

# Tips for Mentors Toolkit

## Attention Mentoring Programs

It is easy to get overwhelmed with our every day work loads—often times, things like social media outreach, ongoing training/support, and giving our mentors reliable, consistent advice gets put on the back burner. Kansas Mentors is committed to providing every young Kansan with access to a caring and quality mentor. That is why we want to make sure that mentors have the support and resources they need to be successful—no matter if you are just beginning the relationship or wanting to strengthen your match.

In this toolkit, you will find:

- [20 Ways to be a GREAT Mentor](#)
- [Three Weeks of Facebook Posts](#)
- [Three Weeks of Tweets](#)
- [Tips for Mentees](#)
- [About Kansas Mentors \(KM\)](#)



## 20 Ways to be a GREAT Mentor

1. Commit to at least one year or one school-year with your mentee.
2. Know the mission of your mentoring provider organization.
3. Maintain regular contact with your mentoring provider organization.
4. Refrain from profanity or other inappropriate speech.
5. Be a friend, not a therapist or social activity planner.
6. Be an advisor, not a preacher.
7. Never violate the law or organizational codes of contact.
8. Do not make inappropriate remarks about your mentee's family.
9. Maintain appropriate boundaries. Do not be afraid to say "no" if your mentee is pushing the limits.
10. Put effort into the relationship. Some relationships take longer to develop. Do not get discouraged!
11. Always remember that you are making a difference...even when you may feel as though you are not.
12. Know that a "thank you" may come in the form of a smile instead of words.
13. Be a positive role-model.
14. Keep conversations between you and your mentee confidential.
15. Be a good listener. Encourage your mentee to share his/her thoughts and feelings.
16. Be happy and joyful when you are with your mentee.
17. Remember that the time spent with your mentee is focused on him/her.
18. Never engage in inappropriate behavior with your mentee.
19. Do not criticize staff or faculty of your mentoring organization in front of your mentee.
20. Be consistent, stable and reliable to your mentee.

*Adapted from Mentor Michigan*

# Three Weeks of Facebook Posts

*Copy and paste the posts below on your personal and/or work Facebook pages!!*

- Advice for Mentors: Be a friend, not a parent or authority figure. Mentors are trusted guides helping young people make positive decisions, form their own values, and realize their potential. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Maintain confidentiality– Mentors should act in the best interest of the mentoring organization and ensure confidentiality, taking care to protect against inadvertent disclosure. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Have fun! Getting to know your mentee is the primary goal of any mentoring relationship. Activities such as hanging out, grabbing a bite to eat, or playing basketball help build the relationship. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Allow the mentee to have a voice and choice in deciding on activities. Ask your mentee what he or she would like to do during your time together. This ensures that the young person will be interested and engaged in the activity. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Be positive. Offer encouragement and assistance. When times are tough, help your mentee focus on the future. Celebrate successes large and small. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Let the mentee control the direction of conversations. Don't push the mentee to tell you everything at once; allow him or her time to get to know you. Be sensitive and respectful and above all keep everything the mentee says to you confidential. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Listen. Sometimes the mentee will need to vent about schools, work, home or friends. By listening more than talking you can learn a lot and build your relationship. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Respect the trust the mentee places in you. Don't judge the mentee or provide unwanted advice. Reassure him that you will be there no matter what. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Remember that your relationship is with the young person, not his or her parent. The focus of the match is on the youth's goals, not those of the family. At the same time, avoid passing judgment on the mentee's family. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Remember that you are responsible for building the relationship. Take the initiative to keep in contact with your mentee. #QualityMentoring
- Some young people are more ready than others for a #mentor. Many will test their mentor's commitment. Try not to take such behavior personally. Gauge your success in the mentoring relationship by your actions, not your mentee's!! Time is the true test in the mentoring relationship. Give your mentee your time, and eventually they will trust you.
- Kansas ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the Nation for Volunteerism!!! Volunteers provide a powerful economic and social benefit to communities across the state, with 807,000 Kansans serving more than 82 million hours, providing services valued at more than \$1.5 billion! A special thank you to all of our #mentor (s) who are helping make a difference in the lives of our youth!
- While most mentoring relationships develop and flourish without serious problems, things do happen. Mentors have an important role, but that role does not include being a mentee's counselor. There are support systems in place for real emergencies. Contact your mentoring program coordinator for more information. The most you are expected to do—or should do—is to help guide your mentee to the appropriate source of help.
- Are you prepared to be a #mentor? Mentors should be prepared to be a friend to a young person and demonstrate consistent, dependable, trustworthy, accepting, honest and respectful behaviors.
- How do you leave a legacy of service with your mentee? Encourage them to participate in #volunteer efforts. Plan a service-learning project with your mentee today!
- Attention mentors! Do you have integrity? Mentors should consistently act in ways that are ethical, earning the respect and trust of their mentees and supporting community partners.
- "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." –Mahatma Gandhi  
How have you been serving others? What is your favorite part about being a #mentor?
- Are you following appropriate conduct with your mentee? Please be sure to refrain from profanity, criticism of school faculty or staff, inappropriate physical contact, and violations of law or school codes of conduct.
- It isn't easy to trust a stranger, especially if you are a young person who's had a lot of bad experiences with adults in the past. It may take awhile to build up trust between you and your mentee. Don't interpret caution as a rejection. A young person may not show it, and he or she may not even know it fully, but your help is definitely wanted. Be patient, be kind and be consistent. It will pay off in the long run.

