

CHIPPEWA AREA MENTOR PROGRAM

750 Tropicana Boulevard
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729



Chippewa Area
Mentor Program



Mentor
Handbook

CHIPPEWA FALLS AREA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Chippewa Area Mentor Program

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Dear Mentors:

When I started mentoring I wasn't sure what to expect. It's been quite a while since my kids have grown and left our home. I was anxious about how things would go; would the student like me, would we "hit-it-off".

After I started I didn't realize how much I missed the enthusiasm, sincerity, and frankness of a child. Tuesday mornings are now one of the highlights of my week. That half hour each week has truly been a positive and uplifting experience. I can't say that we do anything special or out of the ordinary, but we just enjoy each other's company.

I believe that time is one of the most valuable gifts we can give children. It is almost embarrassing to give so little time and have it mean so much to the youngster I mentor. I would encourage anyone with just a little time and a heart for kids to get involved with the Mentor Program. You will get a lot more out of it than what you will give.

Thanks for all that you do for our kids.

Mike Schoch, Former Superintendent

We Believe...

- ☆ Each student can be successful
- ☆ “One at a Time” is the way to go!
- ☆ Each student can discover hope and develop resiliency
- ☆ Each student can discover personal abilities and understand how they can be used to help him/herself and others
- ☆ Each student can show respect and accept responsibility
- ☆ This community is a rich resource of caring people and learning opportunities

Table of Contents

<i>Record of Revision</i>	<i>i</i>
<i>Welcome to the Chippewa Area Mentor Program!</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Vision</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Program Information</i>	<i>2</i>
History of the Chippewa Area Mentor Program	2
A School Community Partnership	3
Mentor Program Organization	3
Scholarship Program	4
Criteria	4
Selection Process.....	4
Scholarship Amount.....	4
Mentor Program Endowment Fund	5
<i>How the Program Works</i>	<i>5</i>
Student Selection Process	5
Mentor Application Process	6
Mentor Requirements	6
Mentor Screening	7
Mentor Assignments.....	7
Mentoring Calendar	8
Summer School Mentoring	8
<i>What is Mentoring?</i>	<i>8</i>
Listens	9
Role Models	9
Advices	9
Coaches	9
Empowers	9
Sponsors	9
<i>Mentor Roles and Responsibilities</i>	<i>9</i>
Be Dependable	10
Meet Only at the School	10
Use Counselor/Teacher Resources	11
Respect Confidentiality	11
<i>Mentor Guidelines</i>	<i>12</i>
Gift-giving Guidelines	13
Guidelines for Reporting Abuse or Neglect	13
Handling “Sticky” Situations	14
Ensuring Mentee Safety	15

Mentor Scenarios — “What would you do if...”	16
Scenario 1	16
Scenario 2	16
Scenario 3	17
Scenario 4	18
Scenario 5	18
Communicating with your Mentee	18
Communication to Avoid	19
Being a Good Listener.....	21
Attending	21
Summarizing	21
Clarifying.....	22
What to Do with My Student.....	22
Building Developmental Assets	23
Saying Goodbye.....	24
After the Relationship Ends	24
<i>Mentor Training and Support.....</i>	25
<i>Program Logos.....</i>	26
Everyone is a Star!	26
<i>References</i>	27

Welcome to the Chippewa Area Mentor Program!

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, what sort of house I lived in, or what kind of car I drove; but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child. ~Anonymous

We are excited about our community's way of helping students and we are happy that you have decided to become a part of this caring group of community volunteers. Since 1988 we have found mentoring to be an effective way to help struggling students build resilience and experience success in school and in their personal lives.



Mission

The Chippewa Area Mentor Program, in partnership with the community, is committed to strengthening students' social and emotional growth through one-on-one matching with caring and responsible role models

Vision

Each child is a STAR! By matching positive adult role models with kids our vision continues to:

- Give students hope for the present and vision for their future
- Encourage students to work toward goals and help them to believe they can be successful
- Enable students to see themselves as valued and positive, contributing community members
- Connect community people of all ages through mutually beneficial and rewarding activities

Program Information

History of the Chippewa Area Mentor Program

In the summer of 1988, six people from Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Chippewa Falls, WI, offered themselves to their neighbor (the Chippewa Falls Middle School) to "help wherever needed." In a leap of trust, the principal, Tom Welch, revealed his concern for the growing number of good kids that seemed to be "falling through the cracks" despite the best efforts of the school district. "I can't help but believe that these kids could make it if they just had some adult who encouraged them on a regular basis. They need a friend...maybe we could call that friend a MENTOR."

The Mentor Program...

...started with no money

...and only 6 volunteers

...at a time when there seemed to be a "wall" between our schools and our community

...when public schools seemed fearful of working with faith communities

...long before Colin Powell, US presidents and CEO's promoted mentoring

...before research proved the benefits of mentoring for kids.

The Chippewa Area Mentor Program is now a successful model. Over the past several years it has provided materials and advice to hundreds of individuals and communities across the nation showing how a community mentoring program can help schools, communities and churches work together to serve the growing number of struggling students.

The program serves K-12 students in the district's eight public schools, two alternate schools and four Catholic schools. The program recruits, screens, trains and supports over 250 adult volunteers, most of who return year after year and follow their students from school to school and as they pass through the grades.

