Foster Grandparent Pre-Service Training (20 Hours)

As you complete this training, record the *total training time* for each day on your timesheet. If it took you *longer* than the approximate time given, record the actual time you spent. If you completed the training in less time, record the time that was *anticipated* on your timesheet so that you can still complete the 20 hours of training (e.g. if you spent 20 minutes reading a 30 minute article, record .50 on your timesheet.) **Record your first 20 hours in the TRAINING COLUMN of your timesheet.**

Complete with Volunteer Coordinator (5 hours)
☐ Volunteer Orientation and Handbook Review (3 hours) ☐ IPT Training for Timesheet Submission (.5 hours) ☐ Review Service Assignment Schedule (.5 hours) ☐ Reflective Discussion (After Videos and Articles) (1 hour) Discussion Scheduled Date: _____

Videos and Note-Taking Guide (7 hours total)	
YouTube Channel Link *You can click the YouTube Channel link to watch all of the videos in order. You can also type this URL into your internet browser:* **https://bit.ly/FGPpreservice** *or click the links for the individual videos below.* ***Note: With exception to the policies and procedures, the videos shared here are not produced by UServeUtah and do not denote an endorsement.***	
Introduction to Being an AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer	
Importance of Foster Grandparent Volunteers (.25 hours) *You will recognize the impact you can make with the children you serve and understand your role in national service.*	☐ AmeriCorps Seniors: Reasons to Serve ☐ Become a Foster Grandparent Volunteer ☐ Healthy Volunteers. Stronger Communities.
UServeUtah Policies and Procedures (.75 hours)	☐ UServeUtah AmeriCorps Seniors Overview

You will understand the mission of UServeUtah and AmeriCorps Seniors, and review essential requirements for volunteering.	☐ IPT Training: FGP (Foster Grandparent Program)
Your Influence in Guiding Children	
The Power of Relationships (.50 hours) *You will learn how influential your unique bond with each child can change their experience and learning.*	☐ Rita Pierson: Every Kid Needs A Champion ☐ Inspirational Video - Be A Mr. Jensen ☐ The Power of Relationships in Schools ☐ The Power of Relationships in the Lives of Youth
Growth Mindset (.75 hours) *You will learn the difference between a growth mindset and a fixed mindset, as well as how to foster a growth mindset in the children you work with.*	☐ Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance ☐ How to Help Every Child Fulfill Their Potential - Carol Dweck ☐ How Mentors and Growth Mindset Go Hand-in-Hand ☐ Using Mistakes and Failure to Your Advantage ☐ The Right Message in the Right Situation ☐ Carol Dweck: The Effect of Praise on Mindsets
Understanding Young People (.75 hours) *You will understand how children best learn and improve behavior using developmentally appropriate strategies.*	☐ Importance of Play ☐ Every Behavior Has A PURPOSE! ☐ 4 Ways to Prevent Problem Behaviors ☐ 5 Common Mistakes When Talking with Preschool Children ☐ Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood
Social Emotional Learning (.50 hours) *Learn about different intelligences and how to teach social emotional skills.*	☐ You Think You Are Smart? There Are 9 Types of Intelligence! ☐ Social-Emotional Learning: What Is SEL and Why SEL Matters ☐ Practical Strategies for Teaching Social Emotional Skills
Literacy and Reading Tips	
Literacy	☐ What is Early Literacy and Why Is It Important? ☐ Teach Your Child New Words with Books

(1.25 hours) *By learning these skills to help early readers, you can become an excellent support to a child who needs assistance to improve their reading and vocabulary in effective and enjoyable ways.*	☐ Scarborough's Reading Rope ☐ Reading Expert Linda Farrell: Letter Names vs. Letter Sounds ☐ What is Phonemic Awareness? ☐ Understanding Phonics: Why Is Teaching This Way Effective? ☐ Letter Naming/Alphabet Knowledge ☐ Articulating Our Sounds ☐ Reading Expert Linda Farrell: Mastering Reading Accuracy ☐ Letter Names with Reese, Kindergartener ☐ Mastering Short Vowels and Reading Whole Words ☐ Read Aloud to Your Child
Children with All Abilities and Backgrounds	
Children with Learning Disabilities (.50 hours) *By learning the challenges and symptoms associated with learning disabilities, you will understand how to teach according to individual student's unique strengths and capabilities.*	☐ Learning Disabilities, What Are the Different Types? ☐ ADHD: Signs, Symptoms, Solutions ☐ What is Dyslexia? - Kelli Sandman-Hurley ☐ What is Autism? | Quick Learner ☐ Strengths of Students with Learning Disabilities and Other Disorders
Working with All Children (.25 hours) *You will learn helpful ways to build relationships with children from different backgrounds.* **Defensive Driving** *Because you will likely transport yourself to your service site, these are effective methods for safe driving.*	☐ Cultural Competence ☐ What is Cultural Humility? ☐ 5 Defensive Driving Strategies To Be A Safer, Smarter Driver

Articles and Writing Prompts (3 hours total)
☐ Child Development Overview ☐ Working with Youth At Different Ages ☐ Reading Tutoring ☐ How to Identify and Teach to the Child's Learning Style ☐ 10 Tips for Working with Teachers in the Classroom ☐ What Are Learning Disabilities? ☐ 10 Teaching Strategies to Keep Struggling Students Working ☐ Growth Mindset

On-the-Job Training (5 hours) - Must Be Completed Last
☐ Assignment Plan Discussion (.5 hours) ☐ Station - Volunteer Discussion (1 hour) (Expectations, policies, check-in/out procedures, etc.) ☐ First School Session (3 hours) ☐ Follow-up with Coordinator (.5 hours)

Congratulations! You have completed your 20 hours of pre-service training. You may now record future hours in the "Volunteer Hours" column. We will still provide you with 24 hours of in-service training each year. Thank you for being willing to meet this federal requirement, we hope you apply this valuable knowledge to your service.

Laura Huefner
AmeriCorps Seniors Program Manager

FGP Pre-Service At-Home Video Note-Taking Guide

Use your phone camera to take a picture of this QR Code. It will pop up with a link that you click to take you to the pre-service training video playlist.

Or copy this link into your browser: https://bit.ly/FGPpreservice

Note: With exception to the policies and procedures, the videos shared here are not produced by UServeUtah and do not denote an endorsement.

Importance of Foster Grandparent Volunteers

AmeriCorps Seniors: Reasons to Serve

What is your reason to serve as a Foster Grandparent volunteer?

_____

_____

Become a Foster Grandparent Volunteer

Why do you think a positive, supportive relationship is as important as a good education?

_____

_____

Healthy Volunteers. Stronger Communities.

Why do you think giving back is good for your health?

