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News from Connecting Generations

about Creative Mentoring, Seasons of Respect,
Creative Transitions, Bridge to Employment, and More!

October 2009 Newsletter

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NEW! Creative Mentoring No Longer Just in Schools!

Since its earliest days the Creative Mentoring Program has paired adult mentors with students in school settings. We are now also partnering with quality community and faith based after school programs.

When the mentoring program first started in 1990 the only safe place to work with large numbers of students was in schools. That is no longer the case. As more and more families have both parents working there has been an explosion in the number of quality after school programs. These after school programs provide another site where mentoring can take place.

The after school programs add to our ability to link mentors to youth in the following ways:

- Mentors who cannot leave work during the regular school day may be able to mentor during the hours of 4:00pm-6:00pm.
- Students being mentored are not pulled out of school classes that are sometimes critical for their school success. The school schedule is much more inflexible in a school than it is in an after school program.
- Students can be mentored in a variety of areas including a computer lab, games area, gym, art room, etc. This improves the ability of the mentor to use the mentee's interests to enhance the relationship.
- High school students who are members of the club are available on site without having to be transported to another site.

We have been working for the last year to increase our partnerships with after school programs. Our partners now include: The Fraim and Greater Newark Boys and Girls Clubs, Cathedral Choir School, Pencader Hundred Community Center, Urban Promise, and West End Neighborhood House.

We offer the same services to these programs as we do our regular school partners: Application Processing, Criminal Background and Reference Checks, Support for the Site Coordinator, all Forms necessary to make the match between mentor and mentee,

Survey Forms to document mentee progress.

If you know of an after school program that would like to start a mentoring program, please let us know. Contact Iazia McTeer at imcteer@connecting-generations.org or 302-656-2122 ext.16.

Creative Mentoring Training Sessions in October

New Castle County

October 7th 1:00pm-4:00pm
Bear Public Library
or

October 24th 10:30am-1:30pm
Brandywine Hundred Public Library

Kent County

October 13th 2:30pm-5:30pm
Smyrna Public Library

Sussex County

October 2nd 10:00am-1:00pm
Georgetown Public Library
or

October 22nd 1:00pm-4:00pm
Lewes Library

Click here to register for any of these sessions to begin mentoring this fall.

High Schoolers to be Trained as Mentors!

Traditionally Creative Mentoring has exclusively trained adults interested becoming mentors. However, many of our partner schools have found that given the opportunity, many high school students can also be effective mentors. Therefore, to support our partners and the new mentoring relationships, Creative Mentoring has recently developed a training model and training manual exclusively designed for high school students who are interested in becoming mentors.

We are looking for schools that would like to have high school students trained to mentor younger elementary age students. If you are interested in finding out more, contact Iazia McTeer at imcteer@connecting-generations.org or 302-656-2122 ext. 16.

Seasons of Respect Program Partnering with 20 Schools (and Counting) for the 2009/2010 School Year

The Seasons of Respect Program, which focuses on character education and anti-bullying, got off to an early start with Maple Lane Elementary School beginning the program in August under the facilitation of School Counselor Tyrel Price. So far twenty schools have signed up for the program representing six school districts across the state.

This year Seasons of Respect Facilitators include Bernadette Davis for New Castle and Kent Counties, Kim Taylor for Sussex and Lower Kent Counties and Joanna Carty for New Castle County. For more information on the Seasons of Respect Program please contact Joanna Carty at 302-656-2122 ext. 10 or jcarty@connecting-generations.org. Read more about the program [here](#).

"Imagine a World" With Us!

Join us for one of our next free one-hour "Imagine a World" open houses to learn more about Connecting Generations:

**November 4th 9:30am-10:30am
Community Services Building,
Wilmington**

or

**November 10th 10:00am-11:00am
Newark Sr. Center, Newark
-hosted by Stacey Altemus-**

or

**November 16th 4:30pm-5:30pm
Lewes Library, Lewes**

Register today by clicking here or calling 302-656-2122 ext. 12.

Mentor Coordinator Information Sessions

Based on feedback from Mentor Program Coordinators last year, we are excited to offer 2 new training sessions for Coordinators in Partner Programs. We are offering these classes via teleconference so that all schools can participate. Coordinators may also attend the sessions in person at the Community Services Building in Wilmington. Coordinators should RSVP at least 2 days before the session. Information on how to dial in to these calls, and materials for the call will be sent to you once you RSVP.

Topic 1: Getting Started & Recruitment

October 8th 10:00am-11:00am
or
October 22nd 2:00pm-3:00pm
[Register Here](#)

Topic 2: For Elementary School Partners Interested in Recruiting High School Mentors

October 15th
10:00am-11:00am
or
2:00pm-3:00pm
[Register Here](#)

If you have questions, please contact Iazia McTeer at imcteer@connecting-generations.org or 302-656-2122 ext.16.

Connecting Generations Board and Committee Members Needed

We are looking to expand our Board of Directors and increase the number of volunteers on our Committees.

Mentor Corner

Mentoring Pairs: Back to School!

