

# A Brief Intro to Tutoring

## Tutoring do/don't

### **Do be friendly, not friends.**

A huge part of GPN is supporting the students, and making sure you're approachable. Be nice, but remember we have a duty of care over them - they're not your friends - they're your students. Feel free to talk opening about yourself and share your experiences with them. But keep in mind they still need to respect you and follow your instructions.

### **Don't touch the keyboard, unless you *really really* need to.**

The students only learn through doing, not seeing. If they are struggling, you can dictate to them or point at the screen to help them fix where they are stuck. Only touch the keyboard for non-learning problems, like if it's more of a computer problem rather than a programming programming.

### **Do guide students towards the answer.**

Poke them in the right direction, and ask them lots of questions about their code and about the problem they're solving. There aren't many situations where you'll need to just tell them the answer.

### **Don't talk about students in front of students.**

### **Do let students work out how they want to solve a problem.**

They're writing their own code and solving it their own way - it's your job to help them do that. If they have a partial answer help them complete it, even if it's not the "best" way.

### **Don't encourage imposter syndrome.**

Don't laugh at the students, make fun of their code, or make them feel dumb/uncomfortable. Sometimes students will realise their mistake and say, "*Oh, that's a really stupid mistake.*" When they do, don't agree with them - try to make it positive, like "*That's okay! You'll know next time.*" Lead by example and be confident in your own abilities!

### **Do admit when you don't know the answer.**

Admitting you don't know the answer is hard for you, but invaluable for the students. It shows them it's ok not to know the answer and that we are all learning. Show them it's ok not to know the answer yet by saying something like "I'm not sure, let's figure it out together!"

### **Do ask for help.**

If you don't know the answer to question, ask another tutor for help. Everyone of the GPN tutors loves helping both the students and other tutors, if they didn't they wouldn't be at GPN.

### **Do take opportunities to grow!**

Tutor, lecture, sign up for a morning job, attend GPN professional development workshops.

## Examples of how to talk to students in the classroom

A lot of the time, most of the trouble the students have is identifying where they're getting stuck, working out how to continue, or working through errors. You can help by saying things like...

- Hey, what are you working on?
- Can you tell me what you want your code to be doing?
- What does your code do at the moment?
- Let's break down the problem - what's the first thing you need your code to do?
- What does that line of code do?

These questions are great at getting kids to identify what they are trying to do. And by talking through their problem they often figure out the solution by themselves.

You'll get the hang of tutoring, and you'll develop your own style of tutoring over time.