_____

_____

UServeUtah Policies and Procedures

UServeUtah AmeriCorps Seniors Overview

How many hours a week are you required to serve at a minimum? _____ hours

The majority of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers experience improved or **stable** health, a decrease in feelings of **isolation**, and feel less depressed.

Research shows serving more hours means the volunteer reaps more benefits of service, like improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, life satisfaction, and increased sense of purpose. Why do you think serving more hours as a Foster Grandparent helps volunteers reap more health benefits, as shown by research?

_____

_____

_____

_____

IPT Training FGP (Foster Grandparent Program)

The first time I enter my timesheet for a new month, I will need to press the **SAVE** button before having access to my timesheet.

Circle the correct answer:

We do / don't want you to count the time that you spend entering your timesheet information into IPT, as it is part of your volunteer service.

I can write in the _____ _____ (also known as the request for administrative leave column) using the pencil and paper icon to record the number of hours for each station that I am serving at, the type of in-service training I completed, requests for administrative leave, and any other necessary notes.

If I serve 15-20 hours a week, I will receive _____ holiday hours per holiday in months that I am actively serving.

The Power of Relationships

Every Kid Needs a Champion: Rita Pierson

No significant learning can occur without a significant **relationship**." - James Comer

How does the story of Rita giving a student +2 instead of -18 on a quiz *impact you*? How can you use this strategy to help the children you will serve?

_____

_____

_____

“Teaching and learning should bring joy.” How powerful would our world be if we had kids who were not afraid to take risks, who were not afraid to think, and who had a champion? What changes might you see?

_____

_____

Every child deserves a **champion**, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” - Rita Pierson

Inspirational Video - Be a Mr. Jensen

How did Mr. Jensen view Clint, the very active child?

_____

What will help you see children for their strengths and not their problems?

_____

_____

_____

The Power of Relationships in Schools

“We need to create learning environments which allow for **strong,** long-term relationships for children to become attached to school and to the adults and other children in it.” -Dr. Darling-Hammond

- Relationships are not just being nice to a child. The child needs to have an experience of **trust** strong enough to experience the benefits of oxytocin.
- **Emotion** and learning are completely connected.

“If you’re in a positive emotional space, that opens the opportunity for more learning.”
- Dr. Darling-Hammond.

What relationships did you have in school that helped you learn?

_____

_____

_____

The Power of Relationships in the Lives of Youth

When kids experience a developmental relationship, they are dramatically more likely to be motivated in school, to be optimistic about the future, they build their own will to want to learn, and they feel connected to people.

What are ways that you feel like you could connect with the youth you will mentor?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Growth Mindset

Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance: Angela Lee Duckworth

“Grit is passion and **perseverance** for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day in, day out, not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years, and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint.” -Angela Lee Duckworth

- Grit is not related to talent. Talent doesn’t make you gritty.
- When children learn about the brain’s ability to change and grow in response to challenges, they are more likely to persevere when they fail, because <u>they don’t believe that **failure** is a permanent condition</u>.

After hearing about grit, why do you think it is important? Is there someone in your life who is a good example of having grit? How do they exemplify grit?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How to Help Every Child Fulfill Their Potential: Carol Dweck

- You never see an unmotivated baby. Mindset can make kids afraid to try and make them easily derailed by setbacks.
- What are the two types of mindsets:
    - _____ mindset - you only have a certain amount of intelligence. This makes kids afraid to try.
    - Growth mindset - intelligence can be **developed.**
- Goals: *Fixed mindset* kids must avoid looking dumb at all costs. *Growth mindset* kids have a focus on learning. An emphasis on learning helps students earn higher grades.
- Effort: *Fixed mindset* kids feel you should not have to work hard, it should come easily. *Growth mindset* kids put forth **effort**; even geniuses have to work super hard.
- Setbacks: *Fixed mindset* kids hide their mistakes. *Growth mindset* kids feel that they learn from mistakes.
- Praise: Mindsets are transmitted through praise. Praising children's intelligence harms them.

Why do you think praise can cause fixed mindsets?

- Yet: In Chicago instead of a failing grade, students got the grade **not yet**.
- The brain can be developed like a muscle.

Knowing that "not yet" implies there is opportunity for growth, what areas of your life could you apply the power of "not yet"?

Growth Mindset for Mentors: How Mentors and Growth Mindset Go Hand-in-Hand

- Relationships with caring adults help expand a kid's **sense of self** and help them navigate the challenges of adolescence.
- Mentoring Relationship/The Positive Impact to Develop A Growth Mindset
    - **Cognitive Development** - Mentors help youth think more clearly and make better decisions - *Offer strategies to approach problems*.
    - **Social Emotional Development** - Mentors help youth manage their emotions, get along better with others, and learn how to handle conflict and disappointments - *Reframe emotions and provide support.*
    - **Identity Development** - Mentors can model appropriate behaviors, help youth discover their values and beliefs, and give them a glimpse of who they might become - *Model a growth mindset.*
- How can I be a good mentor? Be consistent, trustworthy, and caring.

How can you model a growth mindset? Share an example from your life.

Growth Mindset for Mentors: Using Mistakes & Failures to Your Advantage

Avoid negative reactions and embrace making mistakes because they are natural and give us opportunities to learn.

Brain growth happens *from* mistakes, not in spite of them.

- Analyze mistakes (emphasize they're an important part of learning!)
- Honor and praise what they did right
- Talk about the *feelings* associated with mistakes.
- Push your mentee to take on bigger challenges when they are ready, that are just a stretch beyond their current abilities.

- Share your own failures and mistakes. (Provides an opportunity to model how you approach mistakes).
- Encourage them to ask for help when they get stuck.
- Be proactive - don't wait for them to fail. Initiate conversations any time.
    - *How do you feel when you make a mistake?*
    - *How do you think others view you when you make a mistake?*
    - *Have you ever discovered something new from making a mistake?*
    - *Has a mistake ever made you think more deeply about a problem?*
- Be patient. It may take time for them to feel comfortable about discussing mistakes or learn and apply the growth mindset.

Growth Mindset for Mentors: The Right Message in the Right Situation

- Situation 1: New learning challenge - present challenges as exciting opportunities to grow and learn
    - Messages to foster excitement and confidence around challenges:
        - "Let's take it one step at a time"
        - "Your brain is going to get stronger as you work through the challenge."
        - "You've got this. I have seen you learn challenging things in the past. What strategies have helped you **overcome** those challenges? Could you use similar strategies for this challenge?"
- Situation 2: Working with a mentee that is still struggling despite tremendous effort:
    - Remember that **effort** is just one ingredient to developing a stronger brain.
    - Help to identify the strategies or **support** needed to overcome the challenge.
    - Responses to provide support and encouragement to keep trying:
        - "Let's step back and see if there's another way we can do it."
        - "I'm glad you let me know that you're struggling. Getting help is sometimes a good way to crack tough problems."

