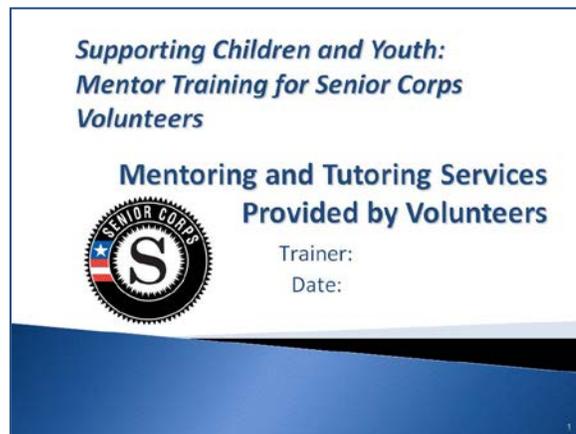


Module 1 Handouts

The following handouts are included in this module:

1. Exercise Worksheet: Helpful Volunteer Traits and Abilities
2. Getting to Know the Child/Youth
3. Types of Tutoring and Mentoring Services (optional)
4. Tips for Working with Teachers (optional)
5. Recommended Resources for Tutors and Mentors (optional)
6. Training Feedback Survey



Exercise Worksheet: Helpful Volunteer Traits and Abilities

Instructions: With your small group or partner, choose the type of program you are interested in:

- Mentoring Children
- Mentoring Youth
- Tutoring and Homework Help
- Out-of-School Time Programs
- Preschool

Find the type of program on the next few pages and consider the kinds of abilities or characteristics that would help a volunteer serving in this area. Jot down a few notes and be ready to discuss.

Mentoring Children (ages 5-11): Meet with a child on a regular basis to talk about things that are important to them, enjoy an activity, share a meal, or occasionally help with schoolwork.

What kinds of abilities or characteristics would help a volunteer serving in this area?

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities: _____

Personality Traits/Characteristics: _____

Experience or Special Talents: _____

Other: _____

What are some specific things you would like to learn if you were serving in this area? _____

Mentoring Youth (ages 12-18): Meet with a youth one-on-one on a regular basis to talk about things that are important to them, problem-solve, enjoy an activity, or share a meal.

What kinds of abilities or characteristics would help a volunteer serving in this area?

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities: _____

Personality Traits/Characteristics: _____

Experience or Special Talents: _____

Other: _____

What are some specific things you like to learn if you were serving in this area? _____

Tutoring and Homework Help: Work with students to help them learn a specific subject (e.g. reading), reinforce school lessons, be better organized, or build confidence in their abilities.

What kinds of abilities or characteristics would help a volunteer serving in this area?

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities: _____

Personality Traits/Characteristics: _____

Experience or Special Talents: _____

Other: _____

What are some specific things you would like to learn if you were serving in this area? _____

Out-of-School Time Programs: Supervising children and youth involved in group activities, facilitating an activity for a small group, occasionally assisting one-on-one.

What kinds of abilities or characteristics would help a volunteer serving in this area?

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities: _____

Personality Traits/Characteristics: _____

Experience or Special Talents: _____

Other: _____

What are some specific things you like to learn if you were serving in this area? _____

Preschool (ages 3-5): Serving in a classroom or program, working with children one-on-one and in small groups to help them with age-appropriate development (e.g. learning numbers).

What kinds of abilities or characteristics would help a volunteer serving in this area?

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities: _____

Personality Traits/Characteristics: _____

Experience or Special Talents: _____

Other: _____

What are some specific things you would like to learn if you were serving in this area? _____

Getting to Know the Child/Youth

Imagine you are starting your first day as a tutor or a mentor. You will be meeting regularly, one-on-one, with this child/youth. How will you get acquainted? Children are often shy with adults at first, so you may be carrying the conversation! What are some things you can do to build a good relationship? If you are already experienced as a tutor or mentor, think about what you would recommend to a new volunteer.

