Changing our nation for good!

Youth Mentors

A resource for Christians with the courage to guide a young person on their journey

Find a DVD with a training video in the back cover of this manual
HEARTLINES

About HEARTLINES

HEARTLINES is an organization which helps people to talk, think and ACT on good values. We make FILMS, books and TV programmes, and use SMS and the internet to get people to do things which will be GOOD for themselves, for others and for South Africa as a whole.

HEARTLINES promotes good values – values such as compassion, responsibility, perseverance, courage, service, selfless love, acceptance, honesty, forgiveness, second chances and self-control. The failure to live out these values leads to many of our social problems, such as HIV/AIDS, crime and corruption. In line with this vision, HEARTLINES supports the ONE-LOVE campaign, which encourages people to live out values such as honesty and faithfulness in relationships, and stick to one sexual partner, so as to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS.

HEARTLINES has established the forgood movement, which supports people who want to take action for good by connecting people through an innovative social networking platform using cellphone and website. Go to www.forgood.co.za to find out more.

HEARTLINES is a not-for-profit company, which receives funding from donors such as the United States President’s Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), the Anglo American Foundation and the First Rand Foundation, amongst others.

A word from Young & Able

Young & Able Youth Advisory Services cc is a personal and business development consultancy committed to helping young people activate their potential. We also assist business to understand today’s young people and the way in which they see the world around them. We are an implementing partner to HEARTLINES and as such are responsible for steering this mentorship programme. Research has proven that young people have incredible capacity to bounce back from challenging circumstances if they feel loved and supported. We are pleased to support your efforts to impact a young person’s life, for good. We invite you to use this resource firstly to look inside yourself, at the kind of person you are, and ask yourself the tough questions. We ask that you then look around and find a young person whose journey you can share. www.youngable.com
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We at Heartlines have taken precautions to ensure that our mentoring resources are used by responsible people and for the good of all mentees. However, we will not be liable should someone use our resources improperly, or create unhealthy relationships which result in harm to either a mentor or mentee.
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At its heart, mentorship is about a shared journey between two people; one with more life experience and one with less. Mentorship provides us as Christians with a relational context in which issues of faith can be worked out and applied to our daily lives. It gives us people to look up to and to whom we feel a measure of accountability. We find many examples of mentoring in the Bible where people of faith fanned the flame of faith in someone else, and there is much we can learn from these biblical examples.

In the book of Acts we read how Barnabas came to Paul’s aid and began to mentor him shortly after Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus. Even though the church leaders were fearful and mistrustful of Paul, Barnabas defended Paul and encouraged the elders to accept the truth of Paul’s conversion. The two later travelled together throughout Asia Minor, doing the work of the Kingdom and planting churches. Theirs was a deep friendship that encouraged Paul in his new faith.

Barnabas’ name means “Son of Encouragement” and this is the role he played in Paul’s life. Later, Paul took the young man Timothy under his wing and referred to him as his son in the faith. Through a letter to Timothy he passed on this heritage of mentorship and discipling and encouraged Timothy also to be a mentor by saying, “The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

(2 Timothy 2:2)

Mentorship – a strategy for your church

There are many discipleship tools that assist new believers to grapple with the tenets of our faith and grow in their relationship with God. In modern times however discipleship too often takes the form of an academic process; we are given discipleship materials to study in our own time, or we sit in a big group and listen to someone at the front of the room talk about how to be more Christ-like. While these have their place, discipleship should never be a process devoid of real relationship and authentic personal engagement with believers. Mentorship can bring authentic relationship into the process of growing grounded believers. Mentoring needs to continue to be a tool that the church uses in the development of its people. The need has never been greater for people of mature faith to come alongside those who are starting out and to walk part of life’s journey with them, supporting, encouraging and advising.

More and more churches are making mentoring an important strategy in the life of their church.
Some suggestions on how to do that:

- Encourage people to find their own mentor and mentee from people they already know.
- Use sermons and Bible studies to encourage everyone to be a mentor and to have a mentor (be a mentee). We have some materials that can help you to get started in this area, so please contact us.
- Provide training on mentorship for all those interested. You can use information from this manual and the enclosed DVD to help you. You can also contact us at Heartlines if you need more support in the area of training.
- Where people cannot find their own mentors and mentees, the church can link people up.
- Provide support mechanisms through counsellors and advisers for those involved.
- Keep things simple—don’t make it too difficult for people to get involved.
- Provide a forum for mentors and mentees to share with the church how this is helping them in their spiritual walk. Tell their stories! That way more people will want to be a part of it.

Make mentoring a way of life in your church

Use the Heartlines mentorship initiative as a support for those involved.

Encourage people to register as a Heartlines mentor by going to www.forgood.co.za, or by smsing the word “mentor” to 33250.
This manual is designed to help you to mentor young people. It is divided into three sections.

**SECTION 1** So you want to be a mentor?

This section has a number of activities that will allow you to reflect on why you want to mentor a young person, what you have to share with them and what you need to be aware of if you are to be a mentor. The activities are designed for you to do on your own, though you could also do them with a friend or group that also wants to mentor. You should work through this section before you start to mentor a young person.

**SECTION 2** Skills for mentoring

This section outlines many of the skills that a mentor needs. For example, it looks at how to build trust, how to listen and how to give advice. You can use this section as a reference as you begin to mentor a young person.

**SECTION 3** Understanding young people

This section gives information on how young people grow and develop. It also gives advice that you may need if the young person you mentor is facing a particular difficulty, such as substance abuse or pregnancy. The section gives you ideas on what you can do, how to refer the young person and a list of organisations that you can refer them to.

At the end of the manual, you will find a contract that you and the young person and their parents can sign if they agree to form a mentoring relationship with you.

You will also find a training DVD in the cover of this manual. This will help you to become an effective mentor and will give you some inspiring stories to motivate you.
In every society, a young person’s primary source of support and guidance is the family. Admittedly, in different cultures the term “family” is defined either broadly to include the extended family, or narrowly to mean only parents and children.

In South Africa there is tremendous strain placed on the family structure, however it is defined. This is because of social pressures, such as parents who live far from their children in order to work, single-parent households, and death of parents owing to crime, road accidents or diseases such as HIV/AIDS. For many young people, the traditional networks of support are not there, leaving them particularly vulnerable to peer pressure and poor decision-making. The old saying is true: it does take a village to raise a child and in the Church family, this presents an opportunity. So that’s where you come in. As Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). You can become a mentor to a young person that you know, and this manual will help you to find out how.

We want to support you on this mentoring journey. We have set up a support line where you can access advice on whatever issue you or the young person you are mentoring may be facing. And if we can’t help you, we will do our best to connect you with someone who can. You can reach us in these ways:

The HEARTLINES Mentor Helpline: 0860-MENTEE (636833)

Sms your query to 33250

Email us at mentors@forgood.co.za

Mentoring skills as life skills

If you become involved in a young person’s life through mentoring, you will certainly benefit young people in particular and society in general. More than this, it will help you to develop many skills that are useful in a wide variety of contexts. Some of these skills are the ability to communicate, to resolve conflict and to listen. You will also need to navigate the relationship with the young person’s family and community with wisdom and sensitivity. You will have to figure out when to challenge them and when to offer praise. This requires a certain amount of assertiveness.

Beyond the “hard skills” required in our economy, we also need these “soft skills” in order to grow and reach our potential as a nation. Becoming a mentor will help you to grow in ways you can only imagine.
Mentors have played an important role in all societies. For example, in African tradition young people are mentored into adulthood by older men and women, who teach them how to behave through stories and ceremonies and by example. Can you think of any examples of mentoring from your cultural heritage? In the Bible, there are many examples of mentoring. For example, Moses mentored Joshua and groomed him to lead Israel into the promised land. Paul mentored Timothy as he grew into a church leadership role. Naomi mentored Ruth, a Moabitess, and taught her about the God of Israel and His ways. Elizabeth mentored Mary. Even Jesus played a mentoring role with his twelve disciples and other followers. ‘Discipleship’ is a term used for a more intensive form of mentoring and teaching others specifically to follow the ways of Jesus.

"For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son, whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church."

“Paul and Timothy” – a mentoring relationship

1 Corinthians 4:17
A mentor can be someone:

- from the family, such as an aunt or uncle or older cousin
- older and more experienced whom you look up to
- who teaches a set of skills, like a music teacher, a sports coach or a woodwork teacher
- we meet at work who helps us to learn about our job
- someone you worship with who can help you make good decisions.

Mentoring can take place in an informal setting just through conversations, it can be organised with a group such as a youth group, or it can be set up to help a young person learn a particular skill or job.

Most of us already have a young person or young people in our lives that we interact with – a child of a relative, a neighbour or a friend. Perhaps a child in your community has been orphaned because of HIV/AIDS, or is looking after ill parents, and you want to get involved. This manual is designed to help you add value to these relationships, to help you influence and guide the young people you are already in touch with so that they grow up to be adults who work for good in their world.

Mentors can change society!

Mentoring really does have the potential to change our society. Many theorists today are talking about the idea of "social capital". Social capital consists of the active connections among people: the trust, mutual understanding, and shared values and behaviours that bind members of communities and make collective action possible. Where this exists, people start to act in a way that benefits not only themselves, but also others. By building social capital in individuals, we will slowly build a sense of common good, and in this way we will begin to build a South Africa founded on respect for life and for each other. Mentoring young people is one of the most powerful ways of building social capital – one young person at a time.
What young people want from a mentor

Someone:
- to listen
- to say, “You matter to me”
- to challenge them to do their best
- who takes them seriously
- who doesn’t judge them
- who respects and accepts them
- who tries to see things from their perspective
- who walks the talk
- who cares
- who will be honest and open
- whom they can trust
- who will keep their confidences
- who has the courage to challenge them when they are making a bad choice
- who can expand their horizons
- who has the grace to accept feedback.

