

## **November Life Skills On The Go | ACTIONS: How Do I Get There? Setting Goals and Achieving Them**

When you were a youth did you dream about your future? What did you want it to be like? Are you now living out that dream?

I doubt you would be surprised if I said that your mentee has a dream or two. You may have to dig a bit and work to make them feel safe in order for them to open up. As a mentor, you can encourage your mentee to start to take steps toward their dreams. Teaching them the skills of setting goals and celebrating their accomplishments is an important learning process that will better their life.

Start big--but get small fast! Start talking about your youth's dreams and their future. Have them verbally identify what they want to accomplish. Quickly, move from that big picture to a small snapshot. Set a goal or two that gets them moving forward and can be accomplished in a short period of time. Make sure to structure a check-in process to review progress and celebrate accomplishments. Do not see struggles as failures, but instead as learning opportunities. Please take a small amount of time with your mentee to go over the following questions and small activity.

1. Talk to your mentee about their dreams. Get them down on paper in the form of a list, letter to their mentor, letter to themselves, a collage of pictures or words, or a piece of art.
2. Take a small snapshot of your mentee's dreams. Help them identify a mini-goal that they want to accomplish. This mini goal should be achievable in one month's time. Make sure the goal is realistic and measurable. Set actions that they will take to accomplish the mini-goal. Plan times to check-in with each other. Use the following example and template to guide you; we have also attached a copy of the example and a blank template.

Celebrate the accomplishment! Find your own way of recognizing what your youth has done. Help them come up with their own reward system. Even if reaching the goal was a challenge find the positives to celebrate. A big part of life is learning to overcome obstacles and continue striving for our goals.

### **Helpful Websites**

5 Facts About Goal Setting: [http://kidshealth.org/teen/drug\\_alcohol/getting\\_help/goals\\_tips.html](http://kidshealth.org/teen/drug_alcohol/getting_help/goals_tips.html)

Goal Setting Activities for Teens: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/137027-goal-setting-activities-teens/>

Creating S.M.A.R.T. Goals: <http://topachievement.com/smart.html>

### **Activity to do as a Match**

Help your mentee identify accomplishments in their life. Consider the past couple of months: what positive actions do you see? Have they reached a goal, given more effort in school, or overcome a challenge? Find a way to appreciate those accomplishments. Start a tradition of small celebrations where you can share how proud of them you are.