



[00:00:04.320] - Kianna

Maybe.

[00:00:23.430] - Kianna

All righty.

[00:00:28.400] - Kianna

Everyone can see my screen okay?

[00:00:33.120] - Kianna

Perfect.

[00:00:33.800] - Attendee 1

Yes.

[00:00:34.960] - Kianna

Thank y'all.

[00:00:35.900] - Kianna

All right, so my name is Kiana. I'm your facilitator today. I am the Program Support and Outreach Manager for the Greater Maryland region here at [MENTOR Maryland | DC](#). That is a long title to say that if you are a part of most of Maryland, I am your point of contact. So if you're wondering what MENTOR Maryland | DC does, I'm about to tell you.

[00:00:55.800] - Kianna

We are a nonpartisan organization. We serve Maryland, D.C., and Northern Virginia, and we serve as community based experts on mentoring. So we provide services such as training, like what you're joining us today. Research, public awareness, we support with recruitment, we provide advocacy, but our big role is just to ensure that the folks who are doing mentoring, such as all of y'all, so mentoring programs, mentors, mentees, that all of you have the resources to do it well. And we are here as a resource to you, so we'll share my information at the end of this-- at the, at the end of this call, but I'll be your point of contact if you are based in Maryland. If you're based in D.C., we have another person, but we'll be able to point you that way. So glad you're all



here today. Thank you so much for being with us. And as I mentioned, we'll share out these slides at the end of this call and you'll be able to click on all these links.

**[00:01:50.750] - Kianna**

But these are just some of the services we provide. I really want to highlight the second one, which is our [no-cost program, consulting and technical assistance](#). So this is where any program, it could be a small grassroots program to a public school, can apply for technical assistance. It's no cost. And we pair an expert consultant with you that can help you with anything from creating a logic model to policies and procedures to trainings.

**[00:02:17.110] - Kianna**

And they work alongside you with that. So it's a great resource and definitely just want to highlight that for you. But again, we'll share these slides out and you'll have access to click on all of these different links of the resources you provide.

**[00:02:29.170] - Kianna**

All right, so I know we are all very familiar with webinars, especially since COVID and everything. So I won't spend too much time on this.

**[00:02:37.740] - Kianna**

But just some gentle reminders. Please remain muted unless we're all engaging in an activity or maybe we're sharing out. There's a chat box that you should be able to see. You can click on that. You can ask questions in there.

**[00:02:51.190] - Kianna**

Any aha moments, any comments, whatever you may have feel free to use that and interact with each other using the chat box. You also have some reactions. So if something really resonates with you, feel free to give me the clap emoji or the heart or whatever feels right. If you have any questions or want to participate, we do have quite a few people right now. We have 118 participants.

**[00:03:14.670] - Kianna**

So please make sure to use the hand raise emote or the hand raise function and we'll be able to call on you in that way. And any additional questions you have, I'll be hanging out to the end of



the session and we'll make sure that we have an opportunity to answer any questions. All right? So if that all makes sense, you give me a good thumbs up in the reactions. Perfect.

**[00:03:37.780] - Kianna**

I see a few. Thank y'all. All right, so here at MENTOR Maryland | D.C., our goal in training is gathering community. Our overall presence in Maryland and D.C. Is to create community wherever we can. We really do believe that community is the cure and the foundation of learning, of being seen, of being heard and feeling understood.

**[00:04:01.250] - Kianna**

We also know this is what young people crave from us. Right? So we want to be able to model that and we have community standards to help us achieve that. So I'm just going to quickly go over these. Again, this is all housekeeping, and then we'll jump into the content.

**[00:04:13.010] - Kianna**

So our first community standard is that our community is open to all. We also acknowledge the deep seated racism, sexism, homo and transphobia, misogyny, ableism that is all very pervasive in our country. And we stand against these isms and actively work to the same, especially with our youth. This means that we must acknowledge that we also approach our work differently and beautifully. Right? That's our first community standard that we're all going to agree to.

**[00:04:38.760] - Kianna**

Our second is that we're going to share openly, we're going to listen more openly, but be open when your sharing might hurt. So what this means is that one person's like, yes, thank you, that was such a good point. Moment might be someone else's trigger. So we want to keep that in mind and be open if we receive any of that feedback.

**[00:04:57.170] - Kianna**

The third community standard we have today is to be generous with positive assumptions, but don't be afraid to ask genuine questions. So we've all heard, assume positive intent, and we ask you to also do that here. But that doesn't mean that impact can't be harmful. Right? So we ask that we all, if we're feeling a certain way, that you please turn to wonder and questions and so that might look like, hey, I wonder why they said that; or I wonder why they feel that way; or I wonder what that meant? So turning to wonder and being generous with those positive assumptions.



**[00:05:31.340] - Kianna**

Our fourth community standard is that no matter what your role here today is, you are a host. This is my favorite one. So I am your facilitator today. But we are all going to be hosts of this, this space. And what that means is that we all have the ability to make everyone feel great, awesome. To approach this with openness, to approach this with a warmth and creating a space where we all are happy to engage. And so I ask that you all be a part of that so we can all enjoy it. And this is something I'm asking that be all of our responsibility.

**[00:06:02.360] - Kianna**

Fifth community standard is we don't endeavor to create safe or comfortable spaces, but brave spaces where discomfort can be explored and beliefs and practices challenged. So we've all heard the saying that "growth and learning is at the edge of our comfort zone." That does not mean that something might not feel, which means that something might not feel comfortable to us, right? But it does not mean we're in danger. So let's look for the lessons and those emotions and those reactions. If something feels a little uncomfortable, sit with it for a second. Try to figure out what that might mean.

**[00:06:36.650] - Kianna**

All right, team, we're almost done with these community standards 6: we want this community and experience to be supportive and educational, but also fun. So please bring your full present self. It is welcome. Feel free to engage with me as much as you'd like today and be as present as you can. I'm excited to be here with y'all and so I hope you're excited to be here with me too.

**[00:06:57.210] - Kianna**

And lastly, no fixing, saving, advising or correcting each other. So this is taken from one of our favorite tools, which is called the Touchstone for Developing Trust Framework. It's pretty self explanatory, but if you feel the need to deliver feedback, just first ask for permission and make sure you're listening first. That is all that we ask.

**[00:07:15.600] - Kianna**

So those are our community standards. Thank you all for listening and in the spirit of transparency, just want to share that if any of our staff, we have a few other staff members here on that are going to be answering your questions throughout the day and engaging with you. If anyone feels



that any of these community standards are violated, we'll be chatting and just making sure that this is-- remains a comfortable space for folks.

**[00:07:38.370] - Kianna**

And if you feel like anything is violated, feel free to also reach out to us or any of the staff that are online with us as well. All right, Sound good? Give me some thumbs up. Thank you. All right.

**[00:07:54.610] - Kianna**

So this is me. My name is Kianna. As I said, I'm the program outreach and support manager. I've been working in youth development and mentoring for eight years. I am originally from South Carolina, so I am a transplant, but I've been in Baltimore for seven, so I claim it. I was an AmeriCorps alum from in 2017.

**[00:08:12.520] - Kianna**

I am first generation American born, first generation high school graduate and first generation college graduate. And my pronouns ones are she/her/ella.

**[00:08:21.870] - Kianna**

I share all of this so that you understand the context that I bring, the biases I bring, and this all impacts how I show up in each space. So want to make sure that you know a little bit about me before we jump into what we're doing here today.

**[00:08:37.530] - Kianna**

All right. So again, we are here for this lovely training and this is what we're hoping to learn today. So today, by the end of this session, participants should be able to reflect on youth voices and experiences, identify qualities of askable adults, explore skill building tools for better relationships and practice communication and listening skills. So those are the four things we're hoping that you walk away with today.

**[00:09:05.790] - Kianna**

And how are we going to do that? We just did our welcome introduction. Thank you all for hanging out today. If you haven't gotten a chance to introduce yourself in the chat, please feel free to do that. We're going to talk about what an askable adult is, reflect our own personal experiences so that we can make sure we understand why being an askable adult is important.



**[00:09:24.350] - Kianna**

We're going to go through the four askable adult skill areas, explore some possibilities and actions and how we can actually implement some of this and talk about some resources and close it up with some questions. Okay?