The Mentor Program awards \$500.00 scholarships to all eligible mentor students who demonstrate their desire and commitment to continue their education. Scholarship money is provided through the generosity of local service clubs and individuals.

A School Community Partnership

A high degree of collaboration exists between the Mentor Program and other school programs, community groups, agencies and local leaders. Collaborative efforts result in enhanced recruitment, training, funding and program development. The Mentor Program encourages students to participate in the Voyager After School Learning Center so they can connect and be involved with positive activities and people in their community.

The community of Chippewa Falls has embraced the Mentor Program. Supporters include local churches, service clubs, the Chamber of Commerce, many local businesses and the local media. Having started as a totally volunteer program, the Mentor Program's \$70,000 annual budget is now funded jointly through the school district and United Way of Chippewa County, area foundations, and community donations.

Mentor Program Organization

The Mentor Program is comprised of a board of directors, one full-time Director, and one full-time Mentor Support and Promotions Coordinator (see Figure 1). In addition, each year the program hires an AmeriCorps member to implement a service-learning and community service opportunity for mentees attending the middle school. The board of directors consists of 12 individuals representing the public and parochial schools, community members, community professionals, a parent representative, and a mentor representative(s).

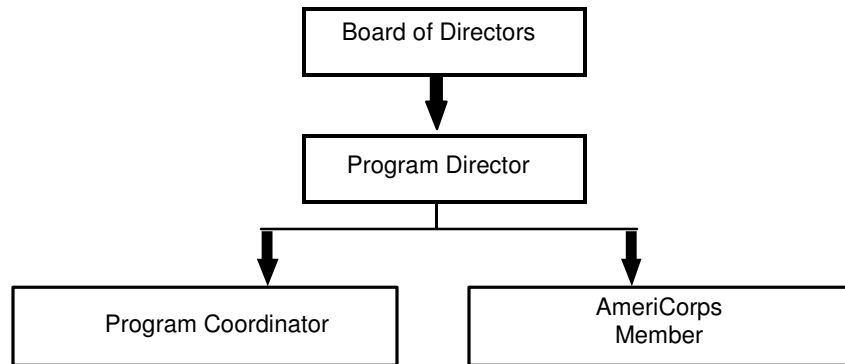


Figure 1. Organization Chart

Scholarship Program

The Chippewa Area Mentor Program Scholarship was established in May 2000 to provide assistance for students in the Mentor Program to obtain post-secondary training and education. In 2007, the Mentor Program began a scholarship endowment fund with the Community Foundation of Chippewa County.

Criteria

To qualify for a Mentor Program Scholarship, the student must meet the following criteria:

1. Must be a high school graduate, or have earned a GED
2. Must have been a mentee in the Chippewa Area Mentor Program for at least one year
3. Must have been accepted and enrolled at an accredited post-secondary school.

Each applicant must complete an application form. Students are eligible for up to three years after high school graduation or until age 22.

Selection Process

The scholarship recipient will be chosen from those who have submitted an application. Applications are available online or from the Mentor Office (Chippewa Falls Middle School). The Mentor Program Board of Directors will select the scholarship recipient.

Scholarship Amount

The scholarship awarded will be a minimum amount of \$500.00. This is a renewable scholarship. The number of awards given each year will be determined by the funds available in the scholarship fund and the number of qualified applicants. The award check will be made payable to the recipient and the university or college in which he/she is enrolled. The recipient will receive the scholarship certificate at the annual Senior Awards Program. Scholarship monies will be awarded upon the Mentor Program's receipt of the student's transcript, which verifies the recipient has completed a full semester and will receive credit for all courses taken.

Please encourage your mentee to apply for this scholarship. It's available only for our mentor youth!

Mentor Program Endowment Fund

In May 2004, the Mentor Program Advisory Board took a bold step to start the *Mentor Program Endowment Fund*. The Endowment Fund is our way to promote and ensure sustainable funding to continue our mission now and forever!

We are proud of the way our community supports its children and are proud of our accomplishments—kids will always benefit from caring adults, and communities will always profit when kids and adults connect. The Endowment Fund can ensure that the vision of the Mentor Program continues.

The Mentor Program accepts gifts to the Endowment Fund in the form of cash, bequests and beneficiary designations, and life income gifts. All gifts to the Endowment Fund are invested through the Community Foundation of Chippewa County. Gifts may be sent to the Chippewa Area Mentor Program or the Community Foundation of Chippewa County.

By giving to the Mentor Program Endowment Fund you are investing in the lives of children on the "brink of success." Your gifts to the Endowment Fund will continually grow and provide funds for program operations.

How the Program Works

The Mentor Program is simple but requires many community volunteers and the collaborative effort between Mentor Program staff, school counselors, teachers, parents, and students. To ensure our program is effective and provides a safe and healthy environment for both our students and mentors, we use our school resources and parents to select students for the program, recruit and screen all mentors, and assign a mentor to a student (on the waiting list).

Student Selection Process

Students are selected for the mentor program when teachers, guidance counselors, and/or parents recognize that a student is losing interest in school, experiencing a traumatic event (such as divorce, death in the family or new school environment), or inconsistently meeting school expectations. When or if a concern arises, the following takes place:

1. Teachers and/or counselors recommend students for the Mentor Program.
2. The student is placed on a waiting list.
3. Mentor Program staff recruit, screen, and train potential volunteers on an ongoing basis.