Thinking about the age group you will be/are working with, take about 5 minutes to jot down some answers to the questions below. (It is okay if you don't finish.) Take this worksheet with you when you go home today; you may think of more ideas later.

1. Your first meeting: What are some things you can do or say to help the child/youth feel more comfortable with you? (For example, ask "ice breaker" questions such as, "Do you have a brother/sister? Pet?" "What did you do this past weekend?" "What do you like to do?")

2. Your second meeting: What are some things you can do or say to help build a good relationship? (For example, end the meeting by talking about what you've accomplished or how much fun you've had)

3. As you continue to meet: What are some things you can do or say to maintain a good relationship? (For example, always be on time, be sincere with compliments)

Tutoring and Mentoring Services

The table below lists common types of tutoring and mentoring services; the next pages provide descriptions and examples. This list is a *general description* and does not include every possibility. The many creative and unique programs provided for children and youth by Senior Corps volunteers are too numerous to list here. In addition, tutoring and mentoring programs vary in scope and focus; some may have multiple goals for the children they serve, while others may zero in on one particular need (e.g. literacy, keeping youth out of gangs).

Type of program	Children/youth Served	Purpose/Goals of the Program	Examples of Volunteer Activities	Examples of Helpful Volunteer Traits
Preschool	Children ages 3-5	Help children achieve age-appropriate developmental milestones; prepare for Kindergarten or progress to the next level	Help children learn their letters and numbers through games and activities; read to children; help children stay on task; role model appropriate social behavior.	Patient, kind, energetic and enthusiastic, observant and sensitive, willing to work with teacher.
Homework Help	School age students, grades 1-12	Help students learn good study skills and achieve academic success	May be available at a program (“on call”) as students drop in and request help with assignments in different subjects. May be in school or after school.	Ability to break down tasks and help student get organized. Enthusiastic, positive, patient, good role model.
Tutoring	School age students, grades 1-12	Help students achieve academic success (some programs narrow the focus to one goal, such as improved reading ability)	May involve tutoring students one-on-one or in small groups, during school or after school, at the school or another community location. May focus on one subject or more. May need to work from a curriculum or with a teacher.	Ability to explain concepts clearly and patiently, enthusiastic, able to adapt methods to different learning styles (i.e. can see if student isn’t getting it and tries another way).
School-based mentoring	School age students, grades 1-12	May have multiple goals: help student improve self esteem, behavior, academic achievement, attitude toward school, peers, adults	Meet regularly at a designated school location to talk. May involve some help with homework.	Willing and able to commit for the school year, caring, observant and sensitive, enthusiastic, good listening skills, willing to work with school/program staff, a good role model.

(Continued from previous page)

Type of program	Children/youth Served	Purpose/Goals of the Program	Examples of Volunteer Activities	Examples of Helpful Volunteer Traits
Community-based mentoring	Children and youth, age may depend on the program's focus	May have multiple goals: help youth improve self esteem, behavior, coping skills, resiliency; develop and achieve goals; improve relationships with adults and peers, etc.	Meet regularly with child/youth at the program's location or activities, or meet youth in the community to talk, share a meal or activity.	Willing and able to commit for a long period of time (usually a year), caring, patient, interest in youth culture and issues, good listening skills, flexible, a good role model.
Out-of-School Time Programs	School-age children and youth; age may depend on the program's focus	Provide students with a safe, supervised place and constructive, fun, or educational activities.	After school programs vary greatly. Volunteers might help students with homework, read to children, help students use a computer program, lead a crafts activity, assist with recreation activities, or help students with a school project.	Energetic, enthusiastic, flexible, interest in youth culture, open and friendly, caring, responsible, good role model.

PRESCHOOL

Head Start and other preschool programs serve children who are ages 3-5. Programs may have a strong research-based curriculum or they may be less formal. Preschool programs help children become ready for kindergarten by building pre-literacy skills and language development, math knowledge (e.g. number recognition), social skills, motor skills, healthy hygiene practices, and helping them achieve other age-appropriate developmental milestones.