**[00:09:38.640] - Kianna**

All righty. So the "why" this is actually adapted from the [Vermont Network](#), and they conducted a 2017 survey or survey in 2017 of 584 Vermont youth. And the majority of young people said that the number one solution, so the top solution out of all of these young people said that the number one solution to coping with various anxieties in their lives would be having access to more supportive and askable adults. So in this survey, young people identified an array of concerns that caused them stress in their everyday lives that looked like anything from drug and alcohol use to poverty to sexism and harassment, body shaming, bullying, homophobia, transphobia. And when we when those responses were heard and young people were asked what would help.

**[00:10:31.180] - Kianna**

Again, young people said that the number one solution would be more adults that they can confide in, more adults that they could trust, more adults that they confide in in their lives. And as we know, children and young and young people are more resilient to stress and adversity when in meaningful relationships with at least one trusting adult.

**[00:10:49.350] - Kianna**

So this is especially critical for us as we work with young people and especially critical for young people who are working to develop a positive sense of self, especially in a culture that often devalues them based on their identity or their ability or their background or their status. So making sure that we're equipping adults, such as all of us, who are on this call, to be more askable and supportive for children and young people. Support.

**[00:11:13.480] - Kianna**

To support their healing and supporting that resiliency for all youth, including those who might have experienced some trauma and toxic stress. So that's why we're here today. We're here today to learn about how we can all be that adult that those young people were asking for.



**[00:11:32.180] - Kianna**

So we're gonna learn about what an askable adult is. All right, so I'm gonna kick us off. We're gonna. This is gonna have a lot of different audio stories throughout today. So we're gonna kick off with Maru and Alexa's story, and then we're gonna talk about what we noticed in that.

**[00:11:59.110] - Alexa**

Hi, I'm Alexa.

**[00:12:00.870] - Maru**

Hi, I'm Maru.

**[00:12:02.870] - Alexa**

So what would you tell other adults? What do they need to know about how to help youth feel comfortable?

**[00:12:08.710] - Maru**

That maybe listen to the people who are talking to them and just, like, be understanding and ask questions? Because I know that for myself, when people ask questions to me, it helps me understand, like, where they're at. Because, like, sometimes adults will just, like, say, mm, when they don't actually understand you, and then you keep going, and then they can't follow you. So just, like, asking questions is important.

**[00:12:41.980] - Alexa**

Mm.

**[00:12:43.930] - Maru**

When you were growing up, were there any askable adults in your community that you felt you could turn to?

**[00:12:49.860] - Alexa**

That's a good question. I don't know that. I really feel like when I was nine years old, I had as many people that I could trust--



**[00:12:57.620] - Attendee 2**

Are we supposed to be hearing something?

**[00:12:59.060] - Alexa**

as you can. I think as I got older, they were like, some of my counselors at--

**[00:13:02.970] - Kianna**

Yes, you should have been hearing a video. Okay, thank you so much.

**[00:13:07.900] - Renee**

I heard it Kianna.

**[00:13:09.390] - Kianna**

Oh. Other people could hear it. Okay. Okay. I'll continue playing it, and I hope you are able to hear it.

**[00:13:18.010] - Alexa**

Summer camp, and then. I don't know. I Think it makes me feel like I want to cry a little bit. Part of what I really love about the way that your parents have chosen to raise you is that I think you really understand your feelings a lot. And it's easy for you to be able to name what you're feeling and, like, talk about it and even just, like, know that you're feeling really frustrated with your brother and, like, be able to ask for help and all that. I think it's really incredible gift, and it's part of why I like spending time with you, because you, like, do know how to talk about your feelings, and I think it's just such an important skill to have because knowing how we're feeling actually helps us, like, have healthy ways of dealing with that as opposed to ways of dealing with our feelings that might hurt other folks or hurt ourselves. I don't know. It just feels really important to me.

**[00:14:12.090] - Alexa**

I think I feel glad to be a person like that in your life and glad that, you, special being who I love, feels like you have a lot of support from folks who really see and love you, and everybody deserves that.

**[00:14:25.610] - Maru**



Yeah.

**[00:14:27.710] - Narrator**

All adults can strengthen relationships with the young--

**[00:14:31.870] - Kianna**

All right, I hope most of you are able to hear that, and I am making my way back over to you, maybe.

**[00:14:49.510] - Kianna**

Sorry, folks, give me one second. My computer seems to be freezing.

**[00:15:00.020] - Kianna**

All right, so in that story, you learned a little bit about Maru and Alexa's story and their mentoring story.

**[00:15:08.100] - Maru**

Hi, I'm Maru.

**[00:15:09.560] - Kianna**

What is happening?

**[00:15:11.580] - Renee**

You're good.

**[00:15:13.020] - Kianna**

Okay. What is something that you noticed that Maru said about what makes an askable adult for them? You can come off mute or put it in the chat. What is something that you noticed that Maru said about what makes an askable adult for them?

**[00:15:28.000] - Attendee 3**



To keep asking questions, even though. Yeah, just try to get deeper at what they're saying because they might not be comfortable saying it.

**[00:15:36.560] - Kianna**

Right. Yeah. So being okay with digging deeper, it's good.

**[00:15:42.240] - Attendee 4**

She asked for an adult who was willing to listen and be understanding and not just provide response because they get lost in the conversation, slightly removed or detached.

**[00:15:52.440] - Kianna**

Yeah, that's really good, Mark. That stood out to me too. Like, just the. I'm-- I guess I'm listening. I'm just going to give you a very basic response rather than, like, it seemed like Alexa was really engaged and they felt that, right?

**[00:16:09.120] - Kianna**

I see some thoughts in the chat. Yep. The soft tone of her voice was helpful. She sounded concerned, empathetic, actually listening.

**[00:16:24.410] - Kianna**

All right, awesome. Thank you for those responses. Y'all being engaging.

**[00:16:33.850] - Kianna**

So glad we got to ground ourselves in that. So what you're looking at right now, is a wordle. So these images reflect how the surveyed Vermont youth described who their askable adults are, what their qualities are, and what they would talk to them about. So the ones that are bigger mean that those were repeated more often. So a lot of people said that their askable adult was their mom.

**[00:16:58.010] - Kianna**

Do any of these words surprise you? We'll go through a few of these, but these specifically start with young people. When they described who their askable adult was, this was their response. Do any of these surprise you?



**[00:17:11.930] - Attendee 4**

Nobody.

**[00:17:13.250] - Attendee 2**

The dogs.

**[00:17:15.810] - Attendee 2**

Yeah. I thought that was a sweet one or maybe inspire you or resonate with you. I heard nobody. Yeah, that one hits and it's bigger.

**[00:17:23.020] - Kianna**

Right. So it means more people said that.

**[00:17:26.490] - Attendee 5**

Lawyer.

**[00:17:30.730] - Kianna**

A lawyer. Yeah. That one's surprising, too.

**[00:17:34.800] - Attendee 4**

Is a TA teacher's assistant?

**[00:17:37.800] - Kianna**

I would assume so, yeah. So maybe they had a teaching assistant that they really connected with, similar to a teacher.

**[00:17:45.440] - Attendee 5**

I'm going to try now. It surprises me that mom is so big. I-- I'm in Ohio and I teach boundaries and unarmed self defense to girls middle, middle school, and high school. And when we talk about who is your askable adult, they never say mom.



**[00:18:11.950] - Kianna**

Yeah.

**[00:18:12.670] - Attendee 5**

And as I would ask deeper questions, it would be because they were afraid that their mom would not believe or have conversations with them. Like over 300 girls, very, very few of them said mom. So it surprises me that it's so big.

**[00:18:32.090] - Kianna**

Right. Yeah. That is surprising, especially as we know a lot of folks don't maybe feel it's important to have an adult outside of the family system. Jackie, I see your hand raised.

**[00:18:51.330] - Attendee 6**

I find that dog is a pretty intuitive response. You know, because your pets, when they don't talk back, they're great listeners. They're, you know, wonderful support, and I think that's what kids feel. I also find it interesting if they actually use the word advocate. Depending upon the age of the kids that did this.

**[00:19:17.540] - Kianna**

Right.

**[00:19:18.860] - Attendee 6**

A lot of the younger children that I have worked with would not know the word advocate. You know, maybe the older fifth, sixth, seventh graders, possibly.

**[00:19:31.920] - Kianna**

Yeah. I believe the survey was through. 18

**[00:19:35.400] - Attendee 6**

Through-- okay. And having worked for lawyers my entire life, I always find it interesting anybody would suggest a lawyer is a good listener. They're good talkers, that's for sure.

