

Activities Catalog for Mentors and Mentees

FUN

We gratefully acknowledge our contributing partners who provided their experience and wisdom to the creation of this activity guide.

We Thank You!

Produced in Partnership By:



Activities Catalog for Mentors and Mentees

FUN

Created by:



for the youth of NY

NOTES

This activity guide was prepared by the Department of Youth and Community Services and Mentor New York. It has been designed to cover a broad range of goals while working with youth, such as team building, trust and self-awareness.

We hope you find these activities useful, effective and most of all...

FUN!

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AIRPLANE CONTEST

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Look at different websites that show how to make different kinds of paper airplanes.

Here are a couple: <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Paper-Airplane> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12UJvz0f-8k>

Use different colors of paper or decorate your airplane with markers or crayons. You can even have a contest with other mentoring pairs to see which airplane can fly the furthest!

NOTES

TRUST WALK

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

This is an incredible trust activity! Every group member is either blind-folded, not blind-folded, but promises not to peek. The leaders of the group will organize the group in a straight line or in pairs, singles, etc. The leader will make sure the group begins by holding one another's hands in a circle to help make them feel comfortable. The leader will lead the blinded group members around, periodically leaving them by themselves (but always holding on to something like a tree, fence, sign, etc., and NEVER for any great length of time), or with new people to hold on to. **THE KEY TO THIS ACTIVITY IS NO TALKING.**

If there is an object that needs to be stepped over, the leader should raise the hand of the group member, the next person will do the same to warn the next person, and so on. If there is an object that is overhead, the leader will lower the arm of the blinded group member, indicating they should duck down, and the chain will continue in the same manner as for a raised object. The leader can organize this activity according to their group. Leader should make sure everyone feels comfortable participating.

If someone is nervous, they could become the leader's partner or just watch.

TAKE A TOUR!

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

The mentoring pair can devise a tour of their school and even think of what a tour guide might say about different parts of the tour. For example: "This is the place where Tommy made the winning basketball shot," or "This is the lab where the 10th graders dissected frogs."

See if you can design the tour to make it interesting for new students and their parents. Maybe the school will allow students to give this tour to the incoming class in the fall.

TOILET PAPER GAME

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: Several Rolls of Toilet Paper

Gather mentors and mentees into a circle. If the group is large, create two circles to play at the same time.

Pass around a roll of toilet paper. Ask participants to take as many sheets as they want, but they must take at LEAST one sheet.

Once everyone has their sheets, explain the rule of the game, which is to tell the group something about themselves that most people don't know—one thing for every sheet that they have pulled off the roll.

The facts can be serious and important or just plain silly. It is just another fun way to learn about each other.

MACHINE

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

The object of this game is to have a group create a machine using their own bodies (i.e. ceiling fan, hot air balloon, watch, etc).

Each person is required to be accountable for one noise and one motion of the machine. The group members should then put their motions and sounds together to create the machine.

Give each group about 5 minutes to work together and prepare and then have the groups present it.

CREATE A GREAT ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Have the mentor and mentees work together to help create an advertising campaign to recruit more mentors.

Start out by making a list of the reasons that someone would want to be a mentor (benefits – to the mentee and to the mentor). Encourage them to be creative and even funny. Make as long a list as you can.

Now take some of the reasons and think about which medium would be best to get people to hear that reason. Should it be a Facebook ad? Should it be on the radio or TV? Should it run in a newspaper or magazine? Should there be an email campaign?

Mentors and mentees can even think about designing what the ads/outreach should look like.

If they are happy with the marketing campaign, perhaps the mentoring program can use one or more of the ideas to recruit the next group of mentors!

SOLEMN AND SILENT

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

The instructor explains that this exercise will take self control. Members pair back-to-back. On the count of three, everyone must face their partner, look each other in the eyes and then try to remain solemn and serious.

No speaking!

The first to smile or laugh must sit down.

All who remain standing then take a new partner and the activity continues until only one person has not smiled or laughed. (The second round involves two teams competing to outlast each other.)

If you get a pair at the end who are both keeping a straight face, the rest of the group can act as hecklers to disrupt them.

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Ask for five volunteers to make up one team and another five to make up another.