# Three Weeks of Tweets

*Copy and paste the posts below on your personal and/or work Twitter pages!!*

- Advice for Mentors: Be a friend, not a parent or authority figure. #QualityMentoring
- Mentors are trusted guides helping young people make positive decisions, form their own values, and realize their potential.
- Advice for Mentors: Maintain confidentiality—Mentors should act in the best interest of the mentoring organization to ensure confidentiality.
- Advice for Mentors: Have fun! Getting to know your mentee is the primary goal of any mentoring relationship. #QualityMentoring
- Have fun with your mentee- Activities such as hanging out, grabbing a bite to eat, or playing basketball help build the relationship.
- Advice for Mentors: Allow the mentee to have a voice and choice in deciding on activities. Ask your mentee what he or she would like to do.
- Want to ensure your mentee will be interested and engaged in the activity? Allow him/her a voice and choice on activity. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Be positive. Offer encouragement and assistance. When times are tough, help your mentee focus on the future.
- Advice for mentors: Celebrate successes large and small. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Let the mentee control the direction of conversations. Be sensitive and respectful to what your mentee says.
- Advice for Mentors: Listen. By listening more than talking you can learn a lot and build your relationship. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Respect the trust the mentee places in you. Don't judge the mentee or provide unwanted advice. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Remember that your relationship is with the young person, not his or her parent. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Avoid passing judgment on the mentee's family. #QualityMentoring
- Advice for Mentors: Remember that you are responsible for building the relationship. Take the initiative to keep in contact with your mentee.
- Some young people are more ready than others for a #mentor. Many will test their mentor's commitment. Don't take this behavior personally!
- Gauge your success in the mentoring relationship by your actions, not your mentee's!! Time is the true test in the mentoring relationship.
- KS is 4th in nation for volunteerism! A special thank you to all of our mentors who are helping make a difference in the lives of our youth!
- Are you making a difference in the life of a child in need? Tell us your story! <http://ow.ly/tp0Sq> #KanServe
- Mentors in Kansas change lives. Together we #KanServe our community. Share your story, <http://ow.ly/tp34r>.
- Mentors have an important role but that role does not include being a mentee's counselor. There are support systems in place for emergencies.
- Are you ready to be a #mentor? Mentors should be prepared to be a friend to a young person and demonstrate stable, consistent and reliable.
- How do you leave a legacy of service with your mentee? Plan a service-learning project with your mentee today! #volunteer #KanServe
- Gandhi said, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." What is your favorite part about being a #mentor?
- Are you following appropriate conduct with your mentee? Learn the rules and regulations of your mentoring organization before beginning.
- It isn't easy to trust a stranger, especially if you're a young person who's had a lot of bad experiences with adults in the past.
- It may take awhile to build up trust between you and your mentee. Don't interpret caution as a rejection. #QualityMentoring
- A young person may not show it, but your help as a #mentor is definitely wanted. Be patient, be kind and be consistent.

## Tips For Mentees

1. Make a commitment to your mentor to make the most of this new friendship. A relationship is only as good as the energy two people put into making it work.
2. Exchange contact information and/or talk about the best way to reach each other—by phone, text message, e-mail or whatever works best for both of you. Talk about what time is best for both of you to see each other and stick to those times. If your phone number or contact information changes, let your mentor know right away so you can stay in touch.
3. Show up for meetings. If you make a plan to see your mentor, be there.
4. If there is an emergency and you really need to skip a meeting last minute, call your mentor right away to let him/her know.
5. Get in touch with your mentor if you haven't heard from him/her. You don't need to wait for your mentor to call you—this is your relationship too. Everybody gets busy or forgetful sometimes, and all it takes is a quick call or text message to say, "Hey. What's new? Let's get together."
6. Be open and don't judge. You and your mentor will probably have some things in common, but you may have some differences too. Asking questions is a great way to learn about different life experiences people have. Talk about them openly, share your thoughts, and ask questions. Expect your mentor to do the same.
7. Show appreciation. Your mentor will likely get as much out of your relationship as you will, but mentors may not always know if you are really enjoying your time together. Find ways to tell your mentor you like having him/her in your life. A simple "That was fun today", a note or a card can go a long way.
8. Be respectful. Just like you don't want your mentor to share with others your personal stuff, show your mentor the same respect if he/she shares private information with you. Being reliable and on time is another way to show your respect.
9. Be reliable. Nothing creates a good reputation and track record toward success than keeping your word and showing up on time. Your relationship with your mentor is an important place to practice these skills and habits. Remember, your mentor is volunteering to be with you and his or her time is a precious gift.
10. Be honest with your mentor program organization. If there is something about your mentoring relationship that you are unsatisfied with—make sure you talk to the appropriate staff person about it

*These 10 Tips can be adapted/adjusted for any kind of mentoring program and/or mentee age simply by changing the language used throughout the narrative. This is a great start to developing a Mentee Agreement or Mentee Code of Conduct.*

*Adapted from YouthBuild U.S.A.*

## About Kansas Mentors (KM)



Kansas Mentors is a statewide mentoring partnership that works to promote the great mentoring opportunities found throughout the state. We believe that all children deserve a caring adult role model in their lives; our mission is to help make this a reality.

Contact: [mentor@ksde.org](mailto:mentor@ksde.org), (785) 368-6211

*Kansas Mentors is a program of the Kansas Volunteer Commission and is housed within the Kansas State Department of Education.*

The Kansas Volunteer Commission (KVC) is collecting 105 stories of volunteerism in Kansas. Please consider sharing your story by visiting [www.KanServe.org](http://www.KanServe.org).