



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 1

125 THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR LITTLE PAL

1. Start a collection of something you are both interested in like stamps, rocks, coins, bugs, dolls, etc.
2. Walk, train, and play with your dog together.
3. Pop popcorn (the “old fashioned” way, not in the microwave).
4. Build a model car, plane or rocket.
5. Form your own book club (with other matches) and/or read together.
6. Go to a circus, fair or carnival.
7. Go horseback riding.
8. Draw, paint, work with clay, or do an art project.
9. Play charades, checkers, chess, backgammon, or any board or card game.
10. Take a bike ride together (making sure you both wear your helmets!)
11. Research your family trees together- the library and internet are great resources!
12. Attend your Little’s school play or sporting event to cheer him/her on!
13. Fly a kite at the park- for an extra challenge, make your own kites!
14. Visit an area firehouse or police station.
15. Attend a Big Pals-Little Pals monthly group activity.
16. Feed birds or go to a park and feed the ducks.
17. Go roller skating, skate-boarding, roller-blading or ice skating (wearing appropriate safety gear).
18. Have a TV show you both watch every week, then call and talk about it.
19. Do a science project together using household products (ex. find out what happens to an egg soaked in vinegar.)
20. Make a calendar to schedule outings on and then plan ahead!
21. Go to local art fairs, festivals, and events (check local papers and online community calendars).
22. Watch a parade.
23. Go bowling.
24. Check into local history/archeology.
25. Go swimming or even play with the water hose or sprinkler in the backyard (make sure you and your Little both have privacy for changing).
26. Volunteer to help build a house for Habitat for Humanity, deliver food for Meals on Wheels, walk dogs at the Humane Society, help out at a homeless shelter or food pantry.
27. Keep a journal of all your outings together and what you liked/disliked about each.
28. Make friendship bracelets, or do other crafts together.
29. Play Frisbee, catch, basketball, volleyball, touch football, croquet, badminton, etc.
30. Visit a local courthouse and observe a court hearing.
31. Make paper airplanes and gliders.
32. Write a newsletter together to send it to your friends and relatives.
33. Go apple picking and try different apple recipes with your apples.
34. Make caramel apples.
35. Make Halloween costumes.
36. Go rock climbing at a local climbing gym.
37. Visit a local museum.
38. Play golf or putt-putt, or just hit golf balls at a driving range.
39. Volunteer at a nursing home.
40. Make wrapping paper from old magazines and newspapers.
41. Show him/her how to maintain their bike-replace chain, repair brakes, etc.
42. Teach him/her how to change a flat tire.
43. Make an obstacle course in your yard or local park and time each other.
44. Make puppets and put on a show for friends or family.
45. Use sidewalk chalk and draw pictures on the sidewalk.
46. Let your Little drive... at a go-cart track!
47. Go to a gem and mineral show or flea market.
48. Go to a local beach, build a sandcastle.
49. Go to the YMCA together for free.
50. Show your Little Pal how to do chores (wash the car, wash the dog, garden, etc.)
51. Let your Little Pal run errands with you (make grocery shopping educational - teach them how to read a label or work on budgeting, apply the same ideas to other errands).
52. Eat lunch with your Little at school.
53. Explore your local areas.
54. Go geo caching (Don’t know what it is? Look at this website <http://www.geocaching.com>).
55. Go Christmas caroling or volunteer to wrap gifts for a group like Toys for Tots.

56. Prepare a meal together from start to finish-try finding good recipes online or in your favorite cookbook.
57. Take a walk and take a camera to photograph interesting objects along the way.
58. Write a letter to your Little Pal on your match anniversary telling what you've noticed about him/her in the last year.
59. Make your own cards for holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions for friends and relatives.
60. Take your Little Pal to your place of employment, talk about the education and preparation you needed to do your job.
61. Help your Little Pal with homework or a school project.
62. Help your Little make a card or present for Mother's Day/Father's Day/Christmas or a parent's birthday.
63. Trim the hedges, mow the lawn, rake the leaves, and do yard work together.
64. Build a bird house or feeder.
65. Visit a park or the Farmer's Market.
66. Play Frisbee Golf.
67. Learn a new language together.
68. Write and send letters in the mail to each other, or get pen pals.
69. Share family/vacation pictures with each other.
70. Create a match scrapbook or photo album to record all your fun times together.
71. Start a garden, indoors or out.
72. Carve a pumpkin together and roast the seeds!
73. Make a log cabin, picture frame, or anything you can think of out of popsicle sticks.
74. Try new restaurants together.
75. Go to the movies, or rent one (be sure to check the movie rating and get parent's permission).
76. Watch a firework show.
77. Teach him/her how to change the oil in your car, or any handy skills you may have.
78. Complete a jigsaw puzzle.
79. Go to an auto show, boat show, tractor pull or stock car races.
80. Make up new lyrics to a song-maybe even about your match.
81. Make your own t-shirts with fabric markers and colored glue or tie-dye!
82. Enjoy cloud watching on a nice day.
83. Bake a cake, cookies or brownies or make candy.
84. Sit in a coffee shop.
85. Have a picnic.
86. Make a collage on "friendship" or your Little Pal's life using pictures and headline from old magazines and newspapers.
87. Visit the Humane Society, play with the kittens or walk dogs (call ahead for shelter policies).
88. Look up new words in the dictionary.
89. Have your Little Pal teach you how to do something.
90. Plan for a money earning project and save money for a special event.
91. Listen to music together.
92. Blow bubbles.
93. If your Little Pal is a teenager, practice completing job and college applications.
94. Show your Little Pal your high school yearbook, baby pictures, old report cards, etc.
95. Go on a camera scavenger hunt – Make a list of the things you want pictures of before you go and let your Little take the pictures.
96. Build a snowman/woman.
97. Play a musical instrument or learn one together.
98. Spend time on a college campus (call the admissions office to get a free tour).
99. Teach your Little Pal good telephone etiquette - how to leave messages, and how to use emergency phone numbers.
100. Take a first aid class together.
101. Set up a lemonade stand and donate the money to charity.
102. Assemble a time capsule.
103. Roast marshmallows, make s'mores.
104. Go to a football, basketball, baseball or any other sporting event together (call BPLP to check for free tickets).
105. Go fishing at a local lake, stream or river.
106. Prepare and cook a fish that you catch.
107. Take a boat ride (with lifejackets!)
108. Go tubing, canoeing or rafting (with lifejackets!)
109. Go skiing, sledding or build a snow fort.
110. Go stargazing.
111. Go bird watching.
112. Collect fall leaves and identify the trees they fell from.
113. Pick up litter at a local park.
114. Go to the skating center for free.
115. Go swimming (make sure you know your Little Pal's swimming ability).
116. Paint a fence or a room.
117. Teach him/her how to build a campfire.
118. Go to a local farm to see animals or pick apples.
119. Find a location on a map using a compass or GPS.
120. Teach your Little Pal how to read a map.
121. Go to a dog show, cat show, horse show, etc.
122. Learn to juggle.
123. Plant a tree or shrub.
124. Go to a dance performance, concert or art show,
125. Do litter patrol or visit a recycling center.