- Situation 3: Praising when there has been success because of a strong effort and good strategies.
    - Acknowledge the effort once a new challenge is overcome and complete.
    - Help mentees identify the **strategies** they've learned for tackling challenging situations or tasks.
    - Responses:
        - "What do you think contributed to your success?"
        - "I saw you use a variety of techniques."
        - "What can you **apply** from this experience?"

What responses or questions stand out to you? Why do you think they will be effective?

Carol Dweck: The Effect of Praise on Mindsets

After watching the children's responses to the difficult puzzle based on whether they were praised for their intelligence or their effort, how does that motivate you to speak to the children you work with?

Understanding Young People

Importance of Play

- Play helps children to think creatively, learn different **problem solving** strategies, develops their language, and leads to positive social skills.
- Play helps children in literacy areas because it is very **symbolic**. Looking at a word and seeing that it represents something that's not present requires symbolism.

Adults can enhance playing pretend by taking on a make-believe role, playing parallel to or with children to make play suggestions, to ask questions, and to **role play**.

Share why you believe it's important for adults to provide enriching interaction in play, but to leave and allow children to play on their own:

Every Behavior Has A PURPOSE!

Remember that behaviors are **symptoms**.

We can say, "What is the **function** of that? What are they getting from it?"

Consider if a child is staying silent during the entire tutoring/mentoring session. What ideas come to mind when you consider the *function* of their silence?

How does it change your perspective on their silence?

What ideas do you now have to address their silence?

4 Ways to Prevent Problem Behaviors

To prevent problem behaviors, we need to communicate expectations to them in a clear, understandable, and **accessible** way.

When we are in a state of **sensory overload**, we will engage in unexpected problem behaviors because we are trying to escape that situation and calm down.

What appropriate coping strategies and solutions could you come up with to help a child who is experiencing sensory overload?

-

- _____
- _____

5 Common Mistakes When Talking with Preschool Children

1. Over Flattery - makes children question your sincerity over time
2. Using Terms That Have No Meaning
3. Don't <u>Ask</u> If They Don't Have A ***<u>Choice</u>***
    a. State things as a command, not a question.
4. Don't End Your Statement With "Okay?" It becomes a choice again.
5. Tell Children What You WANT Them To Do

Come up with an alternative to saying: "Don't dump all of the crayons out of the box!"

Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood

What are challenges for lower socio-economic status children?

- Hearing fewer words at home
- May have access to fewer reading materials

Because of this, they will need explicit instruction in vocabulary.

Language can take a variety of forms. Teach how language can suit different situations, like how you might wear a dress to church but not to play soccer. Teach *formality* versus *incorrectness.* Do not shame children about the ways they speak at home.

Brainstorm examples of areas of your life where you might speak or write formally, and when you might speak or write informally. Reflect on the importance of time and place.

_____

_____

_____

We learn by **<u>verbalizing</u>** so you want to keep kids talking, trying to find the right words, and not giving them all of the answers.

If we don't **<u>rehearse</u>** information, we forget information.

Intelligence is not set in stone! It changes.

In order to invest in school, students need to:

- Experience academic success
- Develop and maintain their **cultural** identity
- Develop a critical consciousness so that they can question things.

Teachers (and volunteers!) can give emotional support, quality feedback, precise feedback, and establish routines that help manage productivity and behavior.

Social Emotional Learning

You Think You Are Smart? There Are 9 Types of Intelligence!

- Naturalist (nature smart)
- Musical (sound smart)
- Logical-mathematical (number/reasoning smart)
- Existential (life smart)
- Interpersonal (people smart)
- Bodily-kinesthetic (body smart)
- Linguistic (word smart)
- Intra-personal (self smart)
- Spatial (picture smart)

Based on the examples in the video, what types of intelligence do you identify with?

How do you see these intelligence types as strengths in your life?

Social-Emotional Learning: What is SEL and Why SEL Matters

The process of learning social and emotional skills is most effective when it begins **early** and continues through high school.

Students with SEL learn to:

- Manage their own emotions and behaviors
- Have empathy and show care and concern for others
- Solve problems effectively
- Make responsible decisions
- Maintain healthy relationships
- Identify others' emotions and perspectives

In what ways do students benefit from social emotional learning? How do their outcomes change?

Practical Strategies for Teaching Social Emotional Skills

By helping children develop social emotional skills, they can build friendships, solve problems, manage their emotions and more.

Why is it important for you to both model *and* provide instruction on skills like sharing, taking turns, or helping each other, like the educators in the videos?

Literacy

What is Early Literacy and Why is It Important?

The skill when children understand that letters have meaning and can be read as words and sentences is called _____ _____.

83% of children who are not reading on grade level by the beginning of fourth grade are at risk of failing to graduate high school. This shows the importance of early literacy.

Teach Your Child New Words With Books

Practice using “expanding.” What are three other sentences that you could use to describe the caterpillar in more detail?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Children learn vocabulary best through _____.

Scarborough’s Reading Rope

- A child needs strong skills in both language comprehension and **word recognition** in order to read.
- What are some ways to build a child’s vocabulary?

_____

_____

- **Verbal reasoning** is the ability to understand language beyond the words that are spoken.
    - Verbal reasoning involves figurative language, or language that is not the typical meaning of the word (e.g. sauna being used to describe a hot place)

Give an example of another word that we often use to describe something that is not its actual meaning: _____

- Helping the child understand when information is implied and not directly stated will help their ability to make connections and inferences.

Give an example of how you can practice inferential thinking with a child you work with.

_____

_____

Pick a letter and write a silly example sentence like “might move mom’s magnets to her mirror” which can help the child develop phonological awareness:

When practicing phonics:

1) Follow the words with your finger from left to right.
2) Touch and say the words as you read them.
3) Give the child a chance to practice before you jump in too quickly.

Reading Expert Linda Farrell: Letter Names vs Letter Sounds

Before we teach a child to read, the child needs to understand that there is a letter and there is a sound, and they are often not the same sound.

What Is Phonemic Awareness?

It is important for students to understand that the words we hear when we speak are made up of individual_____.

Understanding Phonics: Why Is Teaching This Way Effective?

We have 26 letters in the alphabet but we use _____ sounds to make all the words in the english language.

Letter Naming/Alphabet Knowledge

Use “letter is, _____ is” when teaching the alphabet and letter pronunciation.

Articulating Our Sounds: A Helpful Video for Teachers And Parents

As mentors we want to make sure that we are **articulating** the sound clearly and accurately for students, and providing error correction if we hear students adding that “schwa” on.

Tricky letter sounds to practice and pronounce correctly: Q, Y, _____, and R.

Reading Expert Linda Farrell: Mastering Reading Accuracy

It's important to not let an inaccurate reading of a word slip by even if it doesn't change the meaning of the word. That sets up students for poor **comprehension**. We want to help students develop a habit of reading accurately.