4. Guidance counselors/Mentor Program staff identify a potential mentor/mentee match.
5. Parents give permission for the student to be matched with a mentor.
6. After training and screening is complete, mentor/mentee pair meets once a week at the school for one class period (between 1/2 hour to 1 hour) during the school year.

The duration of a mentor/mentee match varies depending upon the willingness and availability of the mentors and the interest and needs of the student.

Mentor Application Process

Mentor applicants are eligible only if they meet requirements defined by the Mentor Program Board of Directors. The program director also has the authority to review extenuating circumstances, and if mentor eligibility is questionable, can seek direction from the Board of Directors. The following subsections outline the requirements volunteers must fulfill to become a mentor within the Mentor Program, the screening process, and the matching or “assignment” process.

Mentor Requirements

Mentors must adhere or complete the following to become a mentor with the program:

- Complete a written application form. The forms are available from the Mentor Office or online at <http://cfsd.chipfalls.k12.wi.us/cvMentors.cfm> .
 - Provide necessary information to complete a criminal background check.
 - Provide three personal references.
- Must be at least a junior in high school.
- Be willing to adhere to all Chippewa Area Mentor Program Guidelines.
- Commit to spending 1/2 hour a week with a student.
- Agree to attend mentor events as able.
- Must not have a record of an arrest, charge or conviction of child abuse, neglect or sexual assault. An applicant with a felony conviction will be considered after their criminal record is clear of criminal charges over a seven-year period.
- Must not possess or use illegal drugs.

- ❑ Must not use alcohol or controlled substances in an excessive or inappropriate manner.
- ❑ Cannot be receiving treatment for substance abuse at the time of application.

Mentor Screening

Each mentor applicant is screened using a criminal background check, by contacting three personal references, and through a Mentor Program orientation session. A criminal background check includes the following:

- ❑ Criminal Court Access Profile (CCAP)
- ❑ Department of Justice Crime Information Bureau (CIB)
- ❑ Local law enforcement
- ❑ National Sex Offender Registry

Three personal references listed on the application form are contacted and questioned to ensure the applicant is a good candidate for the Mentor Program.

After the screening process is complete, the Mentor is scheduled to attend an orientation session. During this session, mentor staff provides one-on-one information about the program, reinforces the program's guidelines and rules, and has the opportunity to meet and "interview" the new mentor.

The decision to accept an applicant into the Mentor Program is based upon a final assessment done by the program director (or appointed staff) at the completion of the mentor screening procedure. The program director has final approval for an applicant's acceptance into the program. Documentation of the screening process is maintained for each applicant and placed in confidential files.

Any applicants who provide false information during the course of the screening process will be denied acceptance into the program. The Mentor Program Director reserves the right to deny any applicant. Additionally, applicants will not be allowed to mentor a relative nor can mentoring be used to fulfill community service requirements as assigned by a court of law.

Mentor Assignments

After screening is complete, the mentor application is given to the guidance counselor/principal at the school in which the mentor chooses to mentor. If the applicant did not indicate a school preference on his/her application, the application will be sent to the school with the greatest need for mentors. Based on the information on the application and needs of the students on the waiting list, counselors create the match and contact the mentor to schedule a meeting day and time.

Mentors will be issued a photo identification badge to comply with school safety concerns. The photo will be taken at Mentor orientation. Mentors can pick up their photo ID from the receptionist at the school in which the mentor is volunteering at.

Mentoring Calendar

Each year mentoring begins in mid-September after the second week of school or after fall registration events are complete. This time frame allows Mentor Program staff and school counselors to determine which students have transferred to a different school or moved out of the area. It also allows students and teachers to adjust to their new school routine. Mentoring ends two weeks prior to the end of the school year.

Summer School Mentoring

Mentors of elementary age students can continue mentoring during the summer if their mentee is enrolled in summer school. Summer school is generally 5 weeks long and begins in June and ends in July. A list of mentor students enrolled in summer school is generated before the end of the school year. Those mentors with students attending summer school will be contacted by mail to determine availability and/or interest in summer school mentoring.

Mentoring during summer school is optional. Mentors are not obligated to continue their mentoring relationship during the summer months.

What is Mentoring?

By definition, a mentor is a *trusted advisor or guide*. Mentoring is a committed relationship between an adult and a child that is focused on developing the character and capabilities of that young person. Formal or informal, mentoring is a wonderful way for caring adults to make a positive difference in the life of a child.

As a wise, entrusted friend, a mentor plays many roles that the mentee will value:

- Listens
- Role Models
- Advises
- Coaches
- Empowers
- Sponsors



Listens

Listening is one of the most important functions of a mentor. Many young people do not have anyone who is willing and able to listen to what they have to say.

Role Models

Mentors can help their students develop values, standards and goals by allowing themselves to be seen as “real people” and by sharing personal beliefs and values. Mentors may also introduce or expose their students to others whom they hold in high regard.

Advises

Through discussion, mentors can help young people gain a different perspective on their problems and their own abilities to deal with them.

