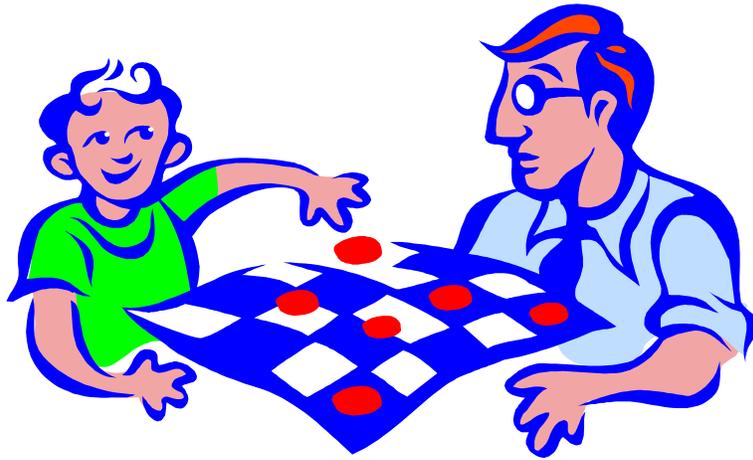




**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
of Peel

# **In-School Mentoring**

## **Activity Manual**



**AMGEN**  
*BBBSP Science Sponsor*

## **Introducing the Manual and the value of Play**

Welcome to the In-School Mentoring Program. We hope you are as excited as we are about participating in a program designed to help boost kids' self-confidence. Sometimes mentors and mentees can get stumped for activities they can do together in one hour. This manual serves as a resource guide. Here you will find new activities, games and craft ideas. Also provided are tried and true hints and advice from current mentors in the field. General information on children's stages of development is included. This background information may help you to choose a more accurate game to play with your mentee based on his/her skill level, or may remind you of the outside factors your mentee is dealing with at his/her age.

Mentors often ask "How does play activity benefit mentees?" Here is a brief response on the value of play... "On the playground of life, game playing equips each of us with the "rules of the game." As youngsters, games taught us how to work together, to accommodate, and to help one another. Through playful moments, children can act out real-life situations. In imagined contexts, they can learn how to solve problems, look for options, and resolve conflicts. By winning or losing at games, children experience the real world but in less harsh fashion. Children learn about their environment and how to relate to other children, as well as grown-ups. They learn about healthy competition and about trying to do their best. And, because most games have winners and losers, children learn to accept positive and negative outcomes. Game playing offers opportunities for children to build self-confidence and enhance self-esteem." Bob "Captain Kangaroo" Keeshan (Hopscotch, Hangman, Hot Potato and Ha Ha Ha: A Rulebook of Children's Games).

*Let's begin!*



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# A SCHOOL YEAR'S WORTH OF MENTORING ACTIVITIES!

## SEASONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS

### FALL

*A few ideas:*

- Create a design and carve a pumpkin for Halloween.
- Read a scary/mystery story together
- Play mystery games like Guess Who? Or Solve puzzles/riddles you each make for each other.
- Take a walk in the school yard and collect fall leaves together and then use them in a painting/picture/craft.
- Bake Halloween treats for the class.
- Talk/research on elections/politics.
- Create/start a scrapbook.
- Write an original story or poem together. You can write and your mentee can draw the pictures for it to create an actual novel!
- Engage in games such as chess, checkers, Hangman, Monopoly.
- Exchange favourite recipes and make a book.

Remember to ask your mentee what they would like to do. **Plan together and discuss and reflect each week!**

### DECEMBER/JANUARY

*A few ideas:*

- Bake/decorate cookies or muffins or Rice Krispie squares together
- Make cards or small creative gifts for the holidays for friends, classmates, teachers or parents
- Wrap gifts
- Do a project – what good things are people doing to help others during the holidays? How much do people spend on gifts during the holidays?
- Research a favourite hockey player or hockey team or country or heritage?
- Make New Year's Resolutions and set your mentoring goals
- Write thank you notes/cards for holiday presents
- Decorate T-shirts and wear your creations proudly.
- Create a time capsule and bury it. Determine when it should be opened.