Volunteer activities typically include giving children needed one-on-one attention and role modeling behavior like kindness, politeness and cooperation, paying attention to the teacher, and sharing materials. Volunteers may read to children, recite poetry and rhymes; assist children to express themselves through music and stories, or to use tools through crafts; help them learn their numbers, colors, and letters through puzzles and games.

Some children that volunteers serve may have special needs, such as a physical or cognitive disability, or may come from disadvantaged communities or difficult home environments.

Preschool stations often provide training to volunteers. Volunteers in Head Start classrooms work closely with the teacher.

Volunteer Activity Example

Lois serves at a Head Start program three days per week. Lois is assigned to two children with special needs; both have extreme difficulty paying attention and one frequently acts out in anger. The teacher has developed an assignment plan for each of the children and Lois works closely with her to ensure that the children are getting the one-on-one attention they need and building needed skills to prepare them for Kindergarten.

Program Examples:

- Head Start, Glouster, Ohio: <http://www.hapcap.org/headstart.htm>
- The Born to Read Volunteer Reader Program, Portland, Maine (reading program that serves preschool-age children): <http://www.mainehumanities.org/programs/btr-volunteer.html>

HOMWORK HELP

Homework assistance programs are often located at schools, during or after school hours. Services may be offered in a classroom or larger open room such as a school cafeteria or gymnasium. Ideally, quiet work spaces are sectioned off to minimize distractions. Students may be referred to the program because they are behind in their assignments; other students may simply want a place to study after school.

Community organizations that provide youth services may also provide academic assistance that includes homework help. In addition, public libraries in many cities offer drop-in and online homework assistance programs for students. Many community-based homework assistance programs are “drop-in”, where students can attend without enrolling in advance.

Volunteers may work with students one-on-one or in small groups. They may see the same students regularly and get to know their needs.

Volunteers do not have to be experts in a subject to help students. A primary goal of homework assistance programs is to help students develop good organization and study skills, learn to stay on task and follow through on assignments, and eventually work independently. Volunteer activities may include helping students break down and prioritize tasks, and use a planner to meet due dates. They may also help students figure out how to find the answers or research a topic (e.g. in the text book or an Internet search), or study for an upcoming test.

Volunteer Activity Example

Carolyn is a volunteer who has a gift for working with teens. She volunteers two evenings a week at a middle school homework help program where students who need help in different subjects can “drop in” and work individually with a volunteer. Many of the students are referred to the program by teachers because they are not turning in required assignments. Sometimes students do not understand their lessons, but often they have not developed good study skills. Carolyn works with students to take concrete steps to get better organized so they do not feel so overwhelmed.

Program Example

The public library in Oakland, California has a free drop-in homework help program for teens at five library locations: http://www.oaklandlibrary.org/links/teens/teen_homework.html.

TUTORING

Like homework assistance programs, tutoring may be school-based or provided by a community organization. Tutoring programs are generally more focused and rigorous, although this is not always the case.

Tutoring often involves ongoing, regularly scheduled, one-on-one tutor-student assistance in a particular subject (e.g. reading). Ideally, students would meet with the same tutor at the same days, time and place, for the duration of the sessions. Each session would be well-planned and structured.

A tutoring program may also use a research-based curriculum and assess students' progress periodically so the assistance can be tailored to better meet individual needs. Volunteer tutors would be trained on the curriculum and in different learning styles before they begin tutoring, and they would continue to receive training and support during their service. Tutors might also work closely with the student's teacher or program specialist/supervisor.

Some tutoring programs, especially those that serve younger students, may be less intensive; for example, volunteers might help children learn to read by reading to/with them. However, it is likely that these programs would still be structured to help children meet specific learning goals. For example, reading tutors would be trained to help children develop phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension; reading materials would be carefully selected; sessions would be ongoing and structured.

