diversity training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Goal setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Skills for setting limits with their mentee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Problem-solving skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Conflict resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Potential issues with mentees' families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Child abuse, including neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Teen pregnancy/sexual activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Alcohol and other drug issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Domestic violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Ongoing mentor support groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Guidelines for Small-Group Practice

page 1 of 2

Your group will be working with *either* Activity #2, Roles of a Mentor, or Activity #4, Supporting Children and Youth, in “Starting the Relationship.”

Follow these steps:

1. Select a group leader. That person will then guide you through the following steps.
2. Allow a few minutes for everyone to read the activity carefully and to understand how it fits into the context of the goals and other activities in “Starting the Relationship.”
3. Have a brief group discussion about the activity in which you identify its specific goal: What should new mentors know and/or be able to do as a result of participating in this activity?
4. All mentor training will, to some extent, be customized so it is specifically geared toward the characteristics of the particular program in which the mentors are volunteering; the specific issues that are important in that program; and the characteristics of the people who serve as mentors.

So that your group can think more specifically about the audience for this activity, you should all agree on the identity of the mentoring program that will be presenting the activity during your role-play. The easiest approach is to use one of the group member’s programs. Be sure everyone in the group knows that program’s goals, characteristics of the children or youth who participate, where the mentor/mentee meetings take place, and any other information that could influence the approach to mentor training.

5. Select someone in your group to be the facilitator when you practice this activity. (That person might or might not be the same as the leader you selected in step #1.)
6. As a group, decide whether you want to make any changes in the activity. For example, if it is suggested that participants be paired up, would you want to change this so they are instead working in small groups of 4 or 5 people? What would be the advantages or disadvantages? Do you want to substitute for, or drop, a suggested quote? Do you want to alter any of the sub-steps in the activity? Do you want to create a handout to use during the activity or to give to participants to read after the training workshop? Do you want to create any overheads?

7. Allow the facilitator about 5 minutes to prepare, including doing any necessary writing on a flipchart (since it is not possible right now to prepare overheads) as well as becoming mentally prepared.
8. Role-play presenting the activity in a mentor training workshop. Your selected facilitator is “the facilitator”; everyone else in the group is a “new mentor.” (You will probably have about 15 to 20 minutes for the role-play, slightly less than the ideal amount of time for conducting this activity for a group of new mentors.)
9. Give feedback on the role-play. Everyone in the group participated in making decisions about whether and how to modify the activity. Give yourselves feedback on the decisions you made about content and approach in this activity. Did the activity achieve its goal? What worked well? What would you change? Give the facilitator feedback on his or her work. For example, did the facilitator help participants feel engaged in the activity? Handle group process well? Model good listening skills? The facilitator should be a full participant in this feedback session, talking about his or her own perceptions of what went well and what he or she would change in facilitating this activity again.
10. Each small group will make a brief (about 3 to 5 minutes) presentation to the whole group about modifications it made in the mentor training activity. Decide who in your group will make that presentation.



Three Things I Will Use

Briefly describe three things you learned during this session that you will use at your program. These might be facilitation strategies, content for mentor training sessions, or anything else.

1.

2.

3.



Resources for JUMPstarting Your Mentors

Curriculum

Mentor Training Curriculum. 1991. National Mentoring Working Group. Washington, D.C. Available through the National Mentoring Partnership, (202) 338-3844; or through the “Volunteer Marketplace Catalog,” (800) 272-8306.

Volunteer Education and Development Manual. 1991. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Available through Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, 230 North 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (215) 567-7000, national@bbbsa.org.

Other print material

How To Be a Great Mentor. 1999. A guide, in magazine format, produced by Kaplan, *Newsweek*, and the National Mentoring Partnership. Available through the National Mentoring Partnership, (202) 338-3844.

The Kindness of Strangers: Adult Mentors, Urban Youth, and the New Voluntarism. 1993.

