



SIXTEENTH EDITION | 2019-2020

YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS PROGRAM

7TH GRADE CLUB MENTORING HANDBOOK



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Fostering

Competence.

Connection.

Autonomy.

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The Young Women Leaders Program

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YWLP Calendar for Fall 2019

Fall Semester 2019		Notes
Wednesday, August 21	Middle schools: 1 st day of school city/county	
Sunday, August 25	Facilitator Retreat	
Monday, August 26	YWLP Training	
Tuesday, August 28	1 st day of UVA classes	
Wednesday, August 28 Thursday, August 29	Groups Meet at UVA during scheduled group times (no Littles)	Location decided by group
Monday, September 2	1 st day of YWLP class @ UVA	3:30PM-6:00PM
Week of September 2	YWLP Group Orientation	1st Group Meeting Wed 9/4 and Thurs 9/5
Week of September 9	Week 1 – groups	
Week of September 16	Week 2 – groups	
Week of September 23	Week 3 – groups	
Week of September 30	Week 4 – groups	
Week of October 7	Leadership Day - groups	BRAFB tour
Monday, October 7	Reading day – no class	
Week of October 14	Week 5 – groups	
Saturday, October 19	YWLP Leadership Food/Supplies Drive	10am-2pm in 1 hour shifts for each group – hours will be distributed
Week of October 21	Week 6 – groups	
Week of October 28	Week 7 – groups	
Week of November 4	Leadership Day - groups	
Week of November 11	Week 8 – groups	
Monday, November 18	Week 9 – groups	
Week of November 25	<i>No Class</i>	
Wed & Thurs, November 27 & 28	<i>No Groups</i>	Thursday, Nov. 28 – Thanksgiving
Week of December 2	Week 10 – groups	
Monday, December 2	Last YWLP Class of Fall	4:00pm-6:00pm
Friday, December 6	Last day of classes @ UVA	
Saturday, December 7	Fall Finale 12:30pm – 2:30pm	

YWLP Calendar for Spring 2020

Spring Semester 2020		Notes
Monday, January 13	Classes @UVA Begin	
Monday, January 13	1 st day of YWLP class @UVA	4:00PM-5:00PM
Wednesday, January 15 & Thursday, January 16	YWLP Spring Orientation	1st Group Meeting
Week of January 20	Week 11 – groups	
Week of January 27	Week 12 – groups	
Week of February 3	Leadership Day - groups	
Week of February 10	Week 13 – groups	
Week of February 17	Week 14 – groups	
Week of February 24	Leadership Day - groups	
Week of March 2	Week 15 – groups	
Week of March 9	Spring Recess, No Groups	
Week of March 16	Week 16 – groups	
Saturday, March 21	UVA Day 11:00am- 2:30pm	
Week of March 23	Week 17 - groups	
Week of March 30	Week 18 - groups	
Week of April 6	One on One Time	City/County Spring Break
Week of April 13	Week 19 - groups	
Monday, April 20	Week 20 – groups	Last group meetings: April 22 & 23
Monday, April 27	Last YWLP class @UVA	Party!
Tuesday, April 28	Last day of classes @UVA	



The Young Women Leaders Program

University of Virginia Women's Center and Curry School of Education

Co-founded in 1997 by Edith "Winx" Lawrence, Ph.D. and Kimberley Roberts, Ph.D., and sponsored by *the* University of Virginia Women's Center and Curry School of Education, the Young Women Leaders Program (YWLP) is an innovative mentoring program that is designed to empower middle school girls and college women to be leaders in their families, schools, and communities. Undergraduate women are recruited to be "big sisters" to the middle school girls and receive a semester of training during the first semester of mentoring and weekly peer supervision each subsequent semester they serve as a mentor. Combining the benefits of one-on-one mentoring with targeted group activities, the program follows a research-based curriculum that addresses issues facing adolescent girls. Each Big-Little pair meets two hours per week with five to nine other pairs for curriculum-based group activities. These group sessions are facilitated by an undergraduate or graduate student.

In addition to the group sessions, each pair also meets one-on-one two for a minimum of outings each semester for activities of their own choosing. Graduates of the seventh-grade program may choose to continue in YWLP during eighth grade. YWLP's year-long program allows girls to explore leadership and friendship, to recognize that they have important choices to make in their daily lives, to learn to appreciate others different from themselves, and to give back to their communities through service and leadership projects.

At UVA YWLP typically offers four seventh grade and four eighth grade school-based groups each year. Girls are referred to participate by their middle schools. And YWLP has expanded to include ten sister sites nationally and even more internationally in countries including Mozambique, Cameroon, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Nigeria. We provide consultation and support to these sister sites as well as opportunities to connect with one another across the globe. For more information about all aspects of YWLP, visit our web site: www.ywlp.virginia.edu

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YWLP's Mission

The mission of YWLP is to help adolescent girls create “a belief in self far greater than anyone’s disbelief” (August Wilson as quoted by Robinson, 1996). We do this by promoting the girls’ competence, connection to important others, and autonomy. While this is an overarching focus for the program, we also include specific activities and opportunities within the group mentoring to promote these goals. Here are some examples:

1. Competence: We get things done!

- Setting Goals
- Promoting Sparks (Topic schedule, outside time)
- Doing Service Projects (Food/Supplies Drive)

2. Connection: We care about each other!

- Developing Mindfulness (Stress reduction, Breathing)
- Practicing Appreciation (Certificate of Appreciation, Appreciation Dinner, Practicing Kindness)
- Connecting Through Teamwork (Engineering Challenges)

3. Autonomy: We think for ourselves!

- Developing Problem-Solving Skills (ABCs, Magic Three, Gossip Guard, GASP)
- Negotiating Hot Topics (Bullying, inequality, drama with friends and family, dating, body image)
- Practicing Leadership (Group leadership roles, group and one-on-one interactions)



YWLP Leadership Secrets

To help the Big and Little Sisters hold on to the leadership skills and strategies incorporated in the YWLP curriculum, we have identified nine “leadership secrets” we think are foundational to good leadership. We have organized each week’s curriculum around one of these secrets.

1. Leaders Set Goals!

“A goal without a plan is a wish.”

In YWLP, we learn to set goals in an organized and intentional way. The YWLP goal-setting process involves frequent check-ins, during which we can assess our current progress and reevaluate our goal as needed. Big and Little Sisters encourage each other to set goals in different areas of their life (i.e. school, home, sports) to help them achieve the future that they would like for themselves.

2. Leaders Appreciate Others!

“Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”— Voltaire

An important part of YWLP is learning to show others how much they mean to us. We do this in a variety of ways, including thank you notes and spoken words of appreciation. This is because leadership is strengthened when we appreciate the resources of others.

3. Leaders Are Mindful!

“If you want to conquer the anxiety of life, live in the moment, live in the breath.”— Amit Ray

Being mindful is an important part of successful problem solving and a necessary skill for effective leadership. In YWLP, we practice slowing down and using our breathing as a way to take a timeout when we feel stressed or overwhelmed.

4. Leaders Help Others!

“One woman can make a difference but together we can rock the world.” —

Anonymous

Recognizing we are part of a larger community helps us act on our empathy for others. In YWLP, the Fall Food Drive and mentoring group leadership projects are a way for Big and Little Sisters to work together to help others in the broader Charlottesville community as well as across the globe.

5. Leaders Respect Differences!

“A great relationship is about two things. First appreciating the similarities and second, respecting the differences.” — Anonymous

YWLP brings together middle school girls and college women from a variety of backgrounds. We also learn about the lives of young women leaders at our sister sites around the world. As we spend more time together, we learn that appreciating differences enriches our connection with others and understanding of ourselves.

6. Leaders Create Support Teams!

“Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back.” — Anonymous

YWLP mentoring groups are meant to be a supportive place for all group members. This is because recognizing and appreciating our support systems helps us grow as leaders. In YWLP, Big and Little Sisters can help each other identify and appreciate the support others give them. Success often requires leaning into and collaborating with our support network.

7. Leaders Keep Their Cool!

“Keep cool; Anger is not an argument.”—Daniel Webster

Middle school can be a very frustrating and confusing time. Sometimes our tempers get the best of us and we end up saying things we don't really mean or doing things that are not the best thing for us. In YWLP, we learn different strategies to help us keep our cool during these challenging moments. Being able to “keep our cool” helps us think more clearly and better recognize all of our options.

8. Leaders Respect Themselves!

“When you say yes to others, make sure you are not saying no to yourself.” —

Anonymous

An important part of being a leader is treating ourselves with respect and love. In YWLP, we practice loving ourselves and our bodies, both of which are foundational to respecting ourselves.

9. Leaders Celebrate Success!

“To be successful, the first thing to do is fall in love with your work.” —

Anonymous

In YWLP, we take time each week to recognize the hard work and success of each group member. We learn that it feels good to celebrate the successes of others, as well as our own successes. It is important to acknowledge these moments because celebrating effort fosters growth.



YWLP MENTORING COMPETENCIES

Mentoring youth can be an amazingly rewarding experience but rarely will it be without challenges. Mentoring challenges can include relational schisms, misunderstandings, unmet expectations, and/or difficulty keeping commitments, among other things. However, we believe these challenges are also an opportunity to work through issues in a way that can strengthen the mentoring relationship.

In YWLP we have identified five mentoring competencies we think contribute to mentors being able to successfully respond to challenges within the mentoring relationship in a way that promotes a stronger relationship with and positive outcomes for the youth they are mentoring. These competencies provide a map for reflecting on what might already be an area of strength for you as a mentor and what might be an area for growth.

The Five Mentoring Competencies Are:

1. Positive Attitude (Zest)

- Growth mindset
- Enthusiasm

2. Collaboration (Teamwork)

- Positive communication
- Mutuality

3. Empathy and Attunement (Heart)

- Appreciation of differences
- Mentee-centered interactions

4. Initiative and Perseverance (Grit)

- Analysis and problem solving
- Creativity and adaptability

5. Mentoring Knowledge (Brains)

- Program curriculum and expectations
- Adolescent development and best practices

Applying the Mentoring Competencies in YWLP

In the Mentoring Relationship:

1. **Positive Attitude** (*Zest*):

A Big Sister with this competency believes in the potential of all kids and plasticity of their development. She engages her mentee enthusiastically through a variety of methods, including maintaining positive affect, seeking physical proximity, engaging in conversation, sharing in her mentee's interests and activities. She is able to redirect negative interactions positively and not take them personally.

2. **Collaboration** (*Teamwork*):

A Big Sister with this competency communicates warmly and regularly with her mentee using different strategies as needed (e.g., calls, emails, visits mentee's world, connects via school contact, parent, or friend). She is an active listener, seeking to understand rather hoping to give advice. She creates safety in the relationship by being reflective and non-judgmental. She values commonalities in the relationship and looks for opportunities to strengthen her mentee's independent thinking while also conveying that she is on her mentee's team.

3. **Empathy and Attunement** (*Heart*):

A Big Sister with this competency seeks to understand and appreciate her mentee and her world and is respectful of differences (e.g., developmental, cultural, racial, social, religious). She is empathic to and patient with her mentee's concerns and challenges.

4. **Initiative and Perseverance** (*Grit*):

A Big Sister with this competency uses strong critical thinking and problem solving skills to adapt to her mentee's changing needs; She has a bias toward action and experimentation and perseveres in overcoming relationship obstacles and disruptions.

5. **Mentoring Knowledge** (*Brains*):

A Big Sister with this competency appreciates the nuances of adolescent development (physical, cognitive, emotional) and uses best mentoring practices to develop the mentoring relationship. She understands and follows program rules and expectations and seeks support when needed.

During Big Sister and Group Mentoring Meetings:

- 1. Positive Attitude (*Zest*):**

A Big Sister with this competency believes in the potential of all group members. She brings energy and enthusiasm to the planning process and group meetings. She is able to redirect negative interactions positively and not take them personally.
- 2. Collaboration (*Teamwork*):**

A Big Sister with this competency reaches out warmly and effectively with all group members. She builds on the ideas and resources of other group members to create an engaging group atmosphere. She promotes leadership development and teamwork in group.
- 3. Empathy and Attunement (*Heart*):**

A Big Sister with this competency is curious about and respectful of differences among group members and seeks to understand and appreciate each and her world. She is attuned and responsive to the needs of other group members.
- 4. Initiative and Perseverance (*Grit*):**

A Big Sister with this competency uses strong critical thinking and problem solving skills to solve problems during group planning and implementation. She has a bias toward action and experimentation.
- 5. Mentoring Knowledge (*Brains*):**

A Big Sister with this competency is knowledgeable about the YWLP mentoring curriculum and the underlying rationale. She contributes ideas and strategies for group and program improvement. She assumes a leadership role in the group.



YWLP Ethics and Confidentiality Procedures

1. All group information should be treated confidentially. You'll talk about this in your group but the bottom line is we want to create a safe space for everyone.
2. Do not discuss your Little Sister's problems publicly or with others outside of YWLP. If you need help, discuss the matter with your YWLP support team.
3. All mentee information should be treated confidentially within the group, with a few exceptions:
 - **If any UVA student suspects child abuse or neglect we are required by law to notify Child Protective Services.** Talk to YWLP Staff who will help you contact the school counselor and CPS if needed. We will then schedule a meeting with the child and the counselor to inform them of the CPS report.
 - **If a child reports something (other than child abuse or neglect) to their Big Sibling or Group Facilitator or if a UVA student witnesses a concerning interaction between two middle school students:** The person or people who witnessed the report or interaction must pass that information on to the guidance counselor at the middle school. The guidance counselor will be the one who follows up with the middle school student(s). In addition, the UVA students should inform their Women's Center supervisor (in YWLP or MLP) of the situation as well.
 - **If a child feels uncomfortable with something their Big Sibling has said or done:** If any of our middle school students ever feel uncomfortable with the words or actions of any UVA student in their group, we want to empower them to inform their middle school guidance counselors of their concerns as soon as possible. We will ask counselors to inform us of any concerns that are brought to them regarding our UVA students.

My Facilitator's contact information is:

Work Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Sarah Jenkins's contact information is:

Work phone: (434) 982-2648

Cell phone: (321) 480-4923 (for emergencies after-hours only, please)

Email: Stjenkins@viginia.edu

YWLP Middle School Contacts

Buford Middle School

434.245.2411

Counselors:

- Mr. Joshua Epps, eppsj1@charlottesvilleschools.org
- Ms. Shamika Terrel, terrels1@charlottesvilleschools.org

Burley Middle School

434.295.5101

Counselor: Ms. Leslie Fendley, lfendley@k12albemarle.org

Jouett Middle School

434.975.9320

Counselors:

- 7th grade: Ms. Erin English eenglish@k12albemarle.org & Ms. Ali Harshaw, aharshaw@k12albemarle.org
- 8th grade: Mr. Steve Hendrix, shendrix@k12albemarle.org

Sutherland Middle School

434.975.0599

Counselor: Ms. Lisa Wright, lwright@k12albemarle.org

YWLP POLICIES AND PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

During Group

1. All pairs should be within eye shot or ear shot of other group members at all times. Small groups alone must always have at least 2 Big Sisters or 2 Little Sisters at any given time.
2. All Sisters must stay in the room during group time unless they are accompanied by their Big Sister and another Big or Little Sister. This includes being excused from group to go to the restroom.
3. Little Sisters must attend school in order to come to group
 - They may not come to group if they have received an unexcused absence or suspension from school unless they have permission from school administrators.
4. It is each member's responsibility to treat the teacher's room respectfully. This includes not using the teacher's supplies (e.g., pencils, pens, stapler) unless you have received permission. It also means making sure desks are in their original arrangement, making sure the board is clean, and wiping up any spills or food crumbs.

Before and After Group

1. Facilitators and Big Sisters must arrive prior to the dismissal bell so they can greet the Littles when they arrive.
 - Big Sisters must notify YWLP Staff, their Facilitator and Little Sister as soon as they can if they will be late or absent.
 - Little Sisters must report directly to the YWLP group after the bell rings. If they need to use the restroom, they can go with their Big Sister before group begins.
2. Little Sisters must be supervised at all times.
 - Big Sisters are responsible for working with their Little's parent or guardian on transportation after group.
 - Little Sisters may only ride home:
 - With at least one other person in the car at all times, either two Little Sisters being dropped off together, or two Big sisters riding in the car together.
 - With another adult authorized by parent in writing
 - On their designated late bus
3. Little Sisters can only be taken home or to a place designated by her parent or guardian.
 - **ANY CHANGE OF PLAN IN WHERE SHE IS DROPPED OFF MUST BE APPROVED BEFOREHAND BY THE PARENT OR**

GUARDIAN IN WRITING OR VIA A PHONE CALL TO THE BIG SISTER.

- Consult with YWLP staff if you have a question or concern.
4. NEVER leave a Little Sister alone. Designate another Big or Facilitator to stay with you while you wait.
 - Stay with her while she waits for her ride.
 - If you must leave because of another obligation, take her with you and call her parents to let them know where you are.
 - Contact YWLP staff right away for guidance and support.

Emergencies Involving Health or Safety Issues

1. Call your Little's parents/guardians immediately
 - You should already know the parents/guardians' wishes related to emergency medical treatment or transportation.
 - Follow the advice of the EMT if you are unable to reach the parent.
 - Call your Facilitator and the YWLP Staff immediately.
2. If you observe or suspect that your Little is engaging in behavior that is unsafe for her or others during outside time, contact the middle school counselor as soon as you can. Follow up with YWLP staff as well.
3. If you're not sure, call us! We are here to support you but we can't if you don't call us.



Mindfulness Training in YWLP

Mindfulness is a deceptively simple way to slow ourselves down and pay attention to our experiences without judgement or criticism. In YWLP we encourage Big and Little Sisters to practice mindfulness as a strategy for reducing stress and emotional reactivity as well as enhancing our appreciation for self and others. Here are some of the ways we have incorporated mindfulness practice into the program:

Practicing Mindfulness in YWLP

- Mindfulness is *present-moment, nonjudgmental awareness*
 - While most of what we achieve is by *doing*, mindfulness is about *not doing*.
 - Mindfulness is about observing. It allows us to see our thoughts and emotions for what they are, just thoughts we are having at the moment and emotions we are experiencing.
- There is no right or wrong way to practice mindfulness

Mindfulness Goals in YWLP:

1. Improve our ability to be present and appreciative
 - a. Appreciating self and others (warmth)
 - b. Attentive and empathic listening
 - c. Solving problems mindfully
 - d. Engaging in difficult conversations
2. Improve our ability to manage challenges
 - a. Physical symptoms (feeling stressed, overwhelmed, exhausted)
 - b. Emotional regulation (being emotionally reactive, judgmental)

Mindfulness Skills in YWLP:

1. Calming - Taking three deep breaths
 - a. Centering and grounding ourselves
2. Focusing - Using focused attention
 - a. Being present
 - b. Active listening (active silence)
 - c. Showing interest

- d. Expressing care
- 3. Accepting - Noticing without judgement
 - a. Accepting with appreciation
 - b. Visualizing letting go
- 4. Relaxing - Progressively relaxing muscles
 - a. Body scan
 - b. Sleep aides

Mindfulness Activities in YWLP Curriculum:

- 1. Active listening (active silence) practice
 - a. Whenever you're with each other!
- 2. Deep breathing practice
 - a. Start of class
 - b. Start of group check in
- 3. Appreciation practice
 - a. Sister Time (Expressing care)
 - b. Certificate of Appreciation
 - c. Practicing Kindness
- 4. Noticing without judgment practice
 - a. Visualizing letting go
 - b. Problem Solving (ABCs, GASP, Gossip Guard)
- 5. Muscle relaxation practice
 - a. Stress Reduction Stations



Tips for YWLP Big Sisters

We are delighted that you have been selected to be part of YWLP this year! We know from past research that the program's success depends on the participants' enthusiasm and commitment. You were selected because staff felt you would excel in these. We hope you have a wonderful experience. Here are some tips on being a Big Sister offered by former YWLP Big Sisters.

General Reminders:

- **YWLP Expectations:** Be clear about the program's expectations regarding the amount of dedication and time required to be an effective Big Sister in YWLP. In addition to transportation and homework time, as part of being in YWLP, you are committing to approximately five hours a week for a year (i.e., Class and Big Sister Meeting [2.5 hr/wk]), Mentoring Group at the middle school [2.25 hr/wk], and other events (Service Drive, Fall Finale, UVA Day). We know we are asking a lot from you but we also know that giving this much is what will make a difference for your Little Sister. You need to bring your "A" game each week to the group, your Little Sister, and the Big Sister meeting. Talk to your Facilitator or a Program Coordinator ASAP if you think you'll have conflicts with the YWLP expectations.
- **Middle School Code:** You are about to re-enter the world of middle school and its rules. Remember to dress and speak in a manner appropriate both for dealing with middle school girls and for being present in a middle school. Dress neatly and don't wear revealing clothing! (*What middle school administrators think is revealing is very different from what college students think is revealing!*) Address teachers and administrators by their formal name. Review the appropriateness of what is posted to your social media. Little Sister's parents are known to go on these sites to check you out. And when you are with your Little Sister don't discuss college social life events and issues that are not middle-school appropriate!
- **Showcasing College:** One of the goals of YWLP is to introduce middle school girls to the excitement and possibilities of college. Please bring

your Little Sister to campus to study with you, see an event, or just hang out. And remember not to spend your High/Low time in group complaining about all the class work you have to do; it makes college seem overwhelming to them!

- **Look for Strengths:** YWLP is committed to building girls and women's sense of themselves as competent, connected, and autonomous. In line with the positive youth development field, we believe youth are not problems to be solved but assets to be developed. The focus should always be on discovering and supporting the development of each other's assets and strengths.

Building a Relationship with Your Little Sister

- **Take It Slow:** All good relationships need time to grow and develop and one between a college woman and a middle school girl is no exception. Even if you hit it off with each other right away, develop your relationship slowly and steadily. It is okay to let your Little Sister know there are limits to how often you can respond to a call or text from her. On the other hand, a Little Sister may act disengaged or uninterested in group or one-on-one time for many reasons. She may be anxious to impress you or wary of entering a new relationship. In some cases, the girls simply may not have strong social skills and do not know how to interact well with others. Focus on being consistent and dependable and don't take it personally if it takes her several months to warm up to and trust you.
- **It's Not About Money:** YWLP discourages the Big Sisters from spending money on their Little Sisters during outside time, especially at the beginning of the relationship. Paying for her ice cream may be okay later on but taking her out to dinner is too much initially. You also can't expect that her family will be able to give her money for activities so try to find things to do together that are free and fun.
- **Two Ears, One Mouth:** Listening to another is by far the most important ingredient in relationship development. Resist giving your Little Sister advice about things even when she asks and, instead, draw out her opinions about how things should go. Try asking "North Star" questions, that is, creative questions that help her share her thinking. Instead of, "Why don't you like school?" ask "If you were the principal for a day, what would be the two biggest changes you'd make?" Instead of, "What do you like to do in your free time?" ask, "If Oprah asked you to come on her show and talk about issues facing adolescent girls today, what are three issues that you'd talk about?"

Bringing Out the Best in Your Group

- **Know the Curriculum:** The success of your group is dependent on all the Big Sisters understanding the purpose of the various activities in the curriculum and helping to adapt these activities to best meet the needs of the group. Before the first group session it is imperative that you look over the entire curriculum so you not only know what you'll be doing the first day but also have an idea of what issues you'll be covering over the course of the year. Your attitude about the curriculum can set the tone for the group so use a tone that is positive and enthusiastic.
- **Adapting the Curriculum to Fit the Group Needs:** Every YWLP group is different so it is vitally important that the Bigs and Facilitators think about how to make it work each week for their group. For the group to work you must be responsive to the needs of the Littles each week. This may involve changing the order of activities one day or moving an activity to another day in order to have time to continue an important discussion initiated by a Little. Not only do you need to know the curriculum in order to share it with them with energy and excitement but you also need to know when it needs changing to better capture your Littles' sparks.
- **Create Sacred Time:** The group meetings should be treated as sacred time: cell phones off, "baggage at the door," staying present and available. The Big Sisters set an example for the Little Sisters about respecting the group and each other; if you aren't attentive and respectful, they won't be.
- **Become a Support Team:** One of the best things about YWLP is the opportunity to be involved with a fabulous group of women and girls. At times you will need to lean on each other to master the inevitable hurdles in mentoring. Help each other out with transportation or relationship difficulties. Take turns leading a group activity or discussion. The more you ask for and give each other support, the stronger your group will become.
- **Respect Differences:** YWLP is committed to celebrating diversity. It is important to make room for the expression of all group members' opinions, even those with whom you don't agree. Rather than trying to teach middle school girls to have the "right" answers, we are focused on providing them lots of opportunities to develop competent and autonomous thinking. To do this, Big Sisters must be genuinely curious about the reasons behind the Littles' sometimes "unique" ideas.
- **Easy as PIE:** Use **PIE** as a guiding philosophy for interactions in group. All interactions should be **Positive, Inclusive, and Empowering for everyone.**

Building a Relationship with Parents/Guardians

- **Learn From Them:** Parents/guardians know their daughters better than we do. They are lending them to us and it is important that we are grateful! Check-in (call or in-person) with your Little Sisters' parents/guardians **often!** Chat with them if they come to pick up Little Sisters or when you drop her off. These informal opportunities are really when connections are made.
- **Be Respectful:** Parents tend to plan AT LEAST a week in advance so consider that when talking to parents about upcoming events! Clarify transportation needs. Show appreciation for the parents/guardians and their time! And, of course, address them as "Mr." and "Ms." unless they ask you to do otherwise.
- **Share the Good Stuff:** All parents like to hear good things about their children. Let them know often what you like about their daughter!

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7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

YWLP Orientation: We Are Leaders!

Overview:

- ❖ Generate a sense of fun, excitement, and enthusiasm surrounding YWLP
- ❖ Help moderate Little Sisters' expectations of YWLP

Session Checklist:

- Welcome & Intro:** Greet Littles & Introduce YWLP (10 minutes)
- Energizer:** Relay Races (10 minutes)
- Focus One: Girls are Powerful**
 - Activity:** What Needs Changing? (20 minute)
 - Activity:** Who We Are & My Study Habits (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** Gumming up the Works (15 minutes)
- Sister Time:** Starts next week
- Focus Two: Leadership**
 - Activity:** Leadership Secrets and Goals (20 minutes)
 - Activity:** Goal Tracking (20 minutes)
- Closing Activity** (10 minutes)

Needed Supplies: Always check supplies and website links BEFORE group meeting and pick up additional supplies from Women's Center if necessary.

___ Nametags

___ Pencils/Pens ___ Colored Sharpies or Markers

___ Supplies for Energizer

___ Small Post-it Note Pads ___ Large Post-it Note Pad

___ Ask Staff for WiFi password for your school

___ Computer(s) speakers and projector (some classrooms have no computer and projector in front so you may need several group members to bring their laptops and break into smaller groups to watch the videos)

___ Download (or stream) videos and any other materials needed for activities

___ Packs of gum (4) ___ Pair of new garden gloves (2)

___ Goal Tracking Worksheets (in expanding file folder)

___ My Study Habits Worksheets (in expanding file folder)

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

YWLP Orientation: We Are Leaders!

Welcome and Intro (10 minutes)

As Little Sisters enter the room, greet them and have everyone fill out nametags. The goal is to briefly welcome them to YWLP and then get started quickly doing something active! Things to cover are:

- Your name and role
- Sharing YWLP 's mission (briefly). Use laminated mission handout in expanding file folder if it helps.
- The Who, What, When & How of YWLP
 - Who the Littles are and how they were selected
 - Little are selected or invited to apply to YWLP by their school counselors. They are identified by counselors because of their leadership potential. Littles should be proud to be in YWLP!
 - Who the Bigs are and how they were selected
 - Talk to the little sisters about why you decided to apply to the program and what it means to you.
 - What the group will be doing during group meetings
 - (Look ahead in the handbook before the meeting to get a sense of some of the topics you'll be discussing later on!)

Energizer (10 minutes)

Relay Races: The goal of today's energizer is to get people moving and laughing while they are beginning to learn each other's names.

