

Mentoring Tips

This tip sheet is designed to give mentors and those who want to be mentors some handy tips for their relationship with a child.

Be patient

Building trust takes time. A young person may not show it at first, but your help may be just what is needed. Be persistent

Praise is power

A word of praise in a critical world works miracles in the life of a child.

Set boundaries

Most mentoring relationships develop and flourish without problems. Occasionally, however, something comes up. Mentors have an important role, but this doesn't include replacing family or social service professionals. A mentor can help guide a young person to the appropriate source for additional help.

Try to understand a child's viewpoint

Even if you don't share his or her point of view, trying to appreciate it shows you care.

Celebrate differences

Experienced mentors report that working with a young person from a different background broadened their own horizons and deepened their understanding of other people and cultures. Sometimes it is the differences that make the difference.

Be honest

Kids know adults aren't perfect. If you make mistakes, admit it. Say you're sorry. It's a skill a child may only learn from you.

Be there

Just the sound of your concerned voice can make a big difference in the life of a child.

Be positive

Ask yourself, "What encouragement can I give if my young friend disappoints himself or herself?" Mentors are in the business of helping young people make the most of their lives. Allow the child to make a few "growing" mistakes when they learn new things.

Believe

Many children in our communities struggle with self-esteem. Your faith in them can be the greatest gift you can give.

