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Ready for Mentoring
A Guide for YouthBuild Students
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A note about being fearless

“Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities … because it is the quality which guarantees all others.” —Winston Churchill

We admire you. You took a chance, you stepped forward, and now you want to join with a mentor and be fearless about your goals. Read this guide as a first step. You will learn how to be a “mentor magnet,” someone who attracts the good in others. You will learn the qualities to “be,” the things to “know,” and “what” to “do.” This knowledge will help guide all your mentoring experiences and future mentoring relationships. Be fearless as you develop your life plan in the areas of career, health, asset development, positive relationships, education, and leadership. Both you and your mentor will have individuals from the YouthBuild program there to help you.

Know that, like you, your mentor is a little nervous. Mentors are also preparing for this amazing experience. Help them be fearless…

Carlos E. Campos
Director, National Mentoring Alliance, YouthBuild USA

“Your life expands in proportion to your courage.” —John C. Maxwell
I think everybody needs a mentor. I think it changes their life a whole lot for the better … With having someone I know that cares about me or that would rather, you know, have fun … like going somewhere with me or have fun being with me, then I think a whole lot of people would feel better about themselves and, you know, be more confident.

—Rafael, mentee

Having a mentor had a huge impact on Rafael’s life. As a YouthBuild student, you too can have a mentor. But you may be wondering what exactly mentoring is and how it fits into your overall YouthBuild experience—not to mention everything else going on in your life!

An important part of being in YouthBuild is that you are in charge of your experience—and that includes mentoring. This guide will answer your questions and give you all the information you need to be ready for mentoring.

“A mentor is someone who allows you to see the higher part of yourself when sometimes it becomes hidden to your own view … I don’t think anybody makes it in the world without some form of mentorship. Nobody makes it alone. Nobody has made it alone. And we are all mentors to people even when we don’t know it.”

—Oprah Winfrey
Being a mentor just means you're there for young people. You check on them, see how they're doing, you encourage them, you give them your experience, you take them places. You just enter their life and help them, help them deal with life.

—Colin Powell

What is a mentor? A mentor is someone you can trust—someone who cares about you and your future, and who takes a personal stake in your success in YouthBuild and in life. YouthBuild mentors are volunteers who can work with you on developing your YouthBuild Life Plan, identifying your strengths and how to make the most of them, and dealing with any challenges you might face at school, work, or in your personal life.

The Story of Mentor
The character Mentor appears in *The Odyssey*, a story told by the Greek poet Homer. Mentor was a trusted friend of King Odysseus. When the king sailed away to fight in the Trojan War, Mentor was given the task of keeping the king's only son safe and helping him grow up to be successful. The word “mentor” itself comes from several Greek words meaning to think, to counsel, to remember, and to endure. Over time, “mentor” has come to mean a trusted advisor, friend, teacher, and wise person. Today, mentoring means a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentees.
Why would someone want to mentor me?

Your YouthBuild mentor is interested in you just the way you are. He or she can see the strengths you have to offer and help you figure out how to build on them. Mentors decide to share their time with young people because they know that everyone needs a helping hand on the road to success. They’re hanging out with you because they want to, not because they have to.

Sometimes it feels like many adults in your life are trying to get you to be different than you are or to make you change something about yourself because of what they think is “best for you.” A mentor is different.

"The experience and feelings I get from mentoring are simply exhilarating. I truly believe that I get just as much, or more, out of the relationships I build with young adults as they do. One thing I realize is that every person has potential to be successful in life ... My goal is to serve as a bridge to help maximize their opportunity for success by providing advice, honest and straight talk, and support. The success that individual mentees enjoy serves to make our communities, states, and country stronger."

—A YouthBuild mentor
What’s in it for me? Why would I want a mentor?

In many ways, a YouthBuild mentor is like any other friend who’s fun to hang around with and talk to—or not talk and just listen, if that’s what you need. Unlike some friends, though, mentors don’t judge you if you screw up or make a mistake. They’ll support you if you want to make better choices and can help you learn from your mistakes, and they won’t hold your past mistakes against you.

YouthBuild mentors can also connect you with people and places in your community that can help you reach your goals. They can go with you to meetings and events where you might meet new people, or introduce you to other adults that know a lot about something you’re interested in—all things that could lead to jobs or other opportunities down the line. Mentors can also help with things like getting a library card, registering to vote, opening a bank account, or getting a driver’s permit. Just let your mentor know what you want to accomplish.