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 1

MATCH CONVERSATION STARTERS

When are you (or have been) most afraid?
What has been the happiest day of your life?
If you could change one thing in the world what would you change?
If you could change one thing about yourself what would you change?
How long should a couple date before they get married?
What does “being in love” mean?
What is the most important thing in your life?
What is the one thing you couldn’t live without?
What is your favorite movie of all time? Why?
What is your favorite book of all time? Why?
What cartoon character would you most like to be?
What is the hardest thing about being _____ years old?
What is the best thing about being _____ years old?
Describe your perfect day.
What job would you never want to have?
Who is your best friend? Why are they your best friend?
Would you rather dive from a high cliff into the ocean or give a book report in front of 500 kids?
What’s your favorite car and why?
Who would you most like to meet?
In what other country would you most like to live?
What things don’t boys understand about girls?
What things don’t girls understand about boys?
What’s easier, math or English?
How much TV should kids your age be allowed to watch each week?
At what age should a child be allowed to see a PG-13 movie? An R movie?
Why do you think people use curse words?
When was the last time you cried? What did you cry about?
Are you looking forward to the next school year?
What’s the hardest part about going to school?
What should a parent do when their children don’t obey?
If you could have any animal as a pet which would you choose?
Would you like to hear your parents to tell you they love you more often?
What embarrasses you the most?
Is it ever OK to call someone names?
If you could take a family vacation any place in the world, where would you go?
Do you think it’s more important to be rich or kind?
If you had three wishes, what would they be? (You’re not allowed to wish for money or another wish!)
How many children would you like to have one day?
If you were the parent, what lesson would you like to help your mom and dad learn?
Do you know how much your family loves you? How can you tell?



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 1

10 TIPS TO MENTOR YOUTH LIKE A SUPERSTAR

The [Effective Strategies for Providing Quality Youth Mentoring in Schools and Communities](#) series provide mentoring program coordinators and mentors with tools to build quality mentoring programs. They outlined 10 tips for adults who want to be successful youth mentors:

1. **Build relationships grounded in trust.** Many kids without mature role models are suspicious of adults. Do not try to become your mentee's best friend or substitute parent. Mentors are positive role models who invite open communication and mutual respect.
2. **Create realistic goals and expectations.** Do not expect your mentee to confide in you right away. Ask questions; get to know your mentee. As your relationship grows, your mentee will feel more comfortable sharing his or her life with you.
3. **Have fun together.** Find out what kind of activities your mentee enjoys. Go bowling or watch a good movie. Shoot some hoops. Play miniature golf. Walk through a mall or grab a snack at a food bar. You need not spend a lot of money to build a strong mentor/mentee relationship; what's most valuable is your investment of time.
4. **Discuss decisions about activities with your mentee.** Some kids may be shy to suggest ideas because they don't want to appear rude or needy. Others are content to let you make the decisions, especially in the beginning stages of your relationship. When you ask your mentee for input, this shows you value his or her ideas.
5. **Allow your mentee to reveal personal information when they are ready.** Give your mentee permission to reveal how much (or how little) information they wish to share with you. Remind them that they can share with you without fear of judgment.
6. **Listen.** When you ask questions and listen, you give mentees permission to share their stories and personal experiences without criticism.
7. **If a mentee asks for advice, focus on solutions.** Allow your mentee time to release uncomfortable emotions if they need to vent, but encourage him or her to consider their options. When they focus less on what they can't control and shift their attention to those areas within their control: including their own thoughts, feelings, decisions, and actions, they reclaim their personal power. Don't get stuck in the problem; consider solutions.
8. **Be positive.** Briefly share your own experiences to demonstrate empathy, but your time together is not about you – it's about your mentee. Do not bog down your time or monopolize conversations with stories about your struggles when you were growing up. If your mentee feels "stuck," remind him or her they can change their perspective by changing their thoughts.
9. **Your primary relationship is with your mentee, not their parents or family members.** Do not try to act as an intermediary between your mentee and family. Resist efforts as a mentor to be drawn into parental or familial issues. Discuss matters of concern with your program director.
10. **It is your responsibility to set a good example as a mentor.** Your mentee will lose trust in you if you can't be depended upon to honor your commitments. Decide upon consistent times to talk or meet with your mentee. Show up on time. Your lack of commitment can be devastating for the young person you offered to support. If you are unsure about the time or emotional commitment you have to share with a child or kid, do not volunteer to be a mentor until you are confident you can fulfill the responsibilities.



