

## Ice Breaker Questions

Here are some ideas for questions that can help you learn about your mentee (and help your mentee learn about you). Don't forget to answer them yourself! Sharing information is a great way to build trust with your mentee.

- Why are you part of this program? (Let your mentee know why you're offering your time back as part of this relationship, and how mentors have helped you along the way.)
- 4 S Interview Questions (see next page)
- What are your favorite subjects in school? Why?
- What are some things you'll do for fun this summer?
- What hobbies or interests do you have?
- If you could learn something new, what would it be?
- What are five things we have in common?
- What person do you most admire and why?
- Describe your ideal Saturday.
- How would you describe yourself?
- What types of jobs are you interested in? Why?
- What are some of the strengths that you bring to work?
- What is one of your worries about work is?
- What is one thing you hope to gain from this summer job?
- How do you like school?
- Tell me about your friends.
- What are some favorite things you like to do with other people?
- Tell me about an accomplishment of which you are particularly proud.
- What is one thing about you that is important for people to know?
- What would be your dream vacation?
- If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

## **The 4 S's Interview** by Search Institute

The 4 S's Interview is a way to get to know students by understanding and validating four important aspects of their lives: their sparks, strengths, struggles, or supports. Research shows that feeling understood and validated by another person are the strongest contributors to establishing a sense of rapport between people (Reis et al., 2000; Reis et al., 2010).

- Sparks are your talents, deep interests, and activities that you love doing.
- Strengths are your skills, values, habits, and other things about you that help you do well in life.
- Struggles are the things that you worry about and that cause you problems.
- Supports are the people and programs and even places that help you get through your struggles and succeed at things.

Feel free to share some of your own 4 S's during the conversation.

### **4 S's Interview Questions**

#### **Sparks Questions**

1. What is something you really enjoy doing – that gives you pleasure and that you almost lose track of time when you do it?
2. Is there a subject that you are interested in learning more about?
3. What subject in school are you are most interested in? It doesn't matter if you are good at it or not.

#### **Strengths Questions**

4. What are some of the best things about you?
5. What are you good at doing?
6. Are there any values or rules that you try to live by? What do you think is important in life?

#### **Struggles Questions**

7. Are there things that you worry about or are afraid of?
8. Are there places you don't like to go or people you don't like to be around?
9. Is there anything you wish you could change about yourself?

#### **Supports Questions**

10. Who are the people that matter most to you?
11. Who can you talk to when you have a problem?
12. Are there programs you participate in or places you go that help you do things you want to do or need to do?