

## Mentor Guidelines and Code of Conduct

### WELCOME TO A NEW ADVENTURE!

Utah Youth Mentor Project is excited that you would like to be a mentor. We want to make sure that you understand and are comfortable with the expectations for mentoring. *Remember, mentoring is about being a good friend.* Please read the following guidelines carefully.

### **MENTORS ARE: Positive role models, friends, sympathizers, advisors, self-esteem builders, sounding boards, and advocates.**

- In the first several months of mentoring, your Friend may appear to be hesitant, unresponsive, and/or unappreciative. Your Friend's attitude is likely to gradually become more positive as he/she realizes that you sincerely care. *Be patient and remember that consistency is key.*
- Friendship requires trust. Your Friend will be interested in getting to know how "real" you are – getting to know each other may take some time. Stay in contact by phone, email, social networking, or text messages. Plan activities that will give you a chance to talk to each other.
- Try to have fun together and build a genuine friendship. Mentors who are friends are more influential than mentors who focus on a problem solving agenda.
- You are not required to be a teacher, parent, disciplinarian, therapist, Santa Claus or babysitter. Our experience has demonstrated that it is counterproductive to assume roles other than a dependable, consistent friend. Treat your mentee like a friend by keeping an open mind, responding without judgment, and honoring their values.
- Mentoring should empower youth to make positive decisions. Identify his/her interests and take them seriously. Be alert for opportunities and teaching moments. Explore positive and negative consequences by talking together. Remember to ask if your Friend wants your help with their concerns – often he/she may just need someone to talk to, instead of someone to rescue them.
- Do not get discouraged if your Friend makes serious mistakes or does not seem to be "improving". Youth must make their own choices. Mentors have a great deal of impact; it is not always immediately evident. *Look for signs of success, such as: youth initiates contact, shows appreciation, is willing to talk about sensitive issues, or requests your advice/assistance.*
- As a friend, you can share and advise, but know your limitations. Serious and life threatening issues like suicide, substance abuse, mental or physical abuse, domestic violence, and/or criminal activity are best handled by professionals. *If these issues arise contact Marianne immediately.*
- Discussions between you and your Friend are considered confidential. If you feel that you need to inform someone else about a concern/conversation (like a TAL case worker, foster parent, etc) please ask your Friend if you may share the information. Be careful with sensitive, personal issues. A youth's personal or family life may be difficult to discuss, particularly early in your relationship as you establish trust. Discuss personal boundaries with your Friend.
- If you have any concerns please contact your group coordinator. You are part of a community of support; there are people and resources available to help you succeed as a mentor.

Contact Marianne Brough for more information or assistance with concerns  
(801)755-3735 [marianne@youthmentorproject.org](mailto:marianne@youthmentorproject.org)