What do you observe Linda Farrell doing to make sure the child reads accurately?

Letter Names with Reese, Kindergartener

The video highlights that children may need practice with some letters hundreds of times before mastery. How can you maintain patience and persistence when helping a child who struggles to remember specific letters over time? What are some ways to keep the lessons engaging?

Mastering Short Vowels and Reading Whole Words with Calista, 1st Grader

In the video, Linda uses specific praise and encouragement with Calista. How can you apply similar positive reinforcement techniques when working with a child who is struggling with reading? What about these techniques being applied to children that are not in a school or literacy setting, such as in a Boys and Girls' Club or domestic shelter?

Read Aloud to Your Child

When reading aloud, talk about the *characters*, where the story *takes place*, what *problems* the characters are having, and *predicting* what will happen next.
Doing these things aids the child's understanding of story **structure** and **comprehension**.

When dyad reading:

1) Sit side by side with the child slightly in front of you.
2) Read with the child at the same time using two voices
3) Your voice should be a little faster and louder than the student's
4) Use your finger to track reading beneath the text
5) Make sure you keep your eyes on the words
6) For only a few minutes each session, you should read at almost your normal pace to pull the student to higher rates of speed.
7) Write down any unknown words and talk about them using student-friendly descriptions.
8) Occasionally lower the volume of your voice to allow the student to lead the reading.
9) Have fun. This experience benefits both of you.

Children with Learning Disabilities

Learning Disabilities, What Are the Different Types?

Learning disabilities are disorders and basic psychological processes that involve understanding and using language (the ability to receive, process, recall, and then communicate information).

_____ is a learning disability in reading.

_____ is a learning disability in writing.

Dyscalculia is a learning disability in math.

Children can have learning disabilities that may significantly affect the following domains or make them have a preference for learning in the domains of:

- Auditory processing
- Visual processing
- Sensory-motor functioning

- Social-emotional functioning

True / False Circle whether the following statement is true or false:
Learning disabilities can be caused by a child having vision or hearing loss, being on the autism spectrum, having an intellectual disability, or experiencing cultural/environmental/ economic disadvantages or emotional disturbances.

ADHD: Signs, Symptoms, Solutions

ADHD stands for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Children with ADHD have trouble paying attention, are hyperactive, and often have difficulty controlling their behavior.

- It is estimated that it affects around 5% of all children aged 3 to 17 globally.
- For every girl diagnosed with ADHD, there are 3 boys diagnosed with ADHD.

Brainstorm some ways you can work with a teacher and/or parent to empower a student with ADHD to have the best chance at success in school in your mentoring sessions:

What is Dyslexia? - Kelli Sandman-Hurley

People with dyslexia don't have a problem with seeing language, but with **manipulating** language. They see the same words as we do.

- The brains of those with dyslexia rely more on the **right** hemisphere and frontal lobe. It means a word takes a longer trip through their brain, and can get delayed in the frontal lobe.

True / False Circle whether the following statement is true or false:
A person with dyslexia can change their brain and improve their reading.

What is Autism? | Quick Learner

Autism is sometimes associated with strengths in the areas of visual memory, music, art, math, and science.

People with autism sometimes have other conditions, such as:

- Higher rates of sleep disorders
- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Gastrointestinal Issues

Treating these co-occurring conditions can make a big difference.

Describe ways that the world would be a better place if the qualities of people who are neurodiverse are accepted and valued:

Strengths of Students With Learning Disabilities and Other Disorders

Neurodiversity: everybody has certain pockets of strengths and weaknesses within the different learning disabilities and disorders they may have.

- Ask ourselves: *What is different about the way neurodiverse individuals filter and understand the world around them?*

We can help those with learning disabilities or other disorders to understand the answers to the questions of:

- "Who am I?"
- "How can I engage in meaningful ways with my peers, with adults, and others in my community?"
- "How can I contribute in meaningful ways?"

Working with All Children

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence encourages the acknowledgement and acceptance of differences in appearance, behavior, and culture.

According to the video, how do you demonstrate respect to others?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Without cultural competence we create a higher risk for misunderstanding, hurt feelings, and bias, things that can all be avoided.

What is Cultural Humility?

In your own words, what is the goal of cultural competency?

_____.

- Cultural humility is a lifelong process of asking yourself how your own **biases** might impact the way you treat and understand others, alongside work to minimize that impact.
- Cultural competency is a ***goal*** while cultural humility is a ***mindset***.

Ways to Practice Cultural Humility

- Recognize that no culture is better than another
- Engage in self-reflection
- Be honest when you're not sure
- Learn about other cultures
- Find a support system

Circle which practice of cultural humility above that you need to work on most.

Defensive Driving

5 Defensive Driving Strategies to Be A Safer, Smarter Driver

What is Space Management?

What is Situational Awareness?

Helpful notes:

- Map An Intersection and Track Road Users
- Current statistic: 36% of crashes occur in *intersections* (US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration NHTSA)
- Parking Lots - Check your rear window, then your rear view mirrors, THEN begin backing up.

What is my attitude toward driving, as indicated by my yielding and following distance behaviors? Does that attitude need to improve?

How can I improve my driving? Which of the 5 strategies specifically do I need to improve?

Foster Grandparents At-Home Training Articles

The articles shared here are not written by UServeUtah and do not denote an endorsement.

Child Development Overview

CDC.GOV

Preschoolers (3-5 years of age)

As children grow into early childhood, their world will begin to open up. They will become more independent and begin to focus more on adults and children outside of the family. They will want to explore and ask about the things around them even more. Their interactions with family and those around them will help to shape their personality and their own ways of thinking and moving. During this stage, children should be able to ride a tricycle, use safety scissors, notice a difference between girls and boys, help to dress and undress themselves, play with other children, recall part of a story, and sing a song.

Middle Childhood (6-8 years of age)

Middle childhood brings many changes in a child's life. By this time, children can dress themselves, catch a ball more easily using only their hands, and tie their shoes. Having independence from family becomes more important now. Events such as starting school bring children this age into regular contact with the larger world. Friendships become more and more important. Physical, social, and mental skills develop quickly at this time. This is a critical time for children to develop confidence in all areas of life, such as through friends, schoolwork, and sports.

Here is some information on how children develop during middle childhood:

Emotional/Social Changes

Children in this age group might:

- Show more independence from parents and family.
- Start to think about the future.
- Understand more about his or her place in the world.
- Pay more attention to friendships and teamwork.
- Want to be liked and accepted by friends.

Thinking and Learning

Children in this age group might:

- Show rapid development of mental skills.
- Learn better ways to describe experiences and talk about thoughts and feelings.
- Have less focus on one's self and more concern for others.