Coaches

Giving advice and providing feedback are important as a young person takes on new challenges. Coaches give praise for a job well done, encouragement when the going gets tough, and constructive criticism when changes need to be made. It is always easier to deal with the negatives when you know there are some positives.

Empowers

While it may be easier to do things for a young person who is struggling with a problem, the benefit will be greater if the young person is taught how to handle the problem himself. One way to empower young people is to teach them the skills to take care of themselves.

Sponsors

Mentors can help open doors for young people by introducing them to new people, activities and organizations. Opportunities for a young person to meet new people and explore new situations may open new horizons.

Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

The Mentor Program is based on the simple concept that an adult can become a child's wise and trusted guide and friend. While the program allows much flexibility to serve individual needs and differences, we do ask that you follow four guidelines to ensure a safe environment for our students, the Mentor Program, and you, our mentors.

Mentor Program Rules

1. **BE DEPENDABLE:** If you cannot meet, call the school (Don't call the Mentor Office!) and let the child and counselor know.
2. **MEET ONLY AT THE SCHOOL** during the school day.
3. **ASK THE COUNSELOR OR TEACHER IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CHILD.** For general concerns or suggestions, you can call us.
4. **CONFIDENTIALITY IS ESSENTIAL!**

Be Dependable

Mentors are very special people. Many of the children in the mentor program have been let down numerous times by family, friends and/or life circumstances. The Mentor Program strives to create a dependable and trustworthy relationship between a student and a mentor. Earning a child's trust is hard and often difficult to rebuild.

It's not uncommon to have a schedule change without notice. If your schedule changes and you are unable to mentor, simply call the school and inform the office personnel or guidance counselor of your inability to meet. He/She will contact your student and inform him/her of your schedule change. Perhaps it would be easier to reschedule and meet on another day. The important thing is to make your mentor student aware of your absence.

Meet Only at the School

There are two main reasons for insisting that mentors meet only at school. First, some students do not like school, have little success with school, or are not well accepted. Our experience shows that meeting with a mentor is the highlight of the week for some students. In many cases, a students' attendance has improved because he/she knows the mentor will be there.

Second, there are liability issues with meeting off of school grounds. This guideline not only protects the student, but it also protects the Mentor and the Mentor Program. Meeting at other sites increases the possibility of a vulnerable situation for both the Mentor and the student. **Mentors are only covered by school liability insurance while mentoring on school grounds.**

The Mentor Program is a school-based program. If you want an opportunity to "make a difference" in the life of a child outside of the school hours and location, opportunities exist with other organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters, 4-H, city recreation programs, scouting, church groups, and the YMCA.

Use Counselor/Teacher Resources

The Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District (CFAUSD) and the Chippewa Area Catholic Schools (CACS) have wonderful teachers, guidance counselors and administrators that support our program and know the children well. If you ever have a question regarding the well being of your mentee, call the guidance counselor or teacher and utilize his/her expertise. The counselors/teachers collaborate with the Mentor Program staff and work closely to ensure the well being of each mentor-mentee relationship. Below are some examples in which to utilize counselor and teacher support:

- Talk to the counselor immediately if it appears someone could be in danger. Instances could be talks of suicide, indications of abuse or violence. The counselor and school officials will know how to respond.
- Ask the teacher or guidance counselor for information on your student's progress whenever needed--counselors will help arrange for this.
- Talk to the counselor for advice on interacting with the student's parents. Occasional notes to the student's family have been effective--especially when they are friendly and positive. Do not go to the student's home.

Respect Confidentiality

A mentor's role contains elements of teaching, counseling and parenting. The relationship that develops between a student and a mentor implies that your student will share personal, private and confidential information.

Mentors have an obligation to protect the confidentiality of their mentee. You must not "gossip" or share things entrusted to you as a friend. Trust is fragile and, once broken, is not easily put back together. As a rule of thumb, share only with people who "need to know" such as counselors, administrators and teachers (if the topic relates to the classroom material). Remember that our only purpose in talking about a student should be to help them. ***If what you share is not intended to help, don't share.*** Use the following guidelines to ensure you maintain and respect confidentiality:

- Share information only with those who "Need to Know."
- Share information only to "help"— not to gossip.

- Seek advice from a school counselor when you feel uncertain about what to do in any situation including questions of confidentiality.

A RULE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

“I will keep what you say in confidence unless I feel what you share could put yourself or someone else in danger.”

Mentor Guidelines

In addition to our four rules, we have a few guidelines to help make your mentor/mentee relationship a success:

1. Call the school in advance if your student's attendance is a problem--this may save you an unnecessary trip. Also ensure that school is not closed due to inclement weather and check the school calendar for vacation days, in-service, or other changes that could affect your meeting time.
2. Concentrate on the good qualities and actions of your student. Each child is unique and Mentors are wonderful at discovering the buried treasures. Help your student achieve small goals and learn to be responsible for following through. Celebrate success!
3. "What should we do today?" Take cues from your student. Is he/she upset and just needs to talk? Is he/she ready to work on a project? Would playing a game be best today?
4. Keep in mind--some mismatches do occur. It is possible that you could be more effective and happy working with another student. Let the guidance counselor know your feelings.
5. ENJOY EACH OTHER AS FRIENDS!

A MENTOR ...