(Source: Adapted from Intensive Caring – Practical ways to mentor youth, 1998, Group Publishing, page 27)

A mentor is not:
- a replacement for the young person’s family
- our solution to all the young person’s problems
- responsible for the decisions a young person makes
- someone who must support the young person financially.
So you want to be a mentor?

- Why be a mentor?
- Who was a mentor to you?
- What values do you want to share with young people?
- What have you learned that you can share with young people?
- What special skills do you have that you can share?
- Create your own vision for mentoring
Why be a mentor?

We know that many young people in South Africa today are vulnerable. They lead difficult lives in difficult contexts. HIV/AIDS has dramatically increased the vulnerability of children and youth, with more than a million young South Africans having lost one or both parents to the disease. Yet we also know that many young people survive these circumstances and become healthy contributing members of our society. Some do not. What makes the difference?

Recent research around child development suggests that if certain things are present in a person’s life as they grow up, they can be protected from the negative influences of the environment that they grow up in. If these things are missing then young people are at greater risk. If these things are present, young people can grow up strong in spite of adversity. Psychologists call this ability to overcome adversity “resilience”.

We can describe the things that encourage resilience as things that children have, the way they are, and the things they can do.

I have:

- people around me I trust and who love me, no matter what
- people who set limits for me so I know when to stop before there is danger or trouble
- people who show me how to do the right things by the way they do things
- people who want me to learn to do things on my own
- people who help me when I am sick, in danger or need to learn
- people who teach me about my faith, or about the importance of spiritual things
- people who pray with me and for me.

I am:

- a person people can like and love
- glad to do nice things for others, and show my concern
- respectful of myself and others
- willing to be responsible for what I do
- hopeful that things will be all right
- interested in spiritual growth.

I can:

- talk to others about things that frighten me or bother me
- find ways to solve problems that I face
- control myself when I feel like doing something not right or dangerous
- figure out when it is a good time to talk to someone or to take action
- find someone to help me when I need it
- trust God to help me with the challenges I face

Go through this list and think about how many of these things can be provided by a mentoring relationship.

(Adapted from: A guide to promoting resilience in children by Edith Grotberg, Early Childhood development: Practice and Reflections Number 8, Bernhard Van Leer Foundation)
People with resilience

Do some research and find out about people you know who have grown up strong in spite of difficult circumstances. Interview them about why they think they turned out the way they did. If you cannot find anyone to talk to, research a historical or Biblical figure (such as Joseph) who has made a difference in the world in spite of having had a tough start. Record the interviewees’ answers or the historical figure’s ideas here:

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Did any of them have a mentor or an older person who guided them? How did he or she help them to be resilient? *(Note: if using a historical or Biblical figure, you may have to research the context and culture of the times to answer this question.)*

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Gift: My name is Gift and I am a pastor in Faithways Bible Church. I have been there for many years now. I am responsible for youth and the children’s church. I am married to a beautiful woman for six years now and I have a daughter who is 20 months old – very exciting. That is basically me. Currently, I have started a business. It is a technical business. We do alarms and motorised gates and electric fences and electrical jobs.

Thabo: I am Thabo and I come from a family of four, which is my three sisters and my mum. I am the only boy, the last born. Currently, I am working with Gift in his security business. Before, I was not working.
**Thabo:** The Thabo who was before could not even talk to people. I was shy, secretive, reserved. But then I was glad for what Gift gave me. At the church I was never treated as a child. They gave me a position as a leader and that made me feel like somebody. So giving me this leadership forced me to grow. So Gift's friendship to me has been such a great help. I can speak today in front of people because of how he taught me, the things I see in his life and how he encouraged me.

I never really searched for a mentor, but I never knew my father. My father left us – me and my sisters – when I was five years old, so I had to go out there and learn on my own. Even though I never looked for a mentor I knew deep down inside I needed someone I could relate to. And I saw this in Gift. I saw that he has things that I really need to know as a young boy, as a young man. I saw things in him that could help me grow and I knew I needed someone to guide me, to lead me in those things. Our relationship started in the church, but now I talk to him about all things, even girls.

**Gift:** I remember the first time I saw Thabo. He came to the youth meeting, he had long dreads and tattoos, and I thought, “Oh God, will this one stick?” He was just wild. He came from the streets. He looked to be a wild kid, but when I spoke to him I saw a difference – I thought he was hiding something. As we talked, I realised he was willing to learn, and this drew me closer to him.

At first I did not think of being a mentor, but only recently do I see that this is what it is. For me, I took him as a young man who became a friend, and then he moved from being a friend to being a son. He got close to us and his family know when he is not home he is with us.

"It has pushed me to be a better person, especially now he is involved with me in my business."

**Gift:** Sometimes it scares me that he is watching me – I think, “If I mess up, what will Thabo say?” It has pushed me to be a better person, especially now he is involved with me in my business. I have to be consistent in church, in home and in my business. So it is beneficial to me and to Thabo, this relationship.
Who was a mentor to you?

The mentors in your life

Think back on your own life. Who has mentored you? Who helped you to grow up to be the person you are now?

Think of anyone that spent time teaching you something. Perhaps they taught you a practical skill, a life skill, faith in God or a value through their example. What did you learn from them? Are there things that people have said to you as you were growing up that have stayed with you and make an impact on the way you live?

List the mentors you had and next to their name write down the things you learned from them:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of your mentor</th>
<th>Things you learned from this person</th>
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Think about how your life would be if you had not met the people on your list.

Do you have an existing relationship with a young person? Do you use that relationship to show the young person a good way to live? Is there a young person that you already know that you could mentor? Is there a young person in your community who has lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS and could use someone to guide them?

Make a list here of young people you know who you could mentor. Next to each name write something you could teach them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of someone you could mentor</th>
<th>Something that you could teach him or her</th>
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What values do you want to share with young people?

“We become an open book when we start to work with young people. What we do is what young people learn.”

Xolani, mentor trainer

If you want to be a mentor, you need to examine your own life. What is written in your book? Because as Xolani says, the young people you interact with will be looking closely at what you say and do, and you will become a role model for them. It is important that you think about your own values before you become an open book to someone who is younger than you.

Which values influence your life?

It is important that you clarify what your values are before you help young people to think about theirs. Values are things we believe in that guide our actions, like responsibility and compassion. For example, if you value compassion you will help people in need. If you value responsibility, you will not put someone you love at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Values guide what we do, and how we behave towards other people. We also use our values to decide what is “good” and “bad”. Many of our values are formed as we grow up. They are influenced by what our friends and family say and do. For example, being polite to elders shows the value of respect for other people. As Christians, our values are rooted in our faith in God and should reflect His character.

“Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.” Hebrews 13:7

One of your most important roles as a mentor is to help the young person avoid making the mistakes that you made. You can be a mentor even if you have not always led a good life. Mistakes or bad choices in your past do not disqualify you as a mentor. In fact, it can help you to be a good mentor, as you are giving the young person the opportunity to learn from your experiences. It’s important to be honest and open about yourself and admit to your mistakes, as this will help the young person to trust and respect you.

Values in a time of HIV/AIDS

Values are particularly important as young people grow up in the context of HIV/AIDS. Young people must have a set of values passed down to them by people who care about them and who live out these values in their own lives. By adopting a set of good values, young people develop a sense of identity and a future orientation – these valuable things can help them in making choices around relationships and sexuality.
Here are some values that may be important to you:

**Compassion, honesty or integrity, forgiveness, self-control, perseverance, responsibility, acceptance**

Take each value in turn. Think about what it means. Then write an example of this value in action – how someone would show that this value is important to them. Then write about the last time you showed this value in your life. Remember to think about the value in relation to people and God’s creation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>An example of the value in action</th>
<th>The last time I showed this value in my life</th>
<th>How this value impacts on the world around me (think specifically of HIV/AIDS, the Environment etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
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<td>Honesty</td>
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<td>Forgiveness</td>
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<td>Self-control</td>
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<td>Perseverance</td>
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<td>Responsibility</td>
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<td>Acceptance</td>
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HEARTLINES has produced a series of films with discussion guides that explore each of these values. Watch them with a group of friends and discuss them. Think about whether you show these values in your life.

Call 0861 44 22 88, or email orders@heartlines.co.za to order a copy of the DVDs.
Values help us to make the right decisions

Have you ever been in a situation where you had to make a difficult choice or decision? Write a description of that situation here:

__________________________________________________________________________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________________________

What did you choose to do?

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Make a list of the values you were showing through your decision:

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Do you think you made the right choice – did you do right or wrong? Would you change your decision now? Why, or why not?

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Values guide our actions

Completing these sentences will help you to think about what your values are:

I think most adults today value or see as important ...

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

I think most young people today value ...

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

I think the three most important values for me are ...

■ ____________________________________________

■ ____________________________________________

■ ____________________________________________

So far, I have supported these values by ...

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Three values that I find challenging to put into practice are ...

■ ____________________________________________

■ ____________________________________________

■ ____________________________________________

“Sometimes you become like their mum and dad – their family. So the feedback you give to them has a big impact. So if you don’t have good values they will learn them from you – they will look at you and decide they will do the same thing. What you do can impact on them for the rest of their lives.”

Junius, mentor
Katlego uses his life experience as a focus for his mentoring. Many mentors do this. Others share particular skills that they have. It is important for you to think about the life experience and skills you may have to share with a person younger than you.

The activities on the next two pages will help you to think about your own special gifts as a mentor.

You may not have a big life experience like drug addiction to share, but we all have some life experience that has taught us something.

“"I work from my own experience. I used drugs when I was young and so I now talk to young people about my life. I know about this and so I can talk about how bad drugs are and young people listen.”