Volunteer Activity Example

Gail volunteers at a reading tutoring program at an elementary school library three afternoons a week. She works one-on-one with 2nd grade students referred to the program because they are falling behind in reading. Gail works closely with the program staff supervisor to implement the program's curriculum, and she attends weekly meetings with the supervisor and 2nd grade teacher to discuss individual students' progress and ways to improve their learning.

Program Examples:

- Reading Buddy program, North Central Iowa: <http://www.boomersinaction.net/RB-Template.htm>
- Friends Learning in Pairs (FLIP) program, Davidson and Williamson Counties, Tennessee: <http://volunteerrsvp.com/FLIP.html>
- RSVP Reading Tutors (America Reads), Stevens Point, Wisconsin: <http://www.co.portage.wi.us/adrc/RSVPReadingTutors.html>

SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING

At school-based mentoring programs, students are paired with a volunteer mentor and meet at school facilities throughout the school year. Mentors could be matched with one child or a small group.

Some school-based mentoring programs provide “peer mentoring”, where younger students are matched with older student mentors.

School-based mentoring is usually limited to the school-day and school year schedule, although some programs facilitate opportunities for mentors and the students to stay in touch over the summer or school vacations.

Mentors must meet with the child/youth consistently to build a quality relationship. Mentors might meet with them once a week or more frequently; meetings often happen during lunchtime but there might be other school activities. Mentors might also meet regularly with program (school) staff which might include teachers and counselors.

Mentors can help the child/youth work toward achieving a goal - one that is focused and led by the child/youth. They might also talk through problems and help the child/youth think of options so they can make thoughtful decisions.

The mentored children/youth tend to show benefits that are related to school, such as better attendance and behavior, and overall academic performance. Mentoring has also helped kids achieve personal goals and improve self esteem. Longer matches usually show better results, and some research has shown that younger children (grades 4-6) and girls benefit the more from school-based mentoring than older youth and boys.

Volunteer Activity Example

Estelle is a volunteer mentor at the neighborhood elementary school. She works with two children, a 4th grade girl and a 3rd grade boy. The boy's mother is serving in the military overseas and he is extremely shy. The girl has been referred to the program because she has recently shown behavior problems. Estelle meets with each child two times a week for lunch. Over the school year, she has seen the boy develop confidence and make a new friend, and now he is talking about joining a summer swim team. The girl seemed angry and unresponsive at first, but now she trusts Estelle and is able to talk about her problems at school so Estelle can help her think through solutions.

Program examples:

- Lunch Buddies program, Medford, Oregon:
<http://www.retirement.org/rvmcs/lunchbuddies.htm>
- RSVP Mentoring Project (Collaborative Student Mentoring Program), Kenosha, Wisconsin: <http://www.kafasi.org/rsvpmentoring.html>

COMMUNITY-BASED MENTORING

Community-based mentoring programs match mentors with a child/youth who may then meet at the program facility or somewhere in the community. Successful programs provide mentor training and ongoing support. There is an effort to match mentors and children/youth with similar interests and backgrounds.

The most important thing in mentoring is to develop a bond, build trust and a good relationship, and this requires a time commitment. Community-based mentoring programs will have requirements for how often and how long, minimally, the mentor and child or youth should meet (e.g. two hours, three times a month, for at least a year). Longer, quality relationships result in better outcomes for the kids.

The types of activities that can help develop a bond include talking and spending time together, playing games, going to a movie or watching/playing sports, enjoying a meal, getting involved in community activities. Activities might also involve helping the child with homework occasionally or getting involved in a service project. Most importantly, the activities that mentors and children/youth do together should be kid-driven and reflect the child or youth's interests.

Research has shown benefits to mentored children and youth, including: better school attendance, resiliency, improved problem-solving skills and confidence, and better relationships with parents. Mentored children/youth were also less likely to start using drugs and alcohol or hit someone.