- *Enjoys being with children*
- *Has a positive attitude*
- *Acts in a dependable manner*
- *Maintains confidentiality*
- *Finds student's strengths*
- *Gives students hope and vision*
- *Communicates to student "I believe in you!"*

A MENTOR DOES NOT...

- *Replace a parent or guardian*
- *Break the trust given by the student*
- *Give students money and gifts*
- *Go into a student's home*
- *Provide transportation*
- *Get involved in student's family life*
- *Disregard school policies*
- *"Fix" the student's problems*
- *Expect quick or dramatic changes*

Gift-giving Guidelines

Gift giving is optional and should be done at the discretion of the mentor. Mentors are encouraged to use the following guidelines when gift giving:

- Avoid extravagant gifts (i.e. iPod and mp3 players, video games, snowboard etc.) which may lead the mentee to misconstrue the mentor relationship
- Give gifts in the privacy of your mentor/mentee visit to avoid creating adversity between other mentor/mentee relationships
- Ensure the mentee places the gift in his/her locker or in the possession of school personnel for safety and to avoid disruption of class time

Guidelines for Reporting Abuse or Neglect

As volunteers for the Mentor Program, it is our responsibility to provide you with the necessary information for reporting abuse or neglect in the rare occasion that you suspect your student is experiencing such a situation. Child abuse and neglect occur throughout all racial, cultural, and socioeconomic levels.

Individuals employed by the school district such as a nurse, guidance counselor, teacher, administrator, AODA counselor, physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech-language therapist or school audiologist are considered mandatory reporters. If a reasonable cause exists in which you suspect a child has been abused or neglected or have a reason to believe that a child has been threatened with abuse or neglect and there is a probability it may occur, mandatory reporters must *immediately* make a report to the Chippewa County Department of Human Services. **Mentors are not considered mandatory reporters.** However, in the unlikely event you suspect that your student has been abused or neglected, please follow the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the student:

1. Remind your student that whatever they share with you will be kept in confidence unless their safety or the safety of others is in jeopardy.
2. Do not ask leading questions about that which the student reports to you. Leave interviewing to a trained staff member. Questioning done by untrained staff can damage future testimony.
3. Try not to react with shock or extreme reactions if you hear disturbing information and need to debrief. Praise the child for self- disclosure.
4. Inform your student a report must be made.
5. Report suspected child abuse or neglect to your school's guidance counselor. If the guidance counselor is not available, report the suspected abuse or neglect to the building principal or one of the mandatory reporters as listed above. You can report the information directly to Child Protective Services at:

Human Services Office-726-7788

6. Be aware that a Child Protective Services worker may contact you. The first individual who heard the information must be the one to share it with Child Protection Services. Second hand reports are not accepted. Understand that the guidance counselor or social worker may not be able to share any of the follow-up information with you

Note: If you are unsure of whether the information shared with you constitutes abuse or neglect, talk with your school's guidance counselor.

Handling "Sticky" Situations

What do you do if your mentee asks you to do something "outside the rules of the program," or something that makes you uncomfortable?

As friendships deepen between mentor and student, situations might arise that require making a tough choice. The best help for dealing with these sticky situations is to be prepared. Mentors need to be aware that sticky situations, although uncommon, might occur. Mentors need to understand the parameters of the program and the possible jeopardy to the program, and to the individual mentor, if the programs' guidelines are not followed. Mentors also need to know their own boundaries as to what is "right" or acceptable for them. Also it is necessary to know whom to contact in case their student indeed needs help that is beyond the mentoring relationship. When in doubt, contact the guidance counselor or Mentor Program office.

While the vast majority of mentoring relationships develop and flourish without “sticky situations” or serious problems, things do happen. Mentors have an important role, but that role does not include medical or psychological treatment, or family counseling. There are support systems in place for real emergencies. The most a mentor is expected to do, and should do, is to help guide a young person to the appropriate source of professional help.

A Mentor IS...

A wise and trusted friend and guide
A mentor is a listener and can be a coach, tutor,
cheerleader, confidant, and an advocate

A Mentor IS NOT...

...a foster parent	...a therapist
...a parole officer	...a “cool” peer
...an ATM Machine	...a doctor/nurse
...transportation	...a Savior
...a counselor	

Ensuring Mentee Safety

The child’s safety is most important! Therefore, whatever you say or action you take, please do so with the safety of the child in mind. We encourage you not to resolve or “fix” a problem on your own, but to get help. Chippewa Falls is a community with wonderful resources to help our kids. The following list includes some things and resources to keep in mind:

- If you suspect abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual), contact your student’s guidance counselor or building principal during school hours. School personnel are mandatory reporters and thus knowledgeable in actions to be taken. Refer to *Guidelines for Reporting Abuse or Neglect* on page 13 for more information.
- What is the TRUTH? We cannot assume that what the child tells us is always the “whole story.” Some children, in order to cope in extreme situations, have quite highly developed survival skills. This might include “stretching the truth” or other manipulation skills. A common example of this might be a “fight” between teen and parent.
- What/who is your “safety net” as a mentor? Know who you can call if your student calls you after school hours or late at night. Some possibilities might be:
 - The city Police or County Sheriff

- The child’s caseworker, if he/she has one
 - LSS Runaway and Youth Services, 1-800-235-1913
 - The child’s guidance counselor, teacher, or principal
 - Family Support Center hotline, 1-800-400-7020
- Respect parent’s rights—even if you don’t agree with their style of parenting—they ARE the parents!
 - Don’t do anything that violates your personal boundaries of what you feel is safe or proper.

