

# Is Mentoring for You?

(HANDOUT)

Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina, Inc. 2023 Symposium  
by Linda Bergman-Althouse, President, WRNC, Inc.

- In 2020 the WRC implemented an apprenticeship regulation. Why?
- Home-based vs. facility rehabilitator – What is the difference?
- WRC TERMS - **Apprentice**: trainee, intern, novice, rookie, mentee, follower, student, beginner, newbie, learner  
**Mentor**: trainer, sponsor, coach, guide, instructor, leader, supervisor, teacher  
**Apprenticeship**: training period, probation period, mentor program
- What are the differences among these terms?  
**Internship** = short term (3-6 months), usually unpaid, to investigate suitability  
**Mentorship** = length of career, to learn life/professional skills, “*want to be like*”  
**Apprenticeship** = long term (1-2 years), to learn task skills, paid (\$/credential), “*want to perform like*”
- **What is in your Mentor Toolbox?**  
Mentoring is a *system* of training a new generation of wildlife rehabilitators in the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to effectively rehabilitate *squirrels, opossums, and cottontails*.
- **MENTORS** are critical for the training and development of less experienced individuals and they increase success & the continued interest of less experienced individuals.
- A MENTOR has a sense of “giving back,” so the motivation is internal to the person.
- **A GOOD MENTOR** will always...support and guide an apprentice through every aspect of rehabbing, from receipt to disposition of an animal.
- There may be ROADBLOCKS: **Lack of...Time, Family support, Interest, Investment, Logistical understanding.**
- **Logistical concerns**: Hands-on time with apprentice, Access to animals, Respond to emergencies, Availability of other rehabbers (for hands-on, back up, other species), Lack of computer/technical skills
- **Tools**: E-mail, Zoom, Reference manuals/videos, Cell phone/texts, Facetime, Organizations



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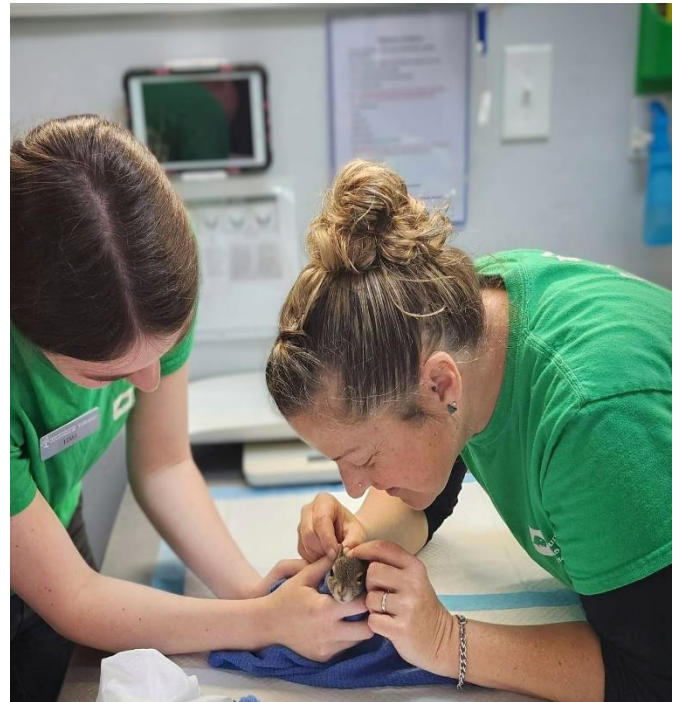
- **CONCERNS:** Will I have all the answers? Will I risk my license? Will I be successful? Can I still Rehab? Do I have enough time? Other concerns?
- Go to **WRC WEBSITE** to check rules, restrictions, and conditions: [ncwildlife.org/Licensing/Other-Licenses-and-Permits](http://ncwildlife.org/Licensing/Other-Licenses-and-Permits)
- **License For Holding:** Allows for the possession of wildlife for scientific, educational & exhibition purposes.
- **Two license types for captivity for REHABILITATION:**
  1. **Rehabilitator License** - allows for the possession of wildlife to provide care and treatment to injured and orphaned animals to enable their release
  2. **Apprentice License** - is under a mentor. Allows for the possession of wildlife to provide care & treatment to injured & orphaned animals to enable their release
- **Required Forms:**
  1. Application for Rehabilitation License – Apprentice Level
  2. Mentor’s Report (forms 1 & 2 submitted together)
  3. Application for Rehabilitation License (for & by apprentice)
- Before applying for a captivity license for rehabilitation, WRC requires the apprentice to:
  1. Find a Mentor
  2. Complete a 12-month apprenticeship
  3. Submit required forms & fees
- Before applying for a rehabilitation apprentice level license, the individual needs to:
  1. Be vetted (this is determined by a mentor)
  2. Get a formal commitment from a mentor
  3. Submit required forms & fees
- **The MENTOR** is the contractor who must take all steps available to ensure a solid foundation is laid before the Mentor – Apprentice relationship begins.
- **Vetting Process** – The WRC leaves the requirements/eligibility for apprenticeship up to the Mentor. Before a commitment I made by the rehabilitator, determinations to increase success are a must.



