The “Lure” of Being a Mentor

What was your first experience on Pennsylvania waters? Was it:
- A hike along one of Pennsylvania’s 85,000 miles of streams and rivers?
- A canoe trip on one of Pennsylvania’s 4,000 inland lakes?
- Hearing frogs sing after a summer rain?
- Catching your first fish?
- Feeling pride while planting trees along a streambank?

Behind each experience is the reflection of your mentors. Mentors help you learn and guide you through each experience. Some examples of famous mentors are: Yoda (Star Wars), Mufasa (Lion King), Mary Poppins and Minerva McGonagall (Harry Potter). The people who are helped by mentors are called apprentices.

Fishing and boating mentors introduce others to the importance of conservation. Being a mentor does not require you to be older, wiser or have years of experience. This PLAY issue introduces you to mentoring. Becoming a mentor provides an opportunity to:
- Help others connect to Pennsylvania waters through activities
- Reflect and share experiences and skills
- Learn something new
- Share the responsibility of aquatic resource protection and enhancement
- Make a difference and have fun doing it

Vocabulary (Watch for these words!)
- Apprentices - beginners being guided by mentors
- Protégé - a person supported by a more experienced person
- Encourage - give support to someone
- Observant - quick to notice things
**WHO Can Be a Mentor?**

**YOU Can!**

You have a lot to offer, just by being you. Whether you take someone:
- Hiking to a waterfall
- Exploring for amphibians and reptiles
- Planting trees
- Paddling or fishing

Who you are, where you live and your interests shape your experiences on Pennsylvania waters. Your experiences and skills can help others connect to Pennsylvania’s waters.

**What Does a Mentor Look Like?**

You can be a mentor. Share your interest in fishing with your friends by being their mentor. You can even mentor an adult by introducing a non-fishing family member to the sport.

Why are young people good mentors?
- Young people are spontaneous and curious, notice what is happening now and want to learn more.
- You have a lot to offer, just by being you.
- Whether you take someone:
  - Hiking to a waterfall
  - Exploring for amphibians and reptiles
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  - Paddling or fishing

- You are, where you live and your interests shape your experiences on Pennsylvania waters. Your experiences and skills can help others connect to Pennsylvania’s waters.

- Young people may see mistakes as opportunities. He or she learns by doing, even if something does not work out.
- Kids may be more observant and notice details missed by adults.
- Young people use their imagination and creativity and sometimes find a better way.
- Kids like to play. Kids remind adults that the journey is just as fun as getting to the destination.
Mentors of All Ages

Young anglers can mentor other young anglers or non-anglers. When your friends see you doing something, they feel more confident.

Young mentors also like to have fun and be with friends, learning together. When the mentor and apprentice are young, they know it is more about becoming an angler than about learning to catch fish.

Beginners Can Mentor Experienced Mentors by:

- Observing new things about an activity the mentor is teaching.
- Reconnecting with “Why” - Reigniting the reasons a mentor participates in an activity.
- Curiosity - Asking a lot of questions. Some questions deepen a mentor’s interest, while other questions teach mentor’s new ways of teaching.
**Ask Questions**

Make sure you understand what your student or apprentice wants from his or her experience on Pennsylvania waters. Their idea of success may be different than yours.

- **Mentor’s** idea of success—“catch a fish.” Example: “Let’s get to the stream before the fish stop rising.”
- **Protege’s** idea of success—“the journey.” Example: “Check out the box turtle crossing the trail.”

**Build Excitement**

Involve new participants with planning and preparation. Be prepared for weather and other expectations. Decide where you want to fish and what you want to catch. Together you can research regulations and fishing equipment.

**Have an Activity Plan**

Help create an activity plan to share with family or friends.

**ACTIVITY PLAN**

TYPE OF ACTIVITY: ______________________
LOCATION OF ACTIVITY: ______________________
NAME OF OTHERS PARTICIPATING: ______________________
TIME OF DEPARTURE: ______________________
TIME OF EXPECTED RETURN: ______________________
VEHICLE DESCRIPTION: ______________________

**Share Safety Importance**

Share the importance of safety and gear needed for a safe experience. Review safe fishing, boating and conservation practices.

**Provide Encouragement**

Stay positive. Mistakes are opportunities to learn more about the activity and yourself.

**Inspire Conservation**

Encourage and model good conservation practices. Share ways to get involved. Instill the importance of regulations that protect waterways and animals.
Mentor Pathways—Where Do You Start?

With a variety of backgrounds and experiences, people mentor in different ways.

You Can Mentor Others By Getting Out There!

- Invite someone to plant trees, fish or boat with you.
- Encourage attendance at learn to fish programs. State, county and local parks offer these programs. Visit the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission’s (PFBC’s) website at www.fishandboat.com, and view the events calendar or have an adult follow PFBC on Facebook.
- For more information about events at state parks and forests, visit Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources’s website at https://events.dcnr.pa.gov.

You can mentor others by getting out there!
Take Action

Connect to Pennsylvania waters. Join PFBC and partners to protect, conserve and enhance aquatic resources. Here are a few activities to get started.

**Purchase a Fishing License**
Fishing license purchases help support Pennsylvania’s aquatic resources. Your fishing license also helps PFBC provide the following services:
- Public access areas
- Maintenance and management of access areas
- Waterway and dam improvements
- Fish habitat enhancement projects
- Amphibian and reptile (herp) and fish studies and management
- Aquatic resource protection and regulation
- Education programs and instructor training

**Conservation Projects**
Connect with local organizations assisting PFBC with habitat or tree planting projects such as:
- County Conservation Districts
- Other State Agencies
- Trout Unlimited Chapters
- Watershed Associations
- Sportsmen Organizations
- Conservancies

**Take a Hike and Discover Pennsylvania Herps**
A diverse population of herps live in Pennsylvania. While looking for amphibians and reptiles, explore Pennsylvania’s waterways.
- Pennsylvania Amphibian and Reptile Survey (PARS) – Photograph and report what you find. Learn more at: [https://paherpsurvey.org/](https://paherpsurvey.org/).
- Visit [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) for PFBC’s amphibian and reptile page.

**Get Started with Fishing**
Connect to Pennsylvania waters by fishing. Below are resources to get you started.
- Visit PFBC’s “Fishing Fundamentals” page at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) for equipment basics, tackle loaner program, where to fish and more.
- Visit [www.takemefishing.org](http://www.takemefishing.org) for fishing tips, blogs and more.
Mentor Circle—First Steps Begin with You!

Help guide the angler to the center of the maze and collect the items she needs to go fishing.

**Items to collect:**
1. *Pennsylvania Fishing Summary*
2. Fishing hat
3. Sunglasses
4. Fishing lure
5. Fishing rod
6. Net

**TAKE ME FISHING COUPON**

Date: ________________  Time: ______

Location: ______________________________________________________

Types of fish: _________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________

Equipment needed: ____________________

_______________________________________________________________

Cut out this coupon, and use it to invite family and friends fishing.

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