**[00:19:49.060] - Kianna**



Those are really good points, Jackie. So I'm going to move us on to this next slide.

**[00:19:53.370] - Kianna**

So this shows what the qualities are for what they believe askable adults are. Do any of these. Surprise. My bad. Do Any of these surprise inspire or resonate with you?

**[00:20:12.660] - Kianna**

This is what they believed, that they're askable adults. The qualities that they had. "Kind," yeah, it is really big!

**[00:20:22.740] - Kianna**

Mary, I'm glad to hear that you're an askable adult for your nieces and nephews.

**[00:20:28.900] - Kianna**

"Non-judgmental." Yeah. Like, we could close the training here. Like non-judgmental. It's. That's a big piece of it.

**[00:20:34.760] - Kianna**

"Doesn't press you," that's coming up a lot. Yeah.

**[00:20:39.890] - Kianna**

So feeling like you get to lead the conversation. Awesome. And lastly, we have. This is what-- this image reflects, what they talk to their askable adult about. How are we feeling about this?

**[00:20:56.520] - Kianna**

Any things on here that surprise you, maybe resonate with you? You're like, oh, I've definitely had a lot of those conversations.

**[00:21:03.760] - Renee**

Mark's hand is up. Do you want to share one?

**[00:21:06.440] - Kianna**



Yeah, go ahead.

**[00:21:08.490] - Attendee 4**

No, I. Look, he had a question. I'm backtracking to the engagement with Maru and Alex. Alexa, in my capacity, I currently work with some students who. Some college students who may be neurodivergent. And I noticed that Alexa was inspired and motivated to talk to Maru based off of her ability to communicate back effectively. And so I have some students, when I'm asking them questions, will kind of give me like one-worded responses like, yeah, yeah, I'm okay. Things are cool. And it kind of like depletes my desire to kind of like communicate with them in that certain way. So I'm just wondering if there are any, like, pointers for how we might be able to engage with those-- that student-- population of students.

**[00:21:56.770] - Kianna**

Yeah. That's a really great question, Mark. We actually have a whole training dedicated to that on neurodiversity and inclusion. Renee's actually the creator of the training. So I'll actually let Renee jump in on this one.

**[00:22:09.350] - Renee**

Sure. I mean, especially for neurodivergent young people, questions like. Such as that. Right. Like, how is this. How is that. They might take. In a very literal sense. Right. And they're. They're answering the question in a way that makes sense in their context, which might again be more literal and not necessarily-- I think a lot of time for neurotypical people and for adults, period right-- we're expecting elaborations, things like that, because we would do that.

**[00:22:39.050] - Renee**

But for a neurodivergent young person, they might. Their understanding, which again might be more black and white, is that I did answer the question and what more do you want? So I think there will be more tips further into this training that will help as well. But I think a lot of it is also the patience of leaving space for young people to tap back in, for young people who just need more time to consider what their answers may be. And then also this idea of motivational interviewing and open end questions as well, with which I know the training will get to.

**[00:23:13.260] - Renee**

But Shay's hand is up as well. Kianna.



**[00:23:17.500] - Renee**

Yeah, go ahead.

**[00:23:19.740] - Attendee 7**

Yes, bullying. I do have a seven year old who talks to me about that at his school and his emotions and him being mad sometimes at school. So school is on there as well. And mad bullying and emotions.

**[00:23:36.060] - Kianna**

Yeah, yeah, Bullying is really big, especially for young people. And so it's great to see if it's being talked about with an askable adult, right?

**[00:23:45.060] - Kianna**

But also a lot of these, it's like, wow, a young person shouldn't have to even think about these things. Thank you for sharing that.

**[00:23:53.630] - Attendee 7**

I agree. I don't remember at 7 years old, like going to my mom saying anything like that.

**[00:24:00.410] - Kianna**

Right. Yeah. There's a lot more access to things now. And for better and for worse. Right. Thank you all for sharing and engaging and sharing some of those personal experiences and what stood out to you here.

**[00:24:14.640] - Kianna**

So what makes an askable adult? So when I mention this training or whenever I do mention this training, their first question is usually, what's an askable adult? So in the chat, let me know what you think an askable adult is. We already showed you some traits of them. If there's a word that stands out or maybe what you think an askable adult might be, let me know, Share in the chat.

**[00:24:41.310] - Kianna**

"A safe person."



**[00:24:52.870] - Renee**

One thing I want to point out, Kianna, when we ask this question, right, like we heard directly from the young people on their point of view about what an askable adult is. So even our answer, how much meaning can we really give here? Right. It's like, what in our point of view, so we can see where there might be a mismatch and where we're kind of on the same page as well.

**[00:25:11.390] - Kianna**

Absolutely. Thank you, Renee. Yeah, I see some folks saying approachable, non-judgmental, someone you trust, available, relatable, empathetic. Awesome. Thank you for sharing those.

**[00:25:22.790] - Kianna**

So our definition of an askable adult is someone who is approachable, which I saw that word come up, easy and easy for children and youth to talk to about anything that's on their mind. So as you saw, there's a big list of things that young people are saying, hey, this is what I talked to my askable adult about. So something that they're able to talk to any of those topics about.

**[00:25:46.590] - Kianna**

Askable adults are committed to having strong, effective and affirming relationships with youth, using positive communication to develop trust and connectedness. And qualities of adults who are askable include some of those listed that you see in those little boxes.

**[00:26:02.320] - Kianna**

"Patience, consistency, respectfulness, honesty, kindness, attentiveness, trustworthiness, lightheartedness, open mindedness, non judgment, and knowledgeability." This is not all inclusive. These are just some of the qualities that we know askable adults often share and they often have a similar racial or ethnic or sexual identity as the young person. So we know shared experience is super valuable. A young person might feel more comfortable talking to someone who looks like them or has similar experience to them. So that's something we also want to point out.

**[00:26:35.510] - Kianna**

Being an askable adult means that you are approachable and easy for children and you talk to about anything that's on their mind. That's what I want you to take away from this. Okay?



**[00:26:46.460] - Kianna**

So we're going to reflect a little bit about our own experiences here, and we're going to get to know each other in this way. So we're actually going to get into some breakout groups.

**[00:26:54.900] - Kianna**

In those breakout groups, I would like you to answer these questions. I want to remind you all that this can be a difficult experience for some. So if you are not comfortable sharing out loud, sharing the answers to these questions out loud, remember, you can write this down. You can engage however you'd like. I definitely want you to still participate, but in whatever way feel safe to you.

**[00:27:14.820] - Kianna**

So you can write it down for yourself, share out loud in your group. But we are going to go into breakout rooms now, and I'll give y'all about six minutes in those groups and then we'll come back to share together, okay?

**[00:27:29.590] - Kianna**

All right, I will see you all soon.

**[00:27:31.540] - Renee**

And I'm opening those rooms now.

**[00:27:33.540] - Kianna**

Thank you, Renee.

**[00:27:37.590] - Kianna**

I know this was, I know this was a lot to reflect on, all of our own experiences. And I'd love to hear some of your experiences. So I would like to ask three groups if three folks who would like to share from their group would like to raise their hand. I'd love to hear how it went for your group. And we'll start there, so feel free to raise your hand.

**[00:28:07.400] - Attendee 8**

Yeah this is Zainab. I think our group, I think we had five people, but two of us shared. I know I shared that. You know, when I was growing up, children are, we're typically seen, not heard. I



mean, you know, we played with our friends, but when we're around adults, you know, we just kind of listen and we don't say anything. So it was hard for us to kind of relate to the adults that are around us all the time. But I did have one adult that I was able to kind of, you know, ask questions or bounce ideas off of. And this was my cousin, who was an older adult. To me, she was an older cousin. So that was it for me.

**[00:28:53.730] - Kianna**

Thank you for sharing that, Zainab. Yeah, that sounds like you did have someone to talk to, which made a big difference in a place where you didn't always feel heard.

**[00:29:00.610] - Attendee 8**

Yeah.

**[00:29:02.970] - Kianna**

Divine. I see your hand is up if you'd like to share.

**[00:29:06.610] - Attendee 9**

Yes, it's Divine.

**[00:29:08.150] - Kianna**

Divine. Thank you.

**[00:29:09.810] - Attendee 9**

I forgot our group number. I think it was 21 maybe. But the main consensus was that many of us did not have an askable adult. And I love with one of what someone said is that, you know, back in the day, some adults, so many adults maybe weren't quote, unquote, cool, you know, And I can definitely resonate with that. But for the most part, many of us didn't. Or if we did, it was later. Maybe not when we were in elementary school, but maybe when we got to high school.

