



Virtual Coffee Meeting Hour Questions and Answers

Please remember by becoming a mentor, you are doing your part to ensure that today's students have the tools and supports they need to succeed.

Questions and Answers from the mentor coffee hour webinar held on 11/30/2020

Q. How is a student selected to have a mentor?

- *Parents, teachers, administrators and students can request a mentor for a student.*
- *Students with a Take Stock in Children scholarship are required to be placed with a mentor.*
- *High school academies and internship programs are supported by mentors.*

Q. Do students know why they have a mentor?

- *Yes, the [Family & Community Liaison](#) meets with students who have been assigned a mentor. The liaison reviews the role of the mentor and the mentee prior to the mentor match.*

Q. My student is quiet and isn't opening-up online?

- *Time is your best tool. Be patient and consider utilizing the online [weekly topic suggestions](#). Relationships are built on trust and with time, the student will open-up. Pre-plan your topics and ask students to think about your next meeting topic. Keep it light until the student is willing to share. Remember, there is no one size fits all for children. Have FUN together. Allow the mentee to reveal themselves as they are ready.*
- *Here are some helpful tips, games and activities www.pcsb.org/mentor.resource*

Q. My mentee is having difficulties, academically, emotionally and socially.

- *Please make sure the family & community liaison at the school is aware of the student's difficulties. The liaison will make sure the students teacher(s), guidance counselor or social worker can follow up with the student.*
- *You are showing up and being present is the most important role you can play.*
- *Having conversations on how to solve problems and build a tool chest of solutions can help.*

Q. My mentee is having difficulty navigating online learning.

- *Let the family & community liaison at the school the student is having difficulty with online learning.*
- *Make sure the mentee is reaching out to the teacher(s) to get help.*

Q. What are the virtual platform options used for mentoring?

- *Pinellas County Schools uses two virtual internet platforms - Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Take Stock in Children mentors can also use the Take Stock in Children's Chat App.*

Q. How can I use the white board in Zoom?

- *Here is a quick tutorial to operate the Zoom white board [white board tutorial in YouTube](#). You can also sign up for a [Zoom Class](#) that is offered through Pinellas County Schools Volunteer Office.*
- *When using the white board mentors can talk through possible career paths, make a vision board, outline ideas or play games.*

Q. How do you keep students centered in all the chaos?

- *A strategy for chaos is to identify what are the issues that are causing problems.*
 - *Talk about each big issue.*
 - *Think about how you can help the student address the big rocks.*
 - *You don't have an instant solution. You can refer to school staff to help support the student with these issues.*
 - *Remind the student they're not alone and that you are there to support and encourage them.*

Q. How can I help my mentee deal with peer pressure and conflict?

- *You want to make sure the student is not in danger. If there is perceived concern of danger such as; the student is being harmed, someone is harming the student or the student is harming themselves, contact the Abuse Hotline at 1-800-962-2873 immediately, and if possible a school administrator.*
- *Talk about to how to develop a plan for how to handle peer pressure or conflict.*
 - *Example: Have the student talk out what the peer pressure/conflict is and how best to deal with it. The more the student discusses how to deal with the problem, the easier it will be for them to move forward to take care of it.*
 - *Let the student know they can avoid people or situations that don't feel right and leave a situation that becomes uncomfortable.*
 - *Let the student know that it is OK for them to take care of themselves when they uncomfortable.*
 - *They can always talk with a guidance counselor at the school for support or help.*
 - [Bullying Prevention and Intervention](#)

Q. How can I be a better mentor?

- *Continue to show up with a purpose.*
- ***Be a good listener to create intentional conversations.***
- *Let the student know you care and that you are there for them.*
- *Help them come up with solutions to their problems.*

Q. Can a mentor contact the family? What are the limitations?

- *Mentors are not allowed to have contact with family members. Reach out to the Family & Community Liaison at the school, they are your best resource.*

Q. What are some fun activities to do with quiet students.

- *Here are some fun questions on [bookmark cards](#)*
- *Get silly with quiet kids. [Jokes for kids!](#)*
- *Use the whiteboard on Zoom to play Tic,Tac,Toe or word games.*
- *Take a walk on Google earth in search of a favorite place to visit.*

Q. What should I do if my mentee is distracted and not actually sharing because there are other students in the room.

- *Having private space in the schools can be an issue. Ask the Family & Community liaison at the school if there is a quieter space available. Let them know about the distractions. Also, make sure the student has headphones to help with privacy.*

As a mentor you help young people by:

1. **Improving social skills:** Follow their interests. Enjoying others will come more naturally when a child is doing something they are genuinely interested in. Asking open-ended questions gives the student the opportunity to express themselves and their ideas. Practice role playing to enable the student to better relate to different kinds of people. Talk about empathy. Why it is important to have empathy for others. Help them develop strong communication skills so they can handle any situation. Be a good role model.
2. **Bolstering self-esteem:** A mentor is someone who is always in a student's corner. Be a champion. Believe in a young person. Recognize and celebrate his or her successes.
3. **Providing career exploration:** Many mentors act as career counselors, helping students to brainstorm career possibilities, define career goals and establish action plans to reach professional goals. You can also be a great source of networking opportunities for students.
4. **Supporting academic activities:** Depending on the circumstance, you can serve as an important academic tutor during the school year. Spend part of your session reviewing an academic subject.
5. **Being a friend:** Some students, especially the older ones, find it difficult to talk to their parents or friends about what's on their mind. As a mentor, you can serve as a trusted confidante, helping a student work through day-to-day struggles.

(Envision Experience.com)



www.pcsb.org/mentor.resource