

Make an *Impact*



Mentor Training Handbook



Office of Strategic Partnerships Family & Community Relations
Pinellas County Schools

WELCOME

Children Learn What They Live

*If children live with criticism,
they learn to condemn.*

*If children live with hostility,
they learn to fight.*

*If children live with ridicule,
they learn to feel shy.*

*If children live with shame,
they learn to feel guilty.*

*If children live with tolerance,
they learn patience.*

*If children live with praise,
they learn appreciation.*

*If children live with honesty,
they learn truthfulness.*

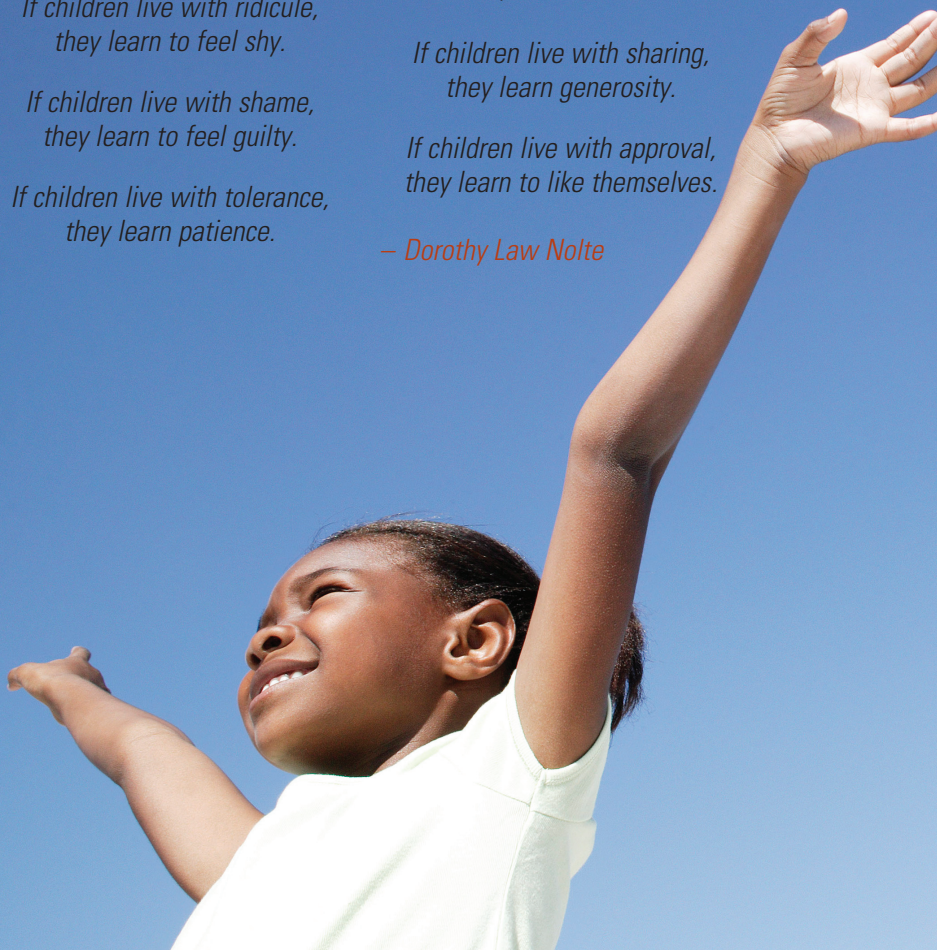
*If children live with fairness,
they learn justice.*

*If children live with acceptance,
they learn to love.*

*If children live with sharing,
they learn generosity.*

*If children live with approval,
they learn to like themselves.*

— Dorothy Law Nolte



A Message to Mentors

Thank you for being a caring adult and making a profound difference in a child's life. This is the first step on a journey to changing your life and the life of a child. Being a mentor requires commitment, responsibility, loyalty, compassion and empathy. It is true that the giver often receives more by giving than the person receiving the gift. Children grow up with higher self-esteem and make a positive impact in their communities when there are caring adults in their lives.

This is a critical time for students in their growth and development. Your role as mentor models enthusiasm for learning, strength during trying situations, empathy for others, encouragement to stay motivated when things are tough, and the understanding that perceived failures are actually opportunities for growth. When students learn that they are not measured by their failures or triumphs, but by their character, and how they handle adversity, the more successful they will become.

We believe that the mentor/mentee relationship is beneficial to you both. Your willingness to invest time in others, be accessible and open to listening, and not judge, will create an important connection with you and the student.

If you have any questions regarding the mentor program, please talk to a school representative or contact the Office of Strategic Partnerships, Family & Community Relations Volunteer Coordinator at 727-588-5050.



