

Creative Mentoring® Student Handbook

WELCOME TO THE CREATIVE
MENTORING FAMILY!



**You have been chosen to
receive a mentor!!**

This mentee handbook was written especially for you. We are glad that you are part of a wonderful relationship that we hope will last for years and years!



Provided by Connecting Generations

Why Mentoring?

You may be wondering what all the excitement is about. Big deal. You are getting a mentor. But it is soooooo much more than that!

A mentor is an adult who, along with your parents, provides support, counsel, and friendship. Mentors are good listeners, people who care, people who want to help young people bring out strengths that are already there.

Did you know that mentoring has proved to be a powerful tool for helping young people fulfill their potential? Yes!! It's true!

Mentoring can:

- Give you the chance to talk about things that are important to YOU;
- Help you with school work that you may find really hard;
- Offer opportunities to learn about different careers;
- Improve your attitude towards your parents, peers and teachers;
- Encourage you to stay motivated and focused on education; and
- Help you learn new things.

You help your mentor by helping him or her feel better about life by helping a younger person. This way everyone gets something from mentoring!

-Source www.mentor.org

What Makes a Good Mentor?

A mentor's most important job is to be your adult friend. They may not look like you or come from your neighborhood—and that's ok. Just know they care about you and want to help you be your best.

Mentors want to help you grow and succeed!



Your mentor will not tell others about what you talk about. But the mentor may tell someone if there is concern you may be in danger. This may sound like snitching or ratting you out but it is in your best interest. The mentor's job is to keep you safe.

It is expected that your mentor will meet with you every week for 45-60 minutes throughout the school year. This may not sound like a lot of time but just an hour or so does wonders. Mentors are encouraged to remain with the same student from year to year. The longer the relationship, the better!

Your mentor will be committed to you!

Expectations and Responsibilities

Mentors are committed and dedicated. They are asked to make a weekly commitment of 45 minutes to 60 minutes. However there are times when the appointment has to be missed due to travel or an emergency. These cancellations should be the exception—not the rule. It may be disappointing when your mentor has to cancel but try to understand that it is for a very good reason.

Creative Mentoring opportunities happen during normal program hours only. For a school, that means during the school day. At an after school program, that may mean the hours of 3 pm -7 pm. The mentor should not have meetings with you outside the normal hours unless it is directly related to a school or program activity. If you are in a school play it is perfectly okay for the mentor to attend the play. It is not okay for you to eat dinner at your mentor's home.¹

Mentor Responsibilities

There are four responsibilities that your mentor has:

1. Establish a positive, personal relationship with you
2. Help you learn how to talk to adults and solve problems
3. Help you do better in school
4. Help you think about all the great things you can be when you get older

¹ If you would like to have after school "out of school time" with your mentor, ask the mentor to become a Big Brother/Big Sister. There are quite a few mentors who participate in both programs and it works out wonderfully! If they need more information, they can call us at 877- 202-9050 x15.

Mentee Responsibilities

The mentee's responsibility is pretty simple—to have fun and enjoy the relationship. There are a few things you can do to help your relationship grow.

1. Realize you don't have to do anything special for your mentor. Your mentor likes you just because you are you.
2. Come to school EVERYDAY. There may be some days you just *have* to miss but it is very disappointing for a mentor to arrive at the school only to learn you did not come to school.
3. Give your mentor a chance to get to know you. Your mentor really is interested in you.
4. Get to know your mentor. It's okay to ask your mentor questions about their family, job, favorite foods or whatever else! Look at the list of questions on the next page for some ideas.
5. Treat your mentor with respect and expect them to respect you as well.
6. Complete a Survey at the end of the school year so that Creative Mentoring can learn more about you and your mentor.

Questions you can ask your mentor:

- How many brothers and sisters do you have?
- What do you like about your brothers and sisters?
- What do you dislike about your brothers and sisters?
- Who is your best friend?
- What was your favorite subject in school?
- What was your least favorite subject in school?
- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite movie?
- What do you like to do in your free time?

