

***Appreciations from Youth:***

The appreciations to parents/mentors from youth are very personal and should convey appreciation. Appreciations are private and are exchanged at their family table before the graduation ceremony. Appreciations are read aloud within the where no outsiders are present (no guests, no professionals from the school, and no children or other family members). The youth reading the appreciation stands in front of the parent to present the appreciation.

The appreciations are written on nice paper as a keepsake. Parents often keep the appreciations for years as they are very meaningful. Appreciations are empowering, genuine, and affirming. They are written from the heart and read from the heart. Each parent should receive a personal appreciation.

The goals of the appreciations are to empower and support parents, as well as to reinforce positive parenting. Appreciations are not meant to be instructions or to make any parent feel shameful. Offering praise is challenging because the person receiving the praise can easily feel embarrassed, ashamed and afraid, rather than feel special, recognized and affirmed. Because there are risks in doing an appreciation of parenting, they can only be delivered within relationships of trust.

***Sample Appreciations:***

*1) Mom, I appreciate you for spending time with me on the weekends and coming to every one of my school plays.*

*2) Coach Evans (mentor), thank you for coaching me in basketball and helping me keep my grades up.*

*3) I like it when we cook dinner together. Thank you for taking me and Cameron bowling and making sure me and my sisters have what we need. Thank you for helping me with my homework. I love you.*

*4) I'm sorry for messing up in school. Thank you for forgiving me and sticking by me and helping me get back on the right track. Thank you for coming to FAST with me every week so we can be closer.*