Mentor Scenarios — “What would you do if...”

Scenario 1

Your student asks you for money for a fieldtrip, school supplies, a present for mom, diapers or food... or some other worthy cause.

You might be tempted to...

Feel sorry for your student and give him or her the items asked for.

But it would be better to...

Option 1: Say, “You know I care about you, and would like to help you any way I can, but mentors are not supposed to give students money. Let’s check with your teacher (counselor) to see if we can figure out a good way for you to get what you need.”

Option 2: (If you REALLY DO want to give the money) Say, “Let’s talk to your counselor and see if it would be OK for me to do this.” Then write a check to the place/program or give the money to someone who will see that the money is spent the way it was intended.

Scenario 2

You get a call in the middle of the night... “I can’t get in my home, (I’m on the street and my ride left me) can you come get me?”

You might be tempted to...

Drop everything and go get him/her – even if you have to drive your own car all alone to an uncomfortable place

But it would be better to...

Option 1: Encourage them to call their parents or family for help. You might even offer to call the parents for them. If the parents are unwilling to help, tell

the student, “I’ll call for someone to come, and get you to a safe place.” The best course of action for the safety of the child is to tell them to call the police.

Many mentors are reluctant to call the police for fear of breaking the child’s trust, but the main consideration needs to be for the SAFETY of the child – and yourself! Plus, it is important that kids know the police are not the “bad guy”, but they exist to HELP keep people safe!

If you feel you absolutely MUST be physically present for the child, ask the police if you could meet the child in their presence.

Chippewa Falls Police: (715) 723-4424
Chippewa County Sheriff: (715) 726-7701

Option 2: Call a taxi to pick up your student.

Other options:

... call the child’s case manager (if they have one)

Never take the child to your home! This puts you at great risk. ALWAYS make certain whatever action you take is SAFE for yourself and the child. You might also want to have a reliable witness – Protect yourself!

Scenario 3

Your student tells you terrible things and you suspect physical or sexual abuse.

You might be tempted to...

Ignore the situation and assume that “this couldn’t be happening” or immediately call Social Services.

But it would be better to...

Option 1: Remember that this student trusts you. How can you help without breaking that trust?

Option 2: Remind your student you will keep his/her confidence unless their safety or the safety of others is in jeopardy.

Option 3: You might say “I believe you and think you need help so that won’t happen again. I know someone who could help you. Would you be willing to talk to that person?” Then offer to go with the student to report the incident to that professional (usually a school counselor). It may take a while for the student to agree to tell someone, but most will. The counselor will then talk to the student, make the judgment as to whether or not the authorities need to become involved, and follow through with the student until the situation is resolved.

Scenario 4

Your student has been depressed a lot and says things that make you suspect that they may be suicidal or apt to hurt someone else.

You might be tempted to...

Say “Oh, don’t think that way.”

Ignore it.

But it would be better to...

Option 1: Report it immediately to the guidance counselor or teacher.

Scenario 5

Your student talks a lot about conflict at home and that they don’t get along with their parents or guardians.

You might be tempted to...

Minimize or ignore it.

But it would be better to...

Option 1: If you perceive that this could escalate into a bigger problem, try to help the student think through some choices, such as...

“What could you do to make things better?”

“Who could help you if this happens again?”

Option 2: Encourage your student to talk about this further with their counselor.

Communicating with your Mentee

Communication is a key component to any relationship. How we communicate with each other differs between all individuals and can change with age and circumstances. The following phrases are examples of positive ways to communicate with your mentee and ensure you are sending the message that you believe he/she is important and a valued individual.

- *You get better at that every time I see you. Way to go!*
- *Can I put this on the bulletin board at the office so I can see it every day?*
- *The time I spend with you is really special to me!*
- *I know you worked very hard on that. Wonderful job!*
- *That’s really good thinking. Tell me why you chose that answer.*

Communication Openers

EMPATHY

"In your shoes..."

"I think I understand your viewpoint..."

ACCEPTANCE

"That's an interesting point..."

"Yes." "Hmmm"

REFLECTIVE OR ACTIVE LISTENING

"Let me see if I understand what you're saying..."

"Sounds as though you feel cheated..."

DOOR OPENER

"Tell me more about what happened..."

Communication to Avoid

Communication killers are sure ways to break communication and impact negatively on your mentor/mentee relationship. Below are forms of communication that you should avoid:

ORDERING, DIRECTING, COMMANDING: telling the person what should be done

"I don't care how you learned to make the bed, you do it this way here."

"Don't stay out past midnight."

"Quit complaining."

"You must clean your room."

"You will do your..."

WARNING, ADMONISHING, THREATENING: pointing out the consequences that will occur if the young person does do something that he/she is not supposed to.

"If you stay out past midnight, you'll be sorry."

"If you don't stop doing that, I'm going to call..."

"You better..."

"If you don't..."

MORALIZING, EXHORTING, PREACHING: telling a person what he/she "should" do.