- Divide the group into two or three teams (perhaps one time mixed Bigs and Littles, another time Littles v. Bigs). Give them a minute to learn the names of their teammates. Give each team a ball and ask them to line up in some way (e.g., tallest to shortest, oldest to youngest, alphabetically by first name). The goal of the race is to pass the ball down the line and back over their heads as fast as they can without dropping the ball.
- Next have them do it while saying the name of the person they are passing it to, passing from right hand to right hand, etc.
- Relays also can be done using high fives, high fives and foot stomps or other actions. This is a chance to be creative!

Focus One: Girls are Powerful

Introduce the idea that girls are amazing – smart, caring and complicated. They aren't little kids anymore, and while they aren't adults yet, they often have to deal with serious problems and challenges in their lives. Share with them that in YWLP they're going to practice strategies for handling these challenges (e.g., fights with a parent, drama with friends, unfair teachers) by turning them into leadership opportunities (e.g., speaking up in a calm and confident way, problem solving effectively).

What Needs Changing? (20 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to help the group begin to brainstorm what important issues facing teenage girls today they might want to focus on in YWLP this year.

- Show a video that will help engage your Littles in the conversation. Find a video online that you like about girl power. One suggestion is the video titled “Always #LikeAGirl – Unstoppable” or another of the #LikeAGirl video series
 - <https://youtu.be/VhB3I1gCz2E>
- Pass out pens and small sticky notes (at least 3 sticky notes to each person) and ask them to write at least 3 answers to these questions:
 - “What are the three biggest challenges/issues teenage girls have to deal with today?” In other words “What needs changing?” (e.g., drama with friends, body image concerns, bullying, romantic decisions).
- Place sheets of large Post-it Notes on the walls, and once everyone has written down their ideas ask them to go around and try to clump their ideas into categories (e.g., drama with friends, body image concerns, bullying, romantic decisions).
- Ask everyone to step back and look at the themes or categories they came up with. Anything missing? Invite the Littles to expand or clarify the themes so you are clear about them.
- Once this is completed, take a picture of each large Post-it Note so that Bigs can use these as a guide to prepare a Topic Schedule for the semester to present in the next group meeting.

Who Are We? (15 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to continue to help the group learn each other's names.

- Get into a circle of alternating Bigs and Littles and ask everyone to think about an adjective to describe themselves. The adjective should start with the same letter as their first name. For example, “Delightful Destiny,” or “Powerful Paula,” or “Amazing Amanda.”
- Have each person go around and announce their new name.

- Then have each person introduce themselves, and then the person who went before them.
- After several rounds the Facilitator should try to say everyone's name!
- At the end have each write this name on a nametag and affix them to the top of the group's bin for decoration.

Gumming Up The Works (15 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to have fun, and cheer each other on.

- Divide the group into two teams and give each team a pair of new garden gloves and two packs of gum (5 pieces per pack).
- On go, the first person in each team is to put on the garden gloves, open the package of gum, pull out a piece, unwrap it, chew it, and then pass the gloves and pack of gum to the next person. The first team to complete the task wins.

Focus Two: Leadership

The goal of the YWLP leadership activities is to introduce how YWLP girls and women can grow, demonstrate, and share their leadership skills over the course of this year. This focus introduces the idea of the YWLP Leadership Secrets and how Bigs and Littles can use this program to grow as leaders by setting goals.

Leaders and Goals (20 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to begin introducing how Little's can use YWLP to become leaders in different areas of their life this year by setting goals. We call them SMART goals!

- Gather the group together and explain that they will be learning different ways to grow as leaders this year by learning different leadership skills, or "Leadership Secrets." Explain that one way we can grow as Leaders is by setting goals.
- Ask a big to share an example of a way that they have been using YWLP to grow as a leader this year by sharing one of their goals and how it has been going. Be sure the big shares some examples of how they are doing well as challenges they are still facing! We want Littles to know that goal setting is not a perfect.
- Explain that later on Littles will be learning to set their own goals! First, they will fill out the My Study Habits Survey – this may help them with some ideas when it is time to set goals later on! The first goal littles set this year can be a relatively small goal (doing well on a test, finishing her homework this weekend, being nice to her sister for a week, etc.) to get

her used to the practice of setting goals and feel the success of achieving goals. There will be plenty of time later on to set bigger goals.

- Then, have pairs find a space in the room to fill out the My Study Habits Survey together. After Littles fill out the survey they should spend some time talking through it with their Bigs.

Goal Tracking (20 minutes)

After pairs have finished the survey bring the group back together. Explain that everyone will be tracking goals together throughout the year and that we are going to spend some time creating goal-tracking worksheets.

- To do that, have each pair choose from among the different goal tracking worksheet designs and find a space to decorate them together as a pair. Remember, Bigs should be decorating their own worksheets too. Play some (appropriate) music while girls color!
- After you've finished, take some time to admire everyone's work.

Closing Activity (10 minutes)

Plan a quick closing activity that's fun and leaves everyone excited and enthusiastic! Some ideas include:

- A fun dance move that is unique to your group.
- Everyone goes around and says what they are most excited for/liked about today's meeting.
- A cinnamon hug: hold hands and wrap up in a spiral and everyone gives a big squeeze at the end.

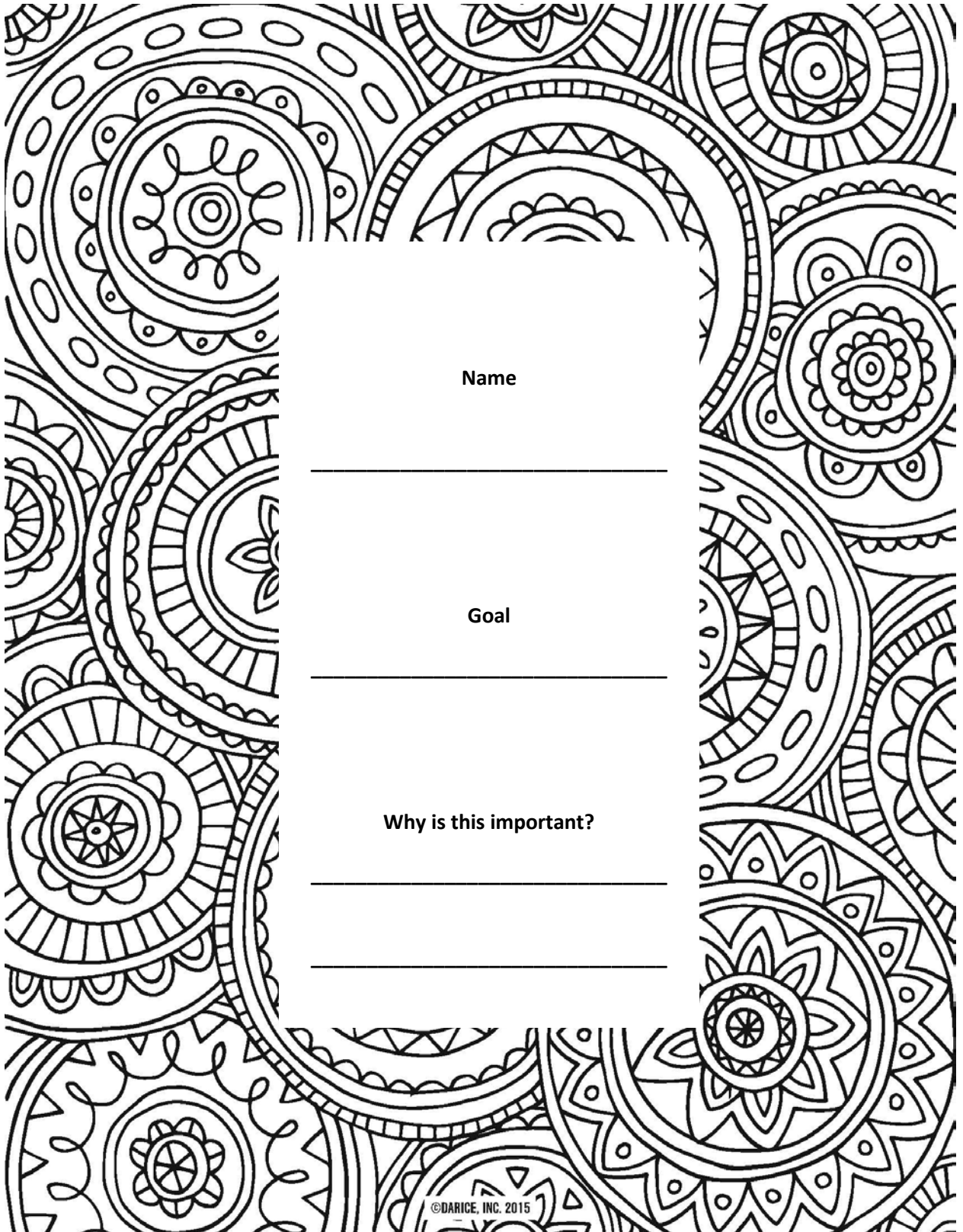
My Study Habits

1. What were your final grades last year?
 - a. Math
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say
 - b. Science
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say
 - c. Social Studies/ History
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say
 - d. English
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say
2. What grades would you like to have this year?
 - a. Math
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say

- b. Science
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say

 - c. Social Studies/ History
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say

 - d. English
 - a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
 - e) F
 - f) Don't remember/ Prefer not to say
2. How often do you study each week?
- a. Every day
 - b. 3-4 days per week
 - c. 1-2 days per week
 - d. I do not study
3. When you study, how much time do you spend on each subject?
- a. More than 1 hour
 - b. 30-60 minutes
 - c. 15-30 minutes
 - d. 10 minutes or less
4. On a scale of 1-10 how satisfied are you with your grades from last year?
5. On a scale of 1-10 how important is it to you that you get good grades?



Name

Goal

Why is this important?

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7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 1: Getting to Know Each Other

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Authentic relationships take time, commitment and collaboration, the mission of YWLP.
- ❖ **Introduce Sparks**
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Set Goals!

Session Checklist:

- Greeting & Create Nametags** (5 minutes)
- Energizer: Who's My Sister?** (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In: High/Lows** (15 minutes)
- Focus One: What is YWLP**
 - Activity: Our Goal** (15 minutes)
 - Activity: Group Guidelines** (15 minutes)
- Focus Two: Leaders Set Goals**
 - Activity: Setting Group Topics** (10 minutes)
 - Sparks** (20 minutes)
- Sister Time: Our Sparks** (20 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (10 minutes)

Needed Supplies: Always check supplies and website links BEFORE group meeting and pick up additional supplies from Women's Center if necessary.

___ Nametags

___ Pencils/Pens ___ Sharpies or Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad

___ Paper Bags

___ YWLP Gift Bags for Parents— Fill out the magnets and put in gift bag. Each Big must hand the gift bag DIRECTLY to your Little's parent. Do not give the gift bag to the Little to pass along.

In Expanding File Folder in Group Bin:

___ Confidentiality and Commitment Contract (1 per pair- Bigs & Littles sign)

___ Our Sparks (1 per pair)

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 1: Getting to Know Each Other

Greet everyone at the door and ask each person to make a nametag.

Energizer (10 minutes)

Who's My Sister?: Before the first group, Big Sisters will be given a bit of information about their Little Sister and may begin to see common interests between her and her Little Sister. Big Sisters should make a token for herself and her Little Sister and write a name on each (two puzzle pieces, two plastic animals, two candy bars but each set should be unique). Tokens could reflect an interest you and your Little have in common, Leadership Roles.

- At the beginning of group, the Big Sisters should head into the classroom with their token in hand and give the other token to the Facilitator(s).
- The Facilitator(s) will meet the group outside the classroom, introduce themselves, and hand the tokens to each Little Sister.
- The Little Sisters will then enter the room and find their Big Sister with the matching token and begin to get to know each other!

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **High/Low:** Introduce the High/Low Check-ins. This is a time for people to share something personal. Go around the circle and have each girl share a high and a low from her previous week. In order to have time for everyone to share, each person should only talk for 3-4 breaths (about 1 minute) although you'll want to follow up when someone shares something emotional. Start with a Big so the Littles have an idea what sharing in the group might look like.

Focus One: What Is YWLP?

This focus is on helping the group learn YWLP's mission and get to know one another better.

Our Goal (15 minutes)

The next activity will introduce the goal of YWLP while also building group teamwork.

- Share that the mission or goal of YWLP is to support Bigs and Littles being leaders who feel competent, connected, and autonomous. As you talk about each briefly and what they mean have a Big write each on a

brown grocery bag so you have a total of two bags for each mission slogan.

- **Competence:** We get things done!
- **Connection:** We care about each other!
- **Autonomy:** We think for ourselves!
- Spread the bags around the room and share that the group will play “Musical Paper Bags!” The challenge is to competently get ALL members balanced on the paper bags in three seconds after the music stops!
- When the music starts everyone should walk or dance around. When the music stops each person has three seconds (count 3-2-1 slowly) to have both feet on a paper bag. By 1 they must have everyone on a bag. Each time start the music and remove one or two bags. Continue until only one Competence bag is left. Shout out encouragement when they use competence, connection or autonomy to be successful and get everyone balanced on a bag.
- Hint: If a Little on her own doesn’t suggest ripping a bag to make it bigger ask all if they can think of a way to increase the space on the bags or spread out the people and the bags (e.g., ripping the bag into pieces).
- At the end ask for a volunteer to shout out the three YWLP missions and what they mean!

YWLP Group Guidelines (15 minutes)

Help the group develop group guidelines interactively. Two areas you want to be sure to include are the 3Rs and confidentiality.

- **3Rs:** Ask the group to sit in a circle and brainstorm group guideline that will help make the group a safe and fun place to come each week. Emphasize that the group is theirs and they should say what they need in order to be able to share as much as possible with each other. Start with ideas from the Littles. As you write the suggestions on a large Post-it Note try to organize them into the 3Rs:
 - **Respect Yourself:** Could include respectfully sharing what's on your mind, only sharing what you feel comfortable sharing, using I-Messages
(I feel _____ when you _____ because _____).
 - **Respect Others:** Could include respecting differences, listening to learn, talking one at a time, and assuming good intentions from others.
 - **Respect the Group:** Could include what's said in-group stays in-group, coming to group each week and on time. Should also include turning cell phones off and putting them in a central location

- away from the group meeting.
- Have them all sign the Post-it Note as an endorsement of these guidelines for your group.
- **Confidentiality and Commitment Contract:** Read this out loud to the group & discuss as a group and sign as a pair.
 - Limits of confidentiality: *“The one exception to our group confidentiality is that if I learn that one of you is either in danger or a danger to someone else, it’s my job to make sure you are safe. If I feel afraid for you, I’ll talk to you and help you talk to someone who could help with the situation.”*

Focus Two: Leaders Set Goals

The second part of group will focus on forming the group’s agenda and setting goals.

Setting Group Topics (10 minutes)

This activity introduces goal setting as an YWLP leadership tool and the Leadership Secret Leaders Set Goals and its connection to YWLP’s mission slogan *Competence: We get things done!*

- Share that one of the ways to develop as a leader is to set goals and work to accomplish them. Share this quote: *“A goal without a plan is just a wish!”*
- Display your group’s Topic Schedule (written on a large Post-It Note) and share how it is based on the process the group used last week to set the goals for the group this semester. Are there any changes they want to make to the topics they came up with? For the YWLP curriculum to be meaningful for the Littles it must be youth centric. It is critical that their voice and ideas are always at the center: *“Nothing about us without us”* is a useful guide. This is an opportunity to solidify their engagement in and leadership of these topics.
- Pass out markers and invite pairs to pick at least one week that they feel passionate about, that they think matches one of the sparks they identified for themselves, and add their name for that topic. This is their opportunity to be a leader for this topic. (More than one pair can sign up for a topic).
 - Being a leader for a topic can be reading the prompts for activities (e.g., Step Into the Circle questions), passing out materials, leading the discussion.

- **Facilitators:** Transfer the information to the *Weekly Topic Schedule for Our Group* sheet and keep as a reference for which pair to invite to lead each week.

Sparks (20 minutes)

After all pairs have connected bring them together in a circle and briefly introduce the concept of “sparks” (Benson, 2011) and how to identify your own and others.

- Almost all teens have something they are passionate about, that they love to do, and that they are good at. These sparks can change over time or stay the same. A spark can be:
 - Something you’re good at that gives you joy and energy (e.g., playing basketball, drawing, writing, singing, reading good books).
 - Something you care deeply about (e.g., the environment, animal rights, helping others, little kids, standing up for yourself).
 - A quality about you that is special (e.g., you are caring, you’re a good friend, you work hard, you’re a good problem solver).
- Share the names of celebrities the group will know and ask them what their sparks might be (e.g., Beyonce – her music, Michelle Obama- healthy eating/exercise, Taylor Swift- music management). During Sister Time they’ll identify what their possible sparks might be as well as decide on what YWLP leadership role they want.
- Explain to Littles that last week we asked them to fill out worksheet about their academics, and this week we want them to fill out something to learn about their sparks. Share that both of these worksheets can help them to know what kind of SMART goals they will want to focus on later on.
- Pass out the *Our Sparks* and the *YWLP Leadership Roles* sheet to the Bigs and Littles to complete during Sister Time.

Sister Time (20 minutes)

- ✓ Ask pairs to spread out and find a space in the room to talk about their sparks and complete the *Our Sparks* sheet. This is a chance to get to know each other better by identifying something they’re good at, their sparks. They will also brainstorm how they might nourish their sparks during their outside time. Knowing about and nourishing their sparks is one way girls and women can develop into strong and effective leaders.
 - Hint: Sometimes it can be hard for Littles to identify their sparks initially. It can help to ask what her mother, father, favorite teacher, coach, etc. would say she’s good at, is special about her, she cares about.
 - What you could say to your Little: “Lots of leaders get their start by doing something that they really enjoy doing and that they are good

at. For example, I really enjoy singing, so I joined a singing group at school! After singing for a long time, I am now the Vice President of my a cappella club. What are some things that you really love to do?”

- Add if necessary: “I know sometimes it can be hard to think of what you are good at and love to do. What would your mother/father/favorite teacher/coach/best friend say that you are good at/care about/etc.?”
- ✓ Facilitators should use this time to take pictures of each of the pairs talking together.
- ✓ At the end collect the *Our Sparks* sheet to keep in a folder in the group’s bin because the group will talk more about sparks and leadership roles over the next weeks.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

Introduce the idea of ending the group each week with a closing ritual that connects the group members to each other. Next week the group will decide how they would like to provide closure for the meetings each week. It is a good idea to do something fun and maybe even a little quirky that officially ends the meeting. Maintaining an official ending to the mentoring group meeting will encourage people to stay until the final ritual and discourage people from trickling out of the gathering and disturbing the flow and dynamic of the group.

Ideas:

1. “Secret Circle” - Stand in a circle alternating Bigs and Littles. One person starts by hooking pinkies with both of the people next to her, saying the Leadership Secret. Those people hook pinkies with the person next to them, passing on the Leadership Secret until everyone gets connected!
2. “Secret Circle Stomp” - Form a circle and jump in at the same time without any kind of verbal indicator of when to do it. Then one group member instructs the group, “stomp once...stomp twice” and follow her directions. Then do a weird dance move. Then cross arms and say the leadership secret out loud as you twist outwards, to symbolize taking the leadership secret out of group and into the rest of our week.
3. “Share the Love” - The Bigs and Littles form a circle and hold hands and swing them in and out saying YWLP! Then Bigs and Littles cross arms and pass a kiss one way then back around and then turn out.

4. “Kisses” - Bigs and Littles form a circle and hold hands and shout YWLP! Then Bigs and Littles blow kisses toward each other in the circle.

5. “Circle Chant” - Circle up, do a chant, and twist out of the circle.

6. “Peace and Love” - After the group forms a circle, Bigs say "peace," then Littles say "love," and finally we all say "YWLP!"

7. “Leadership Secrets” - Have everyone stand in a circle. Have one Sister put her hand in the middle and then ripple around the circle, piling hands on top of each other, saying the meeting’s Leadership Secret (or some variation of it) as hands are placed on the pile. Create a different way to get the Sisters to physically connect and to state or say the Leadership Secret.

8. “Dance Compilation!” - Group will start off the first closing ritual with one dance of their choice (ex: Gangnam Style, The Wobble, etc.). Each week a different dance will be added to the previous week’s dance. At the end of the year you will have a compilation of many dances! *You will need to shorten each type of dance each week so that it can be completed within 5 minutes!



Our Sparks

Almost all teens have something they are passionate about, that they love to do, and/or that they are good at. Our sparks can change over time or stay the same. In YWLP we want to identify each person's sparks and find ways to nourish them.

A spark can be:

- Something you're good at that gives you joy and energy (e.g., playing basketball, drawing, writing, singing).
- Something you care deeply about (e.g., the environment, animal rights, helping others).
- A quality about you that is special (e.g., you're a caring person, you're a good friend, you like to try new things).

Big Sister's Name: _____

My sparks are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Little Sister's Name: _____

My sparks are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Things that are free or low cost that we can do during our Outside Time to nourish our sparks are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Confidentiality and Commitment Contract

As a participant in the Young Women Leaders Program, personal experiences, thoughts, and feelings will be discussed in the group by everyone. Hearing this personal information is a privilege and it is important that everyone in the group is respectful of this privilege.

___ I agree to keep what I hear in group confidential and will not share this personal information with anyone not in YWLP.

___ I understand I may want to talk about group information outside of group time with other YWLP members. I promise to always be respectful in my comments and that confidentiality will not be violated.

___ I understand there is one limit to confidentiality: The one exception to our group confidentiality is that if a Facilitator or Big Sister learns that a Little Sister is either in danger or a danger to someone else, she will make sure the Little Sister stays safe. She will talk to the Little Sister about the situation, talk to YWLP staff and middle school counselor for advice, and help the Little Sister talk to someone who could help with the situation.

___ I promise to attend every group meeting and work hard to make our group the best YWLP group ever!

Sign (Little Sister) Date

Sign (Big Sister) Date



Weekly Topic Schedule for Our Group

Challenges/Issues We Identified	When We'll Focus on This	How is This Related to Our Sparks?
	Week 1	
	Week 2	
	Week 3	
	Week 4	
	Week 5	
	Week 6	
	Week 7	
	Week 8	
	Week 9	
	Week 10	
	Leadership Day 1 2	

Topics We'll Cover Next Semester:

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 2: Appreciating Others

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Leadership is strengthened when you appreciate the resources of others.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Appreciate Others!

Session Checklist:

- Energizer:** Community Web or Same or Different (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Lows (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Appreciating Others**
 - Activity:** Certificates of Appreciation (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** Appreciation Dinner Planning (15 minutes)
- Sister Time:** Decorating Folders (15 minutes)
- Focus Two: Goal Setting**
 - Activity:** SMART Goals and Leadership (25 minutes)
 - Activity:** Sparks and SMART Goals (15 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (10 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Ball of yarn (for Community Web Energizer)
- ___ List of Leadership Roles for group
- ___ Pencils/Pens ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad
- ___ Completed YWLP Goal Setting Guide from Week One
- ___ YWLP SMART Goal Setting Guide (for new goals)
- ___ White folders for littles to decorate

In Expanding File Folder in Bin (check day BEFORE group – pick up additional copies from Women’s Center if necessary):

- ___ Certificates of Appreciation (3 per pair) ___ Envelopes
- ___ Appreciation Dinner Invitations to include with Appreciation Certificates (1 for the Little’s invited guest)

Bigs: Use the group Visa gift card to purchase any food and supplies needed for the appreciation dinner.

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 2: Appreciating Others

Energizer (10 minutes)

Select either “Community Web” or “Same or Different.”

Community Web: The group stands in a tight circle, with one person holding the end of a ball of yarn. The first person says her name and a fact about herself (e.g., I was born in Virginia; I have a younger brother). The other people in the group with that fact in common say “me too” while holding up two fingers. The yarn is then tossed to one of the Sisters holding up two fingers. The Sister who was just tossed the yarn states her name and a fact about herself. This process is repeated until everyone is connected. This is a great time to take a picture of the whole group at the beginning of the year. At the end of the activity, can anyone say everyone’s name?

Same or Different: The goal of this activity is to help pairs connect and explore a bit more how they are both similar to and different from each other. Pairs sit together but spread out from other pairs and the Facilitator calls out a category (e.g., food, clothing, music) and either “same” or “different.” Pairs raise their hands when they have come up with three things in the category for which they are similar (e.g., for food, both like burgers, fries, and milk) or different (e.g., for food, don’t agree about yogurt, liver, spinach). The first pair to raise their hands chooses the next category and the Facilitator calls out “same” or “different.” End the activity by brainstorming what they learned about each other. Are they more alike than they thought? Are they more different than they thought?

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **High/Low:** Introduce the High/Low Check-ins. This is a time for people to share something personal. Go around the circle and have each girl share a high and a low from her previous week. In order to have time for everyone to share, each person should only talk for 3-4 breaths (about 1 minute) although you’ll want to follow up when someone shares something emotional. Start with a Big so the Littles have an idea what sharing in the group might look like.

Focus One: Appreciating Others

These activities introduce the Leadership Secret Leaders Appreciate Others and support the development of YWLP’s mission slogan Connection: *We care about others*. The goal is to help group members understand the power of appreciation.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles during Orientation and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

Certificate of Appreciation (15 minutes)

Display the second Leadership Secret Leaders Appreciate Others and connect it with the YWLP mission slogan Connection: *We care about others.*

- Write the following on the board or a large Post-It-Note: *“Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back.”*
- Ask pairs to find a place in the room to each talk about a woman in their life who “has had her back,” who has been a leader to her, who is a model of the kind of woman she would like to become and why.
- After sharing about this woman with each other, each Big and Little will complete a *Certificate of Appreciation* for this woman. We will mail it to her!
 - It is important for Bigs to select a woman and complete the *Certificate of Appreciation* to model for your Little how to do this.
- Address the envelope using the instructions at the end of this week. If a Little is not sure of the address make a plan for helping her find it or a plan for helping her deliver it by hand. Make sure Little’s also tell their guests in person about the dinner.
- **Facilitators:** Bring the addressed envelopes to the Women’s Center the next day so they can be mailed well before the dinner.

Appreciation Dinner Planning (15 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to practice goal setting and experience the power of appreciating another.

- **Introduce the Appreciation Dinner:** This is a YWLP tradition during which each Little can be a leader in appreciating and honoring the woman leader she has identified by inviting her to a dinner the group makes together. On a large Post-it Note, share when the dinner will be and where and have the Littles write this on the *YWLP Appreciation Dinner Invitation*. Place this in the envelope with the *Certificate of Appreciation* to mail to the Little’s honored guest.
- **Goal Setting:** Put up a large Post-it-Note with the steps for setting a SMART goal already written on it and invite the group to identify their goals for the dinner (e.g., Each Little has a special woman come; The food is good; The decorations are pretty).
 - **Specific:** Goals are clear and detailed.

- **Measurable:** You can measure progress.
- **Attainable:** The goal includes how it can be accomplished.
- **Realistic:** The goal is practical.
- **Timely:** It includes a deadline for achieving the goal
- Once the group has established their SMART goals, invite them to identify the steps they will need to take and the jobs or roles pairs will need to do to ensure the dinner goes well. Possible jobs might include: planning the shopping list, preparing the food, making decorations, greeting guests, cleaning up.
 - Bigs and/or Facilitators will be in charge of purchasing items and then submitting original receipts for reimbursement – must have receipt to be reimbursed. Please see Collab for instructions and forms for reimbursement.
- **Important Health Note:** Since some Littles or Bigs may be allergic to particular foods (nuts, pineapples, strawberries, etc.), please talk to each other about any allergies to ensure everyone can make and eat the planned food items.

Sister Time (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Creating Folders:** Use this time to decorate your Little's folder together. This folder will be used throughout the year to store worksheets and activities focused on your Little's values and goals, and will serve as a reminder of everything you and your Little have accomplished over the year. While you are decorating use this time to talk about what you learned about your Little's values last week.
- ✓ If your Little is shy or you are having difficulty knowing what to talk about, use some of the Table Topics in the group bin to get you going. Remember to use OARS (see page 179 for examples).

Focus Two: SMART Goals

This focus re-introduces the YWLP focus on goal setting by reviewing Sparks and practicing setting SMART goals.

Sparks and SMART Goals (25 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to model how to build leadership by setting by demonstrating how to effectively create a SMART goal. Share that one way for people to be able to use their grow as leaders by setting SMART goals for themselves. Gather the group together and ask a Little to remind the group about

sparks. Then, explain how we can use goal setting to pursue our Sparks, explain that a SMART goal is one way to do this.