Mentor Quick Facts

Who are the students, and how are they identified?

School personnel identify each student, as a child who could especially benefit from a mentoring relationship. The student could be facing social, family and/or academic challenges, or they could benefit from an additional positive and encouraging adult in addition to their parents.

Do parents and/or guardians know their students have mentors?

Yes, parents or guardians are informed by school personnel.

How and when does mentoring happen?

Each mentor meets one-on-one with their assigned student for 30 minutes during the students' lunchtime on a designated day each week. Mentors only meet with students on school grounds or a sponsored school event is in session. There is no contact (in person, by phone, social media, text or email) with the students outside of the school at any time. There is no contact with the parent or guardian of the student.

What is the process for getting started?

- Complete the volunteer application and attend a mentor workshop. Pinellas County Schools will complete a level one-background screening at no cost to the volunteer.
- The mentor chooses a convenient school location as well as student the age/grade they prefer.
- School staff orients the volunteer mentor to all procedures, including signing in and out of the school's front office, recording the volunteer hours in the volunteer system, and where and how to meet with the student. The school liaison will facilitate the first meeting with the mentor and the student.

What are the ongoing procedures?

- Once mentoring is established, the expectation is that the mentors are committed to meet with their student on the scheduled day and time each week for the school year.
- If the mentor cannot attend on the scheduled day, they are to contact the volunteer liaison at the school to make arrangements to meet with the student on a different day of that week or follow-up the following week. (It is understood that there may be occasions when the mentor will miss a meeting.) At the same time the volunteer liaison will contact the mentor if the student is absent on the mentoring day or if there are holiday breaks or testing days when mentoring will not be possible.

What if a mentor cannot continue mentoring their student?

This is understandable, as long as the student is told in a positive, honest and supportive manner. There must always be closure when a relationship is ending.

Can a mentor bring food or gifts to the student?

Yes, check for food allergies first. Gifts/food should not be a practice, but an occasional reward or for teaching a goal.

What are the benefits of involvement?

Mentors are making a huge difference to a student through a lasting and impactful contribution of your time; increase of school engagement, academic performance, self esteem, positive behaviors, and increase in graduation rates.



Mentoring Programs

There are many mentoring programs to meet the needs of students. A student, parent, community member or school staff member can request a mentor for a student. Students are matched with mentors who have similar backgrounds and interests. Mentors and their students meet weekly to discuss a wide range of topics including academic achievement, career goals or personal goals.

Lunch Pals is a lunch time mentoring program where businesses, community organizations and individuals are paired with a school to provide students with the additional presence of caring adults. Students are equipped with the tools and support that are needed to succeed.

Take Stock in Children is a program in which students in grades 6 through 11 may be nominated for a Take Stock In Children Scholarship. If awarded a scholarship, the student will receive the opportunity for a four-year college tuition scholarship by fulfilling a contractual obligation to attend school regularly, maintain at least a "C" grade in all classes, complete homework assignments and remain crime and drug free. Since the program's inception, students have maintained a 93 percent graduation rate and more than 1,000 Take Stock In Children graduates are now achieving success at many of our Florida colleges and universities.

5000 Role Models of Excellence is a mentor program designed to boost the self image, and increase the social skills and academic performance, of males by motivating them to interact with respected and successful men whose real-life accomplishments can inspire young males to succeed. Students are paired with mentors, who they meet with bi-weekly to discuss academics and issues affecting them and their world. Students are recommended by their teachers, peers, counselors and administrators.

Girlfriends of Pinellas County Schools is a program designed to empower young ladies through academic support and mentorship. Students are provided with the resources, tools and guidance necessary to encourage self-discipline and positive behavior, and to cultivate high self-esteem and self-reliance.

“Children must have at least one person who believes in them...It could be you. You never know when a little love and support will plant a small seed of hope.”

Marian Wright Edelman

Peer to Peer Mentors: Key student leaders in the 11th and 12th grades are selected to become Peer to Peer mentors to students transitioning into 9th grade. Peer mentors will provide guidance, support and act as a role model.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay: School-based mentoring for elementary and middle-school children designed to improve academic, social and behavioral performance. For more information on the application and training process please contact BBBS.



Mentoring is a journey – not a destination.

MENTORING VILLAGE

Listen! When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice, you have not done what I asked. When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you have to do something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I ask is that you not talk. Advice is cheap. And I am not helpless - maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I can do and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and weakness.

But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to convince you and get about the business of understanding what's behind this irrational feeling.

And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice.

Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's behind them.

So, please *listen* and just hear me; and if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn and I'll listen to you.

