Experience Corps
Mentor Toolkit

AARP FOUNDATION

experience corps

AARP Foundation Experience Corps Mentor Toolkit

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Christian Rummell
Ed. D., Senior Researcher, AIR

Contents

Introduction and Overview

As an Experience Corps (EC) volunteer, you play an important role in helping students achieve success in the classroom. The time you spend tutoring is linked to improved literacy, reading, and test scores. While impressive, the impact doesn't have to stop there.

Did you also know that your tutoring time has built-in opportunities to help students acquire and practice skills needed for "life" success? Taking just a few additional steps to get to know your students, build a relationship, and add on short activities or questions during your tutoring sessions can yield a number of additional benefits that go beyond—and even enhance—academic achievement. During the time you spend helping students improve reading, test scores, and literacy, you can also make a difference in children's well-being, relationships, and decision-making skills. In addition, your students also gain access to positive role models and advocates that may be missing in their lives. The best part is that you can support such benefits by being more intentional with behaviors you are probably already doing or by simply adding any number of fun, interactive, and short questions or activities outlined in this toolkit.

What's Included

This toolkit contains nine tools that you can use to foster life success benefits in your students. Inside you will find a variety of resources and supports to help you transform your tutoring time. These include definitions, worksheets, activity ideas, and reflection questions. Each tool is meant to give insight, focused skills, and ideas. Using them can help to transform your tutoring sessions into a space that also offers support for long-term social and emotional well-being in your students.

Tool	Definitions
Tool 1: Definitions	Tool 1 provides working definitions for mentoring and social and emotional learning (SEL), giving insight into how to understand a range of ways you can make a difference beyond literacy and reading support.
Tool 2: How to Be a Mentor during Your Tutoring Sessions	Tool 2 describes six actions that you can take to be a high quality mentor: 1) Be consistent; 2) Spend time getting to know your students; 3) Incorporate fun; 4) Be a role model; 5) Be empathetic; and 6) Celebrate the skills your student uses to achieve success. Tips and suggestions are included.
Tool 3: Student Social and Emotional Growth: "Look-fors"	Tool 3 provides a more in-depth look at five competency areas that are closely linked with SEL. These areas are: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills. Each area contains age-appropriate "look-fors" that you can use to identify student strength and challenge areas.
Tool 4: Student Social and Emotional Growth: Questions	Giving students the chance to practice thinking about and responding to questions about feelings, relationships, and decisions can help to strengthen social and emotional growth. Tool 4 provides examples of questions that you can quickly and easily integrate into your tutoring session.
Tool 5: Student Social and Emotional Growth: Activities	From time to time, there may be opportunities to facilitate more structured activities that allow students to practice social and emotional growth areas. Tool 5 describes short, interactive, and fun activities you can do with your students to give them practice in social and emotional growth areas.
Tool 6: Setting Goals for You and Your Students	Goal setting is an important part of every role you play at EC. From helping students take their reading to the next level to supporting improvements in thinking and behavior, goal setting is critical. Tool 6 defines what a goal is, offers insight into strategies you can use to work with your students to create goals, and describes fun and interactive ways you can support your students as they work toward success. This tool also contains a sample form you can use to set goals with your students.
Tool 7: Self-assessment	What strengths do you bring to your role as a mentor, tutor, and advocate for social and emotional growth in your students? This short assessment tool allows you to see in which areas you are strongest and in which areas you may require additional support.
Tool 8: Self-reflection	Self-reflection can help you assess your own strengths in helping students achieve life success. Tool 8 includes reflection activities that you can use to assess the frequency, consistency, and balance of support that you are providing, especially related to mentoring and social and emotional growth opportunities for students.
Tool 9: Recap	Tool 9 is a recap that highlights "look-fors," questions, and activities in one place. You can use this to quickly identify areas for student support, along with questions and activities you can use to make that growth happen.

Tool 1: Definitions

Overview

During tutoring sessions, you have a number of built-in opportunities to create a learning climate that supports both classroom success and life success in your students. This tool introduces you to two key concepts—mentoring and social and emotional learning (SEL)— that build the foundation for these supports. Understanding these concepts will help you to maximize the use of ideas and activity suggestions contained throughout this toolkit and can help you make an even bigger impact on your students.

When to use this tool

This is the first tool in your "toolbox" that can help you build a solid foundation to support a range of benefits in your students beyond the classroom. Taking the time to familiarize yourself with these concepts will help you better understand the importance of each activity and the type of impact it can have on your students.

How to use this tool

This tool is meant to give you basic definitions and awareness of the concepts of mentoring and SEL. Read through, become familiar, and start thinking about why these might be important to your role as a tutor.

