



The Mentors Plus Match

For members of the Mentors Plus Family

March, 2023


Volume 11, No. 3

Quote of the Month

Coming together
is a beginning.
Keeping together
is progress.
Working together
is success.

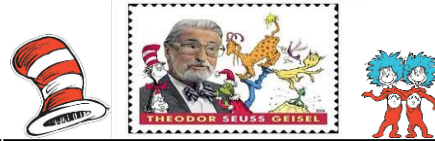
Henry Ford

Mentors Plus has been made quite a few new matches since we could again meet face to face in August. Many of our longer matches survived the Covid19 break are happy to be meeting regularly once more. It's important that we take what Henry Ford said to heart. Having a successful match takes two people understanding that spending time together is important and that any good, strong relationship develops over time - doesn't happen instantly.

Keeping this in mind helps! Julie 

Fun Things to Do Anytime

- *Bundle up, then take a winter walk & shoot pictures of landscapes to share.
- *Snow Art: Fill spray bottles with water & food color, then decorate the snow in your yard or that of a fun-loving friend.
- * Visit one of our local colleges to find out more about what's available.
- * Learn to do some new magic tricks with your mentee, then do a show.
- * Introduce your mentee to a free tax program on-line or pick up a form at the library/post office and try the process of doing a simple tax return.
- * March 2nd is Dr. Seuss' birthday. Get your favorite book out of the library & read it with a youngster.



January Announcements

★ Please submit February Reports by Friday, 3/10/23.

★ **Mentors Plus Orientation:** Orientations are currently being arranged individually. Please have anyone interested call Julie.

Mentors Meeting, 3-1-23 Tools for Building Resiliency with Youth

2100 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford,
6:00 p.m. Light dinner served –
RSVP to Julie, 248 672-0730



Julie's Corner



Mentor Thad, Jackie and their current exchange students enjoying better weather – hope they can send some our way!

People will forget
what you said, people
will forget what
you did, but people
will never forget
how you made
them feel.

MAYA ANGELOU

**The Significance of Sleep
(For Youth – Helps them
learn more easily.) Please
watch: YouTube: Why is
sleep Critical for the Brain
and the Body. (Science Sleep)**

**The Significance of
Sleep (for Adults)
Please watch: Ted
Talk Summary: Why
Do We Sleep, by
Russell Foster.
(10 minutes)**



Oakland County Youth Assistance

Mentors Plus

Be a friend. Show the way.

Oakland County Circuit Court-Family Division
Oakland County Youth Assistance
1200 N. Telegraph Road, Building 14 East
Pontiac, MI 48341-0452
248-858-0041





TO ALL OUR MENTORS, WHO DO SO MUCH TO SUPPORT THEIR MENTEES!

PLEASE SEND IN PICTURES OF YOUR ACTIVITIES WITH YOU AND YOUR MENTEE OR ARTICLES THAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO WRITE. PLEASE GET THEM TO JULIE BY THE MIDDLE OF EACH MONTH. WE REALLY APPRECIATE THOSE OF YOU, WHO ARE DOING THIS ON A REGULAR BASIS ALREADY!

Please visit our FACEBOOK page to see MORE PICTURES!

Did you know that Mentors Plus is on Facebook? Be sure to check out our Facebook page for updates about Mentors Plus and for photos of past events. <https://www.facebook.com/mentorsplusprogram> While you're there, be sure to share and click "Like" on posts to improve our visibility on Facebook timelines. Are you not familiar with using Facebook? The following are links to tutorials: <http://goo.gl/SncwQm>, <http://youtu.be/ewlC5p851KE>, <http://freefacebooktutorials.com/>, and <http://youtu.be/ZpLiODJsp4Q>



Henry Ford Museum – a terrific place to have fun and learn! Tickets are available with a week's notice to Julie!



Focus on Youth (To share with your mentee, if applicable)

Our Mentor Meeting on Wednesday, March 1st will be focusing on how we can help our Mentees build more resilience in addressing life's challenges and communicate better with others. Please join us at 6:00 for dinner and to honor all the people who have agreed to Mentor in Mentors Plus.