**Quaker Oats Instant Muffin Mixes are a quick & easy baking choice!**

### FEBRUARY/MARCH

*A few ideas:*

- As it is Award season, make a collage of a favourite actor / actress / singer
- Research and talk about famous people who use their abilities to get ahead.
- Research the history of music and learn to play a musical instrument together.

- Do a woodworking kit – these cost \$1 from the local dollar store
- Work on a model - be sure to use non-toxic glue, available at Wal-Mart or Michael's
- Make mini-pizzas – use English muffins or bagels
- Make your own puzzle or board game
- Research various holidays and themes (Black History Month, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, etc...)
- Sew/knit something for a friend or family member
- Swap your favourite books/magazines with each other
- Act out a scene from a favorite book and make a production out of it
- Discuss people you admire. Compare heroes and research your favorites.

## **APRIL/MAY**



*A few ideas:*

- Go outside and skip, play soccer, play baseball, basketball, throw a Frisbee, race in school yard.
- Read comic books, write poetry, read the newspaper, research current events
- Plant seeds or decorate a plant pot
- Build a birdhouse
- Construct and fly a kite (activity instructions in APPENDIX)
- Learn a new skill, i.e. Photography or origami.
- Build and launch a rocket.
- Discuss safety precautions such as wearing helmets when riding bikes and fire safety in the home.
- Discuss what your youth wants to be when he or she grows up.
- Conduct mock interviews for a job, read the want ads, discuss dress codes, help with resume and fill out a sample job application.
- Discuss opportunities for post-secondary education. Research colleges and technical schools and the meaning of financial aid. What does it take to get to college? What high school courses should be taken? It is never too early to begin.
- Share your career experiences. How did you get to where you are today?
- Practice how to get a point across.

## **END MAY/JUNE**

*A few ideas:*

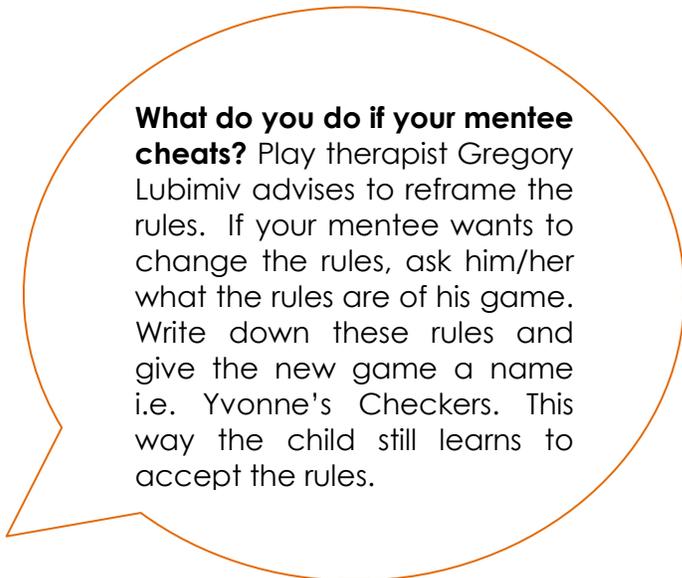
- Finish your scrapbook: fill it with memories of your favourite games, craziest thing you ever baked or did together, etc.
- Discuss travel and dream vacations.
- Discuss the positive activities youth can get involved in during the summer.
- Talk about saying good-bye for the summer
- Revisit resolutions and goals and evaluate your progress
- Call your ISM caseworker to inform them whether you are continuing next year

### **GAMES THAT HELP WITH LITERACY SKILLS:**

- Hangman
- Scrabble
- Boggle
- Discover ways to make spelling fun. Use alphabet cereal or flashcards.
- Share thoughts and feelings between meetings in a small journal.

### **GAMES THAT HELP WITH MATH:**

- Monopoly
- Checkers
- Chess
- Cards
- Baking/Cooking



**What do you do if your mentee cheats?** Play therapist Gregory Lubimiv advises to reframe the rules. If your mentee wants to change the rules, ask him/her what the rules are of his game. Write down these rules and give the new game a name i.e. Yvonne's Checkers. This way the child still learns to accept the rules.

