

## Suggested Match Activities

Below are some tips and strategies for your mentoring sessions. Check to see that they are age appropriate. Remember to ask youth what they would like to do. Plan together. Don't be too structured, though . . . spontaneity is important! Add some good ideas of your own. Make a list of the ideas that you really liked and share them with other mentors. Good luck!

1. Start by telling the youth why you decided to become a mentor.
2. Engage in games-board games such as chess, checkers, and Monopoly, and crossword puzzles.
3. Select books you like and read them together. Get to an exciting part and finish it next time you are together.
4. Start a book club.
5. Exchange favorite recipes. Put them in a book and use it as a neighborhood fundraiser for the program.
6. Research the history of music and learn to play a musical instrument together.
7. Teach the beginning alphabet, words, and phrases of a foreign language.
8. Create a scrapbook of memories that last the entire year.
9. Use a disposable camera to capture special moments.
10. Work on the computer. Create calendars and poems and search the Web. Write a story.
11. Set up e-mail correspondence between mentors and youth if you are permitted and if the youth has access where the mentoring program is located. Write to each other and touch base between visits.
12. Construct a kite together and fly it.
13. Build and launch a rocket. Don't forget to take photos.
14. Create a design and carve a pumpkin on Halloween.
15. Help research and design an extra credit project for the youth's school.
16. Create a time capsule and bury it. Determine when it should be opened.
17. Create a holiday, get-well, or greeting card for a special occasion.
18. Discuss safety precautions such as wearing helmets when riding bikes and fire safety in the home.
19. Write an original story book together.
20. Discuss personal hygiene, health, exercise, and healthful habits. Remember that we are what we eat! Manage a diet plan together.
21. Teach how to give a good hand shake. Practice makes perfect!
22. Discuss proper etiquette and social graces. Plan a field trip to a fine restaurant after youth passes ALL the tests. Make sure to get permission and invite a chaperone. Get approvals from the program first!
23. Connect with the community. Research what after school programs are offered in the community in which youth might engage.
24. Encourage youth to try out for school activities such as band, chorus, drama production, and sports.
25. Play sports, shoot basketball in a school or organization's gymnasium.
26. Explore what to do in an emergency. Create a contact list and discuss 911 procedures.
27. Plan for a sound financial future. Discuss opening savings and checking accounts and the concept of good credit and the meaning of plastic credit cards. Invite a banker to speak with youth.
28. Plan for future careers. Conduct mock interviews for a job, read the want ads, discuss dress codes, and fill out a sample application for a job.

29. Discuss opportunities for postsecondary education. Research two- and four-year colleges, technical schools, and the meaning of financial aid. What does it take to get to college? What high school courses should be taken? It is never too early to begin.
30. Take a career interest inventory. Discuss entry-level positions.
31. Decide on a community service project together with mentors and youth and carry it out. Perhaps it is to plant a garden in front of the local school or remove graffiti from school walls. Maybe it is to collect food and deliver it to the homeless. Take credit for the project as part of your mentoring program. Ask the program staff what their needs are.
32. Start a pen pal project with a group of young people in another country.
33. Talk about friends-those that youth have and those they would like to have.
34. Decorate t-shirts and wear your creations proudly.
35. Discuss what youth want to be when they grow up. Invite guest speakers in who represent the careers of choice.
36. Arrange to shadow corporate executives on Groundhog Job Shadowing Day, a national event in February.
37. Have a game of basketball, football, or volleyball with mentors against youth.
38. Design and paint a mural on the wall of the school.
39. Act out a scene from a favorite book and make a production out of it. Invite the school to attend.
40. Discover ways to make spelling fun. Use alphabet cereal or flashcards.
41. Play hangman.
42. Discuss the positive activities youth can get involved in during the summer.
43. Walk outside on a nice day; sit under a tree and just talk.
44. Research and talk about famous people who use their abilities to get ahead.
45. Read the newspaper and magazines together.
46. Share your life experiences.
47. Share your career experiences. How did you get to where you are today?
48. Remember youth on their birthday with a card.
49. Share your school and other experiences at the same age as the youth.
50. Share a proverb each time that you meet.
51. Build a model.
52. Swap photos of youth and mentors.
53. Bring a scrapbook or photo album in from home and share photos of your family, travels, and pets.
54. Share thoughts and feelings between meetings in a small journal.
55. Practice the answers to the questions for the driver's license.
56. Help youth write a resume.
57. Discuss people you admire. Compare heroes and research your favorites.
58. Discuss leisure activities.
59. Plan a leadership project with youth and carry it out.
60. Ask your youth-if you could go back to middle school what would YOU do differently?
61. Complete a personality inventory to find out who the youth are.
62. Help youth to design a unique and original calling or business card.
63. Help youth to craft a personal mission statement.
64. Ask the youth where he hopes to be in five years? In 10 years?
65. Help your youth to get organized. Write out what your youth does every day and what she would like to change.

66. Practice how to get the point across.
67. Research volunteer opportunities and adopt a project. Giving back through community service is so important.
68. Discuss travel and dream vacations.
69. Discuss the pillars of character, including pride, punctuality, honesty, and responsibility.
70. Help to arrange a mini career fair and invite other youth to attend.
71. Cook a meal together if it is allowed. Ask to use the school kitchen or home economics class if there is one at your local school.
72. Put a cookbook together of favorite recipes of mentors and mentees.
73. Explore careers over the Internet.
74. Teach how to ask a boss for a raise.
75. Invite a guest from the local labor market office to discuss market requirements and the fastest growing jobs today.
76. Share your dreams.
77. Discuss current events and the news.
78. Help with homework. Make sure that the youth takes the lead in making this decision.
79. Plan a random act of kindness.
80. Learn about how newspapers write the news and invite a reporter into a session.
81. Usher at the school play or musical concert.
82. Arrange a field trip to visit a senior citizen home. Read to the seniors.
83. Hold a spelling bee and crown the winner.
84. Try clay modeling.

What are some additional ideas that you have tried that were successful? List them below and share with other mentors.

Activity suggestions developed by Susan Weinberger.