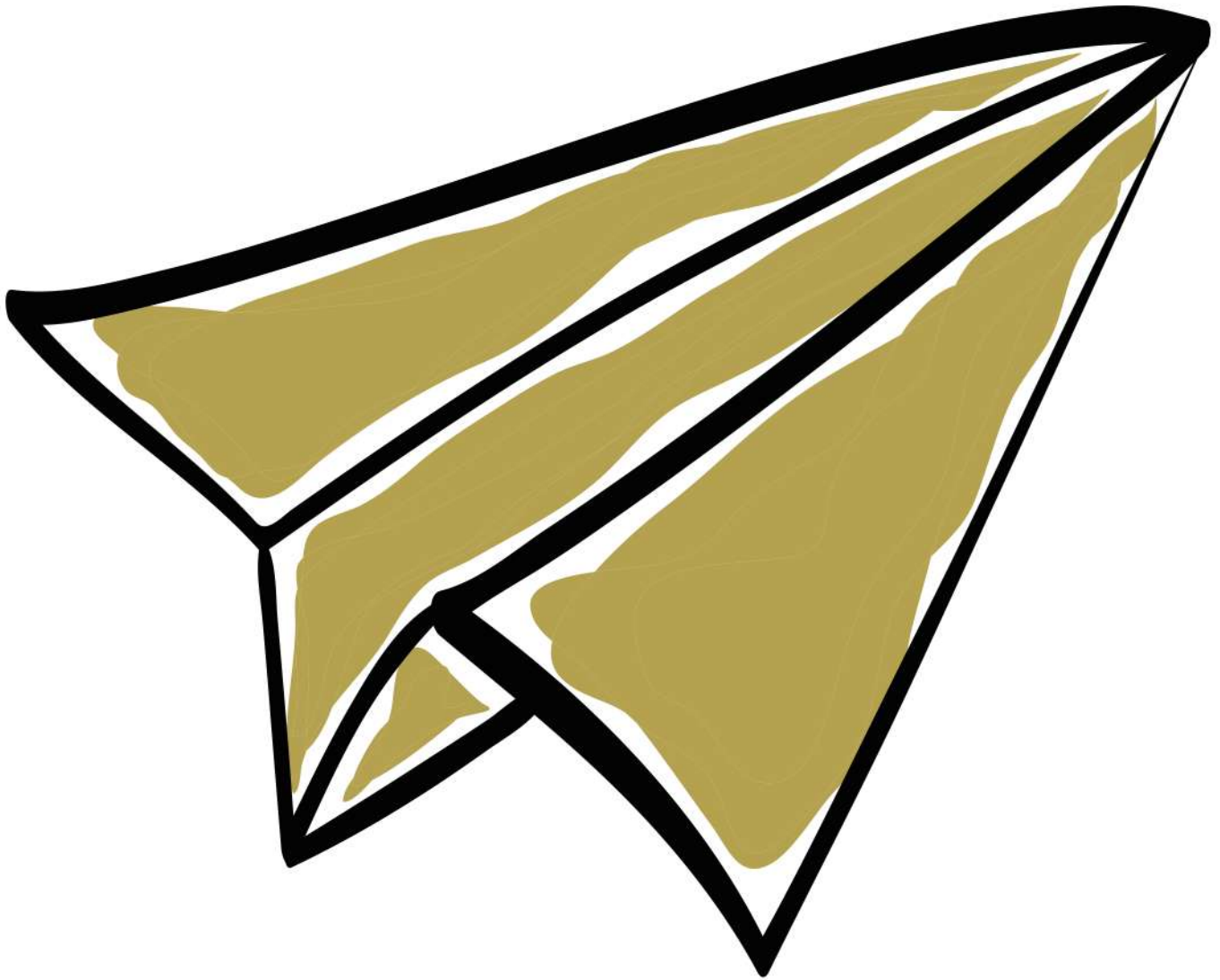


NEW JERSEY ANGELS



# **DARE TO DREAM™ MANUAL**

**EMPOWERING YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE TO SUCCEED**



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# MENTORING YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

Recent data indicates that there are almost half a million youth in our nation's foster care system. Every year, over 20,000 youth in the foster care system age out, losing essential support services and entering adulthood, whether they have the skills to do so effectively or not. While many youth in foster care are reunited with relatives after a short period of time, more than 28% of youth in foster care remain in the system two years or longer.