"You really shouldn't do that."

"You ought to be more like this."

"It is your responsibility..."

ADVISING, GIVING SOLUTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS: giving a person the answers or the solution to a problem without allowing the person to come to their own conclusions.

“What you need to do is...”

“If I were you...”

“Why don’t you...”

“Let me suggest...”

LECTURING, TEACHING, GIVING LOGICAL ARGUMENTS: using facts, information or logic to influence a person.

“Most young people your age don’t know what it means to work.”

“How do you expect to get ahead if you don’t finish school and go on to college?”

“The facts are...”

“Yes, but...”

JUDGING, CRITICIZING, DISAGREEING, BLAMING: giving negative judgment or feedback.

“You were acting disrespectful and ungrateful.”

“That’s a very immature way of looking at things.”

“You are still too young...”

“You are bad...”

“Your hair is too long...”

PRAISING, AGREEING: giving positive judgment and feedback.

“I don’t care if you did get a ‘D’ in math, I still think you will make a great accountant.”

“I think you are a good looking young man. I don’t know why having braces bothers you.”

“You are a good boy...”

“That’s a nice thing...”

Name Calling, Ridiculing, Shaming: embarrassing a person, putting a person down.

“You are acting like a jerk.”

“Look, meat head, pay attention to what I’m showing you.”

“You’re a spoiled brat...”

“Cry baby...”

“You’re just stupid...”

INTERPRETING, ANALYZING, DIAGNOSING: telling a person that you have him/her figured out, that you know what is wrong.

“I know what your problem is. You have a crush on Jenny and she won’t give you the time of day.”

“You are acting that way because you got into an argument with your teacher.”

“What you need is...”

“Your problem is...”

REASSURING, SYMPATHIZING, CONSOLING, SUPPORTING: trying to make a person feel better by denying his/her feelings or convincing the person that the situation isn't as bad as he/she thought.

"Things will look different in the morning."

"Everybody goes through this sometime. It's not so bad."

"There, there...it will be all right."

"That's too bad..."

PROBING, QUESTIONING, INTERROGATING: searching for causes, motives, reasons to help you find a solution to another person's problem.

"What time did you get up this morning? Did you eat breakfast? Did you leave in enough time to get to school on time?"

"What's going on in your classes? Are you worried about your grades?"

"Are you thinking about dropping out of school?"

"Why did you...?"

"Where did you...?"

WITHDRAWING, DISTRACTING, HUMORING, DIVERTING: trying to get a person to forget about whatever is bothering them.

"We don't talk about that..."

"Don't worry about that now..."

Being a Good Listener

Listening is perhaps the most important skill a person can have. Most of us however, are far better talkers than listeners. Here are some tips on Active Listening (also referred to as reflective listening):

ATTENDING

Attending means hearing and understanding. People know you are listening by your "body talk." Body talk includes facial expression, posture, eye contact, and gestures. Leaning forward, nodding your head and ignoring distractions are ways to show you are attending.

SUMMARIZING

Summarizing, or paraphrasing, is when you state the facts and reflect the feelings. This helps to get to the real issue, helps young people see themselves more clearly, and shows that you want to understand him/her. It also serves as a model of effective communication and keeps the conversation going which increases the chances of getting at the real problems. An example of summarizing/paraphrasing might be:

- "Your iPod broke when you and Sam collided on the playground. You are mad."

Children have never been good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.

James Baldwin

- “You were sad when you learned that your best friend was moving to a city far away.”

CLARIFYING

Clarifying means getting additional information to make sure you understand. To clarify, you ask questions such as:

- “Can you tell me more about ___?”
- “What happened next?”
- “Is there anything you want to add?”
- “How would you like this to turn out?”
- “How would you feel if you were the other person?”



What to Do with My Student

“What do I do with my student?” is a question often asked by new mentors. The answer is really the same when answering, “What can I do with my new friend?” Below are a few guidelines that we share with our new mentors.

- Take your cues from the student. Often what they need varies from one week to the other. Sometimes they are ready to work on a task; other times they need an understanding ear.
- Getting started is often awkward...some mentors bring in favorite photos or hobby items to “break the ice”. Some mentors bring in news articles or magazines...or other interesting items to expand the students’ horizons.
- All guidance counselors/schools have many books, activities, games, etc. that are appropriate for students of different ages and abilities. Ask the counselor at your school to show you where these are kept.
- Avoid too much computer time. Kids don’t need to be “plugged in” any more than they already are.
- Often other mentors are your best help. Ask other mentors what works for them or how a particular situation was handled. Input from the guidance counselors is always helpful. Also, often time’s tips are shared in the monthly

newsletter or during informational sessions conducted by the Mentor Program staff.

Building Developmental Assets

Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets are concrete, common sense, positive experiences and qualities essential to raising successful young people (refer to Table 1). These assets have the power during critical adolescent years to influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults. Research has shown that the greater the numbers of Developmental Assets experienced by young people, the more positive and successful their development.

The reality is that the average young person surveyed in the United States experiences only 18 of the 40 assets. Overall, 62% of young people surveyed have fewer than 20 of the 40 assets. In short, the majority of young people in this country--from all walks of life--are lacking in sufficient Developmental Assets needed for healthy development.