Interesting Information

- Most people use only 25% of their natural ability for listening.
- The average person's attention span rarely lasts more than 45 seconds.
- Today's average adolescent spends 13 minutes a day talking to a parent.
- Listening is not a natural art, but a learned art, and therefore, can be improved.
- It is important to remember that we do not deliberately choose to "not listen." We merely forget sometimes how to listen well, or we don't take the time to listen well.

Hindrances to Effective Listening

- Few people listen objectively to others. They tend to anticipate the message and begin thinking of an answer instead of listening to what is being said.
- The views expressed by the student are different from yours.
- The environment around you is noisy or frequent interruptions occur.
- The dress and appearance of the student is distracting.
- The student is telling you something you don't want to hear.
- The thoughts or feelings being expressed shock you or cause you anxiety.
- You are preoccupied with problems of your own and find it difficult to pay attention to what the student is saying.
- You do not have enough time to spend with the student and "hurry through" what the student is saying to you.

Strategies for Effective Listening

- Stop talking...LISTEN!
- Don't label or judge.
- Empathize.
- Don't become emotionally involved.
- Avoid premature conclusions, answers or interpretations.
- Be aware of non-verbal behavior and what it means.



Situational Responses

Categories of Helping Response

Advising or Evaluating	Analyzing or Interpreting	Reassuring or Supporting	Questioning or Probing	Clarifying or Summarizing	Reflecting or Understanding
------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

#6



Least Helpful

Most Helpful

1. Advising and Evaluating

An advising or evaluating response implies what you might or should do.

Examples:

“What you need to do is try to understand your teacher’s point of view instead of arguing. If I were you, I’d take a more positive approach to the situation and try to do better next time around.”

Advising tells another person how to behave or what to do. Advice can keep people from taking responsibility for their own decisions. It’s quick, fast and easy, but many times it’s not very helpful.

Some advising lead-in phrases:

Why don’t you...

What you need is...

If I were you...

2. Analyzing and Interpreting

Some people think they can be a helper by analyzing the situation for another person.

Examples:

“The reason you don’t talk in class is that you are afraid you’re going to make a mistake and be criticized.” or “You’re just saying that because you don’t like to do those things and you’re afraid to try.”



If you want to be helpful, you will probably try to avoid statements like: “I know what your problem is” or “The reason you don’t like ____ is because ____.” Instead, you will want to help people think about themselves and their feelings, rather than guessing what causes them to do the things they do.

3. Reassuring and Support

Reassuring and supportive statements suggest that a person should not feel a certain way. When we rush in with support and reassurance, we deny the feeling that is there. We imply that the feeling is normal and so common that the person should not be concerned.

Examples:

“Everyone feels like that
at one time or another.”
“It may look bad now, but everything
is going to turn out all right.”
“I know how you feel.”

People use these to try to build self-confidence, to encourage, etc. However, the real message that comes through is “You should not feel as you do.”

4. Questioning and Probing

Questioning is an important skill. A question is designed to obtain additional information, provoke thought or encourage discussion. “What, where, when, how” and “who” words, when used in questions, enable the person to be more specific and precise. They are less threatening and more revealing than the “why” question.

Examples:

“What is it about school that you
don’t like?”
vs.
“Why don’t you like school?”

Situational Responses

5. Clarifying and Summarizing

The clarifying statement involves the use of fresh words and simplifies what has been said. Clarifying statements not only check out where people are during a discussion, but they reassure them that you are following their ideas and are trying to understand them.

Examples:

“You seem to be saying that...”

- OR -

“In other words, you’re trying to...”

A summary statement focuses on those things that stood out to you most and that you want to highlight.

Examples:

“You’ve mentioned at least two possible solutions.

One was.....and the second was...”

6. Reflecting and Understanding

Perhaps the most helpful response is one in which we convey that we understand a person’s feelings. The reflecting or understanding of a person’s feelings is perhaps the most difficult to learn. You must be an empathetic listener. In order to be empathetic, you have to go beyond the ideas that are expressed to the feelings that accompany the words.

It might be helpful if you ask yourself: “How would I feel if I were to say something like that?” or “How would I feel to do something like that?” After answering these questions, you might have some additional insight as to what the person is feeling.

Situational Responses Activity Instructions

Read each situation and determine the correct response by Using the Category of Helping Responses Chart on page 7. Please identify the response that best fits each statement.

Situation 1

Nicole is a new student. One day you start a conversation with her and she surprises you when she says: "I like this school okay, but I don't seem to have any friends here and I can't figure it out. I had a lot of friends at the other school, but here..."