Goals

- To understand a basic definition of mentoring.
- To recognize differences between your role as a tutor and your role as a mentor.
- To become aware of the definition and competencies associated with social and emotional learning (SEL).
- To understand the range of benefits associated with mentoring and SEL.

Tool 1: Definitions

During each tutoring session, you have a number of built-in opportunities to create a learning climate that supports both classroom success and life success in your students. This tool introduces you to two key concepts—mentoring and social and emotional learning (SEL)—that build the foundation for this support. Understanding these concepts can help you to maximize the use of ideas and activity suggestions contained throughout this toolkit.

What Is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a trusting relationship that brings a young person (a mentee) together with a caring adult (a mentor) who offers guidance, support and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee. Within a mentoring relationship, mentors and students typically spend time getting to know each other, having fun together, building trust, and working toward self-identified goals.

In addition, it is important to remember that although mentoring and tutoring typically occur together, there are some very important differences:

A Tutor	A Mentor
• Focuses on skill acquisition • Measures success by improvements in academic areas • Usually decides upon the structure of a tutoring session with a student • Often helps to scaffold student growth to the next level through instruction	• Focuses primarily on developing a relationship with a young person • Measures success by improvements in non-academic areas such as relationships and emotional well-being as well as improvements in grades • Usually works with the student to structure how they want to spend time together • Includes fun as a key ingredient in time spent together

Why Is Mentoring Important?

Many students lack caring and consistent relationships with adults in their lives. They may not have anyone there to show them just how capable and competent they are. Without this type of support, students may struggle and have difficulty living up to their full potential.

Mentoring relationships have been linked to a number of positive benefits in students. These include improvements in:

- Mental health
- Social and emotional well-being
- Education and grades
- Improved Relationships with parents and peers [1]

These benefits are attained by building relationship over time and making sure that you are getting to know the needs, interests, strengths, and challenges of your students. Tool 2 highlights specific steps you should take to make sure that your students are benefitting from your mentoring activities.

What Is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?

SEL is a concept that you may have heard before too, especially when talking to teachers and other educators. SEL is defined as:

> the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. [2]

At its core, SEL highlights the importance of giving children and youth practice establishing healthy relationships, healthy emotions, and positive choices.

There are five competencies that are typically linked to SEL: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. [3]

Self-awareness

The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-management

The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

Social Awareness

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Relationship Skills

The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, and resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Responsible Decision-making

The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

Why Is Social and Emotional Learning Important?
SEL has been closely associated with a number of positive benefits in children:
- Better academic performance
- Improved attitudes and behaviors
- Fewer negative behaviors
- Reduced emotional distress [4]

Based on these results, giving young people opportunities to acquire and practice these competencies seems like a pretty good idea, especially if you want to help them succeed in school and in life.

Several tools in this kit offer specific examples and activity ideas that you can incorporate into your tutoring sessions to strengthen key competency areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

[1] Child Trends, 2013
[2] http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/
[3] http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/core-competencies
[4] http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/outcomes/

Tool 2: How to be a Mentor during your Tutoring Sessions

Overview

Mentoring is more than just spending time helping your students learn to read. Mentoring is about the relationships you form, the approach you take, and your ability to serve as a positive role model. This tool highlights specific ways you can start thinking about being a mentor to your students during your tutoring sessions (many of which you are already probably doing).

When to use this tool

Before using this tool, you should already be familiar with what mentoring is and how it is different from tutoring. Basic definitions for mentoring are included in Tool 1.

How to use this tool

Over the course of your tutoring sessions, you will probably see shifts and growth in your students. Each week, small steps are being taken to strengthen reading and improve literacy skills. In addition to these successes, you might also be seeing some subtle changes in the way your students are problem solving, relating to each other, and sharing more about their lives. This tool can help to explain why these things are happening and what you can do to further encourage and intentionally promote these positive changes.

Goals

- To understand actions associated with high-quality mentoring relationships.
- To gain insight into tangible steps you can use to incorporate these actions into your tutoring sessions.
- To understand why each area is important and to be able to identify what type of impact each action may have on your students.

