



CONVERSATION STARTERS AND ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR HIGH SCHOOL MENTEES

Conversation Starters

1. “What do you want to be when you grow up?”
 - a. Actively listen to and question your mentee about their futures and their plans for after high school.
 - b. Talk to your mentee about potential career paths and the steps it takes to get there.
 - c. If you have access to a computer with internet, explore careers and colleges with your mentee.
2. Talk about where you went to college or attained your post-secondary education
 - a. If you attended college or some form of post-secondary education, or are familiar with a local institution in the community, make sure to talk about it.
3. Discuss college life
 - a. Review college newspapers, admission guides, brochures, etc. with your mentee and discuss college life, activities, and admission processes.
4. Extracurricular encouragement
 - a. Encourage your mentee to participate in extracurricular activities through their high school years such as sports, band, drama, student government, community service, and other leadership opportunities. This will help him/her develop a strong pre-college portfolio.
5. College-Bound behaviors
 - a. Talk with your mentee about developing the good habits and self-discipline they will need to be successful in high school, and college. This could include improving grades, study and homework habits, school attendance, test-taking skills, and time management. Talk with your mentee about these college-bound behaviors.
6. Discuss educational paths
 - a. Help your mentee think about the various forms of post-secondary education (community college, vocational school, 4-year university, etc.).
7. Discuss advanced classes
 - a. Encourage your mentee to forego the easy classes and take the harder, more advanced classes whenever possible. The more difficult classes will better prepare them for college entrance examinations, the SAT and/or the ACT. Colleges take note that students were enrolled in the tougher courses when reviewing transcripts
 - b. Grades
 - i. Talk with your mentee about the projects or homework they have for school, emphasizing those good grades are necessary when planning to attend college or any postsecondary education program.
8. College Fair Attendance
 - a. Encourage your mentee to attend college fairs. Find out when one is going to be in the area. If possible, plan to meet them and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at the event.

Activity Ideas

1. Virtual Campus Tour
 - a. Take your mentee on a virtual tour of campuses by visiting the websites of different college and universities.
2. College Admission Application
 - a. Find out what colleges your mentee is interested in and print an admissions application for the school. Bring the application to one of the meetings and begin filling it out with your mentee.

Discuss and set goals to fill in the gaps or to strengthen the application. This will create a strong awareness for the mentee with what to expect.

3. College Application Essay
 - a. Have your mentee write a sample essay or review his/her actual college application essay. Remind them that they should carefully write and re-write their essay to make sure they eliminate any errors. Also encourage them to have others review them, such as guidance counselors, school administrators, parent(s), and writing teachers.
4. College Event Field Trip
 - a. Take your mentee to a college event (football game, basketball game, art fair, cultural festivity, etc.).
5. College Positive Rewards
 - a. Look for opportunities to encourage and reward your mentee when he/she does college positive behaviors such as good grades, completes a project, has a leadership moment, etc.). Do a special activity or bring them their favorite candy or snack. Set goals for specific projects and/or grades and reward those goals with encouraging cards, notes, etc.
6. “What do I like?” activity
 - a. Have your mentee list 5-10 things he/she like to do or are interested in
7. “What do I value?” activity
 - a. Have your mentee list 5-10 things he/she value in life or are important to them
8. “What are my skills? Activity”
 - a. Have your mentee list 5-10 things he/she are good at or enjoy doing

**Adapted from the College Positive Mentoring toolkit*