

Activities Mentors Can Do with Youth with Disabilities

Once you have a mentor, sometimes it's hard to think of new activities to do with them, to keep the relationship fresh and growing. Research done by the National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth (NCLD/Youth) has laid out a list of activities for mentors and their mentees, based on the five areas of youth development/youth leadership, **learning, connecting, thriving, working, and leading**. There may be overlap, as some activities can help youth achieve goals across different areas of youth development/youth leadership.

<u>Area of Development</u>	<u>Activities</u>
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tutoring• Coaching• Recreation• Helping develop a personal development plan• Helping youth apply academic skills to community needs

- Helping youth identify and access learning and assessment accommodations
- Helping youth to identify highly qualified support staff in school and community settings
- Monitoring the youth's grades and helping the youth perform his or her own informal skills assessment
- Developing a showcase of work that highlights the youth's learning experience(s) (e.g., essays, paintings, portfolios, or algebra exams)
- Locating relevant preparation courses for GED, ACT, SAT, etc., and supporting the

	<p>youth's participation in them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping the youth learn about college and scholarship opportunities
<p>Connecting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutoring • Coaching • Problem solving • Recreation • Engaging in cultural activities that promote understanding and tolerance • Providing peer and group activities that promote service and civic engagement • Providing training in accessing available transportation, assistive technology, mental and physical health services, and benefits

	<p>planning services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending assistive technology fairs and demonstrations • Learning about personal assistance services, including attendants, readers, interpreters, and other services. • Attending job and trade fairs to begin building a network of contacts in one's career field of interest. • Volunteering with others on projects to improve the community
<p>Thriving</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing training in life skills, such as how to manage money, find transportation, shop on a budget, buy a car, and obtain

	<p>insurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting youth in the creation of a community resources map related to physical and mental health, personal physicians, insurance companies, parks, grocery stores, drug stores, etc. • Engaging in meal planning and preparation activities • Researching benefits planning information and learning about how they can help you become more self-sufficient • Trips to health centers and health fairs to learn about available resources
Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in

career exploration activities, including career interest assessments, job shadowing, job and career fairs, and workplace visits and tours

- Planning and setting career-related goals
- Finding opportunities for internships and work experiences, including summer employment, to learn and practice work skills, including soft skills
- Assisting with exposure to entrepreneurship training
- Networking with other young people with similar interests

- Practicing mock interviews
- Attending work readiness workshops
- Arranging for visits from representatives of specific fields to speak to youth about the employment opportunities and details of working in their job area.
- Helping with job searches, including preparing resumes and writing cover letters
- Visiting education or training programs
- Providing job coaching
- Participating in learning activities using computers and other current workplace technology

Leading

- Tutoring
- Coaching
- Engaging in problem solving, conflict resolution, and self-advocacy training
- Providing opportunities to practice skills in communication, negotiation, and personal presentation
- Participating in sports and recreational activities
- Voter registration
- Getting involved with civic and community organizations
- Letter writing campaigns
- Learning activities or courses about leadership principles

and styles.

- Meetings with local and state officials and legislators
- Reading books or watching videos about disability history, disability culture, and disability public policy issues as well as of their rights and responsibilities
- Researching disability organizations to promote connections with the disability community

(Adapted from Paving the Road to Work: A Guide to Career Focused Mentoring for Youth with Disabilities, NCWD/Youth, 2006, <http://www.ncwd-youth.info> .)