Tool 2: How to Be a Mentor During Your Tutoring Sessions

Mentoring		
A. Be consistent	• Show up regularly to meet with your student • Commit through your actions • Make your student the priority when you spend time together	Dependability, consistency, and frequency are key ways to build trust, which is the core feature of a mentoring relationship. If you aren't meeting with your student, you aren't going to make a difference. Also, showing up at your assigned time each week lets your student know she can depend on you. When your student feels valued, she is more likely to open up to you and learn from you.
B. Spend time getting to know your student	• Build in time to ask questions and get to know your student • Find out your student's likes, dislikes, friends, challenges, and strengths	Mentoring is about relationships. When you develop a close relationship, you will be able to "reach" your student and help him to achieve goals by knowing his strengths and challenges. Think about those teachers in your life who made the biggest impact. Did they just walk in the room and tell you what you needed to learn? No, they got to know you and you got to know them.
C. Incorporate fun	• Find ways to laugh together. A moment of silliness is a great way to break the ice. • Find ways to engage your student • Link a story to something interesting/personal to the child	One of the most important things about being a mentor is to find ways to connect. Building fun (and even laughter) into your session can help to break the ice, make your student (and you) feel more comfortable, and can build a foundation that can be even more supportive to the needs. Also, students are more likely to learn when they can personally engage with a lesson.
D. Be a role model	• Demonstrate skills that you want your student to emulate through problem solving, treating others with respect, and staying present during your time together	Role modeling is a key way that mentors can make a difference. Your student will learn from how you approach challenges, work through problems, and show respect. When you intentionally role model those traits you want your student to learn, he can see what something looks like in action. When a student respects you, he will want to be more like you.
E. Be empathetic	• Show curiosity for and interest in the student • Remember that you and your mentee may come from different backgrounds	Remember that your student may come from a different background and may be experiencing a number of challenges outside of the classroom. Therefore, showing empathy and patience is essential.
F. Celebrate the skills your student used to achieve success	• Work with your student to see what steps she took to achieve success • Give praise: a simple high five will go a long way!	Praising a student for her success is important. However, working with her to identify how she achieved success can be lasting. Highlighting the strategies used to achieve success can help your student apply these to other situations and settings, making more of an impact over time.

Tool 3: Social and Emotional Growth: "Look-fors"

Overview

How can you know if your students are demonstrating behaviors that have been linked to long-term positive social and emotional growth? These age-appropriate "look-fors" can give you an idea. When students demonstrate these actions, they are showing early mastering of competencies seen to be critical for positive long-term development. Understanding what to look for is an important first step in figuring out your students' strength areas and challenges.

When to use this tool

Before using this tool, you should already be familiar with the definition of SEL and the key competency areas that are closely linked with fostering social and emotional growth in students.

How to use this tool

This tool contains a series of "look-fors" that can help you identify the presence of traits and actions associated with each student social and emotional growth area: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Goals

- To understand what things to "look-for" in your students that show they are accessing social and emotional growth opportunities.
- To be able to recognize potential student strengths and challenge areas.
- To begin to understand how you can help students acquire and practice each competency area.

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[5]   Adapted from State of Illinois SEL Standards (K-3) : http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/social_emotional/standards.htm

Tool 3: Student Social and Emotional Growth: "Look-fors"[5]

How can you know if your students are demonstrating behaviors that have been linked to long-term positive social and emotional growth? These age-appropriate "look-fors" can give you an idea. When students demonstrate these actions, they are showing early mastering of competencies seen to be critical for positive long-term development. Understanding what to look for is an important first step in figuring out your students' strength areas and challenges.

When students demonstrate *self-awareness*, they...

- Recognize and label emotions
- Share what they like, dislike, need, and want
- Identify strengths and challenges in self
- Talk about why school is important and identify goals for classroom success

When students demonstrate *self-management*, they...

- Share how emotions are linked to behavior
- Show how they can control impulses
- Can display "good" classroom behavior

When students demonstrate *social awareness*, they...

- Identify strengths of family, friends, their school and community
- Recognize that others may experience something from a different perspective
- Add on to and build off of others' ideas
- Can identify similarities and differences in others

When students demonstrate *relationship skills*, they...

- Can explain strategies to work and play well with others
- Are able to identify problems and conflicts
- Share how to resolve a challenge or conflict

When students demonstrate *responsible decision-making*, they...

- Can share why safety is important to consider
- Identify decisions that students make in school
- Talk about positive choices with peers
- Identify roles that they can take to contribute to the classroom
- Identify roles that they can take to contribute to their family

Tool 4: Social and Emotional Growth: Questions

Overview

During your tutoring sessions, there are a number of quick and easy ways you can help your students acquire and practice skills for life success. Asking a few targeted questions, incorporating short and fun activities, and reflecting on your own strengths provide key opportunities that can help to translate your time as a tutor into time spent fostering social and emotional growth in your students.

When to use this tool

Before using this tool, you should already be familiar with the definition of SEL and the key competency areas that are closely linked with fostering social and emotional growth in students. You should also be familiar with SEL "look-fors" and know your students potential strengths and challenge areas.

How to use this tool

This tool contains examples of questions that you can use to give students practice in social and emotional growth areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Goals

- To recognize that you can offer support for student social and emotional growth in quick and easy ways during each tutoring session.
- To understand examples of questions you can ask for each competency area.

Tool 4: Social and Emotional Growth: Questions

Your tutoring sessions are often very structured and you may not have a lot of time for building in social and emotional growth activities. The good news is that there are a few simple and easy questions you can ask during your tutoring sessions that are already easy to build in to the time you spend with your students. The following chart details the types of questions you can ask during your tutoring sessions that offer this type of support.

Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision-making
How did that story make you feel? Why?	How were you able to stay calm during the scary part of the story?	How do you think that story made your friend feel? Why?	What did you and your friend do when you played together today?	Why did you let the teacher help you with the scissors?
What did you like about the story? What could've made it better?	Why was it hard for you to stop talking when the teacher told you to be quiet earlier?	What do you think she felt when she painted that picture? Why?	Why did you and ___ get into a fight earlier? What did the teacher ask you to do?	Why did the other students get in trouble and you didn't? What did you do differently?
What was hard about reading the story? How were you able to finish it?	Why do people cry when they are sad? Why do you cry?	What do you and your friend have in common?	What did you do when your friend called you a name? What could you have done differently?	What can you do tomorrow to help your teacher/ classmates out?
What do you like about reading?	Why do people laugh when they are happy?	What is different about me and your teacher?		How did you help your mom yesterday when you got home from school?

Tool 5: Social and Emotional Growth: Activities

Overview

Sometimes during your tutoring sessions, you might find you have time to do a short activity or two with your students. During this time, you may want to include activities that encourage social and emotional growth. This tool highlights a few fun and interactive ways you can quickly give students practice on different competencies associated with social and emotional growth.

When to use this tool

Before using this tool, you should already be familiar with each of the five SEL competencies. You should also be able to use the "look-fors" in Tool 3 to identify strengths and challenge areas in your students. This knowledge can help you prioritize the types of activities you'll want to do that may yield the most benefits.

How to use this tool

This tool contains examples of activities you can use to give students practice in social and emotional growth areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Many of these can be adapted to small groups and can also be used during 1:1 time. Only use the activities in this tool when time allows.

Goals

- To recognize that you can offer support for student social and emotional growth in fun and interactive ways.
- To gain ideas for activities you can use during various times of your relationship.
- To understand examples of activities you can do to support growth in each competency area.

Tool 5: Social and Emotional Growth Areas: Activities

Sometimes during your tutoring sessions, you might find you have time to do a short activity or two with your students. During this time, you may want to include any number of short activities that encourage social and emotional growth. This tool highlights a few fun and interactive ways you can quickly give students practice in a range of social and emotional growth areas.

Each suggestion contains an overview of required materials, time, social and emotional growth areas that are supported, and a description of the activity.

Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light Work with students to identify times when they are worried about an impulsive behavior.
Materials: Picture of a traffic signal
Time: Ongoing, quick "check-ins" during tutoring sessions
Social and emotional growth areas supported by this activity: self-management
Activity: Explain to your students that the traffic light can be used to share with others how they are feeling. Let them know that a green traffic light means that they are feeling OK, yellow means they are worried that they might get upset soon, while red means they are already acting out. Do random "check-ins" with your students to ask which color of the traffic signal they are. This can especially be helpful if you see them about to act up.
This activity is best done 1:1.

Crystal Ball Crystal ball is an activity you can use to help your students think about self-awareness and responsibility.
Materials: Paper, pencil, crayons, or art supplies
Time: 1-2 minutes
Social and emotional growth areas supported by this activity: responsible decision-making, self-awareness
Activity: Before you start reading a story, have your students draw a picture of a crystal ball. In the middle of a story, stop at a random point or points. Hold up the picture and ask your students to predict what will happen next. This activity can help your students start building new connections between behaviors and consequences.
This activity is best done 1:1.

Rules for the Moon Ask your students to collectively decide upon rules for an upcoming trip to the moon.
Materials: paper, pencil, and art supplies (bonus if you can bring or use a picture of the moon)
Time: up to five minutes (depending on the size of the group)
Social and emotional growth areas supported by this activity: responsible decision-making, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills
Activity: Tell your students that they will be traveling to the moon next week. Let them know that this journey will include everyone from the classroom. But, before they can lift off, they need to figure out what the rules of their moon trip will be. Have your students brainstorm a list of rules, writing them down on paper. Ask students why each rule might be important. Talk with them about how they can make sure that they are safe during the trip and make sure they are able to work and play well with other students once they are on the moon.
This activity can be used in 1:1 or small group settings.

30 or 60 Second Challenge Give your student 30 or 60 seconds to draw as many of an item as possible. Use a timer.
Materials: pen, paper, crayons
Time: less than one minute
Social and emotional growth areas supported by this activity: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making
Activity: Use one of the following topics. Ask your student to draw as many of these things as they can in 30 or 60 seconds. • The number of emotions they felt today • Good choices they made • All the things they like about their family • All the things they like about school • All the things they like about where they live • The things that are similar between them and their friends • Strategies to resolve a fight • Things they can do to help their teacher • Things they can do to help their family If you have time, ask them to share more about their answers. With more than one student, go around and ask each to choose their favorite response.
This activity can be used in 1:1 or small group settings.

