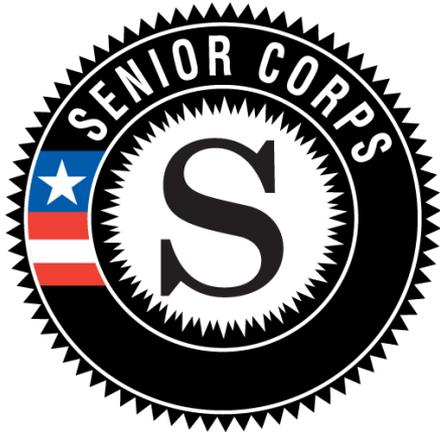


Supporting Children and Youth: Mentor Training for Senior Corps Volunteers



Becoming an Effective Mentor

Trainer:

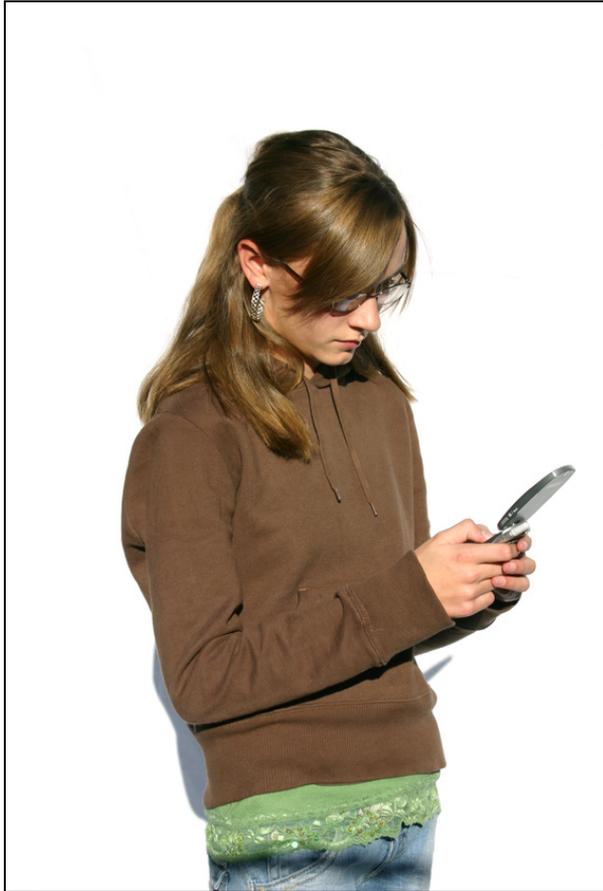
Date:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the session, participants will better understand:

- ▶ The compelling reasons to mentor children and youth
- ▶ The role and practices of an effective mentor
- ▶ Positive approach to working with children and youth
- ▶ The importance of working as part of a team

Kids Today



What has changed in children's lives since you were a child?

What is good and bad about that?

Common characteristics of young people that engage in risky behaviors

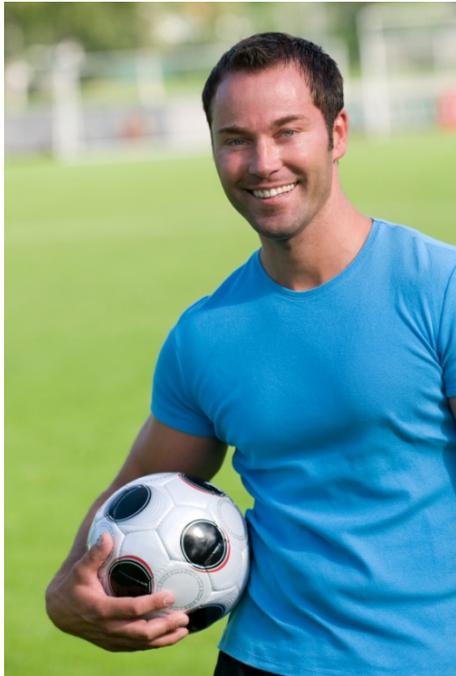
- ▶ Early acting out
- ▶ An absence of nurturing parents
- ▶ Evidence of having been a victim of child abuse
- ▶ Disengagement from school
- ▶ Involvement with negative peer group
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Live in disadvantaged neighborhoods

Who can help? A caring and consistent adult!

Benefits of Mentoring for Older Mentors

- ▶ Improve in physical health
- ▶ Improve cognitive activity
- ▶ Improve mental health (perceived quality of life, reduced feelings of isolation)
- ▶ Improved self confidence and self esteem
- ▶ Enjoyment of activities they do with children/youth
- ▶ Strong connections with other mentors

What thoughts, images or words come to mind when you consider the role of a mentor?



What thoughts, images or words come to mind when you think of what a mentor is ***not***?

A Mentor is:

- ▶ A caring guide, a wise advisor, a partner on the journey, a trusted friend
- ▶ A mirror for the child or youth to show who they are and all they can become
- ▶ Someone who can help the youth feel comfortable and appreciate their gifts
- ▶ Able to form a strong connection with the child/youth
- ▶ NOT perfect or always knows exactly what to say

Effective Ways to Interact

- ▶ **Child/youth role.** Relationship should be child/youth-driven.
- ▶ **Trust and Disclosure.** Don't force disclosure. Understand that trust takes time.
- ▶ **Expectations.** Understand that change may be subtle or not occur during time with child/youth.
- ▶ **Support and Advice.** Offer reassurance, availability and nonjudgmental assistance. Help child/youth problem solve on their terms.
- ▶ **Diversity and Family.** Try to understand the child or youth's experiences and culture. Respect child/youth's family while limiting involvement.

Developmental Assets are what children need to grow and thrive

Example of an “internal asset”:

Positive Identity

- ▶ Personal Power
- ▶ Self Esteem
- ▶ Sense of Purpose
- ▶ Positive View of Personal Future



Search Institute (2009). *40 Developmental Assets® for Children Grades K-3 (ages 5-9)*

Exercise: Supporting Assets

Instructions:

- ▶ Get into groups of 3-4.
- ▶ Read the internal assets and examples listed on the worksheet.
- ▶ For each asset, discuss with your group:
 - What would a supportive response sound like, one that encourages positive youth development?
 - What would be an example of an unhelpful response, one that misses an opportunity to encourage growth?
- ▶ Have one member of the group jot down your ideas on the worksheet.

Reflection: Mentors are part of a team

- ▶ What support might you need?
- ▶ Jot down the names and contact information for people you can consult.



Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made, and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot answer 'Tomorrow,' his name is Today.

Gabriela Mistral

