



**TEXARKANA**

Independent School District



# Tiger Mentor Program



# **Mentoring . . . a joint effort on behalf of children.**

School age youngsters today have too few people in their lives that are able and willing to support and motivate them to identify and achieve their goals in life.

Texarkana Independent School District feels that our students will benefit from a variety of mentoring program such as: Lunch Buddy, which pairs a student with an adult for one hour a week during lunch time; Boys to Men Academy, which provides a group of boys ages 9-14 with a character lesson every other week provided by a male role model; Precious Gems, which provides a girl ages 9-14 with a professional woman to eat lunch with twice a month or a speaker twice a month.

Mentoring is an important answer to this need. Mentors can help students gain the skills and confidence to be responsible for their own future.

Students begin to “be” what they believe other people think of them. If students are given negative images of themselves, they begin to think of themselves accordingly, and may not learn. This program proposes to place caring individuals with students who need positive support for their educational and personal growth.





# Overview

## *What is a Mentor?*

Mentoring is part of TISD's volunteer program. A mentor is an older, more experienced individual who seeks to further the development of character and competence in a younger person. He or she is committed to expending the time and energy necessary to help the student succeed in school. The role of the volunteer is multi-faceted. Mentors care about the youth of today and quality education.

## *Mentor Attributes*

- A strong desire to help children succeed in school
- The ability to perceive and respond to the needs of children
- A willingness to invest time and energy in mentoring a child
- The belief that every child can learn, although each learns differently and at a different rate
- A sense of humor
- An enthusiasm to perform community service

## *What is required?*

- Commit to participating in the program for at least one school year and meet once a month
- Attend mentor training session (one hour)
- Submit an application
- Conduct all meetings on school grounds





# Mentor Guidelines

- Be on time. Remember that students are looking forward to your visits.
- Be positive, firm, fair, friendly, alert, organized, and conscientious!
- Be prudent and professional in any physical contact or public display with students.
- Keep all promises. If you cannot be at the mentoring session, be sure to call the school in advance to inform teachers and students. Don't forget, your students expect you to be there.
- Do not give students your home phone number.
- Some of the students in the program will come from economically disadvantaged homes. You may be tempted to provide presents or other material items. This is not appropriate and may distort the purpose of the program.
- As a role model, set an example that can help students improve their attitude toward education and will develop their enthusiasm for learning.
- Confidentiality is important. If your student shares sensitive issues with you, these matters should not be discussed with family or friends. Some issues may arise that you feel must be addressed. The Principal or Campus Contact may assist you with any such matters.
- Business attire is appropriate.
- Remember you are a guest on the campus and although you are certainly welcome and appreciated, we operate under the school's rules. Smoking is not permitted.
- Every effort should be made to ensure the students feel privileged and proud to be chosen for this extra attention.



# Mentor Suggestions

- Talk about yourself and your job.
- Language is very important. Negative remarks hinder the learning process and tend to sour relationships.
- Be sensitive to a student's mistakes, but VERY PATIENT.
- Be sure to learn the name, birthday and other important information about the student.
- Give students an opportunity to tell you about personal events that have happened since your last meeting.
- Praise and encourage students frequently.
- Help the students develop a positive self-image by providing them with positive comments. For example, you may say that a student works hard, has good ideas, you enjoy his/her company, etc.
- Students who feel they can't learn, won't learn.  
You can help by providing positive experiences.
- Read newspapers and magazines together.
- Attend special school programs or assemblies with students.
- Have lunch together.
- Hold mock job interviews.







# Do's . . .

- Do take time to establish rapport.
- Do keep the student's information confidential, as long as he is not planning to hurt himself or others.
- Do be prepared for the student's appearance and language. Be aware of your own feelings about student's hair, use of profanity and clothing fads.
- Do be aware of limitations. You cannot change the student's home situation.
- Do remember that everyone has strengths.
- Do be yourself.
- Do be aware that the student's value system may be different from your value system.

# Don'ts . . .

- Don't get discouraged if your student's progress does not meet your expectations.
- Don't get discouraged if you offer advice and the student doesn't respond.
- Don't feel awkward with silence. Use silence to allow the student to make choices.
- Don't take ownership of the problem. The problem belongs to the student.
- Don't feel like you need to have all the answers.
- Don't wait on the child to initiate a phone call.





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## **For More Information Contact:**

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