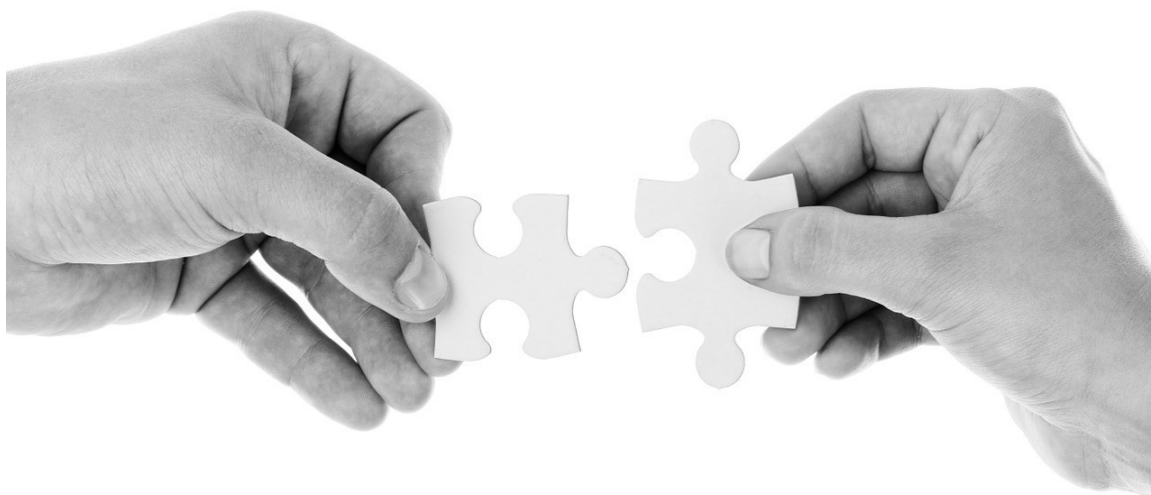


RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH MENTORING IN LATVIA



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Introduction

The material "Recommendations for Youth Mentoring Development in Latvia" has been created as an additional tool for those involved in working with young people, promoting the implementation of a systematic approach to working with young people. In many cases, work with young people is organised chaotically, without a clearly defined goal. We invite you to recognise the youth mentorship movement as an implementable approach to working with young people within your institution or organisation and to implement it. To implement the youth mentorship movement in your institution or organisation, all you need to do is familiarise yourself with this material and implement it step by step.

I believe that the youth mentorship movement will inspire many! I believe that by implementing this program, many positive results will be achieved - among youth mentors, among mentees, as well as in improving the youth work system as a whole.

If, during the development of the youth mentorship movement, you feel that it is impossible to implement it to the end, look up at the sky, take a deep breath and exhale several times, and the answer to the question "Where can I get support?" will come to you. The youth mentorship movement, as a direction for working with young people, is the key to a better tomorrow for our society. By investing in young people today, we are creating a special society for the future! I truly believe in a better tomorrow!

Inese Šubēvica, author



1. Program objectives and tasks

This material has been created with the aim of establishing and developing a group of youth mentors in the local community who provide emotional and practical support to young people aged 13-25 on issues relevant to them.

The tasks of the youth mentorship movement are:

- > to establish a local youth mentor group community;
- > to provide youth mentors with basic mentoring skills (training);
- > to provide support to youth mentors throughout their involvement (methodological support, consultations, and supervision);
- > identify and involve young people aged 13-25 in the mentoring program mentoring role, especially involving young people aged 13-25 from socially at-risk groups;
- > ensure publicity about the achievements of the youth mentorship movement.

Youth mentors are people aged 13 to 25 (young people in accordance with the Youth Law).

2. Whats is mentoring?

Mentoring is a long-term, non-formal relationship between two people who voluntarily devote their time to supporting and encouraging each other to achieve goals, while promoting the development of skills and character building.

Mentoring is a relationship based on mutual trust and respect, regular interaction between the parties involved, based on learning and support, between one individual who shares their knowledge, experience, and wisdom, and another individual who is ready and willing to learn from this exchange and enrich their personal development or professionalism.

Mentoring is a globally recognized approach that has a positive impact on the mental health, social and emotional well-being, educational achievements, interpersonal relationships with parents and peers, and professional growth of those involved.

Mentoring has a number of advantages over consulting, coaching, or organized training:

- ✓ it is flexible — mentoring can take many forms and occur in many different circumstances
- ✓ it is not linked to a specific person in a position of authority at school (teacher) or work (supervisor)
- ✓ it is an individual and unique process — both the mentor and the mentee are unique
- ✓ is people-oriented
- ✓ provides individual feedback
- ✓ covers a wide range of topics – the topics covered are determined by the mentor and mentee
- ✓ complements other learning processes
- ✓ is a long-term process¹

¹ Mentoring Guidelines, Manchester Metropolitan University, https://site-484428.mozfiles.com/files/484428/Mentoring_Guidelines.pdf



2.1. Mentoring tasks

The main tasks of mentoring are:

- ✓ to provide opportunities for development
- ✓ to gain practical experience
- ✓ to establish new and/or useful contacts
- ✓ to achieve set goals more easily and quickly
- ✓ improving professional skills
- ✓ creating and strengthening motivation
- ✓ developing goal-orientedness
- ✓ increase efficiency and productivity
- ✓ improve the flow of information and mutual communication (at different hierarchical levels, between genders or generations)

The youth mentorship movement offers solutions to issues relevant to young people:

- ✓ providing support to young people aged 13 to 25 in their education/studies
 - ✓ providing assistance in resolving social conflicts (e.g., situations where peers pressure them to drink or smoke, other situations typical of adolescence)
 - ✓ reduce the risk of young people in social risk groups dropping out of education prematurely
 - ✓ provide support in resolving disputes among young people
 - ✓ support the development of social skills by promoting friendship among peers
 - ✓ help resolve situations related to difficulties in adapting to the educational/work environment
 - ✓ work to reduce the consequences of violence (emotional, physical, and sexual)
 - ✓ promote participation skills by attending public events together
 - ✓ learning about areas of activity that interest young people - art, sports, agriculture, politics, forestry, auto mechanics, international cooperation, etc.
 - ✓ helping young people better prepare for independent living, etc.
-



2.2. Basic principles of mentoring

Mentoring involves a series of processes that can be described using the following keywords:

- ✓ listening
- ✓ being a good friend
- ✓ defining achievable goals
- ✓ goal orientation
- ✓ having fun and working together
- ✓ letting them choose what to do
- ✓ being positive
- ✓ letting them lead the conversation
- ✓ speaking clearly
- ✓ creating a safe environment
- ✓ not losing trust
- ✓ remembering who the target group is
- ✓ talk about the outcome
- ✓ move the relationship forward
- ✓ confidentiality
- ✓ openness
- ✓ authenticity
- ✓ adaptability
- ✓ be yourself

The poster can also describe additional attitudes that form the basic principles of mentoring:

- ✓ Both parties should benefit from the cooperation
- ✓ Cooperation should be based on mutual respect
- ✓ Respect the experience of both parties, especially not forgetting to value the experience of the mentee
- ✓ every conversation with the mentee (even unpleasant ones) should be positive, so that the mentee wants to continue participating in mentoring
- ✓ there should be a genuine interest on both sides in achieving positive results
- ✓ respect the trust placed in each other

The greatest gift a mentor can give to their mentee is time and knowledge.





2.3. Mentoring models

Mentoring activities can be divided into several **types of mentoring**:

- 1) Mentoring of adults and children/young people – adults help children/young people, performing a kind of godparent role;
- 2) Mentoring in companies – older/more experienced employees help their younger colleagues. This can also be considered job training;
- 3) Career development mentoring or mentoring in entrepreneurship – a high-level specialist or experienced entrepreneur helps a young, promising specialist or entrepreneur to build a career or develop a business;
- 4) Mentoring in public organizations – participants voluntarily share their experience with both members of their organization and interested parties outside the organization, supplementing their professional skills and life experience;
- 5) Mentoring in educational institutions – older students help younger ones achieve their learning goals.

Each type of mentoring can be implemented as a separate **mentoring model**:

- 1) Peer mentoring – the mentor-mentee relationship can be between seniors and seniors, economically active residents aged 30-40 for a specific target group, young mothers aged 20 to 25, etc. The main characteristic of the groups is age: mentors and mentees are similar in age;
- 2) Traditional mentoring – the mentor is an adult (older in terms of age), while the mentee is a child/young person (younger in terms of age). See above Adult and child/youth mentoring;
- 3) Team mentoring – several mentors mentor several mentees together;
- 4) Group mentoring – one mentor mentors a group;

Three **approaches** are used in mentoring:

- 1) Face-to-face mentoring;
- 2) Remote mentoring (via e-mail, WhatsApp, text messages, telephone, etc.);
- 3) Online mentoring (the mentor and mentee simultaneously connect to a communication platform with video and audio – video calls (Facebook, WhatsApp, telephone) or a communication platform (Skype, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.)).

People take the perspectives of their peers very seriously. Positive peer relationships can have a significant impact on a person's self-esteem. Since the mentee's age is similar to that of the mentor, mentors can also feel comfortable sharing with their mentees, less afraid of being misunderstood or misinterpreted. Peer collaboration definitely promotes access to appropriate support and resources for achieving specific goals.



2.4. Mentoring stages

There are various approaches to defining the stages of mentoring. The youth mentorship movement offers mentoring divided into stages based on the experience of the developers of the youth mentorship movement.

The stages listed below are not always clearly distinguishable, often overlap, and sometimes the relationship returns to an earlier stage and repeats itself more than once:

- ✓ establishing a relationship
- ✓ setting goals
- ✓ working together
- ✓ conclusion
- ✓ moving towards joy

Mentoring, in some stages, includes:

- ✓ active listening
- ✓ asking questions
- ✓ discussions
- ✓ giving advice
- ✓ exchanging knowledge
- ✓ seeking solutions to problems
- ✓ performing additional activities
- ✓ achieving set goals
- ✓ evaluation
- ✓ celebrating achievements



2.4.1 Building relationships

Once the mentor has received information about the mentee, the relationship-building phase begins:

1. Getting to know the mentee:

- the mentor familiarizes themselves with all the information provided by the mentoring program coordinator about the mentee
- they familiarize themselves with additional information in the media and social networks – where they study/work, their interests, attitudes, hobbies, circle of friends, achievements, etc.

Young people are not familiar with mentoring. It is important to provide more information about the nature of mentoring at the outset so that mentees can engage in the mentoring program with the confidence that this is what they want. Of course, young people are at an age where some may be forced to participate in a mentoring program on a voluntary basis.

2. Agreement on the first meeting:

- Contact the mentee – by phone, WhatsApp, email, or other means
- Briefly introduce yourself – 3-5 sentences
- Briefly outline the plan and duration of the first meeting
- Agree on 'homework' before the meeting – you can ask them to prepare a transcript of their grades, information about previous achievements, send a video showing the mentee's hobby, etc.

The first meeting is dedicated to:

- get to know each other better
- agree on the form and intensity of cooperation and outline the results to be achieved (if possible – define milestones, but often this does not happen during the first meeting, because the time allocated is filled with discussing other issues)
- the first meeting should not last longer than 1.5-2 hours
- prepare several meeting places and time options - choose a meeting place that is convenient for both parties and where your conversation will not be disturbed
- it is important to emphasize that the conversation will be confidential (only among group members, if group mentoring is organized)
- make sure that the mentor's actions are known to the mentee and that the mentee knows that they can contact the mentor in case of necessity

It is important that the mentoring program has a coordinator whom both parties trust and/or know. This is because teenagers do not always respond to communication from strangers. The coordinator plays an important role in the youth mentoring program, especially in the initial stage (the relationship-building stage).