Katlego, mentor

You don’t have to be perfect to be a mentor. After all, nobody is perfect and we are still in the process of growing as Christians. But you do have to have spent some time working out your own issues, and asking God for help. It is not a good idea to mentor someone if you are struggling with very difficult issues in your own life, particularly if these issues feel overwhelming. If you are struggling, ask a friend or someone in your church or family for help and guidance. When you feel stronger then you can think about mentoring a young person.
Imagining your life as a river. Just like a river starts high up in the mountains as a trickle or a spring, so your life started when you were born. Just like a river goes over rocks and rapids and even over waterfalls, maybe you have had very difficult times. Just as a river sometimes flows slowly, maybe you have had slow or happy times. Just as a river gets bigger as it flows to the sea, you have become bigger and older over time.

Think about the river of your life.

**Were there any times in your life when you learned an especially important life lesson?**
For example, perhaps you learned about the value of relationships over material things when your parents could not afford to buy you clothes for Christmas one year, but your father sat down with you and explained why, and then spent time playing soccer with you. Or perhaps you made a big mistake in your life and ended up having to face the consequences.

Write a list here of the events that taught you something, and what they taught you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The event in my life</th>
<th>What the event taught me</th>
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**Were there any mistakes you made that taught you something?** Record them here for your own reflection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The mistake I made</th>
<th>What the mistake taught me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

These are all life experiences that young people can learn from. Keep these record sheets – you may find an opportunity to share them with a young person that you mentor.

Now, draw a picture of the river of your life. Include in the picture all the important events that have happened to you. Show them as waterfalls, rapids or slowly flowing streams. You can draw pictures of the events or write a short description of them. You may need to get a bigger piece of paper and draw your river of life on it.
1. My home – a four-roomed house (matchbox) in Soweto. We were a poor family with 10 children – six boys and four girls. I'm the seventh in the family.

2. The water flows smoothly because there was love and peace at home.

3. The rocks symbolise bad decisions that I made which disturbed the calm waters and brought turbulence to my life. (Lying to my parents about a detention for trespassing, smoking, sniffing benzene, dagga, then harder drugs, and of course alcohol.) By this time I was experimenting with crime.

4. I was imprisoned for armed robbery (two counts), and was sent to jail for 16 years.

5. This waterfall symbolises my descent into an emotional and physical hole. The reality of my actions and their consequences hit me. I lost hope. At the same time I started to get sick. I later found out I was HIV+. I had nothing to look forward to, and I was in total despair.

6. A stranger (fellow inmate) introduced me to God, and I learned that He loved me and had good plans for me. I started to have hope again, and the waters of my life started to be calmer again.

7. I was transferred to Sonderwater Maximum Security Prison. It is an island in my picture because there was no escape from it.

8. At the prison I was introduced to a nurse who was also a pastor. He gave me treatment for my sickness, but also taught me to trust in God for my healing. He was a mentor to me.

9. A kindly social worker came across my path. She helped me to discover myself. Through her I was given the opportunity to learn about my ability to influence people in a positive way. I began to use my words and my power for good, not evil.

10. The chairman of the case management committee gave me the responsibility of being a cell rep in one of the most corrupted cell blocks. I learned how to be a good leader there, as our cell became the cleanest in the section, and the men in that cell started to change for the better. By now, I started to have dreams for my future.

11. I was released from prison once I became eligible for parole. I came out a changed man, determined to build my community. I had peace and purpose. I started an organisation to help young people choose a much different path than the one I chose.

12. This boat is a row boat, not one with a motor. I am the one with the power to take myself forward. I must use my strength to reach my goal. My boat also has a mast with a sail that I can put up to catch the wind, which represents the direction my life has taken. In the boat is my daughter. She is there with me because I am the one who is protecting her.

13. In the distance is the mountain of my destiny. This is where I'm going, and what motivates me to look forward, not backwards.

(Mbongiseni “Super” Mtshali)
What special skills do you have that you can share?

Mentoring can also involve sharing a particular skill with a young person or with a group. For example, you can mentor through teaching young people how to play a musical instrument, through coaching soccer, through teaching poetry, writing, dancing, drama or singing, business skills, bricklaying, gardening or even telling jokes!

What skills do I have?

Think about each skill you have that you can share with a younger person. Write a list of all your skills:

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

Now think about any young people you know who may want to learn this skill. Make a list of them:

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

Now think about how you could teach this skill. Do you need a special place? How could you organise this? Do you need any equipment? Try and think about ways you can share your skill without needing to spend money. If you do need some resources, such as a soccer ball or a CD player for music to dance to, think about how you can get help to get these resources from someone in the community. You will find a list of some organisations that can help you with projects with youth at the back of this manual.

Write your plan for sharing your skills here:

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

“The nurse at the clinic here, she is our netball coach. We have practices every day after school. We love her and we love to play netball. We even won a district trophy last year. She is young and she is very good at netball! We always talk after we play and she tells us jokes.”

Girls in a refugee camp in Botswana
Sibongiseni: I am a theatre director and I live here in Alex, in the worst part of Alex. I started the theatre group for children out of a genuine concern. It was so heartbreaking for me to see children in my area doing bad things. I thought I can’t just sit down with the talents I have – I have to use them. I realised that most kids are energetic and there are two options for them, to use the energy for negative or positive.

So this is a contribution I make to the community. I could have made money from theatre, but I would be financially rich and spiritually poor. The one group that I have at the moment is a group of girls performing a theatre piece on abuse. It is not just a show to entertain, but to educate. It is about abuse. It has singing, poetry and dancing. I really don’t input much. Each and every song they come up with – we workshop the show.

Mbhali: We started our group in March, and we come every day after school. I come because I want to learn about problems. At school I chose dramatic art. I want to have a career in arts.

Seipati: I want to spread a message about abuse. We must not sit down and see this thing happening, we must stand up and say something.

Nomonde: We wanted to be out of the street, and we want to teach about social issues like xenophobia and abuse to other people.

Mpho: We do physical exercise first when we come here, and we also exercise our voices. Then we rehearse our play. Sibongiseni teaches us many things.

Maureen: He teaches us theatre, but if we have problems with our homework, he helps us too. He tells us to work really hard at school so we can grow up and be real artists.

Seipati: I just volunteer, it is out of passion. I don’t get paid. My dream is to take these children all over the country because I know that there are other children who experience abuse. Theatre is an easy way to teach. I don’t want to be taught with a lecture, but with theatre they are engaging their body and you are taking the message to the audience. We can use theatre to spread the message.

Kelebantswe: Being here as an artist, as an actress, I was taught how to respect and tolerate other people because we learn that things like xenophobia are wrong. I even changed the way I was behaving before I became an artist.
Create your own vision for mentoring

“An open book, tools, trees, a road and the sun!”

This is a drawing done by Xolani and Lindi, who work with City Year South Africa. They drew the picture to show why mentoring is important to them and what they want to achieve from it. Around the picture you will see what Xolani has written about his vision for mentoring. You will see he has a very big dream!

I drew these different pictures to show what it means to me to be a mentor. This drawing is an open book because when we interact with young people we become an open book. What I do is what young people learn. They learn values from me.

Then I drew some tools, like forks and spades. As a mentor I give young people tools – life skills and also technical skills.

I also drew a tree because I hope that my relationship with young people will help them to grow and bear fruit. Then there is a road, and this road starts off narrow and gets wide. This shows that when you first meet young people they sometimes feel that their road is narrow – there is little opportunity, little they can do. But my hope is that after meeting me, the road can open up for them, that they can open up to themselves and to others who can influence their life.
Then there is a sun! I hope that what I do helps young people see that there is light at the end of the dark tunnel. The sun is the hope for the future. I hope that what I have done for them will carry on to the next generation. That they will one day help other young people. In fact, I hope it will go to the seventh generation. This is my big vision — to change the world. That is a huge hope, but I think I can do it one young person at a time.

If you want to become a mentor you also need a vision. You need to think about why you want to be a mentor. Find some crayons or paints, and paint your own vision picture. Don’t worry about being a good artist, just try and show what you are feeling. Ask God to give you a picture. Painting like this can be better than words as it allows your deep thoughts and dreams to come out.

Step 1: Spend time thinking about why you have a drive to help young people. Maybe it is because of someone that helped you, or because you did not get any help and you don’t want other young people to suffer like you did. Maybe you feel you can really love and serve others in this way.

Step 2: Now paint your reasons for working with young people — what you want to see happen through it. Xolani wants to bring light to young people. What do you want to bring to young people?

Step 3: Find someone who knows you and whom you trust. Perhaps they are your mentor. Tell them about your vision for mentoring young people.

Keep your painting in a place where it can remind you of your dream. If things sometimes get a bit difficult, you can use it to inspire you again.
Kelebogile Kabanyane was a desperate young man. He was struggling to come to terms with his HIV-positive status, and was not finding any support or acceptance from his family. His uncle frequently taunted him and called him names, and said that he couldn’t stay with a person with HIV. Kelebogile told himself, “I don’t have a life anymore.” This intense sadness pushed Kelebogile to commit a desperate act. On 9 October 2007, he locked all the doors to the house and tried to take his own life.

Fortunately, caring neighbours interrupted his plans. They found out what was going on, and phoned the police. The police came and broke down the door to the house that Kelebogile had been sharing with his uncle, and they took the distraught young man to the police station. A kind police inspector named Captain Dladla took it upon himself to get involved in Kelebogile’s case. He phoned Junius Malema, a volunteer with Khulisa Crime Prevention, who came to the police station immediately to talk with Kelebogile. Over the next few hours, Kelebogile was able to unlock some of his feelings of pain and rejection in the presence of this listening ear. In the days that followed, Junius followed up on the young man and continued to show his support.

Junius was able to build a friendship with Kelebogile, which over time has enabled Kelebogile to totally change his outlook on life. Junius told Kelebogile that HIV was not the end of the world, and showed him what it meant to live a positive life.

Junius encouraged him to join a support group, and to talk about the things he was feeling. Junius saw leadership potential and courage in Kelebogile, and under his guidance, Kelebogile began to take control of his life.

Kelebogile is not just concerned with improving his own life. Says Junius, “He’s a role model on his own.” He talks to young people in his community about his story, and encourages them to know their status, and to be accepting of people with HIV. Kelebogile once again has dreams for his future. He wants to see other people living a positive life, and he wants to play a role in preventing new infections.

