



## MENTOR GUIDELINES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

**CONGRATULATIONS!** As a career mentor, you are about to begin one of life's most rewarding and fulfilling experiences. Your commitment indicates that you believe in girls. You recognize the magnitude of the responsibility that you accepted in choosing to work with young ladies and agree to interact appropriately with your mentee according to the highest ethical standards always.

Be yourself! Please read the following guidelines carefully.

### Your Role as a Career Mentor:

- At the initial stages of the match, your mentee may appear to be hesitant, unresponsive, and unappreciative of the mentor relationship. *Be patient!* Don't try to speed up the process by going out of your way to accommodate your mentee.
- During the initial phase of the career mentoring relationship, the mentee is more interested in getting to know how "real" you are and how much she can trust you. *Establish how you can reach your mentee* (i.e., by phone, at a specific location) and designate a time and phone number where you can usually be reached.
- Don't try to be teacher, parent, disciplinarian, therapist, Santa Claus or babysitter. Be a *dependable, consistent friend*. Present information carefully without distortion, listen carefully, and offer possible solutions without passing judgment. Don't criticize or preach. Think of ways to problem solve together. Never say "you should have" to your mentee.
- *Respect* the uniqueness and honor the integrity of your mentee and influence her through constructive feedback. Identify the mentee's interests and take them seriously.
- Set *realistic expectations* and goals for your mentee. Remember there is a big difference between encouraging and demanding. Assist in making the connection between her actions of today and the dreams and goals of tomorrow. Look for signs of mentee improvement such as increased school attendance, improved grades, showing up for meetings and expressing appreciation.
- As a friend you can share and advise, but know your limitations. Problems that your mentee may share with you regarding substance abuse, molestation and physical abuse are best handled by professionals. If you have any concerns, *contact us immediately*.
- Be supportive of the parent, even when you may disagree. Don't take sides or make judgments concerning any family conflict or situation. Leave the parenting to the parent.

### Discipline:

There may be instances when your mentee's behavior is unacceptable. Again, remember the parent is responsible for the child's discipline. The following guidelines are to be used if the parent is not around



to assume the responsibility for the child's behavior. Don't forget to inform the parent about the steps you took and why you took them.

- Never physically discipline.
- Never use abusive language.
- Don't use ultimatums.
- Most children will listen and respond to reason. Explain to your mentee why you find her behavior unacceptable.
- Don't give your mentee the silent treatment to solve the problem. Discuss your concerns.
- On very rare occasions, your mentee may need to be taken back home because of unacceptable behavior. Before taking this action, tell her what you are doing and why you made the decision. Taking your mentee back home because of her behavior doesn't necessarily mean the match (relationship) has ended. Before you leave make sure your mentee understands she will see you again and that you are not using her behavior as a pretext to abandon the relationship.

#### **Health and Safety:**

Protect the health and safety of your mentee and seek advice from program staff whenever in doubt about the appropriateness of an event or activity and inform program staff of any persons, situations or activities that could affect the health and safety of the child.

- Do not use alcohol, tobacco or drugs when with your mentee.
- Do not have firearms or weapons present while with your mentee.
- Always wear seat belts while in the car.
- Have adequate personal liability and automobile insurance coverage.
- Ensure your mentee has all the necessary protective items and is well supervised on outings.
- Do not leave your mentee alone or with strangers.
- If you have become aware that your mentee's safety or the safety of another is in jeopardy through disclosure (e.g., child abuse, sexual abuse), *report your concern to program staff immediately*. This requirement should always be discussed with your mentee at the beginning of the relationship to inform them of your obligation to report safety concerns.



**Activities and Money:**

- Taking the first step in planning activities is primarily your responsibility; however, ask your mentee to help make decisions or have her plan an activity.
- Try to avoid bringing someone else when you are with your mentee. However, you may include others (e.g., spouse, friends, other mentees/mentors and relatives) from time to time.
- If there are activities you want to attend that cost money, consult with your mentee and find out how she will pay. You can assist in paying her share, but we encourage you to discuss with parents.
- Do not spend more than \$40 on your mentee for activities, birthday presents, and so on.
- Always call your mentee before your scheduled meeting or appointment to remind her. Be sure you have parental approval for activities that take place away from school premises and home.
- Return your mentee home at the agreed-upon time. If you are unable to or there is a change in plans, always call the parent.

**Program Rules:**

- No overnight stays.
- Discussions between you and your mentee are considered confidential. Be careful about sensitive personal issues. The mentee’s personal or family life may be difficult to discuss.
- If you have a concern you feel is beyond your ability to handle, call the program staff even if it seems trivial. There is no reason to feel helpless or hopeless.

**Measure of Success:**

- Your success is measured by many milestones.

Your mentee may realize for the first time that she . . .	Good indications:
✓ has potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ setting goals</li> <li>✓ developing new skills</li> <li>✓ aware of time management</li> </ul>
✓ is confident and self-assured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ increased cooperation with parents, teachers and peers</li> <li>✓ behavioral changes</li> </ul>
✓ values education and the learning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ increase in school attendance</li> <li>✓ improved grades</li> <li>✓ respect for teachers</li> </ul>
✓ is a capable young lady	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ a willingness to help others</li> <li>✓ ability to see the future</li> <li>✓ ability to plan for college</li> </ul>



- Your mentee will reward you through notes, e-mails or simply conversation (i.e., may tell you how “great” you are, tell you how you have helped her with a problem). Whatever the compliment, know that what you are doing has had a significant impact on the future of this child.
- Ask questions if you find any part of the guidelines unclear or confusing. The mentor coordinator is available to assist you in any way possible.

The quality of the relationship you build directly influences the life and future of the child.

Career mentoring is not a panacea for all the problems/decisions facing your mentee and her family. The essence of mentoring is the sustained human relationship: a one-on-one relationship that shows a child that she is valued as a person and is important to society.

**YOU ARE A:**  
POSITIVE ROLE MODEL  
FRIEND  
COACH  
SELF-ESTEEM BUILDER  
COLLEGE COUNSELOR  
ADVOCATE



I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the above code of conduct and will adhere to its order as I conduct my relationship with my mentee as her career mentor.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that I will be held fully responsible in the event an unfortunate incident occurs because of my neglect and unwillingness to follow the code of conduct guidelines.

Signature:

Date:

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