- Reference the large Post-it-Note with the steps for setting a SMART goal already written on it.
 - **Specific:** Goals are clear and detailed.
 - **Measurable:** You can measure progress.
 - **Attainable:** The goal includes how it can be accomplished.
 - **Realistic:** The goal is practical.
 - **Timely:** It includes a deadline for achieving the goal
- Then, have pairs find their own space in the room. Before class, Bigs have prepared a SMART goal that they set for themselves using the SMART goal format. Each Big will now share her goal with her Little, and explain how she set it. The introduction should follow this model:
 - My Spark is [INSERT ACTIVITY] and I want to become better at it! My goal is to [INSERT SMART GOAL]. Since I'm a leader, I want to make a plan and set a goal using the SMART format. Let's talk about why it's a SMART goal! My goal is Specific because [INSERT]. My goal is Measurable because [INSERT]. My goal is Attainable because [INSERT]. My goal is realistic because [INSERT]. And my goal is timely because [INSERT].
 - Example: "My Spark is cooking and I want to become better at it! My goal is to make a 3-course meal for my parents when they come to visit me at my apartment in two weeks to show them I appreciate their support. Since I'm a leader, I didn't want to make any old goal. I wanted to make a plan and set a SMART goal in order to improve. Let's talk about why it is a SMART goal! My goal is Specific because it clearly tells you what I want to accomplish, who is involved, why I am going to do it, and where I will do it. My goal is Measurable because I know how much food I will be preparing and I will know it is accomplished once I serve it. My goal is Attainable and Realistic because I have cooked a 2-course meal before and have improved so I can cook 3 courses now. And my goal is timely because I know by when I will accomplish it—2 weeks. What do you think about this goal? How would you improve it to make it an even better SMART goal?"
- After sharing their goal, each Big and Little should talk about why the goal is SMART and if there is any room for improvement (remember, Bigs, leaders accept feedback gracefully!).

SMART Leaders (15 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to set a goal using the SMART goal model. Use this format for Littles to set **one SMART goal**. A SMART goal is can be anything that the helps you feel more empowered and grow as leader. It could be an academic goal (speak up more in class, get improve my grade in math), about relationships (be a better friend), or about your sparks (join a soccer team). Even

if they are doing well in school, please encourage the Littles to remember that an academic goal can be more than grades—it could be about forming relationships with teachers, participating in class, or taking on more work during group activities. Before setting the goal, Bigs should look over Little’s Sparks and Study habits worksheets to think of some ideas.

SMART Goal Steps:

1. If this is an Academic goal, review My Study Habits Worksheet.
 - “Remember when we filled out this worksheet about your study habits? You said you wanted to get a better grade in Math—is that still one of your goals?”

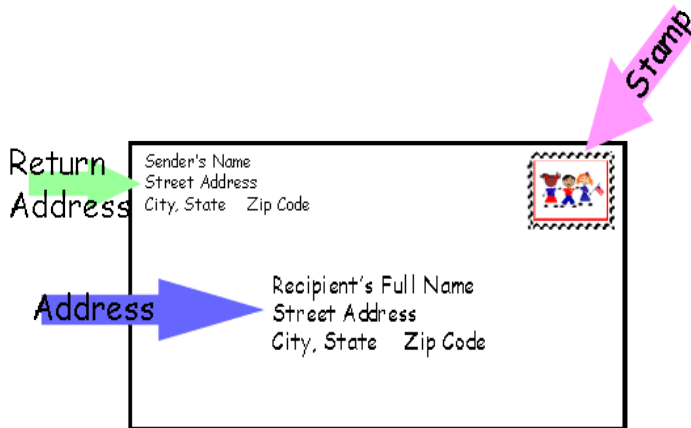
If this is a Sparks goal, reference the Sparks worksheet.

 - “Remember when we filled out this worksheet about your Sparks? You said you were passionate about ceramics—is that something you’d want to set a goal to improve on?”
2. Review SMART goals
 - “What are some of the characteristics that make a good goal?”
3. Specify Short Term Goal
 - “So you want to do better in Math. What does that mean? How would you know you are doing better?”
 - “So you would know you were doing better if you made better grades?”
 - “Great – what is the next grade you have coming up in Math?”
 - “So if you make a B on your next Math quiz you will know you are doing better, that can be a short term goal!”
4. Identify current supports
 - “What are some things you are doing right now that you think will help you reach your goal?” (e.g., studying consistently, doing HW, paying attention in class, getting help from friends, parents, or teachers etc.)
5. Make a plan
 - “So what steps do you need to take to make a B on your quiz? What are some specific things you can do this week to help you accomplish that?”
6. Identify obstacles
 - “What are some things that could get in the way of you accomplishing your goal? What could stop you from meeting it?”
7. Keeping track?
 - “How are we going to know if your plan worked?”
8. Write this goal in Agenda/Planner
9. Fill out “SMART Goals Worksheet”
10. Affirm
 - “Thanks for working on this with me”

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

Addressing an Envelope

****Please help your Little Sister properly address her envelopes!****








Be sure to write *neatly* when addressing your envelope so your letter will reach its correct destination.

Include the following three items:

- **ADDRESS:** This is the name and address of the person (recipient) you are sending the letter to.
On separate lines write:
 - Recipient's Full Name (ex: Jane Smith)
 - Street Address (ex: 123 Main Street)
 - City, State and Zip Code (ex: Charlottesville, VA 22903)
- Use postal abbreviations when writing the state. Postal abbreviations are written in capital letters without periods or other punctuation. The postal abbreviation for Virginia is VA.
- **RETURN ADDRESS: *DO NOT*** include a return address, YWLP will add the YWLP Office as the return address in case any letters cannot be delivered.
- **STAMP:** Stamps go in the right hand corner of the letter, so do not write anything there. YWLP will put stamps on the letters.

Setting A SMART Goal



<p>S</p>	<p>Specific</p> 	<p>Goals are clear and detailed. A specific goal will usually answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What: What do I want to accomplish? • Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal. • Who: Who is involved? • Where: Identify a location.
<p>M</p>	<p>Measurable</p> 	<p>It is important to be clear about how progress towards the goal will be measured. If a goal is not measurable, it is not possible to know whether progress toward successful completion is being made.</p> <p>A measurable goal will usually answer questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much? • How many? • How will I know when it is accomplished?
<p>A</p>	<p>Attainable</p> 	<p>An attainable goal is one that can actually be accomplished. An attainable goal will usually answer the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the goal be accomplished?
<p>R</p>	<p>Realistic</p> 	<p>A realistic goal is one that is practical. It will usually answer the question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I really achieve this goal?
<p>T</p>	<p>Timely</p> 	<p>A commitment to a deadline helps focus efforts on completion of the goal on or before the due date.</p> <p>A timely goal will usually answer the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When? • What can I do 6 months from now? • What can I do 6 weeks from now? • What can I do today?



YWLP SMART Goal Setting Guide

My Name: _____ My Sister's Name: _____ Date: _____

I want my goal to be about: _____

How will I accomplish this? My goal will be SMART!

Specific	
Measurable	
Attainable	
Realistic	
Timely	

Therefore, my SMART goal is to: _____

Things I am already doing that will help me reach my goal are: _____

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 3: Issues at School

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Being mindful is foundational to solving problems.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Autonomy
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Are Mindful!

Session Outline:

- Research Team Visit: Fall Survey** (30 minutes)
- Energizer:** Name Game (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Low and Introduce Hot Topics (10 minutes)
- Focus One: Leaders are Mindful**
 - Activity:** What is Mindfulness? (ABCs of Problem Solving) (10 minutes)
- Focus Two: Practicing Independent Thinking**
 - Activity:** Step Into the Circle (ABCs of Problem Solving) (25 minutes)
 - Activity:** Review Goal Setting (10 minutes)
- Sister Time:** School Tours & Pair Pictures (20 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad
- ___ YWLP Goal Setting Guide
- ___ Hot Topics Box and paper slips
- ___ Week 2 Appreciation Dinner Planning Guide (to remind pairs of roles)
- ___ Hoberman sphere ___ Mindfulness Item

Bigs:

- ___ Confirm plans for Appreciation Dinner
- ___ On post it note sheet write out ABCs of Problem Solving (ABCs stick figures on one side and Chew questions and Choosing responses on the other)

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 3: Issues at School

Research Team Visit: Fall Survey (30 minutes)

A member of the research team will be coming by to do Little Sister surveys!

Energizer (10 minutes)

Choose an energizer to start group this week. Use the one below, or choose a different one your group likes.

Name Game: The goal of this energizer is to continue to learn each other's names. You can ask them to use just their name or their name proceeded by the adjective they created earlier.

- Start off by having everyone stand in a circle and pass a ball around the circle while saying their name first and then the name of the person they are passing it to. (You can use either Once they have done that twice add a second ball and then a third.
- Ask for a volunteer or two to try to say everyone's name in the group.

Group Check-In (10 minutes)

- ✓ Have the group members focus their High/Low this week on their goals. Did they make progress (High) or take a step backwards (Low)? Bigs should be sure to model both successes and taking steps backwards. How can the group members help each other make progress on their goals?
- ✓ **Hot Topics:** Introduce the Hot Topics Box as an opportunity for anyone in the group to suggest a topic she would like the group to talk about. Hot Topics is a way for YWLP to appreciate the good ideas of the Littles and Bigs! The suggestion can be anonymous or not and should be put in the box at the start of a group meeting. The Facilitator will try to work in a discussion on the topic that week or the following week during Group Check-in. Each week the group members can decide if they want to do High/Lows or Hot Topics or they can do each but on alternate weeks.

Focus One: Leaders are Mindful

These activities introduce the Leadership Secret Leaders Are Mindful and support the development of YWLP's mission slogan *Autonomy: We think for ourselves*. The goal is to help group members understand the power of mindfulness for both stress reduction and handling challenging situations.

Learning to be mindful about ourselves can help us become mentally stronger, more balanced, and better able to handle the good and bad things that happen to us. Mindfulness can also help us slow down, and feel more relaxed.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles during Orientation and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

What is Mindfulness? (10 minutes)

Display the third Leadership Secret Leaders Are Mindful and connect it with the YWLP's mission slogan Autonomy: *We think for ourselves*.

- **Thinking for Ourselves.** Hold up a snow globe and while shaking it up, ask the group to brainstorm with you what kinds of challenging situations can get us emotionally stirred up (e.g., unfairness, gossiping, bullying, too much homework, a hard test, etc.).
 - **Emotional Snow:** While strong emotions/passions are a great motivator, when we are too stirred up it is hard to think for ourselves. We tend to become emotionally reactive and that is not usually when we do our best thinking or acting. Leaders do better when they are able to calm the “emotional snow” down and then make a decision.
 - **Mindful Celebrities:** Share some names of celebrities the group might know who use mindfulness tools to be effective leaders. You can show them parts of a video of some celebrities talking about the mindfulness tools they use.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuHpbGrJdb4>
- **ABCs of Problem Solving:** Put up a large Post-It Note with the ABCs of Problem Solving stick figures (drawn before group) and share that in YWLP we have developed the ABCs of Problem Solving as a mindfulness tool to help us de-stress or calm ourselves down in challenging situations. Introduce all three steps but just practice the first two steps now.
 - **Acknowledge:** Become aware there's a problem and identify it. Often the first sign is strong negative feelings that are stirred up, like anger, anxiety, or sadness.
 - **Breathe:** Pausing to take three deep breaths can really help calm us down. Some people call this taking a mindful moment.
 - **Chew & Choose.** Chew is thinking about the situation calmly and from as many different angles/perspectives as you can. Choose is deciding on a plan or action that best fits your goals for the situation.

- **Mindfulness Practice:** Invite the group to practice the first two steps of the ABCs of Problem Solving with you now. Share that you'll give them a chance to practice all steps together later in the group. If you think this activity might be hard for the group to do together, have each pair spread out around the room and practice the two steps.
 - Acknowledge: Invite the group to think more about one of the challenges they talked about before that “stirs up” their feelings.
 - Breathe: Invite the group to take three deep, slow breathes with you and gently breathe out the stirred up feelings. Invite them to notice how breathing deeply sends oxygen to the brain, which helps us calm down and be able to think better.
 - Share that learning to take three deep breaths when we're stressed usually takes a lot of practice and the next activity will help them when they practice mindful breathing.

Focus Two: Practicing Independent Thinking

The goal of these activities is to practice using the ABCs of Problem Solving with a discussion of handling bullying and relational aggression in middle school.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles during Orientation and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

Step Into the Circle (25 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to help the group talk about bullying or being mean to each other, a common problem in middle school. Spend about 7-8 minutes doing Step into the Circle and 15-16 minutes discussing how to use the ABCs of problem solving to solve challenging situations.

- If this is an issue the group identified during orientation, start by acknowledging that and inviting them to focus on the issue using the “Step into the Circle” format
- Form a circle alternating Bigs and Littles (LS, BS, LS, BS, etc.), The Facilitator reads the prompt and those who identify with the statement step into the circle. Then they look at who also stepped into the circle and who did not. Then they step back into the outside circle. If someone does not understand a prompt she can ask for clarification but there should be no other talking or laughing. If someone does not want to step into the circle she can say “pass” or just stand still.
- Start by having the group take three slow, deep breaths so they can do this activity mindfully. Invite them to use their new wands to help them if they want. The first 2-3 prompts should be easy.

Step into the circle... (~7-8 minutes)

- If you have more than one sibling
- If you like chocolate
- If you are glad you are a girl
- If someone has spread rumors about you
- If you have excluded a friend
- If you have been excluded by a friend
- If you have given someone the silent treatment
- If you have heard someone talk about another person behind their back and didn't know what to do
- If you have been ignored or given the silent treatment
- If you have stood up for a friend who was being picked on
- If you have talked about someone else behind their back
- If you saw someone being bullied and didn't know what to do
- If you have bullied someone
- If you have posted something negative on Facebook about somebody else
- If someone posted something negative about you on Facebook

General Discussion (~7-8 minutes)

It is crucial that you have time to debrief after the Step Into the Circle Activity. If you don't think you'll have enough time, save the activity for another day.

The goal is to begin a conversation about personal differences and similarities and when we might need support.

- **Stay Curious:** Facilitate this discussion from an inclusive point of view. Be curious about their answers and ask for more details.
- **Link to Life:** Don't forget to talk about how many of us have to "step into the circle" in real life. Transition back and forth from analyzing the activity to analyzing the challenges identified.
- **Mindful Sharing:** Help everyone be mindful listeners (with the intent to understand) and talkers (2-5 breaths).
- How did taking a deep breath before stepping into the circle help you? What happened to your body when you did this?
- How did it feel when you stepped into the circle? What were you surprised by? How common is bullying at school?
- Why might girls be mean to each other? Experts say that many times bullying starts after a misunderstanding between girls (We're sensitive, friendships matter, and our feelings can easily get hurt). Can they think of examples?
- How do they handle these situations? When they notice they are being

mean, a victim, or witness bullying?

ABCs of Problem Solving Discussion (~7-8 minutes)

- Differing Perspectives: Introduce the idea that there can be many different understandings or perspectives in challenging situations.
 - Show the duck/rabbit and woman/vase pictures and ask what they see. Both perspectives are correct even though they are different. This is often the case in challenging situations too. The ABCs of Problem Solving can be useful for seeing multiple perspectives and sort out a misunderstanding.
- **Briefly** outline how the ABCs of Problem Solving can be applied to a challenging situation. If a more meaningful problem was not identified by your group during Step-Into-the-Circle, you might use this example: “My best friend told me I wasn’t good enough to make the basketball team. That hurt my feelings and I need to figure out what to do.”
 - **Acknowledge:** Identify that it is hard when a friend says something hurtful to you like this.
 - **Breathe:** Share that taking three deep breaths can help calm you down and think more calmly about the situation.
 - **Chew & Choose:** Chewing is thinking about the situation from as many different angles/perspectives as you can. Choosing means picking a response that fits your goal instead of just reacting emotionally to the situation
- Ask the pairs to find a place to talk further about the ABCs of problem solving and the challenge.
- Bigs will give their Little the ABCs of Problem Solving card they made and brainstorm possible “chew” questions and “choosing” responses for the challenging situation. This could also be done in groups of four.
 - **Chew:** Helpful “chewing” questions to ask yourself are:
 - Was it an accident? Did she mean to hurt my feelings or was she just blabbing about stuff?
 - Was she trying to be helpful (even though she wasn’t)?
 - Was she being mean intentionally?
 - Do I really know why? I need more information.
 - **Choose:** Choose a response that fits your goal.
 - Get even (Okay but not being a leader).
 - Let it go (What she says is not that important or maybe I misunderstood her).
 - Talk it out (Talk to her about it in a calm way. This is hard but taking deep breaths helps).

- Bring the group back together with a reminder that the group can continue this important conversation over the following weeks. And remind them to put their ideas in the Hot Topic Box.

Review Goal Setting (10 minutes)

Ask if anyone remembers the YWLP mission slogan related to Competence (We get things done!). Invite everyone to commit to being an YWLP leader this year by getting things done at school through earning good grades (at least As, Bs and Cs). Each pair started this by setting a SMART goal for themselves – we will be doing this throughout the semester.

Have pairs find a spot in the room and to review the SMART goal worksheet they set last week. Then, have pairs transfer this goal to the goal tracking worksheets that they decorated in orientation week. Together, pairs should discuss how they want to introduce their goals to the group today and next week at the appreciation dinner. Then, have each pair come to the front, show the group their goal worksheet and explain their commitment! Take a minute to appreciate each goal.

Remind Little's that they will be sharing their goals next week at the dinner.

Sister Time (20 minutes)

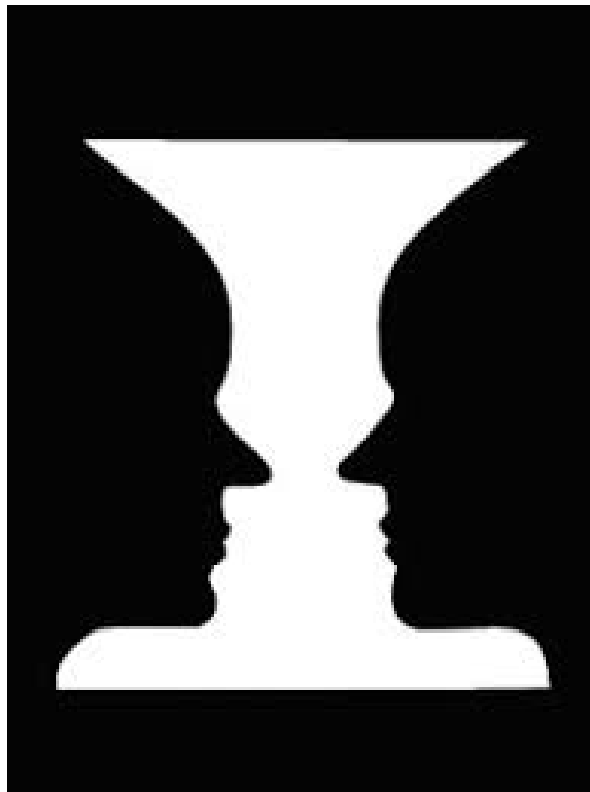
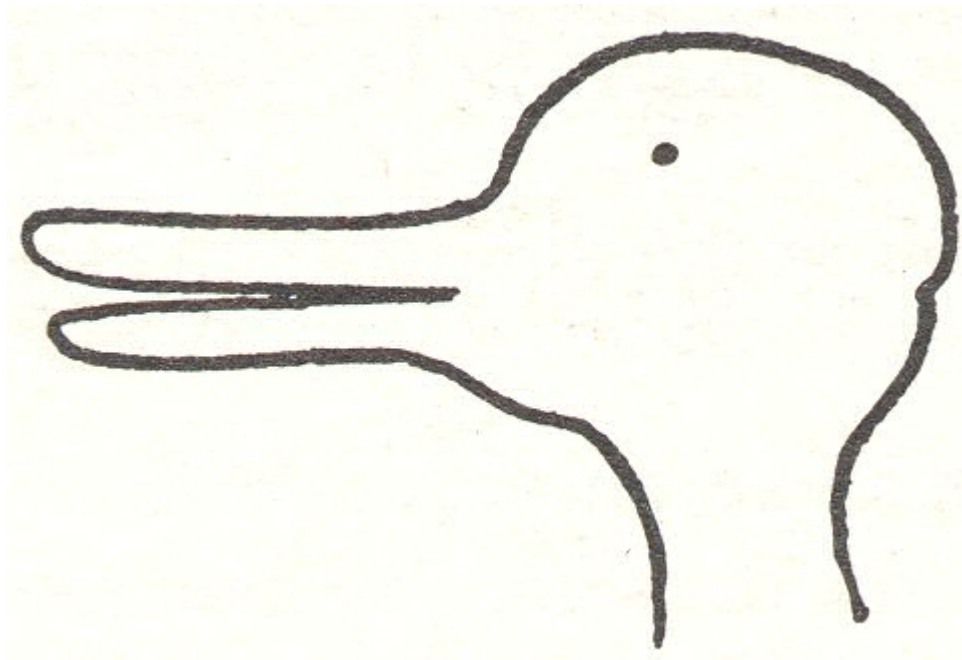
Optional: Use Sister Time to continue debriefing Step In the Circle.

School Tours and Pair Pictures

- ✓ Pairs will spend Sister Time getting to know each other better by learning what a day in the Littles' life at middle school is like, including what things go well for her and what are the difficulties she faces (and where she may want to try out the ABCs of Problem Solving).
- ✓ Each Little gives her Big a tour of the school. Pairs with a quiet Little might join with another pair if that will make her feel more at ease. The goal is to walk through a day in the Little's life – what time she gets to school, when she goes to her locker, where she and her friends hang out between classes, and where she sits at lunch. During the tour, Bigs focus on being curious about what school is like for her Little and how she solves the problems she faces. If possible, visit Little's locker.
- ✓ Remember to stay within eye shot or ear shot of other group members during your tours.
- ✓ Remember to listen and resist giving advice!
- ✓ During this time, Facilitators can go around and take a picture of each Big and Little Sister pair!

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

ABCs of Problem Solving



ABCs of Problem Solving

Acknowledge the Problem



Breathe



Chew & Choose a Solution



Chew Questions

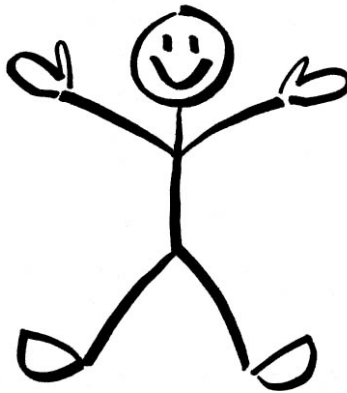
Chewing on the problem means trying to figure out what really happened.



1. Was it an accident? (Did she mean to _____ or was she just _____?)
2. Was she trying to be helpful (even though she wasn't)?
3. Was she being _____ intentionally?
4. Do I really know why? I need more information.

Chose Responses

Choosing means picking a response that fits your goal instead of just reacting emotionally to the situation.



1. Get even (Okay but not being a leader).
2. Let it go (It's not that important or maybe I misunderstood).
3. Talk it out (Talk about it in a calm way. This is hard but taking deep breaths helps).

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 4: Helping and Being Helped

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Recognizing we are part of a larger community helps us act on our empathy for others.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence/Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Help Others!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Human Knot (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** Mindful Moment & High/Lows (15 minutes)
- Focus One: We Care About Our Community**
 - Activity:** Sisters Taking Action (10 minutes)
 - Activity:** Learning About Our Community (20 minutes)
- Sister Time:** Reflection & Goal Check (20 minutes)
- Focus Two: Leading in My Community (Led by 8th Grade Group)**
 - Activity:** Getting to Know Your Team Icebreaker (10 minutes)
 - Activity:** Sister to Sister (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** Poster Making (15 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies

- ___ YWLP Item Donation List (1 for each Little)
- ___ YWLP Food Drive Flyer (1 for each Little)
- ___ Materials for making food drive posters (four for your group)

Bigs:

- ___ Arrange transportation with your Little's parent/guardian and other group members to the Service Drive (see page 3 for date and time).

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 4: Helping and Being Helped

Energizer (10 minutes)

Human Knot: This energizer is a way for the group to practice the ABCs of Problem Solving. To start you may want to break them into two groups.

- Arrange group members in a circle, standing shoulder to shoulder.
- Tell everyone to put her right hand up in the air and then take hold of the hand of someone across the circle from her.
- Everyone then puts her left hand up in the air and grabs the hand of a different person.
- Check to make sure that all are holding the hands of two different people and that they are not holding the hands with someone directly next to them.
- Their challenge is to untangle themselves without breaking the chain of hands. If they break the chain they have to start over!
- Encourage them to talk to each other and use the **ABCs of Problem Solving** as a guide before they even start: **A**cknowledge the problem and **B**reathe (slowing down). Then **C**hew on the problem and **C**hoose a solution.
- If the group members solve the tangle quickly, have them do it again!

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by using the Hoberman sphere in the bin to pace everyone taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present for High/Lows. In the future ask a Little to lead the three deep breaths at the beginning of the check-in.
- ✓ **High/Low:** This is a time for people to share something personal. Go around the circle and have each girl share a high and a low from her previous week. In order to have time for everyone to share, each person should only talk for 3-4 breaths (about 1 minute) although you'll want to follow up when someone shares something emotional.

Focus One: We Care About Our Community

Sisters Taking Action (10 Minutes)

Explain that one of YWLP's mission statements is *Connection: We Care About Each Other*. Part of our commitment to caring about each other is serving the community that we are a part of. Part of our community service will be a food drive that will benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (BRAFB). Remind them about the **Food Drive coming up on _____ (see page 3 for date/time and write it in)**. Your group will do a one-hour shift during that time.

Your one-hour shift will be from: _____ at the grocery store:
_____.

Learning About Our Community (20 Minutes)

Pull up the website for the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (<https://www.brafb.org/>) and ask the Little sisters if they have heard of the food bank before and if anyone knows what they do there? Explain that next week, during our first Leadership Day (**see page 3 for date**) we will be traveling to the BRAFB and learning more about what they do. We will tour the food bank from _____. Ask the littles to guess why it might be important to visit the organization before we have our food drive?

Take some time to brainstorm as a group what kinds of things you might learn about while you are there. Have the little sisters prepare questions they would like to ask after the tour. Write the questions down so that you can help them remember what they wanted to ask next week. Remind little sisters that it is important to be on time next week so that you can get to the food bank on time. **Please make every effort to arrive at the food bank by _____ so that the tour can start promptly at _____.**

(Big Sister Notes: Some of our little sisters may have personal experience with the food bank, or a similar location. If any little sisters share that kind of information, be sure to thank them sincerely for sharing with us. Be mindful of the language you are using to describe the people who might use the food bank.

Talk to parents: *Speak to parents directly to let them know where your group will be going next week and the purpose of the trip. Do not rely on Little Sisters to relay this information.)*

Sister Time (20 minutes)

- ✓ Big Sister and Little Sister pairs can continue the discussion about the visit to the Food Bank if Little Sisters have any questions.
- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Leading in My Community

This year, 7th grade groups and 8th grade groups will be doing two different service projects. 7th grade groups will continue our traditional food drive while 8th grade groups will be holding a supplies drive to benefit the Shelter for Help in Emergency (SHE). Although these activities are different, they have the same general premises and both require learning the **Magic Three**.

Getting to Know Your Team Icebreaker (10 minutes)

This activity will be decided on and led by the 8th graders. The purpose is to introduce the 7th and 8th grade Bigs and Littles to each other.

Sister to Sister (15 minutes)

This activity is an opportunity for the 7th and 8th grade girls to practice asking for donations as leaders. It will be led by the 8th graders.