It is critical for a youth to have the stability of safe and loving relationships for the success of a youth's emotional, intellectual, and social development. In addition to the trauma caused by the disruption to their family and home environment, youth in foster care often have a wide variety of other serious emotional and physical needs. Many are victims of abuse and neglect. They may have trouble forming healthy relationships with adults and peers. Many suffer from chronic health problems. Older foster youth may exhibit substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, or involvement in risky behaviors. Academics and educational progress often suffer, which puts them behind their peers developmentally. However, the formation of a healthy relationship serves as a key component in healing relational trauma. A consistent trust-based mentor relationship is proven to help counteract these negative outcomes.

## MENTORING PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO:

- Encourage overall academic performance
  - Increase college participation
  - Build self-worth
- Form trust-based relationships
- Create independent living skills
- Positively impact mental health

## ATTRIBUTES OF A GOOD MENTOR:

- Consistent
- A good listener
- Patient
- Caring
- A positive role model
- Focuses on strengths
- Non-judgmental
- Empathetic
- Understanding
- Present
- Has time to commit

# HOW TO BECOME A DARE TO DREAM MENTOR

The purpose of this manual is to provide mentors with the tools necessary to build relationships and teach life skills. Our hope is to create positive outcomes for youth in the foster care system. We know the value of one caring person (YOU) who keeps showing up will help these youth build trust and develop the skills needed to thrive.



Attend an informational meeting or schedule a phone call with a Dare to Dream case manager.



Read the Dare to Dream Manual and pass an initial background check and send a copy of drivers license and insurance to Dare to Dream case manager.



Get matched with a youth in foster care.



Schedule and attend a Dare to Dream training.



Attend an initial introduction between the case manager, youth, foster parent, and you.



Meet with the youth at least twice a month.



Fill out a tracking form by the 10th of every month.

# 10 MILESTONES

1. Building Rapport
2. Personal/Professional Goals
3. Support Systems/Healthy Relationships
4. Physical Fitness/ Meal Prep
5. Driver License
6. Sex Education/Internet Safety
7. Interview/Resume Skills
8. Money Management/Budget Planning
9. College, Trade School, Military
10. Living Arrangements

## HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

This manual aspires to equip you to make a real impact on youth in foster care. You will need to be ready to listen and hear their stories, heartaches, and dreams. You will learn what it means to give feedback that provides encouragement and guidance. You will be able to help them set goals so they can start building the foundation to be able to attain their dreams! You can make these youth feel safe, capable, and loved. You get the opportunity to help change and mold their self-perceptions and view of the world.

## END GOAL OF PROGRAM

**Short term goals:** Each youth will have completed appropriate milestones, such as obtaining a driver's license, career plans, bank account, knowledge about renting an apartment/living alone.

**Long term goals:** That each youth will have a sense of normalcy, placement stability, education progress, independent living skills and relational permanency.

**Normalcy:** Providing a child with typical childhood experiences helps promote positive mental health, emotional well-being, and identity formation. We train you to look for opportunities to help provide some of these typical experiences (i.e. sports, camps, extracurriculars, etc.)

**Mentoring is all about being a consistent friend, positive role model, and advocate. It's knowing how to assess who you need to be in different situations.**

# MILESTONE 1



## BUILDING RAPPORT

We know that meeting someone for the first time can be intimidating or awkward. These youth probably feel the same way, so take a deep breath and relax. You'll both do great!

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Get to know each other, build trust, and dream together. This is a never-ending process during your time together.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What is an interesting fact about you?
- What are some of the things that bring you the most joy/make you happy?
- What is your favorite movie/show and why?
- Do you like animals? What kinds?
- Do you have a pet and what your pet like?
- What is your favorite thing about school?
- If you had a whole day to do anything you wanted what would you do?
- After getting to know you what strengths will I discover you have?