Marc Freedman. Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Some useful Web sites

www.mentoring.org

National Mentoring Partnership—includes information about mentors’ roles and characteristics of effective mentors.

www.nydic.org

National Youth Development Information Center—provides a wide range of information about youth development principles and programs, relevant statistics, and links to related sites.

www.search-institute.org

Search Institute—provides information about research on, and approaches to, positive youth development.

Starting the Relationship

*Materials to help you
plan and deliver an
introductory training
session for new mentors*

Time: 2 to 2½ hours
Limit: 20 participants

The best time to give this training session: before mentors have the first meeting with their mentee

Introduction

Goals

To help new mentors develop a realistic understanding of their role and begin to explore effective approaches to mentoring. By the end of the workshop, they should have:

- Identified qualities of good mentors
- Identified roles that mentors can play in the lives of children and youth
- Learned about the children or youth who are enrolled in your program
- Been introduced to youth development principles and how they can be applied to mentoring

Agenda

1. Introductions (35 minutes)
2. Roles of a Mentor (30 minutes)
3. Youth in the Program (25 minutes)
4. Supporting Children and Youth (25 minutes)
5. Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

At the end of the workshop, distribute the evaluation forms to participants and ask them to complete the forms and return them to you before leaving.

Included Here Are

- Suggested activities, in a suggested sequence, that you can use or modify to meet the particular needs of your program
- Handouts that you can use or modify, and an evaluation form for participants to complete at the end of the session
- Notes and training tips for facilitators
- Some quotations you can use at key points during the training session

Materials You Will Need To Provide

- Copies of the handouts and any other materials you prepare for the participants
- Copies of the evaluation form
- Flipcharts, an easel, marking pens, and masking tape
- The overheads you prepare
- An overhead projector
- Name tags (do not distribute them until after the first activity)
- Index cards

Notes For Facilitators

Preparation Tips

1. This material includes two lengthy handouts related to youth development: Handout C, “Developmental Assets for Children and Youth,” and Handout D, “Developmental Stages of Children and Youth.” While you will not want to use much (or perhaps even any) workshop time reviewing these handouts, you might want to briefly introduce them during Activity #4, “Supporting Children and Youth,” and give one or both to participants at the end of the session so they can read them later.
2. If you have not covered program information during an orientation session, you should add an activity that describes:
 - Your organization’s expectations of mentors. This includes time requirements (both the frequency of meetings with their mentee and the length of commitment); any required paperwork and telephone or in-person meetings with the program supervisor or school coordinator; and training requirements.
 - The support that mentors can expect from program staff.
 - Community resources, if any, that are available for the mentee and mentee’s family, as well as the program’s process for accessing those resources.
 - Legal/liability and confidentiality issues as they relate to your program.
 - The program’s ground rules.

In addition to making a presentation about these topics, prepare written materials that contain this information and be sure that each new mentor receives a copy.

This presentation could take place immediately after the introductory activity. (If you are going to be presenting this program information, add another 30 minutes to the scheduled time for the workshop.)

If your new mentors have already received this kind of orientation, you should still prepare written materials that cover this information and give everyone a copy at the end of the session.

Facilitation Tips

“Facilitate” means “to make easier.” Think about yourself as a “facilitator”—someone who helps mentors learn, rather than as someone who attempts to impose learn-

ing upon them. “Facilitating” suggests the idea of a collaborative relationship between the trainer and participants.

A facilitator is a:

- Coach
- Listener
- Trainer
- Learner
- Manager of group process

What follows are some good practices for facilitating.