- Start by asking the 8th grade Littles to share the posters they made for their supplies drive. Have them explain why displaying posters and giving shoppers a list of items we can give to the organizations can help.
- 8th grade Littles will start by sharing the **Magic Three** of asking for something— **1) The Smile, 2) The Ask, and 3) The Thank You**—and role play how to use them. Big Sisters will be the different types of customers they will meet at the Food Drive (e.g., customer asking for more information about Food Bank and/or YWLP, happy customer, grumpy customer).
- Possible scenarios to role play include how to respond if a customer asks or says the following:
 - What organization are you with? What's YWLP?
 - Why hold a Food Drive? Why is this important?
 - Where does my donation go?
 - What types of food do I purchase to donate?
 - Already bought food & forgot to purchase. Here's some money for you to purchase food to donate.
 - No. I don't want to give food.
 - I barely have enough money to feed myself.

Hint: It's also great to think about ways to incorporate the following into your role playing as these can happen:

- Not looking customers in the eye when talking with customers
- Speaking too softly or quietly when asking
- Acting shy
- On cell phone when talking with customers
- Drinking Starbucks while asking for donations

- Not paying attention to customer – horse playing/fooling around, standing far away from group, being too loud, etc.

Bigs: Make sure your Little has a turn role-playing the “Magic 3” of asking for something. If she didn’t get to in the group, role play with her when you drive her home or at the beginning of the Food Drive.

Poster Making (15 minutes)

Each group will make 4 posters to use at their service project. You can do these together with the 8th grade group or separately if you’d like to have a bit of time alone. Plan with your corresponding 8th grade group in advance!

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

If your group would like to share, show your closing ritual. If there is time, watch the 8th grade group do theirs as well.

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 5: Appreciation Dinner

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Recognizing and appreciating our support systems helps us grow as leaders.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Appreciate Others!

Session Checklist:

- Group Check-In:** High/Lows or Sister Time (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Prepare for Appreciation Dinner** (30 minutes)
 - Activity:** Decorating and Cooking (30 minutes)
 - Activity:** Mindful Appreciation (3 minutes)
- Focus Two: Appreciation Dinner** (40 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Nametags
- ___ Sharpies
- ___ Pens
- ___ Food and drinks
- ___ Cooking supplies
- ___ Completed Appreciation Certificates (if not already given)
- ___ Decoration supplies
- ___ Computer and speakers for music
- ___ Dinner supplies (plates, cups, napkins, utensils, serving utensils)
- ___ Cleaning supplies
- ___ Paper Thank You notes- to be written to the teacher whose room you used
- ___ Hoberman sphere

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 5: Appreciation Dinner

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

Share with the group that since this week is the Appreciation Dinner, they will choose either High/Lows or Sister Time and do it quickly!

Focus One: Prepare for Appreciation Dinner

The Leadership Secret for this week is Leaders Appreciate Others. Learning how to appreciate others when we are leading is a great skill. During the dinner preparations it is important to model being generous with appreciations for the help of others.

Decorating and Cooking! (30 minutes)

Cooking: Remind pairs of their assignments and get to work! Make sure to allow PLENTY of time for cooking, as it often takes longer than you think!

Guest Appreciations: While working on the party preparations, Bigs should help their Littles practice saying their appreciation for their guest. This will prepare them for standing up and saying what they appreciate about their guest in front of the whole group.

Goals: While setting up, make sure to give Little's their goal tracking worksheets and prepare to share them at the dinner.

Music: Play (appropriate) music as everyone is working. You can also play them in the background during the dinner to make the event more fun.

Other Jobs: Activities for decorating and occupying Littles can include making place cards, nametags, and signs directing guests. Be sure one pair is assigned to be the greeters so guests feel welcome as soon as they arrive. Make sure there is a team in charge of cleaning up - leave time at the end of the dinner for this to happen.

- Also, a thank you note should be written to the teacher whose room your group used.

Mindful Appreciation (3 minutes)

At some point in the preparation, probably about 10 minutes before the guests are to arrive, bring the group together in a circle and thank them for their teamwork to bring the dinner together.

- Ask one of the Littles to use the Hoberman sphere to lead the group in taking 3 deep breaths to calm themselves and focus attention on the wonderful opportunity to appreciate someone special in their lives.
- Ask the group if there is anything else they want to appreciate (e.g., that everyone helped out, that they had fun making the dinner, etc.). If so, use the Hoberman sphere to pace taking 3 deep breaths in appreciation of this.
- End this slowing down activity by finding out what tasks remain and how others can help support them to get these done.

Focus Two: Appreciation Dinner

The purpose of the Appreciation Dinner is to help the Littles show appreciation for an important woman in her life and for her Big to get to know this person. Research indicates mentoring relationships are stronger when there is a good connection between the mentor and the mentee's family.

Appreciation Dinner (40 minutes)

Arrivals: Have greeters greet guests as they arrive and show them their seats. Consider having Little Sisters serve as waiters and take drink orders. It is very important for the Facilitators and Big Sisters to introduce themselves to the guests as they arrive. Remember the guests are likely to be more nervous than you!

Serving: When it is time to serve dinner, welcome the group with a short introduction. Consider having Little Sisters serve their guests.

Appreciating Women Leaders and Goals: In between dinner and dessert, share with the group that the Leadership Secret for this week is Leaders Appreciate Others. Ask each pair to come to the front and use this leadership skill. Big Sisters will introduce their Littles, sharing one thing they appreciate about her, and the Littles will introduce their guests to the group, sharing why each guest was nominated for this honor and presenting her with a Certificate of Appreciation if she hasn't already received it. Then, Littles will share how they are planning to use YWLP to become a stronger leader this year by sharing their Goal with the group.

Thank You: At the end, thank everyone for coming and perhaps suggest they are welcome to stay (if they are!) and talk during clean-up. You can end the dinner by teaching the parents the **YWLP Closing Ritual** your group does!

Clean Up (15 minutes)

- Allow lots of time for clean-up. Please make sure you do a good job since **this is extremely important for our relationship with the schools.**
- ✓ Make sure each pair has a clean-up job and that the room is as clean as you found it.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 6: Creating a Support Team

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Success requires leaning into and collaborating with your support network.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Create Support Teams!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Trust Walk or Beach Ball Buzz (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** Highs/Lows of Food Drive (15 minutes)
- Focus One: When Do We Need Support?**
 - Activity:** Step into the Circle (20 minutes)
 - Activity:** Who's On My Support Team? (5 minutes)
- Sister Time** (20 minutes)
- Focus Two: Collaborating with a Team**
 - Activity:** Group T-shirt Design (20 minutes)
 - Activity:** Group T-shirt Design Negotiations (15 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Trust Walk - Strips of cloth to serve as blindfolds (one for each pair)
- ___ Beach Ball
- ___ My Support Team Worksheet (2 per pair- Big and Little each completes one)
- ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-It Pad
- ___ White Paper for drawing drafts of T-shirt Designs (in plastic storage box)
- ___ YWLP T-shirt from last year
- ___ Fall Finale Save the Date Flyer (Give to parents)

Bigs:

- ___ During Big Sister Meeting this week, write thank you notes for the principal and guidance counselor thanking them for letting the group host the YWLP Appreciation Dinner (note cards are in the expanding file folder).
- ___ Develop prompts for this week's Step Into the Circle that unpack one of the issues the group identified as important during orientation or put in the Hot Topics box.

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 6: Creating a Support Team

Energizer (10 minutes) Choose one

Trust Walk: Pass out strips of cloth or bandanas to each pair and have either the Big or Little put it on. The other will serve as her guide and gently lead her Sister on a walk around the room (or building if time allows). Remind them that trusting someone takes a lot of courage so it is important for both to breathe if they start to feel frustrated or anxious.

Beach Ball Buzz: Prior to group make a numbered list of questions for the group to answer. Be creative! Blow up your beach ball and put a number on each stripe of the ball. Start the energizer by asking the group to stand in a circle then throw the ball to someone. They quickly answer the question that corresponds to the number their right thumb is nearest to and, then, throw the ball to another person. You can use the ball whenever the group has a little extra time. You can also ask the Littles to create questions! Sample questions:

- What is the funniest movie you've ever seen?
- What was the name of your kindergarten teacher?
- What is the worst thing you've ever tasted? Did you swallow it or spit it out?
- What's your greatest pet peeve?
- If you were stranded on a desert island, what two things would you want to have with you?
- If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?
- If you could meet any historical figure, who would it be and why?
- What is *your* song and why?

Group Check-In (25 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to use the Hoberman sphere to pace everyone taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present for High/Lows.
- ✓ **High/Low:** Have Bigs and Littles focus their High/Lows this week on the Appreciation Dinner. What did it mean to them? To their guests? Bigs should lead the way in acknowledging and appreciating how another pair helped make the Appreciation Dinner a success or how sincerely a Little introduced her guest.

- ✓ **Service Drive Debrief:** Take a few minutes to talk about the Food Drive last Sunday.
 - What did each pair do well during the Food Drive?
 - How did the group support each other? Did preparing with the 8th graders help?
 - What would they do differently next time? (Please take note of these comments to share with YWLP staff to improve in the future.)
- ✓ **Fall Finale (see page 3 for date and time):** In the last minute or so announce the date for Fall Finale and begin brainstorming presentation ideas for your group. (Facilitators and Returning Bigs/Littles: talk about what kind of performances people did last year.) Bigs can give parent/guardian the YWLP Fall Finale Save the Date flyer to their Little's parent(s)/guardian(s) after group.

Focus One: When Do We Need Support?

This focus introduces the fifth Leadership Secret Leaders Create Support Teams and its connection to YWLP's mission to promote Connection: *We care about each other!*

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles during Orientation and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

Step Into the Circle (20 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to help the group talk about some of the issues they identified during orientation or in Hot Topics as being important to them and to begin thinking about how they can ask for support on these issues when they need it. Bigs will decide on the prompts during this week's Big Sister Meeting given their group's needs. Spend about 10 minutes doing Step Into the Circle and 10 minutes discussing the issues that were covered.

- Introduces the Leadership Secret Leaders Create Support Teams and its connection to YWLP's mission to promote Connection: *We care about each other!* Share that one of the ways to develop as a leader is to create support teams.
- Write the following on the board or a large Post-It-Note: *"Accept me at my strongest, support me at my weakest."* Share that the next activity provides an opportunity to learn more about each other and think about the support we all need to manage challenges. How do we give ourselves permission to ask for support?
- Form a circle alternating Bigs and Littles (BS, LS, BS, LS, etc.), The Facilitator reads the prompt and those who identify with the statement step into the circle. Then they look at who also stepped into the circle and who did not. Then they step back into the outside circle. If someone does not

understand a prompt she can ask for clarification but there should be no other talking or laughing. If someone does not want to step into the circle she can say “pass.” The first 2-3 prompts should be easy.

- Start by having everyone take several slow, deep breaths so they can do this activity mindfully.
- The activity tends to be more meaningful when a serious and respectful tone is set. If any Sister starts to act up during the activity, politely ask her to stop. **Many people feel anxious in this exercise so all Bigs must help the group manage the anxiety respectfully.** Gently remind everyone of the power of taking three deep breaths when they start to feel anxious.

Prompts: We've listed a number of prompts. Don't try to do them all. Pick prompts that will work well with your group and help them begin thinking about their support team and how to ask for support. Start with "easy" ones and move to more difficult, personal ones.

Step into the circle... (~10 minutes)

- If you have an older sibling
- If you have a younger sibling
- If you like hip-hop
- If you like country music
- If you have stood up for a friend recently
- If you asked a parent for support recently and they came through for you
- If you feel a teacher has treated you unfairly
- If you asked a parent for support recently and they didn't come through for you
- If you have ever felt uncomfortable walking down the halls at school
- If asking a teacher for support is hard for you
- If you have felt betrayed by a friend
- If asking a parent for support is hard for you
- If anyone has ever started a rumor about you
- If you have had a crush on somebody who did not like you back
- If you asked a friend for support recently and they came through for you
- If asking a friend for support is hard for you
- If you have stood up for and supported someone of another race
- If you have stood up for and supported someone of another culture
- If you have stood up for and supported someone who was being bullied

- If you asked a friend for support recently and they didn't come through for you
- If you have ever felt excluded by a group of friends
- If a guy has ever made fun of your body
- If you asked a teacher for support recently and they didn't come through for you
- If you feel like sometimes your friends don't really know you
- If you have ever been a victim of prejudice because of your race, religion, or gender
- If you have ever asked an adult outside your family for support and they turned you down
- If you have ever asked an adult outside your family for support and they came through for you
- If you have chosen not to step in at least once during this exercise EVEN if the prompt applied to you
- Anything you would like to add?

Discussion: Remind the group about the importance of respecting yourself, each other, and the group, as well as keeping confidentiality. The goal is to keep the discussion open and focused on personal experiences: there are no right or wrong answers. Useful questions include:

- How did it feel to learn people were the same as you on some prompts? Different from you on some prompts? Did anyone think she was alone on something, and then found out she shared it with someone else? What did that feel like?
- Did anyone learn something new about somebody else?
- Were there things you stepped into the circle about that you have felt comfortable asking for and receiving support? How about challenges that you haven't felt comfortable asking for support?
- Why is it hard to ask for support sometimes?

Who's on Your Support Team? (5 minutes)

This short activity helps identify and talk about support systems in different areas of life. Transition the group from talking about challenges to thinking about support. Each Big and Little pair will identify who they can call on for help when they need it. These are the people who can be counted on for support.

- Using the *My Support Team* leadership sheet, identify members of your support team. Each Big and Little first fills in the center circle with their own name and then adds the names of people they can go to for support in the different areas.

- Explore if asking for support is harder/easier in different areas. Does it help to use the **Magic Three** when asking for support? **1) The Smile, 2) The Ask, 3) The Thanks**. If time allows, roleplay with each other asking for support using the Magic Three.
- Encourage everyone to display the map in their room at home so they can remember to call on their support team when they are facing challenges.

Sister Time (20 minutes)

- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Teamwork

The next activities provide opportunities for the group to practice working together and asking for and giving support.

YWLP T-Shirt Design (20 minutes)

YWLP is all about supporting girls and women to be leaders. Every year YWLP designs a t-shirt to be given out at the Fall Finale that symbolizes this. Each group comes up with a design and the Big Sisters in all the YWLP groups vote on their favorite. Only one t-shirt design will be chosen so your group will need to come up with something that others groups haven't thought of!

- Each pair will work on a t-shirt design that symbolizes YWLP and then present it to the group.
- Returning Big Sisters and Facilitators should bring their shirts from last year or contact YWLP staff to get different ones from the YWLP office to show what has been done before.
- A few T-shirt guidelines:
 - Shirts will be a basic, unisex, short-sleeved t-shirt.
 - YWLP Logo must be on the front of the shirt!
 - On the back, your shirt design can include two colors!
 - Choose a shirt color, and we will do our best to find it!

T-Shirt Design Notes:

As your groups work on their shirt designs these are a few things to keep in mind and help explain to the little sisters about the shirt design process!

After all the groups have turned in their shirt designs and the final winning design is chosen by vote, it will be sent to our communications department which will create a version of the design that can be printed onto the shirts. Although we try our best to stay as true to the original intent of the design that the group creates, elements will be changed in the process of translating the design from paper to shirt.

In helping guide your little sisters to create a successful design that would easily translate to a t-shirt, here are a few other guidelines to pass on:

- The best t-shirt designs are bold (no fine lines) and simple.
- If they want to use a phrase, please have it be no more than 35-40 characters. Much more than that and it just does not show up well on a shirt.
- After your group has created some designs, hang them on a wall and stand as far away from them as possible so you can get a sense of what they would look like being viewed on a t-shirt at a normal distance.

YWLP Group T-Shirt Negotiations (15 minutes)

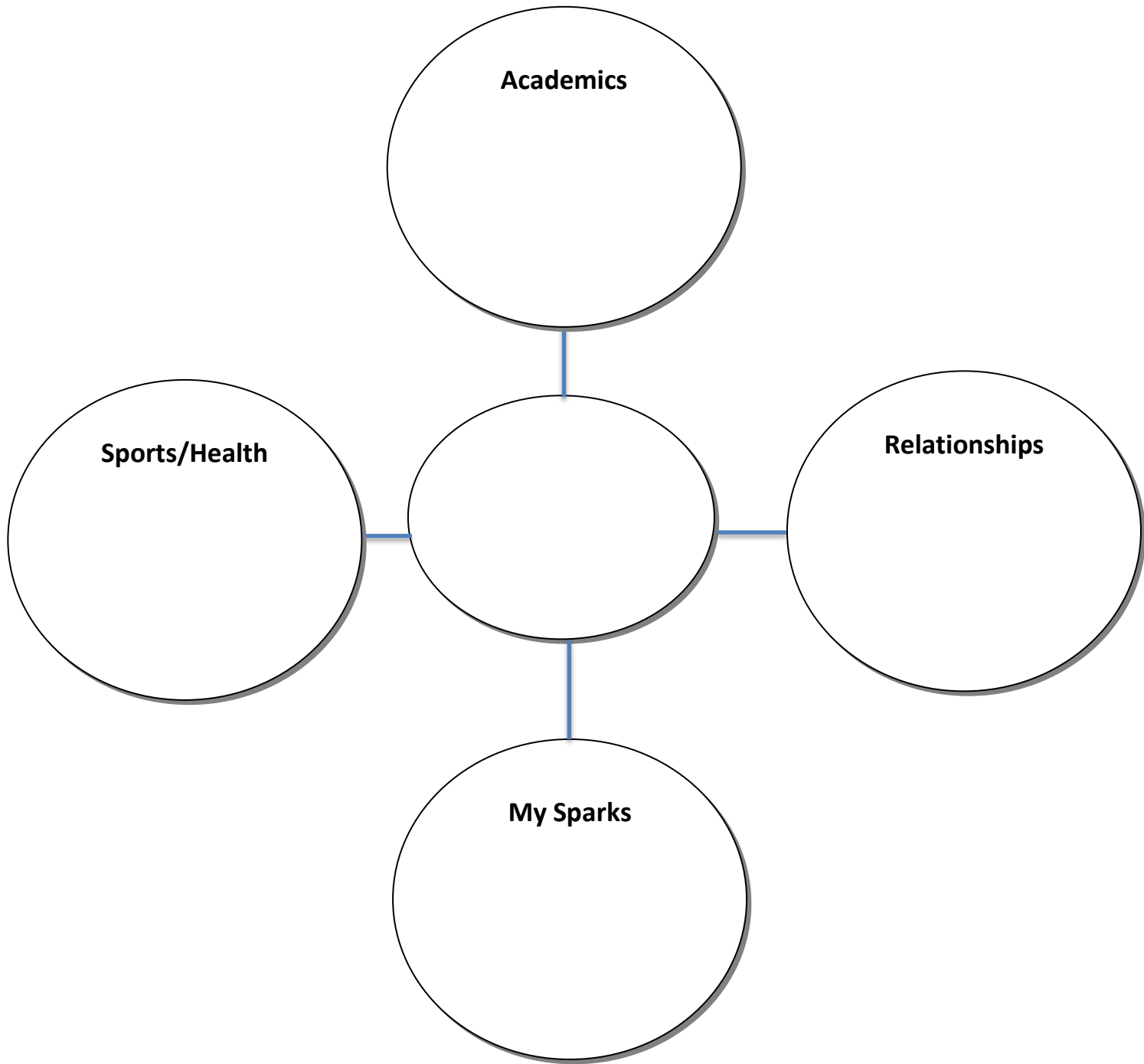
The goal of this activity is for your group to work as a team to develop a t-shirt design for YWLP. The goal is to brainstorm ideas, listen to feedback from each other, negotiate differences, and develop a final product. This is another opportunity to practice mindful sharing and the ABCs of Problem Solving!

- **Presentation and Negotiation:** Bring the pairs together and have each present their design. The group can choose a pair's design as it is or they can work to create a group design by getting ideas from the other pairs. For instance, there may be a pair that has a great slogan and another pair that has a great color scheme. Together, create a design that incorporates the best of each pair's design. You may need a pair to volunteer to be T-Shirt Design Leaders and finalize the design. This Big can present it to the class for voting.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

My Support Team

Use this page to identify who is available as a support when you are making tough decisions. Put your name in the middle circle and use the surrounding circles to identify who can be a support to you in the different areas of your life. Both Bigs and Littles get their own map of their support team!



7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 7: Honoring Differences

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Appreciating differences enriches our connection with others and understanding of ourselves.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Respect Differences!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Mindful Coloring (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** Hot Topics (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Practicing Kindness**
 - Activity:** A Circle of Care (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** Staying out of Drama (20 minutes)
- Focus Two: Honoring Differences**
 - Activity:** Stereotypes (30 minute)
- Sister Time** (15 minutes)
- Fall Finale Planning** (10 Minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Mindful Coloring pages
- ___ Colored pencils, crayons or markers
- ___ Hot Topics Box and paper slips
- ___ Mindfulness Item
- ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 7: Honoring Differences

Energizer (10 minutes)

Mindful Coloring

Using markers, colored pencils, or crayons, the energizer this week is mindful coloring.

- Show the choices and ask pairs to pick one they would like to color. Invite everyone to use mindful attention (i.e., paying attention on purpose) to color the page as they reflect on the picture and its possible meaning to them. What thoughts/emotions do they have as they color?
- At the end, ask the girls what about this activity helped them slow down, relax, and be nonjudgmental. Were they able to mindfully reflect on their thoughts or emotions?
- Is coloring/drawing at home a way to de-stress (practice mindfulness) outside of group? What else can they use?

It's All About the Breath

- This is a creative video about the usefulness of breathing and being mindful. It is based on 'All About That Bass' by Meghan Trainor. Prior to showing it review it for suitability for your group as the teens in the video do use one bad word. You could play it while the girls are coloring.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qif847Bklzg>

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Another way of leading the group in taking three deep breaths is to slowly raise both your arms (like a conductor) and ask everyone to breathe in as you raise your arms up and breathe out as you slowly lower your arms.
 - Variations can include having everyone raise their arms as well, varying the speed and height of the arms, and pausing your arms midway so the breath is held. Have fun with it! Invite a Little to lead this next time.
- ✓ Today you may want to do a **Hot Topics** rather than High/Lows. Connect the topic with one of the issues the group identified in orientation.
 - Start this by inviting everyone to join you in taking three deep breaths as a way of de-stressing and being fully present for the group.

Focus One: Practicing Kindness

One way to respect differences is to appreciate them rather than be nervous about them. The focus of these activities is to respect differences by practicing kindness to ourselves and others. This helps us appreciate the ways in which we are different from each other rather than becoming anxious or judgmental about differences.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles during Orientation and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

A Circle of Care (15 minutes)

This activity introduces another strategy for de-stressing—replacing negative thoughts about ourselves or others with positive ones.

- Write the following on the board or large Post-It-Note: “*A great relationship is about two things. First appreciating the similarities and second, respecting the differences.*”
- Share that in addition to taking three deep breaths (practicing mindfulness), another strategy for de-stressing is to replace our negative thoughts or feelings about ourselves or others with positive ones. **Thinking positively about a person or a situation can be very powerful but it is a habit you have to develop.** As humans we can easily become addicted to and give more importance to the negative (soap operas, criticisms, bad grades) and forget about all the positive things we accomplish every day.
- Invite the group to create a circle of appreciation for each other by sharing what they appreciate/respect about others in the group. In three weeks, the group will write affirmations for each person so this is a prelude to that.
- Variations:
 - If your Littles are shy, do this activity using a gratitude jar. Invite everyone to write down something they are grateful for on a small piece of paper. Place the piece of paper in a jar without signing a name to it. Pass the jar around and have each person pick out a piece of paper and read it aloud.
 - Ask the Bigs to stand next to a Little other than their own (i.e., someone they may not have regular contact with) and share what they appreciate about this person.
 - If your group likes arts and crafts, you can write each person’s name on a slip of colored construction paper and ask everyone to pick a slip and write what they appreciate about that person. After they read what they wrote staple these slips all together in a group appreciation chain or let the person take it home.
 - If your group likes movement, you can split the group into two groups, one facing in and the other surrounding them but facing out and ask them to move in a circle in opposite directions. When you call “Thank you” they offer a “Thank you for…” to the person in front of them.

Staying out of Drama (AKA Gossip Guard) (20 minutes)

Introduce tools that girls can use to practice kindness to themselves and others. Talk about the ways that girls can work to stay away from drama at school:

1. **Stay Positive:** If you hear friends gossiping about someone, you say something positive about the person. It is important to speak up positively!
 - **Why?** Research shows that if the first remark after a negative remark is positive, others are likely to make more positive remarks and less negative ones next. *Staying Positive* is a way you can help others!
 - **Role Play:** Have the Big Sisters role play *Staying Positive*. They can be funny or serious. The emphasis is on saying something positive in a nice way. Then have Little Sisters join the Big Sisters in practicing this

response.

2. **Think Twice:** When you catch yourself gossiping about someone stop and *Think Twice* about what you are really feeling and use the ABCs of Problem Solving.
 - **Why?** Research shows that one way we deal with difficult feelings is by trying to cover them up. Most people don't like feeling angry, sad, jealous, hurt, or lonely. So, we try not to feel them or to blame another person for the feeling. This can lead to gossiping about that person.
 - What if instead we could *Think Twice* and just **A**cknowledge the uncomfortable feeling without judgment, take some deep **B**reaths and **C**hoose not to let the feeling be quite so big or painful.
 - **Role Play:** Have the Big Sisters role play **Think Twice** in a dyadic relationship. Model how to notice yourself gossiping, taking some deep breaths and then just noticing the uncomfortable feeling without judgment. Examples of difficult feelings/thoughts that might lead to gossiping include:
 - *"I'm mad at my friend because she hurt my feelings."*
 - *"I'm jealous because she got a better grade than I did."*
 - *"I don't think he really likes me and that makes me sad."*
 - Then have Little Sisters join the Big Sisters in practicing this response. Note: Thinking about our own positive qualities can also help when we need to pay attention to our uncomfortable feelings.

Discuss:

- Big Sisters should share their own positive and negative experiences with gossiping when they were in middle school.
- What helped you practice kindness to yourself and others? What are you still working on?

Focus Two: Honoring Differences

The purpose of this activity is to help girls think about how people can be different. Specifically, Littles will learn about stereotypes.

Stereotypes (30 minutes)

This activity examines how people develop stereotypes and how stereotypes can lead to prejudice.

- Gather everyone together and give each person a piece of paper and something to write with.
- Tell the group that you will be reading a series of words and instruct group to write each word on their paper, followed by the first thought that comes to mind when they think of a person in that role. Encourage everyone not to censor their responses.
- The facilitator should read the following words aloud (take a pause between each word so people have time to write):

- Cheerleader, grandmother, teacher, gang member, honor roll student, dancer, construction worker, doctor, librarian, athlete, nurse.
- After everyone has finished, have them turn their paper face down.
- Then, have the group select two words from the original list, such as construction worker and cheerleader. Divide group into small groups of 4 (2 pairs). Give half the groups the first word and half the second.
- Give groups four or five minutes to list as many characteristics as possible of their assigned word. When they have finished, generate a list of all the responses on a large post it note.
- As a group, discuss the accuracy of these characteristics: have the group consider whether all cheerleaders, for example, are blond or if all construction workers are men. Have students consider which of the characteristics listed under each name could be considered *assumptions* or ideas that we believe without verification.
- Then, ask the group to define a stereotype – supplement what the group comes up with using this definition “a stereotype is an oversimplified generalization about a person or group without regard for individual differences, even positive stereotypes can have negative consequences”
- Then, ask group to think about whether the assumptions they made lead to stereotypes about these two groups.
- Finally, ask the group to turn over their papers with the first responses. Have them review their lists and think about the following questions:
 - Based on the discussion are you reconsidering any of your responses?
 - Are any of your responses stereotypes?
 - Do you think if we tallied the responses to each of the items they would be similar?
 - How do we learn stereotypes?
 - How can you check if an assumption about a group of people is accurate?
- Close the activities by having group members think about a stereotype that is held about a group to which they belong. Ask them to share their ideas with the group if they are comfortable!

Sister Time (15 minutes)

- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little’s voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we’ve created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.
- ✓ **Relationship Check:** This may be a good time to do a quick relationship check. How have you been at recognizing your Little’s sparks? Start by telling her what you appreciate about her and finding out what she appreciates about you. Do you appreciate your similarities or differences more? What are one or two things you each want to improve in your relationship?

Fall Finale Planning (10 minutes)

Continue to brainstorm your group's thoughts for what they would like to do for Fall Finale. The group's Fall Finale presentation is an opportunity to portray themselves positively as young women leaders!