REMEMBER ME

Teaching Social Skills to Today's Teenagers

Gabe and Neil making the most of our winter weather by enjoying sledding recently





Today's Teenager

Understand | Reach | Influence

Roy Petitfils, LPC

"We're losing social skills: how to read a person's mood, their body language, how to be patient until the moment is right to make a point. Too much exclusive use of electronic information dehumanizes what is a very, very important part of living together." ~Vincent Nichols

As a kid, I lacked social skills.

I struggled to make and keep friends. I was needy, insecure, abrasive and obnoxious. I talked too much about myself and my interests, didn't listen enough, pretended to know what others were talking about when I didn't, tried too hard, picked at my skin,

bit my fingernails and laughed obnoxiously loud. To make matters worse, I was poor, morbidly obese and lacked good hygiene habits that helped further isolate me.

At the time, I thought those behaviors were *who I was*.

Today, I realize that those actions were ***how I was***.

As a young adult, a few families and one priest showed me, by example and explicit teaching, ways of being around other people that nurtured relationships. They helped me adjust how I was showing up so that who I was could shine through.

Today's young people are severely lacking in social skills.

I'm not referring to differently wired, twice exceptional, ASD, AD/HD and OCD youth whom we expect to have social deficits. I'm talking about youth without any exceptionalities who are growing up without basic social skills they need to get through life.

What can we do about it?

Model Appropriate Social Behavior

Young people watch and learn from people they respect. Let them watch you do the following:

- *Avoid gossiping by smoothly changing the subject or letting a gossiping session die down.*
- *Play conversational ping pong by taking turns talking about yourself and asking about the other person.*
- *Listen deeply and avoid interrupting others.*
- *Make them aware when they interrupt you, their siblings or anyone else. Do this in private soon afterward if the situation isn't appropriate in that moment.*
- *Smile often.*
- *Look for the silver lining, the good in other people.*

- *Find ways to make bad situations better.*
- *Encourage and affirm them, your spouse and other people.*
- *Don't take slight's personally.*
- *Open doors for others*
- *Give up your seat*
- *Make small talk, looking for common interests*
- *Show genuine interest and curiosity about others without being intrusive*
- *Show respect by saying "please" and "thank you"*

“Who” We Are is Different from “How” We Show Up

Depending on the age of the teen, you can help them make this distinction. This is especially important for teen boys, who tend to over identify with their behavior, good or bad. You can help them to see that their identity, who they are, is deeper than how they interact with others. You can help them to see, that making changes in the way they interact with others does not mean they are changing *who* they are. You can make this point most effectively by helping them to see how they might talk, act differently depending upon who they are with. You can also help them to see how different situations in their life might merit different language and behaviors. For example, how you act with your friends and what you say to them is most likely different than what you'd say when you're hanging with the Pope. Teens usually get this and therefore get the main point.

Point out Good and Bad Social Interactions

Start by asking them about their perception of an interaction or a particular social dynamic that did not involve you or them. This is not a time to gossip about others, but it can be a good teaching opportunity. You can make the teaching point by saying, "Here's what I saw..." "Here's what I did...and I said/asked/did that because..." and "Does that make sense?" Then you could say, "I know I was talking with an adult, how do you think that would play out with your friends?"

Bring Attention to Their Social Strengths and Weaknesses

Often adults will fear shaming kids or insulting their intelligence by bringing attention to their prosocial and antisocial behaviors. Many young people today need to explicitly teach them how to be socially appropriate. Some tips:

Point out 2-3 examples of their strength for every weakness. Because we don't want to destroy a young person's confidence, we tend to say nothing. But this doesn't help them. It allows them to believe what they're doing is working, even when they know it isn't working. You need to bring attention to their weaknesses, but always start with a positive. Teens will know you're about to give them a critique, but will still appreciate your affirmation. Make sure to end with an encouraging word.

Give Other Adults Permission to Help

I say this often, because it's true. It does take a village. But today, because we don't live in the village, we must be intentional about creating it for ourselves and our teens. Ask other significant adults in your child's life to help you teach them these skills. If you are that other adult, ask permission from the child's parent to begin dialoguing with their teen about developing pro-social behaviors. Too many adults are afraid of offending teens by doing this, but today's teens respect adults for being direct. This doesn't mean abrasive or blunt. It means that in the context of your relationship, intentionally looking for opportunities to model, mentor, teach pro social behavior.

**Continue to make this year one of being curious,
learning lots and overcoming challenges.**