Says a smiling Kelebogile, “In all the difficulties that we meet, there is still hope in life that one can make a right decision.” There are many people who are glad that a caring friend helped him to learn that lesson before it was too late.
Junius, I can take him as my brother, my uncle, my friend. Whenever I walk past his place I have to go and see him, I cannot walk by. We talk a lot when we are together, what we can do to keep our lives together.
Skills for mentoring

- Building trust and setting realistic expectations
- Confidentiality!
- Allowing young people to set the agenda
- Doing things together
- Important conversations
- Caring and empathising
- Active listening
- Resolving conflict
- Managing the relationship with the young person’s family and other adults in their life
- Setting appropriate boundaries
- Challenging young people to be their best
Building trust and setting realistic expectations

It doesn’t matter what kind of mentoring situation you are in if the young person does not trust you – you will never be a mentor. Therefore the first skill to find out about is how to build trust.

**Time**

Time is important in building trust. You need to spend regular time with a mentee. Begin with non-threatening activities such as watching a soccer game on TV or going shopping together. At first, just chat and don’t try to get into deeper conversations. Introduce personal questions gradually, as it may take some time for the young person to begin to see you as a mentor and someone they can be open with, even if they have known you for a long time. The next few pages will give you ideas on how to take the conversation deeper.

Over time the young person will know that you care about them enough to spend time with them, and they will begin to trust you.

“We have spoken freely to you... and opened wide our hearts to you. We are not withholding our affection from you...”

Paul encouraging the Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians 6:11-12

**Keeping your promises**

If you make a promise to a mentee, you need to keep it. Young people will trust you when they see you back up your words with actions. You may feel sorry for the young person, but you still should not make promises to them that you can’t keep. If you cannot do something, say so. Don’t raise false expectations. Be very clear about what your relationship with the mentee will involve. You can say something like this: “I don’t have money to help you get tertiary education, but I do have time to spend with you over the next six months, and maybe this will help you to think of your own ways to get further education.”

**Sharing yourself**

Another important thing you can do is to let the young person know about you. Talk about what you have been doing, what you are thinking about, what some of your dreams are. It’s okay to talk about mistakes you’ve made and lessons you’ve learned. The more open you are with a young person, the easier it is for them to be open with you. But be careful not to share too many of your troubles – you don’t want the young person to feel that they have to look after you!
One of the most important ways to build trust is to be a person who keeps things confidential.

A mentor keeps confidentiality, as it is key to building mutual trust. Confidentiality should be a part of each conversation you have with your mentee. It does not only apply to difficult issues, but also to things like embarrassing incidents that the young person has told you about, personal goals they have, things that they overcome and things they are worried about. However, you need to outline the conditions under which confidentiality cannot be kept at the onset of your mentoring relationship. The conditions would be, for example, abuse or a threat of suicide. See the box below.

You may ask the young person for permission to share something with others if you feel it will help them, but the rule is:

**If I don’t have permission, I won’t share the information. (Not even with someone I know well and trust.)**

If you are working with young people in a group, it is important to make the whole group aware of the issue of confidentiality. They should also all agree to keep personal issues confidential.

What happens if someone in a group mentoring situation does break confidentiality? You need to confront them gently and remind them that they agreed to keep things confidential. Clarify what confidentiality means, and then help them to renew their commitment to this.

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“In it is so hard to find someone to trust. You can’t just talk about what is bothering you as people gossip and gossip about you. I think a mentor is an important person because young people can trust them. They will not gossip.”

Amy, mentor

“Gossips betray a confidence, but the trustworthy keep a secret.”

Proverbs 11:13

Look at the code of conduct for mentors at the end of this book. Confidentiality is an important part of the code.

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In some cases you do need to tell someone

You might discover that a young person is in a serious situation – one in which they or others could be endangered, such as abuse or attempted suicide. Issues of abuse or behaviour that could be seriously damaging to a person require something beyond confidentiality. The issues must be passed on to the appropriate person in a responsible way. In fact, you are bound by law to report it if you know a young person is being sexually abused. A local social worker is usually the best person to report to, but if you do not have a social worker in your area, go to the local school principal as they will know the correct procedures.

Before you do this, you need to tell the young person that you cannot keep this information confidential, as they are in danger. Discuss with them who you will report to and involve them in the process.

(Source: This text and some of the ideas on this page are taken from EYL Mentor Training, Participant Manual, page 59)
All relationships have a positive or negative power balance, and mentor relationships are no different. If you are to have a meaningful mentor relationship, the power needs to be in positive balance. You may be older and more experienced, but if you make all the decisions about what you and your mentee do together, or if you spend your time talking at the mentee, you will soon find they do not want to spend time with you. Let the young person take the lead in what you do together and, more importantly, in what you discuss. Keep a humble attitude.

But the best thing to do in general is to spend time with the young person, and slowly your relationship will grow and deepen.

**Doing things together**

Ask the young person what they would like to do with you. Sometimes young people are not used to expressing their ideas to an older person, so you may need to come up with ideas.

**Some ideas for activities to do with young people**

- Go for a walk, share an ice cream, read a book and discuss it, get a library card,
- read a newspaper, watch a movie or a play and talk about it, visit a local heritage site,
- do homework, share a meal, cook a meal, try a new food, explore nature, worship,
- celebrate important days and achievements, visit a local tech or university,
- compile a CV, take them to work with you, tour a friend's workplace, do a puzzle, exercise, play a game, watch a sports game, play soccer, plant a tree, tend a garden, clean up a public place, make something with your hands, fix something that's broken, build something,
- visit someone who is sick, learn a new song, memorise a Bible verse, learn a new dance, learn to play a musical instrument, share your favourite song and talk about why it's your favourite, tell stories, share memories, read a Bible passage, look at old photos, take new photos, volunteer at a children's home, help someone in need “just because”.

Important conversations

In a mentoring relationship, it’s important that you both have time to “just be” and to enjoy each other’s company. However, because you care about the young person and desire to guide them in a positive direction, there are some conversations that, over time, you must have with your mentee. Your own values will determine which conversations you would categorise as “must have”. You’ll have to figure out the appropriate time, and try not to force your mentee to talk if they’re not ready or willing.

Here is a suggestion for one such “must have” conversation.

Relationships, sexuality and HIV/AIDS

There are many cultural and societal taboos around these issues, but South Africa has one of the highest HIV infection rates in the world. Young people between the ages of 16 and 30 are most at risk of getting infected. So, talking about it may ultimately save lives. What values does your mentee hold regarding sexual activity? Are their attitudes, beliefs and actions likely to protect them from infection, or are they placing themselves at risk? As a mentor, you can assist them to make decisions that will greatly decrease their risk of HIV infection. Once they’ve made a decision, you can also support them to act in accordance with their decision. If your mentee is HIV-positive, you can also support them by showing them love and acceptance and helping them to live a healthy life.

Remember that your mentee will make their own decisions about their life. You may be fortunate enough to be able to influence their decisions, but ultimately they will decide and must take responsibility for their own choices.

Other possible “must have” conversations

- Setting goals for the future
- How to choose a career
- How to look for a job
- How to cope with being unemployed
- Avoiding the pitfalls that could compromise your future
- What it means to be a “good man” or a “good woman”
- How to manage family obligations and responsibilities
- The role of faith in your life
- Choosing the right friends
- Making good decisions in your relationships
- Peer pressure
- The importance of being yourself
- Budgeting, and saving money
- Making your money grow
- Avoiding debt
- Environmental issues and saving the planet
- The role of the individual in creating a better community
- Social justice and human rights
- Triumphanting over poverty
- Racism and xenophobia
- The importance of voting and being politically aware
- Having a devotional time with God
- Handling temptation
- What to do when you have failed God or people
- The importance of Christian fellowship and being involved in a church
Taking the talk deeper

It is sometimes difficult to take a conversation beyond discussion of everyday events into feelings and issues. Here are some ideas to deepen conversation:

- Explore the young person’s attitudes towards a given subject, and try to find out why they feel that way. For example, if they are not interested in voting, ask them to try to explain why. Don’t criticise their opinions, even if you don’t agree.

- Use issues that are topical to try and probe their feelings and attitudes. For example, with all the attention given to women’s issues in the month of August, it’s a good opportunity to ask them what they think about women’s role in society, how to show respect to women, etc. This can lead into a broader discussion on gender roles and stereotypes.

- Don’t use arguments to try and change their minds. Rather, if they are showing an attitude or behaviour that is potentially harmful or negative towards themselves or others, try to create an experience whereby they may change their mind. For example, if they express negative sentiments toward foreigners, try to introduce them to someone from another African country, who is contributing positively to the community and who can share their story.

- Ask open-ended questions instead of simple questions that will get just a “yes” or “no” answer. Try to explore their life and their interests in some depth. For example, don’t ask, “Do you have close friends?”, ask, “Who are your close friends?”

- Listen to their responses and follow up with more questions, for example “Why is Thapelo your favourite friend?” or “What is it that you like about Maria?”

- Volunteer information about yourself. Talk about your friends and your experiences. Share your opinions, when appropriate.

- Allow the mentee to ask you questions – don’t keep the conversation one-sided.

- Respect boundaries. Allow the mentee to signal when they do not want to talk about something personal.

Young people like to discuss big issues such as war and human rights, and this is often a good way to get the conversation below the surface of everyday things without having to discuss something too personal.
Big Brother Big Sister South Africa run a formal mentoring programme that pairs up young people who want to mentor children and teenagers who need mentors. Some of the children and teenagers, like Dominique, are in children’s homes, but others live with their families. You will find more information about the organisation at the back of this manual. This story gives an idea of how important it can be to a child to have an outside person who visits regularly and does simple activities with them.

