

Seedling's Promise - FAQs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

If my mentee changes schools, what do I do?

Let the Seedling Program Mentor director know. She will assist you in following your mentee if you are willing and able to do so.

What if my mentee has a problem that he/she does not want to share with family or teachers or counselors?

Unless your mentee is in physical danger, ask permission to talk to his/her counselor. Listen carefully. Trust and confidentiality are the foundation of successful mentoring relationships.

What should I do if my mentee misbehaves?

Let your mentee know what your expectations are and what you will do in the future (e.g., report the incident to the counselor, terminate the session, or whatever seems appropriate to you). Be clear, firm and consistent without becoming angry.

What if my mentee does not seem to care about his/her education?

Be patient, listen and communicate the importance of education. Though you can be clear in stating your belief that education is essential, be non-judgmental in your exploration of alternatives and consequences.

How do I respond if my mentee asks a question that I cannot answer?

It is natural not to have all the answers; the important thing is to be honest in admitting that you don't know. Offer to help your mentee learn the answer, or let them know you will try to find out the answer for your next meeting.

What if my mentee mentions the incarcerated parent?

Listen carefully. If the child is expressing pain or sorrow to be separated from his/her parent, say, "It must be very difficult for you not to see your mommy/daddy every day." Then listen and let the child talk. The key issues are: letting the child know that you heard the pain expressed—and letting the child know that you are willing to have the conversation.

What if my mentee never mentions the incarcerated parent?

Then just be a consistent and caring presence in your mentee's life and know you are making a difference.

How do you close a relationship with a child?

Take turns talking about the activities you have shared that were most special to each of you.

Talk about what the relationship has meant to you and give your mentees an opportunity to do the same.

If you definitely plan to return in August, tell your mentees so. Let them know that you will think of them over the summer. If you want to, you could give your mentees stamped, addressed envelopes so they could write you.

You might give your mentees a picture of you, or of the two of you, for safe keeping until you see one another again.

If you wanted to give your mentee a gift, our program strongly recommends giving a book. Ask the school librarian for an age appropriate recommendation. Many children who live in poverty do not own a book.

If you know for certain that you will not be returning in August, it's important for you to let your mentees know that. Please do emphasize that your ending the relationship has nothing to do with them or anything that they did "wrong." Children tend to personalize adult decisions and it's important that they not feel responsible for your leaving the relationship.

Do a final project together that they could take home with them. Bring your camera and take a picture of the two of you that your mentee can keep.

Make a calendar together so that they can see when you will be coming back to see them.

These special gestures will ease the sadness your mentee might feel about "losing you" — if only for the summer months.

Do you have a question? Just click the link below and send it to our Mentor Directors! Your question may be added to the FAQ page.

Director Email

Thank you again for the wonderful job you are doing as an informed Mentor.