Caterpillar Check A caterpillar check is a fun way to take your students' "temperature" to assess how well they were able to achieve a specific social and emotional growth area during the tutoring session.
Materials: Gestures (and silliness)
Time: up to five minutes (depending on the size of the group)
Social and emotional growth areas supported by this activity: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making
Activity: There are three different "ratings"—a caterpillar, a cocoon, and a butterfly.   • Caterpillar (a rolling motion with your arm...) is a rolling motion with your arm like a caterpillar walking, or this could also look like a wave.) When a student uses this gesture, it means that something was difficult   (but after some practice it can be done!). • Cocoon (gesture like "cradling a baby") Using the cocoon gesture means that the student is almost there. • Butterfly (flying motion) When a student uses a butterfly gesture, he feels good about something. Have students "rate" various life success skills. This can be done through using the following prompts or asking students about something from the story. Directions: Explain to your students what the caterpillar check is. Explaining this can even offer a few moments of silliness between you and them. Make sure that each student gets the chance to practice each gesture and knows what it means. Once everyone is ready, let your students know it is time to do the caterpillar check! Here are a few sample questions you can use: Tell me, caterpillar, how well were you able to .... • Listen to your teacher (follow up: Why is listening important?) • Be nice to your friend (follow up: What did you do to show you were you nice?) • Sit during class (follow up: Why were you able to sit?) • Read during our session today (follow up: How did that make you feel?) • Make good decisions (follow up: What were they? Why were they good?) You can also create your own questions. Feel free to find ways to use this check to see how well your students like school, get along with their friends, like doing homework. You can even have your students practice with each other, taking turns leading and following.
This activity can be used in 1:1 or small group settings.

| **Simon Says** |
| Work with students to give them practice with impulse control as well as showing what different "life success" skills look like. |

| Materials: None. |

| Time: Ongoing, quick "check-ins" during tutoring sessions. |

| Social and emotional growth areas supported by this activity: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. |

| Activity:
Explain to your students the rules for "Simon Says." Tell them that you will be giving them instructions for different things to do. Each time you say "Simon says" the students should follow your instructions.

Feel free to practice with them:
   • "Simon says" touch your left elbow (students should touch their left elbow)
   • "Simon says" jump three times (students should jump three times)
   • "Simon says" high five your tutor (students should high five their tutor)
Let them know that if you don't say "Simon says" before an instruction then they SHOULDN'T do the activity. For example, if you say "touch your nose" the student shouldn't do anything.

Feel free to practice with them:
   • Touch your nose (students shouldn't touch their nose)
   • Jump three times (students shouldn't jump three times)

Lastly, share with them that they will be eliminated from the game if they follow directions that are not preceded by the phrase "Simon says" or if they don't follow directions that include "Simon Says."

Go ahead and practice:
   • "Simon Says" touch your nose (each of the students should touch their nose. If a student didn't touch her nose, she is eliminated from the game.)
   • Jump three times (no students should move. If a student jumped, she would be eliminated from the game.)

Go faster and faster with your commands, randomly alternating between "Simon Says" and giving directions such as touch, jump, etc.

Here are some suggested questions you can ask that will connect it to the tutoring session as well as give students a chance to practice life success skills:
   • "Simon says" turn to page 3 in your book
   • Touch your head four times
   • "Simon says" jump like you are really happy
   • Close your book
   • "Simon says" read the first line of your story
   • Count to ten
   • "Simon says" show me a face of a surprised person |

| This activity can be used in 1:1 or small group settings. |

Overview

Goal setting is an important part of every role you play at EC. From helping students take their reading to the next level to supporting ways they are able to improve behavior, goal setting can be critical. This tool defines what a goal is, offers insight into strategies you can use to work with your students to create goals, and describes fun and interactive ways you can support your students as they work toward success.

When to use this tool

This tool should be used at the start of your tutoring year. You should also be familiar with basic definitions for mentoring and social and emotional learning (SEL) found in Tool 1.

How to use this tool

This tool can give you a basic understanding of what a goal is and how to work with your students to identify areas they want to improve. By finding fun and engaging ways to support your students as they work toward their goals, you can help to strengthen their commitment to success. In addition, the "tutor" reflection goal setting worksheet can be used to track your own goals for supporting students throughout the school year.

Goals:
• To understand how to work with your students to identify goals.
• To identify fun and interactive ways to support students as they work toward their goals.

