



# Red Flags in Mentor Screening

## *Best Practice Resources – Mentor Screening*

This list of red flags to look for in screening volunteer was created by Friends for Youth, Inc. For more information on screening youth, purchase a copy of SAFE: Screening Applicants for Effectiveness at [www.friendsforyouth.org](http://www.friendsforyouth.org).

Red Flag Category	Example Behaviors
Lack of Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of peer relationships</li> <li>• Excessive gift giving</li> <li>• Over-invested in child/youth</li> <li>• Overstates problem with child's family; tries to get agency involved</li> </ul>
Extreme Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very impatient with process</li> <li>• Overly cooperative</li> <li>• Overly cooperative with program (sharing photos, calling, reporting, etc)</li> <li>• Very secretive about activities or who is always too busy to talk for very long</li> </ul>
Inappropriate Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vague about how learned about program</li> <li>• Concerned with getting agency swag before getting involved</li> <li>• Questions about overnight trips</li> <li>• Doesn't relate to interview in socially appropriate way</li> <li>• Expresses discomfort at information divulged</li> <li>• Shared inappropriate remarks or jokes</li> <li>• Overly concerned about child/youth liking him/her or being rejected</li> <li>• Displays excessive physical contact, "child's play"</li> <li>• Has excessive need to discipline child</li> </ul>
Over-Involvement with Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overly-involved in teaching, scouting, church youth groups, etc</li> <li>• Over-indulges child/youth or unable to set limits</li> <li>• Involves other boys/girls on outings when not expected</li> <li>• Over-identifies with children</li> <li>• Regresses to child's level of behavior</li> <li>• Becomes animated around children</li> <li>• Finds own mentee and then ask to join program as "pre-match"</li> </ul>
Under-Involvement with Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upon examinations, adult connects are superficial</li> <li>• Lack of dating experiences or relationships</li> <li>• Difficulty providing references that know him/her well</li> <li>• References are not from same generation (much younger or older)</li> </ul>
Focus on Personal Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes desired match specifically</li> <li>• Excessively worries about child liking him/her</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently experienced major life change and needs friends in life</li> <li>• Is looking for directions</li> <li>• Wants to terminate position suddenly without reason</li> <li>• Treats mentee as an adult companion</li> </ul>
<b>Unhealthy Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believes children should be treated as equals to adults</li> <li>• Expresses revulsion or extremely judgmental attitude about homosexuality</li> <li>• Wants to be one to teach child/youth about sex ed</li> <li>• Pushes boundaries of relationship by pushing excessive cleanliness or hygiene</li> <li>• Overstates problem with child's family; tries to get agency involved</li> </ul>
<b>Problematic Personal Interests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives vague answers when asked about interest</li> <li>• Expresses strong interest in camping, hunting, hiking, backpacking</li> <li>• Interests are outside of immediate community</li> <li>• Reveals strong interest in photography or video production</li> <li>• Child/youth complains about too much sedentary time (ie watching tv)</li> </ul>
<b>Problematic Background Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of abuse, neglect, or sexual victimization</li> <li>• Police record, even if seemingly unrelated to crimes against children</li> <li>• Has history of alcohol abuse or regular alcohol or drug use</li> <li>• Has history of depression</li> <li>• Has military history, especially if discharged</li> <li>• Applied/ was not accepted or "didn't like" other youth-serving programs</li> <li>• Continues to see children that met through other programs</li> <li>• Has history of moving from job to job or place to place</li> <li>• Has job which requires moving or traveling extensively, especially overseas</li> <li>• Lives out of service area</li> <li>• Has held many lower-echelon jobs with no ambition for responsibility of advancement</li> </ul>