Middle Childhood (9-11 years of age)

A child's growing independence from the family and interest in friends might be obvious by now. Healthy friendships are very important to your child's development, but peer pressure can become strong during this time. Children who feel good about themselves are more able to resist negative peer pressure and make better choices for themselves. This is an important time for children to gain a sense of responsibility along with their growing independence. Also, physical changes of puberty might be showing by now, especially for girls. Another big change children need to prepare for during this time is starting middle or junior high school.

Here is some information on how children develop during middle childhood:

Emotional/Social Changes

Children in this age group might:

- Start to form stronger, more complex friendships and peer relationships. It becomes more emotionally important to have friends, especially of the same sex.
- Experience more peer pressure.
- Become more aware of his or her body as puberty approaches. Body image and eating problems sometimes start around this age.

Thinking and Learning

Children in this age group might:

- Face more academic challenges at school.
- Become more independent from the family.
- Begin to see the point of view of others more clearly.
- Have an increased attention span.

Young Teens (12-14 years of age)

This is a time of many physical, mental, emotional, and social changes. Hormones change as puberty begins. Most boys grow facial and pubic hair and their voices deepen. Most girls grow pubic hair and breasts, and start their period. They might be worried about these changes and how they are looked at by others. This also will be a time when your teen might face peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco products, and drugs, and to have sex. Other challenges can be eating disorders, depression, and family problems. At this age, teens make more of their own choices about friends, sports, studying, and school. They become more independent, with their own personality and interests, although parents are still very important.

Here is some information on how young teens develop:

Emotional/Social Changes

Children in this age group might:

- Show more concern about body image, looks, and clothes.
- Focus on themselves; going back and forth between high expectations and lack of confidence.
- Experience more moodiness.
- Show more interest in and influence by peer group.
- Express less affection toward parents; sometimes might seem rude or short-tempered.
- Feel stress from more challenging school work.
- Develop eating problems.
- Feel a lot of sadness or depression, which can lead to poor grades at school, alcohol or drug use, unsafe sex, and other problems.

Thinking and Learning

Children in this age group might:

- Have more ability for complex thought.
- Be better able to express feelings through talking.
- Develop a stronger sense of right and wrong.

Teenagers (15-17 years of age)

This is a time of changes for how teenagers think, feel, and interact with others, and how their bodies grow. Most girls will be physically mature by now, and most will have completed puberty. Boys might still be maturing physically during this time. Your teen might have concerns about her body size, shape, or weight. Eating disorders also can be common, especially among girls. During this time, your teen is developing his unique personality and opinions. Relationships with friends are still important, yet your teen will have other interests as he develops a more clear sense of who he is. This is also an important time to prepare for more independence and responsibility; many teenagers start working, and many will be leaving home soon after high school.

Here is some information on how teens develop:

Emotional/Social Changes

Children in this age group might:

- Have more interest in romantic relationships and sexuality.
- Go through less conflict with parents.
- Show more independence from parents.
- Have a deeper capacity for caring and sharing and for developing more intimate relationships.
- Spend less time with parents and more time with friends.
- Feel a lot of sadness or depression, which can lead to poor grades at school, alcohol or drug use, unsafe sex, and other problems.

Thinking and Learning

Children in this age group might:

- Learn more defined work habits.
- Show more concern about future school and work plans.
- Be better able to give reasons for their own choices, including about what is right or wrong.

What are some similarities or common themes that you see in the changes between middle childhood and teenagehood?

How does being informed about the influence of hormones and puberty give you compassion for children and teenagers as they navigate all of the challenges in mental health, emotions, independence, confidence, etc.? How can you remember these things to be more compassionate and patient in your interactions?

What can you take from your own experiences growing up and/or being a parent that can help you in your role as a foster grandparent?

Working with Youth at Different Ages

Children of the same age may resemble each other in certain respects but they also *differ* from one another in many ways. A combination of physical, emotional and environmental forces plays a role in every child's growth. As a Foster Grandparent volunteer, you can support children most effectively when you recognize important characteristics of their development.
This tool describes children in three age ranges: five- to seven-year-olds, eight- to ten-year olds,

and 11- to 13-year-olds. Each section includes characteristics typical of that age group along with suggestions for volunteers. Note that a suggestion about working with an eight- year old may also apply to an 11-year old. Since each child is unique, there's no substitute for understanding the individual child(ren) you work with.

Five- to Seven-Year-olds

In general, children in this age group:

- Are very active; need frequent breaks from tasks to do things that are fun
- Need rest periods—good quiet activities include reading books together or doing simple art projects
- Like to talk and are rapidly increasing their vocabulary
- Have difficulty making decisions
- Are very imaginative and involved in fantasy-playing

Respond to the shifting interests and short attention spans of five- to seven- year-olds with patience and flexibility. Observe the child's energy level for cues about when to shift gears. Stimulate interest by starting a new activity, taking a five-minute break, stretching, or taking a walk down the hall.

Provide opportunities for the child to express himself and for you to express your interest in him. Share something about yourself and then ask the child about himself. For example, *I had a delicious chocolate milkshake today. Chocolate is my favorite flavor, do you like milkshakes? Ask* the child if anything good or bad happened at school that day. The more open-ended a question is, the easier it will be to continue the conversation. Some openers might be:

- *I bet your teacher reads stories to your class. One of my favorites is* The Cat in the Hat. *What are some of your favorite stories?*
- *I love all different animals. My favorite is the cheetah because it can run very fast. Are there any animals that you like?*
- *I know lots of kids watch television. What are some TV shows that you like to watch?*
- Offer your ideas but focus most on what the child says. The goal is to encourage the child to speak. A good prompt is, *That's interesting— tell me more.*

Ask your child for their ideas for writing or drawing. Provide some suggestions, if

necessary, to spark his thinking, but avoid guiding him through every step of the process.

Give explicit praise to reinforce his efforts:

- *I noticed you corrected yourself when you realized that sentence didn't make sense. Good readers are always checking to make sure their reading makes sense.*
- *I see you looking at the pictures to help you make a prediction about what will happen next. That's a great strategy.*
- *Nice Job sounding out the word, vowel, etc.*
- *I can tell by the way you were reading that you were really paying attention to the punctuation.*

What stands out to you in the suggestions of how to praise the child you work with? Why might that specific praise be more powerful for the child than just "Good job!"?

Eight- to Ten-Year-olds

In general, children in this age group:

- Are capable of prolonged interest
- Are eager to answer questions
- Want more independence while knowing they need guidance and support
- Exhibit wide discrepancies in reading ability
- Show interest in people; show awareness of differences; show a willingness to give more to others but also expect more
- Often idolize heroes, television stars, and sports figures
- Spend a great deal of time in talk and discussion

Recognize eight- to 10-year-olds' increasing independence by *offering* choices in your tutoring sessions. Providing choices promotes independence, responsibility for learning, and personal investment in the activity. The language you use when offering choices is critical. Avoid asking yes-or-no questions unless you're willing to accept *no as* an answer. If you decide to work on a phonics game in the session, present it to the child as a plan rather than a choice: *Now we're*

going to play a matching game versus d*o you want to play this matching game now?*
There are many instances when it is appropriate for you to decide the content and sequence of a lesson.