- _____ (A) Well, Nicole, you'll get around more and find more friends pretty soon. You're still new here.
- _____ (B) Hey, look Nicole, if you want to have more friends, then you've got to get more involved with some of the school's activities – just do your thing.
- _____ (C) What have you been doing to make friends?
- _____ (D) You're saying that you had more friends before you came here and you're not sure why you don't have more now.
- _____ (E) You're feeling left out and wondering what you can do about it.
- _____ (F) Well, maybe one reason you don't have as many friends here is that you don't have confidence in yourself and you're holding back.

Situation 2

Jason is an elementary student who has been lagging behind in reading for a couple of years. He is discouraged and frustrated with school work and has low self-esteem. One day he tells his mentor, "I'm stupid. I'm trying my best, but the teacher doesn't explain it right. Everyone is smarter than me."

- _____ (A) The reason you are not successful in school is because you're not paying enough attention.
- _____ (B) Are you asking your teacher for help?
- _____ (C) You're really feeling down about your grades. You must be hurting inside.
- _____ (D) What you need to do is study harder.
- _____ (E) I'm sure you'll be fine. You'll do better next time.
- _____ (F) You seem to be saying that you are having a hard time understanding some of the work in class and this makes you feel stupid.

Situation 3

Matt is in his first year of high school and is having discipline problems. He is starting to withdraw by skipping classes, coming late, using bad language, arguing with teachers and falling behind in grades. Generally, he has developed a "bad attitude." He told his mentor, "I can't wait to get out of here – this place stinks."

Situational Responses

- _____ (A) What's different this year for you? Last year you did so well.
- _____ (B) Don't you see that it's your actions that are causing you problems with everyone here at school?
- _____ (C) You're telling me that you don't want to be here, that there is nothing here for you. You also said that no one cares whether you come to school and you aren't being treated fairly.
- _____ (D) You are really going through a tough time right now. You probably feel trapped and hopeless.
- _____ (E) You need to change your attitude. Everyone here at school is trying to help you.
- _____ (F) I can remember high school being a trying time, too. Hang in there – things will get better.

Situation 4

Shelly, a middle school student, says she feels like a piece of furniture at home. Since her parents divorced a few years ago, her mother is working two jobs and is never home. Shelly and her mother don't have supper together, nor do they have time to talk. When they are together, they only argue. No matter what Shelly does to be helpful around the house, her mother never thanks her. Shelly told her mentor, "I can't please anyone; no one seems to care about me."

- _____ (A) As hard as you try, you can't get a positive response from your mother and you want to spend more time with her. You feel resentful and hurt that your mother doesn't spend any time with you.
- _____ (B) If you would do even more than you do now around the house, maybe your mom would appreciate you more.
- _____ (C) Tell me what happens when you go home after school. How can you change it?
- _____ (D) That's a very common problem – everyone has to work harder to keep up with expenses.
- _____ (E) From what you've said, you feel alone, unnoticed and unappreciated.
- _____ (F) The reason she has no time is that she's working hard to make things better for you.

Answers are on the inside back cover.

“The future is in the hands of those who can give tomorrow's generations valid reasons to live and hope.”

Pierre Tielhard de Chardin

Transition

Transition to the Next Level

Transition to Middle School

Some very practical things you can do with your mentee:

- Review the middle school handbook (if available).
- Review the grading policy (a report card will be received every six weeks).
- Review school administrative structure (6th, 7th and 8th grade level concept).
- Get a school map; discuss changing classes.
- Help your student learn how to use a lock.
- Discuss Physical Education issues (showers, changing clothes, etc.).

Transition to High School

Some very practical things you can do are:

- Review the high school handbook (if available).
- Review absence and grading policy.
- Review requirements for graduation.
- Discuss clubs, sports, other school activities and areas of interest.
- Be sure he/she knows where to turn for help – guidance counselor, social worker, etc.

Closure

Letting Go / Moving On...

(How and When to Dissolve the Relationship)

Letting go starts with the first session, when you tell the student how long you will be meeting with him/her. The student needs to be aware that this is a time-limited relationship. The time will vary with each mentor and student relationship. Four or more sessions prior to termination, you will need to begin the separation process in a positive, honest and supportive manner.

The message must be positive, i.e. “I am very proud of how far you have come. You have grown and matured, etc. You are ready for your next important life step – becoming a middle school student or high school student. How grand this achievement will be as you grow into a young adult.”

If you will not be continuing with the student the following year, be honest about the separation. “Our last meeting will be (date). Although we will not be seeing one another next school year, I will be thinking of you and pulling for you, etc.”

Encourage the student to talk about his/her feelings of separation and moving to the next level. You may need to look for non-verbal clues about the student’s feelings. He/she may become more attached or more withdrawn.