Tool 6: Goal Setting

The connection between tutoring, mentoring, and goal setting
As a tutor, you are in a unique position to help young people work toward their reading and classroom goals. As a mentor, you are also creating a unique bond that can be used to push your student to gain problem-solving skills, practice regulating emotions, and seeing how to have positive relationships with peers and other people in their lives. Because of these unique roles, you can work with your students to reach new heights in multiple levels. Using just a few of these tips and ideas can help guide what these goal setting opportunities can look like.

What is a goal?

If your students are new to the idea of goal setting, an easy way to help them build this connection is to give them examples of goal setting from real life. For example, ask your students what it takes to run a marathon, be a basketball star, be a doctor, fly to the moon, be a singer, etc. Work with them to identify different skills or practice they will need to accomplish one of these tasks or careers.

Once your students have a good idea of what a goal is and can look like, you can ask them to talk about what they want to "be." Have your students share what they want to be when they grow up. Then work backwards with them to talk through different skills or traits or education they will need to get there.

This activity is a nice opening to get to know your students as well as understand what types of life dreams they have (which will likely change throughout the year).

Helping students identify their goals

In addition to using different goal setting conversations and activities to learn more about who your students are, there are a number of ways you can also help your students identify current goals that you can help them with right now. For example, work with your students to identify things they should do now to get to where they want to be when they grow up. The following interactive activities can be useful to help you document each goal and work with your students to achieve success:

Growth Chart

Have your students identify a reading, behavior, and/or emotion goal for the year. Create a growth chart on a piece of paper (you can use a ruler to put in different markers). Revisit these goals on a regular basis to see if your student recognize any growth. Use this as an opportunity to check in on any challenges your student is facing and how you might be able to help. Document each week so your students can see all the changes.

Treasure Map

Have your students draw a treasure map with three hidden treasures. Each treasure should represent one goal (these can be tutoring goals, emotional goals, behavioral goals, etc.) Talk to your students about the "steps" it will take to get to each and write these down on the map. Revisit frequently to see how close they are to the goal.

Mountain Climber

Draw a picture of a mountain and mountaineer. Write a goal at the top of the mountain and talk with your students about the "equipment" needed to reach that goal. Will they need an ice axe? a jacket? support from other climbers? What about practice? Will they need to learn new words (if it is a reading goal)? Will they need to share their feelings more (if it is an emotion goal)? Revisit this frequently to see if the equipment changes.

Goal Setting Worksheet

If you want a very basic template for goal setting, consider using the one below. This can be used to document the goals that your students identified in the activities above. This tool can also be used to help you and your students document the goals you have for your relationship over the school year. Remember to revisit the goals regularly throughout the year. They may need to be revised as well.

Directions for the goal setting worksheet:

1. Both of you should write your name on the goal setting worksheet.

2. Talk with your student about three goals he has for the year. These can be reading goals, feeling goals, relationship goals, impulse control goals, or other "life success" goals. You can capture goals from some of the interactive activities just described or highlight a few while sitting down together to go over this worksheet. Either way, keeping track is a good idea. Let your student know that you will revisit these as the year goes on.

3. You can also share some of your goals for the year. If it makes sense for you to go first during this activity, you can also role model how you set your own goals for her to see. Remember that sharing can also be an important way to build a relationship with your student.

4. In addition to your individual goals, you should identify the things you want to accomplish together. What do you want to achieve as a pair by the end of the year? Write these down and also come back to them regularly to see your progress.

5. A few goal examples for students and mentors are included below:

Student Goal Examples	Tutor Goal Examples
• Learn all my letters and their sounds • Learn _____ new sight words • Read a whole book on my own • Read ___ new books and discuss them • Be helpful/respectful to the other students in the tutoring group (if small group) • Listen attentively to the tutor • Be respectful to myself, my classmates, and my tutor • Get to know my tutor	• Always be on time • Get to know my student and his/her favorite and least favorite things • Come prepared to work with my students • Be a good role model • Regularly incorporate fun reading activities

Sample Goal Setting Form	
Student Name _____	Tutor Name _____
Goal 1: Goal 2: Goal 3:	Goal 1: Goal 2: Goal 3:
How will the tutor help you to achieve your goals?	How will the student help you to achieve your goals?
Our Shared Goals	
1. 2.	1. 2.
Our Progress	

Tool 7: Self-Assessment

Overview

What strengths do you bring to your role as a mentor, tutor, and advocate for social and emotional growth in your students? This short assessment tool allows you to see in which areas you are strongest and in which areas may require additional support.

When to use this tool

Once you are familiar with each concept and definition from Tool 1, you can use this assessment to identify strengths and challenge areas that you bring with you to your role as a tutor, mentor, and advocate. This tool is meant to give you a quick "temperature" check when you first start tutoring. You can also use this tool later in the year to see if you've changed during the time you've been working with your students.