**[00:29:47.350] - Kianna**

Right.

**[00:29:47.840] - Attendee 9**



And I did have an askable adult in elementary school. It was just one, my guidance counselor that really was supportive.

**[00:29:58.120] - Kianna**

I love the diversity in even who the askable adults were. Right. We had a cousin, so a family member, and now we have a guidance counselor. So someone who is built into your school that you found a safe place with. That's really awesome. All right, I'll take two more. I'm going to do Brianna and then Mohammed.

**[00:30:15.560] - Attendee 10**

Good morning, everyone. I think I was in group 13, if I'm not mistaken. But as far as my askable adult, it wasn't my biological mom, I consider as my earthly mom. She was the one that I went to and still do go to in the adulthood. I feel like, with being an-- I feel like being more of an askable adult now in my adulthood from my childhood. It helped me to become more open. And I've learned that, you know, back in my mother's time growing up, they didn't really have, like, askable adults or they didn't take mental health as serious as, you know, it is now in our days. So, yeah, my askable adult was my earthly mother.

**[00:31:00.510] - Kianna**

I love that. Yeah. Thank you for sharing that. And last but not least, Mohammed, if you could just share how that went for your group, that would be helpful.

**[00:31:11.200] - Attendee 11**

Thank you. And my group was very nice. They were very nice members over There. And we were talking about the askable adults, and mostly they were like the parents. Some are more close to their mother, some are more close to their fathers. And they have got, like, specific experiences with them where there is learning, where there is love here. And also, like someone mentioned about the teachers as well, because they are the building blocks of our careers. They teach us manners and living standards. So it was a good discussion, but the time went out, so it was a nice thing to discuss with each other. Yeah.

**[00:31:51.170] - Kianna**

Yeah. Well, I'm glad to hear it was a good discussion and that you were able to talk about maybe some natural supports that became askable adults like the teachers and family members. It



sounds like that was a really common thread among a lot of you. Well, thank you all for engaging. If there's something that you think wasn't covered, feel free to put it in the chat.

**[00:32:07.460] - Kianna**

I'm going to keep us trekking along to some of our content, but feel free to still engage in the chat with one another around this as I'm. I know that might have been. That might have brought some stuff up for y'all. So I'm really proud of you all for engaging in that activity. Thank you.

**[00:32:21.940] - Kianna**

All right, so our four askable Adult skill areas. This. These are the four things we're going to focus on today. Four things we're going to learn skills around. So the first is building trust and affirming relationships.

**[00:32:32.660] - Kianna**

The second is commitment to consistent connections. The third is committing to caring communication. And the fourth being being a curious co pilot and navigating tricky conversations. This is all taken from the Askable Adult Skill Building Toolkit. This is something that we're going to share here in the chat, but we-- and you should be able to click on it and it'll come up as a PDF. But we will also be sharing this after this training in an email to you, so you'll have this available to you, too. All right, so we're going to kick off with building trusting and affirming relationships. I warned you all at the beginning. We're going to listen to quite a few audio stories.

**[00:33:08.450] - Kianna**

They're very beautiful and engaging and hope you enjoy them as much as I do. So we're going to listen to that and come back together and chat. All right, so

**[00:33:18.870] - Attendee 7**

We are supposed to be listening to it. We're not supposed to be seeing a video, correct?

**[00:33:23.130] - Kianna**

Yes, you are just listening to an audio story. Good question. Thank you. All righty, so. And y'all let me know if you don't hear it. I'm going to start playing it in about two seconds. All right.

**[00:33:41.520] - Gabriel**



I'm Gabriel.

**[00:33:42.320] - Kianna**

Can y'all hear that?

**[00:33:42.920] - Natanya**

And I'm Natanya, and I am Gabriel's mom. Can you talk about a time when you felt like I was there for you?

**[00:33:49.000] - Gabriel**

I was at a friend's house. It was the first time I had to sleep over there. We were having a great time until we had to, like, mellow down and go to sleep. The sleeping arrangement was just much different than what I was used to. I really wasn't feeling comfortable, and so I went upstairs and contacted you.

**[00:34:10.740] - Natanya**

So it was pretty late at night when you called me.

**[00:34:12.660] - Gabriel**

It was like, two in the morning. It was really late. You didn't really ask any questions, and you came over and picked me up without any judgment.

**[00:34:23.000] - Natanya**

So is there something that I've said to you over time, at any point, that made you feel like you knew that you could call me at that time and ask me to pick you up?

**[00:34:32.630] - Gabriel**

There wouldn't be any judgment. If I ever needed really anything from you that you could do, you would come do it, especially like that. I feel like you proved it over time, and that was one of the reasons that I called you and didn't just try and go through it and force it.

**[00:34:54.200] - Natanya**

How then would you describe our relationship?



**[00:34:57.890] - Gabriel**

I feel like there's a strong, like, bond almost where we trust each other a lot, but there are some times when it's a bit shaky and we can get angry at each other, and we just. But every time we get that relationship back and we can trust each other a lot more.

**[00:35:24.480] - Natanya**

And do you feel like it's gotten better over time?

**[00:35:28.270] - Gabriel**

I feel like over time, it was a bit shaky, and now it's a good. It's getting stronger. Yeah.

**[00:35:34.730] - Natanya**

Awesome. I'm glad to hear that. Love you.

**[00:35:37.830] - Gabriel**

Yeah, I love you, too.

**[00:35:40.290] - Natanya**

All right, so that was Gabriel and Natanya's story, and this, again was about building trust and affirming relationships.

**[00:35:50.980] - Kianna**

So how did y'all note trust and connection, where that was built in their relationship? How did you note that trust and connection were built in their relationships? I see a hand up.

**[00:36:06.540] - Attendee 12**

Yeah. He was able to call her, his mom, to come pick him up from a situation that he wasn't comfortable in.

**[00:36:14.860] - Kianna**



Right. And it didn't sound like the mom was like, well, what are you getting into? Or what? You know, it was just like, okay, I'll be there. That's awesome, Mamie, I see your hand up.

**[00:36:26.220] - Attendee 13**

So one of the things he did say to the mom, he says, you've proved yourself time and time again, and that stood out to me.

**[00:36:31.430] - Kianna**

Yeah, yeah. So built trust by like continuously doing it, saying, hey, you can rely on me. Anything else stood out to folks? Let me look at the chat.

**[00:36:47.230] - Kianna**

Yep. She was non judgmental, consistency. Her expectation, his expectations matched her actions.

**[00:36:54.550] - Renee**

If I could say something about consistency. So when I used to train mentors directly, always says consistency is foundational to relationships. Young people need to be able to be able to predict how an adult is going to ask. Right. So when adults are unpredictable or inconsistent, there's not an opportunity to build trust or to feel affirmed. Right. So an easiest thing to do is to A) do what you say you're going to do, right. But if you're a mentor, right, showing up when you say you're going to show up, making clear, if I'm not going to show up, then I'll do this other thing to communicate with you. But consistency is really important for young people to feel comfortable again, to be this idea of askable.

**[00:37:36.950] - Kianna**

Right. That's a really good point. Yeah. Like I'm sure all of us probably can think of adults in our lives who weren't consistent how that made you feel, right. It didn't make you feel safe, it didn't make you feel like you could trust them. It didn't make you feel comfortable in multiple ways.

**[00:37:50.710] - Kianna**

And so having the antidote to that and also knowing that like young people really need that consistency to then be able to build a relationship to feel like that they can trust in that. That's good. Any other notes before we jump in a little bit more into building trust?



**[00:38:13.980] - Kianna**

All right, well, let's define what trust is. So trust is the assured reliance. I heard a lot of you say, hey, he could rely on her, he could call her and she'd be there. He knew that she would be there. She was consistent.

**[00:38:27.460] - Kianna**

Right. So it's the assured reliance on the character, ability, strength and integrity of another person or thing. So to trust someone is to feel safe being vulnerable with them. Which we heard Gabriel doing a lot of that in his interactions. Right.

**[00:38:40.760] - Kianna**

He was just like, I'm not okay. And it's 2am can you come get me? And she was like, okay, I'll be there. And so young people are more likely to come to you with their concerns if they trust you, if they feel like they can come to you.

**[00:38:54.920] - Kianna**

So I have a few tips for us on how to build those trusting and affirming relationships. So especially with the young people in your life. In your life.