1. Before the training session:

- **Take time to plan carefully.** Customize activities and handouts so they best address characteristics of your program. Be prepared to offer real-life examples that illustrate your program’s experiences. Think about how you will facilitate the session, and be prepared to make on-the-spot adjustments if, for example, an activity is not working well or you find you need to spend more time on one activity and thus have to shorten another.
- **Select a space for the training that is physically comfortable and contributes to group interaction.** Avoid a traditional classroom setup. Depending on the size of your group, have a table large enough for all the participants to sit around, or multiple tables (square or round) for smaller groups to sit around. If that is not possible, arrange chairs in a circle—this will facilitate discussion. If small groups are going to be meeting as part of the activities, make sure there are rooms available nearby, or be sure the training room is large enough that small groups can meet within it without distracting each other.
- **Have everything ready.** Copy handouts and prepare overheads. Gather any required materials and equipment: flipcharts, markers, masking tape, name tags, an overhead projector (and extension cord, if necessary), and anything else you might need for the session.

- **Arrive early.** Get to the training room about 30 minutes ahead of time to set up the area: arrange chairs, do any necessary advance writing on the flipchart, and check equipment. Be sure that refreshments (coffee, water, soft drinks, etc.) are available.

2. During the session:

- **Create a comfortable learning environment.** Be sure participants can hear each other as they speak. Create an atmosphere where people are taken seriously and where they can also laugh—people are usually most open to new ideas when they are enjoying themselves and feel comfortable enough to risk making mistakes. Think about ways to inject humor into the training session. Using relevant cartoons as overheads, for example, or telling funny anecdotes about experiences of mentors, can help create an open and friendly atmosphere.
- **Pace the training appropriately.** Encourage the exchange of ideas and information, while also keeping activities on track. Move things quickly enough to keep participants from being bored but slowly enough to make sure they absorb what is being discussed. Allow time throughout the session for participants to ask questions. Where appropriate, involve the whole group in answering questions. But also have a feel for which questions should be answered quickly so the session can proceed.
- **Model good listening, feedback, and problem-solving skills—the skills that mentors need.** Listen carefully and respectfully. Acknowledge what people say even if you don't agree. Maintain eye contact with each person as he or she speaks. Monitor your nonverbal signals as well as your verbal comments. Be nonjudgmental. Respond by guiding, not imposing. Repeat and address key points. Help participants develop collaborative problem-solving skills by involving them in answering other participants' questions and having them work together to arrive at solutions to problems.
- **Keep this point in mind: People remember about 20 percent of what they hear; 40 percent of what they hear and see; and 80 percent of what they discover for themselves.** Use overheads and flipcharts to help people see and remember. Flipcharts are a useful tool for group thinking and problem solving. Summarize major discussion points on flipcharts, and post the pages on the walls around the room so you and your group can keep refer-

ring back to, and expanding upon, earlier ideas and contributions.

- **Build in success.** People learn best when they experience success frequently. Structure activities so participants have a sense of accomplishment at the end of each. Structure the training session so participants' sense of accomplishment grows throughout.
- **Be yourself.** Have a sense of humor. And know your limitations. If you don't know the answer to a question, that's OK. You don't need to know all the answers. Just say you will try to find the information they requested and get back to them.

3. After the session:

- **Use an evaluation form to get feedback from participants.** Distribute it at the end of the session, and ask participants to complete it before they leave.
- **Reflect on what worked well and what did not.** Use the information from participants' evaluations to help you think through what worked well from their point of view, what you need to modify about the content, and what facilitation skills you want to strengthen. Along with participants' feedback, give yourself your own feedback on the training. Think about the situations when participants seemed involved, bored, stimulated, confused, angry, or having fun. Based on your self-observations, make necessary adjustments in session content and your facilitation strategies.
- **Follow up on information you promised participants you would get for them.** During the training session, keep a "to do" list of information (or answers to questions) that you tell participants you will obtain for them. Try to get the information, and then contact the participants who requested it. If you can't find the information (or the answer to a question), contact the participant to let him or her know about the situation.

Some Quotations to Use During this Session

These are among many good quotations that could help mentors think about their roles and about the strengths and vulnerabilities of children and youth. You can make overheads of some or all of these quotes—or other quotes you like—and use them during the session to stimulate discussion or sum up key points. You could also develop a handout for participants that lists these and/or other relevant

quotes.