### APPLICATION

- What is an interesting fact about you?
- What are some of the things that bring you the most joy/make you happy?
- What is your favorite movie/show and why?
- Do you like animals? What kinds?
- Do you have a pet and what is your pet like?
- What is your favorite thing about school?
- If you had a whole day to do anything you wanted what would you do?

### EXAMPLE: MENTOR AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, promise to be consistent with our meetings. If I, the mentor, have to cancel, I will reschedule. I promise to be a confidant for the mentee and respect everything that is shared. Our meetings will be a no-judgment zone.

# MILESTONE 2



## PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL GOALS

As a mentor, you need to regularly be checking in on their goals to ensure they are being met, need revision, or need to create new ones!

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Identify and establish personal and professional goals.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What do you want to achieve?
- How are you going to achieve it?
- How can you be helped along the way?

### APPLICATION

- Have specific and realistic goals.
- Help set up a plan for the youth with milestones achieved in a realistic time frame.
  - Ex. In six months time, I'll have studied and successfully passed the SAT/ACT.
  - Ex. Before the end of the school year, I will have joined one extracurricular activity.
  - Ex. In three months time, I will have trained and successfully run my first 5k.
- Establish specific and realistic goals (SMART). Ensure goals are specific, measurable, agreed upon by both mentor/mentee, realistic, and goals can be met within established timeline (<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm>).



# MILESTONE 3



## SUPPORT SYSTEMS/HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Many of these youth have experienced negative and harmful relationships. It's a mentor's role to ensure that they know the signs of a healthy and unhealthy relationship.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Being able to identify a supportive person. Being able to know how to build a healthy relationship.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Who is your support system?
- Who can you identify as a healthy, supportive person in your life? Be sure to get their contact information.
- In what areas are there specific people you can rely on?
- If youth mentions biological family, then ask "Do you want a relationship with your biological family once you age out?" How do you think it will be?
- What makes a healthy and unhealthy relationship?

### IF THEY SAY THEY HAVE NO SUPPORT, DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

- How do you identify and build healthy relationships? Three things to look for are:
  - Is the person safe?
  - Are they inspirational?
  - Are they supportive?
- Visit <http://www.loveisrespect.org/healthy-relationships/> for more information on healthy relationships.

### APPLICATION

Talk about how to identify and draw your ideal friend. What character qualities do they have? How do they show you love and support? Are you that friend to others?

# MILESTONE 4



## PHYSICAL HEALTH/MEAL PREP

Encourage youth to develop healthy habits, such as doing activities outside and making healthy meal choices. Being active together or creating a meal together strengthens the relationship between mentor and mentee. You work together as a team, building on the foundation you started on Milestone 1.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Identify ways to eat healthy and be active.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What is your favorite sport/activity and why?
- Do you have a favorite sports team you follow?
- Do you like to cook?
- What about it do you like?
- What's your favorite meal to eat?

### APPLICATION - ACTIVE TOGETHER

- Determine the physical activities they are interested in (swimming, hiking, etc.).
- Create realistic fitness schedule/goals for a week/month.
- Talk to the Case Manager about donations or discounts for the YMCA, gyms, and sporting events such as Trenton Thunder or Somerset Patriots.
- Try to participate together on activity of choice. Play basketball at the gym, go on a hike, take them bowling, to laser tag, attend a yoga class, etc.
- Talk about the benefits of exercise and staying physically active.

### APPLICATION - MEAL PREP

- Bring over some cookbooks or online recipes for the mentee to choose a meal from and go shopping for ingredients.
- Cook and eat together.
- Go to a cooking class.

# MILESTONE 5



## DRIVER LICENSE/TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is important for foster youth because it allows them to have the ability to get to work, school and other activities (grocery store, extracurricular activities, etc.) This is the #1 hurdle of youth who are aging out of care. It is more difficult to care for themselves and be independent simply because they do not have a license.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

To obtain a license.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How can you be helped?
- What can I do to support you with this?