**[00:39:03.400] - Kianna**

So respect: youth identify feeling respected is central to having effective relationships with adults.

**[00:39:12.020] - Kianna**

Adults who are askable for Children and youth hold respect as a core value and work hard to maintain that. So a good thing to ask yourself to think, hey, do I follow into this first principle, this R-E-S-P-E-C-T principle? Ask yourself, would I treat another adult this way? That one hits hard for me. I know there are times when I might be even with like a little, really little young person, right?

**[00:39:35.550] - Kianna**



You might be like very quick to interact in a different way than you would an adult. And so asking yourself, hey, am I treating this young person in the way I respect other people and am I treating them in the way I would treat another adult? Would I talk to another adult this way?

**[00:39:51.870] - Kianna**

Secondly, keeping confidential things confidential. And of course, if you're not able to do that, be honest with that upfront.

**[00:39:58.660] - Kianna**

That could look like something like, hey, I'm a mandated reporter of child abuse, which means that if you share anything with me that makes me concerned for your safety, I might have to report that. Even that concept of being honest in that way and being honest about what you can and cannot keep, keep confidential is a way to build trust.

**[00:40:16.020] - Kianna**

Thirdly, check your own agenda. Even well intentioned adults can get lost in their own agenda. So a good question to ask yourself periodically is why you're in a relationship with young people.

**[00:40:27.740] - Kianna**

Why am I doing this? Why do I want to keep mentoring? Why do I want to be in a relationship with this young person in this way?

**[00:40:35.280] - Kianna**

Allowing space. So remembering that young people are in the process of developing their identities and values, giving young people the space to reach their own decisions and the information they need to do so in an educated way.

**[00:40:47.050] - Kianna**

So making sure you're giving, allowing them to make those choices for themselves, they might change those choices. That's okay. Believe young people when they tell you who they are. So if a young person says, hey, this is how I'm identifying, or this is who I am, or this is what I believe. Believe them.

**[00:41:01.520] - Kianna**



Trusting relationships are formed when youth understand that they are not required to share your values in order to be loved and respected by you. So if a young person disagrees with one of your, with one of your opinions or your values, they know that they can still come to you and they know that you will still love them. That is huge.

**[00:41:24.180] - Kianna**

Next, we have share power. So remembering that our society in general grants a lot more credibility and authority to adults than young people.

**[00:41:31.580] - Kianna**

So making sure we're able to include young people in decision making is huge in that. And it can be even those smaller decisions, right? Like, hey, do you want to go to this after school or this after School instead, and making sure that young people feel that they have power in that decision making, that you truly are giving them a space in that decision making.

**[00:41:52.700] - Kianna**

Watching your assumptions, so paying close attention to your assumptions and how you react to what young people do or tell you.

**[00:42:02.340] - Kianna**

So this could be making sure you're asking questions, listening carefully, and learning. And this could be practicing the question of, hey, do you just want to talk? And me listen, rather than assuming that folks want to hear what you have to say, but making sure that we're watching our assumptions and that we're just willing to sit there and learn too.

**[00:42:22.470] - Kianna**

All right, we're almost there. With these tips for establishing relationships.

**[00:42:26.830] - Kianna**

Pause, reflect, and let go of judgment. It's. It is as important to pay attention to your own reactions as it is to listen to youth. So let's say if you find yourself having a really strong feeling, kind of what we talked about at the beginning with our standards, with our community standards, we want to pause and reflect before we react or respond. So a good question you could ask yourself is, how would I respond if this was another adult?



**[00:42:54.280] - Kianna**

How would I respond if, you know, this was my friend telling me this? Am I making an unhelpful judgment?

**[00:43:03.950] - Kianna**

And last, second to last, keep your promises. What's up?

**[00:43:08.720] - Renee**

I want to make sure you see these last two questions in the chat.

**[00:43:11.850] - Kianna**

Oh, I did not. Let me see them. Oh, my chat is behind. Okay. You're concerned about talking with children as they are adults.

**[00:43:20.040] - Kianna**

Did I get the statement correctly? That's a really good question. So what we mean by that is we don't want to talk down to young people. So we don't-- a lot of times as adults and in the youth practitioner world, we find that we will not give young people choices and that we talk down to them.

**[00:43:40.410] - Kianna**

So that might look like, hey, you didn't do your homework. You would never tell an adult, hey, you didn't do your work. You would ask a question or communicate in a way that is respectful. So we're saying you should give young people the amount of respect that you give adults. That doesn't mean that you're sharing inappropriate topics or that you're not being age appropriate in your communication, but rather that you are giving them the same level of respect in your communication, in your tone, in your questions that you would an adult.

**[00:44:08.860] - Kianna**

Does that make more sense?

**[00:44:16.070] - Kianna**



All right, and how about having good standards of personal contact? Would that be. Would that be seen? Oh, we have a few questions. Oh, okay.

**[00:44:22.880] - Kianna**

Sorry, my chat just went crazy. "Good standards of personal conduct would that be seen as being discriminatory or unreachable?" Professor, would you be able to expand on that a little bit? So I, if I'm understanding correctly, you're asking, like, let's say if you're in a certain setting, you might have certain standards, and you're asking if that might be viewed as discriminatory. Am I understanding that correctly?

**[00:44:50.960] - Kianna**

Okay. So depends on what the standards are. I think that we have a whole different training on, like, "Combating White Saviorism," which is a really good one that I would recommend watching to get a little deeper into some of that. But my. And "Practicing Cultural Humility" is another big one.

**[00:45:09.440] - Kianna**

But I think ensuring, if it's a standard that. So I'm immediately thinking of, like, let's say you're at an activity with young people where you're preparing for mock job interviews. You might have certain group standards that are supporting young people in that way. But we also want to be very cognizant of how white supremacy culture is pervasive in our society and how certain things and certain standards might lean into some of that discriminatory practices. So we need to be careful of that and ensuring that first, everything's accessible to young people that we're not, again, not like correcting, but rather, hey, letting it be a teaching moment.

**[00:45:54.020] - Kianna**

Do you have a specific example you're referring to, Professor?

**[00:45:59.980] - Kianna**

And if we want to talk about this offline, we can, too.

**[00:46:13.590] - Kianna**



And as, and as Renee mentioned in the chat, if you're holding standards to a program or to a space that is communicated clearly to setting people up for success. Right. So we want to make sure that if it's something that's, like, shared ahead of time, that's something that could be.

**[00:46:38.350] - Kianna**

That's something that we want to make sure we're communicating clearly. All right. I'm going to go on with my last community, my last tip over here before we keep it moving.

**[00:46:47.670] - Kianna**

So my last two tips was keep your promises and do your best to show up. This goes in line with what we were talking about earlier with consistency. We really want to make sure that we're showing up and that we are being consistent in that.

**[00:47:01.390] - Kianna**

And lastly, do not give up. We know that building trust takes time, and you'll see that as a consistent among all of our four skill areas. We want to make sure that we're not giving up and that we're being there and being present.

**[00:47:11.810] - Kianna**

All right, any questions on these before we move on?

**[00:47:21.890] - Kianna**

All right. And Renee, let me know if I missed anything in the chat. But I'm going to keep us moving.

**[00:47:27.810] - Kianna**

All righty, so we're going to go into some breakout rooms again and we're going to talk about. We're going to do a little bit of reflection here. And so this is something for y'all to reflect on. Again, you can verbally share out or write it down, whatever you would prefer.

**[00:47:42.250] - Kianna**

But what is something that is doable for you personally to increase your askability within building trust and affirming relationships? And what is something that is a stretch for you to achieve? So



thinking about these tips we just did, if any of these feel very doable for you, you're like, I'm already doing this, or, hey, this one's kind of hard and I want to learn a little bit more about that.

**[00:48:01.940] - Kianna**

That's what we're going to do together in these breakout rooms. Okay? So I'm going to give y'all about five minutes in those breakout rooms and then we'll come back together and we'll keep it moving. Sound good? All right, team, thank you, Kiera, I'll talk to you soon.

**[00:48:24.580] - Kianna**

We'll go ahead and. We'll go ahead and start our conversation. So if I could have y'all in the chat, share what is some. What is something that stood up to y'all, Maybe something you shared that's very doable for you, or maybe something that you shared was a stretch. Put those in the chat and we'll review some of those real quick.

**[00:48:59.300] - Kianna**

I see, hand raised. What's up Serenity?

