



MENtorship GROUPS / SESSIONS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

OBJECTIVES:

- Running intentional MENtorship sessions of high quality and consistency.

PROCESS:

GENERAL NOTE

Below you will find the format for a typical MENtorship group / session with The Character Company. This detailed guideline provides you with a tried and tested structure including suggestions on how to make the most of your time with the boys. You are their MENtor and they are looking forward to spending time with you so make the most of it. Remember to bring in your own personality and lead by example. MENtorship is long term relationship building. Take and make time to get to know each one of your boys in a way that makes them feel safe and secure.

HOW TO RUN YOUR GROUP: SUMMARY

Plan

Pick up boys and confirm on your whatsapp group
 Arrive at venue / activity
 Open with prayer (you can ask the boys to do this)
 Meet and greet / acorns and thorns
 Snack time
 National Anthem (do this frequently but not every time)
 Values (do this at every opportunity)
 Recognitions/Rewards
 Weekly topic discussion
 Planned activity (cycling, etc.)
 Close with prayer
 Drop off boys and confirm on your whatsapp group

2-3-hour session

Submit your M&E feedback within 24 hours

Please note: The structure given is an example of how your session can flow, but feel free to change the flow of things for example, you can do your activity before your weekly topic discussion or have discussions while busy with your activity. It's up to you – **be creative!**

Have fun but don't miss the opportunity to be intentional. And remember that the boys (especially the younger boys) have a short attention span, so make sure your sessions are smooth and flowing.



HOW TO RUN YOUR GROUP

1. PLANNING



MONTHLY:

- Plan out your monthly schedule, and please ensure that you decide before hand which venue and activity you will use for your MENTorship sessions. Always have a back-up plan, for example - you plan to spend some time in the park, but it rains or there is another event - be prepared to move to plan B.
- If you are in a region where your Regional Character sends out a monthly schedule of activities, check your schedule and make sure you know where to go each week. If you need to confirm your attendance with an activity partner, please do so as per the activity partner agreement.
- Remember to check your personal calendar. If you cannot make a session, please try and change it to another day or time. Do this well in advance. Remember that for these boys this is a highlight of their week.

WEEKLY:

- Spend some time praying about your time with the boys.
- Plan your discussions / interactions with the boys at least one day prior to your meeting. Go through your curriculum guide and read up on the monthly theme as well as the weekly topic that you want to discuss. This will ensure that you make the most of the limited time you have with the boys. It will also help you to think of and plan any needed elements like reading material, ice breakers and games. Remember that the curriculum guide is your information resource, and the monthly themes and weekly topics were chosen for a specific reason, but please feel free to try different things and send your feedback of what works and what doesn't work to thando.ch@racter.co.za.
- You are encouraged to use any teaching materials (including videos, demonstrations and Biblical references) that are centered on our monthly theme. Our experience is that if you focus on the curriculum themes, you will see the desired change in your boys.
- If you are taking the boys to one of our activity partners, remember to arrange and confirm with the activity partner as per the activity partner agreement.
- Please keep in mind that your actual activity is just the vehicle to drive the relationship building. This is your opportunity to pick something that fits your unique personality. TCC does not subscribe the kind of activity just that it must be safe and legal. Try to have a healthy combination of activities that include physical activities, mental and social stimulation (refer to the activity partner document to see what partners are available through TCC).

PLEASE NOTE:

TCC can issue a donation receipt for any donation from an activity partner.

- The day before your session, send a reminder message on your WhatsApp group to remind the moms and boys of the group session the following day and a reminder for them to please be on time. Also mention what the boys will need for the session.



- Make sure that your diary is cleared, your car is filled up and your phone is charged.
- If you cannot make your regular appointment, please try and change it to another day.

Please familiarize yourself with the TCC interaction guidelines and rules. If unsure, please refer to your MENTors MOU.

2. GROUP SESSIONS



- Pick up the boys from the agreed locations.

PLEASE NOTE:

You can allow boys interested in the program to visit your group for a maximum of 2 times, but the mom will have to sign our general indemnity form before the session starts.

- We have a 10-minute waiting policy - you do not have to tolerate disrespect by having to wait while boys take their time getting to the agreed collection point.
- Make sure that you communicate the collection of each boy on your official WhatsApp group. Do this as you pick up the boy so that you are not tempted to start texting while you are driving. Please make sure that all communication takes place on this group to ensure transparency. Avoid personal messages to and from moms at all costs.
- Where applicable, communicate on your group if you did not pick up a boy with the reason why not.
- Please do not leave boys unattended in your vehicle at any time. If you have to get out of the car to collect a boy, take the rest of the boys with you, or make sure that you can keep an eye on them all the time.
- Make sure that the boys wear their seat belts and that they remain seated and calm during the pickup route – you need to engage with them but remain focused on the road.

The ‘learning process’ starts the moment you pick the boys up, so use every opportunity to engage with them.

