

## **Kids and Mentors Outdoors (KAMO) - Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1) What is the value of an outdoor youth mentoring program?**

Over 90% of adults involved in mentoring youth say that it is rewarding and that they would recommend it to someone else. Mentors agree that their involvement keeps them more active in getting outdoors. Having such a program shows kids in the community that an adult cares about them. Many kids do not have a direct connection with the outdoors such as an active outdoorsman in the family. male  
The kids of today are the potential future stewards of our resource.

### **2) What are some good things to know when starting a chapter?**

A couple officers in the group, Ben Gruber and Mike Brown, have written about this subject and can forward this information to you.

### **3) What are some qualities of good mentors?**

Caring	Good listener	Stable	Provide
leadership			
committed	non-judgemental	patient	
tolerant	sense of humor	reliable	

### **4) How are mentors recruited?**

With the idea in mind that it is a quality, not quantity endeavor. better to have 6 strong core members that 20 you don't hear from. Word of mouth from other mentors or members of the public. Invite people to your chapter meeting which is held at a predictable time and place each month. Partner with local organizations that have the means to put the word out for you - Trout, Duck, or Whitetails Unlimited, your local rod and gun club or archery shop, US Fish and Wildlife, DNR, etc. Go talk to some volunteer organizations in your area. Advertise need for mentors/ activities. meetings in the outdoor section of the paper. Hold periodic informational meetings in a public place. Put a KAMO magnetic on a vehicle.

**5) Once we get a mentor, how do we make sure they are right for the task and will consistently participate?**

Mentors should be screened according to their qualifications and attributes. What do they have for skills? What do they hope to accomplish as a mentor?

Mentors should be provided with a clear description of the functions they will perform including the specific time requirements - frequency and duration of meetings with mentee.

Mentors should be trained. There are a number of online courses - some even pay up to \$100 upon course completion. Mentors may learn by accompanying other mentors during one or more events. For example, one facet of being a mentor is training on safety and liability aspects of mentoring (such as checking in with someone else in their chapter before going out on a one on one). Check to see about the availability of a mentoring handbook that covers some procedures and do's and don't's.

The chapter should hold periodic outings to enhance mentor/ family relationships and to get newer mentors a chance to meet with some kids.

**6) What are some do's and don'ts of mentoring?"**

Dos:

Be aware of the medical and comfort needs of your child and be prepared to deal with them.

Be informed about any potential dangers and safety aspects of your upcoming outing. Discuss these with children in advance of going on outings.

Let another chapter mentor know when and where you are taking your mentee in advance of a one on one.

Be interested in mentee.

Listen to what your kid has to say.

Be honest

Show mutual respect

A mentor should be aware that they are an important figure in the child's life - make and adhere to commitments about getting together.

Don'ts:

Forget how important you are to your mentee  
Be judgemental or blaming  
Try to inflict your belief system/ opinions.  
Use inappropriate language  
Attempt to replace a parent or guardian  
Settle for inappropriate talk or behavior from your child  
Smoke or drink in front of your child

### **7) What types of mentoring styles are there?**

Small or large group - Two or more mentors work together with small or larger groups of kids.  
One on one - One mentor and one child similar to a Big Brother/ Big Sister match. Has both the greatest reward and liability potential.  
Peer - Older kids can often take younger ones under their wing, especially when adults are stretched thin.

### **8) How do we get our first kids?**

Talk to officials at your local school district about your program?  
Can they advertise in the school newspaper?  
Put the word out to an organization that works with single parents.  
Advertise and invite the public to your outings using the calendar in your local paper which is free.

### **9) How are mentors and mentees matched?**

Not every mentor wants a child to work with consistently. Not every family wants a mentor for their child. Those people are probably group activity oriented.  
In cases where a family would like a mentor for their child, some important considerations must be taken into account. Mentor/ mentee pairs should be matched according to their interests.  
Ideally, the child, child's parent, and mentor had time to meet each other at a group activity and felt comfortable around each other.  
According to their ability to make a connection geographically and schedule-wise.

### **10) How do our KAMO chapters raise funds?**

Hold raffles - if the chapter can receive a valuable item for free or cheap, this can generate substantial funds after mentors sell

tickets.

Have a brat fry or other fundraiser. One chapter takes in about \$600 per year for selling food at a local grocery store a couple times per year.

Going to speak with civic organizations can help motivate donations.

If a chapter is active enough and gets some media exposure, this can prompt donations from the public.

Helping other organizations with their big event - if that organization is taking in money they often share it with the helping organization.

For example, one chapter runs a concession stand during a Chamber of Commerce event and receives money. The same chapter receives money from the sponsors of an annual festival for some activities that chapter runs at their event.

### **11) What does it take to keep a chapter going over time?**

Having a solid core group with a strong President figure is key.

The chapter must have some sources of funding - \$1500 for the first year may be a reasonable goal. New chapters receive some breaks to help them get off the ground.

Meet at a consistent time and place.

Have an agenda at meetings - move forward - run meetings efficiently - establish goals. Commit to seeing these goals accomplished.

Recruit mentors with a variety of skills so the chapter has growth and there is a diversity of skills that can be shared.

Hold several group activities per year to promote adhesiveness among members of chapter.

Use the media to promote awareness of your presence.