**[00:49:02.220] - Attendee 14**

I would like the gentleman. I want to say Rick, but I don't know if Rich, I don't know if I read his name correctly. He had a great question or comment that I think would be great to present to you in the group.

**[00:49:14.540] - Attendee 14**

All right, Rick or Rich, you've been summoned. What's up?

**[00:49:25.880] - Attendee 15**

I think I just unmuted. Did this work?

**[00:49:27.880] - Kianna**

Yes, I can hear you.

**[00:49:29.320] - Attendee 15**



Hi, everybody. I'm Rich. So I'm a volunteer mentor in a program with a lot of teenagers. And something that I struggle with is luckily I seem to already be a fairly askable adult, so I get a lot of sometimes delicate questions, things that have to do with, you know, sexuality and other things that are kind of like between topics of. I want to let them know that I heard them and, you know, I support them and these are normal questions. But also I'm an outsider. I'm not a counselor or a teacher, I'm not your parent. There are some things that I can listen to but I can't necessarily answer for safety reasons and therefore I have to kind of pass you off. And I don't know how to handle that question or handle that situation smoothly in a way that says, you know, I'm here for you. But there are some things that unfortunately I can't help with just due to our nature.

**[00:50:24.400] - Kianna**

That is a really great question. I'm sure some. It's coming up for a few other folks too. I think the thing that stood out to me that you said is that you're affirming them, right? And I think that is like the biggest thing you can do if someone's coming up and saying, hey, I'm not really sure how I'm feeling about X, Y and Z.

**[00:50:38.680] - Kianna**

My friends are doing this and you know, I'm not sure how, where my identity lies within X, Y and Z, whatever it may look like, I think showing up with empathy first. Right? So yes, I like, I hear you. That is really hard. Doing those reflective statements, showing empathetic responses and active listening and then being honest with them.

**[00:50:59.030] - Kianna**

That's okay if you're like, hey, I don't have an answer for you here, but you know, if you're okay, do you want to look alongside me and maybe we can find something online? Maybe it's looking for a counselor for them to connect to or a program for them to connect to or maybe they already have a built in support for that that you can be like, hey, I know You've talked about Ms. Renee before. Did. Have you been able to talk to Ms. Renee about this yet? If not, I can keep you accountable to that-- is it okay if I check in with you next week? So it's okay to set your boundaries and say, hey, I'm not the person who might be able to answer this, but I'll listen and I can help point you to the place while still showing up as an empathetic, askable and loving adult in their life. Does that make sense?

**[00:51:37.550] - Kianna**



And tag onto that. If anyone else has any ways that maybe they've navigated those types of questions, feel free to come off mute and share too.

**[00:51:45.110] - Renee**

I think the other side of that too is that it's great that you're the, that you are the askable adult. And of course, being honest with young people when you don't know the answers also makes you even more askable because young people assume that potentially that adults do have all the answers. And then also I think kind of touch on this like being affirming that they did ask. Right? Like, I am glad that you told me this, even though I'm not the person to help you. Right. Because we don't want you to be struggling and things like that. So being acknowledging that they've done something great, which is seek out support from an adult, and then again making that referral that Kianna mentioned.

**[00:52:20.810] - Kianna**

Right. Awesome. Nice. Awesome. Good conversation in the chat, too, around. Thank you for being honest about what's hard. I heard. I saw "keeping my poker face on is hard, sharing power is hard," and that's okay. That's why we're here, to learn how to do those things together. All right, so we're going to move on.

**[00:52:42.800] - Kianna**

That was our first skill area. We're going to move on to our next one, which is committing to consistent connections. So we have another story to listen to. Again, this will be a listening story, and then we'll come together just to quickly talk through what we notice. All right.

**[00:53:09.210] - Kianna**

And you should be able to hear something now.

**[00:53:11.290] - Lori**

My name is Lori. Thomas comes to our house, and he works with the horses and he walks our dog, Sky. There was something very different about him. We just kind of started talking to each other.

**[00:53:29.050] - Lori**



Yeah. Just randomly. We would be doing something around the house of the horses, and Thomas would be working with horses, and we'd have him in and then just start talking to each other. And I at least felt that it was just this kind of instant connection.

**[00:53:45.630] - Lori**

Watching him with the horses has been incredible. Incredible. They watch for him. My dog, who is this really quirky character, adores Thomas, and they have this. They have a connection, too. Sky just thinks like you're one of them. He's like, oh, here comes my buddy. They walk at the same pace.

**[00:54:09.350] - Thomas**

He's my best friend. I prefer animals over people, too.

**[00:54:14.520] - Lori**

You can see that with him, with the horses, they so accept him and they trust him, which is very unusual. They're not trusting by nature.

**[00:54:23.520] - Lori**

If there was something that was really troubling you, would you feel comfortable coming to me and asking me if we could talk about it?

**[00:54:33.580] - Thomas**

Yeah.

**[00:54:36.050] - Lori**

Why do you think?

**[00:54:37.020] - Thomas**

I mean, I don't know. I just feel really comfortable talking to you. You know, it's like a safe space.

**[00:54:44.190] - Lori**

And I feel that way about you, too. It's sort of like. I think that what's really essential in our friendship is that there's no judgment. And I think one of the things that we connected with is we



both like working with wood. So when Thomas fell out of the sky, I was doing some projects on outbuildings. When he came to work with the horses, he would check in to see what I was doing. And he always had these suggestions that totally blew me away because I think I know what I'm doing.

**[00:55:20.180] - Lori**

And then one time I had smashed my finger with a hammer because the nail wouldn't go in the wall. And he said, you know, if you drill a pilot hole first, that won't happen. I find myself. I'm learning stuff from him too. And he's got. He has a really creative mind and he comes up with these ideas that are like, really?

**[00:55:44.530] - Thomas**

I don't hear many good compliments about myself. It's nice to hear some good.

**[00:55:50.510] - Lori**

Do you believe it?

**[00:55:51.680] - Thomas**

I do.

**[00:55:53.360] - Lori**

I hope you do, because I mean it. I really do. I think you're incredibly special. And it was like he. He just came into my life unexpectedly. And I feel that he's helped me broaden the way I look at things. And it's been a real joy to watch him growing and changing. Do you feel you've changed since you started coming--

**[00:56:19.970] - Thomas**

I have.

**[00:56:20.610] - Lori**

to the little farm?

**[00:56:21.540] - Thomas**



I have a lot. I can control my anger better.

**[00:56:25.570] - Lori**

Yeah, I've noticed that about you.

**[00:56:27.530] - Thomas**

Yeah.

**[00:56:28.730] - Lori**

And you smile a lot more.

**[00:56:30.330] - Thomas**

Yep.

**[00:56:31.410] - Lori**

Yeah.

**[00:56:33.730] - Kianna**

All right, so that was our story about Lori and Thomas. What'd you notice here?

**[00:56:40.650] - Kianna**

What is something you noticed about their connection and consistency? Let's share that in the chat. What is something you might have noticed about their consistency, about their connection. Sure.

**[00:56:53.800] - Attendee 15**

Okay. As a mother of a-- I'm going upstairs because I don't want him to hear me-- of a 31 year old special needs adult. I'm guessing that's what he might be. We tend to correct, correct, correct because we want them to be, you know, acceptable in society. Like he was saying is anger and things like that.

**[00:57:12.560] - Attendee 15**



And then this woman comes along and yeah, she's calm. She's not correcting him. She's finding his good traits because she doesn't, no offense, but she probably doesn't have to deal with his other traits. But since they start on such a good foot and she's feeding that, then that's how he continues to be around her. So, yeah, she's a very good askable adult.

**[00:57:36.760] - Kianna**

Yeah. Thank you, Ellen, for sharing that personal experience and also seeing that. Yeah. It sounds like Lori's able to also see how their relationship is reciprocal. Right.

**[00:57:46.870] - Kianna**

Hey, I'm. I'm learning from you too. And here are the ways that you're showing up and here are the positive things I see in you. And speaking to that. That's really good.

**[00:57:54.270] - Kianna**

Yep. Deborah said they have a lot in common. Debbie, she's a safe place, comfortable. They have a friendship.

**[00:58:03.750] - Kianna**

She compliments him and he appreciates it. Yeah, that, that little sentence always breaks my heart where he's like, I don't, I don't hear compliments like that about myself. I don't hear good things about myself. So speaking into young people. Awesome.

**[00:58:18.380] - Kianna**

Thank you all for sharing. So how do we commit to consistent connections?