The teams will line up facing one another. Ask them to examine the team opposite themselves to remember everything they are wearing and how they are wearing it! Now one team must turn around for 30 seconds while the other team gets a chance to change their appearance in 10 ways (they may trade shoes, untuck a shirt, hang the rope of their key chain out of the opposite pocket or undo their hair... whatever they want to try to make it difficult for the other team to realize how their appearance has changed).

Once the 30 seconds are up, the challenger team turns around and must determine what changed. Whichever team can list the most changes out of 10 wins.

If five more students want to play they can line up to play the winner.

WHY ARE YOU SO SPECIAL?

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

This activity will help mentees identify people they admire and respect. Ask participants to think of someone that they admire. This person can be anybody (family, friend, celebrity...).

Have each mentee and mentor write the answers to these questions:

- Who is this person and what do you admire about them?
- What makes this person so special to you?
- What qualities/characteristics of this person would you like to have?

Make a whole list.

Make a list of the different qualities that people admire.

Ask participants to think about how to develop some of these qualities in themselves

DOES IT HELP OR DOES IT HURT

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

This activity asks mentors and mentees to think about how their actions can make the mentoring relationship work better. Talk through each action below and discuss whether it helps or hurts when trying to get to know somebody. Then, place the action in the appropriate category.

Hurts

Helps

Ignore Them
Be Respectful
Agree On What To Do Together
Arrive Late
Tell Them About Yourself
Be Mean To Them
Smile
Ask For Their Opinion
Talk About Life Together
Learn Something New Together
Take Them For Granted
Do What You Say You Will Do
Let Them Know What You Appreciate About Them

SHOE FACTORY

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Have the group stand in a large circle shoulder to shoulder. Then have everyone remove their shoes and put them in the center. After the group has formed a pile with their shoes, the leader has everyone choose two different shoes other than their own.

They should put them on their feet (halfway if they are too small). The group then needs to successfully match the shoes and put them in proper pairs by standing next to the individual wearing the other shoe.

This will probably result in a tangled mess—and lots of giggles!

FIND SOMEONE WHO...

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Find someone in the room who fits the description. Fill in that person's name (and any other requested information). You may only use each person's name once (and don't forget that you can use your own name as well).

Example list:

- Wears contact lenses _____
- Took a shower this morning _____
- Went to college _____
- Ate breakfast this morning _____
 What did they eat? _____
- Born in the same month as you _____
- Is the oldest of 7 Siblings _____
- Likes to eat spinach _____
- Owens a bike _____
- Speaks more than one language _____
- Has one thing in common with you _____
 What is it _____
- Has had a mentor before _____
 Who was their mentor _____
- Born outside the US _____
 What country _____

STOP DISASTERS!

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

<http://stem-works.com/external/activity/128>

This is a disaster simulation game designed to educate youth on different types of natural disasters and different ways communities can prepare for it. The role of the player in this game is to plan and construct a safer environment for the chosen scenario. The players are asked to assess the disaster risk and try to limit the damage when natural hazards strike using critical thinking skills and mathematics.

SPENT

DESCRIPTION: High School

www.playspent.org

This is an online activity meant to engage and educate mentees about managing their finances and making difficult decisions. On the website playspent.org, visitors are challenged to find a job, pay all of their bills and be able to make their money last for 30 days. Early on in the game, it becomes increasingly apparent that the margin for failure is very high. One wrong decision can make all the difference. Mentors can use this activity to influence a mentee's relationship to money and improve their critical thinking skills.

TWO TRUTHS & A LIE

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Give the group some time to write down two things about themselves that are true and one thing that is a lie.

Each group member will then share these three facts about themselves and the rest of the group has to identify which "fact" is actually a "lie."

BEACH BALL

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: Beach Ball

Get a large inflatable beach ball and use a permanent marker to write all of the following questions on it. The resulting tool is an “icebreaker ball.” Use it in a large group and throw it around.

The person who catches it has to answer the question touching their left thumb.

Example questions:

- If you talk in your sleep, what do you imagine you say?
- What is the first thing you do when you get out of bed?
- What is your favorite movie scene?
- If you were to treat yourself to the “finer things” what would you treat yourself to?
- If your life was being turned into a feature length movie, who would play you? And why?
- What sport is the most fun to play and why?
- What is the best advice you have been given?