Invite children to make suggestions and share their feelings about the work you do together. Look for ways to integrate the child's personal interests into your lesson. If the child is very interested in dogs, bring some books about dogs that are on the appropriate reading level. If your tutee lives with his grandmother, read books about other children who live with their grandparents or ask him to draw or write about his grandmother.

Choose your words carefully when offering praise or suggestions for improvement. Since eight- to 10-year-olds can be very critical of themselves and others, convey your support clearly and consistently. Positive and honest feedback is important and, as with children of all ages, it is best to give explicit praise to reinforce the child's good behavior or performance.

Imagine creating a tutoring session for kids aged eight to ten for reading, using the information above. How would you set it up? List the important parts and the methods you would use to make sure the kids are interested and get the help they need.

Eleven- to Thirteen-Year-olds

In general, children in this age group:

- Need help with organization—thoughts, schoolwork, writing
- Have more interest in current events and social issues
- Love to argue and can begin to see more than one side of an issue
- Feel challenged rather than defeated by *reasonably* hard work
- Tend to be perfectionists; if they try to attempt too much, may feel frustrated
- Can be both playful and serious
- May have bad diet and sleep habits and, as a result, low energy levels
- Enjoy testing limits; may exhibit a know-it-all attitude
- Are very concerned with what others say and think about them

Eleven- to 13-year-olds are at a challenging crossroad. No longer children but not yet adults, they waver between a growing need for independence and a continuing need for support. Collaborate with 11- to 13-year-olds so they feel some control over what takes place in your tutoring sessions. While you still need to establish and maintain your role as the authority figure, you can accomplish this while giving children choices and asking for their suggestions about how you spend your time together.

By this age, children may have *experienced* frustration with their academic experiences. Eleven- to 13- year olds often lack interest in subjects of classroom study and they may not get enough exposure to compelling books at the appropriate reading level.
Eleven- to 13-year olds may have diminished self-confidence, which hinders their willingness to take risks in their learning. Be supportive by honestly sharing some of your own challenges and successes. Cite examples from your own life or the lives of others and you can also find well-written books that tell inspiring personal tales.

What are some examples in your life or from others that you could share with the child you mentor in the future?

Reading Tutoring

There are many different methods to tutoring a child to read. One way we recommend is using Dyad Reading. It is a simple technique where you and the child read out loud together. Read below for further instructions.

IMPLEMENTING DYAD READING

Because choice is motivational in reading, children should be allowed to choose from three to five books, both fiction and non-fiction texts, that are at least two grade levels above their current reading level. As reading achievement improves, the level of text challenge should be adjusted to keep students reading at an appropriate text difficulty level.

THE PROCEDURE IS SIMPLE:

Share one book.

Sit side by side.

Use one SMOOTH finger.

Read with two voices.

Keep eyes on words.

Don't go too fast or too slow.

Write down words you don't know.

Have fun!

The child can read with a parent, an older sibling, or a friend who is a strong reader. Read for 15 minutes and then discuss the words that were written down.

Problem solve together to decode the words the child did not know and determine meanings. Show the child how to decode the words—break the words into syllables, identify root words, prefixes, suffixes, or compound words, and provide child-friendly definitions, emphasizing problem solving and decoding strategies. Show the child how to look up words on the Internet or how to use a dictionary.

What expectations and questions do you have with dyad reading? Share these with the teacher or UServeUtah staff member to help prepare you for success.

How to Identify and Teach to the Child's Learning Style

There are several ways in which people learn. Here are some clues to help you find and teach to the child's strongest learning style. Be an observer of behavior first.

Visual Learners

- Remember words by their appearance
- Enjoy pictures, books and demonstrations
- Notice details
- Respond well to visual order and neatness
- May watch your face intently
- Remember where they have seen things
- May have speech problems

As a tutor, you need to:

- Take out visual distractions
- Give lots of visual directions
- Use matching games, charts, maps, graphs
- Use color-coded clues for places to begin/end a lesson
- Use sight words in context. Use pictures representing words or ideas

What do you think could be a strength of visual learners?

Auditory Learners

- Learn easily by hearing and saying
- May need to verbalize while doing nonverbal tasks
- Ask questions about written instructions
- Remember what is said and discussed
- Never stop talking
- Often have poor handwriting
- Can memorize the words to songs and poems easily

As a tutor, you need to:

- Help him/her talk through the tasks
- Read and spell out loud
- Play lots of rhyming and phonics games
- Allow him/her to talk while writing
- Tape record lessons and tests
- Read aloud to the child
- Give instructions verbally as well as in writing

What do you think could be a strength of auditory learners?

Kinesthetic Learners

- Learn by doing and remember what was done
- May prefer hands-on learning to audio-visuals
- May be restless and need frequent breaks
- May draw while listening or watching
- Need learning to be organized and fairly routine
- Want to touch and feel everything
- Are movers. That's the way they learn

As a tutor, you need to:

- Model skills and let the child try it
- Plan breaks and opportunities to move around
- Have the child write with fat markers
- Have a standard agenda and lesson routine
- Use as many concrete objects as possible for math and vocabulary
- Use lots of writing. You may need to introduce writing with stencils
- Clap or tap out numbers, syllables, etc.
- Use number lines on the floor and move heavy objects along it for physical feedback
- Teach prepositional concepts, addition and subtraction on the monkey bars
- Supply concrete objects for counting, sequencing, establishing patterns, seeing likenesses and differences

What do you think could be a strength of kinesthetic learners?

What type of learning style do you have? Knowing that your learning style may be different from the child you are assigned to, how do you plan to navigate this difference to serve them?

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10 Tips for Working with Teachers in the Classroom

Volunteers support classrooms by providing needed individual assistance to students. Volunteers also bring a new dynamic to the classroom by sharing their own life experiences, compassionate manner, and calming presence. To make the best of your experience as a classroom volunteer, here are some tips to help you serve with teachers.

