



**BECOME A
MENTOR
WITH BEEDIE
LUMINARIES**

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Introduction

A mentor-mentee relationship is unique. It is unlike other typical non-peer relationships, such as a coach-player, or a parent-child relationship, in that there are specific goals directly related to the development of your mentee that are not found in these other types of relationships.

In relation to Beedie Luminaries, the objective of the Mentorship Program is for the mentors to help their mentees (Luminaries) successfully navigate and finish their postsecondary education so that they become contributing members of society, and eventually, mentors to future Beedie Luminaries students.

A mentor-mentee relationship can be described as:

- **a learning partnership.** This means that you, as a mentor, and your mentee work together as a team to address goals and challenges that may arise for your mentee. You also support the learning of your mentee based on the parameters set by the mentoring program and your mentee.
- **a reciprocal, yet asymmetrical relationship.** In other words, both you as the mentor and your mentee may benefit from this partnership; however, the primary purpose of the relationship is to support your mentee in their development and in the achievement of their goals. So, it is reciprocal in the sense that you may both benefit from the relationship, but asymmetrical in that the primary focus of this relationship is on your mentee.
- **a dynamic relationship** - the meaning and impact of this relationship may change over time based upon your mentee's needs and both the mentor's and mentee's comfort level, while continuing to function within the bounds of the relationship.

The Main Goals

Broadly, there are four main goals for a mentoring relationship:

- **Preventing psychosocial difficulties or challenging behaviours.** It is hoped that the relationship will support your mentee in the face of adversity and promote resilience within them.
- **Promoting the positive development of personal competencies.** The promotion of your mentee's personal competencies is intended to increase their well-being and create the desire to be a productive and contributing member of society.
- **Facilitating community integration.** It is the hope that through fostering a sense of caring and intergenerational commitment and connection, your mentee will feel an increase in their sense of belonging and responsibility, becoming more active in their communities.
- **Conveying care to mentees.** It is hoped that through your involvement, your mentee will feel cared for and supported as they work towards attaining their goals and addressing challenges.

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Mentor's Role and Expectations

It is hoped that you can serve as a supportive figure in your mentee's life. In the context of your role as a mentor, a "supportive figure" means a few things:

- **Acceptance:** It is expected that you will be accepting of your mentee, whether this be in relation to their personality characteristics, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual identity, etc. Conveying acceptance and warmth will help your mentee feel safe in the relationship with you, knowing that they can pursue their goals, risk, fail and succeed, and your belief in their potential will be unwavering.
- **Encouragement:** Another component of being a supportive figure in your role as a mentor is encouraging your mentee. By encouraging, reassuring, and supporting your mentee, it is hoped that your relationship will continue to strengthen, and that they will feel more confident in their goals and pursuits.
- **Empowerment:** Empowering and advocating for your mentee are important aspects of the mentoring role as well. By maintaining an accepting and positive view of your mentee, a tendency to encourage and empower is likely to follow.

In your role as a mentor, it is also hoped that you will function as a **role model to your mentee**. Through observing you - in how you interact with them and the world around you - hopefully your mentee will learn how to navigate existing relationships, increase their ability to positively relate to others, balance work-or school-life demands, and establish comfort in assuming positions of greater responsibility.

Finally, it is hoped that you will work as a **collaborator** with your mentee when discussing their goals and decisions in relation to academic, professional, or personal pursuits, without taking ownership of these pursuits yourself. Although you may have special skill-sets and specific experiences that your mentee does not, it is important to focus on your mentee and their goals and perspective while still providing support, encouragement, and empowerment.

Specifically related to Beedie Luminaries, in your role as a mentor you are expected to:

- Have a regular contact with your Mentee (at least once a month)
- Provide two brief updates via email on your Mentee's progress (mid and end of school year)
- Participate in ongoing training and development
- Have a commitment of a minimum of two, ideally four years
- Participate in Beedie Luminaries activities (e.g., student events, awards dinner)
- Provide honest feedback of your experience so that Beedie Luminaries can continue to improve.

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Valued Characteristics in a Mentor

Some key characteristics that mentees have identified as important qualities in their mentors include:

- **Respect:** Mentees reported valuing feeling respected or admired by their mentors based on their abilities, achievements, or personal qualities.
- **Mutuality:** Mutuality can be described as a shared sense of purpose between two or more people; there is a feeling of unity between the members based on the pursuit of a common goal.
- **Authenticity:** Authenticity can be thought of as a sense of genuineness or "being real" with individuals. This may mean being truthful or honest in your reactions, working to be accepting of yourself and others, as well as being open and transparent about mistakes and your learning process.
- **Trust:** Mentees reported valuing being able to have a feeling of safety or belief in the reliability of their mentors.
- **Empathy:** Mentees value feeling as though their mentors are able to understand their thoughts and feelings.
- **Closeness:** Closeness can be thought of as similar to trust, in the sense of having a feeling of safety, with an added aspect of warmth between the mentor and mentee.
- **Energy:** Mentees often value a vitality and energetic nature in their mentors.
- **Positive regard:** Positive regard means that the mentor thinks of the mentee in a positive way and is transparent and honest about what they like or find admirable in their mentee.
- **Comfort with the other person:** Mentees value feeling a sense of ease with their mentors.

All Beedie Luminaries mentors will be provided with an on-boarding session and a handbook.

References:

The Cmolik Foundation Mentoring Handbook

The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring: A Multiple Perspectives Approach

The Sage Program of Applied Developmental Science: Handbook of Youth Mentoring