IT’S NOT WHAT YOU SAY, BUT HOW YOU SAY IT

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Have the group sit in a circle.

Explain that the purpose of this activity is to understand how tone of voice can change what is being said and can express a range of emotions. The object of the game is to find different ways of saying the same phrase and discovering different subtexts depending on intonation and facial expression.

Pass a phrase around and ask the next person to repeat it in their own way.

Examples: *I don’t believe it*
You’re cool
Please
Oh no

Once a couple of the phrases have been passed around and the group has practiced, set up a scenario for them to embody while projecting a phrase.

Ex: You are opening a box on Christmas. Pull out an imaginary sweater and say, “Oh, Thank you.”

DREAM CATCHER

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: Ball of String

All participants stand in a close circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. The person holding the ball of string will say, "One thing I have learned is..." and state something that they have learned in the last year from this group. The lead facilitator holds onto an end of the string and then throws the ball across the circle to a willing participant. The participant speaks, unwraps the string and, while holding onto a part of the string, throws the ball across the circle to another participant. This should create a string connecting the speaker to the person receiving the ball of string.

Once everyone has gotten the chance to speak, the lead facilitator should restate some of the key learnings and ask the group what the shape created by the ball of string looks like. The participants will say things like "a spider's web" or "dream catcher." The facilitator can make references to the strength of the web coming from its structure and its interconnectedness. They can also mention the connection that has formed in the group over the course of the work and the need for the support and strength that the group has generated to continue.

Participants can then begin to throw the ball back in reverse order as to unwrap the web. Each person who receives the ball says "I will..." and expresses their hopes and dreams for the future. Continue until the ball is back to the lead facilitator. The facilitator can wrap up the activity by restating the hopes and dreams of the group, and asking them to remember the support and strength that they have generated as a group from their time together.

STAND UP/SIT DOWN

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

This game is a great icebreaker so people can see things they might have in common with others—or differences! Have everyone seated in a circle. Ask them to stand up if they fit the question and then ask them to sit down.

Ex: Stand up if you like hip-hop. Okay thanks, please be seated. Then go to the next question. Some examples are:

- Stand if you like to cook.
- Stand if you like to work out.
- Stand if you want to go to college.
- Stand if you know how to swim.
- Stand if you like to watch scary movies.
- Stand if you like broccoli
- Stand if you like to sleep late.
- Stand if you like the Yankees.
- Stand if you know what you want your career to be.
- Stand if you have brothers or sisters.
- Stand if you are a twin.
- Stand if you know how to juggle.

Feel free to make up your own questions!

IT'S A MYSTERY!

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Instruct the mentor and mentee pair to write down a list of things they've always wanted to know.

Lists should include ideas from both the mentor and mentee. For example:

- Why is it dark at night?
- How does a car work?
- How does an airplane fly?

Then, the mentor and mentee can go to the library or use the internet to find out the answers!

BAKE AND EARN

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

NOTE: This activity is for sites with access to kitchen facilities.

Mentor and mentees select recipes for muffins, cupcakes and cookies. The mentor assigns cooking tasks to mentees and instructs them on techniques.

Mentees package their various baked goods to sell at a street fair or other neighborhood event. Mentees should research and set prices for the baked goods based on current market trends.

Mentees will sell the baked goods and decide how the profits might best be used.

MISSION STATEMENT

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: Paper and Pens

Everyone completes the sentence "My vision of a team that works well is...". The team then reads all their answers and collectively creates a team mission statement.

Desired result: Creating a mission statement will create a sense of community and purpose.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? IMPROV

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

This activity is set up in a tournament format.

Two participants are selected to square off. First participant begins to emulate an action and role plays along (ex: acts as if they are flying a kite). The opposing participant asks, "What are you doing?" and the participant in character must respond, without pause, by saying something that is totally inconsistent with the action being portrayed (ex: "I'm walking a dog" *slipping up by saying "flying a kite" would result in elimination).

The opponent then takes on the role of the mistaken statement, thus in the case illustrated above, acts as if though they are walking a dog. They are then asked, "What are you doing?" and without pause must say anything BUT "walking a dog" (ex: brushing my teeth).