3. Preparation for the first meeting:

- The mentor identifies their strengths and weaknesses (so that they can be clearly defined if the conversation during the meeting turns to this topic)
- The mentor identifies what advice, experience, or knowledge they are prepared to share offer
- The mentor draws up a meeting plan (so that the excitement of the first meeting does not prevent them from discussing issues that are important for future cooperation)
- the mentor prepares a short story about themselves
- the mentor prepares a few short tasks/tests/quizzes, etc., to help the mentee feel comfortable in the conversation and 'open up' in case of uncertainty

4. First meeting:

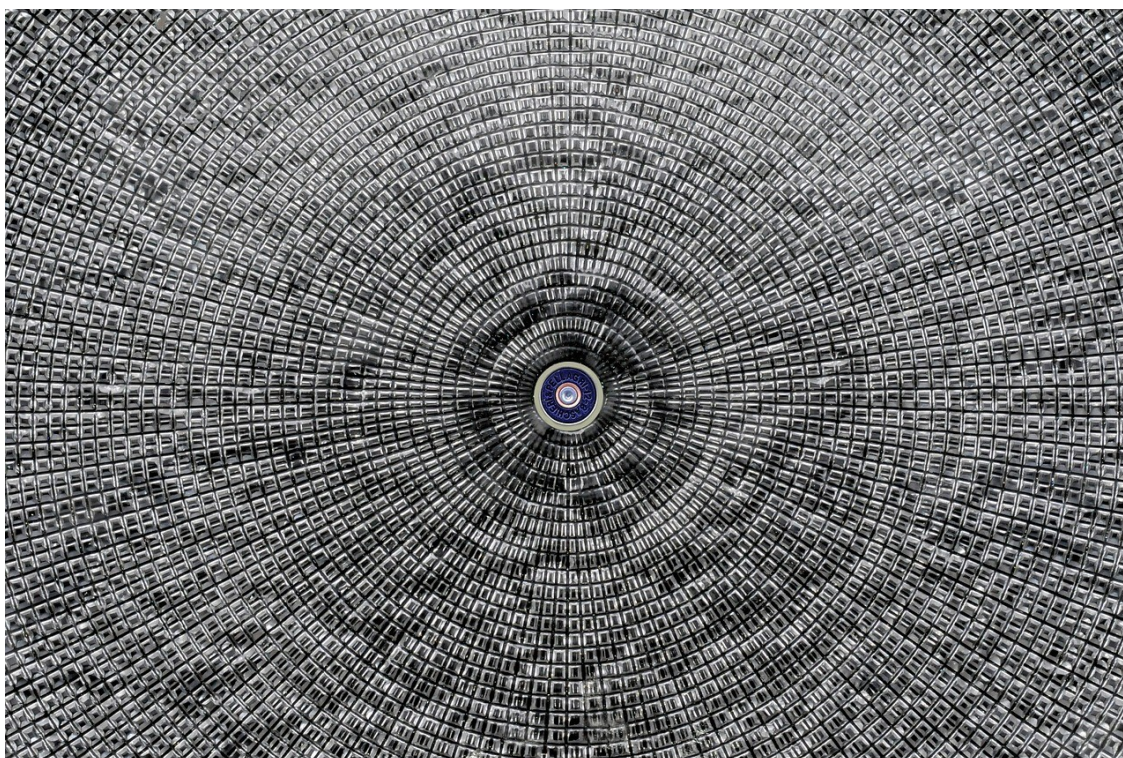
- ✓ The mentor introduces themselves with confidence and a smile!
- ✓ The mentor invites the mentee to ask additional questions
- ✓ The mentor invites the mentee to talk about themselves
- ✓ The mentor asks additional questions about the mentee
- ✓ The mentor uses pre-prepared tasks/tests/quizzes, etc. To give the mentee a chance to get into the conversation and “open up”
- ✓ The mentor must be patient and open
- ✓ Agree on the boundaries of the mentor-mentee relationship (see section 4.5 for more information)
- ✓ End the meeting on a positive note/with a positive tone/with an agreement on future communication/cooperation

The first meeting is crucial for the entire mentoring relationship – during the meeting, both parties, and especially the mentor, must be consistent, authentic, and open.

Any communication between the mentor and the mentee (remote, face-to-face, in person) should create a positive impression (the first meeting only happens once and is therefore particularly important) and a positive impression should be maintained throughout the entire mentoring period (the mentee has the right to withdraw from the mentoring program at any time, and a large part of the mentor's role depends on how intensively and for how long the mentee will cooperate).

Mentees vary – some talk a lot, others hardly speak at all. You have to be prepared for mentees not to tell the truth, especially if they are young people from socially disadvantaged families.





2.4.2. Setting goals

Once the introduction process is complete and agreement has been reached on the format and intensity of cooperation, it is necessary to define the goals that both parties wish to achieve within the mentoring programme. The goals set by the mentee may be personal, career-oriented, academically oriented, or anything else that is relevant to the mentee within the defined mentoring programme. The mentor should encourage the mentee to set ambitious but achievable goals.

We recommend using the SMART KISS formula to define goals!

S – Specific

M – Measurable

A – Achievable

R – Relevant (realistic)

T – Time-bound

i.e. goals should be Specific/Concrete, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound.

Goals should be as short and simple as possible (Keep It Short and Simple).

Young people often struggle to define their goals. These skills are just beginning to develop at this age. In the initial phase, more time should be allocated to building relationships before moving on to goal setting. Youth mentors should be encouraged to seek help from a coordinator/consultant when defining goals. Often, multiple meetings are needed before reaching a clear goal formulation.

