



COLLEGE POSITIVE MENTORING



Michigan | Campus Compact

Mentor Michigan and Michigan Campus Compact developed the College Positive Mentoring Toolkit, designed to provide mentors with information, conversation starters, match activity ideas, and ready-to-use activities, to help their mentees take important steps towards higher education.

Mentoring relationships provide youth with the consistent encouragement, skills, and motivation to succeed personally and academically. A college positive mentor exposes their mentee to college and career-focused resources and opportunities, empowering the youth to consider education beyond high school as a realistic option, as well as equipping them with the tools to plan for and attend post-secondary institutions.

What is “College”?

As referred to in this Toolkit, “college” includes a range of post-secondary opportunities, including:

- Colleges and Universities (4 years or more);
- Community and Junior Colleges (2 years or less); and
- Vocational, technical, and business schools.

What is the Mentor’s Role?

College positive mentors serve to connect their mentees to the information and opportunities that make college a realistic option. Mentoring program staff should make sure to draw healthy boundaries with regard to the role of a mentor. It is not the mentor’s job to provide financial assistance or to fill out financial aid forms for their mentee, but to help them understand the options and deadlines and encourage the mentee to discuss these with their parent(s)/guardian(s). Be sure to share the “Ways to Pay for College” document in the Additional Resources section with the mentee and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to show them the available options for financial aid.

Things to keep in mind:

- Mentors should be cautious and sensitive of cultural differences regarding college attendance and be aware of alternate options (local community colleges, religious institutions, etc.).
- Many factors contribute to an individual’s life history. Take care not to judge the background, socio-economic status, aspirations, parent(s)/guardian(s), etc. of your mentee.
- Mentors working with a young person whose parent(s) did not attend college must be patient and sensitive to their needs and those of their family. Mentors must be respectful of the values of their mentee and mentee’s family while navigating the processes and institutions involved with college attendance; connecting college to job and career interests, perceiving themselves as college material; and believing college is possible.
- Mentors should encourage their mentee to do well in school, to pursue their dreams, and to attend college by responding with “yes, you can” rather than “maybe, you can” or “maybe, you can’t.”

College Positive Mentor

The role of a college positive mentor is to offer encouragement and support to promote the college-going mindset, expose their mentee to the resources and options that make college possible, and equip them with the tools and knowledge to explore and pursue higher education.