

Grow Our Own Mentor-Fellow Discussion Guide



Use this guide to facilitate meaningful conversations with your student fellow.

While it is recommended that mentors meet with their fellow three times per academic semester, some may choose to meet more frequently or continue beyond a single semester.

Each meeting should be structured to support the fellow in preparing for a degree and career in behavioral health. This guide includes three recommended meeting topics, along with optional discussion questions and activities, to help guide your conversations.

Focus on getting to know your fellow, providing valuable resources, and assisting them in developing a clear plan to confidently pursue a behavioral health-related degree.



Grow Our Own
Behavioral Health
Providers



NORTHWEST MICHIGAN
**Behavioral
Health
Initiative**



Getting to Know Your Fellow



Meeting Goals:

- Share your own educational and career experience and the value you find in your career
- Understand your fellow's career interests within the behavioral health field
- Understand your fellow's concerns with pursuing a career within the behavioral health field
- Understand your fellow's goals for pursuing a behavioral health related degree/career

Mentors will introduce themselves and provide a background on their educational and career experience. Fellows will learn why and how their mentor became a behavioral health professional. Mentors will share first-hand experiences that showcase why a career in behavioral health is valuable and how behavioral health professionals make a difference in the lives of the people they serve. Mentors will work to understand their fellow's career, degree, and skill building interests, as well as any concerns they may have about pursuing a career within the field.

Optional Discussion Questions:

- What is something you're most excited to learn about or experience during this mentorship?
- What interests you most about pursuing a career within the behavioral health field?
- What does your dream job within the behavioral health field look like?
- Are there any concerns or uncertainties you have about pursuing a career in behavioral health? How can I help address them?
- How do you feel about working in rural or underserved areas, where there may be a higher need for behavioral health professionals, like northern Michigan?
- What is one goal you'd like to achieve in the next six months in your exploration of behavioral health careers?
- What strengths do you think you already have that would be beneficial in a behavioral health career?
- Are you interested in taking on an internship/job shadowing opportunity within the behavioral health field over the summer?

Optional Activity: Recognizing Behavioral Health

Encourage your fellow to pay attention to when and where conversations, situations, or careers related to behavioral health come up (i.e. in school, on TV, on social media, etc.) between now and your next meeting.

Exploring Resources with Your Fellow



Meeting Goals:

- Help your fellow determine a specific career pathway they are most interested in pursuing and learn more about it
- Share resources available in the Mentor Resource Packet with your fellow, including information on career pathways, degree programs options, scholarship opportunities, etc.

Mentors will help their fellow further explore behavioral health-related careers in Michigan. Utilize the resources available in the Mentor Resource Packet and those included below to help define different career options and the degree and licensure requirements for each. If a fellow knows which career pathway they'd like to pursue, help them to learn about available degree programs in Michigan by using the degree program resources available in the Mentor Resource Packet.

Optional Discussion Questions:

- *Meeting 1 Activity Reflection:* Did you notice when and where conversations, situations, or careers related to behavioral health come up (i.e. in school, on TV, on social media, etc.) since our last meeting?
- Do you have a specific behavioral health career pathway you are interested in pursuing?
 - If yes, do you know what level of education is needed, where those types of professionals can work, how much they are paid, what their day-to-day responsibilities look like?
 - Help your fellow fill in their knowledge gaps related to that career pathway by completing the Career Exploration Mapping activity below.
 - If no, Complete the Career Exploration Mapping activity below to help them learn more.
- If time allows and your fellow is interested, explore the degree programs related to their career interests that are included in the Mentor Resource Packet.

Optional Activity: Career Exploration Mapping

Guide your fellow in creating a "career map" or "roadmap" of various behavioral health professions that they may be interested in (e.g. social worker, counseling, psychiatry, etc.). For each role, help them to research and note required education, skills, work environments, salary expectations, and job outlook.

- Utilize [SAMSHA's Behavioral Health Careers by State Tool](#) and their [Behavioral Health Career Description's](#) webpage to explore behavioral health career opportunities in Michigan.

Creating a Plan with Your Fellow



Meeting Goals:

- Help your fellow create a plan that will lead to strong college/university program applications
- Determine what your fellow is already involved in and what other opportunities they could pursue related to behavioral health (i.e. extracurricular clubs related to behavioral health, job shadowing opportunities, volunteer opportunities) to enhance their level of experience.

Mentors will help their fellow develop a plan to gain experience and build skills related to behavioral health, which will strengthen their future college/university applications. Take time to recap the discussions and interactions you have had with your fellow so far, and allow time for your fellow to reflect on what they have learned and the experiences they have most enjoyed.

Optional Discussion Questions:

- What activities/ experiences/ skill building opportunities related to behavioral health have you already participated in that will help to make your college/ degree application strong?
- What additional activities/ experiences/ skill building opportunities related to behavioral health are you interested in participating in to help strengthen your college/university application?
- Help your fellow explore additional opportunities they may be interested in.
- What's something you have learned so far that surprises you about the behavioral health field?
- How has your understanding of the behavioral health field changed since we first started working together?
- What is the most valuable thing you've learned about yourself during our time together?
- What skills or insights have you gained from our conversations that you think will help you in your future career?
- What other resources (websites, networking opportunities, skill-building opportunities) do you think would help you on your educational/career journey?

Optional Activity: Creating a Resume Outline

Help your fellow develop an outline they can use to develop a resume, if they do not already have one. Encourage them to list out their educational experience, professional experience, extracurricular involvement, volunteer experience, certifications, etc.

- Encourage your fellow to think through what additional experiences they may need to add to their resume and where those experiences can come from.