**[00:58:27.580] - Kianna**

So an important message for young people to hear is you matter to me. I would say this is an important message for anyone to hear, but this is the message that all children and youth in your life should get from you: you matter to me.

**[00:58:38.820] - Kianna**

No matter what your relationship is to them, whether you are a parent or a teacher or a youth worker or a neighbor, a family member, just a random person walking down the street. This



message should guide all of your interactions with young people in your life. They need to know that someone cares and that you, that they matter.

**[00:58:54.560] - Kianna**

So you matter to me. Tell them that they matter to you and show up for them over and over and over again. As we've seen in these examples that we've been listening to.

**[00:59:03.570] - Kianna**

We also know there's importance of connections. The importance of connections. So children and youth who have consistent and strong connections to adults in their families and in their communities are more likely to have a solid sense of belonging and security.

**[00:59:16.940] - Kianna**

We also know that connection fosters well being across racial, ethnic, cultural, geographic and socioeconomic characteristics. So it's really important that all young people feel connected. And because this improves literally life outcomes and it's important for relationships, we know that relationships have a pretty predictable stages. So I have them listed here in those-- the three last points.

**[00:59:46.110] - Kianna**

But oftentimes young people first check it out for safety. So young people often expect disappointment, they expect abandonment, maybe a lack of genuineness and those negative outcomes. So we can ensure that we're. We can help ensure that physical and emotional safety by offering comfortable and accepting environments that honor that individual difference. Right? So encouraging young people to ask for what they need. That's how we can make sure it feels safe.

**[01:00:12.210] - Kianna**

We also know that testing limits is also something that happens. We-- if we've interacted ever with a young person, you've experienced this. So young people often seek to learn about your role in their lives and ensure you accept them for who they are. So we want to be forgiving of a young person's desire for reassurance and retesting it to explore how consistent, predictable, and dependable you are.



**[01:00:33.830] - Kianna**

And we also want to respond with unconditional positive regard. This is actually one of my personal favorite pieces of this entire training is unconditional positive regard, which is the idea that you will not change your attitude based on something they say or do. So you, regardless of what happens, you always have positive regard for a young person. And that's something we want to show as young people are testing limits.

**[01:00:58.050] - Kianna**

And lastly, we know genuineness. When trust is built in small amount moments over time, it could then creates predictable and dependable connections. So when that happens, trust gets deeper and anxiety decreases; communication is smoother; and feedback and modeling have more meaning. Rich, when you were sharing your story about how you often are a person that young people come to, I imagine you've experienced a lot of these different things and have experience the beauty of now people are coming to you and that communication is smoother. So thank you for being an example of that and letting me call on you real quick.

**[01:01:30.400] - Kianna**

All right, so within those consistent connections, some quick tips for that. Tips for staying connected with the young people in your life.

**[01:01:37.970] - Kianna**

You want to pay attention, so make sure you're focusing on children and youth when they are talking about things that matter to them. That means we're not on our phones. That means we're making eye contact. And we're also affirming that we believe them and we believe what they're saying.

**[01:01:51.110] - Kianna**

We also want to follow up. That means even when you're not around, let's say you haven't been able to see them for a minute, that's okay. And you want to maintain contact, especially if you know they're going through something challenging. You don't want to wait for them to bring it up, but you can send a quick message to remind them that you're present.

**[01:02:06.630] - Kianna**



"Hey, I know you had a really big test coming up that you were anxious about. How'd it go?" I know my youngest or one of my younger nieces, she is always so excited to hear from me, and I'm pretty present in her life. But if I remember something like, "hey, I know you were going on that date the other day, how'd it go?" She lights up because I remembered her and I followed up without her having to initiate. So we all want to make sure we're doing that even for just for any young person in our life.

**[01:02:34.240] - Kianna**

Third, make time for lightness. It does not always have to be super serious. We can bring in humor and fun and laughter and really help young people navigate stress. Right.

**[01:02:43.120] - Kianna**

We know that youth experience stress, whether it be normal stress or really complex and toxic stress. And so helping youth learn how to manage that by finding things they love, finding things that make them happy, finding things that allow them to be mindful. Those are ways that we can make time for lightness.

**[01:02:59.210] - Kianna**

We want to find satisfaction in doing things for and with them. So young people need to believe that we value spending time with them. So making sure we're showing them that.

**[01:03:08.090] - Kianna**

Shifting levels of support; I think the last story we listened to was a really good point for this, but making sure we're giving or shifting levels of support meanings that we're giving support when young people are struggling and less when they're coasting. So if a young person is really struggling, making sure we're showing them we're there, we're there, we're there. And when they're showing-- when they need a little less support, easing up and letting them take the front seat. Right.

**[01:03:33.730] - Kianna**

And lastly, as always, don't give up. We know that consistency matters. All right, I see some things in the chat. Let me just check on that.

**[01:03:47.980] - Kianna**



"Following up is important." Yep.

**[01:03:52.020] - Kianna**

Alrighty. And thank you, Renee, for catching that one in the chat. All right, so we are moving on to our third skill area, which is "Committing to Caring Communication." But before we do that, I want to read this quick quote. So "Do you want-- do you want to vent or do you want advice? Just Learning now after 40 years on Earth that this might be the most important question to ask whenever a friend or loved one is upset."

**[01:04:19.840] - Kianna**

So in the chat, if you could just give me a number one, if you have ever tried, like literally the number number one, if you have ever tried this approach with youth or someone in your life, give me a thumbs up if you thought that was helpful. But this is something I would. I'm definitely trying to enact in my personal life.

**[01:04:37.680] - Kianna**

I have found that it's really helpful in any conversation. So just wanted to share that as we move into committing to caring communication. All right, I see a few of you with some ones. Thank you. And some thumbs up.

**[01:04:49.160] - Kianna**

Awesome. All right, so this next skill area is committing to caring communication. Effective communication between two adults or between adults and youth is critical to building connection. So both how adults communicate with youth and what they communicate is really important, right?

**[01:05:09.490] - Kianna**

So here's some tips for engaging and caring communication with the young people in your life.

**[01:05:14.570] - Kianna**

I would say this first one is the most important, which is put away judgment. This was the number one concern in relationships with adults that we saw from that survey that we talked about earlier. The biggest concern was judgment. So putting away that judgment, asking what they need, and listening deeply.



**[01:05:32.460] - Kianna**

So young people want to be listened to and heard. They don't always want us to jump into problem solving, but making sure we're asking, what do you want and need? Kind of like what that question was just asking, hey, do you want to vent or do you want me to just listen?

**[01:05:44.220] - Kianna**

Wait. Which stands for "Why Am I Talking," ask yourself this a lot.

**[01:05:50.530] - Kianna**

So trying a one to three ratio of where young people drive the conversation, which might look like for 15 minutes of a conversation, make sure you're not talking for more than five of those minutes. Right. Making sure young people have the opportunity to drive the conversation. We'll practice this in a minute.

**[01:06:09.990] - Kianna**

Leaning in--so being interested and learning. So be curious about what matters most right now to them. Asking questions, learning from them and showing it. That could be simple as their favorite music right now, or maybe something they learned recently at school or just something they're excited to talk to you about.

**[01:06:27.150] - Kianna**

Talking about boundaries and limits. So we know that young people kind of what we were talking about earlier. Rich, this kind of also relates to your conversation earlier. Young people actually really appreciate it when they know our limitations. Telling them upfront models honesty, it models dependability, it models predictability, and it helps them talk about their own boundaries. So if you're saying, hey, I actually can't connect with you on social media, that's a boundary I have.

**[01:06:50.400] - Kianna**

They then know, hey, that's a boundary I can have too in the future with other people. So those boundaries could also look like time and day, best ways to communicate with them, maybe topics to communicate with them about.

**[01:07:03.380] - Kianna**



Supporting their process and remembering yours. So we know mistakes are necessary, part of learning. So making sure we're praising young people for hard work and for what they're doing well, whether they succeed or not.

**[01:07:16.030] - Kianna**

Being a source of appraisal and honesty. So we know that young people often appreciate positive and honest feedback and affirmation and constructive feedback.

**[01:07:26.990] - Kianna**

Understanding what's happening in their lives. So again, this could look like listening to music or watching media that's important to them. Just giving a genuine interest to what they care about.

**[01:07:36.430] - Kianna**

Revisiting difficult conversations in small doses. I think this goes hand in hand with consistency, but it really shows that you care and are able to give conversations room to grow and evolve until you're both more comfortable with that. So let's say if a young person brought something up, it's like, I don't want to talk about it.