The sooner the mentoring goal is defined, the sooner you can start working toward it!



2.4.3. Implementation

Always remember to foster a positive image, encourage questions, share thoughts, acknowledge, and evaluate progress. The longer the collaboration lasts, the more personal and open the relationship becomes.

The implementation phase in mentoring, focused on achieving goals, is considered the most crucial and results-oriented stage. This stage includes:

- challenging
- an environment to conflicts (both internal value/attitude clashes and interpersonal ones)
- continuous monitoring time, tracking activities and milestones on the path to goal achievement

2.4.4. Conclusion

Conclusion means:

- ending the relationship on a positive note
- celebrating the time spent together
- clarifying the relationship while moving forward

Time must be allocated for a Closing Conversation! - The conversation should be steered in a way that ends the relationship on a positive note. The conversation should include time for evaluation (verbal and/or written). Even if the mentoring program is terminated earlier than planned for any reason, time must be found for a closing conversation (in-person, remotely, or online) (conversation, survey, etc.).

Achievements must be celebrated! - An agreement must be reached on how the collaboration between the mentor and mentee will conclude (a simple conversation, gift exchange, attending a joint event, agreement on future steps, etc.). And the agreement must be implemented.

Understanding the future! - At the conclusion, it must be discussed how the mentor and mentee's relationship should look after the mentoring program ends (mutual agreement). Both parties must agree on how they envision the future relationship. (see section 8) to avoid any misunderstandings in the long term.

There are several factors that influence the time spent in mentoring relationships. Some collaborations last several years. Some mentees achieve their goals quickly. To know if it is time to conclude the collaboration, youth mentors should periodically ask the mentee the following questions and seek joint answers:

- Have you achieved what was planned?
- Are there additional learning opportunities that are needed or desired?
- Can we together do something useful to continue working towards the mentee's goal?
- Would another person in the youth mentor role, whose experience better serves the mentee's needs, be more suitable?, etc.

It is important that time is invested wisely. If both parties agree that continuing the collaboration adds value, plan the next steps – review goals and timelines.



2.4.5. Moving Forward

This stage is indirectly related to a specific mentoring program that is concluding. However, it is crucial to remember that the Youth Mentor remains, first and foremost, a mentor to their specific mentee. In practice, situations often arise where the mentee periodically updates the Youth Mentor about their achievements. The Youth Mentor must always remember that this stage also involves relationship-building and maintaining a positive image, requiring time investment (e.g., responding to messages, calls, or acknowledging posts on social media with a "Like" , commenting on achievements shared by the mentee, or being present for their milestones (e.g., congratulating them at a graduation, attending a concert or sports competition, etc.).

3. Mentee Selection and Profiling

This is one of the mentoring program coordinator's responsibilities (see Section 5 for more details).

3.1. Selection Criteria

Mentees are selected in alignment with the defined objectives of the mentoring program.

Before approaching potential mentees, it is essential to define the selection criteria by which they will be chosen. These criteria may vary depending on the local context and the defined goals. For example:

- age;
- experience and competence;
- hobbies;
- motivation and time dedicated to program participation;
- physical and mental health;
- identified problem situations, etc.

Potential mentees can be identified and approached in collaboration with:

- educational institution psychologists and social pedagogues;
- municipal youth and social workers;
- local community organizations whose target group also includes young people aged 13 to 25 years;
- religious organizations;
- municipal minor affairs inspectors, etc.

3.2. Profiling Techniques

To enable the Youth Mentor to provide the most comprehensive information about the mentee, it is essential to conduct mentee profiling—an initial assessment of the youth that includes an in-depth study of socio-psychological and economic issues, awareness of the youth's education, work, leisure, social activities, prior experience, existing skills, personality assessment, and identification of interests and skill development needs.²

Youth profiling is divided into:

- *basic profiling* – whether the youth meets the general criteria of the mentoring program (age, place of residence, occupation, etc.);
- *in-depth profiling* – is conducted when a youth, after basic profiling, is confirmed for participation in a mentoring program. This involves assessing their prior experience in education, work, and social activities; identifying interests and leisure activities; studying their personality; recognizing existing and additional required skills; conducting an in-depth socio-psychological and economic problem analysis; determining risk factors (social environment, dependencies); and identifying the youth's living conditions, resources, aspirations, and other factors.³



² Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 385 Riga 7 July 2015 (Minutes No. 32 § 25) "Regulations on the implementation of the Operational Programme "Growth and Employment" 8.3.3. specific support objective "To develop the skills of NEET youth not registered with the SEA and promote their involvement in education, in measures implemented by the SEA within the framework of the Youth Guarantee and in the activities of non-governmental organizations or youth centers". Available: <http://likumi.lv/ta/id/275554-darbibas-programmas-izaugsmes-un-nodarbinatiba-8-3-3-specifika-atbalsta-merka-attistit-nva-neregistrem-neet-jauniesu>

³ Methodological guidelines for working with target group youth in the project "Know and do!", www.jaunatne.gov.lv, 2015

3.3. Benefits for Mentees

In conversations with mentees, it is crucial to emphasize the benefits of participating in the mentoring program. This often serves as an effective "carrot" to maintain their attention and motivation. Long-term engagement is a significant challenge for youth—both mentors and mentees. Young people are more inclined to engage in "short-term relationships" that yield visible results quickly. Therefore, it is especially important to highlight the advantages of participating in the mentoring program as a mentee:

- opportunity to learn from the mentor's unique experience
- promotes personal growth
- increases productivity (improves success rates)
- acquires new knowledge and skills
- develops self-confidence and strengthens self-awareness
- promotes personal well-being

Mentees in the mentoring process:

- gains a deeper understanding of their personal strengths and abilities
- learns to align their advantages and interests with potential career paths and further education or the learning process
- gains an understanding of the broad range of educational and learning opportunities
- learns to plan further education and/or employment, and/or meaningful leisure time⁴

In addition to the above, mentees:

- have the opportunity to meet experienced or knowledgeable individuals who share information and provide advice on continuing education, career advancement, and professional development
- an open, safe, and supportive physical and emotional environment is created where one can express ideas, voice concerns, and receive support
- there is an opportunity to explore the reality and daily life of a peer (mentor), which encourages learning, making one's own decisions and taking action
- there is an opportunity to receive independent feedback and support to improve performance





3.4. Mentee's own involvement

The mentee is equally responsible for the outcomes by actively participating in the mentoring program, whether as a coordinator or mentor.