Most importantly, a mentor is someone you can trust. You can tell your mentor just about anything and know that it’s not going any further. In fact, unless you talk about something that might put you or someone else in danger, mentors are required to keep everything you tell them confidential.

“He’s a good person to talk to because he listens … and he’s a person, like, if I tell him I want to do something, he encourages me.”

—Carl, mentee
Who picks my mentor?

Ideally, you do. If you know someone you think would be a good mentor for you, go ahead and tell your mentoring coordinator that you have someone in mind. He or she will follow up with this person to see if they can join the program. Everyone who becomes a YouthBuild mentor needs to be screened and trained by the program, be at least 21 years old, and be willing to make a 15-month commitment.

If you don’t have anyone in mind, that’s okay too. Your program will help you find a mentor. You might take part in a group activity that helps you get to know and select possible mentors, or your program might match you with a volunteer. Sometimes the ideal mentor is someone who shares your interests and life experiences; other times it’s someone with a different background that you can learn a lot from. Your mentoring coordinator will work hard to find the best mentor for you.

Either way, you’ll have a say in who you get as a mentor. You’ll learn all the details of how you will be paired at your orientation to the YouthBuild mentoring program. Once you’re matched, you and your mentor will participate in a matching ceremony to kick off your relationship.

“When you leave YouthBuild, you’re going to come across the highs and the lows of life, and not everything is going to work out as planned. But know that you have this wonderful foundation—the things that you’ve learned, the relationships that you’ve built—that you can fall back on. Reach out to your mentors, your instructors, your leaders. Know that none of us survive without a community of support and networking.”

—Michelle Obama
**What do I do with my mentor?**

Don't worry if you're not sure what to do or say when you first meet your YouthBuild mentor. Like any other friendship, it might take a little while to feel totally relaxed together.

As you get to know your mentor better, the two of you will decide together what you want to do. It might just be hanging out and catching up. Sometimes you’ll check in about your YouthBuild Life Plan and work on parts you’re unsure about or celebrate goals you’ve met. And other times, you’ll do service projects with your mentor. Really, the possibilities are endless and totally up to you and your mentor. Here are just a few ideas to get you started:

- Explore financial aid options for school
- Go for a hike
- Visit your mentor’s place of work
- Tour a college or technical school campus
- Share your favorite music
- Get help with homework
- Attend a community event, like a street fair or concert
- Learn about low-cost things to do for fun in your community
- Cook a meal with a group of other mentors and mentees
- Shop for groceries; compare nutrition facts and prices
- Learn something new together
- Develop a business plan for an idea you have
- Restore an old car
- Work on a service project with other mentors and mentees
- Make a music or home video to submit to a contest

"I get out of my neighborhood now and get to go places... I probably didn't see any movies before I had a mentor, and I've seen dozens of movies now, which is fun because I was never in a movie theater before. That was exciting... She's kind of made it easier for me to get around to places, so I'm not stuck in the house all the time when no one's home."

—Tina, mentee
How does my mentor fit into my overall YouthBuild experience?

The mission of YouthBuild is to help you unleash your intelligence and energy to take control of your own life and give back to your community. We know you have what it takes to become successful, healthy, and engaged, but we also know that it takes many different kinds of support to get there.

At YouthBuild, you’ll meet lots of caring individuals—teachers, counselors, work-site supervisors, the program director, guest speakers, and others—that you can talk to and learn from. These people are your support system—helping you achieve your goals in YouthBuild.

Your YouthBuild mentor is another important part of this support system. You and your mentor will meet, away from the program, for at least four hours each month. Your mentor can help you look at your goals and challenges in new ways and provide new opportunities and supports to help you as you complete YouthBuild.

A YouthBuild staff person called a “mentoring coordinator” will plan activities and service projects that you and your mentor can join. He or she will keep in touch with mentors to let them know what’s going on at YouthBuild and give them ideas on how they can help you get the most out of the program. The mentoring coordinator will also check in with you to see how things are going between you and your mentor. These conversations will take place frequently in the beginning and at least once a month once your relationship with your mentor is more established.

