



Getting Started as a Take Stock in Children (TSIC) Mentor - FAQ

Role and Responsibilities

What is my role as a mentor?

As a mentor, your primary role is to build a supportive and trusting relationship with your mentee. You will share life experiences, encourage academic success, and help your student set and achieve meaningful goals.

What is the role of the parent or guardian?

Parents or guardians are to encourage their child to succeed, to help with their schoolwork when they can, and to attend meetings about school or the Take Stock in Children program. Parents or guardians are strongly encouraged to participate in Advocacy Meetings alongside the Mentor and the College & Career Coach:

- 9th–10th grade: One meeting per semester
- 11th–12th grade: One meeting per quarter
- Translators are available upon request.

These meetings count toward the required total mentor/mentee meetings for the school year and are a valuable communication tool for all participants involved in the mentee's success.

Meeting Logistics

Mentors are expected to meet with their mentee a minimum of 16 times per academic year, for a minimum of 20 minutes per session. The 16-meeting requirement is for students in the 9th thru 12th grades, with 6 additional sessions being required for the incoming 8th grade students. Four of the 6 sessions are built into the onboarding of the 8th grade students.

Approved meeting formats:

- In-person at the student's high school during lunch
- In-person at the Champions for Learning office (Mon thru Fri, 8:30 AM–5:00 PM)
- Virtual meetings via TSIC App (text or video chat)

- Zoom sessions hosted by Champions (Mon & Thurs, 4:00 PM–6:00 PM)
- School-sponsored events (with prior parental approval)

Communication Protocols:

- Do not use FaceTime, Google Duo, or other personal video platforms.
- Mentors schedule meetings directly with students.
- Maintain student confidentiality at all times.
- Do not exchange gifts with students.
- Transportation together is prohibited.

Logging Mentor Sessions

Mentors are required to log each meeting to verify the 16-meeting requirement and ensure their student remains eligible for the TSIC scholarship. The 16-meeting requirement is for students in the 9th thru 12th grades, with 6 additional sessions being required for the incoming 8th grade students. Four of the 6 sessions are built into the onboarding of the 8th grade students.

Time Commitment

Mentors should meet their student:

- 4 times per quarter (approx. once every 2–3 weeks)
- A minimum of 20 minutes per session

More frequent meetings are welcome when mutually convenient.

What if I'm only in town part of the year?

Seasonal mentors are valued! Champions will work to pair seasonal mentors with a mentee whose schedule aligns, and virtual check-ins using Champions' Zoom line and Take Stock App are encouraged during your time away.

Building a Strong Mentor-Mentee Relationship

What if my student doesn't open up right away?

This is normal. Build trust by being consistent, actively listening, and asking open-ended questions. Patience is key.

What should we talk about?

Conversations can include academics, hobbies, goals, and life skills. Champions provides online resources, including:

- Mentor Toolkit
- Year-at-a-Glance with student benchmarks
- Grade-level Hub of student activities can be used as conversation starters

Can I meet with my student during lunch?

Yes. Lunch meetings are encouraged. Purchasing lunch is optional but may help foster a more relaxed, engaging conversation. Purchasing lunch allows the mentor more time with the student.

How do I learn more about my student's background?

Explore gently through conversation. Attend school events (with parental permission) and take time to build rapport.

Expectations and Boundaries

What's expected of me?

- Be reliable and encouraging
- Support student goal setting
- Communicate concerns with a Mentor Liaison or College & Career Coach

Is academic support part of my role?

You are not expected to tutor, but you should promote good study habits and show interest in your student's academic progress.

What if I'm uncomfortable with sensitive topics?

That's okay. Use activities from the Mentor Toolkit and reach out to a Mentor Liaison or College & Career Coach for support.

Mentor Support and Resources

Is support available for new mentors?

Yes. Mentor Liaisons are available to:

- Attend your first school visit
- Provide training and ongoing support
- Connect you with other mentors

Available resources include:

- Dedicated College & Career Coach for each student
- Mentor Learning Sessions and "Coffee and Conversations"
- Online Mentor Resource: championsforlearning.org/volunteer-resources
- Year-at-a-Glance document with program milestones (shared in early August)
- Student HUB - Grade-specific materials and monthly updates (shared in early August)

Are there opportunities for continued training?

Yes. Regular training sessions and informal mentor gatherings are offered throughout the school year.

Can I earn meeting credit at events?

Yes. Participation in Champions events or workshops with your mentee counts toward your meeting session total.

Is the TSIC app useful?

Feedback has been mixed. Champions recommends prioritizing in-person meetings at the high schools or CFL offices, and Zoom options hosted by Champions' staff until the app is more reliable. The TSIC app can be used to log mentor/mentee meetings.

Other Common Questions

How are mentors matched with students?

Matches are based on shared interests, mentor availability, and school location to support regular meetings.

How do students log Bright Futures volunteer hours?

Students must submit supervisor-signed documentation of volunteer hours to their school counselor. Students can also submit their work hours, if properly verified, to their counselor for Bright Futures credit.

Are summer activities expected?

Summer participation is encouraged but optional. Virtual check-ins on Champions' Zoom line and summer service events will be available.