

# Role of a Mentor

- **Be a professional role model.** It takes a caring adult willing to devote time out of their busy schedule to be a role model to young people.
- Have the mentee's best interests in mind. It is extremely important for mentors to put themselves in a position that doesn't appear overbearing or too judgmental to their mentee. Mentors must always ensure that they are dealing with impressionable young minds and be prepared to communicate with their mentee on a level which is pleasant and comfortable for both of them.
- **Be a good listener.** In the role of mentor, it is extremely important to present yourself as an active listener and generate questions while listening to show your mentee how much you care. Questioning, problem-solving and decision-making are critical elements as a mentor. Mentors must always appear approachable and encouraging to their mentees at all times. It is during these types of one-on-one conversations that mentors must have excellent interpersonal communication skills and a caring demeanor to address the needs and concerns of a minor.
- **Be non-threatening.** As a mentor, you may recognize that your mentee has made a few mistakes or may be struggling in a certain error of their lives that may be difficult for them to discuss. It is during this delicate time that the job of the mentor is to help them solve or correct their issue by developing non-threatening resolutions and giving them constructive criticism to their problem.
- **Be supportive.** As a mentor, it is your duty as a volunteer to ensure your mentee you are there for them regardless of what difficulties may be afflicting their lives. Your mentee may have a hidden talent that they're afraid of pursuing or bringing out and this would be a perfect time to inspire them. Through words of encouragement you can make your mentee feel their worth. Young adults are often empowered by having someone to look up to. As a mentor, you are that someone in their life.

The mentor job description may possess certain characteristics that may seem impossible for just one person to achieve. In order to fulfill the role as a mentor, it takes a person who simply wants to benefit from being a positive influence on someone who needs guidance and encouragement. Choosing the role of a mentor is a job done from the heart. And the true reward comes from making a difference in one youth's life.