Vicky: I joined the Big Brother Big Sister programme about a year ago. I went through the training for mentors, which was pretty intensive, and then about 10 months ago I became a Big Sister to Dominique, who is eight years old. She is in a children’s home, so it is really important for her to have contacts outside the home. I decided to do mentoring because I enjoy children and they are a big part of my life, and also for study reasons; I needed to have experience with children. I am hoping to do Education Psychology Honours next year.

I visit Dominique once a week for about an hour and a half. We do bead work and fabric painting, and we go out for lunch. Sometimes we just sit and talk.

Dominique: We play cards. I win!

Vicky: I have learned a lot from Dominique – I have loved every minute.

Dominique: I feel happy when I see Vicky because she is here! I have special angel wings from Vicky – this one just broke.

Vicky: When I met Dominique she was a very shy little girl and it was hard to talk together, but once she got to know me it was great. I was just myself and asked questions and eventually she began to talk to me.

Dominique: I like going out to the movies with Vicky and to eat lunch. We saw Brats at the movies. That was my favourite.

Vicky: I have two nieces and I have been an aunt since I was 10, and I have always had children around, so being Dominique’s friend is just an extension of that.
Organisations like Big Brother Big Sister provide a wonderful opportunity for Christians to make a difference outside the Church and to reach out with the love of Christ to those in need.

Dominique: I wish my friend Valerie could have a friend like Vicky. If Valerie had a big friend she could also go out ... to the movies.

Vicky: Being a mentor to Dominique has taught me what the real world is like for some children and what is important to children. If I look at Dominique, who comes from a children’s home so she doesn’t have lots of things like toys but she is still happy because she has people who love her here, it showed me that children don’t need lots of things.

Dominique: I draw for Vicky – I made her a card. It said “thank you for everything you do”. I am a good speller!
“What is just one hour a week for us as an adult? The impact of that will stay with the child for a lifetime. That person will always stay with the child as a reference, no matter where the child goes or no matter what they do.”

Desiree, mentor

Many young people feel that no one cares about them, including their family, their friends and even society in general. One of the most significant things you can do for a young person is to show them that you care.

You can show you care in a number of ways.

**Be yourself**
- Look in their eyes when you talk to them
- Tell them it’s okay to have the feelings they have
- Give them choices when they ask for your advice

**Help them discover new things**
- Listen to them
- Share with them strengths they have that you admire
- Share their excitement

**Remember their birthday**
- Laugh together
- Be honest
- Surprise them

**If they do something bad, remind them that good things can come from mistakes, that God still loves them and that they are of immeasurable value to Him. Delight in their discoveries**
- Mail a card or letter to them
- Call them to say hello
- Give them space when they need it

**Their dreams and nightmares**
- Laugh at their jokes
- Create traditions with them and stick to these
- Point out what you like about them

**Questions**
- Keep the promises you make
- Answer their questions
- Tell them how great you think they are

**Tell them how much you like being with them**
- Be excited when you see them
- Admit it when you make a mistake

**Tell them how proud of them you are**
- Believe in them
- Be flexible

**Delight in their uniqueness**
- Accept them as they are
- Daydream with them

**Praise, don’t criticise**
- Let them tell you how they feel
- Celebrate their firsts and lasts, such as the last day of primary school

**Ask for their opinions**
- Let them teach you

**Let them solve most of their own problems**
- Pray for them and with them

Empathy

Empathy is one of the greatest gifts you can give to someone that you have a relationship with, including your mentee. Empathy is simply the ability to place yourself in someone else's shoes. It is a skill you can teach yourself. There will be times when you feel irritated or even angry with the young person – stop and consciously try to see what things look like from their point of view, as if YOU were in THEIR shoes. Before you express anger or irritation, ask them, “What were you thinking? What was going through your head?” Try to understand from their point of view. Ask God to let you see their heart, rather than just their behaviour.

Often it seems that young people worry about things that we think are silly or trivial, but stop and think, “What is this issue like from their point of view? How would it feel to be in their shoes?” You will begin to understand why the issue is important to them. Train yourself to stop and empathise before talking or judging – it will improve all your relationships!
Active listening

Research with young people in South Africa shows that many, many young people do not feel that they have someone to talk to. They say that parents are more interested in telling them how to behave than in listening to them, and that they cannot always talk to friends as friends can gossip. So one of the most important things you can do is to listen.

"To answer before listening is foolish and shameful"
Proverbs 18:13 (TNIV)

Being a good listener

- Make sure there are no physical barriers like a desk between you and the young person.
- Listen with your 🎧 and 📝 – watch your expression and body language.
- Listen for emotions, not just words – what is their voice telling you?
- Make regular eye contact.
- Communicate acceptance and understanding through positive body language. Show you are listening through your facial expressions, nod your head or smile to encourage, where appropriate.
- Repeat what you think the person has said. This will help you to clarify what they are trying to say.
- Don’t be quick to interrupt.
- Don’t be quick to give advice.
- Relax.

(Source: Adapted from Intensive caring – practical ways to mentor youth, 1998, Group Publishing, page 17)

Mentors also need support

It is important that you have someone you can talk to and who supports you. Mentoring can be difficult, and at times you may feel sad and as if you are not able to help your mentee. Find someone that you can meet with regularly. Talk about your doubts and feelings and your achievements as a mentor. It can be a friend you trust, or an older person who is your mentor – the important thing is to talk about your concerns and feelings.

You may sometimes need to ask for advice from the person who supports you, or even from a professional such as a social worker. Remember that you need to ask your mentee for their permission to share confidential information. You will find a list of helpful organisations at the end of this book. You can also call the HEARTLINES Mentor Helpline 0860 - MENTEE (636833)
Handling conflict

What do you do if you and the young person you are mentoring get into a conflict situation?

1. Ask yourself, “Will I gain anything if I win this conflict? Will they gain anything if I win?” Tell yourself that nothing is gained by winning.

2. Now make sure you are not angry. You cannot resolve a conflict if you are angry. If you are feeling angry, take a big breath and count to 10. You should feel calmer. If this does not work then walk away for a while until you calm down. You may even have to come back another day. Explain to the young person what you are doing, so they don’t feel as though you have gone forever. Don’t say things in anger that you will regret tomorrow.

3. Think about how you are feeling. What has made you feel this way? You may find the young person has triggered something in your past history and that is why you are angry.

4. If you can talk this through without being angry, then explain to the young person how their behaviour or what they said has made you feel. Use “I” statements, not “you” statements. Don’t say, “You are being selfish and rude, and you are not showing any respect!” Say, “I feel sad when you are disrespectful to me.”

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Proverbs 15:1

We all make mistakes. If you do say words in anger, you can always admit you were wrong and apologise. This sets a good example for the young person.
Managing relationships with the young person’s family and other adults in their life

It is important to remember that you are just one person in the young person’s life. They have other adults in their life, who will support them – their teachers, their soccer coach, their dance teacher, their friends and, most importantly, their family.

You should not try to replace all of these people, but just be there if the young person needs you.

It is particularly important to manage your relationship with their family. It helps if your mentee is already part of your extended family circle or the child of friends. But whoever they are, you need to make sure that the family knows who you are and what your role is as a mentor.

If you would like to play the role of a mentor to a young person, explain to the young person and the family what this is. You can use the contracts at the back of this book to help you explain what mentoring involves.

Here are a few important rules to keep your relationship with the family healthy:

- Never criticise a young person’s family, whether you agree with the things they do or not.
- Make sure the family knows when the young person is with you and where you are going.
- Build a relationship with the family so that together you can understand and support the young person.
- Make sure the family understands your role. This way, nobody will feel threatened.
- Explain the issues around confidentiality, so they will not expect you to share with them everything the young person shares with you.
- Make an effort to learn about any rules the family has, and be careful not to break them, for example a curfew on a school night.
- Don’t try to mediate conflict between the young person and their family. Rather offer to assist by bringing in a third person, if it is agreeable to those concerned. You don’t want the family to begin to resent your presence in the young person’s life.
Setting appropriate boundaries

You need to protect the young person and yourself. Have a look at the code of conduct at the back of this manual for some important boundaries. You must also make sure that you keep some distance between yourself and your mentee. It may damage you emotionally if you take on all of their problems as your own. They also need to know when it is appropriate to contact you and when not. For example, they can call you after work, but not during work hours, unless it is an emergency. They need to know what you can help them with and what you cannot, for example you can give advice, but not money, or you can visit once a week but not more than that.

These rules will teach them about having respect for people and will also make sure that the relationship is one you can sustain. Do not make promises to do things that will become too much, as this may cause you to stop the relationship. You need to make sure it is a sustainable relationship – one that can go on for some time.

What happens if the mentoring relationship has to end?

For various reasons, you may not be able to continue to act as a mentor to the young person. Perhaps you are moving to another town, or must take on additional work or family responsibilities. If this happens, explain the situation to the young person honestly. Help them to see that you are not rejecting them, and that your time together has been very valuable for you as a mentor. Assure them that you will always have an interest in them, and, if possible, leave the door open for you to stay in touch.
Challenging young people to be their best

An important role that a mentor can play is to challenge young people to be the best they can be. Obviously you can only begin to challenge someone about changing negative behaviour once you have a relationship with them. There are a few ways we can help young people to be their best:

- By resisting the temptation to rescue them when they make a mistake. It is important that young people learn the consequences of their actions.
- By gently pointing out actions or attitudes that are inappropriate.
- By guiding them to question the negative values that surround them in our society.

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."

Hebrews 10:24

Always affirm, never break down!!!

While you should never say anything negative about a young person themselves, you can question their actions or behaviour. Young people today live with a lot of criticism. Peers are very critical and quick to gossip, teachers often break young people down, and even parents discipline through criticism. A mentor can be different. You should always affirm, even when you are challenging young people. Look for opportunities to praise them when they do things right.