Volunteer Activity Example

Armando volunteers at a community-based mentoring program that works primarily with boys ages 8-18 who do not have a positive male role model in their lives. He has been meeting with a 13-year old youth, John, for 3-4 hours a week for the last 2 years. Armando discovered that he and John share an interest in baseball and soccer. They have begun volunteering at the local Park and Recreation Center coaching children's soccer. They also go to baseball games together occasionally. Armando received extensive training from the program prior to being matched and still meets twice a month with the program supervisor to discuss any concerns.

Program Examples:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters (www.bbbs.org) is a nationwide mentoring program. They also have a program for mentoring children of active duty parents near/on military bases.
- Across Ages intergenerational mentoring program matches senior volunteers with children: <http://www.acrossages.org/>

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS

Out-of-school time programs can take place after school, on the weekends, during the day over school vacation times, and during the summer months. They take place at schools, community centers, places of worship, park and recreation centers, libraries, and other community facilities. They can vary a great deal in the types of activities provided and age ranges served. Some may be very directed toward one type of activity (e.g. sports or homework help); others may provide many options, or change the main activities over different times of the year.

The goals for children/youth served can also vary a great deal depending on the type of out-of-school time program. The program may want to improve academics and attitude toward school, social skills and self esteem, or build healthy habits. Others may be aimed at a specific age group (e.g. teens) or interest (e.g. writing, music). All out-of-school time programs aim to provide children/youth with constructive activities in a safe supervised place.

Program participants are school-age children and youth, but again, the age range may vary by program.

Volunteers are likely to spend more time with groups of children/youth than one-on-one individualized attention. Volunteer activities may include: homework help, coaching or supervising sports activities, leading or assisting with arts and crafts, engaging children in games, helping students find resources for school projects, reading aloud to a group of children, or partnering with youth on a community service project.

Volunteer Activity Example

Luis volunteers at an after school program at the elementary school in his neighborhood two evenings a week. Children can play outside at the school playground and basketball court, or stay inside and get help with homework. Luis prefers to supervise the kids outside and he found that he was very good at encouraging the younger shy children to join in group activities, and helping children play as a team.

Program examples:

- 826 Valencia is a network of nine non-profit organizations that provide after school tutoring, workshops, field trips and other activities that help children and youth ages 6-18 develop writing skills: <http://www.826valencia.org/> .
- After School Matters is a Chicago-based non-profit organization that offers after school activities for teenagers in arts, sports, technology, communications, and science: <http://www.afterschoolmatters.org/> .

10 Tips for Working with Teachers in the Classroom

Volunteers support classrooms by providing needed individual assistance to students, and allowing more opportunity for small group work. Volunteers also bring a new dynamic to the classroom by sharing their own life experience, compassionate manner, and calming presence. To make the best of your experience as a classroom volunteer, here are some tips to help you serve with teachers.

- 1.** Know the responsibilities of your volunteer position in the classroom – tasks you should and should not be performing. Ideally, you and the teacher have written documentation such as the volunteer description that can be referenced.
- 2.** Teachers have different ways of doing things, and different comfort levels with someone new in their classroom. Some teachers may want you to jump right in; others may want to get to know you better before asking you to work with particular students, or lead a small group activity.
- 3.** Remember that it is not your job to discipline the students! Talk with the teacher prior to service to make sure you understand the discipline plan and what you should do when you see unacceptable behavior. You need to understand the teacher’s rules so students get consistent messages.
- 4.** Try to give the teacher the benefit of the doubt even if it seems like his/her methods are inconsistent when dealing with different students. Remember that the teacher knows more about the individual students’ abilities and behaviors than you do.
- 5.** Let the teacher know about any special skills or talents you have that might be helpful to students. For example, you may have personal or professional experience with learning disabilities that hinder reading ability, or you may have a special knack for helping very shy children feel more comfortable.
- 6.** Let the teacher know if you are uncomfortable with a task or feel overwhelmed. The teacher does not want you to burn out either, and it may be that all you need is a few minutes of additional instructions, an intervention from her, or a short break.
- 7.** Communicate with the teacher on a regular basis. It may be difficult to talk during a hectic school day, so try to schedule a regular time when you can meet. When you meet with the teacher, ask for comments on your performance, and make it clear that you are open to constructive criticism. No one learns without a little helpful honest feedback.