STAGES OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors

Mentors have an easier time getting through trouble spots in their mentoring relationships if they understand the basics of the typical match “life cycle.” All matches go through a similar set of ups and downs and you will have an easier time working with your mentee and getting appropriate support from staff if you know what to expect. The first two stages are critical as they lay the foundation for what the relationship will eventually become. If mentors are to be successful, they need to work through the difficulties presented early on so that the match gets to a place of trust and mutuality where “real” mentoring can take place. The chart on the next page offers examples of what these stages feel like for mentors and tips for communicating effectively throughout each stage’s ups and downs.

Stage	Characteristics	Effective Communication
Beginning of the Match The beginning of any relationship is often awkward, and mentoring relationships are no exception. Your first few months will focus on getting to know each other, exploring similar interests, discussing expectations, and starting to form norms and bonds that will shape the rest of your first year together. During this phase mentors should work with their mentees to set parameters for the match, such as when to meet and for how long, what kinds of activities will take place, and how to contact each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting to know each other• The first impressions• Trying to see the positive in the relationship• Bonding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask open-ended questions• Use body language that is open and not guarded• Active listening• Demonstrate empathy• Avoid “prescriptive” communication• Use prompts• Speak with language that you feel comfortable with• Don’t be afraid of silence
Challenging and Testing Once the mentoring relationship is off the ground, it is normal for your mentee to start testing boundaries of the relationship. Though you’ve spent time affirming that you appreciate and enjoy your mentee, he may still want to see how far your commitment really goes. Because mentees often come from situations in which adults can’t always be relied on, trusting another adult is difficult for them, and they may even try to sabotage the relationship by “acting out.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentee challenges• Testing phase• Rethinking first impressions• Difficult feelings or emotions may surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be consistent in your communication, even if it is difficult• Demonstrate respect• Build in problem-solving techniques in your open-ended questions• Raise sensitive issues at the beginning of your interactions• Make sure to separate behaviors from who the mentee is• Disclosure of personal feelings and experiences when appropriate

Stage	Characteristics	Effective Communication
<p>“Real” Mentoring In this stage, the mentoring relationship has reached full maturity. Trust and closeness have been established and the match is comfortable having fun and relating to one another. It is during this phase that mentors can use the trust they have built to move their mentees along the developmental pathway—asking them to think about goals or try new things. There may still be testing or behavioral issues, but they do not jeopardize the relationship itself. Mentors that reach this stage must be prepared to maintain this hard-won status—this is where the real impact of mentoring happens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimum benefit from the relationship is gained at this stage • Mentors and mentees have more realistic expectations about each other’s needs, strengths, and commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust has been established and the relationship has developed a strong bond • Focus on ensuring new opportunities for growth and learning • Provide feedback, support and advice
<p>Transition (toward closure) The transition toward closure can be a difficult time for both mentors and youth. There may be many strong feelings about the match ending and it is important to not let the process of ending the match negate the many positives it provided to everyone involved. As the end of your match approaches, work closely with your match supervisor to end on a high note and make sure that the transition leaves the youth feeling positive and fulfilled about the experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for closure • Relationship may become deeper or mentee may start pulling away • Reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find common language to sum up your feelings • Provide feedback that describes growth that you observed • Be prepared to listen and affirm fears that your mentee may have



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 2

WHAT IS A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?

Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors

What are the qualities of an effective mentor? What strategies do mentors use to engage and connect with youth? These questions are at the heart of all mentoring relationships.

Every year, thousands of volunteers come to mentoring programs because they want to make a positive difference in the lives of youth. But how are these volunteers able to make a difference? How does the magic of mentoring happen?

Several years ago, Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), a research organization in Philadelphia, set out to learn what helps successful mentoring relationships develop. They also wanted to understand why some mentoring relationships are not successful— why the mentor and youth do not meet regularly, why a friendship never develops between them, and why the pair breaks up.

P/PV looked closely at 82 pairs of mentors and youth, ages 10 to 15, in Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring programs around the country. They interviewed each mentor and youth, and returned nine months later to interview them again. By then, 24 of the pairs had broken off their relationship, while 58 of the matches were still meeting.

Why were some relationships doing so well while others had come apart? The key reasons had to do with the expectations and approach of the mentor. Most of the mentors in the relationships that failed had a belief that they should, and could, “reform” their mentee. These mentors, even at the very beginning of the match, spent at least some of their time together pushing the mentee to change. Almost all the mentors in the successful relationships believed that their role was to support the youth, to help him or her grow and develop. They saw themselves as a friend.

Those successful mentors understood that positive changes in the lives of young people do not happen quickly or automatically. If they are to happen at all, the mentor and youth must meet long enough and often enough to build a relationship that helps the youth feel supported and safe, develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and see new possibilities in life. Those mentors knew they had to:

- Take the time to build the relationship
- Become a trusted friend
- Always maintain that trust

While establishing a friendship may sound easy, it often is not. Adults and youth are separated by age and, in many cases, by background and culture. Even mentors with good instincts can stumble or be blocked by difficulties that arise from these differences. It takes time for youth to feel comfortable just talking to their mentor, and longer still before they feel comfortable enough to share a confidence. Learning to trust—especially for young people who have already been let down by adults in their

lives—is a gradual process. Mentees cannot be expected to trust their mentors simply because program staff members have put them together. Developing a friendship requires skill and time. What are the qualities of an effective mentor?

These are the 10 important features of successful mentors' attitudes and styles:

1. **Be a friend.**
2. **Have realistic goals and expectations.**
3. **Have fun together.**
4. **Give your mentee voice and choice in deciding on activities.**
5. **Be positive.**
6. **Let your mentee have much of the control over what the two of you talk about—and how you talk about it.**
7. **Listen.**
8. **Respect the trust your mentee places in you.**
9. **Remember that your relationship is with the youth, not the youth's parent.**
10. **Remember that you are responsible for building the relationship.**

In the study of Big Brothers Big Sisters, mentors who took these approaches were the ones able to build a friendship and develop trust. They were the mentors who were ultimately able to make a difference in the lives of youth. The following pages say much more about each of these mentor characteristics. The importance of each is illustrated through the voices of actual mentors and young people talking to you about their relationships and how they came to be.