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- **Suggested minimum requirements for apprentice license:**
  1. At least 24 hours training in an approved basic rehabilitation course, including hands-on training
  2. A written application/questionnaire
  3. A structured interview with one or more rehabilitators
- **A Mentor needs to check:**
  1. References
  2. WRC
  3. Google Map
  4. Social Media
  5. And review detailed job descriptions



## Is Mentoring for You? (Cont.)

- **If the mentor/apprentice relationship dissolves**, the apprentice is responsible for:
  1. Informing WRC in writing within **10 days** that they no longer have a mentor.
  2. Receiving acknowledgement.
  3. Obtaining another mentor and informing WRC, in writing within **30 days** of the new mentor.
  4. If after **60 days** a new mentor is not secured, the apprentice license is revoked, and a new application is required; apprenticeship **starts over**.
- What **qualities, skills, and abilities** make a rehabilitator a good mentor?  
**A Mentor is:**
  1. Committed to helping the new rehabber
  2. Respectful and patient
  3. Well-organized, but flexible
  4. Able to use different learning/teaching styles
  5. A problem solver
  6. An active listener
  7. Able to develop and maintain good working relationships
  8. Positive and honest
  9. Field and species knowledgeable
- Who is responsible for a successful apprenticeship?

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- Mentor's Performance Expectations:
  1. Provides general training, coaching, support, and feedback
  2. Helps, consults & arranges backup when absent for extended periods
  3. Communicates regularly with apprentice
  4. Provides oversight/supervision
  5. Keeps detailed documentation & evaluation
  6. Sets limitations for self and apprentice
  7. Exhibits professionalism & is good role model
  8. Keeps abreast of available training for self/apprentice



## A MENTOR IS NOT A:

- Financial supporter
- Insurance provider
- Vet coordinator
- Cage builder
- Referee
- Supply provider
- Police officer
- Parent

## Is Mentoring for You? (Cont.)

- **Apprentice Performance Expectations:**
  1. Learns, understands, and complies with all laws/regulations
  2. Communicates with mentor, asks questions
  3. Keeps detailed documentation & evaluations
  4. Becomes knowledgeable/skilled in the species of interest
  5. Sets limitations
  6. Self-assesses
- **When problems develop, make them learning experiences vs. crises!**
  1. Identify
  2. Explain
  3. Correct

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4. COMMUNICATE
5. Be Proactive
6. Anticipate, Predict & Prevent

- **A successful apprenticeship can be constructed in a variety of effective ways!**

**Use** every tool available,

**Learn** how to use new tools and

**Replace** tools as needed.

*Thank you for coming!*

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