

COMMUNITY MENNONITE CHURCH OF LANCASTER

GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

(Updated October 2013)

1. Please review the Mentor Program portion of CMCL's Child Safety Policy, excerpted on the second page of this document.
2. A mentor's responsibility is to develop a relationship with one youth, showing him/her that you care about all aspects of his/her life, over the course of a **two-year** commitment. You are one of the significant connections for the youth, linking them with the church. This will take time and effort on your part, with the advantage that the youth chose you and anticipates a positive experience.
3. We encourage monthly contact with your youth. A contact can be a phone call, a conversation after church, a card, attending a school event, or doing an activity together or with other mentor pairs. As the adult of the pair, you may need to take initiative 99% of the time. It may be helpful to have a place to keep track of your contacts.
4. Make your plans directly with the youth. This demonstrates your respect for the youth, and that you recognize he/she is growing up. Plans should be communicated to parents as well.
5. If you have an absence during these two years for any reason, consider ways of staying in touch. Writing letters can be a positive experience. Plan to spend time together before the time apart.
6. After your two years of mentoring are completed, consider giving some photos to your youth from shared time together or writing a blessing for the coming years. The formal relationship of mentoring ends, but you continue to be one adult that the youth knows in the congregation.
7. Thank you for this connection you are making on behalf of CMCL with a youth in these important growing years. We welcome you to be in contact with us when you feel unsure about your role or how to negotiate unexpected events.

**CMCL Mentor Program
Child Safety Guidelines
Excerpted from CMCL's Child Safety Policy
(revisions adopted May 28, 2013; full policy available online)**

Mentors are same-gender, Approved Volunteers chosen in consultation with youth and appointed by Staff to provide companionship, nurture and support for youth during their pre-teen and early teenage years. These relationships are an exception to the policy of needing two Approved Volunteers present for activities with youth. This risk is addressed by the following practices:

1. Approved Mentor/Mentee pairs will be in a formal, church-sponsored relationship for two years, with clear beginning and end dates communicated to the Mentor, Mentee and Mentee's parents/guardians. See "Guidelines for Application to Volunteer" below.
2. Orientation for Mentors will be offered annually.
3. The Mentor, Mentee and Mentee's parents/guardians will meet at the beginning of the formal relationship to discuss safety considerations for all involved and to write down any ground rules or boundaries they would like to establish.
4. Mentors will be clear with the Mentee's parents/guardians about plans and how much time will be involved. In the event of one-on-one, evening activities, be aware of time. This is to avoid any appearance of impropriety and to discourage pairs from meeting too late in the evening.
5. Mentors must have parental consent to meet with the Mentee, including clear plans for travel to and from the activity.
6. Mentors should provide a cell phone number to the Mentee's parents/guardians so that they can be contacted at any time.
7. Engage in activities with other mentor pairs when possible.
8. Engage in activities that occur in public places or where others are frequently present. Mentors should never meet one-on-one with Mentees in a private home or on the church property without other Adults present.
9. Mentors are not considered counselors or pastors, though they are encouraged to form trusting and honest relationships with Mentees. Should a Mentor become concerned for the Mentee's emotional or physical safety, s/he will report the concern to a Pastor or the Director of Children and Youth Programs.