8. Pay attention to student behavior during transition times. Some students have difficulty between activities, when they need to get organized to leave or settle down again to focus on a task. Individual attention from you can make transitions much smoother; be a calming presence that helps them adjust.

9. Because you are a trusted member of the classroom and an example to students, take care not to say anything that sounds like gossip. You may see behavior or hear sensitive things about individual teachers' or students' private lives; be respectful and keep it to yourself.

10. Keep in mind that the teacher is always the one in charge of the classroom. However, for their part, you can expect teachers to tell you what they expect and provide clear directions. Volunteers should be provided adequate support and supervision.

References

"10 Tips for Classroom Volunteers", Eileen Palma, PTO Today (accessed 1/12/11).

<http://www.ptotoday.com/pto-today-articles/article/30-10-tips-for-classroom-volunteers>

"10 Tips for Classroom Volunteers", Greatschools staff, Greatschools.org (accessed on 1/12/11).

<http://www.greatschools.org/improvement/volunteering/10-tips-for-classroom-volunteers.gs?content=365>

"Teacher Guide for Volunteers in the Classroom", Ohio State University P-12 Project, 9/30/2004.

<http://p12.osu.edu/documents/Teachermodule.pdf>

Recommended Resources for Tutors and Mentors

This is just a sample of some of the many resources available to tutors and mentors. Your supervisor may have additional recommendations.

The **National Mentoring Center at Education Northwest** provides training for youth mentoring programs. Many of their resources are available online: <http://educationnorthwest.org/nmc>. One of their most innovative resources is the free online course, "Talking it Through: Communication Skills for Mentors: Real life examples to guide you through your mentoring relationship". This course includes video stories, tips, a journal and quizzes: <http://talkingitthrough.educationnorthwest.org/>

The **Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota** developed "Tools for Mentoring Adolescents", brief papers on mentoring topics such as "Building Trust and Attachment with Your Mentee" and "Setting Mentoring Boundaries": <http://www.mpmn.org/ToolsforMentoringAdolescents.aspx>

The Tutor is a series of articles that was published by LEARNS offering practical, research based advice on various tutoring topics. These articles are now housed at the Resource Center, an information clearinghouse for Corporation for National and Community Service programs: <http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/learns/tutor>. Here is a sample of recommended articles from The Tutor:

- "Connecting with Kids: Communication Strategies for Volunteers" The Tutor (Winter 2007)
- "Now I Get it! Homework Help Strategies for Volunteers" (Spring 2005)
- "Savvy Traveling: Volunteers Engaging with School Culture" The Tutor (Fall 2004)
- "Tutoring our Youngest Readers: Focusing on Five Major Reading Strategies" (Winter 2002)
- "Room for One More? Strategies for Small Group Tutoring" (Summer/Fall 2002)

Books

Stand by me: the risks and rewards of mentoring today's youth by Jean E. Rhodes. Published by Harvard University Press; Cambridge, Massachusetts (2002).

Help America Read: A Handbook for Volunteers by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. Published by Heinemann; Portsmouth, New Hampshire (1997).

Training Feedback Survey

Please help us improve our training sessions by providing feedback on the training you attended. Thank you!

Training/Session Name: _____ Date: _____

Lead Facilitator: _____

Program you serve with: Foster Grandparent RSVP Other: _____

Please rate this session using the following scale:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. The subject matter was presented effectively.					
2. The facilitator was knowledgeable.					
3. The facilitator responded to questions.					
4. There were enough opportunities for discussion.					
5. The written materials are useful.					
6. The session met my expectations.					
7. As a result of this training, I gained new knowledge applicable to my volunteer assignment.					
8. I plan to apply what I learned at this session.					

9. What did you like best about this session?

10. What would have improved this session?

Thank You! Your feedback will help us to improve our training!