Parent Responsibilities

Your parent or guardian has received a handbook to help them support your mentor relationship. You should expect your parent to:

- Complete and return all required forms.
- Ask how your mentoring sessions are going.
- Make an effort to meet your mentor.
- Try really hard to send you to recognition activities that highlight you and your mentor. It is okay for your parent or guardian to attend these events too.
- Complete the special end of the year survey.
- Talk to the Mentor Coordinator if they have any questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why was I chosen for this program? Is there something wrong with me?

NO! Nothing is wrong with you. In fact you are very special because someone has decided to spend time with you every week! Your teacher or parent sees all of your talent and knows that a little bit of time will make you an even better student.

Any child can benefit from mentoring. Mentors can help improve your growth and development, to discover your unique gifts and talents, and to help you reach your potential.

How did I get my mentor?

Usually a teacher or guidance counselor recommends a student for the program. In a few cases, the parent makes the request. The request is sent to the School Coordinator who then gives out permission forms to be completed by your parent or guardian. To help make the match the best, mentors were interviewed by the school coordinators to share hobbies and life experiences. You should have completed the interest form to share what you like and things you would like your mentor to know about you. The School Coordinators looks at all of that information and then makes the match.

What if I don't like my mentor?

The overwhelming majority of matches work just fine. Believe it or not, your mentor is JUST as nervous about the match working! One thing to remember is that a strong relationship may not occur over night. It may take about three to six months to really get comfortable with each other. Your mentor may not look or talk like you but if you give them a chance, you may find that you have quite a bit in common. In those rare instances where the match really doesn't work, it's important to let your program coordinator know.

Relax and give it time!



Can I talk to my mentor over the summer?

No. We don't encourage meetings over the summer for the same reasons we don't encourage meeting away from school. Your parent or guardian did not agree to out-of-school contact. If you attend summer school there may be a few opportunities to meet at school after classes.

Other site-based programs (like the Y or Boys and Girls Club) may continue to hold sessions throughout the summer. If so, mentoring may be able to continue over the summer. If not, you may be able to talk to your mentor by writing letters to one another.

Can I have the same mentor for more than one year?

Yes!! The longer the relationship lasts, the better it is for you AND the mentor. But if your mentor does not stay with you for a second year, that is **okay**. It doesn't mean they don't like you. It means the mentor may have other things going on that won't allow them to mentor.

I switched schools and didn't tell my mentor. What do I do?

Ask your parent or guardian to call us at 877-202-9050 ext 15. We need to know your old school and your mentor's name. We will reach out to your new school and do our best to reconnect you to your mentor.

Will my mentor give me gifts?

Maybe or maybe not. The mentor is always giving of their time and that is very special. If you receive a gift, say for your birthday or other special occasion, expect it to be a small but meaningful item. The best gift any of us can give to another is the gift of time.

You should not ask your mentor to buy you things like a PSIII game, CD's, or other items. If there are things that you really need, talk to your teacher or guidance counselor and see if they can help.

What if I need money for a field trip or lunch on a day my mentor is at the school?

You should not ask your mentor to give you anything. That would not be polite. You should talk to your teacher or program coordinator instead.

I think my mentor is mad at me. What should I do?

ASK! Find a way to talk to your mentor about the situation. Your mentor will listen and give you an honest response. You and your mentor may disagree at times and that's okay. You just have to talk about it. Sometimes you may even have to say you are sorry. If you don't feel like you can say sorry, you can always write it in a note.

I want to do something nice for my mentor but I don't have any money.

WOW! That is very thoughtful of you. You don't have to worry about money. Your mentor doesn't need a gift from you. They are happy just to spend time with you. But if you really want to do something special you could:

- Make your mentor a card or other handmade gift (you can ask your teacher or School Coordinator for ideas and materials)
- Write a poem or rap
- Tell your mentor THANK YOU!

Creative Mentoring

100 W 10th St., Suite 1115 □ Wilmington, DE 19801

302.656.2122 phone □ 877.202.9050 toll free □

302.656.2123 fax

creativementoring@connecting-generations.org

www.creativementoring.org