“There is no beginning too small.”

—Henry David Thoreau

“Let everything you do be done as if it makes a difference.”

—William James

“You never know when you’re making a memory.”

—Rickie Lee Jones

“Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and to let him know you trust him.”

—Booker T. Washington

“Once the self-concept changes, behavior changes to match the freshly perceived self.”

—Carl Rogers

“With time and patience, the mulberry leaf becomes a silk gown.”

—Chinese proverb

“Treat a child as though he already is the person he’s capable of becoming.”

—Haim Ginott

“If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence,

you have won even before you have started.”

—Marcus Garvey

“The impulse to dream had been slowly beaten out of me by experience. Now it surged up again and I hungered for books, new ways of looking and seeing.”

—Richard Wright

“Catch people in the act of doing something right.”

—Ken Blanchard

Activities

Activity #1: Introductions

- Introduce yourself. Welcome the new mentors and explain the goals of this training session. (Copy the goals onto a flipchart or prepare an overhead.) Then tell participants you want them to introduce themselves to one another.
- Organize the group into pairs. (Pair people together who do not know each other.) Then distribute Handout A, “Who I Am.” Ask each pair to use the handout as a guide for having a conversation in which they introduce themselves and learn about one another. Tell them that each person will then introduce his or her partner to the whole group.

Allow about 10 minutes for pairs to complete their conversations. Then have each person very briefly—allowing about 1 minute per person—introduce his or her partner.

- Thank the group for their contributions. Then lead a discussion focusing on how this activity is similar to starting a new relationship with their mentee. Be sure to include these points:

How did it feel to reveal things about themselves to a stranger?

Did their partner do or say anything to help them open up? If so, what?

What did they try to do to help their partner feel more comfortable?

What would they do differently if they did this exercise again?

- Note that this exercise provides practice in sharing information with another person and in helping that person share information with you. Those are key first steps in beginning a relationship. The exercise should also have helped the participants think about some of the roles they play in life. For many of them, being a mentor will be a new role.

[Activity adapted with permission from the Volunteer Development Seminar, “Relationship Building,”

pp. 11-12. *Volunteer Education and Development Manual*. 1991. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.]

Activity #2: Roles of a Mentor

- Give each participant an index card. Then ask them to think back to when they were a child or youth. (Suggest an age range that is the same as the ages of the children or youth they will be mentoring.)

Ask them to identify one person outside of their family who was a kind of mentor

for them. (If there is no one outside of their family, then they can identify a relative who served as a kind of mentor.) Ask them to think about why that person was important to them and the result for them of that person's interest.

Have them recall the *qualities* of that person that made her or him so valued by them. Ask them to write down three or four of those qualities on their index card.

- Have the participants talk briefly about the mentor they identified and the qualities they valued. As they speak, list those qualities on the flipchart. When a quality is repeated, put a check mark next to it each time it is mentioned. (For example, the first time someone says "good listener," write that phrase. Each time someone else identifies this quality in his or her mentor, put a check mark by the phrase.)

Review the items on the list. Note which were mentioned most often. Then have the participants identify which of the qualities might be categorized as "communication skills," such as listening, talking, asking questions, and being nonjudgmental. (Material in the training session on "Building Trust" focuses more specifically on communication skills, but their importance for mentors can never be overemphasized.)

- Now ask the participants—again thinking back to the person they identified—to identify the roles a mentor can play in a child or youth's life. List their responses on the flipchart. (These might include: friend, big brother, big sister, positive role model, resource, guide.) Lead a brief discussion about what each of these roles might include. Be sure the participants see that a mentor is not a parent, teacher, or counselor.
- Display the following quote on the flipchart or an overhead you have prepared in advance. Use it to sum up the discussion from this activity:

"The program director and I used to talk about what was wrong with the world, and we always used to say that if somebody could just hold these kids' hands sometimes—not drag them along, but just walk along with them—maybe a lot of them would find their way."

—Mentor, Washington, D.C.