### **GAMES THAT HELP WITH BUILDING CONVERSATION:**

- Share a proverb each time that you meet.
- Play 20 Questions
- Talk about friends — those that your youth has and those he or she would like to have.
- Share your school experiences when you were the same age as your mentee is now.
- Tell your mentee – if you could go back to high school, what would you do differently?
- Ask your youth where they hope to be in five years and in 10 years.
- Use the “Deeper Conversation Topics” attached (once you both have already built a rapport)
- Play Fact or Fiction

### **ACTIVITIES THAT HELP WITH GETTING YOUTH ENGAGED/BUILDING LIFE SKILLS:**

- Encourage your youth to try out for school activities such as the band, chorus, drama and sports.
- Research what after-school programs are offered in the community in which youth might engage.
- Decide on a community service project together i.e. Plant a garden in front of the local school, remove graffiti from school walls or collect food for the homeless. Take credit for the project as part of your mentoring program.
- Plan a random act of kindness.
- Discuss personal hygiene, health, exercise and healthy habits.
- Teach how to give a good handshake. Practice makes perfect!
- Discuss proper etiquette and social graces. Plan a fancy “lunch” to practice.
- Discuss the pillars of character including pride, punctuality, honesty and responsibility.
- Help your youth to get organized. Write out what your youth does every day and what he or she would like to change.
- Help your youth to design a unique and original calling or business card.
- Explore what to do in an emergency. Create a contact list and discuss 911 procedures.

## **FUN WEBSITES FOR KIDS**

Computers are available at most schools. While we do not recommend playing video games, sometimes playing on the computer can be both fun and educational. Mentees can visit these sites during their time together, or mentors can visit them before their session to retrieve activity ideas. We tried to identify websites that do not need you to download or install new versions of software to use. Since the information on web pages is constantly changing we recommend you preview the sites before logging onto them at school. These are some of the top sites we found:

### **WEBSITES FOR MENTORS (TO GET SOME GREAT IDEAS!):**

[www.family.go.com](http://www.family.go.com). This website caters more to adults. It includes arts and craft ideas (such as inexpensive ways of making valentine's cards for classmates). It also offers information on children and learning, and raising kids.

<http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/education/kids.html> This website gives users art adventures and activities from the National Gallery of Art.

<http://www.pinterest.com/zimmuseum/arts-craft-ideas> Can go on Pinterest and learn cool new arts & crafts ideas.

### **WEBSITES FOR ARTS & CRAFTS:**

<http://www.firstpalette.com> Resource filled with free kids' crafts, art activities, and pintables designed to nurture creativity and the love for learning.

<http://www.crayola.com/crafts/> Website featuring art techniques for all ages.

[http://www.myactivitymaker.com/?q=arts\\_and\\_crafts](http://www.myactivitymaker.com/?q=arts_and_crafts) Fun arts and crafts activities for kids of all age groups.

### **WEBSITES ON SCIENCE/ANIMALS/NATURE:**

<http://camp.wonderopolis.org> Discover a new wonder each day, i.e. Why are they called Lava Lamps? What Badger has a sweet tooth?

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com> Games, videos, information, cool photos, and more on this educational site.

[www.nwf.org/kids](http://www.nwf.org/kids). On this website your mentee can learn about animals and endangered species in different environments. There are wildlife riddles and quizzes. "Ranger Rick" also has cool activities of the month worth checking out. This website is better suited for mentees aged 6-8.

[www.yucky.com](http://www.yucky.com). This is a discovery website that encourages an interest in science. It answers questions on gross topics such as why people burp, etc. It includes icky experiments, creepy crafts, revolting recipes and unusual activities.