The turn then gets put back on the original participant and the activity is prolonged until somebody either slips and tells the truth about what they are doing or fails to think of another action to play on.

FREEZE! TAG-TEAM IMPROVISATION

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Organize group into a circle. Two people enter the center of the circle (the stage) and begin acting. Note: generally the first two actors have a difficult time coming up with a scene, but they should be encouraged to improvise, to react and respond to the other actor.

After about a minute, someone from the group says, "Freeze." The two actors stop in the middle of their action. The spectator then enters the stage and tags one of the actors, who then rejoins the group. The spectator then assumes the exact expression and position of the actor he/she tagged-out of the action.

Based on the positions and expressions the actors are in, a completely new scene is improvised. Spectators will learn to freeze the improvisation when the actors are in difficult, compromising and telling positions in order imagine the next possible scene. This continues until everyone in the group has acted at least once or twice.

This exercise encourages spectators to be actors and to invent improvised scenes based on what they see.

CELEBRATING CIVIC CONTRIBUTIONS

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Mentees will research contributions of groups that help their community (police, firefighters, nurses, community leaders). They will plan and execute a thank you ceremony that celebrates the civic contributions of these groups.

Decide what group(s) of people they want to focus on (talk about their civic contributions).

Give the mentees an opportunity to interview the groups they are researching, as well as additional resources that will help understand their civic contributions.

Brainstorm how they are going to thank these groups.

Create a timeline with objectives that they need to complete each week.

Alternative option: Think of which groups of people they want to focus on. Write them a hand-written letter of at least one page expressing appreciation and detailing how they've impacted the community.

SERVICE ACTIVITY/PARK CLEANUP

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: Garbage Bags, Plastic Gloves

As a service project, mentees can decide to clean up all of the playgrounds in their neighborhood. As many of them and their families may use the playgrounds on a daily basis, this could be a project of interest.

One mentee who has worked on a project like this, Jayden, said, *“I want our playgrounds to be clean especially because my brothers, sisters and I play here all the time. I don’t like seeing my park dirty.”*

The participants might take more ownership of the project and have additional youth and teens join in because the service project is personal to them.

This service day teaches the youth to value their community and the importance of volunteerism.

Consider partnering with other organizations, local businesses and the Parks & Rec department for ideas and supplies.

IMAGE THEATER

DESCRIPTION: High School

Have the group reflect on a memory befitting the theme of the class (a memory of a struggle at home or a memory of a time they felt embarrassed at school, etc).

Choose one participant to go first and explain to the rest of the group members that they will volunteer to be sculpted.

The sculptors are asked to make a picture of a particular scene using their bodies. Issues to sculpt are limitless, but some possibilities are: the family, education, male-female relations, immigration, labor and unemployment, violence/crime, poverty, racism, sexuality, etc.

Each sculptor makes a static statue/image with the 2-4 group members bodies. The sculptor cannot speak to the group she/he is trying to sculpt. The sculptor must either show the individuals what positions/expressions she/he wants, or the sculptor must move them into the desired positions/expressions.

MARSHMALLOW CHALLENGE

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: 20 Sticks of Spaghetti, Linguine or Other Long Straight Pasta, 1 Yard of Tape, 1 Yard of String, 1 Large Marshmallow, Scissors, Yardstick to Measure

Objective:

The challenge is to build the tallest freestanding structure using **ONLY** the above materials.

The winning team is the one that builds the tallest freestanding structure measured from the table surface to the top of the marshmallow.

Rules:

The team's structure must stand on its own for measuring. Teams touching or supporting their structure will be disqualified.

Teams can use as much or as little of the 20 sticks of pasta, tape and string provided. Extra materials **CANNOT** be used.

The entire marshmallow must be on the top of your structure. Cutting or eating part of the marshmallow will disqualify your team.

SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT PLAN

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Discuss with youth ways that they can work together to make a difference in their community.