“LEARNING TO TRUST— ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN LET DOWN BY ADULTS IN THEIR LIVES— IS A GRADUAL PROCESS.”

Want to read the full guide and learn more about how to be an effective mentor?

1. Go to **bigpals.org**
2. Under the **Resources for Big & Little Pals** option on the menu, select **Education & Training**
3. Locate **Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors** under the “Getting Started as a Big Pal” heading



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 3

BEING A TRAUMA-INFORMED MENTOR

adapted from "The Trauma Informed Teacher – Silent Front Line" featuring excerpts from *Traumatic Experience and the Brain, A Handbook for Understanding and Treating Those Traumatized as Children*.

Trauma impacts the children [we often work with in mentoring programs]

If you are a [mentor or volunteer for a youth-serving organization], you [interact with] children who have been traumatized. The CDC ACE study tells us that more than 50% of [children] have experienced one or more adverse childhood events (ACE). **The time in life when the brain is the most sensitive to experience is infancy and childhood.**

In the CDC’s ACE Study, the ten types of childhood adversity measured were:

- physical, sexual, verbal abuse
- physical and emotional neglect
- a parent who’s an alcoholic (or addicted to other drugs) or diagnosed with a mental illness
- witnessing a mother who experiences abuse
- losing a parent to abandonment or divorce
- a family member in jail

Trauma Changes the Brain

Studies show chronic stress or unaddressed ACEs can change the chemical and physical structures of the brain. In the classroom, children can display traumatic stress through aggression, anxiety, defiance, perfectionism, and withdrawal. And here’s the biggie, signs of trauma often times look very similar to **ADD, ADHD, ODD and autism spectrum disorder**.

TRAUMA	OVERLAP	ADHD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of fear, helplessness, uncertainty, vulnerability • Increased arousal, edginess, agitation • Avoidance of reminders of trauma • Irritability, quick to anger • Feelings of guilt or shame • Dissociation, feelings of unreality or being “outside of one’s body” • Continually feeling on alert for threat or danger • Unusually reckless, aggressive or self-destructive behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty concentrating and learning in school • Easily distracted • Often doesn’t seem to listen • Disorganization • Hyperactive • Restless • Difficulty sleeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty sustaining attention • Struggling to follow directions • Difficulty with organization • Fidgeting or squirming • Difficult waiting or taking turns • Talking excessively • Losing things necessary for tasks or activities • Interrupting or intruding upon others

Think on this...**inattentive, hyperactive, and impulsive behavior may in fact mirror the effects of trauma or adversity**. Children show their emotions through behavior. What might seem like random, nonsensical or manipulative behaviors in a child, might actually be rooted in a space called ‘FEAR’ and

pain. The emotional backpack they carry [...] each day is one that they cannot set outside [while you spend time together], and it will remain heavy and forefront in their brain.

It's important to understand that 25% to 50% of [children] will be affected by adverse childhood events. Trauma undermines attention, executive functioning and working memory. When trauma causes emotional or psychological damage to children, they may adopt a set of behaviors or patterns of thinking that put them on a path for further trauma. Trauma begets trauma.

1. Set the TONE – you need to use the environment to regulate the brain.

[Children] who have experienced trauma in their lives are often operating from a primal state – always ready to fight or flee. They have learned that the world is not a safe place. They are living in a state of hypervigilance; their little minds have been hijacked by their basic instincts and impulses which renders them unable to concentrate.

[The environment you create] and schedule [are] your greatest weapon[s]. Clear expectations and schedules are everything. You can create a safe environment that actually helps regulate the brain. Think schedules and procedures. If a child can anticipate routine, they can feel safe.

2. Recognize that a child is going into survival mode.

When you notice that a child might be having a difficult time, start by asking yourself, “What’s happening here?” rather than “What’s wrong with this child?” For example, the [child] might:

- Get a “deer-in-the-headlights” look
- Looks angry
- Breathes more rapidly
- Becomes fidgety and squirmy
- Bursts into tears or looks about ready to cry

When survival mode occurs, you are not going to be able to talk and correct the child. You need to provide a safe space and help them regulate. This might mean sinking down to eye level and saying, “You are safe.” and then simply step away for a while. The cure for trauma is a safe relationship and you are going to give the child space and environment to feel safe.

3. Self-Regulation through Co-Regulation

[...] Regulatory skills live in the highest part of the brain. Dysregulation lives in the lower parts of the brain. Trauma in a child’s life causes children to live in the lower part of the brain and this means dysregulation, and this looks like a child who is either hypervigilant or disassociated. As a former teacher, I would have described this as the ADD child or the daydreamer. I would have used stickers, rewards, and consequences to curb this behavior... and it never worked.

What works isn’t teaching self-regulation. It’s giving children experiences of co-regulation over and over and over again. Until their brains literally take in and imprint the regulated adult. Children from trauma or from hard places, cannot self-regulate because they were never given the experience of co-regulation. They need YOU. Yes, you may be the only co-regulating adult in their life.

4. Relationship, Not Attachment: See the Goldfish

[C]hildren need you have a [mentor] relationship with them, not an attachment. Attachment is the bond that develops between a primary caregiver, usually the mother, and her infant. This attachment ensures survival for the infant. [The] child should not attach to you as the means to survive. However, they should have a relationship with you as a ‘secure base’[...].

This relationship you have will help you teach to [the] child's emotional age and not chronological. It seeks to understand how history can cause learned helplessness and behaviors that you do not understand.