### APPLICATION

- Pick up the application for a driver's license.
- Get necessary paperwork together.
- Practice driving, take driver's education class.
- Start studying for the written test. <https://www.state.nj.us/mvc/pdf/license/drivermanual.pdf>
- Talk about responsibility that comes with driving.
- Check with your case manager to inquire about applying for funds to cover driver's teaching course.

### HURDLES THAT COME WITH OBTAINING A DRIVER LICENSE

- Paying for a car.
- A car to complete driving hours in.
- Money to pay for insurance and gas.
- Paying for driver's education course.
- Who will help you study for the written test and driver's test?



## **CHECKLIST FOR THE DMV IF YOU ARE OVER 18 YEARS OLD:**

- 6 points of ID. Read more about the 6 Points of ID.
- Proof of address
- The current fee to be paid by credit/debit card, cash, check, or money order (payable to NJMVC).
- Completed Application for Driver Examination Permit.
- Contact the New Jersey Angels case manager if additional questions arise

Visit <https://www.state.nj.us/mvc/license/initiallicense.htm> for more details.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

### **GOAL FOR YOUTH**

Able to use public transportation.

### **APPLICATION**

- Identify the types of public transportation available.
- Describe the costs of different forms of public transportation.
- Read transportation schedules and maps.
- Bring maps and teach them how to read them.
- Demonstrate using at least one form of public transportation if possible.

# MILESTONE 6



## SEX EDUCATION/INTERNET SAFETY

We know this topic (sex education) can be uncomfortable or put you, as the mentor, in a place of discomfort. After signing a topic agreement with the foster parents and with their permission, if you feel like you can tackle this topic, move forward. At a minimum, the mentor needs to ask the mentee if someone has talked with them about sex education. If the youth is in a home, be sure to consult their guardians.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

To have a basic understanding of sex education and safety on the internet.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What do you know about sex?
- What does safe sex mean to you? Talk about condoms and birth control.
- When do you think is the appropriate age to have sex?
- What do you value most in a partner?
- When is the best time to have a child?

### APPLICATION - INTERNET SAFETY

Disclaimer: only ask these questions if the youth has a social media presence already. Make sure you have written permission from the youth's caregivers (text/email) to be "friends" on social media. Always let the youth initiate social media connection and if you choose to accept make sure that your profile is a reflection of you as a role model.

- Describe the purpose of popular social networking platforms (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter).
- Explain the function of a personal profile.
- Help to make personal profile safer with permission.
- Explain three potential consequences of posting inappropriate photos/language on your profile.
- Talk about bullying/ cyber-bullying and in-person bullying.
- Talk about friending people they know and unfriending people they do not know.

# MILESTONE 7



## INTERVIEW/RESUME SKILLS

Learning how to write a resume and have great interview skills can help these youth achieve their goals. This milestone lays the foundation for their career.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Have the ability to develop a resume and cover letter as well as practice interview skills.

### RESUME

- Show them your resume.
- Research companies or organizations youth is interested in.
- Identify a list of potential jobs.
- Bring a few sample resume formats (e.g., functional, chronological).
- Have them take a strength finder test; incorporate the resulting words into resume.
- <http://richardstep.com/richardstep-strengths-weaknesses-aptitude-test/>
- Develop a resume using one of these formats together.
- Explain what a cover letter is and what it should contain.
- Develop a cover letter to accompany a resume or application together.

### INTERVIEW SKILLS

- Describe the role of the interview in the job search process.
- Research the company in preparation for the interview.
- Model appropriate grooming, attire, and behavior for a job interview. Help them shop for a new outfit.
- Identify possible interview questions and develop responses. Make flash cards!
- Describe the verbal and non-verbal communication skills used in an interview.
- Identify at least three personal strengths related to the employment opportunity.
- Practice a job interview with mentor.
- Follow up. Did it go well? What was the feedback?