"Every time she tells me you can do good at this or whatever, it makes me feel like she really cares and that I can really do it. If she thinks I can do it, I can do it."

—Bo Hyun, mentee
How do I make the most of the mentoring relationship?

A mentoring relationship is an equal partnership—a two-way street in which both you and your mentor want things to be as positive as possible. Like any friendship, the more energy and respect you put into your mentoring relationship, the more you’ll get out of it. And how do you do that?

- **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. YouthBuild will ask you to make a **15-month** commitment.

- **Exchange contact information** and 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 call or text 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.

- **Show up for meetings.** If you make a plan with your mentor, **be there**.

- If there is an emergency and you really need to skip a meeting at the last minute—maybe your car broke down or your baby’s sick—**call your mentor right away** to let him or her know.

- **Get in touch with your mentor** if you haven’t heard from him or her. You don’t need to wait for the 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.”

- **Be open and don’t judge.** You and your mentor will probably have a lot in common, but you may have some differences, too. Asking questions is a great way to learn about the different life experiences people have. Talk about them openly, share your thoughts, and ask questions. Expect your mentor to do the same. (See the worksheet on page 26 for some topics you might want to talk about.)

“**Hearing positive things can have a good impact, but I think as a kid you need to hear it constantly. There always has to be a positive person in your life.**”

—Antwone Fisher
• **Share your dreams, goals, and accomplishments.** Mentors want to help you succeed. The more you share about what you hope to accomplish, the easier it will be for your mentor to suggest activities and introduce you to other people who can help you get there. Nothing strengthens your sense of connection more than sharing your successes. Calling your mentor when you feel good about an achievement or blessing in your life is a great way to build the relationship. Some day you may need to ask your mentor for help with a challenge, but don’t wait until then to reach out. Reach out with good news on a regular basis.

• **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 or her in your life. A simple “That was fun today,” a handwritten note on a birthday or special occasion, or asking how things are going, can go a long way.

• **Be respectful.** Just like you don’t want your mentor to share with others personal stuff you talk about together, show your mentor the same respect if he or she shares private information with you. Being reliable and on time is another way to show your respect.

"I don’t have very many people who stay with me. So I’m usually home by myself now ... I used to go home, stay in my room, watch TV all day, and never do nothing. And then when I started seeing my mentor, it’s like, I don’t know, I just changed. I like doing things now ... You know, it’s like I never got to do those kinds of things before."

—Tommy, mentee
• **Be reliable.** Nothing creates a good reputation and track record toward professional success more than keeping your word, being reliable, 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. Being late or not showing up will undermine your relationship and create a feeling of disappointment and distrust. On the other hand, reliability creates respect, trust, and pleasure. The power to create those positive feelings is in your hands.

Following these tips will not only help make your relationship with your current mentor strong, but it will help you become a “mentor magnet.” (For more information about becoming a mentor magnet, see the sidebar on page 16.)
What responsibilities does my mentor have?

Every mentor matched with a YouthBuild student makes a big commitment and the YouthBuild mentoring program asks mentors to take that commitment seriously. Your mentor’s responsibilities to you and the YouthBuild program include:

- Committing to at least 15 months of mentoring
- Meeting with you in person for at least four hours each month until graduation. Most matches will meet at least two times per month
- Meeting regularly with you after you complete YouthBuild
- Participating in mentor training and checking in with YouthBuild program staff about how things are going
- Showing up at all planned meetings
- Staying in touch with you between meetings
- Being a good listener
- Accepting you as you are and not being judgmental
- Putting you in charge of the relationship
- Keeping your secrets and private information confidential (unless you talk about hurting yourself or others)
What if I’m not getting along with my mentor?

All relationships go through ups and downs, especially when you are first getting to know someone. In most cases, if you feel like there’s a problem, start by talking to your YouthBuild mentor directly. Tell your mentor how you feel and that you want to work things out. It may be a simple misunderstanding or a difference of opinion, and talking about it can clear up the problem and even make your relationship better. Sometimes you may have a more serious problem or one you really don’t want to talk about directly with your mentor. When this happens, go to the mentoring coordinator. Most problems get worked out, but if you really give it a try and honestly feel that your relationship with your mentor isn’t working out, talk to the mentoring coordinator.

