



Volunteer screening is an essential component of successful mentoring programs and fulfills a variety of needs. The screening process provides information that is used to determine if a potential volunteer is likely to be successful as a mentor and an appropriate fit for the program. Interviews with potential youth participants, parents, and referral sources provide staff with an opportunity to determine if the youth is an appropriate fit for the program and learn about strengths, needs and interests that may influence the matching process.

This resource was created with input from mentoring professionals who attended *Interviewing Skills and Mentor Screening*, a full day professional development workshop offered by Mentor Michigan in partnership with MSU Extension. These questions will help staff members in their efforts to interview potential youth participants, parents, and referral sources. This list is not meant to be used in totality; rather, staff members should determine which questions will best help them assess the appropriateness, strengths and needs of potential participants.

Volunteer Screening: Interview Questions for Youth, Parents and Referral Sources

Questions to ask potential mentees to screen for appropriateness for the program

- How old are you?
- What grade are you in at school?
- What do you like about school?
- What do you dislike about school?
- Do you have a favorite subject in school?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- Do you have any hobbies?
- Is it easy for you to make friends, or are you someone who feels more comfortable when others come to you?
- What do you like to do when you hang out with your friends?
- Who do you admire and why do you admire him/her?
- If you have a problem, do you have any adult or adults in your life you can talk to?
- What is it about this person or persons that make it easy for you to talk to?
- Do you know what a mentor is?
- Do you want a mentor or are you being told you need one?
- Have you had a mentor before?
- Describe what a mentor would mean to you.
- Is there anything you would like your mentor to know about you?
- What would you like to know about your mentor?
- If you joined mentoring, would there be anything that made you nervous?
- What are you hoping to gain from this experience?
- How did you hear about our program?
- Do you have time to commit to our program?
- What questions do you have about this program?



Questions to ask youth to assist with the matching process

- What activities would you like to do when you are spending time with your mentor?
- What is an activity you have not done that you would like to try if your mentor knew how to do it?
- Do you face any particular challenges in school you think a mentor might be able to help you overcome?
- How do you think you learn best; by observing first or just trying it?
- How do you see yourself?
- Does it matter for you to have a mentor of a certain age?
- Is it important for you to have a mentor who shares your heritage? Faith?
- What do you expect of your mentor?
- What role do you see your mentor playing in your life?
- What should a mentor expect of you?
- Most mentors tell us they learn a lot from their mentors. What could your mentor learn from you?
- Do you expect advice from your mentor? If yes, how do you want the advice given?
- When are you available to see your mentor?



Questions to ask the parent during the screening process

- How were you referred to this program?
- Do you understand our program?
- Are there any questions or concerns about our mentoring program?
- Do you understand the role of a mentor?
- Do you support your child's decision to be in the program?
- Why do you want a mentor for your child?
- How is your child in other adult relationships?
- What are your expectations for this match and from this program?
- Do you have a preference regarding your child's mentor?
- Do you think your child will benefit from spending time with a mentor?
- What would you like to see your child accomplish with the help of a mentor?
- Is there anything specific you would like the mentor to do to help your child?
- Would you like to work together to set a few goals for your child?
- Does your child have any older people in the family he or she will go to with a concern?
- How do you feel your son or daughter may benefit from having a mentor?
- Is there anything you feel we should know about child that we may not have observed?
- What makes your child uncomfortable?
- Is there anything you would not like your child's mentor to discuss with him or her?
- What concerns do you have regarding your child right now?
- Will you make sure your child will be ready at the scheduled match time?
- When would be a good time for your child and mentor to meet?

Questions to ask when consulting with a referral source such as a therapist/social worker/teacher

Questions for a Potential Mentor's Referral

- Would you be comfortable having this applicant mentoring your own son or daughter?
- Would you say this mentor could commit to a youth for the time required?
- What challenges do you think this potential mentor might face when working with his or her mentored youth?

Questions regarding a youth's referral

- Does this youth want a mentor?
- Why do you think this youth would fit in our program?
- What does this youth's support system look like?

- What strategies would work best for this youth?
- What expectations do you have for this mentor relationship?
- Would you trust taking this youth out by yourself?
- What do you think the mentor program could do for him or her?
- What kind of mentor would best support this youth?
- What made you refer this youth to our program instead of the other available programs in our community?
- What makes ___ excited? Frustrated?
- What are the mentee's strengths and challenges?



- Who do you picture as their ideal mentor?
- Does this child have a supportive adult role model?
- Why are you referring this individual to this program?
- How do you think this youth will benefit from our mentoring program?
- Can you tell me about a time when this youth was successful in accomplishing something that made him or her feel proud, or good about him or herself?

For more information...

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