

National Center on Deaf-Blindness



Transition Activities

Mentor/Life Coach and Friend Directory

Topic:

Mentor/Life Coach and Friend Directory will help your son/daughter develop people skills and use the supports that will aid in employment success as an adult.

Overview:

Your son/daughter has a system of supports in place. Some supports, in the form of people, are specific to tasks; for instance, oversight for medical and financial care. But, hopefully, there is also someone with whom your son/daughter can talk with about life in general.

It is likely that you, as a parent, are the person your son/daughter turns to for evolving life issues. However, would your son/daughter benefit from a longer-term but more general relationship with a person who is good at listening, non-judgmental, knowledgeable about living life with a visual and auditory disability and ways to set goals and problem solve—that isn't you? This is the role that a mentor who is also deafblind or a life coach could play.

There are professional mentors and certified life coaches—both have the training or life experience to help young adults figure life out as it unfolds. However, it is the knowledge and relationship that is most important, and sometimes this can be found in people without training but with the calling for this service. Sometimes a sibling plays this role.

Outcomes for your child's transition development:

The purpose of this activity is to ensure your son/daughter either begins or has a relationship with an adult (not the parent) who can be the "go to" confidante for advice and support for general life issues, questions, or situations, when needed. As always, the activity can be modified or even omitted if not appropriate or valued.

Activity Directions:

1. Make a choice about mentors or life coaches:
 - a. Ask yourself, does my son/daughter have all the support needed to live a holistic life?
 - b. Ask yourself, would my son/daughter benefit from a formal relationship with a person who has the knowledge and skills consistent with a mentor or life coach?

- i. If this person already exists you will want to have a conversation with this person about a committed relationship and what that could look like.
 1. Discussion to include: scheduling of face-to-face or virtual meetings or check ins and when to start
 2. Suggested topics or procedures for “checking in”.
 3. Strategies for making it person centered and driven rather than mentor-driven. It’s a relationship, not a checklist.
 4. Agreement as to the role of the parent (or not) in this service
 - ii. If a mentor or life coach does not exist, decide if you want to make contact with a trained mentor or life coach.
 - iii. Or decide you have a plan of your own for going about this
 - c. Act on the plan.
2. Friend Directory
 - a. Assist your son/daughter in creating a friend directory that he/she can access and, if needed, a support person could access.
 - b. Decide what information is most helpful and consider using or modifying the template in the Resources section.
 3. Practice socially engaging phrases that can be used to make new friends:
 - a. Basic social phrases: my name is; what’s your name; nice to meet you, where do you live; I live. . .; see you later, I am deaf/vi/blind, Excuse me.

Resources:

Friend Directory:

- Consider putting each of these names and numbers being on a 3x5 recipe card with a hole in the upper left corner and bound with a circular clip for easy flipping.
- Consider iPhones and other portable electronic devices that might work for this purpose.
- The information on this template can also be used when talking about “dating relationships”.
- Encourage use of the directory when your son/daughter is trying to think of something to do.

Name	Contact Information	What we have in common or like to do together
Sylvia Thurston	123-123-1234 14 W Main	Girlfriend; shopping, eating out, watching movies
Fred Flintstone	098-765-5432 Apartments across from Hospital	Hanging out
Murry Jacobsen	535-485-1086	Nature hikes; tandem biking

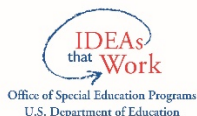
Ways to either Simplify or Increase Complexity:

Ideas for Simplifying Activity

N/A

Ideas for Increasing the Complexity of the Activity

N/A



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