### **EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES/SITES WITH GAMES:**

[www.4kids.org](http://www.4kids.org). Your mentee can learn all about the web on this kid friendly website. The "Ask Amy" section answers questions about the web and the "Make your own Surfificate" section of "Safe Surfing" gives students reminders and pointers for surfing the web safely. You can write wacky stories in the "Wacky Tales" section and print out colouring pages in the "fun & games" section. There is also a "Cool Spots" area where you can search for websites on topics such as "fun and games", "arts", "creatures" and "be a hero".

[www.funbrain.com](http://www.funbrain.com). Another educational website that tries to make math and grammar fun. There is a baseball game involving math and tic tac toe squares math games as well. Your mentee can pick their educational level.

<http://pbskids.org> Find all your favorite PBS characters, each with learning games for kids to play: Clifford, Curious George, The Cat in the Hat, and more.

<http://www.whyville.net/smmk/nice> Tweens hang out in Whyville to play learning games and socialize.

<https://www.pottermore.com/en/jkr-writing#> J.K. Rowling created this site so kids could read the books and play with interactive features and games.

<http://www.kidsknowit.com> This website has an array of Educational Activities, Products, Movies, Music, Games, Articles, Text Books, Learning Programs, Lesson Plans, Worksheets. It also has online learning games and songs for kids.

<http://www.prongo.com/> Offers fun, interactive, & educational games for kids.

<http://www.nick.com/> Play kids games, watch videos from popular kids shows.

### **WEBSITES FOR COOKING/RECIPES:**

<http://heykidsletscook.com> This site is an innovative cooking show, based on nutrition, created just for kids and teens

<http://kidshealth.org/kid/recipes> Plenty of recipes for you to try - from pizza to pancakes!

<http://cookingwithkids.net/> Website designed at introducing healthy recipes for kids.

<http://www.spatulatta.com> Get into cooking on this kid-friendly cooking website with lots of videos and recipes.

## WHAT SHOULD WE READ?

Choosing a good book can be difficult. Listed below are some recommended choices your mentee might enjoy. If your mentee loves baseball, why not bring in a neat book on the subject?

These selections derive from mentors, librarians\* and Big Brother Big Sister staff. Maybe you have a favourite to share with your mentee as well. For more ideas, call your In-School Mentoring caseworker.

### Grades 3-4

Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing. Judy Blume. Peter must learn to cope with his incorrigible 2 ½ year old little brother, Fudge.

The Hockey Sweater. Roch Carrier. When every Quebec boy is pretending to be the great Rocket Richard, one boy must endure the humiliation of wearing a Toronto Maple Leaf sweater.

Ramona Quimby, Age 8. Beverly Cleary. The further adventures of the Quimby family as Ramona begins grade 3.

Casey Webber, the Great. Hazel Hutchins. When Casey finds he can perform real magic tricks, he becomes the sensation of the neighbourhood. But can it go on forever, particularly in view of the mysterious telegrams signed "S.V."?

Tales of a Gambling Grandma. Dayal Kour Khalsa. An affectionate remembrance of the narrator's hard boiled grandma who taught her to play cards and gave her friendly advice on the Laws of Life.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. C.S. Lewis. The classic fantasy in which a wardrobe leads four children to adventure in the land of Narnia.

Home From Far. Jean Little. Six months after her twin brother Michael dies in an auto accident, Jenny must adjust to the new foster brother and sister that her parents take in.

Sarah, Plain and Tall. Patricia MacLachlan. Anna and Caleb's father sends to Maine for a mail-order bride who comes for a month to see if she will like living on the prairie.

### Grades 5 and up

Harry Potter novels. J.K. Rowling.

The Book of Three. Lloyd Alexander. Taran, an enchanter's assistant pig keeper, dreams of glory and adventure.

Lost in the Barrens. Farley Mowat. When Jamie McNair and Awasin Meewasin set out to explore the northern wilderness, they need all their skills and knowledge of the wilderness to survive. A gripping adventure story.

This Can't Be Happening at Macdonald Hall. Gordon Korman. Headmaster Sturgeon, alias The Fish, tries to split up the infamous roommate team of Boots and Bruno.

Truly Grim Tales. Priscilla Galloway. Eight traditional fairytales get very different interpretations in this macabre collection.