- The presentation (no longer than FOUR minutes) should share with the audience the group's major accomplishments, favorite moments, and/or what you all have learned. Past groups have sung a song with new YWLP lyrics, danced a step routine highlighting the ABCs of Problem Solving or Gossip Guard, or performed a YWLP cheer. Be as creative as you can! What does your group want to do?
- If using music be sure to use the instrumental version (no artist singing) as the audience won't be able to hear the group's lyrics or singing.
- Pass out Fall Finale Invitations to all Littles!
- **Bigs:** Make sure you speak to your Little's parents/guardians to let them know that they and their families are invited.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 8: Keeping Our Cool

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Challenging situations necessitate slowing down in order to recognize your options.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Autonomy
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Keep Their Cool!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** A Shrinking Boat or Obstacle Course (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** Hot Topics or High/Lows (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Practicing Stress Reduction**
 - Activity:** Stress Reduction Stations (25 minutes)
- Sister Time** (25 minutes)
- Focus Two: Leaders Keep Their Cool**
 - Activity:** Negotiations 101 (10 minutes)
 - Activity:** Negotiations Role Playing (20 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Hot Topics Box and Paper Slips
- ___ Pens/Pencils
- ___ Supplies for Stress Reduction Stations

Bigs:

- ___ Bring a blanket or rope for the energizer, A Shrinking Boat (these are not in your bin)
- ___ Remember supplies for the Stress Reduction Stations (these are not in your bin)

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 8: Keeping Our Cool

Energizer (10 minutes)

Choose one energizer from below to start group this week.

A Shrinking Boat: Make a space on the floor with a blanket or rope and invite the whole group to stand in the “boat.” Then gradually shrink the space, so the group will have to think fast and work together to keep everyone within the shrinking boundaries. If the group is large, divide into two groups.

Hint: The Leaning Towers energizer would also be a great way to start this week!

DIY Obstacle Course: Break into two groups and create an obstacle course for the other group to go through! You can be as creative as you would like, using just your bodies to form the different parts of the course (e.g., making a human bridge they have to go under, making a human wall they have to step over), or incorporating other items from your YWLP bin (e.g., balancing a book on their head, throwing a ball to a teammate between obstacles).

Group Check-In (25 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to be the “conductor” and pace everyone taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present for High/Lows.
- ✓ **High/Lows or Hot Topics:** As the group shares with each other invite them to try to identify their uncomfortable feelings and just notice them without judgment.
- ✓ **Fall Finale (see page 3 for date and time):** Remind Little Sisters about the date for Fall Finale and that they and their families are invited. Take 10 minutes to continue brainstorming ideas for your Fall Finale Presentation.

Focus One: Practicing Stress Reduction

The goal of this focus is to give the group ideas about how to reduce stress in their lives so they can keep their cool.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles during Orientation and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

Stress Reduction Stations (25 minutes)

Biggs should develop at least three stations that demonstrate additional ways they handle stress. These might include: Hand Massage (with nice lotion), Making a Cup of Tea (with fragrant tea), Pillow Screaming (screaming into a pillow when you are really upset), Music (listening to music to relax), Paper Scrunch (putting your problem on a piece of paper and scrunching it up), Setting a Goal (writing down what you want and the steps for getting there), Walking It Off (going for a walk or run), Yoga, Meditation, or create your own. Be creative and have fun with these activities! Remind Littles that these strategies can be used to reduce stress in class or about schoolwork!

- Share the leadership secret for this week, Leaders Keep Their Cool, and its connection to the YWLP mission slogan *Autonomy: We think for ourselves!*
- Divide the Littles into three groups and spend 4-5 minutes at each station learning the stress reduction strategy before moving to the next.
- As a large group spend a few minutes discussing what they think are the best strategies for which stressful situations. Be sure to identify when these are good strategies to use (i.e., don't paper scrunch in class!)

Sister Time (35 minutes)

- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.
- ✓ **Relationship Check:** This would also be a good time to check in with about how your relationship is going. You can spend some time planning your next activity and talking about what's going well and what you want to work on. If you need activities you could spend some time coloring, doing a craft, or keep make a list of stress reduction strategies.

Focus Two: Leaders Keep Their Cool

The goal of this focus is to enhance our ability to talk about an important issue respectfully. Too much anger loses the argument; too meek a response isn't heard.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles during Orientation and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

Negotiations 101 (5 minutes)

This purpose of this activity is to learn strategies for talking with someone when you have a lot of feelings about something. Leaders need to know how to be able to talk about an important issue respectfully and negotiate for what they want. Last week's focus was on letting go of uncomfortable feelings while this week will focus on acting on them respectfully.

Hint: For these activities to be successful and fun, it is important to focus on the role playing and keep talking about being respectful and negotiating effectively to a minimum.

- Demonstrating with the breathing wand, quickly ask the group to reflect on last week's focus on how just noticing our uncomfortable feelings like stress, anger, sadness, and worry without judging them helps lower our stress.
- But how do you handle it when you should take action, when you need to negotiate for something? Ask the group to brainstorm situations in which they would want to speak up and negotiate.
- Write **GASP** on the board or a large Post-It-note and share that these are YWLP's four steps to successful negotiations!
 - **Goal:** Decide what's your goal for this negotiation?
 - There are three possibilities:
 - Win/win (both sides get something)
 - Win/lose (one side gets their way and the other loses – not recommended)
 - Lose/lose (neither side gets their way – also not recommended).
 - Friends, parents, and teachers are more likely to consider your request if they feel they are getting something too.
Exchange for change!
 - **Ask** to understand. Find out their story first.
 - This is a VERY powerful strategy for successful negotiations but most people forget to do it. Your chances of success are much higher if you first ask them to share their thoughts or feelings about the situation before you share yours.
 - Listening to their story doesn't mean you have to agree with it.
 - **Share** your points calmly.
 - This is hard but also a powerful tool in negotiating.

- *“Keep cool; Anger is not an argument.”—Daniel Webster.*
- Taking three breaths helps!
- **Problem Solve** together.
 - Invite them to problem solve with you. *“Let’s problem solve. What ideas do you have?”*
 - Remember *exchange for change*. Be willing to offer something to the other person rather than just asking them to change.

Negotiations Role Playing (20 minutes)

Prior to the group, Bigs will develop sticky situations that might present specific challenges to the Littles in the group keeping their cool AND speaking up or negotiating confidently (e.g., talking with a teacher about a bad test grade, telling an administrator about a bullying situation, negotiating more privileges with a parent, talking with a friend about how you are being treated). Write a brief summary of each on separate index cards.

- Break the group into two teams and have each draw a sticky situation (or pick one they brainstormed previously). Each team takes 2-3 minutes to plan their role play of the situation and how they will use **GASP** negotiation strategies to address it.
- When ready, each team role plays the challenge and their negotiating strategies. The other team offers feedback on how they did. There may be time for each team to do two.
- Variation: Teams can first role play negotiating poorly and then role play negotiating effectively as a leader using **GASP**.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 9: Valuing Myself—What Gets in the Way

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Challenging misperceptions is a part of developing an authentic sense of self.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Autonomy
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Respect Themselves!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Mindful Walking (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Lows (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Being Mindful of the Media**
 - Activity:** 10 Beautiful Things (5 minutes)
 - Activity:** Personal Values (10 minutes)
 - Activity:** Media Values (15 minutes)
- Fall Finale Presentation** (20 minutes)
- Sister Time** (20 minutes)
- Focus Two: Balanced Thinking**
 - Activity:** Completing a Thought Tracker (25 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it pad

From expanding file folder:

___ Values Squares Sheets
 ___ Thought Tracker Sheets
 ___ Magazine Cover Print outs
 ___ Fall Finale invitations

Bigs:

___ Begin preparations for Fall Finale presentation and lyrics in your Big Sister Meeting

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 9: Valuing Myself—What Gets in the Way

Energizer (10 minutes)

Choose one energizer to start group this week.

Mindful Walking

This activity can help get the group moving while also encouraging them to “rest” their minds. Invite pairs to take a walk, and look for something red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple in that order. They can take pictures of what they find if they would like and should return in 10 minutes.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present for High/Lows.
- ✓ **High/Lows:** Check-in with group on High/Low from their week. Try having each person start by identifying something they used during the week to help them when they were feeling stressed.
- ✓ **Fall Finale (see page 3 for date and time):** In the last minute or so announce the date for Fall Finale and begin brainstorming presentation ideas for your group.

Focus One: Being Mindful of the Media

The purpose of these activities is to help our sisters identify their own personal values and compare them to the values they see portrayed in the media so they can think critically about the media they consume.

(Focus One activities adapted from *Full of Ourselves: A Wellness Program to Advance Girl Power, Health, and Leadership*)

10 Beautiful Things: A Freewrite (5 minutes)

- Give each person some paper to use for this activity. Remind them that they are writing for themselves alone and don't have to share it unless they want to.
- Write the follow prompt on the board or large note pad: “List 10 things you find really beautiful.” Add: “These can be people, places, sounds...whatever’s beautiful to you”
- Allow 3 minutes for personal writing. Big sisters should participate too.

- Ask for volunteers to read their lists (or portions). Note how few/many people listed physical attributes. If they listed any particular people, were they chosen because of their body shape?

Personal Values (10 minutes)

- Hand out the “values squares” worksheet to each person.
- Ask each person to read over the page and check the “10 things that you value most about yourself and in your life.” Encourage the girls to be honest with themselves. “Choose squares that you really value, not ones that you think you should value.” People can add squares of their own on the back of extra squares.
- Have everyone choose a section of the board or a piece of post it note paper and write their 10 values down in ascending order, with the most important item on the bottom. Ties are okay.
- Ask the girls to walk around and observe everyone’s lists, and take note of which values appear most often.
- Suggested discussion questions:
 - Do certain squares appear near the bottom of all the lists?
 - Which squares made your “final 10” and which didn’t? Why and why not?
 - Can anyone guess why I asked you to put your top value on the bottom of the list? (see closing comment)
 - On a scale of 1-10, how often have your actions reflected your values during the past week?
 - What can make it hard to live according to our own values?
- Closing Comment: “The things you value most should form the foundation for everything you do. Note that everyone has a different set of personal values. These can change throughout our lives.”

Media Values (15 minutes)

Have pairs work together for this activity. Explain that each pair is an investigate team. “Imagine that you’ve just landed on planet earth from outer space and you are intensely curious about the habits of human beings—particularly the lives, values, and habits of women. You wander into a drugstore and see row upon row of fashion magazines lined up near the cash registers. You eagerly buy several of these magazines figuring they’ll surely give you the answers you seek.”

- Pairs each have one magazine to investigate together. Instruct pairs to just investigate the cover of the magazine for now.
- Give each pair a new values squares sheet. Ask pairs to examine the cover of the magazine and to check the squares that correspond to what their

magazine cover indicates is most important. They can choose fewer or more than 10 squares.

- “What does your magazine cover indicate is most important to its female readership? What are your eyes drawn to first? Pay attention to the written words and how they are positioned on the page, and also to the photos, body language, and facial expressions. These send messages, too.”
- Ask the pairs to star one value they think the magazine presents as most important. Have pairs share their starred value and hold up the magazine cover for viewing.

(Note: Help the littles avoid black and white thinking. We don’t want to insinuate that fashion magazines are all bad or to denigrate fashion models. In fact, most magazines geared toward girls and women run informative, useful articles about health, relationships, and so on. But these messages are often mixed and diluted, especially by advertising copy and images.)

Suggested discussion questions:

- Does your magazine reflect your own personal values? Which values does it overlook?
- Remember what you found beautiful in the opening freewrite. What is your magazine’s idea of beauty?
- Does your magazine present one “ideal” body type or several?
- Is there anything wrong with being pretty or wanting to be pretty?

Sample Wrap Up

There’s nothing wrong with wanting to look your best. And there’s nothing wrong with looking like a supermodel—if that’s your natural, healthy body shape. The problem is that 95% of us aren’t genetically wired to look like models—without doing some really unhealthy and damaging things to our bodies. If you’re 5’3”, you’re never going to be 5’10”. Bodies come in all shapes and sizes! There’s nothing wrong with being short, muscular, stocky, or big boned. There is something wrong, however, with not caring for the miraculous body you’ve inherited.

When you’re surrounded by so many ‘perfect’ images of ‘pretty,’ we can start to feel like there’s something wrong with us if we don’t look like a model. It can be challenging to accept the body you have. But it’s really empowering! Self-acceptance keeps you from wasting precious time and energy thinking you’ll be a happier person if you could only make yourself over into someone you’re not.

When it comes to beauty, we need to develop wider eyes: to see “pretty” and “beauty” in more than one narrow way. So go ahead and read one of these magazines, if you like, but remember who you are! It’s not that looks don’t matter,

but keep in mind what matters most to you! Remember those things you found beautiful. Hold to those aspects of your lives that you value most.

Fall Finale Presentation (20 minutes)

The group's Fall Finale presentation is an opportunity to portray themselves positively as young women leaders!

- The presentation (no longer than FOUR minutes) should share with the audience the group's major accomplishments, favorite moments, and/or what you all have learned. Past groups have sung a song with new YWLP lyrics, danced a step routine highlighting the ABCs of Problem Solving or Gossip Guard, or performed a YWLP cheer. Be as creative as you can! What does your group want to do?
- If using music be sure to use the instrumental version (no artist singing) as the audience won't be able to hear the group's lyrics or singing.
- **Pass out Fall Finale Invitations to all Littles!**
- **Bigs:** Make sure you speak to your Little's parents/guardians to let them know that they and their families are invited.

Sister Time (20 minutes)

- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.
- ✓ **Mindfulness Check:** Check in on progress using mindfulness to manage stress, negative feelings, or negative thoughts? Have you been practicing mindfulness and developing your mental strength?
- ✓ **Values:** If you have time, spend some more time talking with your sister about how her values compare to the ones you all observed in the media.

Focus Two: Balanced Thinking

In order for a leader to be mindful, she must recognize when her thoughts are heading in a negative direction. This can be really challenging, because it is easy to become stuck in a negative thinking trap. The worst part is: the more we think about and believe in these negative thoughts, the harder it becomes to see things from a new perspective.

To be a mindful leader, we have to learn to recognize our negative thoughts and then challenge them. By doing so, we can have a more balanced idea of what is really going on in our lives (and in our heads). This is called “balanced thinking.” When you are correctly using balanced thinking, you aren’t trying to see everything positively. Instead, you are looking for new information that is important for the decision you are about to make.

Completing a Thought Tracker (25 minutes)

As we are getting better at balanced thinking, it can be helpful to track our thoughts using a Thought Tracker. We can use a Thought Tracker when we realize that we are becoming upset about something. The Thought Tracker will help us stop and challenge those negative thoughts.

- ✓ Bigs: Talk to your Littles about a time you were upset and how the Thought Tracker might have helped. A possible script:
- ✓ “A few nights ago, I was in my dorm and I started to realize that I was really tense. I felt my shoulders hunch and I realized that I was frowning. I could use a Thought Tracker to identify the thoughts. I realize that I was thinking about how I was nervous about an assignment I had coming up. I thought that maybe I was being lazy and I hadn’t put enough effort into it. I thought I was going to fail, and then my family would be disappointed in me. Maybe I was a disappointment. You see how quickly my thoughts went from being nervous about homework to thinking that I was a disappointment to my family? Our minds get stuck in these negative loops and we have to work hard to get out of them. So now I’ll use this thought tracker to question myself and see if I can get more information about the situation.” Continue by working your way through the Thought Tracker’s questions.
- ✓ Then, encourage your Little to fill out the thought tracker. A possible script:
- ✓ “To be a mindful leader, we sometimes have to challenge our own negative thinking. Think about a time you recently were upset. Maybe you were feeling frustrated about the SMART goal that you set, or your friend said something mean to you. Let’s go through these questions together and see if we can challenge your thoughts.”
- ✓ Once you and your Little have completed her Thought Tracker, Bigs and Littles should have an opportunity to share out in the circle. They can reflect on some of their unbalanced thinking, how the activity helped them, or ways they might change the activity to suit their own needs.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

Values Squares

Personality	Pretty Face	Great Hair
Self-Respect	Animals	Nature
Self-Expression	Solving Problems	Sexiness
Honesty	Courage	Shopping
Boyfriend/Cute Guys	Respect from Others	Good Food
Music	Spirituality	Athletic Ability
Popularity	Great Body	Sense of Humor
Talents and Hobbies	TV and Movies	Health
Loyalty	Good Grades	Clothes
Friendships	Family	Intelligence
Love	Creativity	Leadership

Adapted from **Full of Ourselves**, Copyright 2006 by Teachers College, Columbia University



Thought Tracker: Looking for Evidence!



Write down your thoughts and how much you believe them	Support: What evidence supports your thoughts?	Challenge: What evidence challenges these thoughts?	Other perspectives: What would you best friend say if she heard you saying this to yourself? What would you say to her if she had the same thoughts about herself that you are having?

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 10: Affirmations All Around

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Celebrating effort fosters growth.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Celebrate Success!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Mindful Attention or Hot Potato Game (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** Collect Mailing Addresses, Fall Finale Reminder, High/Low (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Affirmations**
 - Activity:** Affirmations (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** What Did I Learn? What Have I Accomplished? (Or use as extra practice time for Fall Finale) (15 minutes)
- Sister Time** (30 minutes)
- Focus Two: Being a Leader**
 - Activity:** Fall Finale Preparation (30 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Ball for Hot Potato Name Game Energizer (if selected)
- ___ Construction paper and pens for each sister for affirmations or use the YWLP affirmation sheets in your expanding file folder
- ___ Materials for Fall Finale Presentation
- ___ Google doc to confirm mailing addresses

Bigs:

- ___ Finalize plans for Fall Finale (e.g., song/lyrics, transportation, remind parent/guardian and confirm if they are attending)

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 10: Affirmations All Around

Energizer (10 minutes)

Choose one energizer from below to start group this week.

Mindful Attention: To start, Bigs and Littles stand across from each other in a line. Invite them to take three deep breaths as they pay mindful attention to the other person (noticing all of the details!). Next have both groups turn their back to each other and Bigs change one or two things (i.e., remove earrings, change hairstyle, take off bracelets, trade shoes with someone else in their group). Invite the Littles to turn around to face the Bigs again, take three deep breaths, and see if they notice what is different. Next have the Littles make the switches and see if Bigs can see the difference.

Hot Potato Name Game

To start, the group will stand in a large circle, either outside or inside the classroom. Ask the girls to pass around a small ball as fast as they can without making any noise. Play a Nicaraguan song as the girls play and pause it randomly.) Whenever the music stops, the girl holding the ball will share how she got her name. After she shares, she will stay in her place in the circle but sit down. Continue the game until everyone has had a chance to share the story of her name (and everyone is sitting down).

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **Collect Mailing Addresses:** As you do check-in, double-check little's mailing addresses with the ones we have on file. In class, Bigs will make a card and use their Little's address received here to mail the card over the break.
 - Please updated little's addresses on the google doc as needed.
- ✓ **Fall Finale (see page 3 for date and time):** Remind Little Sisters about the day and time and confirm transportation plans to and from UVA. Pass out reminder flyer to Littles and Bigs can speak with parent(s) or guardian(s) this week to see if they are able to attend this great event!
- ✓ **High/Low:** If time allows, have Bigs and Littles share their High/Low from the week.

Focus One: Affirmations

Introduce the ninth Leadership Secret: Leaders Celebrate Success. It is easy in our busy lives to forget to slow down and notice our successes. The activities this week are focused on noticing and celebrating what we have accomplished individually and as a group.

Affirmations (15 minutes)

This activity is about practicing kindness to others. Begin a short preparatory discussion with your group about what an affirmation is. Talk about how often the most meaningful affirmations are about someone's internal qualities, perhaps reflected in her actions. Sometimes Littles have a tendency to write affirmations about appearance. There are affirmation examples at the end of this week's curriculum.

- Write the ninth Leadership Secret Leaders Celebrate Success and connect it with the YWLP's mission slogan *Competence: We get things done*. If you have a good quote about the importance of celebrating success, share it.
- Start by dimming the lights and ask a Little to lead the group with a mindful breathing exercise as they think about what they appreciate about each member of the group. What is unique about each member? What have you learned from each?
- Have each group member's name written on the top of the *YWLP Affirmation Sheet* and pass them around to everyone in the group to write down an affirmation. You may want to have "appreciation" music playing during this activity to set the tone.
- Encourage everyone to take theirs home to hang on their wall so they can remember how special they are!

What Did I Learn? What Have I Accomplished? (15 minutes)

(Optional: you can also use this time as extra practice time for Fall Finale)

This activity is focused on helping group members remember and reflect on the skills and strategies they have learned and practiced this semester. This activity will also celebrate successes.

- Mix the pairings up so Bigs are not with their Littles. Pass out a piece of paper to each pair and ask the Bigs to record as many of the skills and strategies the Little can remember learning in YWLP this semester. Be sure to number them.

- Bring the group together and have each Little and Big share what is the most important skill she learned in YWLP this semester.
- Each Little and Big should then share one thing they accomplished with YWLP this semester (e.g., I'm working on my SMART goal of learning how to bake a carrot cake from scratch. I learned how to sift flour correctly, which will make my cake taste amazing!). Ideally, this will be related to their SMART goal and their Sparks!)
- At the end, the facilitator should take a moment to reflect out loud on how the girls learned many skills and because of this, they are taking steps to accomplish goals—and not just any goals, things they're passionate about!

Sister Time (30 minutes)

- ✓ Use this time to talk to your Little Sister about Winter Break! (e.g., how long it will be; how you'll stay in touch with each other; when the next group meeting will be).
- ✓ Also talk about what might be hard for her over the holidays and how she might use some of the strategies she learned in YWLP to manage the stress.
- ✓ If you want, write a letter to each other and promise not to open it until break has started!
- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Being a Leader

The focus is on preparing to showcase their leadership at Fall Finale. It can be daunting for some Littles to speak in front of a large group so practice, practice, practice!

Fall Finale Presentation (30 minutes)

Use this time for rehearsing the group's presentation for Fall Finale. Remember keep it short, sweet, and LOUD! One way you can use this practice time is to have someone use their phone to video the practice so the group can watch how they are doing and make corrections. If you don't think you'll need the full time,

revisit an activity the group really liked this semester.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

Gather the group into a circle and share what you are excited about for next semester. Then do the group ritual.

Examples of Affirmations

- (Name), you are compassionate when others express their feelings of sadness or stress.
- I like the way that you listen attentively when others speak.
- (Name), you have a wonderful laugh that is contagious and brings happiness to our group.
- (Name), your personal style inspires me to want to be like you.
- (Name), it means a lot that you are always on time and ready to participate in group.
- (Name), your respectful attitude toward others makes me feel like you care about me.
- (Name), I can see that your school performance is important to you and I admire the hard work that you put into your studies.
- (Name), sounds like you had a great game/show/presentation the other day – way to go!
- (Name), your work on the food drive set a great example for others. Thanks for caring about our community.
- (Name), that was very thoughtful when you helped (Name) with her leadership project/school work / social situation.
- (Name), I really appreciated it when you stood up for (Name) when she was being bullied. That took courage and showed how much you care about her.
- (Name), I like the way that you talk about yourself with confidence.
- (Name), your smile brightens my day.
- (Name), you are really good at making sure no one feels left out.
- (Name), I feel as though I can always count on you.



_____ **is a YWLP Leader!**

INSERT COLOR DIVDER PAGE HERE

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

YWLP Spring Orientation: We Are Leaders!

Overview:

- ❖ Complete YWLP Feedback Form
- ❖ Designing group topics to focus on this semester

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Changing Places (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** (15 minutes)
- Focus One:** Charging our Sparks
 - Activity:** Setting a new SMART Goal (25 minutes)
 - Activity:** Creating new SMART Goal Tracking Sheets (10 minutes)
- Sister Time:** YWLP Feedback Form (30 minutes)
- Focus Two: Taking Stock**
- Activity:** Setting Our Intentions: Designing Our Group (25 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Paper slips for energizer
- ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad
- ___ Blow Pops (1 per sister)
- ___ Sister Bracelets Supplies (beads and string)

In expanding file folder:

- ___ YWLP Feedback form (1 per pair)
- ___ Goal Sheet (1 per pair)

Bigs:

___ Be sure to contact your Little and her parent/guardian several times before group meets to remind them about the first group meeting date. We also recommend another reminder the day before the first group meeting.

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

YWLP Spring Orientation: We Are Leaders!

Energizer (10 minutes)

Choose an energizer below to start group this week.

Changing Places: Invite everyone to sit in a circle with you standing in the center. Share that this energizer is like musical chairs but will focus on what everyone did during the winter break. The person in the middle (without a chair) is the caller and will call out a fact. Everyone for whom the fact is true must stand and change places with someone else and shakes the hand of their new neighbors to their right and left. The person left without a chair is the new caller. You might start with, “Welcome back, everyone. If you wore red over the holiday, change places and shake the hand of the person on your left and right before you sit down in your new spot.” Everyone who wore red changes places and greets their neighbors. You try and slip into one of the vacant seats. The person without a chair is the new person in the center. She shares another fact such as: “Everyone who saw a grandparent over the holidays change places and greet your new neighbors.” Continue until everyone has connected with each other and shared some winter break facts.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present for High/Lows.
- ✓ **High/Lows:** Have everyone share their High/Lows of the holiday break.

Focus One: Charging our Sparks

Setting a new SMART goal (25 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to reinforce how to build leadership by demonstrating how to effectively create a SMART goal. Remind Littles that one way for people to be able to use their grow as leaders by setting SMART goals for themselves. Gather the group together and ask a Little to remind the group what about sparks are. Then, ask a Little to explain how last semester we used goal setting to pursue our sparks, explain that a SMART goal is one way to do this.

- Reference the large Post-it-Note with the steps for setting a SMART goal already written on it.
 - **Specific:** Goals are clear and detailed.
 - **Measurable:** You can measure progress.
 - **Attainable:** The goal includes how it can be accomplished.
 - **Realistic:** The goal is practical.
 - **Timely:** It includes a deadline for achieving the goal
- Then, have pairs find their own space in the room. Before class, Bigs have prepared a SMART goal that they set for themselves using the SMART goal format. Each Big will now share her goal with her Little, and explain how she set it. The introduction should follow this model:
 - Last semester, my SMART goal was to [INSERT SMART GOAL]. My Spark is [INSERT ACTIVITY] (alternative: Another one of my Sparks is [INSERT NEW SPARK]) and I want to become better at it! My goal is to [INSERT SMART GOAL]. Since I'm a leader, I want to make a plan and set a goal using the SMART format. Let's talk about why it's a SMART goal! My goal is Specific because [INSERT]. My goal is Measurable because [INSERT]. My goal is Attainable because [INSERT]. My goal is realistic because [INSERT]. And my goal is timely because [INSERT].
 - Example: "Last semester, my SMART goal was to learn to bake a carrot cake. We've talked a bunch about how my Spark is cooking and I want to become better at it! This time, my goal is to make a 3-course meal for my parents when they come to visit me at my apartment in two weeks to show them I appreciate their support. Since I'm a leader, I didn't want to make any old goal. I wanted to make a plan and set a SMART goal in order to improve. Let's talk about why it is a SMART goal! My goal is Specific because it clearly tells you what I want to accomplish, who is involved, why I am going to do it, and where I will do it. My goal is Measurable because I know how much food I will be preparing and I will know it is accomplished once I serve it. My goal is Attainable and Realistic because I have cooked a 2-course meal before and have improved so I can cook 3 courses now. And my goal is timely because I know by when I will accomplish it—2 weeks. What do you think about this goal? How would you improve it to make it an even better SMART goal?"
- After sharing their goal, each Big and Little should talk about why the goal is SMART and if there is any room for improvement (remember, Bigs, leaders accept feedback gracefully!).

Creating a New SMART Goal Tracking Sheets_(10 minutes)

- After creating their goal, Bigs and Littles should fill out a goal tracking sheet so that the group can track goals.

Sister Time (30 minutes)

- ✓ **YWLP Feedback Form:** Invite pairs to complete the *YWLP Feedback Form* together during this time. They can use this as a platform for catching up with each other and clarifying expectations for the semester. Give to the Facilitator when completed.
- ✓ **Sister Bracelets (optional):** Use beads and string in your bins to make sister bracelets while you catch up on what your little sister did over the winter break.
- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to ***your*** relationship.