Activity #3: Youth in the Program

- Write on the flipchart or make an overhead of this statement:

"Helping young people achieve their full potential is the best way to prevent them from becoming involved in risky behavior."

(The statement is from a brochure about the National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth.)

Relate this statement to the mentor “roles” that your participants have just identified. Then ask them to keep the statement in mind as they hear more about the children or youth they will be mentoring.

- Present information that will help your mentors understand characteristics—the particular strengths and needs—of the children or youth whom they will be mentoring. Depending on your program, you may want to do the presentation in one of the following ways, or come up with your own alternative (one alternative is to have a staff member make the presentation):
 1. If the children or youth in your program have “special needs” or some other common characteristic—for example, if they are children in foster care, youth who all live in the same housing project, youth living in a juvenile detention facility, children or youth with physical disabilities—you can arrange to have an outside presenter come to the training to talk about the particular challenges the children/youth face and the special strengths they possess. A social worker involved with foster care could, for example, talk about the foster care system and its effects on children. Someone from the housing project’s tenant council could talk about living in the project, so that your mentors have a context for understanding their mentees’ lives. If your program is school-based, a staff member from the school or your program’s school coordinator could make a presentation about what life is like in the school.
 2. If the children or youth in your program are all within a particular age range, you can invite someone who works with young people that age to talk about them in terms of youth development. For example, someone who works with youth at a local Boys & Girls Club, Y, or other after-school or weekend program could talk about his or her experiences with, and observations of, children or youth of that age.

Be sure that anyone you invite to speak has the kind of positive, supportive attitude toward children/youth that you want your mentors to have. Talk to the person well in advance about this training session and why you would like him or her to speak to the group. You can also, in advance, give the speaker a copy of the curriculum for the training so he or she can see how the presentation fits into the entire training session.

3. Arrange for a panel of 4 to 6 current or former mentors with your program (or mentors from a similar program) to talk about the children/youth. Among other topics, they could discuss their initial expectations for the mentoring relationship and how and why those expectations may have changed over time, their challenges and rewards, and what they have come to understand about the children/youth. (As the trainer, you will facilitate the panel discussion.)
4. Arrange for a panel that includes both the professionals or other experts in items #1 and #2 above, and current or former mentors. If you choose this approach, be sure, as you facilitate the panel discussion, that the mentors do not feel overwhelmed or become inadvertently “silenced” by the professionals.

Whatever presentation form you decide to use, allow plenty of time for questions afterward.

- Return to the opening statement about “helping young people achieve their full potential,” and relate it to the information that has just been presented. Note that the idea in this statement is the essence of a positive approach to youth development.

Activity #4: Supporting Children and Youth

- Copy one or more of these quotes (or other quotes that you like) onto a flipchart or make an overhead:

“Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and to let him know you trust him.”

—Booker T. Washington

“Treat a child as though he already is the person he’s capable of becoming.”

—Haim Ginott

“If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence, you have won even before you have started.”

—Marcus Garvey

Lead a discussion about the quote(s) as a way into talking about principles of positive youth development.

- Note that experts in positive youth development talk about young people’s basic needs—essential conditions that help youth avoid risky behaviors, experience healthy development, and achieve their full potential. These basic needs

include
a sense of:

- Safety and structure
- Belonging
- Self-worth/self-esteem and an ability to contribute
- Independence and control over one’s life
- Support from caring adults
- Competence and mastery

Display these items on the flipchart or an overhead you have prepared. You might also want to make a handout to give to participants.

(This list is adapted from “A New Vision: Promoting Youth Development.” Testimony of Karen Johnson Pittman, Director, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, before the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, September 30, 1991.)

Have participants discuss what each of these items means to them. Write their key points on the flipchart.

Note: *Two handouts on aspects of youth development—Handout C, “Developmental*

Assets for Children and Youth,” and Handout D, “Developmental Stages of Children and Youth”—are included at the end of these materials. If you are going to give either

or both of these to your participants, you may want to refer to them here, while waiting until the end of the session to distribute them.