1. Have the students brainstorm service-learning project ideas and write each of them down. (Ex: create care packages for the homeless, draw pictures for or visit residents in nursing homes, clean up litter, etc.).
2. When all ideas have been shared, ask youth to rank on a scale of 1-to-10 how urgent and important the need is for each project.
3. Tally how many points each idea receives, review the options with the highest scores and have youth discuss the pros and cons of each option.
4. Then take those top-scoring ideas and have the youth rank them again to determine which idea to use for the project.
5. Brainstorm and create a timeline for service-learning project plan.

FIND A CLASS!

DESCRIPTION: High School

Have mentees find a class offered at a local college that looks fascinating to them. Have them email the professor and ask if they can sit in on a session or two just to experience what the class is like.

POP THE BALLOON

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Blow up colorful balloons and write questions on them, such as, “what is your favorite memory from this year,” “tell us what you learned in the past year,” or “what do you hope to achieve going forward,” and place the balloons around the room.

The participants take turns picking up a random balloon and reading the question out loud. Everyone in the circle answers the question, and the person who picked up the balloon gets to pop it. If it’s a large group, blow up a balloon for each of the participant, if feasible.

PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: Bag of Pennies

All participants are given a bag with pennies (each participant should have one penny for each member in the group - if there are 20 people, each player should have 20 pennies).

Participants go around the room to each other and trade “a penny for a thought.” Participants trade pennies and positive thoughts about what they think of one another. What an incredible activity and a wonderful way to end an experience!

The activity continues until all participants have shared with every member of the group and have a new bag of “pennies for thoughts.”

CAMPUS SCAVENGER HUNT

DESCRIPTION: High School

Once your mentee feels comfortable on a college campus, try doing this scavenger hunt as a fun addition to your campus tour! Remember to bring a camera or use the camera on your cell phone. Each item is worth one point, unless otherwise noted!

- ◇ Where do first year (freshman) students live? _____
- ◇ Pick up a copy of a free college paper. What is it called?

- ◇ Ask a student the name of the mascot. What is it? _____
- ◇ Visit the financial aid office and pick up a FAFSA form. Receive a bonus point if you find information about a scholarship you qualify for!
- ◇ Talk to three students and find out their name, major and hometown. Each student is worth one point!
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- ◇ Take a picture of a computer lab. Where was it located? _____
- ◇ Find the main campus library and ask a librarian what the normal hours are:

- ◇ What are the names of two campus cafeterias or restaurants:
 - ◇ _____
 - ◇ _____
- ◇ Find the fitness center. What are its hours? _____
- ◇ Find the name of two student groups or associations on campus:
 - ◇ _____
 - ◇ _____
- ◇ Take a picture of college students studying. What was the location?

- ◇ Find the admissions office and pick up a copy of the application. When are they due? _____
- ◇ Locate a public bus stop on or near campus. What is the name of the public transportation system? _____

Adopted from knowhow2go Mentor workbook

NYU TOUR/RIPLEY'S

DESCRIPTION: High School

We went on a tour of NYU and a trip to Ripley's Believe It Or Not! This was a treat for the mentees who have been consistently attending the mentoring program.

The teens learned from a NYU alumna about the type of college life that they could expect as a NYU student. Mentees also learned about the buildings where freshmen take classes, the dormitories and the library, which is its own building. We also toured the basketball and workout facilities and learned about the current cost to attend NYU.

Mentees asked about whether students were able to work while attending college. The mentees learned a lot for their first college/university tour.

Afterwards, we took the train up to 42nd Street to Ripley's Believe It Or Not! The teens had a blast learning about things from all over the world that were funny and unfamiliar to them.

Overall, the mentees had the most fun in the "Black Hole" where even though it made some of them nauseous, they thought it was really cool.

HAIKU

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

A haiku is a type of a poem that is defined by the number of syllables in each line. A classic haiku is one that has three lines, with 5 syllables in first line, 7 syllables in second line and 5 syllables in third line.

For example,

Toast

- (5) I really like toast
- (7) It is yummy when it's hot
- (5) I like it best cold.

Ask each of the mentees to create their own haikus about what the experience of mentoring means to them. It can be a past-reflective piece or a future-oriented piece. It's up to the participants to define what the topic will be as long as it is related to their experience of mentoring.

MASKS

DESCRIPTION: High School

MATERIALS: Paper

Participants are given a piece of paper (preferably poster board).

They are asked to cut out eyes and a mouth however they would like.