**[01:07:53.820] - Kianna**

You're not pressing on it, but you're showing, hey, I'm going to follow up with you in a few weeks. You might say, hey, I know we talked about that. Is that something you want to talk about a little more? Or hey, this seems to come up again. Just know I'm here if you ever want to talk.

**[01:08:05.060] - Kianna**

So again, giving them the opportunity to lead.

**[01:08:08.080] - Kianna**

And last but not least, again, do not give up. Communication is an ongoing process.

**[01:08:17.790] - Kianna**

All right, so we're not going to do this activity. I want to make sure I'm honoring y'all's time and we have one more skill area to do, but I want to show it to you in case this is helpful for you to maybe



do in your own time. This activity is pretty cool. You have two people. One person's the adult, one person's the young person.

**[01:08:38.180] - Kianna**

And you practice the "WAIT", which again was "Why Am I Talking." So only speaking for one third of the time. And so this might look like if an adult was trying to talk about or if a young person was trying to talk to you about something they're going through. And you have, you're talking for three minutes. You're going to literally practice with a timer.

**[01:09:00.470] - Kianna**

Only talking for one of those three minutes. It's really hard. But it's a great practice and activity. So we won't have time to do it today, but I'd encourage y'all to explore it maybe with a friend or a colleague if you have time.

**[01:09:16.470] - Kianna**

Alrighty. So our last skill area is being a curious co pilot and navigating tricky conversations. So a quote here I have is "Kids talk when we give them our full curious attention. In order to truly hear them and discern the right size response in the moment, we need to tune into their channel. Like on an old fashioned radio dial, we have to hone in on just the right spot to tune out the static of our fears, worries and distractions so we can get the message. Are they just venting or asking for help developing a plan? The best way to do that is to look inside and get to know the static that comes up for us. I often think that the best thing we can do to show up for our kids is to tend to ourselves, seeking support from friends, colleagues or professionals. Especially when we have a hard time removing the static on our own."

**[01:10:03.870] - Kianna**

So in the chat, or you can unmute. What are tricky topics or conversations for you to have with children and youth?

**[01:10:16.710] - Kianna**

So maybe I know, Rich, earlier you shared about sexual identity. That's something that comes up. Maybe bullying is something that's hard in the chat. If you could just share maybe some tricky topics that you're not sure how to navigate.



**[01:10:30.590] - Kianna**

College, sex, use of drugs, drugs and alcohol, sibling issues. When they want to talk about their relationships, that's a big one.

**[01:10:54.680] - Kianna**

Relationships, parents not listening to them, violence, self perception, confidence. These are all great.

**[01:11:03.280] - Kianna**

Citizenship status, marijuana, drugs.

**[01:11:06.760] - Kianna**

All right, we'll get back to that. I do have some resources. I'll share on that in a moment.

**[01:11:12.020] - Kianna**

But some other questions to ponder, this is for you just to internally related to this quote, I want you to keep in mind is: think about your own static.

**[01:11:21.010] - Kianna**

So what fears and worries make it hard for you to fully tune into to critical conversations with the young people in your life? What support do you need to clear out your static? So how can you get that support? Would that look like in terms of Julia Chafets from this quote, who shared hey, her support system is friends and colleagues.

**[01:11:42.190] - Kianna**

What do you need to clear out some of that static? So I want you all to personally ponder on that while we go into being a curious co pilot. So again, this is all about how to navigate those hard conversations, which is why I was asking what are those hard conversations for y'all?

**[01:11:55.410] - Kianna**

So again, you do not expect adults to know everything, but they do appreciate honest responses and helpful information. So tips for becoming a useful resource.



**[01:12:04.450] - Kianna**

You want to be direct and honest. It's okay if you don't know the answer to something or know what to say, but be willing to explore.

**[01:12:11.900] - Kianna**

You might be askable. So you might be a person that young people feel comfortable asking. But you don't know everything and that's okay. If you don't know the answer to a question, you can collaborate to find helpful information. So hey, let's look that up together. You can be comfortable with silent spaces. So just listening and asking questions might be just what the young person needs.

**[01:12:30.360] - Kianna**

You could also break it down. So when youth are trying to solve a problem, you could help them break it down into smaller, more digestible pieces to help them find their own solutions by asking curious questions that could look like hey, so what could you do differently to tackle this problem? Or hey, what's worked in the past when you had something come up like this? Rather than just telling them what to do.

**[01:12:52.250] - Kianna**

You could ask helpful questions. Youth probably have the answer themselves. So you know, what have you already tried? Have you had a similar problem? What worked? Do you need more information? What can I support you with there?

**[01:13:04.450] - Kianna**

Thinking outside of the box. So offering information and practical help, offering to connect them to your other resources and adults. We know social capital is something that us as adults have a lot more than young people. So how can we tap into that?

**[01:13:18.350] - Kianna**

We can also broaden their web of relationships, which is connecting them to others. Just as I was saying, within our network to expand their world and asking about and encouraging those meaningful relationships with other adults. Especially as I saw college in there was a big topic that's been coming up. So it's like, hey, how do you find a mentor in college? How do we talk about that? How do we prepare you for that?



**[01:13:40.000] - Kianna**

Looking up local and other resources together. So model this by sharing times you've had to ask for help.

**[01:13:47.160] - Kianna**

And again, youth want meaningful conversations and practical information about their concerns, so it's okay to Google it. We have some resources that we'll share for tricky convos that I'll share in a moment.

**[01:13:58.380] - Kianna**

But last but not least, don't give up. We know that being a resource is ongoing.

**[01:14:04.880] - Kianna**

All right, we're almost done here, folks. This is our last skill area. So again, we're coming back to this slide. This looks familiar to y'all. These are the topics we talked about that young people often share and often want to talk about with their askable adults.

**[01:14:22.670] - Kianna**

So if you have a resource for any of these topics, feel free to share them in the chat and we'll capture those and share them out with the group later. But this last story, we don't have time to go over it today, which I'll make sure I share it out again. But this just talks about new possibilities and how to make sure that you are exploring those possibilities and actions with young people, keeping them accountable and moving them to action. And so how to make sure that we're doing that in our life so that we can have that more deeply and connected and trusting, affirming relationships with young people. So I want y'all to grab your phones, unless you're on your phone, because then you're already on it.

**[01:15:07.810] - Kianna**

If you're on your phone, take a screenshot. If you're not on your phone, grab your phone, take a picture of the slide. I'm going to share this out, but I want you to have this on your personal device, because this is how you're going to make sure that you're exploring possibilities and actions. I want you to take a picture of this, and your homework is to write down a personal commitment that could look like any of these. You can make up your own.



[01:15:29.360] - Kianna

And if you already immediately thought of one, you were like, I already have one. I'm going to do this. Feel free to add that in the chat, but I want us to walk away with some actionable items of how we will enact this and make sure that we are creating some personal commitments around this.

[01:15:49.200] - Kianna

All right, so I did share some resources. Here are some resources. Again we will share these slides out. These are some resources on how to talk with young people about drugs and alcohol. I saw that as a common thing that young--that y'all were sharing.

[01:16:01.800] - Kianna

How to talk about sexuality and sexual education, how to talk about dating and romantic relationships, how to manage stress and everyday life. So there's some different resources. If there's any that you know of, please feel free to either email that or put that in the chat and we'll make sure we include those as well. But I'm going to hang out here with you guys just to answer any questions you might have. But before we get to those questions and before some of you hop off, just want to share.

[01:16:29.360] - Kianna

The biggest body of work that MENTOR has is the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring well the fifth edition is launching this coming year in January and we have a sneak peek of it and we'd love to share that with you. Again, this just walks through best Practices for Mentoring and we'll be doing a [sneak peek that on December 17th at 11:30am](#) you can register at that Bitly link and again it'll be included in our follow up email to you. And as I hang out for questions, I'm just going to leave it on the screen. I would love to know if you have any feedback. That's how we get better and that's how we continue to grow.

[01:17:06.490] - Kianna

So if you have any feedback, whether it be constructive or positive or just a hey, that was cool, feel free to let me know how I did. You can use that QR code on the screen or type in that Bitly link into your browser. But thank you all for being here today. Thank you so much for hanging out and engaging in some of these activities. I know they were a bit heavy at times, so I appreciate you and let me know if you'll need anything.



[01:17:27.140] - Kianna

I'll hang out for any questions.