The goldfish shark is how I best describe [a] child and [it has been shared with others who] "got it" when it comes to trauma. Here's the story – I share the picture below. I began talking about how [...] children often present with behaviors that look like the shark, but if we look below the water, we will realize they are really just scared goldfish trying to have a need met. Their behaviors might communicate anger and hostility, but below the surface is fear and a hurting child. I further explained that it is our job as parents/teachers[/mentors] to stop parenting the shark fin, and look below the surface and meet the needs of the goldfish.



One of the [participants] raised her hand and said, "I'm a lot like that picture. I act all tough and mean, but I'm really just a scared fish. I wish when I was a kid, someone would have thought to look for the goldfish, instead of just seeing me as a shark"

How to SEE the Goldfish

- Consider all extreme behavior within the context of survival to better understand 'why he keeps doing that?'
- Repetition is important because with every positive experience the impact on the brain grows.
- Traumatized children expect the worst and focus on the negative. If you understand this, you will be better prepared for it.
- Childhood neglect is the most damaging trauma. The child must not have basic needs threatened in any way or survival will be all they think about.
- At the point the child was abused, the brain was focused on survival not learning. The development the child missed due to abuse will need extra attention.
- Traumatized children will often score lower on IQ tests than their true ability. [If retested] when their environment is helping them heal, [you will] watch the scores go up.
- The goal in healing trauma is when the child becomes agitated to help them learn skills to reduce the agitation. This repeated cycle is what most helps the child.
- Promote play with traumatized children. Play is very healing to the brain and the emotions.
- Don't give up hope! The human brain is capable of healing in ways we do not yet understand. It may be a long road to healing and the child may not get there while still in your classroom, but every situation makes a difference.



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 4

MENTORING YOUTH IN POVERTY

Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities
Book by Philip E. DeVol, Ruby K. Payne, and Terie Dreussi Smith

HIDDEN RULES OF CLASSES

Hidden rules are the unspoken understandings that cue members of the group that this individual does or does not fit in. They are the clues and habits that exist between and among the classes.

There are 3 basic classes in our society according to the “Bridges Out of Poverty” model: poverty, middle class and wealthy. Each class involves its own hidden rules which includes things like how to handle money, how to dress, the value of education, how to speak to others and a shared sense of humor. Everyone brings with them the hidden rules of the class in which they were raised. Schools and businesses operate from the middle-class norms and use the hidden rules of middle class, but these norms and hidden rules are not directly taught in schools or businesses. For people in poverty to be successful, we must understand their hidden rules and teach them the rules that will make them successful at work, at school and in the community.

“If you didn’t grow up in poverty, you may be unaware of the hidden rules that govern many aspects of life for the poor. People in poverty are often in survival mode, and support systems taken for granted in middle class and wealth are largely nonexistent.”

PUT IN IN PERSPECTIVE – UNDERSTAND YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH CLASS

Place a check next to each of the following that applies to you.

NOTE: The purpose of this exercise is simply to illustrate that the broader a person’s experience, the greater the potential understanding of different economic realities. There is no assigned value (good or bad) for any item.

This quiz was adapted from the “Bridges Out of Poverty” training.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> have ever lived in a home larger than 10,000 square feet | <input type="checkbox"/> have been to a debutante event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have ever lived in an inner city | <input type="checkbox"/> know the CEO of a company that has more than \$30 million in revenue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have ever traveled to a Third World country | <input type="checkbox"/> have been to a charity event and met a state governor or the president of the United States |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have ever lived in a trailer/mobile home | <input type="checkbox"/> know someone personally who was killed in a drug- or gang-related incident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have two friends who grew up in poverty | <input type="checkbox"/> have been inside a homeless shelter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have flown in an airplane | <input type="checkbox"/> have a friend who was in foster care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have taken a vacation more than 50 miles from home and did not stay with a relative | <input type="checkbox"/> have friends or relatives who have not gone past the eighth grade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have had private music lessons | <input type="checkbox"/> have a friend or relative who has ever received food stamps or services from a free clinic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have used public transportation to get to work or school | <input type="checkbox"/> know someone personally who has been in wealth for two generations or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have a member of your immediate family who is on disability | <input type="checkbox"/> can describe the difference between a trust fund and a will |
| <input type="checkbox"/> know an adult who has never had a full-time job | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have been to a country club | |

HIDDEN RULES OF THE POVERTY CLASS

- **Motivation:** People in poverty tend to value spending their money and time doing entertaining things, spending time with family/friends and function in a mode of survival. (In middle class, people strive for fulfillment through work and achievement. Wealthy people are driven by financial, social, and political connections.)
- **Money:** Money is seen as an expression of personality, and is used for entertainment and relationships. It is something to be spent as soon as it is acquired. (In middle class, people view money as something needed for security.)
- **Decision Making:** In poverty, people live in the present, meaning decisions are made in the moment based on feelings or the immediate need to survive. (In middle class, decisions are made with the future in mind.)
- **Destiny:** People in poverty believe their destiny is controlled by fate and they cannot do much to change their future. (The middle class believes that if they make good choices now, their future will be better.)
- **Education:** People in poverty believe that education is valuable and respected, but not a reality. (People in the middle class believe that education is crucial for being successful and earning an income.)
- **Families:** Families in poverty are matriarchal. Typically, the men/paternal figures are only temporarily involved with the family. Favoritism is commonplace in families and there are often internal feuds between members. (Middle class families are typically patriarchal.)
- **Social Emphasis:** People in poverty focus on social inclusion of people they like. (Those in middle class focus on self-governance and self-sufficiency.)
- **Language:** In the poverty class, people tend to speak casually, speaking “around” the topic rather than getting straight to the point. (People in middle class understand how to speak in a more formal register.)
- **World View:** People in poverty see the world in terms of their local setting. (People in middle class see it as a national setting and people in wealth see it in an international setting.)
- **Humor:** Those in poverty value humor focused on people and sex. (Middle class humor tends to focus on situations.)
- **Handling Conflict:** To survive a poverty lifestyle, being able to physically fight or having someone who can fight for you is necessary because negotiating using their words is not the norm.
- **Philanthropy:** Those in poverty may not believe in volunteerism because working for free is a “rip off” and community service is often a punishment in court sentencing. (Middle class people believe volunteering is a way to give back and make the world a better place.)