Participants are then asked to decorate the face. One side represents what they feel people see/know/believe about them (on the outside).

The other side represents what they feel about themselves (things going on inside, what people do not necessarily know or see).

The participants can share with the group if they feel comfortable.

MY PERSONAL RESUME (Continued)

DESCRIPTION: High School

For personal interests or skills, they can talk about being on the basketball team and even list the team's win/ loss record or a game when they played an important role. Maybe they're on the volleyball team or the debate team. Perhaps they help at their church or house of worship.

Any of these things can help them see that they have value AND that they can, in fact, take on things that make them proud of themselves.

Save copies of the resumes and come back to them in 6-9 months. See if the mentees have added any new things that should be reflected on their revised resumes.

MY PERSONAL RESUME

DESCRIPTION: High School

This activity helps mentees to think about the qualities they have that are admirable, the accomplishments that they made and the goals for things that they want to do.

Bring in a sample resume that shows the general categories that appear on a resume: education, work experience, personal interests, personal awards or accomplishments/goals.

Even if mentees are just beginning high school, they can begin to describe the positive things about themselves and think about what other things they want to tackle in the future.

For education, they could list the courses that they have taken, especially ones that are a little harder than average. If they did well for a marking period or on a special test or report, they could add that. They can think about what career they might want to have and think about how their future resume might need to show some special courses.

For work experience, they could list the community service that they might have done in the mentoring program (like planting trees or cleaning up the neighborhood). They might list babysitting for a younger sibling or walking a neighbor's dog. Perhaps they helped a friend's family move or clean out a basement.

SCRAPBOOK ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION: High School

Invite a mentor/mentee pair to take a picture every time they meet to document what they are doing. Then, once a month, ask them to take these pictures and work on a scrapbook together. This can be a paper scrapbook or an online document.

At the end of one year, they both can look back and see all that they did together. They can think about what has changed, what things they have learned and what they would like to add to the scrapbook.

BUILDING A GALAXY WITH CODE

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

<https://code.org/starwars>

Click or type in the link above to find a game where you can learn the basics of coding while helping the characters of Star Wars build a galaxy! This activity takes the players through the basics of coding through a fun and engaging process. The difficulty level can be adjusted by either choosing to use only drag-drops or use both drag-drop blocks and Javascript.

IS COLLEGE FOR ME?

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Ask mentees to develop and share a list of questions/concerns about college with their mentors. Mentors should use the list, along with any reasons the mentee identified, to develop key areas or categories of concern. Categories might include: cost, need for mentee to help family, grades, too soon to think about it, nobody in family has gone and they are doing well (i.e. not necessary), mentee not ready, etc.

The mentors then acknowledge the mentee's and their family's concerns and explain that together they are going to find out more to answer these questions.

Instruct them to go to www.knowhow2go.com and take the College Quiz in the middle and high school students section. They should discuss the answers as they go.

End the session with motivational success stories or quotations which can be found in the videos or inspiration sections at www.firstinthefamily.org.

WHAT IS COLLEGE LIKE?

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Activity

Brainstorm with mentees about what they think college is like. Encourage them to think about it in a variety of perspectives including the physical campus (size, location, etc.), the people (students, faculty, etc.), daily life (activities, dorms, etc.) and academics (majors, degrees offered, etc.).

Go to <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/prepare-for-college/choosing-schools/types> and review the kinds of schools listed:

- Public vs. Private
- Four-Year Colleges and Universities
- Two-Year Community Colleges
- Career, Technical, Vocational or Trade Schools

Now that they have an understanding of the kinds of colleges that exist, it's time for them to see what a college campus is like by taking a virtual tour. If there is a particular college they are interested in, visit that college's website and see if they have a virtual tour available. If the mentee don't have anything in mind, choose a local college, the mentor's alma mater or go to www.knowhow2go.org and click "College Tour" under Middle and High School Students section to see what a typical college campus looks like.

MAKE A FLAPPY BIRD GAME

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

<https://studio.code.org/flappy/1>

Click or type in the link above to find a game where you can learn the basics of coding and build the classic game Flappy Bird! This activity educates the players on the basics of coding by using building blocks to explain the process behind coding, while allowing the players to immediately see the product of their creation.

