



school on wheels

Best Practices: Tutoring How-To

Before every session:

- Make sure you have several activities with you (either from the Academic, BUS, or Digital Learning programs or another source). Spend 15-30 minutes preparing and getting organized.
- Check in with parent, tutor coordinator, or group home staff (whichever applies) to confirm a few hours before your scheduled session. Wait to receive an affirmative reply.
- Leave early if there is heavy traffic in the area so you arrive on time.

During your session:

- Check in with your student and spend 5-10 minutes getting to know them.
- Plan your hour.
- As you work, make note of what types of assignments and activities interest your student.
- Incorporate hands-on, visual, and auditory techniques whenever possible.
- Let your student lead, and assist them without providing them with the answers.
- Spend 5 minutes at the end of your session engaging in a rewarding activity with your student (game, arts and crafts, etc.)
- Praise your student for their hard work and let them know you are looking forward to your next session.

After the session:

- Log your hours. Briefly describe your session in the online form.
- Think about what worked well and what didn't work. This is a good time to jot down personal notes about what you might want to prepare for your next session.
- Don't be hard on yourself if things didn't go as planned! Reflect on one or two positives from the session, big or small.
- Communicate any issues to your regional coordinator.



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School on Wheels General Procedures

Commitment

- Be consistent in your tutoring sessions. Providing the students we tutor with consistency and structure will allow them to focus on their education during tutoring.
- Use the School on Wheels Programs on our website: the Academic, BUS, Digital Learning, and Summer Programs are carefully designed to benefit your student(s).
- Attend the mandatory advanced tutor training 2-3 months after you begin tutoring. This training is an opportunity to discuss your experiences with other tutors once you have had a chance to get settled.

Communication

- Be proactive in your communication with parents and shelter staff!
- Notify your student's parent/legal guardian or location staff if you will be late or miss a session. If you cannot reach either party, call your regional coordinator.
- Wear your School on Wheels badge at all tutoring sessions. Your badge helps identify you as a volunteer to staff and families.
- Connect with your regional coordinator on a regular basis, at least once per month. Make sure to follow up with your regional coordinator when he/she reaches out to you.
- Notify your regional coordinator of any significant changes: if your student moves into permanent housing, if you need/want to change your tutoring location or if your tutoring schedule changes.

Respect

- Learn your location's rules and regulations and follow them. Your coordinator will orient you at your first session and answer any questions you may have.
- Limit gift giving to special occasions and always get parent/guardian approval. Expensive gifts are strongly discouraged. This applies to any gifts you might want to give the parent/guardian, as well.
- Be sensitive and respectful of differences. This may be the first time you have been in a shelter, worked with a child experiencing homelessness, or interacted with a particular culture. Accept the differences. Cultural diversity, life experiences, and situations combine to create your student's point of view.



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Mandatory Safety Policies

1. Work with your student(s) only in a public area and within view and earshot of at least one other tutor or a parent or designated staff member at your location. Wear your tutor lanyard and badge at all times.
2. Establish healthy boundaries and exhibit professional behavior, including refraining from physical contact or inappropriate language with your student. Do not share your personal information or social media accounts with students.
3. Ensure the confidentiality of students, their families, and all other families at the location(s) where you volunteer. If you take photos of tutoring sessions, they may NOT include students' faces, locations, or full names.
4. Immediately report any information that may suggest child abuse occurring at this time in your student's life. Your regional coordinator is a mandated reporter.
5. Strictly follow the School on Wheels Field Trip Procedures if you would like to participate in an activity with your student outside of your regular tutoring session. Your coordinator will provide you with the necessary information and forms to do so.
6. Log your hours: record the details of your tutoring sessions via the School on Wheels online database after every tutoring session.

Failure to comply with our procedures or safety policies may lead to termination from our program.



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Notes

schoolonwheels.org

Questions? Please email us at contact@schoolonwheels.org.

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