# MILESTONE 8



## MONEY MANAGEMENT/BUDGET PLANNING

Learning how to manage money will help the youth in their financial success long term.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Learn about money, savings, budgets, and opening up a bank account.

### APPLICATION

- Talk about money. What does it mean to them? Do they like money? Is it too important to them?
- Talk to them about what money means to you.
- Are they making any money? Do they have a part-time job, allowance, any form of income?
- Talk about the dangers of credit cards.
- Savings. How much should they save — are they saving in a jar or investing it in a bank?
- Play Monopoly Deal
- Help them create a budget — <http://www.moneyandstuff.info/pdfs/samplebudgetforteens.pdf>
- Take them to meet with a financial advisor to educate themselves on wise financial decisions. If possible, guide them to set up their own bank account.

### MONEY SAVVY TIPS

- Start an emergency fund by saving between \$500 and \$1000.
- Save 10-15% of income until you reach 3-6 months of expenses.
- Encourage them IF they get a credit card to only use it on gas and groceries. When the bill comes, pay it off in FULL.
- Talk to them about a Roth IRA.
- Research their dream job salary (for example, a teacher makes \$42,000/year).
- Make a budget based off their dream job salary.

# MILESTONE 9



## COLLEGE, TRADE SCHOOL, MILITARY

Continuing education or a set plan after graduation can help provide stability and direction.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Pick at least 3 colleges or trade schools they want to attend, or meet with a military recruiter/ROTC rep.

### COLLEGE / TRADE SCHOOL

- Visit FAFSA.org to fill out the necessary paperwork.
- See if the school requires an SAT or an ACT; study and take one of those tests.
- Have your high school transcript or GED sent directly to colleges you are applying to.
- Research the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program through [www.nj.gov](http://www.nj.gov)
- Apply to the colleges directly and fill out their application.
- See if an entrance exam is necessary to check for placement of english, language and math skills.
- Apply for work study if applicable.
- Apply for housing, find the best place suitable for the youth.
- Apply for meal plans, find the best one suitable for the youth.
- Apply for scholarships and grants (see scholarship section for those that apply to foster youth).
- Go on a college tour

### MILITARY

See if any medical conditions will prevent you from serving in the military.

<https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/disqualifiers-medical-conditions.html>

### TOP 10 THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU JOIN THE MILITARY

- Join for you and no one else.
- Fitness Foundation. Research to see what the physical expectations are to get in.
- Take Initiative. Research jobs in the military you'd like or places you could potentially move to.
- Dealing with the Recruiter. Make an appointment and bring all necessary paperwork with you.
- Medical Records. Be truthful about your medical history.
- ASVAB – Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. Buy study guides and take practice tests.
- Stay out of trouble. Your criminal record will be accessed. Be truthful when asked.
- Expect to gain discipline.
- Expect to be away from friends and family for long periods of time.
- Expect to gain an education and lifelong skills.



# MILESTONE 10



## LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

It is essential youth have a plan for housing upon aging out of care.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Can develop a plan to move into living independently or semi-permanent post aging out.

### APPLICATION

- Identify and calculate all start-up costs (e.g., application fee, security deposit, utility deposits, installation fees, first month's rent, furnishings/household items).
- Create a list of necessary items (e.g., furniture, kitchen equipment, towels and linens).
- Develop a realistic monthly budget for maintaining the living arrangement.
- Identify two personal resources or community agencies to help with the plan.
- Create a list of support or emergency services in your home community (e.g., medical, dental support).

### TIPS

- Try to have 2-3 months rent saved beforehand.
- Have 2 pay stubs for proof of employment.
- Aim to build good credit.
- Understand that some apartment complexes require 2-3x the total monthly amount you make in order to make sure you can afford the rent. (<https://www.bustle.com/articles/161536-13-tips-for-living-alone-for-the-first-time-making-the-most-of-your-independence>)

# EXTRA MILESTONE



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We want to cultivate a heart of giving back in our Dare to Dream youth. Engage youth in taking an interest in their community.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Find ways for the youth to volunteer and serve in their own community.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do they volunteer already?
- Ask your youth how they might want to give back to their community.
- What does it mean to them to help out others in need?
- Brainstorm a list of places where your youth might enjoy volunteering.

