



Mentee Training Handbook

**Springfield School Volunteers
School-Based Mentoring Program**

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General Program Information

Congratulations for being selected as a participant in the Springfield School Volunteers School-Based Mentoring Program! This handbook has been developed to help answer any questions you may have and prepare you for your role as a mentee! Here are some of the topics it will cover:

- General program information
- What is a mentor?
- Being a mentee
- Ways to connect with your mentor
- Who can I talk to if I have more questions?

About Springfield School Volunteers

Springfield School Volunteers (SSV) is a non-profit organization that has been matching the resources of the community with the needs of the Springfield Public Schools since 1969. Our focus is to provide academic support to Springfield's public school students in alignment with the school district's priorities through our core programs.

Mission of the School-Based Mentoring Program

The mission of the School-Based Mentoring Program is to match students in the Springfield Public Schools with caring adult volunteers who: serve as positive role models, promote academic achievement, encourage consistent attendance at school and promote the achievement of social, emotional and behavioral goals.

Program Information

SSV's mentoring program is **school-based** - meetings between mentor and mentee take place on school grounds, during the school day and during the school year. Matches do not meet outside of school, during school vacations, or in the summer unless there is an SSV-sponsored match activity.

The minimum expected time commitment is one hour per week for one school year.



What is a Mentor?

Mentoring is a two-way street. Mentors AND mentees play a crucial role in the success of the relationship!

A Mentor IS ...

A Listener – A mentor will ask thoughtful questions and carefully listen to you.

A Guide – Mentors can help you to navigate different situations by sharing their own experiences.

A Resource Broker – A mentor can help you find resources and information that you may find difficult to find on your own. They will help you find places to look so that later you can do it for yourself.

An Advocate – A mentor will support you with your goals, dreams, and ambitions.

A Confidant – A mentor is someone you can share things with and trust they will not repeat it to others (*exception: see confidentiality Page 2*)

A Mentor is NOT...

A Parent – Mentors are not trying to take the place of your parent, nor are they there to tell you what to do the way parents and guardians do.

An ATM Machine – Your mentor may at times bring you a special treat, but mentors are not there to give you money and presents. Instead, a mentor may help you create goals for how you want to achieve things in the future.

A Social Worker or Therapist – Mentors are not (necessarily) mental health professionals, but they can help guide you to a social worker or therapist if you need someone else to talk to.

A Babysitter – Mentors are not just there to entertain you. You both should play an active role in deciding how you want to spend your time together.

A Tutor – You can work on schoolwork or homework with your mentor if you both agree, but you don't have to. You can just talk or do fun activities.

Some Famous Mentor/Mentee Pairs

Yoda and Luke Skywalker (*Star Wars*)

Tony Stark (*Iron Man*) and Peter Parker (*Spiderman*)

Dwayne Wade and LeBron James (*Basketball*)

Steve Jobs (*Apple*) and Mark Zuckerberg (*Facebook*)

Harry Potter and Professor Dumbledore (*Harry Potter*)

Being a Mentee

Mentee Do's	Mentee Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be respectful• Show up to meetings• Let school know if you will be absent the day of your meeting• Participate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be late to meetings• Expect gifts or money• Be passive or always wait for your mentor to start the conversation• Use meetings just to get out of class

Some Things to Expect...

- To meet with your mentor every week
- To participate in skill-building activities and set personal goals
- Information shared between you and your mentor to remain confidential

Confidentiality

In our program confidentiality means that mentors won't share anything they learn during their meetings with you with anyone, except...

- ...program or school staff. Program and school staff are here to support your relationship with your mentor so at times there is information we need to make sure it's going well.
- ...when they believe there is a possibility of harm or danger to others. Your mentor will let you know if there is something they need to disclose to program or school staff.

Boundaries

Boundaries are the healthy dividing lines between you and your mentor. There are three types of boundaries you should be aware of:

- **Physical** – It should be clear between you and your mentor what type of physical contact is acceptable. No contact should ever feel uncomfortable to either of you, so decide what type of physical contact, if any, you and your mentor will have. For example, is it okay for your mentor to give you a hug at the end of your meetings?
- **Emotional** – Deciding what and how much personal information to share with your mentor can be challenging. You may bring up sensitive issues such as sexual activity or drug use. Your mentor will listen without judging. Your conversations are always confidential unless you or someone else may be harmed. How much information you share is entirely up to you.
- **Cultural** – There are different behaviors, customs, beliefs and ways of speaking that are acceptable to some, but not to others. It is important to set cultural boundaries without judging.

Ways to Connect With Your Mentor

There are many ways to build a relationship with your mentor. Below are some things you can try!

- Get to know them by asking questions like...
 - Where do you work? What do you do for work?
 - What do you like to do for fun?
 - Do you have any pets?
 - What made you smile today?
 - Did you have a mentor when you were younger? If so, how did it impact you?
 - What are you looking forward to this week?
- You can each make a list of 25 things you want to do or accomplish during your lifetime and share your lists with one another.
- Play a board game together.
- Discuss the places you would like to travel to and why.
- Talk about what kinds of activities you would like to do in future sessions.
- Pick a topic and take turns discussing it:
 - If I could have one superpower it would be _____ because _____.
 - The most important thing to know about me is _____.
 - Three kinds of jobs I could see myself doing in the future are _____.
 - If I could change **ONE** thing about school, it would be _____.
 - If I could have any animal as a pet it would be a _____ because _____.
- Make a dream board/collage.
- Talk about your interests and goals.
- Talk about or listen to your favorite music together.
- Watch a video or read something (together or separate) and then discuss it.

Who Can I Talk To If I Have More Questions?

When matching you with a mentor, Springfield School Volunteers tries our best to match you with the best possible fit. Sometimes even though a match seems like a good fit on paper, that is not always the case. If you have questions or concerns about your meetings with your mentor, including your specific concerns about your mentor, you can talk to your school guidance counselor or contact someone from our office. Our contact information is below. Keep in mind that from time to time an SSV staff member will be checking in with you to see how things are going. These check-ins are a good opportunity for you to share your thoughts and feelings about your match and the program.

Springfield School Volunteers Contact information:

Telephone: (413) 787-7100, Extension 55697

Email Address: volunteer@springfieldpublicschools.com

Mailing Address: 1550 Main Street 3rd Floor, Springfield MA 01103

Website: www.springfieldschoolvolunteers.org

Our Staff

Denise N. Cogman, President and CEO

Katherine Gasque, Finance and Administrative Support Specialist

Patricia Hanson-Staples, Director of Programs and Services

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Social Media

Check out SSV on social media!

Facebook: [@springfieldschoolvolunteers](https://www.facebook.com/springfieldschoolvolunteers)

Twitter: [@SSVvolunteers](https://twitter.com/SSVvolunteers)

Instagram: [@ssvvolunteers](https://www.instagram.com/ssvvolunteers)