



PUMPed to Run Mentoring Guide

Our mentors should be great listeners, resources of information, reliable, encouraging, and dedicated to the mission of PUMPed to Run. We want to build confidence, self-esteem and self-efficiency for marginalized populations. We aim to be open-minded of everyone who wants to walk or run in this program!

For mentoring to be successful there must be a reciprocal, comfortable relationship between mentors and all running or walking participants. **It is important to remember that every positive interaction, whether it is once or ongoing, will make an impact!** Some runs will have one participant and some will have many. We want to provide a great experience no matter how many walkers/runners there are. Be sure to taper your expectations to be just as excited for one as ten!

There will be times when attachments are made between the mentor and runners, and we do encourage those organic relationships to form. You are welcome to build healthy relationships, for running or other mentor opportunities (jobs, etc.) if that is a natural product that happens from the runs. However, we can't guarantee that mentors will be matched with the same people each week, so if you feel you have a connection with a runner, it is important to let your Lead Mentors know so that we can try to match you up as often as possible. Due to the transient nature of this population, be careful to not get attached to someone as they may leave the shelter without notice. This can be a very tough part of mentoring for this population, but remember that there is someone else who is showing up who would love to talk with you as well!

We ask that you please keep conversations inclusive of the participants and not personal between mentors or friends who are serving as mentors together. It can be a good idea to share things about you with the runners but be careful in talking, especially to other mentors, about your own goals, run and upcoming races; remember that you are here for the participants.

There will be a Lead Mentor present at each walk/run to welcome you and be sure you are paired with a runner or walker. Please communicate any issues, concerns, questions and preferences (walking/pace/etc.) to them and they will help to guide you.

Communication on runs will come through your lead mentor via email, text or Facebook. Our private mentors group on Facebook is a safe zone for our PtR leaders and mentors to share important

information and this group can be used for general communication. This is also where postings will announce extra volunteer needs. If you should feel that this program is not a good fit, or you can no longer participate please remove yourself from the private group.

Tips to Getting Started

1. Be excited to be there!

Sharing your enthusiasm will help reassure our participants that you are committed to helping them succeed and reach new goals. Always be positive and be sure to give compliments when you see someone working hard, who needs it, or who has met a goal.

2. Be open-minded and respectful!

PUMPed to Run desires to serve anyone who wants to participate and we welcome diversity. Please be sensitive to everyone's culture, identity and personality. There will also be participants of all different levels of experience; meet them where they are.

3. Connect!

Conversation should occur informally before, during and after the run. Make an effort to start conversations with runners but let the conversation develop on its own. You may want to ask a couple of questions to encourage participants to open up. Ask them to talk about why they became involved with PtR. Ask thoughtful questions about interests, experiences, and background. What are their hopes and goals of participating in the program? What are their interests and hobbies? Remember, common interests are a great way to build trust. Do not ask direct, probing questions that could seem too personal. If they want to open up to you, it should happen naturally.

4. Be a good listener.

If the participant seems keen on sharing personal information, show your interest by your voice and posture. Avoid interrupting or being pushy with advice. Let them know that you are there if they want to vent their frustrations or focus on how to better nurture oneself.

5. Help our walkers/runners set goals.

Some participants have running experience and for some it is really new to them. Help them set realistic goals for walking or running each week; for a goal race; and as they move on after the shelter. Be willing to walk and be sure to have them walk if they

seem like they can't handle it. Be positive and encouraging. Start small, and encourage all walkers and runners to write down their goals. Communicate with them about other running clubs. Our goal is to increase their self-esteem and help them to believe in themselves through this program, so help those set goals they are excited and encouraged by and are their own.

6. Introduce yourself and share your story when it is appropriate.

Why did you choose to become a part of PtR? Although you don't need to share all of your personal details, it can be helpful to open up a bit about what made mentoring an option for you at this time. Talk about your professional experiences, any transitions that you've made, and what you have going on in your life right now, why you like to run/walk. If comfortable, share some information about any life transitions you have experienced. Even if you have never experienced homelessness or the particular difficulties that our participants face, that does not mean that you cannot empathize.