Mentors must be prepared to face challenges in engaging mentees:

- low mentee motivation
- the mentee's goals are unclear
- it is observed that the mentee has deviated from the initial action plan
- the mentee is unable to solve a specific problem (willing/unwilling to address it)
- does not receive moral support
- does not receive validation for their ideas and suggestions on how to implement them
- there are insufficient resources to achieve the goals
- the mentee doesn't clearly state what exactly they expect from the mentor
- doesn't dare to speak for themselves, but uses 'friends' or 'family members' as proxies
- doesn't express their thoughts and opinions
- isn't ready to discuss their emotions and their impact on goal achievement
- ends as a result of some external negative event, etc.

Before the first meeting, the mentee should familiarize themselves with their mentor's experience, activities, achievements, and interests. The mentee must ensure they have the mentor's contact information in case any questions arise between sessions. Before each meeting with the mentor, it is essential to set aside time to reflect and note down what the mentee expects from the mentor—what the goal is, how the mentor can help achieve it, what additional support measures might be useful, etc. During mentoring sessions, it is crucial for the mentee to ask relevant questions and listen actively. After the session, they should reflect on how to apply the acquired information, knowledge, and resources, whether another meeting is needed, and—based on insights gained—create an action plan with achievable tasks and a timeline to reach their goal(s).





4. Mentor Profile and Benefits

4.1. Required Qualities, Knowledge, and Skills for a Mentor

Regardless of age, a good mentor is educated/knowledgeable mentor.

For a mentor for diverse knowledge of:

- pedagogy
- psychology
- the national education system, educational content and assessment
- state institutions and the protection of interests
- on civic participation
- on culture and sport
- on the role of the mentor and the principles of mentoring, among other things

Essential qualities of a mentor

- openness
- transparency
- interest
- empathy
- professionalism
- sense of equality
- communication skills
- responsiveness
- helpfulness
- honesty
- patience
- supportiveness
- strictness
- enthusiasm
- expressiveness
- kindness
- sense of humor

Mentors:

- don't make decisions
- don't set goals in the mentee's place
- + conversation partner
- + helps build contacts
- + inspires
- + shares personal experience
- + no payment required for mentor support





Key mentor skills:

- active listening
- building trust
- goal setting and capacity building
- encouragement and inspiration⁵

It is also essential that a mentor has the following skills:

- active listening and questioning
- self-awareness and self-control
- awareness of one's values and self-improvement
- analytical skills (noticing, observation, questioning, conveying information)
- providing and receiving feedback
- status verification
- selection and sharing of exemplary experiences
- objective evaluation
- social and communication skills (ability to build relationships)
- encouragement / motivation
- problem and conflict resolution
- ensuring confidentiality
- critical evaluation

A mentor can be:

- a critical friend
- questionable
- partner
- sample
- guide
- bridge deck
- suggestive
- a good listener
- adviser

The combination of the above qualities, knowledge and skills makes a youth mentor a good mentor, yet their absence does not preclude someone from being a suitable mentor. What matters is that the mentor understands his or her role in the mentoring process and keeps developing in order to become an even better mentor.

By asking questions and listening, the mentor helps the mentee himself to understand and analyse his problems (active listening differs from passive hearing: it means taking in information without forming conclusions or judgements). The mentor learns not to be thrown by what he hears and not to interrupt the mentee's story. The mentor does his or her best to ask open questions and encourages the mentee to analyse the situation.

The mentor does not have to motivate the mentee to take part in the mentoring programme; rather, he or she offers support if the mentee wishes to accept it. If the mentee lacks motivation, he or she may simply not be ready for the mentoring process. Motivation can also emerge during the process—by becoming aware of goals, the present situation and how to reach those goals—so the mentor must remember that *"you shouldn't throw in the towel after the first failure."*

⁵ More see - Mentoring guide. A Guide for Mentors, Center for Health Leadership & Practice Public Health Institute Oakland, CA, 2003, p.3.-5, <https://site-484428.mozfiles.com/files/484428/more-mentoring-guide-for-mentors.pdf>

4.2. Where to find mentors?

Mentors **ARE NOT**: social workers, parents, superheroes, sources of money, therapists, or solvers of all your problems. **ARE**: friends, supporters, consultants, good examples, resources for ideas and opportunities, people to talk to.

Mentors can be found and approached through collaboration with:

- educational institutions and career counsellors;
- municipal youth workers;
- associations operating in local communities whose target group is young people aged 13 to 25;
- business support centres whose activities involve young people up to 25 years old;
- opinion leaders in local communities;
- political parties operating in the municipality;
- religious organizations;
- local media;
- activists in thematic/interest groups on social networks.

Before seeking mentors, it is essential to define the selection criteria by which mentors will be chosen. These criteria may vary depending on the local context and the defined objectives.

For example:

- age (a specific range may be set, e.g., 18 to 25 years);
- experience and competence (specific experience in a defined field), for example, has worked in juvenile case registration or has completed high school or vocational secondary school);
- hobbies and/or profession that would be a valuable resource for the target group's youth resocialization (e.g., is passionate about a type of sport, has achievements in art or music);
- motivation and time dedicated to the youth (e.g., is willing to commit for 9 months, at least 1 hour per week or 2 hours per month);
- physical and mental health (e.g., has a diagnosed disability, has religious experience);
- ability to defend one's values and views on life (e.g., debate experience);
- ability to demonstrate reasoned views, thoughts, and judgments (e.g., public speaking experience);
- ability to build trustworthy and equal relationships (e.g., participation in mentoring programs, etc.).