FOOTSY RACE

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Have the group line up.

Draw a line or lay down some objects to mark the middle of the room.

Instruct the group to put their feet together in whatever way they choose because they will be walking toward the line WITHOUT losing contact with one another at their feet (as if their feet were bound together).

DO NOT INFORM the way they should and shouldn't be doing this. Allow them to strategize through trial and error. They may soon find it is easier if they also link arms, link between ankles or another method. Remember, it is only fun if they realize it themselves without outside help.

Note: With larger groups you may split them into teams and make this activity a race.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & UP

Instruct mentors and mentees to go to <https://www.bls.gov/k12/content/students/careers/career-exploration.htm> to find out if an occupation of interest to the mentee (or something similar) is included in the Bureau of Labor Statistics website for kids.

If so, click on the occupation to get an overview that addresses the questions below and record the answers. If not, skip to the next step.

- What is the job like?
- How do you get ready?
- How much does the job pay?
- How many jobs are there?
- What about the future?
- Are there other jobs like this?
- Where can you find out more information?

Help mentees identify other resources for information. Do they know anyone who currently has that occupation? Does their mentor?

If possible, the mentor should set up a telephone interview with that person so their mentee can ask questions. Is there a nearby site (e.g. office, warehouse, hospital) that they can visit to see the working conditions and daily tasks? Can they take a virtual tour of the career on a professional association website?

WHO AM I?

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

Ask mentees to think about someone they know (family member, teacher, friend) who has a job. Does the person enjoy their job? Why or why not? What do mentees think is important when choosing a career? Explain to mentees that before they start thinking about a career, it's important that they know and understand their:

- Interests (what they like)
- Skills (what they are good at)
- Needs & Wants (their values and preferences)

Explain to mentees that now that they have a basic understanding of their interests, skills, and needs, they will be using a few activities to learn more.

Go to www.learnmoreindiana.org and go to the "Career" section. In this section, click on "Research Careers." Mentees will be able to check the activities that are available to explore their interests. They can also take a Personality Quiz when they click on "Personality Style" to receive their Meyers-Briggs code, which is a series of four questions that give five possible career paths.

For more career quizzes please feel free to check out:

<https://www.princetonreview.com/quiz/career-quiz>

<http://www.opencolleges.edu.au/careers/career-quiz/questions/2>

BLIND TREASURE HUNT

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

MATERIALS: 1-3 Objects, Blindfold

For this activity all participants need to be lined up against the wall.

Identify one individual to be the metal detector and one to be the blindfolded person Tie a blindfold or a piece of cloth around the blindfolded person's face and have the metal detector person walk a few yards away and turn around to face the group.

Now that the metal detector person is facing the group and cannot see the field behind them (they cannot turn around and can only take signals from the group) and the blindfolded person is ready, throw the three objects out into the field so that only the group on the wall knows where the objects have landed.

The group must use their waving arms and hand signals to direct the blindfolded person (without making a sound). But, the blindfolded person cannot see this signals, which is where the metal detector comes into play. The metal detector person, facing the kids on the wall, gets to yell out "left, right, back, back, back, stop, right, come in a little, keep going." The activity becomes interesting because the blindfolded person finds out how hard it is to find something without vision and confusion is created between the youth on the wall trying to direct to the metal detector.

GROUP AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

This exercise introduces new ways of listening in connection with others. Group autobiographies can easily be developed into a script or themes can be incorporated into a performance.

Before beginning this activity, allow the story tellers to reflect on their life experiences for 5-10 minutes. During this time, play instrumental music and instruct the group that no talking should occur.

The individuals take turns speaking autobiographically about their lives. The stories should be factual. The participants should tell the group stories from their childhood or recent past. They can tell the group what their family was/is like, where they grew up, what their schooling was/is like. Only one person speaks at a time and speaks until interrupted by another story teller. The interruptions should be erratic so that the monologues vary in length. In other words, the individuals might interrupt each other very quickly or might allow, from time to time, someone to speak a bit longer. Imagine a remote control quickly changing channels on a TV and then pausing on another channel for a bit longer.