1. Know the responsibilities of your volunteer position in the classroom – tasks you should and should not be performing.
2. Teachers have different ways of doing things, and different comfort levels with someone new in their classroom. Some teachers may want you to jump right in; others may want to get to know you better before asking you to work with particular students.
3. Remember that it is not your job to discipline the students! Talk with the teacher prior to service to make sure you understand the discipline plan and what you should do when you see unacceptable behavior. You need to understand the teacher's rules so students get consistent messages.
4. Try to give the teacher the benefit of the doubt even if it seems like his/her methods are inconsistent when dealing with different students. Remember that the teacher knows more about the individual students' abilities and behaviors than you do.
5. Let the teacher know about any special skills or talents you have that might be helpful to students. For example, you may have personal or professional experience with learning disabilities that hinder reading ability, or you may have a special knack for helping very shy children feel more comfortable.
6. Let the teacher know if you are uncomfortable with a task or feel overwhelmed. The teacher does not want you to burn out either, and it may be that all you need is a few minutes of additional instructions, and intervention from her, or a short break.
7. Communicate with the teacher on a regular basis. It may be difficult to talk during a hectic school day, so try to schedule a regular time when you can meet. When you meet with the teacher, ask for comments on your performance, and make it clear that you are open to constructive criticism. No one learns without a little helpful honest feedback.
8. Pay attention to student behavior during transition times. Some students have difficulty between activities, when they need to get organized to leave or settle down again to focus on a task. Individual attention from you can make transitions much smoother; be a calming presence that helps them adjust.
9. Because you are a trusted member of the classroom and an example to students, take care not to say anything that sounds like gossip. You may see behavior or hear sensitive things about individual teachers' or students' private lives; be respectful and keep it to yourself.
10. Keep in mind that the teacher is always the one in charge of the classroom. However, for

their part, you can expect teachers to tell you what they expect and provide clear directions. Volunteers should be provided adequate support and supervision.

Which tips do you already feel comfortable with? Why do you think that is?

Which tips do you feel like you need to better learn and apply? Describe your plan and commitment to do so.

Reflect on the importance of maintaining professionalism and respecting the privacy of teachers and students. How will you make sure that you don't engage in gossip or breach trust?

Discuss the role you can play in helping students during transition times and being a calming presence. What strategies will you use to support students during these moments?

How will you approach the balance between your role as a volunteer and the teacher's authority in the classroom, keeping in mind that teachers are ultimately in charge? What expectations do you have for clear directions and support from the teacher?

Share any special skills or talents you possess that could benefit the students. How do you plan to communicate these to the teacher and integrate them into your volunteer work?

Consider how you'll handle feelings of discomfort or being overwhelmed during your volunteer work. How will you communicate these feelings with the teacher and/or your program coordinator and seek support or guidance?

What are Learning Disabilities?

- Learning disabilities are disorders that can affect the ability to understand or use spoken or written language, do math, coordinate movements, or direct attention.
- People may have one or more disorders, and symptoms can vary from mild to severe.
- Learning disabilities are usually not recognized until a child reaches school age.
- 8 to 10 percent of American children under 18 years of age have some type of learning disability.
- Identifying the child's particular strengths and weaknesses is the first step to getting the right kind of help.

- Special education involves teaching learning skills by building on the individual child's abilities and strengths, while correcting and making up for disabilities and weaknesses.
- Other professionals (e.g. speech and language therapists) also may be involved in the child's special education.

Types of Learning Disabilities

Dyslexia is sometimes referred to as a reading disability or reading disorder. A person with dyslexia may have trouble understanding written words and spelling, for example. Listening to recorded text (e.g. books on tape) helps some people compensate.

Dysgraphia is a disorder where a person may have trouble writing letters or writing within a defined space. Using a computer to write helps some people compensate.

Dyspraxia is a disorder where a person may have great difficulty planning out the steps, and following through with tasks that require fine motor skills (e.g. drawing, buttoning, writing, reading, or speaking). They may have trouble with balance, vision, perception, or memory.

Dyscalculia refers to a wide range of learning disabilities involving math. A person may have trouble solving arithmetic problems and understanding math concepts.

Auditory Processing Disorder affects the way the brain processes sounds. A person may have trouble learning to read, remembering things they have heard, following spoken directions, blocking out background noise, and telling the difference between words that sound similar.

Visual Processing Disorder affects the way the brain interprets what is seen. A person may have trouble reading, telling the difference between things that look similar, and hand-eye coordination.

10 Teaching Strategies to Keep Struggling Students Working

from TeachHub.Com

We have all had to struggle at one point or another in our lives. As human beings we understand that sometimes life can get hard and that we have to push ourselves in order to get

through it. As children, this is a lesson that needs to be learned. Our students who struggle in school must learn to persevere and move through the problem in order to get to the other end. As a teacher, it often seems easier to help a struggling student out, rather than use teaching strategies to give them the tools to get through it. We often have to fight the urge to give the student the answer or tell them what to do because we have 20 other students that need our help too. However, it is part of our job to keep our struggling students working so that they can learn and recognize what hard work is all about. It's important for them to learn the lesson of persistence and perseverance. Here are 10 simple teaching strategies that you can use to help your struggling students so they can become more independent workers.

1. Fight the Urge to Tell Students the Answer

As mentioned earlier, sometimes it is just easier to give the struggling student the answer rather than taking the time to give them the tools to find the answer themselves. However, as a teacher, this is something you should not do, ever. It is your job to teach the student and give them the tools that they will be able to take with them for the rest of their lives. This means fighting the urge to give them the answer just to save you time with your other students.

2. Give Students Time to Think of the Answer

Research has shown that teachers, on average, only wait one second or less between asking students a question and calling upon a student to answer the question. If teachers give students just a few seconds more to really think about their answer, they're much more likely to give an answer and provide elaboration.

3. Allow Student to Explain Their Answers

How many times have you asked a student a question to repeatedly get the answer, "I don't know"? Encourage students to come up with an answer, even if they are unsure. Teach them how to explain to you how they got their answer. Once you find out how they got their answer, it will be easier for you to figure out what they are doing wrong. Require that all students must come up with an answer and be able to explain how they got it.

4. Write Down All Directions

Struggling students can often have a hard time paying attention and remembering things. If you give them oral directions, they may have difficulty fully remembering them, which means they will struggle to know what to do next. Make sure that you always write down everything that you want the students to do on the front board so there are no excuses from any student and they always have a resource that they can refer to.

5. Teach Perseverance

Teach students that when the going gets tough, they must keep on working. This means when they get stuck on a question, they need to try out a few different strategies until they get it. A simple way to do this is to keep a few tips and strategies listed somewhere in the classroom, preferably on a wall where all students can see it from their desks.

6. Teach Time Management Skills

Struggling students have a hard time managing their time and daily tasks because oftentimes it feels overwhelming to them. Teach students how to manage their time and their tasks by having them write down their whole schedule for one day. Then, have students estimate how long they think it will take them to do each task that they listed. Go over the list and discuss how much time should be spent on each task. This activity will help them understand that time management skills are essential, and that they must take ownership of their learning in order to keep them from struggling in school.

7. Take it One Task at a Time

Sometimes the easiest way for a struggling student to understand a concept better is to take it one question at a time. If you find that you have many struggling students, then this is the best option for the whole group. For example, if students are doing small group work, instead of giving them a list of 10 questions to answer together all at once, have them answer one question at a time, and after each question, have them regroup as a whole group before allowing them to go onto the next question.