ESTABLISHING A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP WITH AN INDIVIDUAL IN POVERTY

It is very important to keep in mind that middle class rules should not be forced upon Little Pals, and that poverty is not an inferior way of life. Teaching someone the middle-class rules should be seen as giving that individual another set of rules that they can use if they so choose.

Nine times out of 10, people who were in poverty and made it to the middle class, say their transition was possible because of a relationship with an individual who took an interest in them or made a suggestion. Because relationships are the most important thing to people in poverty, it is practical to use mentoring to help increase a child's future achievement. When a Big Pal from a middle-class background mentors Little Pal from poverty, the Big Pal can help the Little Pal understand the hidden rules of the middle class, and in the workplace to help them maintain employment and possibly move upward toward a more successful career.

- Those in poverty live in the "now", so it can be helpful for a Big Pal to demonstrate the ability to identify the causes and effects of things.

- Teach goal-setting to assist in controlling impulsivity. Goals must be written down.
- Plan the completion of tasks. Use procedures like numbering or color-coding to help organize each step of the task.
- Help identify patterns when problem-solving. Share stories from similar situations, recognize what things worked in that situation and apply what you learned to the current problem.
- Encourage Little Pals to adhere to their commitments. If they tell someone they are going to attend an event, they need to attend the event even if they “don’t want to go anymore”.
- The idea of living in the “now” can also pose problems related to health and fitness. Lifestyle changes with long-term benefits are difficult to comprehend if you are focused on the present. Discipline and money also come into play, as does a reactive approach to healthcare (as opposed to taking part in preventative measures to avoid issues before they are harmful). With this in mind, Big Pals are in a great position to help teach their Little Pals the importance of health and fitness.
 - Establish a routine of going to the YMCA regularly. (Admission is free for matches!)
 - Encourage Little Pals to journal their health and fitness journey to include eating logs, and short- and long-term goals.
 - Look for free or low-cost classes that cover topics like healthy cooking or education on preventing health problems. Columbus Community Hospital regularly offers classes for the community.
- To establish a trusting mentoring relationship, like a Big Pal will with a Little Pal who is living in poverty, a Big Pal needs to make "deposits" to the Little Pal. By understanding the value of these "deposits", the relationship will grow stronger.
 - Appreciate the person's humor and ability to entertain. Do not put down their humor.
 - Accept what the person cannot say about someone else or a situation. Do not demand a full explanation when they do not want to share.
 - Respect the demands and priorities of the person's relationships with family and friends. Do not insist on their independence from those they care about.
 - Help with goal setting, but do not tell them what their goals should be.
 - Identify options from available resources. Do not make judgments on the value and availability of resources.
 - Understand the importance of personal freedom, speech and personality. Do not assign offensive character traits to your Little Pal.
- Because schools and workplaces are based on the middle-class norms and hidden rules, it is crucial to your Little Pal’s success that they are directly taught these norms and hidden rules in order to be successful. Big Pals should assess their Little Pal’s needs and circumstances in this area, but here are some examples of things Big Pals can address:
 - Conflict happens. If it’s possible, it’s best to let go and move on. Rudeness, verbal fighting, physical fighting and passive-aggressive behaviors (like the “silent treatment”) are counter-productive.
 - Do not ask for loans from co-workers or pay advances.
 - Do not “over share” personal information with co-workers, acquaintances, customers and peers.

The Columbus Area United Way hosts a training on the theories and practices of "Bridges Out of Poverty". It is very highly recommended and provides excellent information.

BPLP staff will email details to all Big Pals when the trainings are available.



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 5

THE GROWTH MINDSET

Growth Mindset Kit for Mentors

Growth Mindset = Understanding intelligence can be developed. These students focus on learning over just looking smart, see effort as the key to success, and thrive in the face of a challenge.

Fixed Mindset = Believing that people are born with a certain amount of intelligence, and they can't do much to change that. These students focus on looking smart over learning, see effort as a sign of low ability, and wilt in the face of a challenge.

GROWTH MINDSET BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

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.

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.

HOW MENTORS AND GROWTH MINDSET GO HAND-IN-HAND

Mentoring relationships are a critical resource for young people. Mentors help youth develop a growth mindset in three distinct ways: 1) cognitively, 2) socially and emotionally, and 3) through identity development. Two overarching strategies to help your mentee develop growth mindset:

- Be a good mentor. Be caring, trustworthy, and consistent.
- Model having a growth mindset. Share your own experiences with adapting a growth mindset with your mentee.

SEVEN COMMON GROWTH MINDSET SCENARIOS AND RESPONSES

Developed by MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership

As a mentor, you will encounter multiple situations where you can encourage and reinforce a growth mindset. But even if you understand the concepts of growth mindset, it may not always be clear what to say when confronted with a student who is struggling to persevere or who is shying away from challenges. This tip sheet illustrates some of the messages you can deliver about mindset in response to common situations you may face as a mentor.