Facilitators: Please collect the feedback forms and give them to YWLP staff at class. These are very important, so if part of a pair is absent this week, please complete it next week and turn it in.

Focus Two: Taking Stock

The purpose of this focus is to find out what the group wants to focus on this semester.

Setting Our Intentions: Designing Our Group (25 minutes)

This activity provides the group an opportunity to share their ideas about the group topics and activities they'd like to focus on this semester. (They can build on what they wrote on the YWLP Feedback form about activities they liked/didn't like first semester). **Hint:** Bigs should already be familiar with the curriculum for this semester so you can shape Littles' ideas to match many of the topics and activities in it.

- Re-introduce the Leadership Secret Leaders Set Goals and how that will be the focus of today—setting goals for the group's time together this semester.
- Share that you have 14 weeks together (share the date of the last group

- meeting) and that this is an opportunity for the group to choose what they want to focus on.
- Put up three large Post-it Notes around the room with one of the following on each and invite them to brainstorm ideas under each:
 - **Hot Topics We'd Like to Discuss** (e.g., dating, fights with parents, bullying at school),
 - **Fun Things To Do During Outside Time** (e.g., go for a group hike, have a scavenger hunt at UVA, go ice skating).
 - **Ideas for Our 2 Leadership Days** (e.g., service projects we'd like to do to help others in our community, fun things we could do as a group).
 - Pass out Blow Pops to everyone as you spread the pairs among the Post-it Notes. They will have two minutes at each to write down their ideas before you yell "POP" and they switch to another sheet. If their idea has already been written down, they should put a check by it to indicate a second vote for this idea.
 - At the end of the time, invite the group to identify what common themes/activities they came up with.

Facilitators: Take a picture of the Post-It Notes. During the Big Sister Meeting next week collate the suggestions and develop a Topic Schedule for the semester.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

YWLP FEEDBACK FORM SECOND SEMESTER

Turn into your Facilitator when completed.

Little Sister's Name: _____

Big Sister's Name: _____

School/Group Name: _____

Thinking about last semester:

1. What were your favorite activities and experiences that you shared with your sister?

2. What experiences weren't so great?






Hopes for the new semester:

1. What issues facing adolescent girls do you want the group to talk about (e.g., fights with parents, teachers, dating, arguments with friends, etc.)?

2. What new activities and experiences would you like to try this semester with your Big Sister?

3. What sparks do I want to develop this semester (i.e., something I'm good at, something I really care about, something special about me)?

Setting a SMART Goal

	Description	Developing SMART Goals
S	Specific 	Goals are clear and detailed. A specific goal will usually answer the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What: What do I want to accomplish? • Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal. • Who: Who is involved? • Where: Identify a location.
M	Measurable 	It is important to be clear about how progress towards the goal will be measured. If a goal is not measurable, it is not possible to know whether progress toward successful completion is being made. A measurable goal will usually answer questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much? • How many? • How will I know when it is accomplished?
A	Attainable 	An attainable goal is one that can actually be accomplished. An attainable goal will usually answer the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the goal be accomplished?
R	Realistic 	A realistic goal is one that is practical. It will usually answer the question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I really achieve this goal?
T	Timely 	A commitment to a deadline helps focus efforts on completion of the goal on or before the due date. A timely goal will usually answer the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When? • What can I do 6 months from now? • What can I do 6 weeks from now? • What can I do today?



YWLP Goal Setting Guide

My Name: _____ My Sister's Name: _____ Date: _____

I want my goal to be about: _____

How will I accomplish this? My goal will be SMART!

Specific	
Measurable	
Attainable	
Realistic	
Timely	

Therefore, my SMART goal is to: _____

Things I am already doing that will help me reach my goal are: _____

Things that might get in the way of me reaching my goal are: _____

I _____ agree to follow my SMART goal plan for the next month. I will start following my plan on _____ (date).

Little Sister Signature _____

Big Sister Signature _____

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 11: Getting to Know Each Other Again

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Developing shared goals is a mechanism for deepening connection.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Set Goals!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** One Big Family (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** Highs/Lows Dating Interview (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Designing Our Group**
 - Activity:** Topic Schedule (10 minutes)
 - Activity:** Hot Topic (15 minutes)
- Sister Time** (35 minutes)
- Focus Two: Working Together**
 - Activity:** Blind Retriever (30 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Materials for Selected Energizer
- ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad
- ___ Cloth for blindfolds

In expanding file folder:

- ___ YWLP Feedback form* (1 per pair – for pairs who didn't complete last week)

Facilitators:

- ___ Turn in all YWLP Feedback Forms to YWLP staff

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 11: Getting to Know Each Other Again

Energizer (10 minutes): Choose an energizer to start your group meeting.

One Big Family: As everyone arrives ask them to write the name of a famous woman she admires on a slip of paper. Put the slips in a container, mix them up, and have one person read them all out loud twice. Begin the game by having everyone stand in a circle and take turns trying to guess the character of another group member. If they guess correctly, this person “joins their family” and stands with them. If they guess correctly for someone who already has members of their family, the entire family joins the new family. The game ends when the group becomes one large family.

Or do an energizer from last semester that the group really liked.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **Highs/Lows and Group Goal Check**
- ✓ **Dating Interviews:** End by passing out the Dating Interview Questions and invite the Littles to interview an important woman in their life (e.g., mother, grandmother, aunt, older sister) about dating before next week’s group. This will be the topic of next week’s group!

Focus One: Designing Our Group

The goal of this focus is to share what the group wants to do this semester.

Topic Schedule (10 minutes)

This activity re-introduces goal setting as an YWLP leadership tool.

- Re-introduce the Leadership Secret Leaders Set Goals and its connection to YWLP’s mission slogan *Competence: We get things done!*
- Display your group’s Topic Schedule (written on a large Post-It Note) and share how it is based on the process the group used last week to set the goals for the group topics this semester. Ask for feedback on the schedule and make changes as needed.
- Invite pairs to pick at least one week that they think matches one of their sparks and add their name for that topic. This is their opportunity to be a leader for this topic. More than one pair can sign up for a topic.

Facilitators: Make a copy of the schedule and who signed up to lead as a reference.

Hot Topic (15 minutes)

Pick one of the hot topics the group identified last week that isn't already included in the curriculum and ask the group to talk about it and role play solutions. Invite one of the pairs to lead.

- After talking about the various issues related to the hot topic, invite them to consider if any of the leadership strategies they learned last semester might help.
 - ABCs of Problem Solving
 - Goal Setting
 - Being Mindful
 - Magic Three
 - GASP
 - Gossip Guard
 - Stress Reduction
- Role play possible solutions to the situation.

Sister Time (35 minutes)

- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Working Together

The goal of this focus is to help girls get to know each other again and practice working together.

Blind Retriever (30 minutes)

This activity helps girls work together and build trust and teamwork! Split the group into their sister pairs and explain they will be working together to retrieve something from the room, blindfolded!

- ✓ Have one person blindfold the other in each pair. Then, the non blindfolded person will take any object and hide it somewhere in the room.
- ✓ Then, each pair will lead her partner (blindfolded) through the room to retrieve the object!
- ✓ If there is time, let each person be blindfolded!
- ✓ If the group wants, you can keep score of which pair finds their object first.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)



Weekly Topic Schedule for Our Group

Challenges/Issues We Identified	When We'll Focus on This	How is This Related to Our Sparks?
	Week 11	
	Week 12	
	Week 13	
	Week 14	
	Week 15	
	Week 16	
	Week 17	
	Week 18	
	Week 19	
	Week 20	
	Leadership Days 1 2	

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 12: Leading in Romance

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Empowering Women to Care for Themselves and Each Other
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Respect Themselves!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Leaning Towers or Build a Tower (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Lows (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Healthy Relationships**
 - Activity:** Relationships 101 (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** Step into the Circle (10 minutes)
 - Activity:** Discussion (10 minutes)
- Sister Time** (20 minutes)
- Focus Two: Navigating Relationships**
 - Activity:** Relationship Scenarios (20 minutes)
 - Activity: Debrief** (15 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Newspaper and tape (optional energizer)
 ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad

Bigs:

___ This week we will be discussing healthy relationships, including potential signs of unhealthy or abusive relationships. We recognize this is a difficult topic, please make sure you are taking care of yourself. Connect with YWLP if you need extra support.

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 12: Leading in Romance

Energizer (10 minutes)

These activities are a fun, active, way to symbolize what it means to support one another. Choose one.

Leaning Towers

This exercise is done from the floor (not from a table or chair!). Some group members may have concerns about their size, comfort, and safety during this physical activity. How can the group be supportive of each other?

- Divide the group into groups of four (two Big/Little pairs per group) and have the Bigs start as the *supporters* and ask a Little to volunteer as a *leaner*.
- Standing behind the leaner, the supporters hold wrists and step a few feet away from each other, making sure that their arms are tightly connected. Have the Little stand with her back facing away from the supporters a few feet in front of them and close her eyes.
- Use a call and response such as “Support Team Ready?” “Support Team Ready!” “I’m leaning!”
- After she calls out, “I’m leaning,” the Sister keeps her body straight and stiff and leans back into the arms of the supporters, who make sure she doesn’t fall.
- There won’t be time for everyone to have a turn now but the group can also do this exercise over the next several weeks as an energizer.

Build a Tower

Divide the group up into teams of 2 – 4 people. Give each group an equal pile of newspapers and a roll of tape. Ensure that you have some spare newspapers in case one team ends up needing them for any reason. Set your timer for 10 minutes. On your signal, all teams should go to their newspaper piles and begin working. The goal of the game is to build the largest tower out of only newspapers. Teams can use any sort of design methods they would like as long as only newspaper and tape is being used.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **High/Low:** Go around the circle and have everyone share their High/Lows from the week.

Focus One: Healthy Relationships

Relationships can be tricky, whether they are romantic, friendly, or with our family members. This week focuses on identifying when a relationship is healthy and when it might be unhealthy. This can be a sensitive subject, so it is important to create a group environment today that feels safe for everyone to ask questions. Strive to use gender neutral terms to be inclusive.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

Relationships 101 (15 minutes)

Introduce the two key components of a healthy relationship: (1) communication and (2) healthy boundaries. Remind the group of the confidentiality rules we have in place and the reasons we would have to break confidentiality (if we believe a Little Sister may be in danger).

Communication

- Both partners should want and expect the same things. This can be really challenging. Ask the group:
 - How can you make sure you are on the same page with another person?
 - How do you know if you want different things from someone else?
- Review the answers as a group, and make sure you cover the following:
 - Communication is essential because no one can read your mind. No one knows better than you what you want or need. You are the expert! To make this happen, you can...
 - **Speak Up** – Talk about what is bothering you instead of keeping it inside.
 - **Respect Each Other** – Everyone is different and everyone's wants and needs have value. It's important to respect the other person's feelings and what they want.
 - **Make Compromises** – Disagreements happen, and you can't have it your way 100% of the time. Find a solution where everyone feels respective.
 - **Show and Ask For Support** – Demonstrate your caring by encouraging your friend, partner, or family member when they need it. Be willing to ask for support when you need it as well.

- **Value Privacy** – It's common to feel like in a relationship you have to share everything. Privacy and time to be by yourself, especially to do activities you care about, are important.

Healthy Boundaries in Romantic Relationships and Friendships

Use the conversation about valuing privacy to transition into talking about boundaries. Be sure to hit these key points:

- Healthy relationships are relationships or friendships where you are not together 24/7 or in constant communication. They require space.
- Setting healthy boundaries can keep these relationships healthy and safe.
- Boundaries can help the other members of a relationship better understand what it is that each person wants.
- Healthy boundaries allow people to:
 - Participate in activities they like.
 - Respect individual differences, wants, likes, and needs.
 - Go out with friends without a romantic partner.
 - Have private passwords for email, their phone, or social media.

Step Into the Circle (10 minutes)

This activity will open up discussion about times when communication (or lack thereof) has been important in relationships. In this week's Big Sister Meeting, decide on 10-12 prompts that will be suitable for your group. The first 2-3 prompts should be easy. Possibilities are listed below but feel free to add prompts that are most suitable for your group.

- Start by having the group take several slow, deep breaths so they can do this activity mindfully.
- Step Into the Circle... (~4-5 minutes)
 - If you text, snap, or DM your friends to stay in touch with them.
 - If you have been frustrated when someone doesn't reply to you.
 - If you've ever left someone else on read.
 - If you've ever been left on read.
 - If you have solved a disagreement with your friend by talking about it.
 - If you have solved a disagreement with a family member by talking about it.
 - If you've kept your feelings inside instead of talking about them.
 - If you've compromised in a relationship.
 - If you have shown someone your support.
 - If someone has asked for your password.
 - If your privacy has been violated.
 - If you ever wished people were more supportive of you.
 - If you wish you knew how to better support others.
 - If you have compromised.

- Add additional prompts that are suitable for your group.

Discussion (10 minutes)

The goal is to continue a conversation about communication.

- **Stay Curious:** Facilitate this discussion from an inclusive point of view. Be curious about their answers and ask for more details.
- **Link to Life:** Don't forget to talk about how many of us have to “step into the circle” in real life. Transition back and forth from analyzing the activity to analyzing the challenges identified.
- **Mindful Sharing:** Help everyone be mindful

Discussion: During this week's Big Sister Meeting decide on discussion points that will be suitable for your group. Some possibilities are:

- How did it feel to step into the circle?
- What were you surprised by?

Sister Time (20 minutes)

- ✓ Optional: Continue the conversation about healthy relationships during sister time.
- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Navigating Relationships

(Adapted from the *Healthy Relationship Middle School Educators Toolkit* on Loveisrespect.org)

This focus continues the topic of healthy relationships by discussing what an unhealthy relationship may look like, and how to identify what makes it unhealthy. Make sure you plan group so that there is time to debrief together after Focus Two.

Relationship Scenarios (20 Minutes)

Below are three different relationship scenarios with discussion questions and key themes. You can choose to break up your group into small groups to discuss the scenarios individually, or pick one or two scenarios and discuss them in a

large group. If you do small groups, consider having each small group report back to the rest of the group about their scenario and their main discussion points. **It is very important you read through the chosen scenarios and key themes prior to the group meeting.**

Scenario 1: Communicating Effectively

Introduction: Open, honest communication should be part of every healthy relationship. It's okay to get angry in a relationship—everyone does at some point! What's important is to resolve conflict in a healthy way. It is important to open the channels of communication between partners. Communicating isn't always easy. Some of the tips that we will discuss this lesson may feel unnatural or awkward at first, but they will help Little Sisters communicate better and build healthy relationships. As you are discussing this lesson, you should highlight that if someone listening is in an unhealthy or an abusive relationship, they must be careful. Remind them that they know their relationship best and if any of these tips would put them in danger, don't try them.

Scenario

After a disagreement, Sam, the person that you are dating, uses the silent treatment and won't talk to you for days. During that time, you have a sporting event that's important to you. Usually, Sam is there to cheer you on, but this time decides not to. You become extremely frustrated, and that night, you send them a text with insulting words demanding a call immediately, even though you have both already gone to bed. Sam responds by saying that it would be best to talk at school in the in the morning.

Potential Discussion Questions

1. Is the silent treatment an effective way to resolve a conflict? If yes, for how long? If no, why not?
2. Is it okay to communicate by text to try to resolve a conflict? Why or why not?
3. Does anger due to a disagreement excuse using insulting words or behavior? Why or why not?
4. Do you think it is appropriate to demand an immediate response during a fight? Why or why not?
5. Was the text suggesting talking in the morning dismissive or a good idea? Why or why not?
6. Is this behavior healthy, unhealthy?
7. What are healthy and unhealthy ways to communicate during a disagreement?

Key Themes and Suggestions for Scenario 1

(You do not necessarily need to reiterate all in the group, however, use this information as needed)

For healthier communication, try to:

- **Find the Right Time.** If something is bothering you and you would like to have a conversation about it, it can be helpful to find the right time to talk. Try to find a time when both you and your partner are calm and not distracted, stressed or in a rush. You might even consider scheduling a time to talk if one or both of you is really busy!
- **Talk Face to Face.** Avoid talking about serious matters or issues in writing. Text messages, letters and emails can be misinterpreted. Talk in person or on the phone so there aren't any unnecessary miscommunications.
- **Do Not Attack.** Even when we mean well, we can sometimes come across as harsh because of our word choice. Using "you" can sound like you're attacking, which will make your partner defensive and less receptive to your message. Instead, try using "I" or "we." For example, say "I feel like we haven't been as close lately" instead of "You have been distant with me."
- **Be Honest.** Agree to be honest. Sometimes the truth hurts, but it's the key to a healthy relationship. Admit that you aren't always perfect and apologize when you make a mistake instead of making excuses. You will feel better and it will help strengthen your relationship.
- **Check Your Body Language.** Make eye contact when speaking face-to-face. Sit up and face your partner. Let your partner know you're listening. Show them you really care. Don't take a phone call, text or play a video game when you're talking. Listen and respond.
- **Use the 48 Hour Rule.** If your partner does something that makes you angry, you need to tell them about it. But you don't have to do so right away. If you're still hurt 48 hours later, say something. If not, consider forgetting about it. But remember your partner can't read your mind. If you don't speak up when you're upset, there is no way for them to apologize or change. Once you do mention your hurt feelings and your partner sincerely apologizes, let it go. Don't bring up past issues if they're not relevant.

How to Communicate if You Are Angry

If you get angry with your partner, here are a few steps to take:

- **Stop.** If you get really angry about something, stop, take a step back and breathe. Give yourself time to calm down by watching TV, talking to a friend, playing a video game, taking a walk, listening to some music or whatever helps you relax. Taking a break can keep the situation from getting worse.
- **Think.** After you're no longer upset, think about the situation and why you got so angry. Was it how your partner spoke or something they did? Figure out the real problem then think about how to explain your feelings.
- **Talk.** Finally, talk to your partner and when you do, follow the tips under Key Themes.
- **Listen.** After you tell your partner how you feel, remember to stop talking and listen to what they have to say. You both deserve the opportunity to express how you feel in a safe and healthy environment.

Scenario 2: Resolving Conflict

Introduction: There is conflict in all relationships. And by “conflict,” we specifically mean verbal disagreements and arguments. People disagree and that isn’t necessarily a bad thing. In fact, everyone has the right to a different opinion from their partner. In a healthy relationship, communication is key. When partners communicate effectively, they understand each other better and that makes their relationship stronger. When they can resolve conflicts successfully, they are developing a healthy, mature relationship. But, while conflict is normal, it can also be a sign that parts of the relationship aren’t working.

Scenario

Alex, the person that you are dating, says that you don’t really like them because you want to go to the mall with your friend instead of you two spending time alone together. While at the mall, you run into a group of friends from school and post a picture on social media. After seeing your post, Alex becomes very upset with you. They usually get really angry with you when you post pictures with other people. The next time that you are together, Alex accuses you of cheating with someone from the picture on your social media post and tells you to choose between them and your friends, by saying: “If we are going to remain in a relationship, you can no longer hang-out with your friends.” Alex also demands that you spend more time alone together.

Potential Discussion Questions

1. Are the accusations in this scenario reasonable? Why or why not?
2. Are there healthy boundaries this relationship? Why or why not?
3. What are the real issues in this relationship?
4. What are possible compromises for this situation?
5. Is this behavior healthy, unhealthy or abusive?
6. How do you manage and resolve this conflict?

Key Themes and Suggestions for Scenario 2

(You do not necessarily need to reiterate all in the group, however, use this information as needed)

Conflict Resolution in Healthy Relationships

If your conflict is based on which movie to see, what friends to hang out with or who should do the dishes, then use the tips below to help resolve these arguments in a healthy way:

- **Set Boundaries.** Everyone deserves to be treated with respect—even during an argument. If your partner curses at you, calls you names or ridicules you, tell them to stop. If they don’t, walk away and tell them that you don’t want to continue arguing right now.
- **Find the Real Issue.** Typically, arguments happen when one partner’s wants are not being met. Try to get to the heart of the matter. If your partner seems

needy, maybe they are just feeling insecure and need your encouragement. Learn to talk about the real issue so you can avoid constant fighting.

- **Agree to Disagree.** If you and your partner can't resolve an issue, sometimes it's best to drop it. You can't agree on everything. Focus on what matters. If the issue is too important for you to drop and you can't agree to disagree, then maybe you're not really compatible.
- **Compromise When Possible.** Easy to say but hard to do, compromising is a major part of conflict resolution and any successful relationship. So your partner wants Chinese food and you want Indian? Compromise and get Chinese tonight, but Indian next time you eat out. Find a middle ground that can allow both of you to feel satisfied with the outcome.
- **Consider Everything.** Is this issue really important? Does it change how the two of you feel about each other? Are you compromising your beliefs or morals? If yes, it's important that you really stress your position. If not, maybe this is a time for compromise. Also, consider your partner's arguments. Why are they upset? What does the issue look like from their point of view? It is unusual for your partner to get this upset? Does your partner usually compromise? Are you being inconsiderate?

Still arguing? If you try these tips but still argue constantly, consider whether the relationship is right for both of you. You both deserve a healthy relationship without constant conflict.

Conflict Resolution in Unhealthy Relationships

While conflict is normal, arguments shouldn't turn into personal attacks and neither partner should try to lower the other's self-esteem. If you can't express yourself without fear of retaliation, you may be experiencing abuse. Remember, one of the main signs of an abusive relationship is a partner who tries to control or manipulate you.

Scenario 3: Stepping In

Introduction: Watching a friend go through an abusive relationship can be very scary, and it can seem difficult to figure out how to help them. The decision to leave can only be made by the person experiencing the abuse, but there a lot of things that someone can do to help a friend stay safe. If a friend is undergoing the serious and painful effects of dating abuse, they may have a very different point of view than you. They may have heard the abuse was their fault and feel responsible. If they do choose to leave, they may feel sad and lonely when it's over, even though the relationship was abusive. They may get back together with their ex many times, even though you want them to stay apart. It may be difficult for them to even bring up a conversation about the abuse they're experiencing.

Scenario

You are at the movies with your friend, Taylor. On your way to the movies, you heard Taylor tell the person that they are dating, Jesse, where they were going and that they would see each other later. The entire time you are at the movies, your friend receives repeated text messages from this person. As you are

leaving, Taylor admits to you that Jesse was furious that they went to the movies. Later that night, you see that Jesse posted an insulting comment and photo about your friend on Instagram while you two were at the movies. You also know that this person checks Taylor's phone every day at school to see who they have been texting.

Potential Discussion Questions

1. Is it okay that the person that your friend is dating did not stop texting them? Why or why not?
2. How do you feel about this person's reaction to your friend going to the movies with you?
3. What do you think about this person's motives for posting the negative comment about your friend on Instagram?
4. Is it okay for this person to check your friend's text messages every day? Why or why not?
5. Is this behavior healthy, unhealthy or abusive?
6. As a friend, how can you support them?

Key Themes for Scenario 3

Because relationships exist on a spectrum, it can be hard to tell when a behavior crosses the line from healthy to unhealthy or even abusive. Some of the warning signs of abuse to see if a relationship is going in the wrong direction are as follow:

- Checking someone's cell phone or email without permission
- Constantly putting someone down
- Extreme jealousy or insecurity
- Explosive temper
- Isolating someone from family or friends
- Making false accusations
- Mood swings
- Physically hurting someone in any way
- Possessiveness
- Telling someone what to do

Debrief (15 Minutes)

Take time as a group to debrief after discussing these relationships. Give the Little Sisters space to express their feelings and think through how the scenarios made them feel.

Offering and Asking For Help

If needed in group, here is some advice and resources for discussing potentially unhealthy relationships.

- Don't be afraid to reach out to a friend who you think needs help. Tell them you're concerned for their safety and want to help.

- **Listen** nonjudgmentally to what the person tells you about what is going on. Trust your gut when it comes to what you see or hear. Believe them and take them seriously. Acknowledge their feelings and be respectful of their decisions.
- Help your friend recognize that the abuse is not “normal” and is NOT their fault. Everyone deserves a healthy, nonviolent relationship.
- Focus on your friend, not the abusive partner. Even if your friend stays with their partner, it’s important they still feel comfortable talking to you about it.
- If they break up with the abusive partner, continue to be supportive after the relationship is over.
- Don’t contact their abuser or publicly post negative things about them online. It’ll only worsen the situation for your friend.
- Even when you feel like there’s nothing you can do, don’t forget that by being supportive and caring, you’re already doing a lot.
- **Be Prepared** – Think about how you can connect your them with resources, such as a trusted adult at school or a hotline they can call, such as “Love Is Respect” (chat at: loveisrespect.org, text loveis to 22522, or call 1-866-331-9474). Talk to an adult about how you can make them a safety plan.

Big Sisters and Facilitators: If you have any concerns at all about any group members after this week, please talk to YWLP Staff!

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 13: Leading with Peers

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Being mindful is foundational to solving problems.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Autonomy
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Are Mindful!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** What's Going On? (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Lows and Star Time (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Perspective Taking**
 - Activity:** Hot Topic: Perspective Taking (25 minutes)
- Sister Time** (25 minutes)
- Focus Two: Leadership Styles**
 - Activity:** Colors of Leadership (40)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad
- ___ Computers (at least 2) and Connection to Internet
- ___ The Test Your Awareness Video: <https://youtu.be/ubNF9QNEQLA>

In expanding file folder:

- ___ Perspective Taking Leadership Guide* (1 per pair)
- ___ Colors of Leadership Quiz (1 per person)

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 13: Leading with Peers

Energizer (10 minutes)

What's Going On? Divide the group into at least two smaller groups. You'll need a laptop for each group. Share that you're going to show them a video and they'll need to pay attention to what they're seeing. For fun, ask one group to take three deep breaths before they start and the other to do 10 jumping jacks.

Video: <https://youtu.be/ubNF9QNEQLA>

- What changes were you able to notice? (Feel free to play the video twice if they want to try and notice the changes a second time after they've seen the end)
- Did breathing help them pay attention?
- Share that it is impossible to take in everything and so we miss things, sometimes important things. This week the focus is on strategies to help us manage this better.

Reminder: For next week invite one or two Littles to teach the group a dance or cheerleading routine for the energizer. Ask for volunteers today.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **High/Low and Goal Check:** Go around the circle and have everyone share their High/Lows from the week and check in goals.

Focus One: Perspective Taking

The Leadership Secret that is the main focus for this week is Leaders Are Mindful and the activities focus on how slowing down and being mindful can help us make better decisions in difficult situations. Strategies like the ABCs of Problem Solving and GASP can also be helpful.

Hot Topic: Perspective Taking (25 minutes)

Pick one of the hot topics the group identified that is related to peer relationships (e.g., a friend spreading a rumor about you, drama with friends, feeling left out by a friend) and have two Bigs role play the challenge unsuccessfully first. Invite one of the pairs to lead the discussion as the group tries to figure out how to handle it like a leader. Be sure to clarify the issues before moving to possible solutions.

- **Hint:** Try to make the situation more realistic by making it nuanced but keep the information secret unless the Littles “ask to understand” what is going on (e.g., girl tells others about seeing a friend shoplift a shirt because she is worried about her; but the friend was just joking about shoplifting to try to be cool. She bought the shirt and even has the receipt).
- **Issues:** What’s going on? What might each person be feeling? It may help to show the picture of the duck/rabbit or woman/vase from Week 3 as a reminder that people can see the same situation differently. How hard is it to take the other’s perspective?
- **Leadership Strategies:** Remind them that the Leadership Secret today is Leaders are Mindful and that connects with the YWP mission *Autonomy: We think for ourselves*. How might they use some of the mindfulness strategies to slow down, pay attention and have compassionate acceptance? How might some of the YWLP strategies help them come up with a solution (e.g., breathe, decide what their goal is, ask to understand).
 - ABCs of Problem Solving
 - Acknowledge
 - Breath
 - Chew & Choose
 - GASP
 - Goal
 - Ask to understand
 - Share calmly
 - Problem solve together
 - Gossip Guard
 - Stay positive
 - Think twice
- **Role Play:** Have pairs role play possible solutions to the situation.
 - How well did they negotiate a solution?
 - Did taking the perspective of the other help? What made this hard?
 - How satisfied are they with the outcome? What would they do differently next time?