- Remember that boys are not allowed to have phones and/or gaming consoles and/or electronic devices at their session unless it is part of the activity. Phones can be left in the car.
- When you get to the activity, make sure everyone greets the activity partner.
- If you have any visitors, introduce them to the group and make sure they are comfortable. Please DO NOT leave your boys alone with visitors, only with screened MENTors.
- Start by picking a boy to open with prayer, teaching them to express thanks for their MENTor, friends, safety and a good afternoon. Remind them that prayer is a conversation with God, not something we memorize and repeat.
- Do a “meet and greet” (acorns and thorns) to make sure that each boy is OK.
- You should start observing their behavior and mood at this point already to make sure that you pick up on any issues that need to be addressed.



- **Snack time** - this is a good time to have a meal together but try to avoid too much sugar, as you will have to deal with that hype later.
 - The moms in your group should be on a roster to provide the afternoon snacks (sandwiches, fruits & juice). They can arrange this between themselves via the WhatsApp Group, but you might need to remind them from time to time. It is also advisable to keep a box of energy bars nearby as mom's sometimes forget and the boys will need sustenance. If moms decided not to take turns, each mom will have to pack a lunch box for her own son.
 - Make sure they practice their "table manners" during snack time and clean up after themselves.
- During snack time, you can ask the boys about the previous week's topic to see what they can remember.
- The National Anthem – discuss the full meaning of our National Anthem with your boys. Do this frequently but not every time. You can download the National Anthem and meaning under the toolbox section on the MENTors page.
- Exemplify our 5 values – courage, kindness, honesty, respect and self-discipline. Work through the values and meanings with the boys at every session. Also test their full understanding by asking which value/s they like and which one/s they struggle with.

The value of values lies in the application!

- Acknowledge and recognize boys who have lived their values or recognize where they failed at living their values during the week.
- Discuss the weekly topic in detail. Please stick to the monthly theme and weekly topics, keeping in mind that if your boys have been on the program for a few years, you will have to go deeper as they get older.

When reading scripture please use the opportunity to show that the Word of God is alive and powerful (not boring) by reading the scripture (or getting one of your boys to read) with POWER and ENTHUSIASM.

- Please keep in mind that boys are adventurers and explorers so, their attention span will be limited.
- Remember that your sessions are not only about the lesson but about having fun with the boys and building a lasting relationship. There is an old proverb that says, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" and the same goes for your boys. We are there to MENTor and have fun – both are very important.
- During your activity and/or games that you have planned, ensure that you keep on weaving in the 5 values and the theme – learning through play is best.
- Always maintain discipline!
- Make sure that the boys are always safe and that they stick together – no boy should ever be left alone, and you should never be alone with any boy in any enclosed space (or non-public space). 360-degree rule.
- Try to have some "one-on-one" discussions with at least one of the boys in your group during the session.

Attention Span by Age	
AGE	ATTENTION SPAN
2	4 - 10 min
3	6 - 15 min
4	8 - 20 min
5	10 - 25 min
6	12 - 30 min
7	14 - 35 min
8	16 - 40 min
9	18 - 45 min
10	20 - 50 min



- Deal with any questions in an open and sincere manner (don't freak out 📌) – do not hesitate to admit if you do not know the answer and make a commitment to get back to them the following week.
- Remember to take some photos of your session and share those via your WhatsApp group. This is so that we can keep a photo album for marketing purposes (FB posts). **VERY IMPORTANT: Please note that TCC has been given permission to release photos of the boys, but not MENTors in their individual capacity. In other words, be careful to share photos with the boys' faces on your personal social media platforms. We discourage this due to photo release and the POPI ACT.**
- Remember to take a group “selfie” for your group feedback form.
- Close your session with prayer.
- When it is time to leave, make sure that the boys say “thank you” to the activity partner where applicable and leave the space clean.
- If you had any visitors, please make sure the boys say goodbye and thank you.
- Make sure that you communicate the drop off for each boy on your WhatsApp group. Do this as you drop off each boy so that you are not tempted to start texting while you are driving.

REMEMBER:

Be present during the time with your boys. Do not spend the time talking on your phone or checking emails, etc. They are already neglected by a male figure so make this a quality time experience for them.

If you have any boys in your group that show leadership potential, feel free to look for opportunities to facilitate and “lead from behind”, giving the boys an opportunity to lead.

3. POST SESSION



- Please make sure that you fully record your feedback on the attendance and feedback register and send it to ch@racter.co.za within 24 hours of your session.
- Report any incidents (see incident tab on the Feedback & Attendance Form) that occurred during the session within 24 hours to loraine.ch@racter.co.za.
- Complete and submit visitor feedback (see visitor tab on the Feedback & Attendance Form) for any and all visitors who attend the session within 24 hours to thando.ch@racter.co.za.

The M&E really helps us to keep track of how the boys are growing through the MENTorship program.