<p>Situation 1: Faced with a new learning challenge <i>Underlying principles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Challenges are exciting, not just overwhelming. · Effort is important: you'll get out of this what you put into it. · Having a strategy is vital. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Divide the learning into pieces that can be taken as chunks and defining them - Set up opportunities for there to be small wins that lead to the completion of the larger learning goal · It's OK to ask for help. A little struggle is a sign we are stretching and leaving our comfort zone. But after a while, it's OK to get help or hear new strategies. 	<p>Some potential responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · This is a great challenge! Your brain is going to get stronger as you work through the challenge. · Let's take one step at a time that way we can see where we might need to focus more attention and time. · This looks like pretty demanding stuff. What would a focused first try look like? · I am here to help you learn how to ... · Let's come up with a strategy. · Describe this challenge in your own words. Share anything that might be really confusing. · This may be difficult now, but might be a lesson you remember for the rest of your life. · I have seen you learn challenging things in the past. For example, last _____ [week/month] I saw you... · This is challenging! What do you think are some strategies you could try?
<p>Situation 2: Expressing high expectations <i>Underlying principles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The research is clear, setting high expectations tells kids the adults they care about believe in them · Unrealistically high expectations without support; however, are a different matter 	<p>Some potential responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Let's think through this to determine what you know and where you might need support. · Let's discuss some strategies for tackling this. · What do you already know about this? · When you learn this/do this/ succeed at this, you can be proud because it isn't easy. · This looks like one of those opportunities to stretch/to reach higher. · This is a challenge that could produce some great mistakes that will really help you learn.
<p>Situation 3: Succeeding easily without effort <i>Underlying principle:</i></p>	<p>Some potential responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · You finished that quickly. Let's find something a little more challenging.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Having it be too easy is counterproductive · Acknowledging the lack of challenge and determining the appropriate level of challenge is important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · That seems a little easy for you. How can you make it a stretch enough to build your brain? · What can you do to make this [more meaningful, challenging, exciting]? · How can you add another level to this to challenge you even more?
<p>Situation 4: Slow progress despite strong effort</p> <p><i>Underlying principle:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Effort is the key to success · Identify supports to help foster a sense of success and accomplishment · Analyze the strategies being used and see if they can be improved (see below) 	<p>Some potential responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · I see that you tried that five times. I admire your persistence. It will pay off. · Remind yourself that you just can't do it "YET." Let's think through some next steps to take. · If it were easy, you wouldn't be learning enough. · I expect you to make mistakes. Mistakes are the signals of opportunities for learning - what did you notice in the mistakes you made? Is there anything in the mistakes that will identify where you might need additional guidance or support? · Does it make sense to stop now and come back to it later?
<p>Situation 5: Offering help with strategies when struggling</p> <p><i>Underlying principle:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · When challenge because difficult and your mentee wants to give up, support him or her by identifying strategies that will support persistence and resilience 	<p>Some potential responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Okay, let's think about how to approach this differently? · Would you like to try _____ [different strategy]? · What was difficult? Let's focus on the difficulties to see if we can figure it out. · Who else can you ask for help? · Let's put a plan together for the next ____ [days, weeks]. · Let's go through it together and find the mistakes. · What was your approach? Where do you think you might be struggling the most? · Does it make sense to stop now and come back to it later?
<p>Situation 6: During progress</p> <p><i>Underlying principle:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · As your mentee begins to make progress toward a goal or an important task, it's important to praise the process in order to build persistence 	<p>Some potential responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Starting to come along nicely - your strategy is working! · It seems like the problem/task/concept is at a right level; you've been working on it for a while. Good job! · I see you are using your notes. What other strategies have you used or could you use to continue to make progress? · I can see a difference in now compared to _____ from last week/yesterday. What has changed?
<p>Situation 7: Succeeding with strong effort</p> <p><i>Underlying principle:</i></p>	<p>Some potential responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What was it like for you when you started work on _____? · Look how different it is for you to do that now.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · It is important to acknowledge the effort once a new challenge is overcome and complete · When mentees understand that they have strategies in their toolbox for tackling big challenges, they will be able to use specific tools for specific challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Did all that hard work pay off? · What do you think contributed to your success in _____? · I saw you use a variety of techniques; way to go! · This had that one brilliant mistake. Let's talk about what you learned from that mistake. · Did you compromise on anything to get this done? · The next time you have a challenge this big, what can you use from this experience. · Congratulations for trying again and again to get this done. · How would you compare this to other accomplishments?
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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.

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.

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.

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.



BIG PAL BASICS MONTH 6

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

In working with matches for a few years, we often hear Big Pals ask the same questions and thought it might be helpful to give you an idea of the best ways to handle these kinds of things early on. Please always know that you are encouraged to reach out to BPLP staff whenever you feel you could use support or advice when working through situations with your Little Pal. That's what the staff is here for!

Q: My Little Pal doesn't seem to want to hang out or they don't talk much when we do get together. How do I handle this?

A: Oftentimes, Little Pals get nervous and shy. Some may act distant as a defense mechanism or to seem "cool". In these cases, it's important for Big Pals to continue making an effort to meet regularly. In time, your Little Pal will learn to trust you and understand that you are going to be a constant in their life so they can feel more comfortable. Ask fun questions when conversations seem to slow down. It might help to have your Little Pal pick out the activities, too.

Q: My Little Pal often asks if we can do that same activity each time we meet and I'm not really enjoying that. How should I handle it?

A: If you do the same thing every week, it can get boring or, in the case of a restaurant or costly activity, expensive. And we want Big Pals to enjoy their time mentoring, too! Look up a different craft project or science experiment, and try to get your Little Pal excited about that next time you plan a time to meet. Check out community calendars and suggest that you attend a free event together. Make a plan to come to the monthly group activity. Or, next time you meet, make a list of all of the cool things you'd like to do together in the next few months. Getting excited about all of the possible activities you can do might be enough to pull your match out of a rut.

Some kids get nervous and find comfort in the repetitive activities, and may shoot down every alternative that you throw out. If this happens, you can try splitting the activity in two parts - the first half is spent how they want and the second half is something you think will be fun. ("Yes, we can go to McDonald's again, but we'll need to eat quick because I think we should check out the exhibit at the art gallery, too!"). It's also okay to talk openly about this with your Little Pal or their parent/guardian. ("It's getting expensive to go for ice cream every time we meet. Let's go to the park and play basketball instead this week.")