Sister Time (25 minutes)

- ✓ **Perspective Taking Practice:** Talk with your Little about a movie they might have seen recently. Who was the antagonist? Who was the protagonist? Take some time trying to see the movie from each point of view.
 - If time allows, try to do this with a real life example (e.g., an argument with a friend, sibling, or parent). Can you see their side?

- If Big Sisters feel comfortable, they should model this. This might look like saying the following:
 - “Last week, my sister and I got into an argument about using the car when I come into town. I was really frustrated because when I’m at home, I want to be able to see my friends. But when I thought about it a little bit more, I realize that it could be really annoying that her life gets disrupted when I come home. Maybe she feels like she’s stuck at home when I use the car, or maybe she feels like I’m saying I’m more important when I tell her I should use the car instead of her. What do you think?”
- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little’s voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we’ve created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Leadership Styles

The focus of this activity is to help girls understand different ways of being leaders and how their own personality might affect their own decisions/actions.

Colors of Leadership

(Activity adapted from the Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership Virginia Seminar)

Colors of Leadership quiz (10 minutes)

Have everyone take the colors of leadership quiz and total up their points for each color. Encourage folks to not think too much about scoring each statement, but to go with their initial reaction and move through the quiz quickly.

Colors of Leadership Discussion (30 minutes)

Bigs: During your big sister group, brainstorm some creative, interactive ways to present each of the personality colors to your little sisters.

Once everyone has completed their quizzes explain that the colors of leadership is a test that is meant to help us gain insight into the ways that we behave and the ways that other people behave.

This quiz is NOT the end all be all of your personality. It is one step you have taken into learning more about yourself and how you relate to others. It can help

you identify some of your strengths and some of your areas for growth. Now we'll go through some of the general traits for each color personality, but keep in mind that not all of the traits of your color may apply to you, and that's OK!

So that no one feels put on the spot during the discussion, consider waiting until after you've gone through the traits of the four colors to ask people to reveal what their colors are.

Gold

- Golds are people who generally follow the rules, respect authority, have a strong sense of right and wrong, and value home, family, and tradition.
- Golds are loyal, dependable, prepared, sensible, thorough, and punctual.
- Golds will value things like structure, regulations, and the ability to stay focused. They will dislike situations that are random or unfocused. In groups they can foster their group members' potential, pay attention to details and focus on achievement.
- Golds may perceive themselves as: Extremely put together, punctual, detail oriented, efficient, in-charge, sequential.
- However, to others, Golds may be perceived as: rigid, stubborn, boring, judgmental, or uptight.
- Ways to make a Gold happy are to: Be on time, respect their need for security, respond and follow through with plans, and make plans in advance.
- Some famous Golds are: Henry Ford, Hermione Granger, Mr. Rogers, and George Washington

Blue

- Blues are people who want to feel unique and authentic, and value integrity and unity. They are enthusiastic, sympathetic, warm, communicative, and compassionate.
- Blues will value things like compassion, sympathy, close relationships with people. They dislike dishonesty or deception. They are highly expressive and will work to foster harmony in a group.
- Blues may perceive themselves as: Warm, extremely empathetic individual that desires unity and peace in all of their relationships.

- However, to others, Blues may be perceived as: Overly emotional, weird, idealistic, too trusting, soft, and out of touch
- Ways to make a Blue happy are to: Spend one-on-one time with them, validate their emotions, listen intently, share your own thoughts and feelings, and praise their imagination and creativity.
- Some famous Blues are: Ghandi, Emily Dickinson, President Bill Clinton, and Muhammad Ali

Green

- Greens are people who seek knowledge and understanding. They live by their own standards and value intelligence, insight, fairness, and justice. They are analytical, calm, logical, and curious.
- Greens will value things like answers or resolutions to problems, intelligence and clear explanations. They dislike unfairness and injustice. They may be reserved, and will stay calm and collected even in stressful situations. In a group they can foster innovation and the use of technology.
- Greens may perceive themselves as: Right 98% of the time, Rational, Independent, Detail Oriented, High Expectations of themselves and others
- However, to others, Greens may be perceived as: Uncaring, Perfectionist, Unable to Listen, Arrogant, Controlling.
- Ways to make a Green happy are to: recognize their need for independence, value their abstract “big picture” thinking, respect their privacy, and challenge their problem solving abilities.
- Some famous Greens are: Socrates, Frank Lloyd Wright, Benjamin Franklin and Marie Curie.

Orange

- Oranges are people who may act on a moment’s notice, want fun, variety, and excitement, value courage and are natural performers, competitors and troubleshooters.
- Oranges will value skills, competition, and having options. They may not like rigidness, authority, or forcefulness. They may be optimistic, impatient, eager, and confident. In a group they will foster fun and enjoyment.
- Oranges may perceive themselves as: A negotiator, multi-tasker, easy-going, straight forward, now-oriented, friendly person
- However, to others, Oranges may be perceived as: Irresponsible, selfish,

ignoring the rules, unprepared, easily distracted, unorganized

- Ways to make an Orange happy are to: Recognize their need for freedom, value their playfulness, praise their skills, encourage them to think before they act, and be optimistic.
- Some famous Oranges are: President John F. Kennedy, Ernest Hemingway, Amelia Earhart, and Lucille Ball.

Once you've reviewed the traits of each color you can have everyone raise their hands and reveal what their colors are.

If someone feels like their color might be wrong, that is ok! There could be a number of reasons for this. Maybe their answers to the quiz were a mixture of their own preferences and the expectations that they perceive other people have put on them. They might also be in a growth period and are currently developing previously unused characteristics.

Remind folks that these colors are not meant to stereotype them or other people, they are simply meant to help folks think about new ways to understand themselves and also to understand the motivations behind other people's actions.

Ask little sisters for some suggestions of situations where it may be useful to consider the leadership colors of themselves or others?

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

Colors of Leadership Quiz: This questionnaire describes forty different personality traits grouped together into four sets of ten statements each. Read each statement and circle the number that most naturally describes how often that personality trait applies to you. Add the values of the circle numbers for each set of ten traits. Enter the total for those ten traits only in the appropriate total score space provided at the bottom of each side of the page. Your highest trait total score is your core personality color. Knowing your “core color” is a key to better understanding of yourself and others.

Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Most of the time	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5
I thrive on action and adventure.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I seldom plan ahead. I dislike too much structure in my life.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I am naturally impulsive. I prefer to be spontaneous.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I welcome change and variety					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I naturally like to take risks.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I am competitive by nature. I go all out to win.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I seek to create excitement in my life.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I believe the purpose of life is to be enjoyed.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I am naturally playful. I have a good sense of humor.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I value physical skillfulness more than intelligence and/or sensitivity.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
Orange Total Score: _____					

Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Most of the time	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5
I am driven to understand things and events using logic and analysis.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I need to be valued for my knowledge and expertise.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I am good at developing strategies to solve problems.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I seek to develop competence in others and myself. I value intelligence.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I believe the purpose of life is to be successful at whatever one does.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I am an abstract thinker. I live in a world of ideas. I enjoy thinking.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
If asked for my opinion, I am likely to offer constructive criticism.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
I like to think about how things work—“cause and effect” relationships.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
My head rules my heart. Logic is more important than feelings.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
Others often see me as cool and unemotional. I dislike being emotional.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
Green Total Score: _____					

Colors of leadership quiz continued											
Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Most of the time	Always	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Most of the time	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am naturally organized. I need order and structure in my life.						I seek to create harmony and cooperation among people. I hate conflict.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I need to be valued for being responsible, hardworking, and dedicated.						Relationships are the central focus of my life.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I naturally respect authority and follow the rules.						I naturally care about others' feelings and want them to care about mine.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I seek to develop responsibility and good behavior in others and myself.						I need to feel important and significant to those I care about.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I believe the purpose of life is to work hard and do what is right.						I believe life must be meaningful. I try to make a difference in the world.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I am a practical person. I have a strong need for security.						Harmony is essential in order for me to be productive and happy in life.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I cherish the traditions of home and family and try to uphold them.						I need authenticity and honesty in my relationships.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I like to make lists and follow them so I can get lots of things done.						I like to be seen as different and unique. I desire to express my true self.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I have a strong sense of right and wrong.						I am a true romantic. I enjoy being affection and loving in my behavior.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
I usually plan ahead. I like stability and predictability in my life.						I seek to develop the potential of others so they can be their best.					
0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
Gold Total Score: _____						Blue Total Score: _____					
List your four colors from highest score to lowest score:											

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 14: Leading in School and the Community

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Challenging situations necessitate slowing down in order to recognize your options.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Autonomy
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Keep Their Cool!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Dance Routine or Scavenger Hunt (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Low and Goal Check (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Leaders with Style**
 - Activity:** Hot Topic: Negotiating (25 minutes)
- Sister Time** (25 minutes)
- Focus Two: Perspective Taking**
 - Activity:** Top Ten Gallery Walk (40 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Note Pad. ___ Tape

Expanding file folder:

___ Top ten sheet (1 per group)

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 14: Leading in School and the Community

Energizer (10 minutes) Choose one.

Dance Routine

Invite one or two of the Littles to teach the group a cheerleading or dance routine. Have suitable music available. If you have no Little volunteers, invite a few Bigs to lead the group in Zumba for 10 minutes!!

Photo Scavenger Hunt

This can be done by pairs or with a team of four. Before group prepare a list of about ten interesting places, things, and circumstances that can be captured using a camera and make enough copies for each team. Be creative! Some examples of items are:

- A very relaxing place
- Something big and the color pink
- A very small book
- A photo with a yellow car
- The funniest thing you can find
- Something that begins with the letter “Z”

Each team should find as many things as they can on the list, and for each item, take a picture with all the team members in the photo. Share that everyone needs to be back in the room by x time (8 minutes) or they are eliminated. The winner is the team that has photos of the most things on the list.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **High/Low and Goal Check:** Go around the circle and have everyone share their High/Lows from the week and check progress on goals!

Focus One: Leading with Style

The Leadership Secret that is the main focus for this week is Leaders Keep Their Cool and the activities focus on how keeping our cool by listening to and appreciating others can help us negotiate in difficult situations. Strategies like the ABCs of Problem Solving and GASP can be helpful.

Hot Topic: Negotiating (25 minutes)

Pick one of the hot topics the group identified that is related to negotiating in a difficult situation (e.g., you want to do one thing and your friend wants to do something else this weekend; you want a new cell phone from your parents, you want to talk to a teacher about changing your grade) and have two Bigs role play the challenge unsuccessfully first. Invite one of the pairs to lead the discussion as the group tries to figure out how to handle it like a leader. Be sure to clarify the issues before moving to possible solutions.

- **Hint:** As you did last week, try to make the situation more realistic by making it nuanced but keep the information secret unless the Littles “ask to understand” (e.g., girl wants a new cell phone because hers doesn’t always work and her friends are making fun of it because it is so outdated; but parents don’t have any extra money right now because they have to repair their car).
- **Issues:** What negotiating strategies don’t work? What’s going on? What might each person be feeling? How hard is it to take the other’s perspective?
- **Leadership Strategies:** Remind them that the Leadership Secret today is Leaders Keep Their Cool and its connection to the YWP mission *Autonomy: We are independent thinkers*. How might they use some of the YWLP strategies to keep their cool and take the perspective of the other and develop compassionate acceptance in this situation? How might they use some of the YWLP strategies to help them come up with a solution (e.g., breathe, decide what their goal is, ask to understand). Ask to understand and exchange for change is especially important in negotiating.
 - ABCs of Problem Solving (breath, chew & choose)
 - GASP (exchange for change)
 - Magic Three
 - Smile
 - Ask
 - Thank
- **Role Play:** Have pairs role play possible solutions to the situation.
 - How well did they negotiate a solution?
 - Did taking the perspective of the other help? Did asking to understand? Did exchange for change?
 - How satisfied are they with the outcome?
 - What would they do differently?

Sister Time (25 minutes)

- ✓ **Follow Up:** Talk with your Little Sister about today’s topic—negotiating. Where does she feel strong? What skills would she like to practice more?
 - **Optional practice:** With your Little, pretend that one of you is going to sell each other an item that is handy in the room (e.g., backpack, cell phone, food) and the other is going to buy it. Practice negotiating with each other to buy the item. Then, switch sides to see the other’s perspective.
 - **Check in:** How well did they negotiate a solution? Did taking the perspective of the other help? Did asking to understand? Did exchange for change? How satisfied are they with the outcome? What would they do differently?
- This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little’s voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we’ve created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Perspective Taking

People have different opinions about the best sports, foods, shows, teams, and more. Even close friends don’t always agree on what activity to do next when they are spending time together. That’s because everyone has different perspectives and preferences.

Top Ten Gallery Walk (40 Minutes)

To practice negotiating and taking each other’s perspective, each pair should create a Top Ten list (for example, Top Ten Foods, Top Ten TV Shows on Netflix, Top Ten Athletes, etc.).

- To start off, each person should brainstorm a few ideas for what their list should be.
- Then, the pair should discuss their options and decide on which list they will make.
- Each pair has 15 minutes to create their Top Ten list, filling out the Top Ten List worksheet. The list should represent the pair’s interests, not just the interest of one person.
- After everyone has created their lists, all of the lists should be posted on the walls. Everyone will have 10 minutes to look at the lists around the room.
- Once the group is back together, take 10 minutes to share out. What were some of the hard things about creating the list? The easy things? How did

it feel to negotiate? Did you see some other lists that you agreed with or thought something should be different?

- How did you see your leadership colors come out while you were negotiating your top ten list?

Top Ten Brainstorm ideas

Little Sister's Brainstorm Ideas	Big Sister's Brainstorm Ideas
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

_____ & _____

Present:

The Top Ten _____

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 15: Expanding Our Horizons

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Recognizing we are part of a larger community helps us act on our empathy for others.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence/Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Help Others!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Would You Rather (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High Low/UVA Day (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Expanding Our Horizons**
 - **Activity:** Possible Selves (40 minutes)
- Sister Time** (30 minutes)
- Focus Two: Group Selves**
 - **Activity:** Possible Selves Group Debrief (20 minutes)
- Activity:**
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Pens/Pencils
- ___ Large Post-it Note Pad

In expanding file folder:

- ___ Possible Selves worksheet
- ___ UVA Day Fliers

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 15: Expanding Our Horizons

Energizer (10 minutes)

Would You Rather? Whereas Step into the Circle is serious, this activity is meant to be fun and funny. Invite the group to form a circle of alternating Bigs and Littles. When you ask “Would you rather?” they step into the circle if they choose the first answer and step back if they choose the second. Feel free to add your own choices.

- Would you rather..?
 - Visit the doctor or the dentist?
 - Eat broccoli or carrots?
 - Watch TV or listen to music?
 - Own a lizard or a snake?
 - Have a beach holiday or a mountain holiday?
 - Be an apple or a banana?
 - Be hairy all over or completely bald?
 - Go without television or fast food for the rest of your life?
 - Always be cold or always be hot?
 - Have a broken phone or a broken bone?
 - Not hear or not see?
 - Be stranded on a deserted island alone or with someone you don't like?
 - See the future or change the past?
 - Be three inches taller or three inches shorter?
- What surprised them about how their choices were different/the same?

Or do an energizer the group has really enjoyed in the past.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **High/Low:** Go around the circle and have everyone share their High/Lows from the week.
- ✓ **UVA Day!** (see page 4 for date and time): Discuss plans for getting permission from parents and arranging transportation.

Focus One: Expanding Our Horizons

The focus of this activity is to help girls think through different possibilities for their future! Helping girls explore how they see themselves in different areas of their lives, what they hope for, and what they fear, can help them create visions for themselves in the future. It is also important for them to recognize that what

they want to become could look very different from what their friends or family members want to do. This is designed to help girls expand their horizons by showing guiding them to think through different versions of who they could become.

Possible Selves (40 minutes)

Gather the group and explain the idea of possible selves, ideas about what you might become in the future. Possible selves have to do with what you can be, would like to be, and are afraid of being. Explain that exploring possible selves can help you learn more about yourself and what you'd like to be come.

Then, have sisters break into their pairs and work through the possible selves activity. Pairs should spend about 30 minutes going through the activity. Spend about 15 minutes working through the written part and another 15 minutes working through the drawing. Remember, both Bigs and Littles should be doing the activity – Bigs can do it in the handbook and Little's on a worksheet to save in their folders. If your Little is having trouble guide her through by modeling how you are working on it and providing ideas, but be careful not to fill it out for her!

Sister Time (30 minutes)

- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
- ✓ To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
- ✓ Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Focus Two: Group Selves

Group Selves Debrief (20 minutes)

Bring the group back together and remind them of the Possible Selves activity they just completed. Ask a Little to explain what we mean by "Possible Selves."

Then, invite the group to share what the activity was like for them. Possible questions...

- 1) Why do you think we asked you do to this?
- 2) Do you think it was worthwhile?
- 3) What was it like?
- 4) What, if anything, did you learn about yourself doing this activity
- 5) Anything that surprised you?
- 6) Did this change the way you think about yourself?
- 7) What was it like to think about yourself in this way? How did it feel?

- 8) What was the hardest part?
- 9) What was the easiest part

If the discussion is dying down and you still have time, ask girls if they would be willing to share their possible selves trees with the group. Do not force anyone to share who doesn't want to, if no Little's are ready to start, invite a Big to share. Have the big talk through the different areas of their tree and what they mean to them. Ask the group if they notice similarities and differences?

Thank everyone for their willingness to complete this activity and to be open about their experience.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

Possible Selves Activity

Think....

Identify words or phrases that **describe you** as a:

Person	Learner	Student/Worker
YWLP Member	Community Member	_____ (Choose your own)

Hopes and Expectations...

What do you **hope** to achieve as a:

Person	Learner	Student/Worker
YWLP Member	Community Member	_____ (Choose your own)

What do you **expect** to achieve as a:

Person	Learner	Student/Worker
YWLP Member	Community Member	_____ (Choose your own)

Fears...

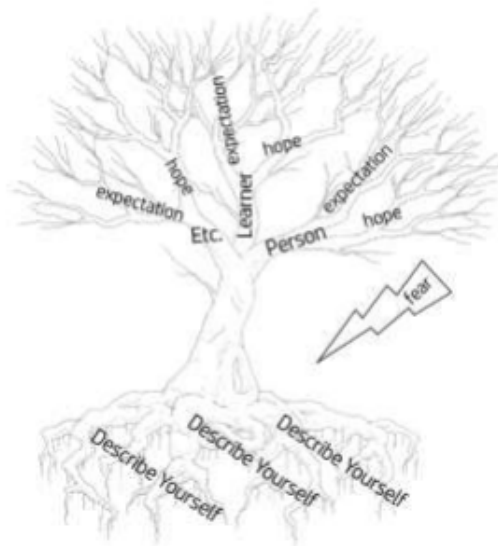
What do you **fear** as a:

Person	Learner	Student/Worker
YWLP Member	Community Member	<hr/> (Choose your own)

Sketch

In this step, you are going to put together the information about yourself you gathered above by drawing a Possible Selves Tree. On a separate sheet of paper, draw a tree where the different parts of the tree and environment represent the different elements:

- Roots – words you used to describe yourself
- Limbs – major areas in your life (representing you as a person, learner, worker, YWLP member, community member, choose your own)
- Branches – hopes and expectations for each limb (major area)
- Things that could attack tree, damage it's health (dark cloud, lightning bolt, insects) – fear statements



7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 16: Our Bodies, Ourselves

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Challenging misperceptions is a part of developing an authentic sense of self.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Respect Themselves!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Body Part Musical Chairs (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Lows, Goal Check, UVA Day (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Appreciating Our Bodies**
 - Activity:** Changing Bodies, Changing Lives (10 minutes)
 - Activity:** Creative Compliments (15 minutes)
- Sister Time:** Follow Up, Goal Check, UVA Day, Intentions (15 minutes)
- Focus Two: Positive Portrayals of Women**
 - Activity:** I Can Learn From You (40 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-it Notes

Bigs:

___ Remind Littles and parents of upcoming UVA Day and finalize plans for transportation, etc. for UVA Day

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 16: Our Bodies, Ourselves

Energizer (10 minutes)

Body Part Musical Chairs: Have everyone form a big circle of chairs with the chairs facing outward. Remove one chair. Have music ready. When the music starts everyone must walk around the chairs (it's fun if you make them jog). When the music stops, the caller yells out a body part. Then everyone races to touch that body part to a chair, one person per chair only. If they touch a chair before the body part is called, they are out. The one person who doesn't get a chair is also out. To speed it up, you can remove more chairs. Start out simple—thumb, hair, left elbow, etc. but towards the end get more complicated—your bare feet, someone else's left hand (they must grab one of the people who are already out). The object is to be the last one left.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present
- ✓ **High/Low:** Go around the circle and have everyone share their High/Lows from the week, check on progress on goals!
- ✓ **Confirm UVA Day Plans:** (see page 4 for date and time). Share the group picture from UVA Day last year and remind everyone to wear their YWLP shirts! Confirm permissions and transportation plans.

Focus One: Appreciating Our Bodies

This week's Leadership Secret is Leaders Respect Themselves. The activities introduce the group to some strategies that adolescents can use to appreciate their bodies. These strategies are powerful ways girls can stand up to the onslaught of negative messages about their bodies.

Connect this focus to one of the themes created by the Littles and invite the pair who signed up for this theme to be the leaders.

Changing Bodies, Changing Lives (10 minutes)

(Adapted from *Full of Ourselves: A Wellness program to advance girl power, health, and leadership*)

- Sit in a circle for a group brainstorm (use a large piece of post it paper to write on) and explain the activity:
 - The Goal is to get down as many ideas on the sheet of paper as possible.
 - No one has to agree, and no idea is too silly or personal to say.
- Ask everyone to close their eyes and imagine themselves back in 4th grade: “Close your eyes and put yourself in your own 8-year-old shoes. What do you look like in 4th grade? How do you wear your hair? What clothes are you wearing? How does it feel to be you, walking around in your 8-year-old body?”
- Ask everyone to open their eyes:
 - “Imagine this: You will be asked to be on a panel of middle school girls who will talk to a group of 4th grade girls about what it’s like to go through adolescence. The topic of the panel discussion is, ‘Ways my Body has Changed Since 4th Grade.’ What are some of things you’d tell the younger girls?”
- Encourage everyone to write their ideas on the sheet of paper in front of you. Pose questions to help organize the brainstorm and keep girls on track:
 - What was your body like when you were in 4th grade?
 - How has your body changed between then and now? (Height, weight, hair, sweat, baby fat, cramps, PMS, first bra, skin, etc).
 - Are there changes you are still waiting for?
 - What is an embarrassing or awkward ‘body moment’ you’ve had in the past few years?
 - What is something about your body that you feel good about today—other than appearance? Prompts if needed: energy level, skills, strengths, stamina...
- Conclude with two points:
 - Agree or disagree: Between the ages of 8 and 14, girls gain and average of 40 pounds.
 - “That is true. A 40 pound weight gain over 5 years is healthy and normal. Everyone’s growth spurt is different, of course. Some girls get chubbier before their height catches up; other girls shoot up 6 inches or more before the rest of their body fills out. The point is, you are all in a growing stage of life and need to gain weight to be strong and healthy.
 - Point out that bodies continue to change throughout our entire lives; speak from your own experiences as women—as it appropriate and as you are comfortable.

Creative Compliments (15 minutes)

- Share that the Leadership Secret for this week is Leaders Respect Themselves. Ask them to brainstorm what gets in the way of girls and women respecting themselves, especially their bodies and how they look.
- Show the group the Dove video on how we portray ourselves.
<http://realbeautysketches.dove.us/>
- Share that one way to combat “lookism” is to focus on creative compliments (e.g., complimenting someone on their actions or internal qualities rather than their looks: "I loved that you took a lead in the discussion last week." OR "You're such a fast runner!") instead of *lookism* compliments (“You're pretty”).
- Start with Bigs giving a Creative Compliment to their Little and her responding with “Thank you!”
- Invite everyone to give a Creative Compliment to the person on their left.

Sister Time (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Follow up:** Talk about why it might be hard for girls to appreciate their body. Here are some suggestions for questions to help with this conversation:
 - Is it hard for you to say nice things about your body? Why?
 - Why are compliments mostly about our looks? How can we change that?
- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little’s voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we’ve created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.
- ✓ **UVA Day:** Confirm transportation and any dietary restrictions.
- ✓ **Setting Our Intentions:** Share that there are about five weeks left in the program and plan together what you want to accomplish in that time. Check the Feedback Form you completed in January and see if there are any activities you listed for outside time that you haven’t done yet.

Focus Two: Appreciating What Our Bodies Can Do

I Can Learn From You! (40 minutes)

In this activity, each Little will teach her Big something. This can be something as big as a new skill (for example, how to crochet or draw an anime character) or something really small (for example, what a popular song and/or dance are at school). After the Littles teach the Bigs, Bigs should give creative compliments and effective praise (e.g., you taught me something I didn't know, you explained that really clearly so it was easy for me to understand, you helped me learn something interesting).

Possible script:

- “We’ve spent a lot of weeks learning things together or teaching you something new. Let’s show off your leadership skills and have you teach me something! What’s something that you enjoy teaching other people how to do? Or maybe something that you haven’t taught someone how to do before, but you know a lot about it? This can be something academic or non-academic, like learning how to draw something or learning a new popular song. I want to let you take the lead on this one, so take a few minutes thinking of what you’d like to do, using this worksheet.”

Once you have learned the new skill, you might say something like:

- “Wow, what a cool [ACTIVITY!]. You did a great job explaining this clearly to me so I understood, and I wouldn’t have learned about this without you. Thank you for taking the time to teach me today! How did that feel for you?”

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

I Can Learn From You!

List a few things you really enjoy doing:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Which of these activities is easy to teach someone?

What steps should you take to teach this?

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 17: What a Leader!

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Appreciating differences enriches our connection with others and understanding of ourselves.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Competence
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Respect Differences!

Session Outline:

- Research Team Visit: Post Survey Collection** (30 minutes)
- Energizer:** Relay, Beach Ball Buzz, Mindful Passing (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Low and Group Goal Check and UVA Day Photo (20 minutes)
- Activity:** UVA Day Feedback (10 minutes)
- Sister Time:** Remember When and Goal Check (25 minutes)
- Leaders Plan**
 - **Activity:** Graduation Planning (20 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Camera or phone to take photos
- ___ Pens/Pencils ___ Markers ___ Large Post-It Notes

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 17: What a Leader!

Post Survey Collection (30 minutes)

A member of the YWLP research team will be visiting your group this week to do the post survey with our Little Sisters!

Energizer (10 minutes) Choose one.

Relay: Split the group into two teams and line up them up. Give each team a beach ball and ask them to pass the ball over their head to their teammate behind them and then back up to the front again. Fastest team wins. Do several variations: over the head of one and between the legs of the next; using only one hand; Big Sisters have to keep their eyes closed, etc.

Beach Ball Buzz: Prior to group make a numbered list of questions for the group to answer. Be creative! Blow up your beach ball and put a number on each stripe of the ball. Start the energizer by asking the group to stand in a circle then throw the ball to someone. They quickly answer the question that corresponds to the number their right thumb is nearest to and, then, throw the ball to another person. You can use the ball whenever the group has a little extra time. You can also ask the Littles to create questions! Sample questions are:

- What is the funniest movie you've ever seen?
- What was the name of your kindergarten teacher?
- What is the worst thing you've ever tasted? Did you swallow it or spit it out?
- What's your greatest pet peeve?
- If you were stranded on a desert island, what two things would you want to have with you?
- If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?
- If you could meet any historical figure, who would it be and why?
- What is *your* song and why?

Mindful Passing: This is a fun outdoor activity. Invite the group to stand in a tight circle and mindfully try to pass around a cup filled with water without spilling. Another version is breaking the group into two teams and have them carry a spoonful of water back and forth to each other. For both, encourage everyone to take deep breaths as they pass the water.

Group Check-In (20 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **High/Low and Goal Check:** Go around the circle and have everyone share their High/Lows from the week, check progress on goals!
- ✓ **UVA Day Photo:** Share the group photo from UVA Day and find out who would like a copy (hard or sent to their phone).

UVA Day Feedback (10 minutes)

The goal of this activity is to provide feedback on UVA Day so next year it is even better.