Mental Health Guidelines

There will be instances where participants will have a mental health diagnosis. Some may be open about their diagnosis, and some may not. When building relationships with people with a mental health diagnosis there are a few things to remember:

1. It is a medical diagnosis. Just because they have a mental health diagnosis does not mean that they are "crazy" or that they need to be feared or treated with kid gloves. They are people first. People who have a diagnosis.
2. It is good to be aware. Mental health issues can present in many ways and every person presents differently. If you see someone displaying an overt behavior you haven't seen before, be aware of their behavior and your own. If you tense up and begin acting differently, you can make an issue worse.
3. Remember personal space. A lot of times people who have mental health diagnosis have trouble with personal space. Having people crowd them can trigger an anxiety attack.
4. If you are running with someone and you notice that they are struggling, they are overly excited, seem very down, or are acting a way you haven't seen them act before, here are some basic steps to follow.

- a. Maintain Personal Space- don't crowd them. Stand far enough away that if they become agitated or violent you won't be in easy range. Stand with a relaxed body, feet shoulder width apart, standing at an angle so that you are not directly facing them, and have your hands loose at your sides. This is a non-threatening stance that also puts you in a position for a quick getaway if necessary.
 - b. Use a calm and even tone when talking to them. If your speech pattern quickens or rises, it can trigger further breakdowns.
 - c. Offer options, do they want to stop and take a break? Do they need a drink of water? (Often taking a drink of water will help someone who is having an anxiety attack or who is escalated. It forces a person to stop, have a moment of quiet and actually helps the heart rate lower through the physiology of drinking).
 - d. Talk about random things. When a person is having an episode, breaking their concentration is a great strategy. Tell a funny story, talk about the history of where you are, talk about something you saw on TV. Anything to help them come back to the here and now. Even if they aren't responding, continue to talk. If they tell you to stop, then stop.
 - e. If they are highly agitated, then you need to look out for your own safety. Trust your instinct and leave. Notify a PtR leader immediately.
5. If your mentee is open about their diagnosis, ask questions if conversation flows that way. Acknowledge they have a diagnosis, and then move on. Often people who have mental health issues are treated differently because they aren't understood. Just like if a person said they had cancer, ask questions about it and then move on. Cancer isn't who they are as a person, and neither is a mental health issue.

Safety Guidelines

General Safety

We recommend running with a cell phone on you in case something happens. If truly needed, call 911. Otherwise, there are first-aid kits at the shelter, so escort the injured person back and a Lead Runner will be at the shelter waiting to assist you. Please remain calm.

Never let anyone walk or run alone! Each mentor should be paired with at least one shelter participant. If anything should happen, stay together and go immediately back to the shelter for assistance. If a

participant you are running with should take off or disappear please go back to the shelter and notify the Lead Runner so we can let staff know.

If you have any concerns for your safety on the run then be sure to stay on a main road and avoid all hazards. Report any concerns to your Lead Runner and let them know of any road closures or bad areas on the run. Please use your best judgements for avoiding road closures or other instances that may come up on a run. Communication is key to avoiding the same problem in the future, and we cannot help if we don't know about it!

Coaching

Encourage stretching before (dynamic) and after (static) your runs for yourself and be willing to teach those stretches to other participants. Do not push anyone beyond their capacity; if you feel they need to stop positively encourage them to take a break – intervals are a great tool for building stamina.

Please track distance and time for participants when you are running with them each time. At the end of the run you can fill this information into the binder with your participant so we can track their progress.

Lead will be able to give you help when planning where to go. If you know the area well, we encourage you to explore and change routes to show different sites and areas to the participants. Some mentors enjoy consistency and other prefer to see new things – when at all possible please accommodate the preferences of the participants.

Weather

We will run in mildly inclement weather. The Lead Runner for the day will make the decision on whether or not it is dangerous enough to cancel. You will be notified by your lead mentor, via their preferred mode of communication (text, email) If you are on a run and the weather changes and you do not feel safe then trust your judgement and please find shelter to wait out the storm. With your phone you can message your lead mentor where you are and that when you are able to you will come back to the starting facility.