



CHAMPS

CHurches as Mentoring Partners with Schools

What is a Mentor? - Tips From Angel Tree, a Prison Fellowship Ministry

From the National Mentoring Partnership –

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

Characteristics of a good Mentor

A Mentor is: a friend, encourager, confidant, coach, guide, nurturer, adviser, trainer, advocate, cheerleader, comforter, model listener.

Each role has the same characteristics in common:

- **TIME** Long-term consistency is critical for an effective relationship. Kids spell love with the letter T-I-M-E.
- **COMMITMENT** Your role is to be faithful and obedient; God's role is to change the life of your young person.
- **LOVE** Unconditional acceptance needs to be demonstrated through concrete actions, warmth, and openness.
- **UNDERSTANDING:** As we work at being good listeners, they let us into their world a little at a time.
- **TRUST:** Building trust is a work in process. However don't over extend your trust ... both you and the child can get burned.
- **ACTIVITIES:** Well-planned activities can help build the relationship, help the child learn new skills, and provide opportunities to help others.

A Mentor is NOT:

- **A MESSIAH:** You are not there to save the child, but to show the Savior to him or her.
- **PROBATION OFFICER:** You do not have the authority of the state or county. You are simply a mentor who guides.
- **MS. or MR. FIX IT:** You are not there to repair the child. Your role is to help restore him or her to productive relationships with their family, community and Creator.
- **A SURRAGATE PARENT:** This is not “your kid”. You work along side the family, school, church and others to help
- **COOL PEER:** You are an adult guide to finding success in the adult world.

A Mentor IS:

- **A LISTNER:** One who shows empathy
- **A FRIEND:** One who is there for the child
- **A COACH:** One who can teach skills
- **A GUIDE:** One who shows the way
- **A HELPER:** One who provides support

10 Signs of Success

- **DO** I Make my best attempt to meet weekly with them?
- **DO** I invest at least 1-2 hours a week with them?
- **DO** I stick to my role of building a friendship?
- **DO** I plan activities based on the child's interest?
- **DO** I listen intently?
- **DO** I encourage my child and remain non-judgmental?
- **DO** I communicate regularly with my church coordinator?
- **DO** I always show respect for my child's family?
- **DO** I pray daily for them and their family?
- **DO** I attempt to reflect Jesus in my relationship?

Do's and Don't for working with the FAMILIES

- **DO** look for ways to affirm the job they have done as parents.
- **Do** ask about family rules and schedules and abide by them.
- **DON'T** become buddies with the parent and alienate the child.
- **DON'T** say anything negative about the family to the child.
- **DON'T** criticize the parent in front of the child.
- **DO** show respect at all times.
- **DON'T** tell the family what the child has shared with you.
- **DON'T** take on the role of a family counselor; leave this to professionals
- **DON'T** give parents money if they ask.

- **DON'T** give large gifts to the child.

Do's and Don't for working with the CHILD

- **DO** Keep the same Christian standards with the child as you keep in your own life.
- **DON'T** give in to the child's pressure to do something you feel may compromise your ability to be above reproach.
- **DO** take what your child says seriously.
- **DON'T** overreact when something is said for shock value.
- **DO** set limits on clean language.
- **DO** keep everything about your child confidential.
- **DON'T** share specifics about your child with anyone outside of CHAMPS mentoring.
- **DO** be warm and open with the child.
- **DON'T** have excessive physical contact.
- **DO** tell your church coordinator about special events you plan with your child.

- **DON'T** have your child over to your house without approval from your coordinator,
- **DO** set an example of a healthy lifestyle.
- **DON'T** use alcohol or tobacco products when you are with your child.
- **DO** insist on seatbelt while traveling in a car.
- **DON'T** allow the child to ride with others.
- **DO** return the child to his/her parent directly unless the parent makes other arrangements.
- **DON'T** leave a child at home alone without parental consent.
- **DO** look for wholesome entertainment.
- **DON'T** view an "R" rated film. PG-13 movies must have parental approval.
- **DO** Look for creative non-threatening ways to correct inappropriate behavior.
- **DON'T** use corporal punishment. Gentle correction and logical consequences are your best tools.
- **DO** report any suspected child abuse immediately to your coordinator or pastor.

Handling a Crisis

Recognizing a crisis is the first key to resolving it. Three questions help in deciding a course of action:

- 1) How is the problem affecting the mentor/child relationship?
- 2) What are the options?
- 3) What is in the best interest of the child?

As a volunteer you are not called to handle a full-blown crisis and CHAMPS is not set up for family or crisis intervention. However, follow these steps to seeking help:

- 1) If the crisis involves potential harm to the child, mentor or another person, your first course of action is to contact 911 immediately and inform your coordinator and/or pastor.
- 2) If the crisis involves a counseling issue regarding the child or family member, professional Christian counseling is the best option. Ask your pastor or coordinator for referral options.
- 3) If the issue is one that may reflect poorly on the program or church, inform the pastor and/or church coordinator. Do not attempt to handle any crisis apart from their experience, expertise and leadership.

Suggestions for Activities Planning:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • going out to eat • making a scrap book • working on a puzzle • go to the fair / park • go to a zoo • walks together • board games • concerts • picnics • kite flying • street festivals • sports • hiking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • canoeing • teaching new skills • internet classes • grocery shopping • teaching money management • building models • working on cars • attending a Bible study • go to a youth group • music class • art class • drama/dance class • sports activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play tennis / racquet ball • Wood shop project • Make pottery • Fishing / boating / sailing |
| | | <p>Community Service Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless shelter • mission trip • nursing homes • library • animal shelter • neighbors yard. |