8. Ask Questions that Require Students to Think

Struggling students need to practice thinking on their own. Take the time to ask questions that make students have to think critically about their answer. Teach them how to make inferences and not just blurt out any answer that comes to mind. The more they take the time to think

about their answers, the easier time they will have when trying to come up with solutions to the answer.

9. Yield the Chronic Hand Raisers

Students who are having a hard time often get the urge to raise their hands and ask for help frequently. To stop this from happening, you should come up with a strategy that will allow students to move on when they get stuck on a question. Some teachers find that sticky notes or red and green flip cards are an effective technique. Other teachers find that limiting the number of times a student is allowed to ask a question for each lesson works well too.

10. Give Students Encouragement

Effective teachers encourage students and motivate them to do well in school. They take the time to praise them and tell them that they can do anything when they put their mind to it. Be that teacher, the teacher that tells them they can do it!

Consider the idea that students sometimes need to learn the valuable lesson of persistence and resilience when facing challenges. How does this understanding influence your decision to volunteer in a classroom, and why is it important?

Reflect on the significance of time management skills for struggling students. How can you assist students in developing these skills, and what difficulties do you foresee in managing their tasks? How will you guide them in overcoming these challenges?

Ponder your own struggles that you had as a student growing up. How do you feel that these strategies would have helped you if someone had applied them? How does that strengthen your commitment to be mindful of these tips in your volunteer service?

Growth Mindset

From www.mindsetkit.org

Youth with a growth mindset earn better grades and perform better on standardized tests. But research also shows that youth's mindsets influence a host of other attitudes and behaviors that have consequences both at school and beyond school. Research has found that youth with a growth mindset about their intelligence:

- Retain their confidence when faced with challenges
- Are more open to taking risks and going beyond their abilities
- Are more resilient when they make a mistake or suffer a setback
- Emphasize learning and their development more than "showing off"
- Cheat less, as they are more interested in improving than the final result

These behaviors are part of the reason why students with a growth mindset perform better. And these traits have obvious value for other domains of life, such as personal relationships and success in the workplace.

Other research has looked at a growth mindset of personality, finding that youth who believe their social skills are similarly improvable:

- Feel fewer social pressures
- Have less aggression and stress
- Are less likely to label their peers with fixed identities (e.g., "bully" or "loser")
- Handle negative experiences, such as bullying, more effectively

- Work harder to improve their relationships with others
- Handle conflict more easily as they recognize their “adversary” as being able to change

Adopting more of a growth mindset can help a child in many ways throughout their life. When caring adults — parents, teachers, neighbors, and, of course, mentors — help youth emphasize a growth mindset, they are truly giving a gift that will last a lifetime.

Teaching Growth Mindset to Mentees

One of the most direct ways mentors can help mentees adopt a growth mindset, is by spending some time directly teaching them about the neuroscience of brain plasticity. Numerous studies show that people are more likely to develop a growth mindset when they learn about the scientific evidence for the brain's ability to rewire itself through practice.

While most of the growth mindset strategies you’ll learn about in this toolkit are subtle ideas and phrases you can weave into your normal conversations, some youth may really benefit from sitting down and learning about the science behind growth mindset. This might be the very thing that gets them to see their abilities, and potential for growth, in a new light.

There are several ways to begin the conversation about growth mindset with your mentee:

- Initiating the conversation in response to a recent struggle or a declaration by the youth that they’ll “never get it” on a challenging topic. This might be a great way to counteract some negative self-talk and help the mentee see that more possibilities for growth exist than they may have thought.
- You could be proactive and tell them about what you learned in this toolkit.

Regardless of how you approach this direct conversation, be sure that the mentee understands that their brain has the ability to grow and change in these ways, and that their lack of progress on some challenge or topic is not a sign that there is something wrong with how their brain is wired. All brains have the ability to grow stronger and become rewired for greater success. And that happens more easily when we try our best to think from a growth mindset perspective.

After talking to your mentee about the amazing properties of the brain, be sure to connect the science to specific behaviors that help them learn, like working through a challenge, practicing, doing homework, etc. You’ll learn more of these strategies and behaviors later in this Toolkit, but they will make the most sense to your mentee when you connect them back to the science you reviewed together.

One powerful word for growth mindset

While remembering to offer the right type of praise to your mentee is a good starting point for promoting growth mindset, there are several other specific approaches that you can use with your mentee. This Lesson covers two simple-yet-powerful strategies you can use to further promote a growth mindset in a variety of situations.

One powerful word

There is one simple word that you should consider incorporating into conversations with your mentee, especially as they relate to aspects of school or life where they are trying to improve. Before we reveal this powerful word, take a minute to think about three things that you cannot do. These can be work-related, health-related, or even related to how you interact with others and build relationships. **Write these three things down:**

_____

_____

_____

Now let's think about the kinds of things many kids commonly think are not possible for them. Think about some of the statements you might hear from your mentee:

- I don't know how to do this assignment.
- I am not good at math.
- I don't have the grades to get into college.
- I can't kick the soccer ball from the corner.
- I don't know how to get a date for prom.
- I can't eat only one cookie.
- I can't go to sleep without smoking pot.
- I can't learn to solve problems with words instead of fighting.
- I can't get organized.

So here is that powerful word: YET. Take a look at those mentee statements again. They all sound much better and less intimidating with the simple addition of the word "yet" at the end. Yet implies that something is achievable. Yet puts a person back in charge of their destiny. Yet hints that there is work to be done in order to get to the desired place.

This may sound like a bit of a trick of the mind, but reminding your mentee that they haven't accomplished something "yet" really can make them feel better about where they are at currently and makes the pursuit of their goals, even the very lofty ones, seem less daunting. "Yet" can make things sound less fatalistic and more optimistic. Yet equals possibility - without it, those statements, and the person who believes them, are set in stone.

Write down the word "yet" after the three things you wrote above that you cannot do. How does that change your perspective on those specific things?

Moving beyond "yet"

Now this doesn't mean that your mentee won't have some anxiety about the journey implied by that "yet." They may be worried about how they can get from point A to point B and feel like they will be overwhelmed somewhere along the way, especially if they are already upset, frustrated, or panicked about a recent struggle that reinforced their fixed mindset. Yet can ring pretty hollow if it's not backed up with strategies to get better. So always follow up a "yet" statement with a phrase like this: "Let's figure out what we need to do to get there." This lets your mentee know that there are steps to be taken and ideas that can be tried, while also letting them know that they have your support for the journey.

To do this exercise for yourself, write out a plan of what you need to do in order to accomplish the three things that you cannot do <u>yet</u> (what you wrote above). Even if you don't necessarily want to do those things, how does this empower you? Do you actually want to try to do any of those things according to your plan?