However, as an alternative to the following exercise, you could distribute Handout C, “Developmental Assets for Children and Youth,” and review it with participants. During the review, ask which of the assets can be promoted or delivered by a mentor, and what, specifically, the mentor could do to deliver those assets.

- Organize the participants into pairs, and give each pair an index card. Ask them to think about everything the group has discussed so far during this training session, including the qualities and roles of mentors, the children/youth enrolled in the program, positive youth development, and young people’s basic needs. Then ask each pair to decide on two or three ways that, as mentors, they can be contributing to the development of the youth they will be mentoring. They should write these on the front of the card. On the back of the card, they should

write down two or three things that, as mentors, they should avoid doing because they would be counter-productive.

- Have the pairs present their “should do” and “should avoid” lists. As they do, compile two master lists on the flipchart.

Where useful, have the group discuss individual items—both positive and negative ones—and give specific examples of how they might “play out” during a meeting between a mentor and youth. For example, if a pair suggests that a mentor can help a youth feel like a valued part of the community, ask “How?” (One possible response is “doing community service projects together,” and this would contribute to a youth’s sense of belonging, self-worth, and competence.) If a pair suggests that a mentor should avoid being judgmental, ask for examples of situations when a mentor’s first impulse might be to sound judgmental (if the youth reports bad grades or being in a fight, for example) and how those situations could be handled in a more positive, productive way.

Wherever possible, connect the items on their “should do” lists to the six basic needs of young people that you discussed earlier in this activity.

After the pairs have finished presenting their ideas, review the lists and see if there is anything that the participants want to add, delete, or modify.

- Display this quote (or another quote) on the flipchart or on an overhead you have prepared:

“Catch people in the act of doing something right.”
—Ken Blanchard, *The One-Minute Manager*

Ask the participants to think for a minute about some of the many small ways they could “catch” their mentee “in the act of doing something right.” Then ask for a few volunteers to give some examples.

Using items from the “should do” and “should avoid” lists and the idea behind this quote, emphasize the important role that mentors have in providing support and building their mentees’ self-esteem.

Activity #5: Wrap-Up

- Distribute Handout B, “During This Session.” Ask the participants to write down two or three things they have learned during this session that they will be able to put to use as they begin their mentoring relationship. They should also try to describe how they will put that learning to use.

Allow a few minutes for them to complete the handout. Then ask for a few volunteers to share one of their items.

- Thank the participants for their attendance and involvement. Let them know that the next training session is going to build on this one, looking more closely at communication skills.

Distribute the evaluation forms, and ask everyone to complete one and return it to you before leaving.

Handout A: Who I Am

1. My name is...
2. My most important role in life is as a...
3. At work, I...
4. My favorite way to spend my free time is...
5. One thing about me that is important for people to know is...
6. Some of the strengths that I will bring to a mentoring relationship are...
7. One of my worries about being a mentor is...
8. One thing I hope to gain from being a mentor is...

Handout B: During This Session

List two or three things you learned during this session that will help you when you begin your new role as a mentor. Then explain *how* each will help.

1.

2.

3.

Handout C: Developmental Assets for Children and Youth

“Developmental assets” are factors—both internal and external—which decrease the likelihood that young people will engage in risky behavior and increase the chances they will grow up to be healthy, caring, and responsible adults.

The following framework, developed by Search Institute (a research and training organization in Minneapolis), identifies 40 assets or factors that are critical for young people’s growth and development. The first 20 of these assets are external—positive experiences that children and youth should be receiving. The next 20 are internal—qualities that young people should (with the help of adults, communities, and institutions) be developing within themselves.