Sometimes, a mentor has problems of his or her own that weren’t detected prior to the match. One kind of problem shows itself by a mentor touching or speaking to a mentee in an inappropriate way. This happens very rarely, but if it does, report it immediately to the mentoring coordinator or another trusted adult. Don’t accept any discomfort or confusion created by this or other unsafe or uncomfortable behavior.

If the relationship ends early for any of these reasons, the YouthBuild mentoring coordinator will match you with a new mentor as quickly as possible.
Handling Challenges
All friendships occasionally go through tough times. In fact, getting past problems can often make a relationship stronger. Use these ideas to help you talk to your mentor when things are difficult.

Talk about what you expect. Before a problem happens, try to let your mentor know about things that matter to you or make you upset. For example:
• “I hope you’ll always call me if you’re going to be late for a meeting.”
• “Please don’t ask me a lot of questions about my friends. I like to have my privacy.”

Remember that it’s okay to disagree. You and your mentor probably aren’t going to agree on everything, and that’s just fine. It’s okay to have different opinions.
• “I see where you are coming from but this is what I think …”

Use “I” statements. You might feel like saying, “You make me so mad,” or “You never call me.” Instead, try starting your sentences with “I” and describe your own feelings without blaming your mentor. Here are some examples:
• “I feel sad when our meetings are canceled because it makes me feel like you are not paying enough attention to our friendship.”
• “I feel embarrassed when you ask me about girlfriends because I’m really not interested in dating.”

Listen respectfully. Remember that your mentor has feelings, too. Give your mentor a chance to talk about the conflict. Pay attention and try not to interrupt. Ask questions to make sure you understand how he or she feels. For example:
• “I’m not sure I understand what you mean. Can you say more?”
• “Can you give me some examples to help me understand better?”

Talk to another caring adult. Sometimes you might not feel ready to talk to your mentor about a problem. Instead you might find it helpful to talk to another adult that you know, or a staff member.

Reach out for help immediately. There are certain situations when you should definitely talk to another adult, and not your mentor. If you find yourself in any of the following situations, contact a YouthBuild staff member or a trusted adult immediately:
• Your mentor touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
• Your mentor is physically or emotionally abusive.
• Your mentor talks to you in a way that makes you feel scared.

Adapted from Mentoring for Meaningful Results: Asset-Building Tips, Tools, and Activities for Youth and Adults. Copyright © 2006 by Search Institute; 800-888-7828; www.search-institute.org.
**How does my relationship with my mentor end?**

As you get ready for life after YouthBuild, you might find yourself feeling that you’ll need a mentor more than ever. Without the regular structure of the YouthBuild program, spending time with a trusted, caring adult mentor can really help you stay on track toward your goals. You will be able to continue meeting with your mentor during this important time. When the 15-month mentoring commitment is over, you and your mentor will participate in a formal ceremony to celebrate your relationship. It’s important for both of you to celebrate all you accomplished and say goodbye. If you want to continue your relationship with your mentor after your match has officially ended, that’s up to the two of you. Some pairs will want to stay in touch even if they’re no longer part of the formal mentoring program. Others will be ready to move on. Either way is okay.
How do I find other mentors throughout my life?

During your life you will have mentors with very similar experiences to your own, and others with very different backgrounds and experiences. Both are extremely important, providing different types of information, support and insight, as well as access to new situations. Everyone benefits from having more than one mentor, and although YouthBuild will only assign you one, we hope the experience will prepare you to watch for people you admire, reach out to them, and develop lasting relationships with many mentors as you face new responsibilities and challenges.

One of the goals of the YouthBuild mentoring program is to teach you how to be “a mentor magnet” throughout your life—how to attract and connect with those people who can guide you along your own life’s journey. (For more information on becoming a mentor magnet, see the sidebar below.)

How Do I Become a Mentor Magnet?

Some things you can do to attract a mentor who can help you achieve your next goal:

- Be eager to learn new things from new people
- Volunteer to help your community; join community groups
- Open yourself to new people and new conversations
- Be willing to take on difficult tasks, assignments, and responsibilities
- Decide what you want to focus on and do what it takes to master it
- Speak positively and take negativity out of your conversations
- Take advantage of little moments and small opportunities
- Help others achieve their goals
- Make an effort to interact with potential mentors
- Thank your current mentor after every positive interaction
- Show your passion and enthusiasm for life
Message from the president of YouthBuild USA

I could never have succeeded in creating YouthBuild and building it up to where it is today without the help of many mentors along the way. For example, Leroy Looper, our founding board chair, was always there for me with advice and reassurance when things got confusing or hard. I could call him anytime. His help was so important because he came from a different background and could explain things I didn’t know from my own experience. I think we all need mentors from the same background, who deeply understand our experience; we also need mentors from different backgrounds who can give us insight into territory we don’t yet understand.

