Partner Role Play

**Activity:** Participants play roles of a mentor and a youth responding to situations involving personal or social competence.

**Purpose:** The vignettes described in the handouts present an array of situations in which mentors are challenged to teach youth personal and social competence. Participants think about how they would respond to some of these situations, learn how experienced mentors responded, and see how other participants say they would respond.

The vignettes are real situations and are to be interesting and provocative. Role-playing gets participants involved. It can be both amusing and stimulating. Note, however, that some people are very uncomfortable engaging in role-playing. You may choose to allow participants to opt out of the performance part, especially if time is insufficient to allow every pair to perform.

**Materials:** Handouts

- “Building Confidence” (Self-confidence)
- “Opening Career Options” (Career Planning)
- “Wanting a Change in Assignment” (Systems)
- “Sagging Pants” (Rules)
- “Carelessness” (Teamwork)
- “What’s Next?” (Career Planning)
- “Beach Weekend Extended” (Systems)
- “Rowdy Youth” (Rules)
- “The Queen’s English” (Communication)

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Introduce Activity**

Mentors consistently say they find it harder to teach personal and social competence than to teach technical competence. The purpose of the role-playing activity is to stimulate mentors’ thinking about how to teach personal and social competence. It is based on vignettes drawn from interviews with experienced mentors who described creative ways of teaching.

Participants will pair off and select a situation described by the title of the handout. Each handout describes in the mentors’ own words a challenging situation. Then it lists questions for the pair to discuss. Next the mentor’s response to the situation is presented, again in the mentor’s words. The back page of the handout gives instructions for a role play that each pair is asked to prepare and perform.

Ask participants to pair off with someone they don’t know. Then read the handout titles. The first pair that asks for a handout gets it. Pairs can move away from each other, then follow instructions in the handouts.
Situation  ⌨  2
Pairs read the situation.

What Do You Think?  ⌨  10
Pairs discuss what they would do in a case like this. Questions are listed in their brochure.

The Mentor’s Response  ⌨  5
Pairs then read what the mentor did in their case.

What Do You Think?  ⌨  10
Pairs discuss mentor’s response.

Prepare Role Play  ⌨  5
Drawing on both their own ideas and ideas from the vignette, each pair prepares a role play demonstrating how a mentor could work with a youth in this or a similar situation.
Emphasize that pairs may portray a different situation that illustrates some of the same issues mentors face.

Pairs Perform Their Role Plays for the Whole Group  ⌨  25
After each performance, players remain in role to answer questions from the other participants. Take volunteers so those who are most willing go first. (Some participants may be relieved not to have to do a role play.)

Possible questions from facilitators:
Why did you do ____________?
Can you think of a question you might ask to get your youth to think about ________?
What was your reaction when your mentor said ____________?
What did you hope would happen when you ____________?