How to use this tool

This assessment can be used to give you a baseline snapshot of your strengths and challenge areas. You can revisit this tool at any point in the school year and see if your scores or needs have changed. This tool can also be used to talk with your EC coordinator to gain additional support for any target areas you don't currently feel comfortable with.

Goals

- To identify your strengths providing mentoring, tutoring, and social and emotional support to students.
- To understand your challenge areas and identify ways to access additional support.

Tool 7: Self-Assessment

Directions: Use this assessment to better understand your strengths and challenge areas for mentoring, tutoring, and support for social and emotional growth areas in your students.

Mentoring

	Never	Less Than Half the Sessions	About Half the Sessions	Almost Every Session	Every Session
I consistently show up to tutoring sessions with my student	1	2	3	4	5
I spend time getting to know my student during tutoring sessions	1	2	3	4	5
I make my student a priority when we spend time together	1	2	3	4	5
I have fun with my student during sessions	1	2	3	4	5
I am a positive role model to my student	1	2	3	4	5
I show patience to my student	1	2	3	4	5
I am empathetic to challenges my student faces	1	2	3	4	5

Mentoring Score: _____

Tutoring & Academic Support

	Never	Less Than Half the Sessions	About Half the Sessions	Almost Every Session	Every Session
During tutoring sessions, I work with my student to identify skills used to solve problems	1	2	3	4	5
During tutoring sessions, I work with my student to think about how to apply learned lessons from our reading materials	1	2	3	4	5
During tutoring sessions, I work with my student to identify strategies to overcome reading challenges	1	2	3	4	5

Tutoring and Academic Support Score: _____

Social and Emotional Growth Areas

	Never	Less Than Half the Sessions	About Half the Sessions	Almost Every Session	Every Session
During tutoring sessions, I help my student identify individual strengths and challenges	1	2	3	4	5
During tutoring sessions, I help my student think through ways to show "good" classroom behavior	1	2	3	4	5
During tutoring sessions, I help my student identify other perspectives	1	2	3	4	5
During tutoring sessions, I work with my student to identify ways to interact well with others	1	2	3	4	5
During tutoring sessions, I work with my student to identify roles they can play to contribute to their classroom or family	1	2	3	4	5

Social and Emotional Growth Score: _____

Total Score: _____

Using the Self-Assessment to Understand Your Strengths
In addition to using this assessment to identify how you are supporting students, you can also use this to reflect on trends you see in your responses. Take a few minutes to reflect upon your scores and ratings.

Which two or three areas are your strongest? Why?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What skills and traits are you using in these areas?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What type of impact do you think your strengths have on your students?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Which areas did you score the lowest? Why?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What skills and traits do you think you can improve?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What resources are available to help you strengthen these skill areas?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Tool 8: Self-Reflection

Overview

Self-reflection can help you assess your own strengths in helping students achieve life success. This tool includes reflection activities that you can use to assess the frequency, consistency, and balance of support that you are providing your students.

When to use this tool

This tool should be used at the mid-point of your tutoring year and only after you have familiarized yourself with key concepts of mentoring, social and emotional learning, and used activities and question suggestions contained in previous tools.

How to use this tool

Use this tool as a "fun" way of checking to see how much impact you are making on your students. Check off boxes that you have done. Leave the others blank until they are completed. Can you score a Bingo? Blackout? If you get the chance, you should compare with other tutors to see how you compare. If you find that you have a lot of blank areas, talk to your EC coordinator to figure out ways you can improve. If you find you've already been doing lots of activities on this card, keep up the good work!

Goals

- To identify different ways you are supporting your students.
- To assess areas you may want to bolster during your tutoring sessions.
- To challenge yourself to maximize the time you spend with your students, giving them access to all the benefits available to them.

Tool 8: Self-Reflection

How do you know if you have been making a difference for your students? The following "Bingo" card can be used to help you track the size, scope, and dosage of mentoring and "life success" activities you are building into your tutoring session. Try to see how many of these activities you have incorporated in the last month.

Mentoring	Questions	Activities	Self- Reflection	Tutoring
I showed up on time every week this month	I asked a question about self-awareness (e.g., What challenged you reading that story? Why were you able to finish?)	I worked with my student to do a "Caterpillar Check" twice in the month	I reflected on my own emotions, strengths, and challenges	I used the EC curriculum to support my students
I had fun with my student	I asked a question about self-management (e.g., How did you feel when x happened?)	I did a "30 Second Challenge" with my student	I made connections between my emotions and my behaviors	I talked to the EC coordinator about my students and their progress
I role modeled positive problem solving during one of our sessions together	I asked a question about social awareness (e.g., How do you think your friend felt when she painted that picture?)	I included activities and questions for self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making	I showed patience and kindness to another person who was struggling	I attended and participated in EC team meetings
I showed patience and empathy to my student	I asked a question about relationship skills (e.g., Why did you get into a fight with your friend yesterday? What could you have done differently?)	I did a "60 Second Challenge" with my student	I resolved a problem that was bugging me	I kept records from each of my daily tutoring sessions
I celebrated the skills my student used to achieve success	I asked a question about responsible decision-making (e.g., Why did the other students get in trouble at lunch yesterday and you didn't?)	I had my students engage in a "Crystal Ball" activity	I made two positive choices	I asked for help when I needed it

Tool 9: Recap

Overview

This tool is a recap that highlights "look-fors," questions, and activities in one place. You can use this to quickly identify areas for student support, along with questions and activities you can use to make that growth happen.

When to use this tool

This is a standalone tool that can be used to identify social and emotional growth areas in your students, along with questions and activities you can use to support each competency area.

How to use this tool

This tool should be used after you have familiarized yourself with key concepts in Tool 1. This can serve as a standalone reference guide once you have worked through the entire toolkit.

Goals

- To understand what things to "look-for" in your students that show they are accessing social and emotional growth opportunities.
- To gain an easy-to-use reference guide for asking questions and incorporating activities that can support social and emotional growth in your students.

Tool 9: Recap

	Self-Awareness
"Look-fors"	*Students in K-3 should be able to:* • Recognize and label emotions • Share what they like, dislike, need, and want • Identify strengths and challenges in self • Talk about why school is important and identify goals for classroom success
Questions	*Potential questions you can ask during your tutoring session:* • How did the story make you feel? • What did you like about the story? What could've made it better? • What was hard about reading the story? How were you able to finish it? • What do you like about reading?
Activities	*Potential activities you can do:* • Crystal Ball: Stop the story in the middle and have students "predict" what will happen and why • Caterpillar Check: Interactive game that asks students to rate how well they were able to achieve a specific task • 30 Second Challenge: Have students write down their responses to a topic

Self-Management	
"Look -fors"	*Students in K-3 should be able to:* • Share how emotions are linked to behavior • Show how they can control impulses • Display "good" classroom behavior
Questions	*Potential questions you can ask during your tutoring session:* • How did you feel when ___ happened in the story? • How were you able to stay calm during the scary part of the story? • Why was it hard for you to stop talking when the teacher told you to be quiet? • Why do people smile when they feel happy?
Activities	*Potential activities you can do:* • Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light: Students use the lights of a traffic signal to tell you how they feel • Caterpillar Check: Interactive game that asks students to rate how well they were able to achieve a specific task • 30 Second Challenge: Have students write down their responses to a topic • Simon Says: Give students opportunities to listen and control their actions

	Social Awareness
"Look -fors"	*Students in K-3 should be able to:* • Identify strengths of family, friends, their school and community • Recognize that others' may experience something from a different perspective • Add on to and build off of others ideas • Identify similarities and differences in others
Questions	*Potential questions you can ask during your tutoring session:* • How do you think that story made your friend feel? Why? • What do you think she felt when she painted that picture in the story? • What do you and (character from book) have in common? How are you different? • What friends do you think would like this story? Why? • How am I different from your teacher?
Activities	*Potential activities you can do:* • Rules for the Moon: Students make rules for a classroom trip to the moon • Caterpillar Check: Interactive game that asks students to rate how well they were able to achieve a specific task • 60 Second Challenge: Have students write down their responses to a topic

Relationship Skills	
"Look-fors"	*Students in K-3 should be able to:* • Explain strategies to work and play well with others • Identify problems and conflicts • Share how to resolve a challenge or conflict
Questions	*Potential questions you can ask during your tutoring session:* • What did you and your friend do when you played together yesterday? • What did you do when your friend called you a name? What could you have done differently? • How did ___ and ____ in the story become friends?
Activities	*Potential activities you can do:* • Rules for the Moon: Students make rules for a classroom trip to the moon • Caterpillar Check: Interactive game that asks students to rate how well they were able to achieve a specific task • 60 second Challenge: Have students write down their responses to a topic

Responsible Decision-Making

"Look -fors"	*Students in K-3 should be able to:* • Share why safety is important to consider • Identify decisions that students make in school • Talk about positive choices with peers • Identify roles they can take to contribute to the classroom • Identify roles they can take to contribute to their family
Questions	*Potential questions you can ask during your tutoring session:* • Why is it a good idea to ask the teacher for help with the scissors? • Why did the other students get in trouble yesterday and you didn't? What did you do differently? • What can you do tomorrow to help your teacher out? • How did you help your mom yesterday when she fixed the car?
Activities	*Potential activities you can do:* • Rules for the Moon: Students make rules for a classroom trip to the moon • 30 Second Challenge: Have students write down their responses to a topic • 60 Second Challenge: Have students write down their responses to a topic

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