External Assets

The first 20 developmental assets focus on positive experiences that young people should receive from the people and institutions in their lives. Four categories of external assets are included in the framework:

1. Support

Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families, neighbors, and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments. The developmental assets in this category include:

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

2. Empowerment

Young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure. The developmental assets in this category include:

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

3. Boundaries and Expectations

Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are “in bounds” or “out of bounds.” The developmental assets in this category include:

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

4. Constructive Use of Time

Young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programs, congregational involvement, and quality time at home. The developmental assets in this category include:

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

Internal Assets

A community’s responsibility for its young does not end with the provision of external assets. There needs to be a similar commitment to nurturing the internalized qualities that guide choices and create a sense of purpose and focus. Four categories of internal assets are included in the framework:

1. Commitment to Learning

Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning. The developmental assets in this category include:

- **Motivation for achievement.** Young person is motivated to do well in school.
- **School engagement.** Young person is actively engaged in learning.
- **Homework.** Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
- **Bonding to school.** Young person cares about her or his school.
- **Reading for pleasure.** Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

2. Positive Values

Youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices. The developmental assets in this category include:

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

3. Social Competencies

Young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life. The developmental assets in this category include:

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

4. Positive Identity

Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise. The developmental assets in this category include:

- **Personal power.** Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”
- **Self-esteem.** Young person reports having high self-esteem.
- **Sense of purpose.** Young person reports that “my life has purpose.”

- **Positive view of personal future.** Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

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Handout D: Developmental Stages of Children and Youth

Children may be of similar chronological age but at different levels of maturity. Eventually, most children will end up at the same maturation level, but it may take some children longer than others. What defines each child's development is both that child's biological clock and what has happened to him or her emotionally and environmentally. Most of the children you encounter as a mentor may have had some disturbance in development, such as a loss through divorce or death. Some children seem to weather these changes, while others are more vulnerable to their effects. It is important to be aware of this and have realistic expectations for your mentee.

A child's development is an individual and continual process. The following pages outline typical developmental characteristics of four age groups. But remember that your mentee may be "behind" or "advanced" in any of these areas.

5- to 7-Year-Olds

General Characteristics

1. Eager to learn; easily fatigued; short periods of interest.
2. Learn best when they are active while learning.
3. Self-assertive, boastful; less cooperative, more competitive.

Physical Characteristics

1. Very active; need frequent breaks from tasks to do things that are energetic and fun for them.
2. Need rest periods—good quiet activities include reading books together or doing simple art projects.

3. Large muscles are well developed. Activities involving small muscles (for example, building models that have small pieces) are difficult.
4. May tend to be accident-prone.

Social Characteristics

1. Enjoy organized games and are very concerned about following rules.
2. Can be very competitive—this may lead them to cheat at games.
3. Very imaginative and involved in fantasy-playing.
4. Self-assertive, aggressive, boastful, want to be first; becoming less cooperative.

Emotional Characteristics

1. Alert to feelings of others but unaware of how their own actions affect others.
2. Very sensitive to praise and recognition; feelings are easily hurt.
3. Inconsistent in level of maturity; regress when tired; often less mature at home than with outsiders.

Mental Characteristics

1. Very eager to learn.
2. Like to talk.
3. Can be inflexible about their idea of fairness.
4. Difficulty making decisions.

Suggested Mentor Strategies

1. Be patient, encouraging, and flexible.
2. Give supervision with a minimum amount of interference.
3. Give praise, opportunities for successful competition, and suggestions about

acceptable behavior.

8- to 10-Year-Olds

General Characteristics

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

Physical Characteristics

1. Very active and need frequent breaks from tasks to do things that are energetic and fun for them.
2. Early maturers may be upset about their size—as their adult supporter, you can help by listening and explaining.
3. May tend to be accident-prone.

Social Characteristics

1. Can be very competitive.
2. Are choosy about their friends.
3. Acceptance by friends becomes very important.
4. Team games become popular.
5. Often idolize heroes, television stars, and sports figures.

Emotional Characteristics

1. Very sensitive to praise and recognition; feelings are easily hurt.
2. Because friends become very important, can be conflicts between adults' rules and friends' rules—your honesty and consistency can be helpful.