Helping young people access opportunities and resources

Another useful role a mentor can play is to help young people access opportunities and resources. These can be business resources, like connecting them with business associates, or it can mean helping them to access financial support for education. But if you are unemployed or have few of these conventional contacts, don’t feel that you cannot help your mentee. You will have many resources to share with them. You can introduce them to friends with skills such as sewing or mechanics or gardening. You can connect them with positive activities such as traditional dance groups, choirs or soccer clubs. Social networks are one of the most useful things in the attempt to live positively, and you can share these with your mentee.
Sponsoring a young person’s education is quite a common thing in South Africa, but not many sponsors make the relationship a mentoring one. Zamo Danca, a young man growing up in a rural area near Port Shepstone, was lucky enough to meet a sponsor who thought he should get to know the young person he was sponsoring.

**Nigel:** A few years ago, my wife and I decided we wanted to put aside a small bit of money for education for young people, because we had benefited so much from our own education. So we started a small foundation to invest a small amount of money for education for a small number of students.

*It is one thing to just throw money at charitable organisations or sponsorship or do-good projects, but we felt it was a bit too easy to do that. So we wanted to be a bit more involved with the people who got the money, because maybe we could give them life skills advice. The first person we worked with was Zamo.*

*It was kind of informal, but very satisfying. At that time we had a beach cottage on the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal, and so in return for the happy times we had had there with our own kids we decided to put something back into that area. We were given Zamo’s name by the principal of Mlonde High School. We supported him in his choice to go to Durban University of Technology and he did a four-year diploma in financial systems.*
We saw him every time we went down to the sea on holiday. We chatted to him, had a meal in Margate and talked about how he was doing and where he was going. He had no father and his mother was courageously bringing him up,

so I hoped I could be a sounding board and give him advice. He had my cell phone number and he could phone if he had any concerns. He always knew he could ring if he was in trouble.

He worked very hard and did well. He struggled with some subjects, but he persevered and he passed. The really great thing is he got temporary work with Eskom in Durban and then got offered a permanent job in accounts.

I suppose we did it out of a sense of wanting to be involved and do something for people. We felt just giving the money wasn’t enough. We did not want to be intrusive and replace his family, but we said we are here if you are stuck or need help with a decision – we don’t want to stand in as parents, but maybe we can just add to the help you already have.

He invited me to his graduation but I didn’t get there – we were overseas and I feel very sad about that. He sent photographs.

Zamo: I didn’t have a father and when I met Mr Matthews he was like a father, the father I didn’t know. He gave me money for tertiary, but we used to have meetings every few months too. He would teach me a lot of things, we would sit for two or three hours and talk. Once, he advised me to try and improve my English, he said it was good but I needed to speak more and with confidence, and that helped me. I would ask questions. Recently I wanted to open a company and I am speaking to him for advice. He advised me to start a small company and then if I see I am managing, then I can get big. We would sit down and he told me a lot of things.

He also helped me to get a job in the holidays with an auditing firm in Margate and I learned so much from that and it helped me earn money for my needs.

I am now assisting other students. I learned this from him. When I went to technical college I realised it is not only about money, it is about information. You can get bursaries and grants, but if you grow up in a rural area you know none of this. So I have been going to talk to rural students at my school and to say, “You can become a student!” and I am giving information and forms about bursaries. It is not only about money, it is about information, and that is what I was given by Mr Matthews.
Understanding young people

- As young people grow up: Understanding adolescents
- Some counselling skills
- Issues you may have to help young people deal with
  - Helping young people make decisions
- Coping with depression
- Substance abuse
- Helping young people to live in a world with HIV/AIDS
- Pregnancy
- Rape and sexual abuse
As young people grow up: Understanding adolescents

The phase in our lives called “adolescence” is very important. Without it, we would not grow from being a dependent child to being an independent adult. So we need to allow young people to experience trying out different identities and to go through the different phases of adolescence.

**Early adolescence 11 to 14 years – “What’s happening to me?”**

These are some of the things that characterise young people of this age:
- They are experiencing many changes and are often bewildered by their changing self-image.
- They can be insecure and confused. They need support and acceptance.
- Often they experience mood swings – joy/misery, tired/energetic, withdrawal/assertiveness.
- They are beginning to show an interest in the opposite sex.
- A same-sex peer group is important to them.

**Mid-adolescence 14 to 17 years – “Who am I?”**

Young people of this age group are trying to work out who they are, and many of them are faced with these things:
- They can be restless, changeable, quickly bored.
- Often their growth is uncoordinated and uneven.
- They want freedom to develop in their own way, to loosen ties with family.
- Their family is being replaced by their peer group.
- They have a strong need to be accepted by peers and to conform to a group. This group is important as it confirms their identity.
- Sometimes they can be rebellious and test parents’ authority. They can be critical and argumentative, showing bravado and a need to experiment.
- They seek out contact with the opposite sex, mostly in groups.
- They become aware of sexual feelings and need to deal with them.

**Late adolescence 17 to 20 years – “This is me”**

Almost adults but not quite, young people of this age are trying to prove who they are by:
- challenging parents and separating from them
- crystallising their own values – social, religious, political, altruistic issues
- seeking the companionship of peers with shared interests
- forming one-to-one close relationships
- having growing intimacy with friends of choice
- taking on a slightly more mature role, such as making career choices
- integrating their learning and experience into their own unique personality.

It is important for you to know this information about young people. As a mentor you can help young people through this process. You can encourage them to explore different roles and identities, allow them to practise being an autonomous person, make sure they are part of a positive peer group, and give them an example of a set of good values that they will wish to copy as they choose who they will be as an adult.
The young person you are mentoring may talk to you about difficult issues, such as trauma, that they have been through or a difficult problem they are facing. It is important to remember that you don’t have the skills as a mentor to deal with serious emotional and other problems – you need to refer them, with their permission, to someone who can help them. You will find the names of organisations that can help with counselling and other issues on the next few pages. But you can be a listener. Here are some simple guidelines for listening to a young person who wants to tell you about a very difficult issue:

- Find somewhere safe and quiet where you can speak in private and without being interrupted.
- Listen with your inner ear to inner feelings.
- Control your reactions – do not show shock, disapproval or anger on your face or through your body language.
- Don’t make hasty judgements and never interrupt.
- Assume nothing about the young person.
- Keep your language simple and allow for silences.
- A good way to respond is to reflect back the feelings you have heard. For example, if your mentee says, “My father makes me very angry!” you can respond by saying, “Your father makes you angry because …”
- Watch your body language. Lean slightly forward. Allow warmth and acceptance to be communicated through your eyes. Make sure you are on the same level – even by sitting on the floor if necessary.
- Do not talk about similar experiences you have had – this communicates that their problem is not that important.
- Don’t give advice at this stage. You can give advice later, if and when they ask for it. Don’t touch the young person if they appear uncomfortable with this.

(Source: Adapted from Lizokusa, Trauma Management in Schools, Centre for the Study of Violence, page 10)

These organisations can help with any problem a young person may face. They will give you advice about the best thing to do.

**Telefriend**
Telefriend is care-line which provides emotional support to hurting people and brings them into wholeness through the love and grace of Jesus Christ.
Tel: 0861-10-63-10
Email: info@telefriend.org.za
Website: www.telefriend.org.za

**Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA) national office**
Offers counselling and life skills workshops. Ask the national office about a provincial office near you.
Tel: 011 975 7106/7
PO Box 2800, Kempton Park, 1620
Website: www.famsa.org.za

**Family Life Centre**
Offers counselling and life skills workshops to people in the Johannesburg area. They can refer you to an organisation in your area.
Tel: 011 788 4784
1 Cardigan Road, Parkwood, 2193
Website: www.familylife.co.za

**Life line**
Offers face-to-face counselling services and workshops. Ask the national office about the closest office to you. They have offices all over South Africa.
Tel: 011 715 2000
PO Box 32201, Braamfontein, 2017

You can also get help from your local church. Many have special youth programmes to help young people with problems.
There are many issues the young people you work with may have to face. On the next few pages you will find some information about some of these issues. You will also find a list of organisations that you can call for advice or refer young people to.

Helping young people to make decisions

One of the most important things you can do as a mentor is to help a young person have a dream for their future. This future orientation will protect them as they are less likely to engage in risky behaviour if they have a dream for their life.

Helping young people to have a future orientation

Spend time with your mentee talking about what they want for their life. Don’t let them think too far ahead; keep it a few years from now, as this will make it seem more achievable. Ask them to think about something like this:

“My goal for myself when I am 20 years old.”

Spend time talking about what could get in their way of achieving this goal and what could help them. Are there any small steps they could take now towards achieving this future goal? Discuss how you as a mentor could help them.

Keep this discussion in mind and remind them about it when things become difficult. Support them to make the short-term goals happen.

Decisions about a career

You can play an important role in this decision. If you have a full-time job, talk about what you do. You could even take the young person you mentor to work with you. Introduce them to friends or contacts that have businesses and let them go to work with them. This will help them to learn about the world of work and expose them to different jobs. Career information days can give useful information – look out for these and take the young person to them.

A mentor can play a crucial role in helping young people to be realistic about what they will do after school. Young people often will not listen to their parents, but they may listen to you. Gently point it out if their expectations are too high, and help them to see that we can often work towards something from a lower step on the ladder. You may be able to describe how you have done this. Some young people are not interested in jobs that involve manual work, but often these are very good options. For those who are not academically inclined, there are many training centres that offer bricklaying, plumbing, electrical, sewing and hairdressing courses. Find out about these kinds of courses in your local area.
Decisions about further study

Help your mentee to get information about university or college. The best place to start is probably at school – ask an interested teacher or principal. You could also visit the student advice office at a local college together. The biggest problem most young people face with regard to further study is funding. There are bursaries and scholarships that young people can apply for. The important thing is to begin applying as early as February in the year they write Matric. You will find some useful organisations listed in this section that may be able to help you with advice.

Starting a business

This is another area where you can be of help. Many business people have started very small and slowly built up their business. Your mentee can start a business with a little bit of your help. A sewing machine or a barber machine and some business advice can go a long way. There are some organisations listed in this section that help young people to start small businesses. Contact them with your mentee.

Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)
Offers support, mentoring and training to set up and sustain funding, to access funding, and to tender and procure in the public and private sectors. They have many regional offices, so you can call to ask about one close to you.
National office: Tshwane
Tel: 012 441 1000
Website: www.seda.org.za

National Youth Commission
Assists youth with career-related and other youth services, and has a database of youth organisations.
Toll-free youth helpline: 0800 000 001

The Study Trust
Toll-free helpline provides information on career options, qualifications admission requirements and educational institutions. The website provides study tips and the organisation itself provides study bursaries.
Tel: 0800 212 641
Website: www.studytrust.org.za

National Student Finance Aid scheme
Provides financial aid to academically deserving and financially needy students through loans.
Tel: 012 176 3323
Email: info@nsfas.org.za

Eduloan
Provides study loans to students and financial assistance for books.
Tel: 011 670 6100
Email: info@eduloan.co.za
Website: www.eduloan.co.za

Umsobomvu Youth Fund
Has a Youth Connect call centre, database of organisations working with youth, and provides entrepreneurship advice and training.
Toll-free: 0860 096 884
They will tell you about the walk-in service centres near you.
Website: www.youthportal.org.za
Coping with depression

Young people sometimes experience feelings of depression or deep anxiety. Depression is an illness that affects the whole body and it needs to be taken seriously.

These are all signs of depression: feeling sad over an extended period of time, fatigue, poor sleep, feeling restless or hopeless, eating more or less than usual, isolating yourself, abusing alcohol or drugs, feeling irritable, crying a lot, having difficulty concentrating.

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”
1 Peter 5:7

If your mentee seems to be depressed, these are some of the things that may help them:

- Help them to think about the positives in their lives. They may find this hard, in which case you can name some of them.
- Encourage them to do some light exercise.
- Encourage them to talk about how they are feeling.
- Help them to make a plan of action just for today. Then make a plan for next week, and next month.
- Help them to seek out good experiences.

If you see that they feel sad for more than three weeks, encourage them to ask for help from a clinic, counsellor or doctor.

Suicide

Some young people get so depressed that they begin to think life has no hope. Sometimes this leads to suicide. If your mentee talks of suicide, take it seriously. Encourage them to get help. Call one of the organisations listed on this page and ask them how you can help.

Any of the organisations listed on page 39 could help you.

SADAG – The South African Depression and Anxiety Group

Has a call centre dealing with issues such as mental illness, anxiety and depression. It is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. It also has a toll-free suicide crisis line. They also run support groups and school programmes.

Suicide Crisis Line: 0800 567 567
Helpline: 0800 20 50 26
Sms: 31393
Tel: 011 262 6394/6
Website: www.sadag.co.za

You may also be able to get help for problems such as depression from your local health clinic.
Substance abuse

Substance abuse is a problem for many young people. You need to educate yourself about this issue. What should you do if you think the young person you are mentoring is addicted to alcohol or other substances? The first thing is to get help from one of the organisations listed below.

The young person must want to be helped. They have to choose to overcome the problem. You cannot force them, but you can build up their sense of self-esteem and get them involved in healthy and wholesome activities, such as sports, a youth group, a music project or a theatre project.

This quiz may be one way to bring the young person face to face with the issue:

**Do you have a drug or alcohol problem? Do this quiz and find out**

Count how many questions you answer “yes” to:

1. I don’t really like drugs or alcohol, but I take them because my buddies take them.
2. I don’t mean to drink when I go out, but it just happens, and next thing I’m really drunk.
3. I drink or take drugs when I’m bored.
4. I spend a lot of my time either taking drugs, recovering from taking drugs, or trying to find the money to take them.
5. When I should be working or studying, I feel hung over and I cannot concentrate.
6. I have to take more and more alcohol or drugs to get as drunk or high as I used to when I started.
7. I feel bad about myself. When I drink or take drugs I feel better.
8. I only drink or take drugs on the weekend. But then I get really drunk or high.
9. I have tried to stop. But when I do, I feel irritable and nervous, and get into bad moods like you cannot believe.
10. A friend is someone who can buy me drugs or drinks.

**What’s your score?**

0 yes answers: You are cool! But remember, if something painful happens or you are under stress, you may be at risk. Don’t get into drinking or drugging to make yourself feel better. Talk to someone you trust instead.

1–3 yes answers: Looks like you are at risk. It’s time to stop. If you find it hard to stop, get help before it’s too late (see below).

4 or more yes answers: You are addicted. You need to get help. Contact one of the organisations below.

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**SANCA National Directorate**

They offer counselling and substance abuse awareness programmes. They have many regional offices. Call the national office to find out about an office near you.

**National office**

Tel: 011 781 6410
Email: sanca@sancanational.org.za
Website: www.sancanational.org.za

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**Narcotics Anonymous**

They offer support to people addicted to substances. They have many regional offices. Call the helpline for information.

Tel: 083 900MYNA (6962)
Website: www.na.org.za

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**Quit Smoking helpline**

Offers support to stop smoking.

Tel: (011) 720-3145
Website: www.againstsmoking.org

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**Al-Anon and Alateen**

Support groups for those affected by alcohol abuse. Call the National office and ask about a group in your local area.

Tel: 021 595 4508
Email: alanongso@iafrica.com
Website: www.alanon.org.za
Helping young people to live in a world with HIV/AIDS

It is important to talk with the young person you are mentoring about HIV and AIDS. You may be the only person who talks frankly to them and who answers their questions accurately. Inform yourself. Contact Soul City (see below) to get publications that will inform you about:

- preventing HIV and AIDS
- what to do if your mentee is diagnosed HIV-positive
- issues related to having family members who are HIV-positive or ill with AIDS.

Organisations that can help young people affected by HIV/AIDS:

**CABSA (Christian AIDS Bureau for Southern Africa)**

CABSA is a ministry that advocates for people living with HIV. They unlock the potential of congregations to be caring Christian communities ministering reconciliation and hope in the context of the HIV pandemic.

Tel: 021 873 0028
Email: info@cabsa.org.za
Website: www.cabsa.co.za

**SACBC (South African Catholic Bishops Conference) AIDS Office**

The SACBC AIDS Office supports the response to AIDS by the Catholic Church in South Africa, Botswana and Swaziland. Interventions include prevention, treatment and care as well as care of orphans.

Tel 012 323 6458
Email: aidstype@sacbc.org.za
Website: www.sacbc.org.za

**Youth for Christ**

Youth for Christ South Africa exists to participate in the mental, physical, social and spiritual development of young people. The organisation runs extensive programmes in schools, prisons and churches, dealing with issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender empowerment, leadership training, values-based education and having a personal relationship with God.

Tel: 011 615 8970
Email: info@yfc.org.za
Website: www.yfc.org.za

**AIDS Helpline**

Provides anonymous, confidential telephonic counselling, information, and referrals to HIV-infected and affected individuals. Ask for places that offer counselling in your area.

Toll-free: 0800 012 322
Website: http://www.lifeline.org.za

**lovelife’s thethaJunction**

The toll-free helpline for youth – known as thethaJunction, or “place to talk” – is a popular resource for sexual health information, counselling and referrals to support services and clinical care.

It operates 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays and midday to 5 p.m. weekends, closed on public holidays.

Toll-free: 0800 121 900
Website: www.lovelife.org.za

**Parent line**

Provides parents with advice and information on how they can communicate with their children on sexual and reproductive health issues. Operates 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays and midday to 5 p.m. weekends.

Toll-free: 0800 121 100

**mothers2mothers**

Mothers2mothers is an organisation that provides education, mentoring and support for pregnant women and new mothers living with HIV/AIDS in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.

Tel: 021 446 9160
Email: info@m2m.org
Website: www.m2m.org

**Treating Action Campaign**

Campaign for treatment for people with HIV and to reduce new HIV infections. They also help mobilise communities to demand action, raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and work with various grassroots programmes.

Tel: 021 422 1700
Email: info@tac.org.za
Website: www.tac.org.za

**Soul City publications**

If you are interested in printed and video materials on various issues related to HIV and AIDS and health care, mother and child health care, life skills and violence against women, contact the Soul City distribution centre:

Tel: 0860 115 000
Website: www.soulcitydistribution.co.za

**Treatment Action Campaign**

Campaign for treatment for people with HIV and to reduce new HIV infections. They also help mobilise communities to demand action, raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and work with various grassroots programmes.

Tel: 021 422 1700
Email: info@tac.org.za
Website: www.tac.org.za
The rate of teenage pregnancies in South Africa remains high despite the amount of information now available to girls in schools, as well as access to contraception.

Research has shown that the reasons for this include the imbalance of gender relations, the lack of after-school educational opportunities for girls to look forward to, as well as young girls becoming involved with older men in relationships where gifts of money, clothes, school fees and other goods are exchanged for sexual favours.

Research has also shown that one of the greatest barriers to assisting young people is their fear and shame about talking to the people who could potentially help them, that is family, educators and health professionals. Other studies suggest that young people who become pregnant feel confused about their options and are ashamed and worried about the response of their families, teachers and others, and so keep it a secret.

If you suspect that the young woman you are mentoring has fallen pregnant, do not hesitate to talk to her about it. You can help her think through the choices that she has. If possible, go with your mentee to talk about it with her parents, and school. According to South African government policy, schools are required to allow pregnant learners and mothers to continue with their schooling, but many schools are not very supportive.

The organisations listed below can help you to discuss the choices with your mentee.

