



Image courtesy of [Reshot](#)

Foster Future Leaders by Investing in Today's Youth

Kids these days. They're as sharp, funny, engaging, brilliant and talented as any previous generation. But given the current state of affairs, what sort of world will we hand off to them?

The need for strong leadership is more evident than ever, and every time you interact with young people, you're shaping them—for better or worse. Who they are in their youth affects their success academically, socially, and in their later careers. Why not give them every possible advantage by fostering their leadership right now? Dive into these resources to help you make the most of every opportunity you have with them.

One-On-One Development

When you're working directly with kids, you have the perfect circumstance to focus on bringing out the best in them as individuals. With that in mind, contemplate [these character traits](#) that can be seen in any good leader:

Leaders need to have *courage*—the courage to make a decision and move forward in spite of risks.

Integrity is another must-have—the follow-through of being where you say you will be and doing what you say you will do.

Good leaders also practice *vigilance*—as a part of follow-through, they pay attention to changes in the terrain and adjust paths as needed.

Leaders need to be *open*—open to listening to others, to hearing their points of view, and to taking what they say into account when making plans and priorities.

Hone Good Habits

As you interact with young people, bear in mind that they will—consciously or not—be looking to you for how they should act. Inc. suggests aiming for these three [habits](#) to ensure you make the right impression:

Be approachable, as it encourages others to look to you for answers. Maintain a sense of humor, advocate for kids who are struggling, and don't be afraid to share your own story.

Listen actively, as it reinforces the speaker's self-worth. Rephrase back to the speaker what you heard, so that they know you understand.

Recognize kids' efforts, as it helps them know they are appreciated. They will be more interested in you and in interacting with you as a result.

Gamify Leadership

One of the best ways to teach youth is through activities. Why not engage kids in games that cultivate leadership skills? Indeed offers [these suggestions](#):

Minefield is a stellar choice for kids learning leadership since it involves roped borders, blindfolds, partnerships, and communication.

Survive the Sinking Ship encourages kids to think about priorities, helping others, and give and take.

Tallest Tower involves teamwork, communication, strategizing, and cooperation.

Leadership Crest helps kids to think about their own personal values and how those values fit within a larger group or organization.

When you work with kids, you have the unique opportunity to shape their leadership capabilities. Make the most of your time spent one-on-one with them, being your best and bringing out their best. Consider it an investment in the future of our world.

