

# TIPS FOR BEING AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR

## WHAT IS A MENTOR?

- A trusted adult or friend.
- A caring, responsible adult or peer who provides access to people, places, and things outside the mentee's routine environment.
- A positive role model. A role model is someone the youth aspires to be like whereas a mentor is someone who offers to help the youth be whoever he/ she wants to be. Today, youth have many role models; however they are not necessarily positive role models.
- Active listener, friend, someone the mentee can count on (reliable, consistent, supportive).
- Someone who provides guidance and insight to the mentee; someone who they care about on a professional level and sometimes personal level. A mentor is usually someone who may be wiser due to life experience or professional experience and not necessarily by age.
- A person or persons who provide support, encouragement, and freely share knowledge and life lessons with a mentee.

## EFFECTIVE GROUP MENTORS:

- Are committed to the group and the time needed to plan and facilitate group sessions.
- Take a developmental rather than a prescriptive approach – providing support and building the relationship around youth goals vs. attempting to “fix” youth problems.
- Are sensitive to youth's preferences for activities and discussion topics.
- Have fun with the youth.
- Ensure all youth get equal time to contribute to discussions and activities – managing group dynamics with vocal group members and introverted youth.
- Allow youth to take the lead in goal-setting and have input into decision-making.
- Focus on what is happening with the group as much as on the program's activities
- Are active listeners.
- Avoid being judgmental with the group.
- Provide encouragement and feedback to the group members on their behavior.
- Allow the group members to mentor each other in positive ways.
- Are familiar with youth development, and group dynamics.
- Are sensitive to culture and socio-economic background of youth.
- Inc. helps girls to positively advocate for themselves and others, and supports laws like Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and other policies that protect the dignity and rights of young women and girls, especially those from vulnerable communities.



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## WHAT IS A TRUSTING, MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?

- Girls know they can come to you with their problems and that you will help (not necessarily solve their problems, but help them work through them). They trust that you will not be judgmental, but will be open minded. They know that you will be there for them (show up and be interested in what they have to say). They learn that you value their opinion and that they can speak up and voice their opinion with you.
- A relationship that provides guidance on the best course of action with the best interest of the mentee in mind.
- Supportive, appropriate interactions that bring a sense of belonging and personal progress to those participating.
- One-on-one or group relationships that are intended to build confidence and self-esteem.
- A person that would cause no harm. A mentoring relationship consists of the two or more parties who have entered into the partnership. Trust must be established and not broken for a relationship to take place and grow. Sometimes in a relationship, trust is tested and time and commitment builds trust.
- A relationship that is sustainable and can be built upon over time.
- A relationship based on mutual encouragement, knowledge, wisdom, and hope.
- There is a balanced attention to needs for ownership, autonomy, input with structure, support, and guidance.

## EFFECTIVE MENTORING ACTIVITIES:

- Are engaging.
- Provide some social aspect vs. just focusing on academics or educational content.
- Have significant time to establish relationships and form bonds.
- Allow for group input into decisions.
- Provide new perspective, options, possibilities, exploration, experience, reflection.