**SA Cares for Life Head Office**
SA Cares for Life is a networking body equipping and strengthening projects that support women, children and families affected by unplanned pregnancies, dire poverty, HIV and AIDS.
Tel: 023 343 4050
Email: info@sacares.co.za
Web: www.sacares.co.za

**NeoBirth Pregnancy Care Centre**
Part of SA Cares, NeoBirth offers FREE services to any woman faced with an unwanted pregnancy, in TOTAL CONFIDENTIALITY in a friendly and caring environment.
Tel: 012 343 6401 (office hours)
info@neobirth.org.za
Website: www.neobirth.org.za

**mothers2mothers**
mothers2mothers is an organisation that provides education, mentoring and support for pregnant women and new mothers living with HIV/AIDS in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.
Tel: 021 446 9160
Email: info@m2m.org
Website: www.m2m.org

**Heart Reach**
offers resources and counseling to both young people and parents around unplanned pregnancies and other issues.
Tel: 011 791 2633
www.heartreach.co.za
info@heartreach.co.za

**Child Support Grants**
The Government does make Child Support Grants available to mothers who qualify. Once the baby is born, contact the nearest South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) office. More information can be found on
www.services.gov.za/ServicesForPeople/Socialbenefits/childsupportgrant
Rape and sexual abuse

What do you do if your mentee is raped or experiencing sexual abuse?

Immediately after the rape

The young person must get to a place where they are safe. They should not be alone. If they come to you for help, there are things you need to know:

- They should not wash away the evidence of the rape. Put their clothes in a paper bag to take to the police for evidence. Get them to a doctor, clinic or hospital quickly for a medical examination. Do this even if they don’t want to report the rape to the police. Here you can get medicine to prevent pregnancy or a sexually transmitted disease (STD). You can also get medicine for HIV/AIDS. You can also get emergency contraception. This must be done within 72 hours if the medicine for HIV is to be effective.

- Then help them to decide if they want to report the rape to the police. If they do, keep in mind that at the police station they have the right to be treated with respect. They can ask to make a statement in private. They can also ask for a woman police officer. Make sure they read and understand the statement before signing it. Keep the case number and the name of the police officer.

Sexual abuse

By law, you must report sexual abuse to someone in authority. The first person to go to should be a local social worker, but if you do not have one in your area, you could go to the local school principal, as they will know the procedure for reporting. You should tell the young person you need to report it and involve them in the process. The social worker you report to will contact the police to discuss opening a case. The young person will need to have a medical examination and an HIV test. Some large hospitals have a crisis clinic that will see to all these procedures in one place. Some also have counselling services.

Stop Gender Violence Helpline
Provides anonymous, confidential, free and accessible telephonic counselling, education and referrals, in all 11 official languages, to survivors, witnesses and perpetrators of gender-based violence.
Toll-free: 0800 150 150
Website: www.lifeline.org.za

Childline
Provides counselling services to any South African child who needs support, guidance or a listening ear.
Toll-free: 0800 055 555
Website: www.childline.org.za

Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN)
Provides training and information on child abuse. They run sexual abuse awareness workshops and sexuality workshops.
Tel: 021 712 2330
Website: www.rapcan.co.za
**Mentoring organisations**

**Big Brother Big Sister South Africa (BBBSSA)**

BBBSSA is a mentoring programme that matches youth in need with carefully selected and trained adult volunteers in one-to-one relationships that help them maximise their potential. Call them about mentoring in your area.

Tel: 021 551 6996  
Email: makeadifference@bbbssa.org.za  
Website: www.bbbssa.org.za

**Khulisa Crime Prevention Initiative**

Khulisa works holistically at all levels of the crime cycle – preventing crime, diverting youth from the criminal justice system, providing alternatives to imprisonment, fostering personal transformation for those who are in prison, and assisting with their transition back to society. They encourage mentoring of young people to prevent crime. Call the national office to find out about a regional office in your area.

Tel: 011 788 8237  
Email: info@khulisaservices.co.za  
Website: www.khulisaservices.co.za

**City Year**

City Year provides a year of full-time community service, leadership development and skills training to young South African volunteers between the ages of 18–25 from all backgrounds.

Tel: 011 429 0300  
Email: infosouthafrica@cityyear.org  
Website: www.cityyearsa.co.za

**Mentoring resources**

**Navigators – Southern Africa**

The Navigators help Christ’s followers “Navigate” spiritually, coming alongside to support them. The hallmarks of their ministry are one-to-one relationship and small-group studies focused on discipleship. They mentor new and maturing believers and equip professionals to live for Christ in the workplace.

Tel: 011 478 2087  
Website: www.navigators.org

**Walk Thru the Bible/Turn the Tide**

Walk Thru the Bible uses the media of seminars, literature and formal education on a wide range of subject areas which will help trainers and mentors.

Tel: 011 782 4222  
Website: www.bible.org.za

**MentorLink.org**

MentorLink International is a ministry that exists to accelerate worldwide leadership development through mentoring. The MentorLink.org website is rich with Bible studies, case studies, articles, mentoring tips and connections to other mentors.

Website: www.mentorlink.org
Useful websites on mentoring
Youth Mentoring Network: www.johnmallison.com
Youth Mentoring Connection: www.youthmentoring.com.au

Environmental sustainability

You and your mentee may want to take action around or find out about environmental issues. Contact these organisations for information and projects in your local area:

Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa
Offers information and local action projects. They have many local branches. Contact the national office to find one near you.
Tel: 011 462 5663
Website: www.wessa.org.za

A Rocha: Christians in Conservation
A Rocha offers workshops on understanding our impact on the environment and how churches and individuals can determine a ‘carbon footprint’. A Rocha’s newsletters will keep you informed on global conservation initiatives.
Website: www.arocha.org

Food and Trees for Africa
Runs greening and food garden projects.
Tel: 011 803 9750
Website: www.trees.co.za
A suggested code of conduct for mentors

This code of conduct is based on those used by a number of non-government service organisations whose staff work with children. We have provided it in this manual as an example of the kind of code that mentors should adopt.

You should mentor a young person of the same sex as you.

You need to think about:
- situations that may present risk and plan and organise your contact with young people so that you minimise any risks
- where you meet young people – make sure you meet in a place where others can see you
- how you can create a culture of openness with the young person so they can easily raise any concerns or fears they have with you
- how you can talk with them about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour – empower them to be aware too of risk and protection
- finding an older person that you trust who knows what you are doing with your mentee – it is useful to discuss your relationship with this person (remember confidentiality though)

You should not:
- Spend too much time with the young person
- Take the young person to your home, especially if they will be alone with you
- Hit or otherwise physically abuse the young person
- Develop a physical or sexual relationship with the young person
- Develop a relationship which could be seen as abusive or exploitative
- Act in a way that is abusive or places the young person at risk of abuse.

Commit yourself to always keeping what they have told you confidential. If you think they may be in danger, though, you must report this to an appropriate authority and follow up until action is taken. Make sure you discuss this with the young person and explain why you need to report it.

Be aware of your behaviour. For example, you should never:
- Use language which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Behave in a way that is sexually provocative – this includes making personal comments about appearance
- Share an alcoholic drink or drugs with a young person
- Have a mentee stay overnight at your home
- Participate in, or agree to behaviour which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Act in a way that shames or belittles a young person – this is emotional abuse.

(Based on the Save the Children International code of conduct)
Contract between mentee and mentor

I am interested in having _______________ (name of mentor) as a mentor. I understand that a mentor is a person who can guide me as I grow into adult life. They can listen when I need to talk, give me advice when I ask for it, and help me to make connections in the adult world.

- I agree to meet regularly with my mentor.
- I agree to be open and let my mentor know when I feel uncomfortable or unhappy with anything in our relationship.
- I will let my parents know when I am with my mentor and where we are going.
- I understand that my mentor will keep what I tell them confidential.

Signed ______________________________  Date ________________

Contract between mentor and mentee

I am interested in being a mentor to _______________ (name of young person). I understand that a mentor is a person who acts as a guide to a young person as they grow into adult life. I can listen when they need to talk, give them advice when they ask for it, and help them to make connections in the adult world.

- I will ask permission to be a mentor from the young person’s parents and will keep them informed at all times about my relationship with their child.
- I agree to meet regularly with my mentee.
- I agree to be open and let my mentee know when I feel uncomfortable or unhappy with anything in our relationship.
- I will let their parents know when I am with my mentee and where we are going.
- I will keep all that I am told confidential, unless I need to share it for the safety of my mentee.

Signed ______________________________  Date ________________

Parents’ contract and consent form

I understand that a mentor is an adult who helps to guide a young person as they grow into adult life.

I give permission for my child _______________ (name of young person) to be mentored by _______________ (name of mentor).

- I understand that the mentor will:
  - let me know when and where they meet with my child
  - keep to the attached code of conduct (see page 49).
- I agree to be open and let my child’s mentor know when I feel uncomfortable or unhappy with anything in their relationship.

Signed ______________________________  Date ________________
“It’s a great tool that our people in our organisation could use throughout the year. I would recommend it. There are steps to take, and organisations to refer to. This would also make you grow as a person, so it’s valuable. It helps you to help others.”

Youth leader

“We hear about mentoring but most of us don’t know how to mentor and a resource like this can help people in understanding what it is and how to do it!”

Youth group member

HEARTLINES

HEARTLINES believes that mentoring young people can make a huge contribution to South African society for good.

In South Africa there is increasing strain placed on the family structure. Many parents work far from home, many children grow up in singleparent households and more and more children are losing parents to crime, road accidents or diseases such as HIV/AIDS. For many young people, the traditional networks of support are not there, leaving them particularly vulnerable to peer pressure and poor decision-making. The old saying is true: it does take a village to raise a child. That’s where you come in! You can become a mentor to a young person that you know. This manual and accompanying DVD will help you to find out what mentoring is and give you ideas on how to do it.

The HEARTLINES youth mentoring strategy includes a helpline. Contact us for help with mentoring or with any problem the young person you are mentoring may face.

You can reach us in these ways:
The HEARTLINES Mentor Helpline: 0860-MENTEE (636833)
Sms your query to 33250
Email us at mentors@forgood.co.za

Youth mentor cover 24/10/2008 10:27 AM Page 1 BRANDDNA SERVER:Sally's work on server:Current work:glynis mentor project:cover: