



Goal Setting

After you and your mentee have gotten to know each other, you should meet with your program coordinator to discuss developing short- and long-range goals. Goals can be changes in behavior, such as the previous example with George, or working toward something as ambitious as becoming class president.

A goal should be: **S.M.A.R.T**

- **S**pecific (You need to know what you want to do.)
- **M**easurable (You need to know when you have accomplished it.)
- **A**ttainable (When you identify goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true.)
- **R**ealistic (If it is too difficult, it will lead to frustration.)
- **T**imely (It should have a deadline so you won't put it off.)

Steps in Goal Setting

Have the mentee identify some positive things she/he would like to accomplish. This might be something like getting a driver's license, finding an after-school job, passing an English course, or attending school every day.

- 1. Select one or two goals to work on.** Help your mentee select goals that are realistic and achievable. You want your mentee to set his/her sights high but also be assured of some success.



2. Discuss with your mentee how his/her parent or guardian may feel about these goal plans. If a parent counts on your mentee for babysitting during the school day, regular school attendance may not be a goal supported by the family. If the mentee's efforts are not supported or understood by the family, achieving the goal will be more difficult.

3. Brainstorm ways to reach the goal. Brainstorming is a process that involves thinking of as many ideas

as you can for reaching a goal, even if some may seem silly or unrealistic. You and your mentee should write down all of your ideas. Later, you can help him or her select the best ones.

4. Identify small steps for reaching the goal. Most goals require more than one step to complete. Recognize the mentee's attainment of each small step to reach his or her goal.

5. Identify obstacles that might prevent completion of the goal. This will need to become part of the action plan for accomplishing the goal. For example, if a parent objects to the mentee's getting a driver's license, your mentee will have to think of ways to approach the parent to obtain permission. If no one can teach your mentee to drive and she/he does not have money for lessons, what else can be done to accomplish this step?

6. Decide on a deadline for accomplishment and reevaluation of the goal. This is an important step. If the process drags on too long, your mentee may get discouraged and quit. A deadline give him/her something to work toward. Opportunity for reevaluation gives you a chance to check his/her progress.

Encouragement from you may be all that is needed to keep your mentee on course.