As president of YouthBuild USA I have also had the opportunity to be a mentor to a lot of YouthBuild students and graduates. It is wonderful when they trust me with what is really going on in their lives and what their goals really are. It is great when they call me to report on their successes, and equally great when they call me to ask for help in thinking through a problem. It makes me happy when I can find ways to be truly helpful in overcoming their challenges.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Stoneman
Worksheets

The rest of this guide includes worksheets to help you prepare for and reflect on your relationship with your mentor. You might use some of these in a group setting with your mentoring coordinator as a guide, on your own, or even with your mentor. Use them to help you communicate better with your mentor, celebrate your similarities and differences, and work on your own skills.
Mentee Contract

As a mentee, I agree to the following:

I will …

• Meet with my YouthBuild mentor in person at least twice a month for about two hours each time until graduation.

• Make weekly contact with my mentor after graduation, sometimes by phone or e-mail, but with four hours a month of face-to-face meeting time.

• Participate in service projects and other group activities with my mentor.

• Provide up-to-date contact information to my mentor and the mentoring coordinator if my phone number or address changes.

• Show up for meetings on time or let my mentor know at least a day in advance if I cannot. If I have a last minute emergency, I will make every effort to contact my mentor. If I can’t reach my mentor, I’ll contact the coordinator.

• Participate in regular check-ins with the mentoring coordinator (by phone or in person).

• Let the mentoring coordinator know if I’m having any problems with my match.

• Participate in a formal closure ceremony at the end of my match.

• Communicate openly and respectfully.

• Share my dreams and goals with my mentor.

• Be open to new experiences.

• Complete YouthBuild mentoring program paperwork and surveys.

Signature

Date
Learning More About Yourself

Use these questions and conversation starters to learn more about yourself and your goals for the future. If you feel comfortable doing so, share your answers with your YouthBuild mentor when you talk about your YouthBuild Life Plan and how to achieve your short- and long-term goals.

- What will my life be like at age 21? 25? 30? What do I want my life to be like in the future?

- Who is the most important person in my life right now (parents, friends, children, mentors, teachers, or others)?

- Am I happy with the important relationships in my life? If yes, what can I do to keep them up? If not, what can I do to improve them?

- What types of responsibilities do I have now (rent, bills, debt, taking care of your room or home, and your responsibilities to your family)? Is there anything I could do to better meet these responsibilities?

- What are three things I’m really good at?

- What are three things I’d like to learn how to do?

- What would my dream job be? What skills, experience, and education do I need to get that job?

- Am I in good health? Three healthy habits that are a regular part of my life are:

- Do I have any unhealthy habits that I’d like to change?

- Do I think of myself a leader? What are some things that I do regularly that show leadership?

- Who are three responsible adults who could help me learn new things and make progress toward my goals?
Learning More About Your YouthBuild Mentor

Use these questions and conversation starters to learn more about your YouthBuild mentor’s personality and life experiences.

- When you were younger, what types of activities did you spend most of your time on? What activities did you enjoy the most?

- Who was your best friend when you were younger? What did you like about him or her?

- Where did you grow up? What was it like growing up there?

- Who’s your best friend now? What makes that relationship special?

- Did you have a mentor when you were younger? Do you have a mentor now?

- What do you like to do for fun?

- What do you worry about?

- What do you love about your job? What do you not like about your job?

- What are your favorite foods?

- What kind of music do you listen to?

- If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?

- If you could change anything about your life what would it be?
Getting the Most Out of Your Time with Your YouthBuild Mentor

A big part of mentoring is just having fun, but your YouthBuild mentor is also there to help you make new connections and achieve your goals. Use this worksheet to think about areas you might want to focus on with your mentor.

