



Happy New Year Mentor!

Ahh January! It's the time of year we delight in having a fresh start to declare our intentions and resolutions for the upcoming year. The goal, of course, is to become a better version of ourselves. Although we begin with great enthusiasm and purpose, often times our resolutions fall by the wayside as day-to-day life gets in the way. But fear not mentor, Seedling has got you covered. One *easy to implement* mentoring intention we are confident you can realize this year is taking thoughtful and deliberate steps towards ensuring your mentee is connected at school and in the community.

Why is this type of connection important you may wonder? In her online vlog, Psychologist Nadine Kaslow tells us that a young person's ability to thrive is greatly improved when he/she is positively connected. Skills such as problem solving, conflict resolution, the ability to communicate effectively, and overall wellbeing are enriched when a young person is connected to school and community. Additionally, meaningful youth participation can enhance a young person's sense of belonging and feeling of being valued, which can contribute to positive mental health.

How can you begin to help your mentee become connected at school and in his/her community? Here are some suggestions;

- Confirm that your mentee knows the name and office number of his/her counselor at school. If not, walk together to the counselor's office and encourage your mentee to introduce him/herself.
- Together with your mentee, seek out where to find information about clubs/groups/sports teams available to join.
- Introduce and inspire your mentee's involvement in positive activities. Talk about what level of involvement each activity requires and encourage your mentee to find out more information about their interests.
- If your mentee is in high school, visit the College and Career center together and explore the possibilities of higher learning and careers.

The best way to engage your mentee in trying something new is to have a supportive, trusting relationship. This is earned by your consistency in visiting once a week, adhering to the [70 / 30 Rule](#), and honoring the unique and wonderful qualities your mentee possesses. Watch and listen for clues about your mentee's social environment. Does it sound positive and enriching? Be ready to offer support if needed. If you have concerns or worries about your mentee, seek support from your Mentor Director. We are always here to support you and will find appropriate help if needed.