### APPLICATION

- Try a whole day of random acts of kindness.
- Find a community tree planting group.
- Hand out meals to families in need (Meals On Wheels).
- Volunteer at an animal shelter. Pay it forward by purchasing a meal or someone's drink.
- Cook for their family together.
- Go to a local park and pick up trash/recycle.
- Have them inquire about joining NHS or NJHS.

Disclaimer: Talk with the youth's caregiver first to make sure whichever activity is chosen will not be a trigger.

# EXTRA MILESTONE



## MINDFULNESS/SELF-LEADERSHIP

Encourage the youth to develop healthy mindfulness practices. Help the youth identify what mindfulness practices they enjoy.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Identify techniques to practice mindfulness. Enhance existing resiliency. Recognize and build their strengths.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Have you ever used a journal?
- What helps you relax when you become stressed?
- What is your sleep routine like?
- When do you feel most anxious?

### APPLICATION

- Try mindfulness practices like journaling, crafts, painting, meditation, and yoga.
- Try the 7-11 breathing regulation tool. Breathe in for a count of 7 and out for 11; repeat.
- If your youth expresses having a hard time focusing in school or test anxiety, try the re-focus technique. Focus on sounds far away than sounds that are closer.
- Try mindfulness health apps like Headspace or Calm for meditation, breathing, and sleep.
- Try paying attention to what keeps you in the present. Music, board games, coloring books, exercise, doing the dishes, etc.
- Make a coping skills box with ideas your youth comes up with to use when stressed.
- Have a journal you share with youth where they can write hard things they have trouble talking about and respond to them in the journal.

# EXTRA MILESTONE



## SELF-ESTEEM

To build self-esteem, and positive self regard.

### GOAL FOR YOUTH

Identify techniques to practice mindfulness. Enhance existing resiliency. Recognize and build their strengths.

### APPLICATION

- Talk about youth's strengths and what they see in themselves (take Strengths Finder test: <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/254033/strengthsfinder.aspx>).
- Explain how self-esteem is related to self-awareness and self-image.
- Describe how self-esteem is affected by the willingness to try new things.

### HELP YOUTH DEVELOP A POSITIVE SELF REGARD AND A HEALTHY WORLDVIEW BY EMPOWERING THEM TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- Who am I?
- What is likable & lovable about me?
- What am I capable of?
- How can I make sense out of what's happened to me?
- Who will I be in the future?

### SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

#### 1. What are you made for?

- Draw three circles.
- First circle: write what you are passionate about.
- Second circle: write about natural talents/gifts.
- Third circle: write dreams, goals and positive qualities people see in you.
- Where do they intersect: what jobs, hobbies, activities do you want to accomplish?

#### 2. Dream Board

- Bring magazines — lots of them! Scissors, markers, tape or push pens.
- Buy or make a cork board with a frame.
- Identify and write personal, professional, academic, health, spiritual, family, financial, activity/ hobby, and social dreams.
- Find and cut out pictures together that remind you of goals.

# ACTIVITY IDEAS



- Visit a Native Plant Sale or Plant Nursery
  - Train for and attend a 5K together
- Go to the movies/movies in the park during the summer
  - Go to the park and have a picnic
    - Go to an arcade
    - Go bowling
  - Visit Grounds for Sculpture, Hamilton Township
    - Go mini-golfing
- Volunteer together at an animal shelter or food bank
  - Tutor the youth or help with homework
- Learn to do something creative, such as knitting, quilting, making pottery, taking photographs or painting
  - Do a puzzle together
- Take a trip to the library (make it extra fun by picking out a book for each other and discuss them at your next meet up)
  - Go hiking
  - Rent kayaks
  - Go to a play or museum
  - Go to a sporting event
  - Play a board game together
- Go to their school and have lunch with the youth
  - Take the youth on a tour of your workplace
    - Take a yoga class
- Go shopping for back to school supplies or a first day outfit
  - Go to Top Golf
  - Take them on a college tour
    - Go go-karting
    - Visit the Jersey Shore
- Create a vision board together to help the youth visualize their goals

# CONVERSATION STARTERS



We want you as a mentor to build a foundation with the youth. These are some ideas that can foster communication between the both of you. Think of these as tips for success.

