* 1. **Coaching Students: Developing Supportive Relationships**

**Level 2 Professional Development**

Topic: Develop Supportive Relationships with students

**Prerequisite:** Level 1, Lessons 1-2

**Audience:** All Staff

**Activity Goal**

Supporting Students

Understand and recognize the importance of the adult-student relationship in the ACP process.

Background Knowledge for the Presenter

* All students need an adult who they can respect and trust and on whom they can rely for objective, honest opinions and advice.  For some kids, this will be a parent; but even where a good relationship exists between a child and a parent, the parent may not be a good mentor because he or she is biased or because the child is striving to become independent from the parent. Consequently, having a positive connection to a school-based adult mentor becomes a key element in the full ACP process.
* There is substantial research that shows how powerful relationships have the potential for dramatic positive effects. The CDC (2009) notes that students who feel connected to school are:
  + More likely to attend school regularly, stay in school longer, and have higher grades and test scores.
  + Less likely to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, or have unprotected sexual intercourse.
  + Less likely to carry weapons, become involved in violence, or be injured from dangerous activities such as drinking and driving or not wearing seatbelts.
  + Less likely to have emotional problems, suffer from eating disorders, or experience suicidal thoughts or attempts.
* There are three key components to building positive interpersonal connections between adults and students:
  + 1. Empathy (and the ability to communicate empathetically)
  + 2. Genuineness
  + 3. Positive Regard
* Strong school-based adult-student relationships allow mentors to recognize the variety of student strengths and the barriers to their students’ success.

**Materials Needed:**

* Handout – Being Genuine (2.1)
* Video –Simone, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atPf-MNUC6I>
* Video – Empathy, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

**Time Needed:** 30 minutes

**Procedures**

1. Share and discuss the information presented in the first two bullet points in the background and knowledge section.
2. Have partners share times when they’ve witnessed the power inherent in a positive connection with a student or students
3. Show the “Simone” video.
4. Have participants reflect upon what they heard and share with a partner their key takeaway(s).
5. Talk about the three key three key components to building positive interpersonal connections (Empathy, Genuineness, and Positive Regard). Have participants define each component in their own words. Discuss the similarities and differences in their definitions.
6. Show the “Empathy” video.
7. Have participants share a time when empathy made a positive effect in their lives or the lives of their students.
8. Review the definition of genuineness and suggest that sometimes it’s hard to be genuine. Sometimes people choose not to be genuine for one reason or another. Do the activity on handout Being Genuine (2.1).
9. Have participants share with a partner which illustration they chose and why.
10. Review their definition of positive regard. Have participants brainstorm why valuing the students’ preferences on education, training, and career pathways is an essential part of the ACP process.
11. Preface the remainder of Level 2 lessons by telling folks that this work on relationship-building and connectedness is the foundation for the upcoming lessons; including engaging in critical conversations, goal-setting, and selecting post-secondary options.

Handout 2.1

Being Genuine Activity

Which image best represents why people struggle to be more genuine?

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