4.3. Mentor Benefits

Within the youth mentorship movement, mentor benefits are viewed multidimensionally – immediate benefits (training), medium-term benefits (practice and supervision), and long-term benefits (competencies: knowledge, skills, and attitudes).

The coordinating institution or organization of the youth mentorship movement offers youth mentors a variety of support packages – training, mentoring sessions, and supervision.

These support packages give youth mentors the specific knowledge and skills they need to carry out their mentoring duties, build their overall understanding of mentoring, and foster the growth of peer mentoring in local communities.

By participating in the youth mentorship movement as a mentor, a young person gains the opportunity to:

- share their life experiences
- learn something new
- gain insight into young people's lifestyles and mindsets
- develop communication skills
- develop the ability to adapt to unexpected situations
- resolve conflicts
- be open to new challenges
- make new contacts
- be inspired to improve yourself
- gain the courage to realize your ideas
- gain other people's perspectives on things and events
- develop leadership skills
- contribute to the development of their community

When weighing the opportunities that participation in the youth mentorship movement offers, and upon deciding to take part, the youth mentor must clearly define for themselves the goal of their involvement in the youth mentorship movement in the role of mentor.





4.3.1. Immediate Benefits for Mentors

Trainings are organized so that by the end of the training, participants can:

- identify mentoring stages and development models;
- gain an understanding of the mentor's role and methods;
- be prepared to provide quality support to mentees in setting and achieving goals, and to motivate mentees;
- recognize challenges and analyze possible solutions;
- become part of the youth mentors collaboration network.

4.3.2. Mid-term benefits for mentors

The youth mentorship movement coordinator (institution or organization) ensures communication between youth mentors and mentees to initiate mentoring programs. Mentoring programs are implemented according to a predetermined timeframe—3, 6, 9, or 12 months. If mentoring lasts less than 3 months, it cannot strictly be called a program, though it still qualifies as mentoring. Conversely, programs extending beyond 12 months may become ineffective (though exceptions exist where longer durations are viable). Shorter program durations are more predictable—mentees can more easily define achievable goals, while youth mentors can appropriately plan support measures and their intensity for the mentee. The most common durations for youth mentoring programs are 6-9 months.

Throughout the implementation period of the youth mentorship movement, supervision is organized for youth mentors—individually and/or in groups (1-2 times per month or as needed). The format, duration, and intensity of supervision for youth mentors depend on the implementation possibilities of the youth mentorship movement.

Throughout the implementation of the youth mentorship movement, youth mentors must be granted access to consultations with specialists, the coordinator, and the youth mentor collaboration network, both remotely and online. Remote communication may use email, WhatsApp, Facebook, SMS, etc. Online communication utilizes platforms available to the coordinator—Skype, Zoom, MS Teams, etc.

Within the framework of the youth mentorship movement, it is essential to organize joint events for mentors and mentees – meetings with inspiring personalities, various events, visits to institutions and organizations, shared leisure activities, etc.



4.3.3. Long-term benefits for mentors

Mentors long-term benefits can be divided into several groups: material/non-material, personal/professional, visible/invisible, etc.

For example:

- The mentor occasionally organizes gatherings for two people, inviting a lead mentor to participate in exchange for compensation, having recognized the mentor's public speaking skills;
- The mentor occasionally shares mentor contacts with a friend who, upon contacting the mentor and receiving their approval, initiates joint participation in the mentoring program;
- The mentor gets acquainted with a family member of the mentee and forms a pleasant long-term friendship;
- The mentor feels inspired to delve deeper into learning topics that will be useful the mentor's professional activities;
- mentors change hair care routines or styling techniques;
- mentors change attitudes toward certain societal groups or socioeconomic events.

Benefits may include: competencies – knowledge, skills, and attitudes; new contacts – among peers or between municipal/educational institution/business/organization employees and/or volunteers; job offers – short-term or long-term, etc.

Note that while mentors develop competencies during the youth mentorship movement, the coordinator ensures necessary support for implementation.

Some outcomes cannot be evaluated immediately after the youth mentorship movement concludes, such as attitude changes, new collaborations, or job offers. Therefore, it's important that evaluation is planned and conducted later (e.g., after 1, 3, or even 5 years).





4.4. Mentor Ethics

Ethical mentoring is guided both by universal ethical standards and each participant's personal ethical understanding, shaped by answering questions such as:

- Am I responsible for setting the priority order?
- How do I resolve potential conflicts between these priorities?
- What boundaries do we set for our actions?
- How much personal relationship will we allow?
- In what cases should mentoring relationships be terminated?
- When should I allow my mentee to make their own decisions?
- In what cases should I not disclose my actions or information to my mentee?
- When guiding a mentee toward the right solution, should it align with the mentor's perspective or what the mentee perceives as correct, etc.?

Within the framework of the youth mentorship movement's organized training and supervision, time is allocated to discuss mentor ethics.