Mental Characteristics

1. Can be inflexible about their idea of fairness.
2. Eager to answer questions.
3. Very curious; collectors of everything, but may jump to other objects of interest after a short time.
4. Want more independence while knowing they need guidance and support.
5. Wide discrepancies in reading ability.

Suggested Mentor Strategies

1. Recognize allegiance to friends and “heroes.”
2. Remind child of responsibilities in a two-way relationship.
3. Acknowledge performance.
4. Offer enjoyable learning experiences—for example, this is a good age to teach about different cultures.
5. Provide candid answers to questions about upcoming physiological changes.

11- to 13-Year-Olds

General Characteristics

1. Testing limits; a “know-it-all” attitude.
2. Vulnerable; emotionally insecure; fear of rejection; mood swings.
3. Identification with admired adults.

4. Bodies going through physical changes that affect personal appearance.

Physical Characteristics

1. Good coordination of small muscles; interest in art, crafts, models, and music.
2. Early maturers may be upset about their size—as their adult supporter, you can help by listening and explaining.
3. Very concerned with their appearance; very self-conscious about their physical changes.
4. May have bad diet and sleep habits and, as a result, low energy levels.

Social Characteristics

1. Acceptance by friends becomes very important.
2. Cliques start to develop.
3. Team games become popular.
4. Often have “crushes” on other people.
5. Friends set the general rules of behavior.
6. Feel a strong need to conform; dress and behave like their peers in order to “belong.”
7. Very concerned with what others say and think about them.
8. Have a tendency to try to manipulate others to get what they want.
9. Interested in earning own money.

Emotional Characteristics

1. Very sensitive to praise and recognition; feelings are easily hurt.
2. Because friends are very important, can be conflicts between adults’ rules and friends’ rules.
3. Caught between being a child and being an adult.
4. Loud behavior may hide their lack of self-confidence.
5. Look at the world more objectively; look at adults more subjectively, and are critical of them.

Mental Characteristics

1. Tend to be perfectionists; if they try to attempt too much, may feel frustrated.
2. Want more independence but know they need guidance and support.
3. May have lengthy attention span.

Suggested Mentor Strategies

1. Offer alternative opinions without being insistent.
2. Be accepting of different physical states and emotional changes.
3. Give candid answers to questions.
4. Suggest positive money-making opportunities.
5. Share aspects of your work life and rewards of achieving in work.
6. Do not tease about appearance, clothes, boyfriends/girlfriends, sexuality. Instead, affirm them.

14- to 16-Year-Olds

General Characteristics

1. Testing limits; a “know-it-all” attitude.
2. Vulnerable; emotionally insecure; fear of rejection; mood swings.
3. Identification with admired adults.
4. Bodies going through physical changes that affect personal appearance.

Physical Characteristics

1. Very concerned with their appearance; very self-conscious about their physical changes.
2. May have bad diet and sleep habits and, as a result, low energy levels.
3. Often a rapid weight gain at beginning of adolescence; enormous appetite.

Social Characteristics

1. Friends set the general rules of behavior.

2. Feel a strong need to conform; dress and behave like their peers in order to “belong.”
3. Very concerned with what others say and think about them.
4. Have a tendency to try to manipulate others to get what they want.
5. Go to extremes; often appear to be unstable emotionally while having a “know-it-all” attitude.
6. Fear of ridicule and of being unpopular.
7. Strong identification with admired adults.

Emotional Characteristics

1. Very sensitive to praise and recognition; feelings are easily hurt.
2. Caught between being a child and being an adult.
3. Loud behavior may hide their lack of self-confidence.
4. Look at the world more objectively; look at adults more subjectively, and are critical of them.

Mental Characteristics

1. Can better understand moral principles.
2. May have lengthy attention span.

Suggested Mentor Strategies

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

[Used with permission from “Child Development Seminar.” *Volunteer Education and Development Manual*. 1991. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.]