Positive Reinforcement

Dealing with Diversity

Cultural diversity is more than race or ethnicity; it encompasses values, lifestyle and social norms, including such things as a different communication styles, mannerisms, ways of dressing, family structure, traditions, time orientation and response to authority. These differences may be associated with age, religion, ethnicity and social-economic background.

As in many situations, knowledge is the key to understanding. Talk to your student about his or her background and ancestry, about what life is like at school, at home and with his/her friends. Ask questions...as you begin to learn and understand more about your student you will be less likely to make judgments about them. It is important to remember to be yourself. It is helpful to paraphrase what you think your student has said, or is feeling, and give examples of similar situations which you have had.

Principles of Effective Mentoring

Build relationships grounded in trust. *Many kids without mature role models are suspicious of adults. Do not try to become your student's best friend. Mentors are positive role models who invite open communication and mutual respect.*

If a student asks for advice, focus on solutions and allow them to reclaim their power. *Allow your student time to release uncomfortable emotions if they need to vent, but encourage him or her to consider their opinions.*

Create realistic goals and expectations. *Do not expect your student to confide in you right away. Ask questions; get to know your student. As your relationship grows, your student will feel more comfortable sharing his or her life with you.*

Have fun together. *Find out what kind of activities your student enjoys. Play games, read books, share articles. You need not spend a lot of money to build a strong mentor/student relationship; what's most valuable is your investment of time.*

Allow your student to reveal personal information when they are ready. *Give your student permission to reveal how much (or how little) information they wish to share with you. Remind them that they can share with you without fear of judgement.*

Listen. *When you ask questions and listen, you give student permission to share their stories and personal experiences without criticism.*

Be positive. *Briefly share your own experiences to demonstrate empathy, but remember - it's about your student.*

Words/Phrases

Wow
What a good imagination
Way to go
I like being around you
Super
That is very responsible
You're special
Super job
Outstanding
You tried hard
Excellent
Outstanding performance
Great
You are important
Neat
You mean a lot to me
Well done
You make me happy
Remarkable
You've got a friend
I knew you could do it

You brighten my day
I'm proud of you
Incredible
Fantastic
Looking good
Nice work
Bravo
You're catching on
Fantastic
Now you've got it
Hurray for you
Dynamite
You're on target
Good job
How smart of you
What a nice job you're doing
I like the way you are trying
your best
You figured it out yourself
That is very creative

Conversation Starters

Get ready to start gabbing! The moment you become interested, you will help kids feel more excited. These conversation starters are sure to get any child's inner chatterbox talking.

- If you could make up a brand new school subject, what would it be?
- What 5 words best describe you?
- Make up a new holiday.
- What is your favorite letter of the alphabet? Why?
- If someone gave you \$100.00, what would you do with it?
- What is your favorite thing about yourself and why?
- When you're sad how do you make yourself feel better?
- What is your favorite day of the week? Why?
- What is the best way to eat an Oreo?
- When you play tic-tac-toe, do you choose to be an X or an O?
- Play a game of tic-tac-toe or hangman...

MENTORING VILLAGE

Confidentiality

Please remember to talk with your student early about the boundaries and expectations of your relationship. Assure them that your conversations will be kept confidential **unless the student is going to injure himself or herself, injure someone else or someone is injuring him or her.** We ask that you inform a school official **immediately** if you discuss any of these issues or see signs that a student has been subject to abuse or neglect.



Report Abuse

TEL: 1-800-962-2873

FAX: 1-800-914-0004

The Florida Abuse Hotline accepts reports 24 hours a day and 7 days a week of known or suspected child abuse, neglect, or abandonment and reports of known or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

If you suspect or know of a child or vulnerable adult in immediate danger, call 911.

Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare is a **mandatory reporter**. 39.201(1)(a), **Florida Statutes**.

Español/Spanish:

Si usted es un locutor español y desea divulgar abuso, llame por favor el teléfono directo en 1-800-962-2873 para hablar con un consejero de habla hispana.

Resources and Website Links

For activity ideas go to:

- www.pcsb.org/mentorresources
- www.education.com
- www.pinterest.com/explore click on school
- www.mentoring.org
- www.pcsb.org/mentor
- Mentors can also word search with Google for more themes and worksheet activities for mentor workshops.

Situation 1

A)3 B)1 C)4 D)5 E)6 F)2

Situation 3

A)4 B)2 C)5 D)6 E)1 F)3

Situation 2

A)2 B)4 C)6 D)1 E)3 F)5

Situations 4

A)5 B)1 C)4 D)3 E)6 F)2



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