## GOOD ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE TO YOUR MENTEE THAT THEY MAY NEVER HAVE HEARD BEFORE:

- **Do the best you can.** No one can judge your best but you.
- **Do more than you're asked.** When someone hires you to perform a task, always deliver more than is expected of you.
- **Take pleasure in your work.** There are few things in life quite as satisfying as doing a task very well.
  - **Be on time.** Make it a practice to always be on time for your commitments.
  - **Ask for what you want.** There is no harm in asking and there is no harm in receiving.
- **Be honest.** By being honest, you will generate trust, and trust will generate opportunity and respect.
- **Stand up for what is right.** Even if others disagree, don't compromise your core values or your integrity.
- **There will be consequences.** Doing the right thing is usually no more difficult or time-consuming than doing the wrong thing.
- **Don't put things off.** One of the keys to success in school and business is to do what needs to be done right away.

## TIPS WHEN ASKING YOUTH QUESTIONS:

- 'Know the difference.' An open-ended question requires an answer greater than a single word or two. A closed-ended question can be answered with a simple "Yes," "No," or other very simple answer.
- After you've asked your open-ended question(s) and have not gotten the response you were looking for, it is then effective and acceptable to ask more specific questions like, "What happened?"
- Another technique that can help you get specific information and a lengthier answer is to ask a closed-ended question followed up with "Why?" or "How?"

# NAVIGATING CONVERSATIONS



When navigating conversations with the youth it is important to listen first, be open minded, and non-reactive. Listen to the message being spoken and interpret the meaning then provide feedback and paraphrase what your mentee needs. This takes time as trust is formed, but can help in establishing healthy and honest communication.

## EXAMPLE OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS:

- What does that mean to you?
- What do you think will happen next in the story?
  - How did you go about solving that problem?
    - How did you make that choice?
  - What information do you have about that?
  - What would you do differently next time?
    - Why do you feel that way?
- What have you considered as areas of growth for the year?
  - What do you feel contributed to your success today?
- Imagine it is the end of the school year. What would you want to say about the year?
  - How exactly did the fight between the two of you start?
    - How did you and your best friend meet?
      - Why do you seem upset today?
  - What are some of the things that bring you the most joy?
- What interests do you and your siblings share, and which interests do you not share?
  - Do you have a pet and what is your pet like?
    - Do you like animals and why?
  - When is your birthday and how do you like to celebrate?
- Do you like rain and what do you usually do during rain storms?
  - What is your favorite flavor of ice cream and why?
    - What is your favorite movie and why?

# WORKING WITH FOSTER FAMILIES

New Jersey Angels is committed to working collaboratively with supportive and caring adults who are part of a youth's network. This can include but is not limited to a foster parent, kinship parent, adoptive parent, guardian, biological parent, teacher, coach, CASA, NJDCF worker, RTC or group home staff, case worker, etc. This page outlines how mentors can interact with these persons in the best interest of support for youth in care. Youth who are 18 and older and have aged out of care will have more natural networks and most likely be independent of authority.

Involving the caretaker in the mentor relationship is one of the best things a mentor can do to ensure the success of the program for the youth. Programs whose parents, guardians, and other caregivers work in partnership with mentors are more likely to see positive changes in youth and improved program outcomes. There are some aspects of involving caregivers that can be challenging from respecting differing viewpoints to navigating schedules and personalities.

Our caretakers and youth are busy and our programs compete for their time with school, family, and community obligations. Some caretakers have conflicting feelings about the role of the mentor, concerns about safety, and specific values or beliefs that can make their, and their child's, participation in a mentoring program difficult.