- What did they like?
- What needs changing? Ask the group to brainstorm ways to improve UVA Day.
- Be sure to have someone take notes and email this feedback to YWLP staff (ywlp@virginia.edu).

Sister Time (20 minutes)

- ✓ **Remember When...** Mix things up by walking around the school during Sister Time.
 - Reminisce about the first school tour you took together many months ago. Talk about how your relationship has grown during that time.
 - This is also an opportunity to talk about next year and if/how you might stay connected with each other. See *Saying Goodbye Intentionally* sheet for tips.
- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.

Leaders Plan

Graduation Planning (20 minutes)

Invite the group to work on preparing for their YWLP graduation in two weeks. What are the tasks they'll need to do? Some ideas include:

- **Leaders:** Which pair(s) will be the leaders for the event?
- **Appreciation:** Who in the school do they want to write a thank you note or give a YWLP Certificate of Appreciation as a way of thanking them for their support of their YWLP group this year? (e.g., principal, guidance counselors, the teacher whose room you've used).
- **Invitations:** Make invitations and decide how they'll be delivered to whom
- **Transportation:** Confirm guest transportation needs, if any
- **Decorations:** What will help make graduation a success (e.g., decorations, food prep, song playlist)?
- **Displays:** How will you showcase your accomplishment?
- **Others?**

A possible Graduation Ceremony agenda is:

- **Welcome:** Welcome the attendees and thank them all for coming and supporting the Littles' participation in the program. Let them know how important they have been this year to the Little Sisters and YWLP! Be sure to recognize and thank the school contact!
- **Leadership Presentations:** Use the displays to highlight the leadership activities the group has done this year and the leadership skills and strategies they have learned. Have a Big/Little pair present on each.
- **Invited School Speaker:** School YWLP contact or other school representative (principal, assistant principal, teacher) speaks for about three minutes thanking the girls and their families for their participation and support.
- **Graduation Ceremony:** The group stands in a semi-circle opening to the audience. The Facilitator calls each Big/Little pair to the center of the circle and says something positive she has noticed specific to this pair (i.e., always laughing together, something they share in common, changes she has seen in the relationship throughout the year). The Big says something kind about her Little Sister, making sure to note a positive change. The Big presents her Little with a YWLP certificate and a letter of appreciation, pick up their tiles from the display, and return to their space in the semi-circle.
- **Conclusion:** Thank everyone for coming. Remind the parents of the 8th Grade Club and pass out enrollment materials. Remind the Littles that they still have their final group the following week. Invite everyone to enjoy the food!

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

Saying Goodbye: Being Intentional

If you will be continuing with your Little Sister in the 8th Grade Club, great!

1. Tell her your plans and help her join the 8th Grade Club!

- Help her get the papers for the 8th Grade Club signed by her family and give them to the YWLP Staff.
- Let her know that YWLP doesn't meet in the summer but will start up again in the fall.

2. Keep in touch!

- Make sure you have each other's summer contact information and let her know how and how often you'll be in contact with each other.
- Use whatever means of communication she has access to (e.g., social media, e-mail, telephone, text messages, letters, etc.).

If you are graduating or will be at UVA next year but are not continuing with your Little Sister:

1. Decide if you will have contact with her.

- Do you want to keep in touch with her? Will you be able to?
- How and how often? Be realistic and don't promise what you can't really do.

2. Let her know that you will be leaving Charlottesville/YWLP and what kind of contact you can have with each other.

- Explain why you won't be able to continue with the relationship in the same way it was this year (e.g., school schedule too busy for weekly contact, will have busy new job, will be in another country).
- Describe what you think your relationship will look like. Tell her where you will be and how often you plan on contacting her.
 - *I'll be in DC so I can't be your Big Sister, but I would love to talk with you on e-mail once a month or so.*
 - *I'm going to be moving to California for a new job. I have loved being your Big Sister, but we won't be able to talk like we used to because I will be so far away. I probably won't see you again.*

3. Tell her what she has meant to you this year.

- Share with her the changes you've seen her make.
- Share with her why she has been important to you and what you have learned for her.

4. Talk to her about how she feels about saying goodbye.

- Has she had to say goodbye to others? What was hard? What helped?

- Be sure to have this conversation several times with her over the next few weeks.
- **Exchange contact information if you plan on staying in touch.** Make sure you have turned yours in to your facilitator as Little Sisters often lose the information and call us for it.

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 18: Leadership Reflection

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Success requires leaning into and collaborating with your support network.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Create Support Teams!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Link or Group Favorite (5 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** High/Lows and Goal Check (15 minutes)
- Focus One: Leadership Reflection**
 - Activity:** The Power of YWLP! (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** Graduation Prep (20 minutes)
- Sister Time** (35 minutes)
- Focus Two: Honoring Us**
 - Activity:** YWLP Tiles (25 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Leadership project materials
- ___ Tiles (2 for each pair, plus extras)
- ___ Paint markers
- ___ Tablecloths to cover desks while painting YWLP Tiles

Bigs:

- ___ During your Big Sister Meeting, start working on a group photo video to show the Littles on the last day of group.

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 18: Leadership Reflection

Energizer (5 minutes)

Link: Form a circle with one person in the middle. That person announces something about herself (e.g. “I have a younger brother”). If this fact is also true for someone else in the group she yells, “Link” and links arms with the person in the middle. If two share that fact, only the one who yells “Link” first makes the link. Emphasize that everyone will eventually be linked. The new link then shares a fact. You continue until the whole group is linked. The last person has to find a link with the first person!

Or do one of the group’s favorite energizers.

Group Check-In (15 minutes)

- ✓ **Mindful Moment:** Start the group check-in by asking a Little to lead everyone in taking three deep breaths as a way of being fully present.
- ✓ **High/Low:** Go around the circle and have everyone share their High/Lows from the week. Ask everyone to reflect on sharing their Highs/Lows this semester. Is it any easier sharing now with the group? How about sharing your successes with others?

Focus One: Leadership Reflection

The Leadership Secret for this week is Leaders Create Support Teams. The activities highlight the different ways the group has developed their leadership skills and supported each other over the year.

The Power of YWLP! (15 minutes)

This is a chance for the group to reflect on their YWLP experience together.

- In the large group ask everyone to share one or two successes they are most proud of this year. This should include goal progress. Girls should share what they have accomplished and take stock of their worksheets.
- How have they grown as leaders to themselves and their family, school and community?
- How has the group grown over the year? What group accomplishments are they proudest of?
- Share that the Leadership Secret for today is Leaders Create Support Teams. How have they supported one another this year?

- What will be hard about not continuing to meet as a group? What will they miss?

Bigs: Make note of what your Little says and try to find one or two pictures that symbolize this that can be incorporated in the SURPRISE group photo video you'll show the Littles on the last day of group.

Graduation Prep: (20 minutes)

Complete preparation for next week's graduation. See suggested tasks from last week.

Sister Time (35 minutes)

- ✓ This year, one of our priorities is to create an experience that values your Little's voice and is responsive to her needs.
 - To do this, we've created some online resources for you and your Little to choose from, which will guide you in making the most of your sister time.
 - Explore the modules on Canvas for more information and to tailor your sister time to **your** relationship.
- ✓ **Relationship Check:** Now would be a good time to check in with your Little about your relationship. Make sure to start talking about the end of YWLP and what you are planning to do after. Talk to your Little about how she feels and if she is planning to be in YWLP next year.

Focus Two: Honoring Us

This is an opportunity for everyone to paint a ceramic tile with a design that symbolizes what YWLP and her sisters have meant to her.

YWLP Tiles (25 minutes)

- Be sure the tables are covered with newspaper before beginning this activity.
- Have displayed 3-4 examples of ceramic tiles already painted to symbolize what YWLP and her sisters have meant to her. Be sure to include a good variety of symbols ...and level of artistic talent. The activity is designed to be fun and meaningful, not stressful to the less artistic.
- Share that they will take them home next week as a reminder of all they have accomplished in YWLP. But first all the tiles will be displayed together at the graduation ceremony for the guests to see!

- Have lots of paper towels for cleaning up.
- Pass out pens and tiles and start drawing.
- Have extra tiles in case someone wants to start again.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 19: YWLP Graduation

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Celebrating effort fosters growth!
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Celebrate Success!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Mindful Breathing (2 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** No Group check-in
- Focus One: YWLP Graduation Preparation** (15 minutes)
 - Activity:** Presentation Practices (10 minutes)
- Sister Time:** No Sister Time.
- Focus Two: YWLP Graduation** (90 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ Tiles from last week
- ___ YWLP Graduation Certificates
- ___ Decorations
- ___ Tape
- ___ Food and drinks for graduation ceremony

Bigs: During your Big Sister Meeting, continue working on a group photo video to give to each of the Littles on the last day of group.

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 19: YWLP Graduation

Energizer (2 minutes)

Mindful Breathing: There is a lot to accomplish this week so quickly bring the group together in a circle for a group hug and to practice mindful breathing.

Group Check-In

- ✓ Explain that there is no group check-in this week as you'll need all the time for the graduation ceremony.

Focus One: YWLP Graduation Preparation

The Leadership Secret for this week is Leaders Celebrate Success. This is a great opportunity for the group to acknowledge the accomplishments of the group and individuals. You will also continue the process of saying good-bye.

YWLP Graduation Preparation (15 minutes)

Give the girls an overview of the day's graduation ceremony and what needs to be done to get ready! Remind Littles how exciting it is to have some of their support system present at Graduation!

- **Decorations:** Decorate the room and arrange the food and beverages where needed. Be creative! You can draw on the chalkboard, create centerpieces using leaves from outside, etc.
- **Presentations & Displays:**
 - **YWLP Tiles:** Create a display of the YWLP Tiles.
 - Take photos of the displays, the group and the guests.

Presentation Practices (10 minutes)

Practice the presentations! Make sure to leave time at the end to welcome guests if they arrive early.

Focus Two: YWLP Graduation

YWLP Graduation (90 minutes)

- **Welcome:** Welcome the attendees and thank them all for coming and supporting the Littles' participation in the program. Let them know how important they have been this year to the Little Sisters and YWLP! Be sure

to recognize and thank the school contact! Share that the group has been learning Leadership Secrets this year and the one that is the focus today is Leaders Celebrate Success!

- **Leadership Presentations:** Use the displays and presentations to highlight the leadership activities the group has done this year and the leadership skills and strategies they have learned. Have a Big/Little pair present on each.
- **Invited School Speaker:** School YWLP contact or other school representative (principal, assistant principal, teacher) speaks for about three minutes thanking the girls and their families for their participation and support.
- **Graduation Ceremony:** The group stands in a semi-circle opening to the audience. The Facilitator calls each Big/Little pair to the center of the circle and says something positive she has noticed specific to this pair (i.e., always laughing together, something they share in common, changes she has seen in the relationship throughout the year). The Big says something kind about her Little Sister, making sure to note a positive change. The Big presents her Little with a YWLP certificate and a letter of appreciation, pick up their tiles from the display, and return to their space in the semi-circle.
- **Conclusion:** Thank everyone for coming. Remind the parents of the 8th Grade Club and pass out enrollment materials. **Remind the Littles that they still have their final group the following week.** Invite everyone to enjoy the food!
- **Clean up:** Allow lots of time for clean-up. Please make sure you do a good job since this is extremely important for our relationship with the schools.
 - Make sure each pair has a clean-up job and that the room is as clean as you found it.

Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

7th Grade Big Sister Mentoring Group Guide

Week 20: YWLP Farewell

Overview:

- ❖ **Big Picture:** Meaningful connection with others often involves stepping outside your comfort zone.
- ❖ **YWLP Outcome:** Connection
- ❖ **Leadership Secret:** Leaders Connect and Appreciate Others!

Session Outline:

- Energizer:** Group Favorite! (10 minutes)
- Group Check-In:** Looking Back, Looking Forward (15 minutes)
- Focus One: What I Want to Remember**
 - Activity:** A Letter to Myself (20 minutes)
 - Activity:** YWLP Feedback (5 minutes)
- Sister Time:** Saying Goodbye and Wrapping Up (40 minutes)
- Focus Two: Saying Good-bye**
 - Activity:** Surprise Group Photo Video (5 minutes)
 - Activity:** Affirmations (20 minutes)
- Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)

Needed Supplies:

- ___ YWLP Feedback questions
- ___ Pens/Pencils
- ___ Paper and envelopes for letter-writing
- ___ Good-bye activity supplies (picture frames are available at YWLP Office)
- ___ Flower for each member (purchase with Visa giftcard before group)
- ___ Surprise Group Photo Video
- ___ Affirmation Sheets (in expanding file folder)

Bigs:

- ✓ During you Big Sister Meeting this week write a letter of appreciation to your Little that shares the changes the Little has made over the year and what you have learned from her.
- ✓ During your Big Sister Meeting, finish the group photo video to show the Littles on the last day of group.

7th Grade Mentoring Group Session

Week 20: YWLP Farewell

Energizer (10 minutes)

Choose one of the group's favorite.

Group Check-in: (15 minutes)

- ✓ Start the group with three deep breaths as a way to become fully present.
- ✓ **Looking Back, Looking Forward:** Since this is the last group, focus on saying good-bye instead of doing High/Lows this week. What did they like most about graduation last week? About YWLP? Ask each person to share what she felt was her biggest success in the group. How does she plan on applying the lessons she learned in YWLP this year to other parts of her life?

Focus One: What I Want to Remember

This activity provides a reminder for each group member about what they want to hold on to from YWLP.

A Letter to Myself (20 minutes)

Invite each Big and Little Sister write a letter to herself that reminds her of the things she learned in YWLP this year and what goals she wants to accomplish next year.

- Pass out envelopes and have everyone address it with her permanent address in pen. Please review the instructions for correctly addressing the letters in your file folder and help your Little Sisters with this. **Do not assume they know how to correctly address the letters.**
- We will mail the letters out at the beginning of the next school year so be sure you have their addresses and for the Littles, which school they are going to!
- Turn these into the YWLP staff to be mailed in the fall.

YWLP Feedback (5 minutes)

We would love to hear what you think about your year with YWLP! Invite Littles and Bigs to share what they loved—and didn't love—about our activities, events, and sessions this year. We appreciate your feedback and will use it to improve the program for next year!

Sister Time (40 minutes)

Focus on saying good-bye. Sister time is long today to give you plenty of time to wrap up. If you are not sure what to do you might take a walk together around the school, make a craft to give each other, look through some old pictures, write a story together about your relationship, or bring another activity to complete. Remember to ask your Little how she feels about the last day of group, review your plan for staying in touch (or not) and make sure she understands. Tell her how much you appreciate your relationship and talk through all the things she's learned and accomplished this year.

Focus Two: Good-byes**Surprise Group Photo Video: (5 minutes)**

Show the Bigs' photo video of the group and all it accomplished this year. Share how the Littles can access it in the future.

Affirmations (20 minutes)

- Share that the Leadership Secret for today is perhaps the most important, Leaders Appreciate Others.
- Start by asking everyone to take three deep breaths as they think about what they appreciate about each member of the group. What is unique about each member? What have you learned from each? If appropriate, ask them to breathe deeply and think of an affirmation each time you call out a pair's name.
- Have each group member's name written on the top of the YWLP Affirmation sheet and pass them around to everyone in the group to write down an affirmation.
- Do they still have the one from the fall? Encourage everyone to take theirs home and compare and hang both on their wall so they can remember how special they are!

Final Closing Ritual (5 minutes)

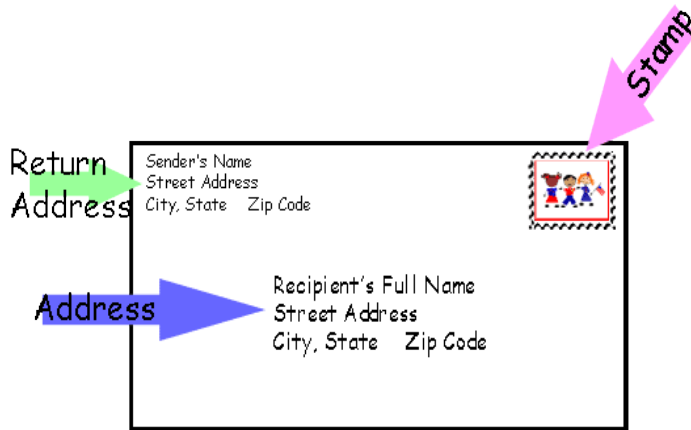
At the end, Facilitators hand a flower to each sister and thank her for making this year so special.

Options: Other Saying Good-bye Activities:

Groups in the past have completed friendship bracelets, given pictures of each pair and had the pairs decorate the picture frames, and/or made music mixes for each other. Be creative and try to do an activity that reflects your group's strengths! If you are going to need additional craft materials please check with your Facilitator and YWP staff to see if funds are available for you to purchase and submit for reimbursement next week.

Addressing an Envelope

Please help your Little Sister properly address her envelopes!



Be sure to write *neatly* when addressing your envelope so your letter will reach its correct destination.

Include the following three items:

- **ADDRESS:** This is the name and address of the person (recipient) you are sending the letter to.
On separate lines write:
 - Recipient's Full Name (ex: Jane Smith)
 - Street Address (ex: 123 Main Street)
 - City, State and Zip Code (ex: Charlottesville, VA 22903)
- Use postal abbreviations when writing the state. Postal abbreviations are written in capital letters without periods or other punctuation. The postal abbreviation for Virginia is VA.
- **RETURN ADDRESS:** ***DO NOT*** include a return address, YWLP will add the YWLP Office as the return address in case any letters cannot be delivered.
- **STAMP:** Stamps go in the right hand corner of the letter, so do not write anything there. YWLP will put stamps on the letters.



_____ is a YWLP Leader!

INSERT COLOR DIVIDER PAGE HERE

YWLP Additional Group Energizers

The Blanket Balance Game

Spread out a blanket (or a towel or a large sheet of paper) on the floor. Ask the girls to step onto and fit themselves on the blanket. It should be pretty easy since the blanket is stretched wide. Then, ask the girls to step off and fold the blanket in half. Tell the girls that the objective of the game is to make the blanket as small as possible while still making sure that all of the girls touch the blanket. Continue to fold the blanket in half as the girls find ways to fit on the surface. Should they stand on one foot? Do they have to hold on to each other? Be mindful of how it feels to balance on the blanket. Is it easier with others' support?

Mindful Noticing

Ask everyone to walk around looking at each other but without speaking until you say stop. They then pair up with the person they were last looking at but it can't be their Sister. As they stand across from each other, invite them to close their eyes, take three deep breathes and see if they can become aware of just this person. Can you see her in your mind? Can they hear the rhythm of her breathing? What might she be thinking or feeling? After a minute invite them to take three deep breaths again, open their eyes and smile or acknowledge this person in some way. Ask them to walk around again looking at each other but without speaking until you say stop and repeat the mindful noticing. Repeat as time allows.

Cross the River

Divide the group into 2 teams, and give each team 3-5 sheets of letter paper (depending on the number of girls in each group). Ask the groups to "cross the river" (aka get to the other side of the room) using only the sheets of paper given as stepping stones. The papers can be moved around and can join together to create larger stones. If a girl "falls in," or steps off the paper, she has to continue the game balancing only on one foot since her other was eaten by a crocodile. Each team must use the stones to cross the river, and whichever team gets all teammates across first, wins!

React and Act

In preparation, create scenarios/events to be acted out and write them down on individual slips of paper. Ideas: you just won the lottery; you just fell in love; you just saw a bear; you just got an A on a math test; you just got fired; you just scored the winning goal/basket/touchdown; etc. Have a girl randomly select an event from the bag that she has to react and act out in front of the group. The girls have 30 seconds to guess what their sister is acting out. This game gives the girls a chance to be silly, but the conversation can be directed towards the negative effects of immediate reactions, and, therefore, the benefits of mindfulness.

Mindful Stretching

Ask the girls to spread out, and lead the group through several stretches that will allow the girls to relax before beginning the day's activities. If the girls are particularly interested in yoga, then teach them yoga poses. If not, teach them normal hamstring/quad/calf stretches. Consider including a stretch the girls can do while sitting in a chair before taking a big test. Encourage the girls to be mindful of their breathing during these stretches, with long inhales and exhales. Allow this time for quiet, mindful thoughts.

Body Part Musical Chairs

Have everyone form a big circle of chairs with the chairs facing outward. Remove one chair. Have music ready. When the music starts everyone must walk around the chairs (it's fun if you make them jog). When the music stops, a caller yells out a body part. Then everyone races to touch that body part to a chair, one person per chair only. If they touch a chair before the body part is called, they are out. The one person who doesn't get a chair is also out. To speed it up, you can remove more chairs. Start out simple—thumb, hair, left elbow, etc. but towards the end get more complicated—your bare feet, someone else's left hand (they must grab one of the people who are already out). The object is to be the last one left.

Eye Contact Musical Chairs

The group will stand in a circle with shoulders touching. Invite someone to be the leader of the game. The job of the leader is to count to three for each round. Each round starts by having everyone in the circle tilt bring their chin to their chest and look down at someone else's shoes (Be careful not to turn your head in the direction of your gaze-only look with your eyes- the trick is to be mindful of your head movement, so that the others in the group can't tell where you are looking.) On the leader's count of three, everyone looks up at that person. If they are looking at you, then you are both out! Continue until there are only 2 people left- they are the winners!

The Human Chair

****Note About Human Chair Energizer:** Some Little Sisters may not feel comfortable with this activity and it is extremely important to be sensitive and respectful of this possibility. Please take time during your Big Sister meeting to decide whether the human chair activity would work well for every member of your group. If you decide not to do this activity, you can choose a different Moves energizer from another week to offer the group as the Moves energizer option.

If you decide to do the human chair activity during group, be sure to let everyone know that they do not have to participate if they do not feel comfortable. If a Little Sister shares that she does not feel comfortable, be sure to provide an alternative option that she can do with her Big Sister during that time.

Ask the girls to stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Each girl then turns to the right to face the back of the person in front of her. Tell the girls to place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. After reminding the girls to trust each other and then counting to three, invite each girl to slowly sit down on the lap of the person behind her. As long as everyone is cooperating, the group should be supporting the weight of each other. Be mindful of how you have to trust your team, because if you decide to fall, then everyone will end up falling. (Need an image of what this looks like? Look up "the human chair" on Google/YouTube!).

Mindful Eating: The Hershey Kiss Meditation

(Adapted from http://www.infobarrel.com/Mindfulness_for_Children)

Note: Past Facilitators recommend having the girls face away from one another to help with focusing on the activity.

Ask the girls to sit with their backs facing each other. Place three Hershey Kisses in front of each girl. Ask the girls to pretend they have never seen a Hershey Kiss before. Read this script in a calm voice:

“Let’s look at the Hershey Kiss and pretend that we’ve never in our whole lives seen a Hershey Kiss.” “Pick up the Hershey Kiss. Think about how it feels between your fingers. Notice its color. Notice any thoughts you might be having about it. Slowly unwrap it and listen to the sounds that makes. Feel the texture of the foil paper and think about that sensation. Lift the Hershey Kiss to your nose and smell it for a while. Now slowly bring the Hershey Kiss to your lips, trying to notice everything you are thinking, feeling or smelling. Notice your arm moving your hand to position the Hershey Kiss correctly. Notice your mouth salivating as your mind and body anticipate eating it. Take the Hershey Kiss into your mouth and chew it slowly, experiencing its taste. Hold it in your mouth. When you feel ready to swallow, notice if your body automatically wants to swallow it. When you are ready, pick up the second Hershey Kiss and just eat it as you normally would if you weren’t practicing mindfulness. When you finish, practice mindfulness again with the third Hershey Kiss, eating it as you did the first.”

Following the activity, ask the girls: What it was like to eat something mindfully? Did the Hershey Kiss taste any different than it normally does? What did you notice when you were doing this exercise? How does this compare to how you normally eat your food?

YWLP Connection Ball

The Connection Ball is a big rubber ball with different interesting questions, instructions, or words written on it that you have created for your group. Have the Sisters throw the ball to each other and when they catch it, say the person’s name and answer the question that their pointer finger lands on. (Use this in the future whenever the group is lagging in energy). The Connection Ball also makes a great “speaking object” if your group is having trouble listening when others are talking. Only the person holding the ball gets to speak!

As guests in our partner middle schools, it is vitally important that we are following all of the rules of those schools while we are on their campuses. This includes paying close attention to the clothing you wear to the middle schools. Please read these dress codes over carefully and be mindful of what you choose to wear to the schools.

Charlottesville City Schools Dress Code

The school board and administration of Charlottesville City Schools understand that styles of dress are important forms of expression for students. All students are expected to dress appropriately for a K-12 educational environment. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene, or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia, or clothing that contains threats such as gang symbols is prohibited.

Clothing should conform to standards of safety and follow the Code of Virginia. Clothing that exposes private parts, the midriff, the breasts, the section of the back below shoulder blades, or undergarments is prohibited. Examples of prohibited clothing include but are not limited to: sagging or low-cut pants because they reveal portions of the back and buttocks which are considered a private area of the body, low-cut necklines that reveal portions of the breasts because that is considered a private part of the body for both genders for the purposes of this dress code. See-through material does not constitute covering these aforementioned private parts; they must be covered with opaque material. The head must be uncovered for optimal identification ability due to safety concerns, unless required for religious or medical purposes.

Albemarle County Schools Dress Code

Students are expected to wear clothing appropriate for school. Shoes must be worn at all times. Examples of prohibited clothing include: strap tops of less than one inch, off the shoulder blouses or tops, muscle shirts, tank tops, tube tops, pajamas and slippers; clothing that reveals the midriff, is excessively ripped or torn, has writing on the back or seat of shorts or warm up pants, is imprinted with words or pictures that suggest vulgarity or obscenity, such as but not limited to: "Johnson shirts," "Big Willie shirts," "Co-Ed Naked shirts," "Butt naked shirts," racial slurs, or symbols of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol (including cigarette, beer, and liquor advertisements); hooter shirts, short shorts, mesh clothing or clothing that is excessively revealing and/or interferes with the orderly process of the school day and events.

Shorts and skirts should be worn no shorter than four (4) inches above the knee. Dog chains, pocket chains, wallet chains, or any chain deemed inappropriate by the administration is prohibited. Students may not wear jewelry considered dangerous or unsafe. Sunglasses may not be worn in the building. Pants, shorts, skirts and dresses must be worn in such a manner that undergarments or shorts are not displayed.

Please do not share or distribute without permission.

OARS TIP SHEET

Open-ended question

- **DEFINED:** A question that requires *more than a few words* to answer.



Remember: Questions can be helpful when you want to know more, but, too many questions can feel like an interrogation!

- You might say:
 - Tell me more about...
 - What are your goals for...
 - If you had one wish...
- For example
 - Tell me more about math class.



Affirm

- **DEFINED:** A statement that accentuates the positive and is used to support and encourage.



Remember: An affirmation should be genuine and specific. You should also limit reflections (you want to hear from the person rather than constantly affirm).

- You might say something like:
 - You tried really hard to _____.
 - _____ is important to you.
 - Thank you for _____.
- For example
 - You've really worked hard on your math homework this week.



Reflect

- **DEFINED:** Reflections are a guess about what the person means that are given in the form of a statement rather than a question.



- **Remember:** It can be difficult to think of a reflection. To help you think of a reflection, you might ask yourself:
 - What has the person tried in the past?
 - Were they frustrated about their progress?
 - Did the person sound hopeful or frustrated about their ability to make a change?
 - Why was this so important to them?
 - **The answer (in the form of a statement) is your reflection**

- You might say something like:

- You really dislike _____ and you really want _____
- _____ is important to you.
- You're sick of this.
- It really bothers you when _____.



- For example

- *MSG:*

“I really hate math. I’ve tried to study for the tests but no one helps me and I don’t understand it. I don’t think I can do this.”

- *Possible reflection:*

Math is hard for you and you’ve tried a lot of different things to improve”

Summarize

- **DEFINED:** A summary collects what the person said (both positive and negative) and often end with “What did I miss?” or “What else is going on?”



Remember: Summaries are a great to use when you don’t know what to say, or, you are trying to sort through everything the person has told you.



- You might say:

- I want to make sure I understand everything you said. You told me that (reasons for not changing) and also (reasons for changing). In the last 6-months, you’ve (summarize what the person has tried) but you’re still having difficulty with (barriers to making the change). What did I miss?