Ethical principles can be broad or highly detailed, depending on the youth mentorship movement's implemented opportunities to dedicate time to questions about the ethics of involved actions (spoken, written, or performed):

- coordinator, collaboration with mentors, preparation of ethical standards (guidelines), code of conduct, rules tailored to specific realities
- mentors familiarize themselves with ethical standards
- mentors confirm their commitment to act ethically and adhere to ethical conduct standards
- mentors affirm their readiness to uphold both their personal and mentoring honor and reputation
- in both professional and personal life, a mentor avoids morally ambiguous situations and actions that contradict generally accepted behavioral norms, as these could negatively impact the mentor's overall reputation
- the mentor acknowledges their responsibility to the mentoring process and society at large
- the mentor critically evaluates their knowledge and pedagogical/mentoring skills, committing to continuously improve their professional expertise
- the mentor strives to selflessly share their knowledge and pedagogical experience with the mentee, thereby fostering the mentee's developmental progress
- the mentor commits to informing the youth mentorship movement coordinators about professionally relevant matters and sharing experiences that may benefit other youth mentors
- those involved must act respectfully toward leadership, colleagues, and other mentees
- a mentor refrains from actions that could diminish respect for other mentors
- a mentor does not impose personal views on the group (e.g., regarding all newcomer-mentor opinions)
- a mentor respects the individuality of other newcomer-mentors and mentees
- mentors promote their own and the mentee's personal growth, talent, and ability to unlock and develop
- those involved avoid unproductive and unnecessary conflicts
- those involved are tolerant and kind
- disagreements and conflicts are resolved constructively, without personal insults
- mentor efforts almost all involved parties interests harmonization, observing the principle of equality and avoiding moral compromises

- mentors do not behave arrogantly, domineeringly, or patronizingly toward the mentee's experience
- mentors are genuine, neither belittling themselves nor others
- regarding their own requirements, they provide clear information when initiating mentoring, and if requirements change, they communicate this promptly, always justifying the necessity of changes
- do not request or accept illegal payments from mentees for training or consultations
- be fair, respect mentees' goals and intentions, and the resources used and results achieved
- without superficiality or bias, responsibly and objectively evaluating the mentee's knowledge and work
- granted authority is used solely for ethical and pedagogical purposes in achieving goals, never exploiting power or privileges for selfish or malicious ends
- during mentoring, no political, religious, or anti-religious propaganda is conducted
- through one's knowledge, actions, and attitude, consistently setting an example of ethical conduct for the mentee, demonstrating the code of ethics in daily life, etc.





4.5. Mentoring meetings

Although appointments can take place in different ways – face-to-face, remotely or online – it is considered that face-to-face meetings will always be the most effective. As far as possible, appointments are to be organised in person, but not to be organised in contradiction with national rules, restrictions or if it adds to the inconvenience (time, finance) of the mentor.

Take as long as it takes to meet, or according to the agreement originally reached (another chooses to meet occasionally a month for one hour, another wants to participate several times a month for a few hours without a break, this one is very individual).

During the meeting, the mentor:

- provide as much information as possible that the mentee is interested in and has required
- get to know the mentee from different angles
- directs conversation (if not by the mentee) - asks questions about the mentee's interests, hobbies, knowledge
- share your experience, especially when interests in an issue match
- helps the mentee plan the next steps toward the goal set
- assist in the development of a timeline to achieve the goal as needed
- give the mentee valuable contacts if possible in the industry/issue that interested in mentee
- monitor that the boundaries of the parties' cooperation rules are not violated (which is agreed at the first meeting, but reverts to the issue as necessary)
- we learn to use the I/to me form, both from mentors and mentees instead of we/to us
- the conversation is concluded by agreement, or it will be necessary to meet again, and, if so, when, where, what time, how long

Ideas for questions for the meeting:

- What can you tell me about yourself to help me get to know you better?
- What do you think we need to do to make this mentoring work?
- What do you want to accomplish/experience in your life?
- Do you feel successful right now? If not, what is stopping you from being successful?
- What do you like best about school/work?
- What are your career goals?
- What has been your most significant learning experience?
- How do you learn best?
- What knowledge, skills and abilities do you think would be most beneficial to your growth?
- What do you expect from me?
- How can I better understand what you need and how can I best help you?
- What do you need right now?
- What is the best way to provide you with feedback?
- What scares you?
- What are your main strengths?
- What satisfies you most at work?, etc.⁶

⁶ Guidelines for mentors, https://site-484428.mozfiles.com/files/484428/people_development_-_mentoring.pdf

5. Coordination of the Youth mentorship movement

Each youth mentorship movement needs to appoint a coordinator – a person who:

- creates a description of the program in a specific reality
- informs potential participants, carries out their selection
- organizes support activities for mentors
- ensures timely access to information and its circulation between the parties involved
- prepares the necessary support materials
- monitors the effectiveness of the pair cooperation
- provides support if the parties have any problems
- develops the program operation
- coordinates the development of ethical standards and receives approval from the participants for this
- helps to assess the achieved results, organizes evaluation (initial, intermediate, final, after time)
- attracts the necessary resources
- informs the parties involved about the achieved results
- organizes the operation of the cooperation network

The coordinator may be appointed within the framework of the structural unit (organisation) responsible for working with youth or by decision of the municipal council, simultaneously with the approval of the municipal council's decision on the launch of the youth mentorship movement in the territory of the municipality and the rules for its implementation (deadlines, performance indicators, available resources, etc.).

To create a program description in a specific reality, you need to:

1. Identify the needs of potential participants (e.g., survey, focus group)
2. Collect current statistics on the target group
3. Define the goals of the mentoring program
4. Create an action plan to achieve the goals
5. Define evaluation processes
6. Determine the procedure, deadlines, and content of the preparation of performance reports
7. Define a communication plan within the program
8. Determine those responsible for the implementation of the program