The Incredible Journey. Sheila Burnford. The heartwarming classic of the courage and loyalty of two dogs and a cat that trek across the wilds of Ontario to return home.

The Runaways. Kristin Butcher. The homeless vagabond camped out in the deserted mansion is hiding a secret.

Bats about baseball. Jean Little. A picture book of clever word play with lingo to delight fans young and old.

A Wrinkle in Time. Madeline L'Engle. An exciting fantasy, science-fiction tale of a brother and sister in search of their father who is lost in the fifth dimension.

### **Great Books for Bullying at the Elementary Level**

One Kathryn Otshi

Zero Kathryn Otshi

Beany and Meany Susan Wojciechowski

Sumi's First Day of School Ever Soyung Pak

Trouble with Girls Ted Staunton

Oliver Buttan is a Sissy

The Adventures of Bully-Boy and Gossip Girl-Comic Lee Wilson & Brett Popplewell

The Juice Box Bully: Empowering Kids to Stand Up for Others Robert Sornson

Confessions of a Former Bully Trudy Ludwig

My Secret Bully Trudy Ludwig

Cliques, Phonies & Other Baloney Trevor Romain

The Name Jar Yangsook Choi

**Books for Self-Esteem/Confidence at the Elementary Level:**

The Dot Peter H. Reynolds

Ish Peter H. Reynolds

Courage Bernard Waber

The OK Book Amy K Rosenthal

The best part of me Wendy Ewald

**All Ages**

Value Tales: each book tells the inspirational true story of an individual who exhibited a particular value in an exceptional way...

The Value of Believing in Yourself: The Story of Louis Pasteur

The Value of Patience: The Story of the Wright Brothers

The Value of Kindness: The Story of Elizabeth Fry

The Value of Humour: The Story of Will Rogers

The Value of Courage: The Story of Jackie Robinson

The Value of Curiosity: The Story of Christopher Columbus

The Value of Imagination: The Story of Charles Dickens

The Value of Saving: The Story of Ben Franklin

The Value of Sharing: The Story of the Mayo Brothers

The Value of Honesty: The Story of Confucius

The Value of Understanding: The Story of Margaret Mead

The Value of Fantasy: The Story of Hans Christian Andersen

The Value of Dedication: The Story of Albert Schweitzer

\*The Brampton Public Library produces a yearly booklet titled Favourites to Share with Children. Also Janet Abernathy from the Toronto Public Library recommended some titles listed above in the Canadian Living book "Raising Great Kids".

## TIPS FROM CURRENT MENTORS

"Making a calendar and planning future meetings works well."

-- Tasha F.

"Call the school ahead of time or speak with the teacher for the upcoming month to see if the school has any school trips planned."

-- Pravir P.

"Plan ahead. Make a list of ideas of things to do and have the mentee do the same."

-- Meredith M.

"Continually look for a variety of activities of interest to the mentee."

-- Bob P.

"Maintain constant communication with the mentee in regard to quality of visits."

-- Marvin M.

"Don't try to play the role of teacher, treat your mentee as a friend."

-- Jennifer V.

"Make that 1 hour all about them."

-- Patrick M.

"Divide your time together doing various activities all over the school. It makes it seem that you've done more in such little time."

-- Jason D.

"Don't have expectations. Go with the flow."

Siobhan K.

"Treat your mentee like any other friend and they will open up sooner. Always have a back-up activity planned."

--Carolyn K.

"Be creative and have fun. Be patient, some kids just need time to open up. "

--Jeff W.

"Just be yourself and have fun; this is your chance to be a kid again."

- -Andrea H..

## Children's Stages of Development

The following information derives from two Canadian Living resources, Raising Great Kids: Ages 6 to 12. The Complete Guide to Your Child's Health and Development and Understanding your Teen. The details are generalizations and serve to provide you with a background for deciding which activities to participate in with your mentee. They also provide a background or reminder of the issues kids are dealing with as they grow older. For instance you may see your mentee not as excited to see you as in the past. As identified below your mentee may still be happy you are visiting, due to the influence of friends they may try to keep their outward enthusiasm under control.