Q: My Little Pal doesn't seem to value personal hygiene at this point in time. Their hair looks greasy and unkempt, they need to brush their teeth or they could really use a shower and some deodorant. How can I gently encourage them to do these things?

A: If your Little Pal isn't demonstrating proper hygiene, the first thing to ask is if they have access to hygiene products at home. If the parents/guardians aren't willing to provide their children with toothbrushes, soap, etc., it can be a sign of neglect and, in that case, would need to be reported to DHHS.

If your Little Pal does have these products but chooses not to use them (which is common in kids, particularly in the pre-teen/early teenage years), there are a couple approaches you can try:

- Give your Little Pal a gift basket of fun hygiene products targeted for their age group. Or take your Little Pal along when you run to Walmart or Dollar Tree and tell them that you like a certain product

and ask if they'd like to try it, too. (e.g. "I love the smell of this shampoo and it makes my hair so shiny. Do you want to try it?"). This option means you will likely have to spend money, but you can reach out to the BPLP staff first to see if there is a gift card available to offset the costs.

- Be honest in a gentle manner and have a conversation. Choose a neutral, casual location. Driving in the car on the way to your activity is a great place to talk. You can start by saying that you recognize this is an awkward topic but that you care about them and want to make sure they are doing okay. Let them know you noticed their hair is tangled or they aren't smelling too sweet. They may not say anything in response or they may make excuses, but at least they will know that their hygiene choices are noticeable to others and can affect relationships.
- Keep quiet and let them learn the natural consequences of their choices not to practice proper hygiene. Wait for your Little Pal's peers to say something first. Kids tend to be truthful with one another and your Little Pal will eventually hear from a classmate that they are smelly - which will likely lead to improved hygiene habits. This option may take a while, so be prepared to hold your nose.

Q: My Little Pal has been using offensive language or saying things that are not appropriate. How do I handle this?

A: While it's nice that your Little Pal feels they can be themselves around you, it's important to establish boundaries regarding appropriate behavior when spending time together. Do not judge the behaviors as "bad" and understand that this kind of language is often the norm in some Little Pal's home lives or with their peers. In a non-judgmental manner, you should let them know that it makes you uncomfortable and ask that they not use that language around you. You can let your Little Pal know that those things aren't appropriate in certain settings and take a minute to talk about other places where people need to "watch" their language to avoid giving off the wrong impressions.

Q: My Little Pal's home life can make me uncomfortable at times. I don't always understand what's going on or I think that situations are being handled poorly. Is there anything I can do?

A: It can be difficult to see your Little Pal being affected by their home life, but remember that your role is just to be there for your Little Pal. You should be there to listen to your Little Pal if they want to talk and be sure not to pass any judgment regarding their family's situation. Encourage your Little Pal to do well in school or other activities, and praise them when they do something well. Make a point to be a positive person in their life.

Q: My Little Pal's parent has asked to borrow money from me with the promise they'll pay me back soon. I know that they are experiencing financial difficulties and want to help. Is that okay?

A: Never lend your Little Pal's family money. This crosses boundaries between your role as a mentor for the child and can make things awkward or uncomfortable. Simply say that lending money is against BPLP rules. If they continue to pressure you to lend money, let BPLP staff know. You can also contact staff to ask for suggestions of community resources to help the family if they are struggling.

Q: My Little Pal needs a winter coat (or another necessary item) but doesn't have one. I can afford to purchase them one. Should I?

A: While you want to help your Little Pal and make sure they have necessary items, we strongly advise against purchasing these things for them. This can easily hurt the parent/guardian's feelings and it blurs the boundaries of what a mentor is supposed to do for their mentee.

In the case of a lack of a winter coat (or something similar), ask your Little Pal if they have access to one - sometimes kids voluntarily choose not to wear/use things. If they don't have one, please reach out to BPLP staff for a referral to a community resource that can provide the item to the family.



BIG PAL BASICS SURVEY

FEEDBACK

You've been matched for 6 months and we are so happy to have you as a Big Pal! Mentors make a world of a difference and we want to be sure to help support you in any way we can. Hopefully you've found some of the information sent in these "Big Pal Basics" packets to be educational as you began your mentoring relationship.

We'd like to hear from you! Please take a minute to think back on the information that has been mailed to you over the last six months and let us know what you think. You can send your completed form back to BPLP in the enclosed envelope. All feedback shared will help future Big Pals.

	<i>Circle one</i>	
Overall, I think the "Big Pal Basics" packets were helpful during the first few months of my match.	Yes	No
I read all of the information in each "Big Pal Basics" packet.	Yes	No
I have used some of the information I learned in the "Big Pal Basics" packets to inform my actions/choices when interacting with my Little Pal.	Yes	No
I thought the first packet was relevant and helpful. The topics covered in the first packet were activity idea suggestions, conversation starters and 10 tips for mentoring youth.	Yes	No
I thought the second packet was relevant and helpful. The topics covered in the second packet were the stages of a mentoring relationship and what a successful mentoring relationship looks like.	Yes	No
I thought the third packet was relevant and helpful. The topics covered in the third packet was being a trauma-informed mentor and understanding how trauma affects children.	Yes	No
I thought the fourth packet was relevant and helpful. The topic covered in the fourth packet was how to mentor youth in poverty and understanding the hidden rules of the classes in our society.	Yes	No
I thought the fifth packet was relevant and helpful. The topic covered in the fifth packet was how to incorporate the growth mindset in your mentoring relationship.	Yes	No
I think the "Big Pal Basics" aren't very helpful for new volunteers.	Yes	No

Any comments or suggestions for improvement?

Are there any topics that would have been helpful to include in a "Big Pal Basics" packet?