The good news is that everyone can build assets. It's not just the responsibility of families, schools, social service agencies, or other institutions—though they all have important roles. Whether you are a grandparent, a neighbor, a bus driver, or a mentor you can start building assets today with the young people who live in your community. What's needed is an understanding of what actions and behaviors breed success, willingness and ideas to apply that knowledge, and most importantly, a desire to see young people grow up happy, healthy, and confident. For more information on how you can build assets, visit www.search-institute.org

Table 1. Developmental Assets

	Asset Categories	Description
External Assets	Support	Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families, neighbors, and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments.
	Empowerment	Young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure.
	Boundaries and Expectations	Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are "in bounds" or "out of bounds."
	Constructive Use of Time	Young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programs
Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning	Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning.
	Positive Values	Young people need to develop strong values that guide their choices.
	Social Competencies	Young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life
	Positive Identity	Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise.

Saying Goodbye...

It's important for your mentee to understand why you are not able to continue your mentoring relationship. Whether your relationship was brief or was built over many years, your mentee needs to understand that sometimes - despite everyone's best efforts - a mentoring relationship comes to an early conclusion.

Common reasons for this to occur include:

- Mentor or mentee moves out of the area
- Other major life changes (health concerns, major career shifts) make continuing impossible
- One of the pair decides to end the relationship

If the relationship ends because of an unavoidable circumstance, consider taking the time for closure and celebrate what you have accomplished. It is helpful to acknowledge that there is probably some disappointment on both your parts; make sure your mentee knows that this is not a reflection on him/her or how much you care.

If one or both of you truly feels it would be best to end the relationship, then your goal should be to make the ending positive and affirming for you both. If possible, ask your mentee for a last meeting to talk about the ending and say good-bye. If it is not possible to meet with your mentee face to face, write a letter. Letters can be sent to your student's school to the attention of the guidance counselor or principal. When ending your relationship, remember to:

- Emphasize what has gone well - ways you've seen your mentee grow, and ways you've benefited
- Acknowledge that sometimes relationships are challenging, and you hope you've both gained some skills in working on interpersonal issues
- Reaffirm your faith in the young person's abilities and potential
- Encourage him or her to keep reaching out to others who can make a positive difference in his or her life - and to give back of himself/herself to others.

After the Relationship Ends

After your relationship ends, remember to emphasize the positive in your own thoughts as well. You've taken the time and the risk to make a difference in a young person's life, and that is a great thing, something to be proud of. Even if you can't see the impact you have made (and this is unlikely), remember - sometimes the effect we have doesn't manifest itself for years. Some of the adults who changed your life probably never knew they did.

Mentor Training and Support

Mentors experience many highs and lows throughout the course of their mentoring relationship. The Mentor Program offers a variety of training and support opportunities for you during your service as a mentor:

- ❑ New mentor training is offered at mentor orientation. These sessions are offered to provide an overview of the Mentor Program and the program guidelines. Mentors receive a mentor handbook at the time of orientation.
- ❑ Mentor Information Sessions are offered at varying times throughout the school year. These sessions are offered to all mentors and are especially helpful for those who have questions, concerns or a need for new ideas. Topics of information sessions are geared toward current issues or topics faced by students in our school district. Past information sessions included such topics as bullying, poverty and building self-esteem in youth.
- ❑ Mentor Chats are held sporadically throughout the school year at central locations (Mentor Office, churches, etc.) to provide mentors time to talk with other mentors in the program and explore positive and negative issues of mentoring.
- ❑ Mentor Newsletter is provided to all mentors every other month throughout the school year. The newsletter provides various types of information from ways to build assets in your student to web sites where mentor information can be obtained. Newsletters can be obtained by email or by paper copy.
- ❑ Fall registration, Holiday party and end of year celebrations offer an opportunity for mentors to get to know their student's teacher & guidance counselor, connect with other mentors and celebrate the spirit of mentoring. Mentors are made aware of these events by invitation & the newsletter.
- ❑ Mentor Office staff is available throughout the school year to help at any time with questions or concerns. We encourage you to utilize our resources and contact us any time.

Office Phone: 726-2400 ext. 2474

Email: camp@chipfalls.k12.wi.us

- ❑ Mentor Program Board of Directors is a 12-member board comprised of various community and school volunteers. The Board of Directors meets every other month. Mentors are welcome to attend the meetings and should call the mentor office for meeting dates and times.

- Guidance counselors, principals and teachers serve as additional support to mentors. Issues related to your student can be addressed through school personnel. Information shared is based on rules of confidentiality that school personnel are required to follow.

Program Logos

Everyone is a Star!

The star logo was developed for the Chippewa Area Mentor Program. It represents our belief that both the mentor and the student are STARS". The larger figure gives support to the smaller/younger figure as they both move forward in their lives. The logo was updated in 2005 to support both technology advancements and the collaborative efforts with LYNCS.



Chippewa Area
Mentor Program



Chippewa Area
Mentor Program



“Children are like wet cement. Whatever falls on them makes an impression.”

~Haim Ginott

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Chippewa Area Mentor Program: <http://cfsd.chipfalls.k12.wi.us/cvMentors.cfm>

National Mentoring website: www.mentoring.org

Minnesota Mentoring Partnership: <http://www.mentoringworks.org/>