### Age 9

- will do an activity over and over to the point of exhaustion
- good with their hands
- anxious to try everything
- developing a conscience - when they apologize, they feel genuine regret
- obsessed with fairness - will be extremely upset if blamed for something they did not do
- starting to plan for the future. They might be interested in your job and how much money you make
- very critical of themselves but very sensitive to criticism from others
- can be moody, anxious and sensitive
- spend more time than in the past with friends, although the friendships might shift often. Today's friend might not be tomorrow's friend.
- more self-conscious of their looks

### Age 10

- willing to try most new activities
- can get physical when they are angry
- loves to talk
- tend toward hero-worship; look up to athletes, actors, musicians
- memory is improving
- aware of the potential for embarrassment. They may take pains to ensure they don't do something to embarrass themselves in front of their peers.
- are comfortable with themselves most of the time
- starting to develop a sense of empathy for others. They are noticing other people have problems too.
- emotions are on a pretty even keel, can explode but the explosion usually passes quickly.

## **Age 11**

- always in motion
- eat a lot
- get tired easily, need more sleep
- becoming more conscious of appearance
- argue for the sake of arguing, constantly testing their intellect
- hold a grudge
- have high ambitions, may want to be an Olympic athlete, rock star
- understand the difference between right and wrong
- test limits

## **Age 12**

- have bursts of high energy alternating with low energy times
- always hungry
- becoming more reasonable, am willing to listen to other people's arguments
- friends' opinions are more important than those of my parents. Friends' opinions shape their feelings of self
- susceptible to fads and trends, possibly to drugs as well.
- sense of identity is growing stronger at home but may get lost with friends in the group
- when they have done something wrong, they are usually willing to take the blame.

## **Age 13**

- privacy is critical
- extremely sensitive to any criticism
- like to hang out with their friends
- appreciate sarcasm, as long as it is not directed at them
- start to see the world in tones of grey instead of just black and white
- might criticize you for something, then turn around and do the same thing (hypocritical)
- get jumpy when sitting for an extended period
- may not be at their best in the early morning

## **Age 14**

- enjoy evaluating subjects and teachers
- areas of interest are becoming more specialized, starting to decide where their talents lie, will want an honest answer to help them focus on their strengths
- thrive on friendly competition, don't need to always win, but do want to test their abilities
- commitments to friends take precedence over commitments to family
- friendships may be less intense

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Weinberger, Dr. Susan. My Mentor and Me: 36 weekly activities for mentor and mentees to do together during the elementary school years. Hartford: Connecticut Mentoring Partnership, 2000.



## APPENDIX: EXTRA ACTIVITIES

### KITE MAKING ACTIVITY

This idea is from Dr. Susan Weinberger's Mentor and Me Handbook. You will need:

- plain brown/white wrapping paper
- kite string
- craft knife
- white glue
- paints
- sparkles
- crayons and markers

You may be able to use some of these items from the school

- Cut the wrapping paper into the kite's basic shape. Leave an extra 1.5 inch on each edge to make a flap that will fold over the string.
- Run a length of string around the edge of the kite folding the edge flaps over the string and gluing only the very outside edge of the flap to the kite. Do not glue the string to the flap.
- Encourage your mentee to decorate the kite and let a young imagination run wild! When finished decorating, attach the kite to the sticks by tying them in a cross, and use a thin saw blade or craft knife to cut a notch in each end of the sticks. Pull out a loop of the string from under the edge flaps at each corner of the kite, and slip the string loops into the notches in ends of each stick. Add a tail if desired, and your project is complete!



### Fun DIY Sport Activity:

"Frying Pan Baseball" –

Developed by mentor Mark M. it's one of his mentee's favourite activities. Equipment needed is a sock or small Nerf type ball and a frying pan type instrument. The pitcher is also the goalie. The pitcher pitches and the hitter tries to sink the sock past the goalie into the net by hitting the sock with the frying pan. You and your mentee can put a new spin on your favourite sport too!