

Mentoring *Matters*

An e-newsletter for the mentors of Chester County Futures, Inc.

September 2007

Welcome to the twelfth edition of Chester County Futures' monthly electronic mentor newsletter- Mentoring Matters. The purpose of this monthly newsletter is to provide a forum for communication and information.

Ten Tips for Effective Mentoring



Coatesville mentor Gene Kiley mans the mentor booth during the August 17th Passport to College Expo.

1. **Maintain Regular Contact.**

Mentors should assume they are the givers in the relationship. Consistent contact models dependability and builds trust.

2. **Always be honest.**

Trust and respect are the foundations on which mentorship is built.

3. **Avoid being judgmental of a student's life situation.**

Acceptance without conditions communicates that your concern comes without strings attached.

4. **Avoid excessive gift giving.**

And don't do for a student what s/he can do for him/herself. Your greatest gift is to help a person discover his/her own solutions to the problems.

5. **Don't expect to have all the answers.**

Sometimes just listening attentively is all people need.

6. **Help your student access resources and expand support networks.**

Discuss the importance of maintaining positive relationships.

7. **Be clear about your expectations and your boundaries.**

Set up ground rules and communicate them.

8. **Avoid being overwhelmed by your student's problems.**

Remain calm and dispassionate to help students solve problems.

9. **Respect confidentiality.**

Good friends do.

10. **If the relationship seems to stall, hang in there.**

Contact Futures if problems or concerns arise.

Passport to College Expo a Rousing Success

On August 17th, Chester County Futures held a Passport to College Expo for its students. Over 115 Futures students attended the event which featured 40+ exhibitors from post-secondary education institutions to booths providing practical/relevant information for students. "The Expo gave me a chance to connect with different colleges and find out where I might want to go when I graduate from high school," a Coatesville sophomore said. According to the post event surveys, students found the booth session to be packed with useful information. Guest speaker, nationally syndicated cartoonist Robb Armstrong, helped kick off the second half of the day with an interactive and powerful keynote luncheon. "Robb was very inspiring and made me take a better look at staying on track and focused," a Kennett freshman said. Robb's animated speech led into the afternoon workshop sessions, which included topics ranging from financial aid for college to a panel of inspirational people who had important stories to tell. The day concluded with a closing session that featured prize distributions. Donated prizes, including iPods and Play Station Portables, were chosen at random in an exciting finish to a productive and information filled day.

The Benefits of High Quality Mentoring

Less likely to initiate drug and alcohol use
Less likely to hit someone
Skipped fewer days of school
Felt more competent about their ability to do well in school
Received slightly higher grades
Reported more positive relationships with friends and parents
Improved academic performance
More likely to participate in college preparatory activities
More likely to attend college immediately after high school graduation
Remained longer in college
Better attitudes toward school and the future
Used substances less frequently
Better school attendance
Better attitudes toward school, their family and communities
Better school attendance

Public/Private Ventures, 1998

Mentors and Students Complete Community Service with Good Works.

On September 8th, two mentors and their students participated in a community service project with Good Works. Projects took place in Phoenixville and Coatesville. Good Works is an organization which restores homes for families in need. They primarily work in Phoenixville and Coatesville. Mentors Todd Harrison and Leticia Buck, as well as their mentees, participated in the event.



Barbara Miller (left), her mentee Patrice (center) and fellow mentor Joan Lindstrom (right) enjoy the May End of Year Banquet.

HAVE QUESTIONS??

We would like to feature your mentoring related questions in our monthly newsletter. It is important that we address your concerns. Please submit your questions to Holly Parker at mentoroffice@ccfutures.org

Academic and Tutoring Help Now Available!

Chester County Futures provides tutoring for its students who are struggling or need extra academic help. Tutoring takes place bi-monthly, but can be arranged more often if the student is in need. Volunteer tutors, as well as Futures' student volunteers gather in each school district for an after-school tutoring session. Students may sign up for these tutoring sessions at their monthly Futures meetings. If your student is struggling academically, encourage them to sign up for Futures' tutoring!



Mentors Laurie Shannon-Bailey (left) and Jeremy Allen attend the Passport to College Expo.

Practical Tips...

Below you will find tips from collegeboard.com that you can use to help your student address their time management issues.

It's 10 P.M.—Do You Know Where Your Homework Is?

Does it seem like there's never enough time in the day to get everything done? Feel like you're always running late? Here are some tips for taking control of your time and organizing your life.

1. Make a "To Do" List Every Day.

Put things that are most important at the top and do them first. If it's easier, use a planner to track all of your tasks. And don't forget to reward yourself for your accomplishments.

2. Use Spare Minutes Wisely.

Get some reading done on the bus ride home from school, for example, and you'll kill two birds with one stone.

3. It's Okay to Say "No."

If your boss asks you to work on a Thursday night and you have a final exam the next morning, realize that it's okay to say no. Keep your short- and long-term priorities in mind.

4. Find the Right Time.

You'll work more efficiently if you figure out when you do your best work. For example, if your brain handles math better in the afternoon, don't wait to do it until late at night.

5. Review Your Notes Every Day.

You'll reinforce what you've learned, so you need less time to study. You'll also be ready if your teacher calls on you or gives a pop quiz.

6. Get a Good Night's Sleep.

Running on empty makes the day seem longer and your tasks seem more difficult.

7. Communicate Your Schedule to Others.

If phone calls are proving to be a distraction, tell your friends that you take social calls from 7-8 p.m. It may sound silly, but it helps.

8. Become a Taskmaster.

Figure out how much free time you have each week. Give yourself a time budget and plan your activities accordingly.

9. Don't Waste Time Agonizing.

Have you ever wasted an entire evening by worrying about something that you're supposed to be doing? Was it worth it? Instead of agonizing and procrastinating, just do it.

10. Keep Things in Perspective.

Setting goals that are unrealistic sets you up for failure. While it's good to set high goals for yourself, be sure not to overdo it. Set goals that are difficult yet reachable.