The goal is to build a cohesive connection with caretakers and together work toward the same goals for the youth which research shows improves youth participation. We have a few simple strategies to help navigate relationships with our caretakers:

We will make sure to communicate with caretakers why our Dare to Dream program exists and what it hopes to achieve for youth in care.

During initial meet ups (for youth in foster or kinship homes ages 11-17) your New Jersey Angels case manager will go over a hot topic agreement with the mentee and guardian to ensure that the mentor knows which subjects of discussion the guardian is comfortable with them discussing. This helps foster trust and respect. Topics include: politics and current events, health and puberty, sex education and birth control, sexual orientation and gender identity, religion and spirituality.

As a mentor, it is important to keep the caretaker in the loop with your plans, communicating clearly where you will be with the mentee and about drop off and pick up.

Mentors can help reinforce the goals, values, and decisions of caretakers by supplementing with further wisdom and guidance. Open communication with the caretaker about things that they are working on with the youth can help keep everyone on the same page. For example, if the youth is having trouble getting up and getting to school on time you can work out a reward if the caretaker helps them log 2 weeks of good school mornings! Keep in mind however, that participation in the program should not be used as a reward or punishment. Caretakers shouldn't keep the youth from seeing the mentor as a punishment or help modify behavior.

Lastly, mentors can get together with the foster or kinship family, sharing meals, community events, picnics or group trips to museums or sporting events can be a nice way of cultivating the mentor-parent relationship.



# NEW JERSEY ANGELS RECOMMENDED BOOK LIST



## TRAUMA-INFORMED BOOKS

- The Connected Child by Dr. Karyn Purvis
- The Whole-Brain Child by Daniel J. Siegel
- The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel van der Kolk, MD
  - The Deepest Well by Nadine Burke Harris, MD
- Childhood Disrupted by Donna Jackson Nakazawa

## TEEN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOOKS

- StrengthsFinder 2.0 by Tom Rath
- 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Sean Covey
- How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie

## MENTOR AND LEADERSHIP BOOKS

- Grit by Angela Duckworth
- Start with Why by Simon Sinek
- Dare to Lead by Brené Brown
- How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen So Teens Will Talk by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

## MINDFULNESS BOOKS

- A Still Quiet Place for Teens by Amy Saltzman
- Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain by Daniel J. Siegal
- Stuff That Sucks: A Teen's Guide to Accepting What You Can't Change and Committing to What You Can by Ben Sedley

# AGING OUT RESOURCES

## EDUCATION

[www.affordablecollegesonline.org](http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org)

[www.Collegescholarships.org](http://www.Collegescholarships.org)

[www.fastweb.org](http://www.fastweb.org)

[www.fc2success.org](http://www.fc2success.org)

[www.nj.gov](http://www.nj.gov)

[www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org)

[www.embrella.org](http://www.embrella.org)

[www.hesaa.org](http://www.hesaa.org)

Education and Training Voucher (ETV) | Financial assistance for college or vocational programs | For more information, search 'ETV' on DFPS website

## SCHOLARSHIPS

See under Education

### Private Grants and Scholarships

**Private Organizations Fund Foster Child Scholarships**- The National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) offers scholarships designed to help foster families pay for education beyond high school.

**Casey Family Programs** is dedicated to improving the child welfare system and providing educational opportunities for foster children. <http://www.fc2success.org/our-programs/information-for-students/>

**The Darko Rapotez Memorial College Scholarship Fund for Aged Out Foster Youth** is administered by Love our Children USA. The foster youth scholarship provides between \$5,000 and \$10,000 worth of tuition fee assistance to children who have “aged out” of the foster care system.

**Horatio Alger Scholarships** disburse between \$2,500 and \$10,000 annually, to each qualified recipient.

**All-Star College Scholarship Program** is offered through UMPS Care Charities, this scholarship is available to children adopted at or after the age of 13 and recipients will receive \$10,000 annually towards their education.

## HEALTHCARE

• Medicaid (FFCC) | For more information on healthcare benefits for youth in care or transitioning out, search 'foster health care' at [childwelfare.gov](http://childwelfare.gov)

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