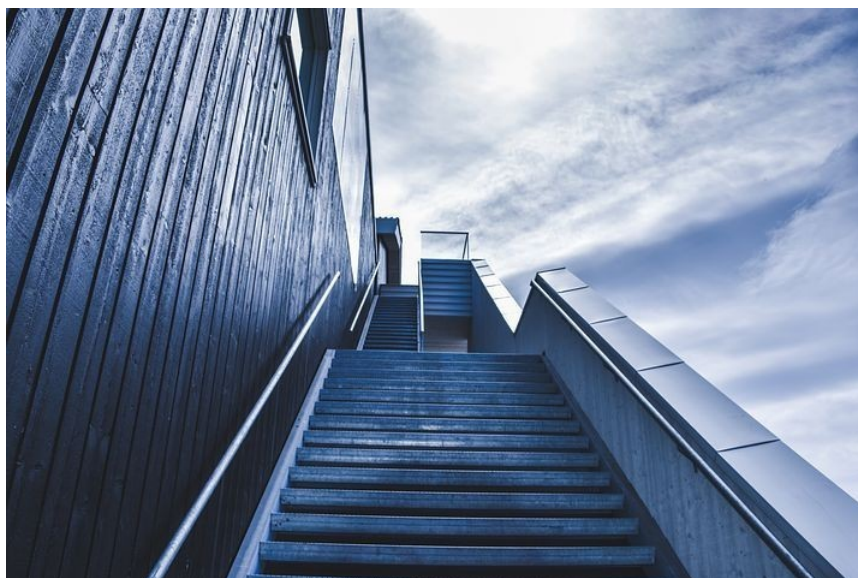


6. Challenges in mentoring

Any mentoring involves various challenges. Taking into account the characteristics of the age, it is important to find time, to raise issues whose solution cannot be postponed (supervision, consultations for mentors) for the successful implementation of the youth mentorship movement.

The most popular challenges in mentoring:

- psychological incompatibility
- unsuccessful process of building cooperation
- undefined goals
- unspoken principles of cooperation
- written or oral agreement
- lack of time
- great distance
- external problems
- lack of trust
- low activity of the parties
- does not listen to what the other party says
- family does not support participation in mentoring
- deviation from the initial goals
- feeling of threat
- does not share enough of their experience
- the mentee develops a habit of asking the mentor everything
- diversity of opinions
- negations caused by everyday problems
- deficit of positive emotions
- chaotic requirements
- insufficiency of pedagogical knowledge
- different understanding of values
- disinterest of the mentor, lack of knowledge, heavy workload and lack of time
- inability to establish constructive communication.
- demotivation (from fear, inappropriate goals set, not knowing what they want, conflicting values, insufficient autonomy, no challenges, confusion, loneliness, burnout, not knowing next steps)





7. Evaluation of the youth mentorship movement and conclusion of cooperation

7.1. Evaluation of participation in the youth mentorship movement

Evaluation is organized at different times: at the beginning of the program, in the middle, at the end, after time and in formats: reflection, joint (group) conversation, self-evaluation, etc.

In evaluation, it is important to observe:

- timeliness (in relation to the program schedule)
- target group reachability (respondents are available, easily reachable)
- convenience in data collection (methodology vs. time)

Evaluation is necessary for ourselves (mentorship participants and involved parties). With the help of evaluation, we can reflect on achievements. Before we define evaluation questions, we need to answer the question – What do we want to evaluate? Process, result or impact? This will facilitate both the creation of evaluation content and the selection of methods.

Various methods can be used for assessment (maximum interactive/visual):

- questionnaires (in person, offline)
- interviews (focus groups, individual)
- content analysis (content analysis – social media, statistics)
- experiment (e.g. tests)
- observation in nature

Mentoring evaluation questions at the end of the mentoring program:

- What results were achieved during the mentoring?
- Were the goals set at the beginning achieved?
- Has mentoring contributed to the motivation of the target group to learn/work/create and how?
- What are the main benefits of the mentoring experience? etc.

The final evaluation is a great opportunity to have a conversation about the experience as a whole:

- What was accomplished (facts)?
- How did I feel during the mentoring/what did I experience (emotions)?
- What did I learn during the mentoring (awareness)?
- How will I experience future use (transformation)?⁷



7.2. End of cooperation

In the youth mentorship movement, it is important not only to set a start and end date, but also to mark the end with a special activity and/or event. This can be a ceremonial closing event of participation in the youth mentorship movement – a party for all involved, an article in local media and social networks, a participatory initiative (an official meeting of participants with municipal employees, a flash mob, posting a video story created by participants on social media channels, etc.), a joint closing hike or picnic (only for mentors or together with mentees). At the end, participants can be presented with certificates of participation in the youth mentorship movement, as well as any other events appropriate to local reality and opportunities.

Tips for ending a mentoring relationship:

- Prepare a closing report
- Be prepared to respond to sadness, frustration, or even anger about the end of the relationship
- Discuss with the parties involved what has been achieved during the program
- Discuss what future educational or career goals are
- Plan a special event so that in an informal setting you can discuss what has been achieved with a wider audience and
- Celebrate achievements
- Inform if a new program is planned, etc.⁸

⁸ Mentoring Guide, CarrerConnect https://site-484428.mozfiles.com/files/484428/Mentoring_Guide.pdf



8. Follow-up activities

There will always be mentors and mentees who want to continue their work. It is essential that the youth mentorship movement provides young people with this opportunity. Follow-up activities can be various:

- participation of mentors and mentees in a new program;
- involvement of mentees in the youth mentorship movement as mentors;
- joint recreational activities after some time to look back on what has been achieved from a different perspective;
- participation in disseminating information about the Youth Mentor Movement to other young people, etc.

The end of a mentoring partnership does not mean the end of the relationship. Former mentees and mentors are a great resource for future initiatives. As with any collaborative network, it is important to maintain communication in the long term (this can be through specially organized small events/activities or simply by disseminating current information in a common communication tool).

There are various ways to continue to maintain contact between the parties involved. For example, an electronic newsletter sent out via e-mail; a thematic closed Facebook group; a joint lunch once a month for all stakeholders; an invitation to participate in each other's idea and problem-solving sessions; an invitation to participate in joint social events, etc.⁹

⁹ Mentoring Guide, CarrerConnect https://site-484428.mozfiles.com/files/484428/Mentoring_Guide.pdf



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If you have any questions, please contact NGO "Youth Leaders Coalition" www.waytothink.lv, proj@inbox.lv, +37129209607 (ENG, LAT, RUS). We would also be grateful for comments and feedback!