1) Are you having any problems in the following areas that you’d like to discuss with your mentor? If so, make a note. (Don’t worry—you don’t have to show this sheet to your mentor or talk to her about any of your problems until you’re ready.)
   - Work
   - School
   - Relationships
   - Health
   - Family
   - Other

2) Think about and write your own endings to the statements below. How can you turn each of these statements into something to do or talk about with your mentor?
   - I am interested in:
   - I would like to know more about:
   - I like to do:
   - I would like to learn how to:
   - I need help with:
3) Think about two or three of your most immediate goals and write them below. Can your mentor help you achieve those goals? What can he do to help? Can he or she introduce you to other caring adults who might help you get closer to your goals? (Make sure these goals are included in your YouthBuild Life Plan.)

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________
Social Networking

One of the goals of YouthBuild mentoring is to help you learn how to find, create, and maintain a positive support network. With your mentor’s help, think about the items below.

Who can I call for help if I have a medical emergency or to help me when I’m home sick?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:

Who can I call when I just need someone to talk to?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:

Who can I call when I want to hang out and have fun?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:

Who can I call if I need advice about applying for a job, writing a résumé, or handling a problem at work?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:
Who can I call if I need help fixing something around the house?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:

Who can I call if I need help studying for a test or thinking about my future educational plans?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:

Who can I call if I have a question about cooking and nutrition?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:

Who can I call if I need a place to stay for a week or two?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:

Who can I call if I need help managing my bills and saving money?
- Name(s):
- Qualities that make this person the right choice:
### My Mentor and Me: How Are We the Same? How Are We Different?

Think about your mentor as you fill out the worksheet below. Circle “same” if this attribute is something that you have in common, and circle “different” if there is a difference between you in this area. Circle “unsure” if you don’t know this about your mentor. **There are NO right or wrong answers. It is OK to be unsure!**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Race</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Sex</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Cultural background</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Socioeconomic background</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Sexual orientation</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Religion or spirituality</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Education level</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Ability or disability</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Substance abuse issues</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Political views</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Think about the following questions after you circle your answers on the previous page. If you like, you can write your answers on this worksheet.

1) Were there any differences or similarities between you and your mentor that you had never thought about before? Does this change how you think about your relationship in any way?

2) Which differences or similarities do you think affect your relationship the most? In what ways? What can you learn from your differences? If the effects are negative, how could you deal with them?

3) Which differences or similarities give you the opportunity to gain a new perspective? Which differences or similarities do you feel comfortable exploring with your mentor? How do you go about discussing this?

4) Which differences or similarities do you feel uncomfortable discussing with your mentor? Why do you think this is uncomfortable for you? Do you think this would also be uncomfortable for your mentor? If you wanted to discuss this with your mentor, what could you say?
How Can I Improve My Relationship with My Mentor?

Use this worksheet to think ahead about what to do if problems come up. Sometimes the best plan is to talk to your YouthBuild mentor honestly and directly. In other cases, you might want to talk to the mentoring coordinator or another trusted staff person first. If you’re not sure, ask the YouthBuild mentoring coordinator for help. For tips on talking to your mentor directly, see Handling Challenges on page 14.

My mentor doesn’t show up for meetings.
• Who do I talk to?
• What should I say?

My mentor and I disagree about something that’s important to me.
• Who do I talk to?
• What should I say?

My mentor said something that hurt my feelings.
• Who do I talk to?
• What should I say?

I’m confused about something my mentor said or did.
• Who do I talk to?
• What should I say?
I feel like my mentor tries to tell me what to do and how to act.
- Who do I talk to?
- What should I say?

My mentor spends lots of money when we hang out and gives me expensive gifts. It makes me uncomfortable.
- Who do I talk to?
- What should I say?

I’m afraid to be alone with my mentor.
- Who do I talk to?
- What should I say?

My mentor asks me questions about things I’m not comfortable talking about.
- Who do I talk to?
- What should I say?
Something to think about

The work of Madame Curie, a ground-breaking researcher in the field of radioactivity, led to the development of the modern medical x-ray! She once said, “Life is not easy for any of us, but what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained.”

Your mentor also believes you “are gifted for something.” Tell your mentor what you think your gift is. Then, ask your mentor to help you put it in your Life Plan and be “fearless”!

Carlos E. Campos
Director, National Mentoring Alliance, YouthBuild USA

“It is what you learn after you know it all that counts.” —John Wooden