Story tellers should switch from memory to memory, building off the content they hear from other story-tellers. The story tellers will begin to collaborate, listening and relating through what they hear in timing, tone and attitude. Pieces of their stories intersperse with pieces of others. Affected by what they hear from others in the group, individuals may recast the emotional value of their own autobiographies.

This can help shift their perceptions of themselves and others!

WHAT ARE MY DREAMS?

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

By 2020, 65 percent of all jobs in the economy will require postsecondary education and training beyond high school.

The goal of this session is to get your mentee really thinking about the benefits of going to college.

Ask your mentee to think about what they want their life to be like in 10 years.

Explain to them that they will be creating a “story board” of their life in the future. Using magazines, ask your mentee to tear out pictures that represent their vision for the future. You may need to prompt them with additional questions such as: Where do you want to live? What do you want to become? What do you want to have? Etc.

Now, ask them to glue the images on the poster board. They should also feel free to add text or writing if they want to.

When the board is finished, ask your mentee to explain what each of the images represents to them.

Now ask how they plan to get that life. Have they thought about what to do after high school? Have they thought about going to college? Why or why not? Make a list of their answers and keep it for future use.

CODES TO LIVE BY (Continued)

DESCRIPTION: High School

A king that sits on a throne of judgments scatters all evil with his eyes; do not judge others; everyone has their own reason for being the way that they are

Learn something new everyday

Everything happens for a reason, which leaves no room for coincidence

When you get down... Count your blessings

Hard work pays off

Be original and never be afraid to be yourself

Home is where the heart is

This activity can be used to create a project (e.g. design a plaque/manifesto and paste it to the front of your journal). Or, it can be a reflection exercise. This exercise helps mentees reflect on their own ethics and can help establish routines based on accountability and mentees' values (e.g. during a 1-on-1, if a mentor is speaking to a mentee about a struggle they have been dealing with and it is something that in the mentee's motto they declared opposition to, the mentor can challenge them to reflect on whether or not they are following through with their own values).

This can also be done so that all of the mentors and mentees are asked to guess which mentor wrote each phrase.

PROGRESSIVE STORY

DESCRIPTION: Middle School & Up

NOTE: Set ground rules that include keeping confidentiality and being accepting.

For this exercise, a group of people must know one another and feel comfortable discussing personal issues.

The facilitator begins the story by setting the initial scene and mood. (The mood will alter as a result of the addition of more content to the story.) The story can start with the following examples (or others): "On my way to class the other day..." or "A good friend called last night and..." or "I had the most amazing weekend! I..."

In no special order, members of the group then take over the story. They add another element to the plot. The main point is to make sure everyone adds something. The progression of the story indicates where the group members are emotionally and is representative of what is high on their lists of priorities, concerns and thoughts.

This exercise spurs on creativity and can reveal a lot about a group's collective state of mind. The facilitator plays a big role in interpreting what is said by each person.

LIFELINES

DESCRIPTION: High School

Each participant draws a line on a piece of paper to represent the highs, lows, significant events, turning points, etc. of his/her life to date (can also project into the future).

Members then share their lifelines, and other members ask questions about each other's lifelines.

This exercise can also be done with pipe cleaners and verbal explanations.

Highs

Birth Teenager College First Job

Childhood High School Grad School

Lows

CODES TO LIVE BY

DESCRIPTION: High School

In this lesson, the group will document a list of mottos/codes to live by. Invite mentors to create a list of ethics/codes they live by that could be expressed as clichés.

With one mentor's list of 10 sayings, cut 10 strips with one saying on each strip. Pass each saying around so that the mentees can read it out loud to the rest of the group.

As each is read, facilitate a reflection of what they think each means and whether or not they relate to it by instructing them to raise their hands if they agree or disagree. Allow them to explain why they agree or disagree.

After sharing all of them, ask them to guess which mentor wrote them. Take a few guesses and then share the correct answer.

Let the group sit for 5 minutes and brainstorm any phrases of life/ mottos they have heard before and relate to. Let them share their lists with the circle and, in the same manner, invite them to break it down into examples.

Here is one mentor's list:

You reap what you sow; you always get what you give; what goes around comes around

Never short-hand yourself; ultimately, we control our own destiny

Write a new poem every week

Love all, enemies included

(Continue onto the next page)