

# Recommendations



## Closing Point 1

Students in this study harbored deep loneliness, sadness, and pain, often masked by anger and defiance. Schools should move beyond exclusionary & punitive discipline, toward holistic prevention and treatment, when addressing disruptive and even dangerous behaviors.

## Closing Point 2

Students in this study experienced extreme personal, family and community stressors which directly impacted educational availability and academic success. Policy makers should fund comprehensive "wrap-around" programs to provide a continuum of services to this population.

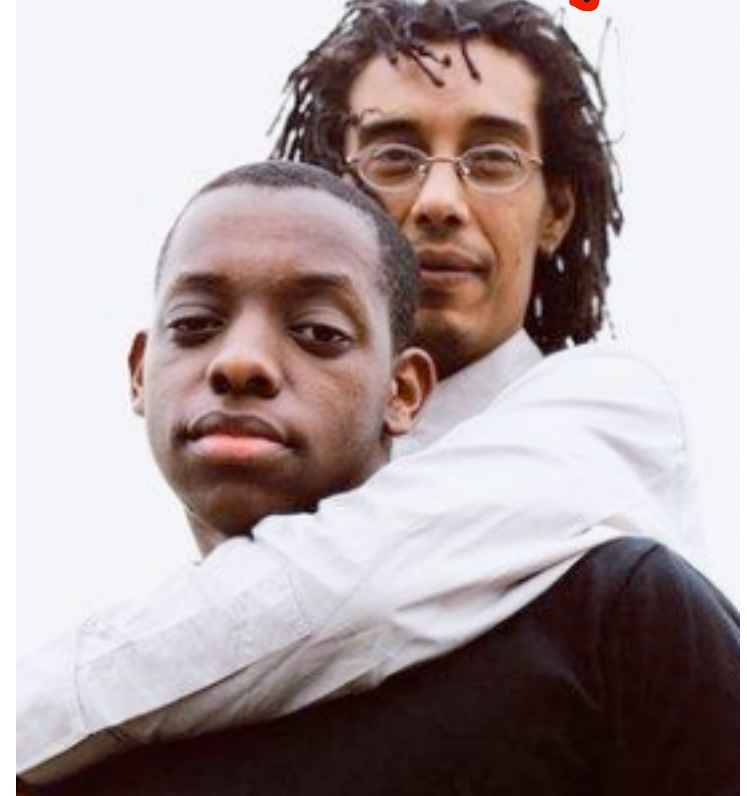
## Closing Point 3

Students in this study valued genuineness, knowledge, and rapport in mentor-teachers above similarities in race or gender. Professional development should help new staff develop cultural competence, counseling, and a perception of selves as "educateurs" rather than security or remedial specialists.

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# Predictable Stages of



## Relationship Building with Troubled Youth

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# Today's Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Overview of Study
3. Five Stages of Relationship Building
4. Tips and Traps in Each Stage

## Overview of Study

### A. Key Concepts:

- ✓ Resilience
- ✓ Resilience & Relationships
- ✓ Relationship Sabotage

### B. Key Questions:

- ✓ Can teachers be effective mentors?
- ✓ Do race & gender differences impact relationships?
- ✓ Are there predictable patterns?

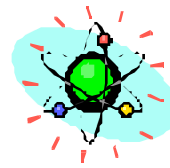
### C. Study Details:

- ✓ Setting: 1-year qualitative study in DC school
- ✓ Subjects: 16 African American students  
8 graduate teaching interns
- ✓ Methods: Case histories, surveys & interviews,  
observations, weekly journals, focus groups

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# Stage 5: Bonding



## Motive

Genuine identification with  
and affection for mentor

## Typical Behaviors

- Affection & Identification  
Protectiveness over mentor  
Acting as mentor might act
- Values Exploration  
Exploring and adopting new beliefs
- Cognitive Dissonance & Separation Anxiety  
Confusion over conflicting belief systems  
Anxiety over anticipated end



## Traps

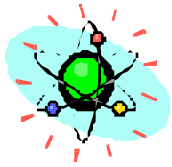
- Becoming so flattered by admiration  
as to encourage dependency
- Making hollow promises to reduce anxiety



## Tips

- + Encourage independent prosocial behavior
- + Teach student to set own goals, monitor own  
progress, and praise own performance
- + Help youth acknowledge feelings of loss
- + Plan special closure events

# Stage 4: Trust



## Motive

Satisfaction of close relationship and desire to please mentor.

## Typical Behaviors

- Personal sharing
  - Discussing home problems/asking advice
  - Revealing hidden deficits
- Interest in mentor
  - Seeking non-school time with mentor
  - Asking about mentor's personal life
- Role confusion
  - Expecting special treatment in class
  - Feeling betrayed by professional limitations
- Regression
  - Emotionally distancing self after close experience



## Traps

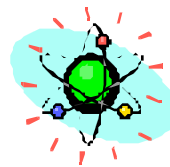
- Trying to replace a parent.
- Trying to redirect student's life.
- Taking classroom regression personally (esp rejection in presence of peers).



## Tips

- + Use relationship to encourage student to challenge old academic and behavioral patterns.
- + Establish and hold high expectations, but be patient with anxieties and setbacks.
- + Carefully negotiate role boundary issues without personal rejection.

# Stage 1: Resistance



## Motive

Resisting adult influence while establishing social status.

## Typical Behaviors

- Passive resistance
  - Deliberately ignoring teachers
  - Pretending ignorance of rules
  - Frequently making excuses to leave class
- Active resistance
  - Blatant disrespect
  - Accusations & challenges
  - Verbal & physical aggression



## Traps

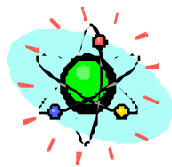
- Trying too hard to be a "pal."
- Enforcing rules too rigidly or backing down too easily.
- Taking rejection personally.



## Tips

- + Clearly establish and maintain reasonable rules.
- + Manage your own anger and frustration calmly.
- + Use existing school policy and authority figures to back up your own authority.
- + Explore student interests to begin building individual relationships.

# Stage 2: Manipulation



## Motive

Meeting own physical needs  
Meeting own emotional needs

## Typical Behaviors

- **Immaturity**  
Childish attention seeking  
Acting petulant
- **Manipulation**  
Deception & sneakiness  
Argumentativeness
- **Limited compliance**  
Situational cooperation  
Conditional respect



## Traps

- Breaking rules to gain student favor.
- Taking manipulation personally and getting vindictive.

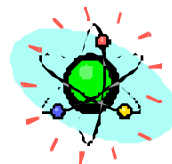


## Tips

- + Reinforce small behavioral changes with genuine praise and encouragement, but avoid physical rewards.
- + Recognize and defuse attention-getting and manipulative ploys. React with humor, not anger.
- + Seek out opportunities to interact on student's terms.

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# Stage 3: Involvement



## Motive

Pleasure of accomplishments  
Pride in academic progress

## Typical Behaviors

- **Academic involvement**  
Tentative interest in learning
- **Interpersonal involvement**  
Staying after class to talk with mentor
- **Regression with resolution**  
Problems often followed by genuine apologies, explanations, or attempts to make improvement



## Traps

- Showing too much excitement.
- Taking student setbacks personally.
- Not allowing students to apologize for mistakes.



## Tips

- + Reinforce students' positive classroom behaviors with warm praise and encouragement.
- + Provide individual assistance as needed.
- + Recognize occasional defiance or immaturity as signs of insecurity and react with assurances of genuine caring and commitment.

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