The beginning of the year is a fun and exciting time for mentors and mentees. For reuniting pairs it is a chance to catch up on the happenings of the summer, to re-visit goals and to really hit the ground running into another exciting school year. For brand new pairs, it is an opportunity to let your mentee get to know you and for you to get to know your mentee, so you can start developing your mentoring relationship.

[How to Start With a New Mentee](#)

One time in your whole mentoring career when a mentor can plan a session around themselves is the first session. During future sessions you will plan your activities around your mentee's needs and interests. However, for your first session, before you really know your mentee, you should share things about yourself to help your mentee feel more comfortable opening up. A few suggestions:

- Bring in your favorite game from elementary/ middle school to play
- Bring in a picture of yourself when you were in elementary/ middle school. Talk to your mentee about what school was like then, what you liked and disliked. Ask them what they like or dislike about school. Talk to your mentee about fashion of the day, how things have changed or stayed the same.
- Bring in your favorite book/magazine /comic book from when you were in elementary/ middle school. Talk to them about why that was your favorite book. Ask them about their favorite thing to read.
- Bring in items from a hobby/ interest you have. Ask your mentee about their hobbies/ interests.
- Let your mentee take you on a tour of their school.
- Make a "Getting to know you" sheet where you make up 20 questions that you can ask your mentee, and they can ask you. (i.e. Do you have any pets? What are your 3 favorite foods? What is your favorite television show?)

Your school's mentor coordinator should give

We would especially love participation from individuals who live in **Kent or Sussex Counties**, as our programs are statewide.

Anyone with expertise in Fundraising, Research and Evaluation, Computer/IT, Legal, or experience with any of our programs would be an asset to our team.

If you are interested in learning more about any of these positions please contact Rich Kapolka at 302-656-2122 ext. 11 or rkapolka@connecting-generations.org.

Got Kids? Get Involved!

This is the tagline the Parent Information Center is using to promote Governor Jack Markell's proclamation of **October 2009** as **Parent Involvement Month**.

Mentoring is a great way to get involved and is a great way to meet teachers, administrators, and other volunteers at your child's school. Mentoring improves the overall school environment and success rates: Studies have shown that mentoring helps children improve their self esteem and avoid risky behavior.

Parents make great mentors. One hour a week is all it takes. Spending time with a child who has been nominated by a school nurse, counselor, or teacher can make a big difference in your child's school!

[Click here to learn more about becoming a mentor.](#)

Mentors Age 55+ Can Join RSVP: Retired Senior Volunteer Program

Contact Susan Fox at 302-255-9690 to find about this great program, to

you a copy of your mentee's interest sheet, which will outline some of your mentee's interest areas. If at all possible, use that as a guide to plan your session. Additionally, your mentor coordinator may have "Getting to Know You Activities" and there are more activities in the "Power of One" activity guide.

[How to Re-connect With a Mentee From Last Year](#)

Reuniting mentoring pairs have an opportunity to catch up with one another about what happened over the summer, and how things are going so far. Once you catch up, reuniting pairs can almost immediately start talking about personal, and/or academic goals they have for the year. A few skills that may prove useful to re-visit:

- Goal setting: Pairs can use the SMART goals method to identify and set goals for the year. See your "Power of One" manual for more information.
- Problem solving: Remember, mentees need to be empowered to make their own decisions, and solve their own problems. The SODAS method (outlined in the "Power of One" manual) can be used to help your mentee to continue to develop their problem solving skills.

Have a great year mentoring, and don't forget to contact your school coordinator or the Creative Mentoring program staff with any questions or concerns! Rachael Hotchkiss can be reached at 302-656-2122 ext. 17 or rhotchkiss@connecting-generations.org.

United Way of Delaware Campaign

Did you know you can support the Creative Mentoring program through United Way? Please consider designating your donation to us if you're planning to participate in this year's United Way of Delaware Campaign.

Designate:

"Creative Mentoring Book# 9344"

Thank you! We appreciate your support!

join RSVP, or to track your hours if you're already a member.

Book Recommendation

Enjoy this new feature, where friends, partners, mentors, and coordinators review and recommend resources:

[We're All Special](#), a children's book by Creative Mentor Joyce Taylor Dennis

How will the gentle inhabitants of peaceful Lively Creek Forest deal with a small intruder who threatens their homes and tries to take over as their leader? He states that he is "special" but what does that mean? Sometimes the best way to deal with a bully is not to view him as an adversary, but to make him your friend. This delightful adventure of charming forest animals delivers a wonderful lesson to young children on socializing with others and dealing with confrontations with bullies. Along the way young readers will meet some wise and powerful characters like Judge Wendell Owl, Bartholomew J. Badger, grumpy old Carlton Fox and a host of others that bring the story to life. The endearing, colorful illustrations will entertain them and children of kindergarten age through fourth grade will learn about communicating with others, building self-esteem and confidence in this story that stresses how truly special every individual is.

This book was written by Joyce Taylor Dennis, a long time mentor at East Millsboro Elementary School in Sussex County. What a great book to share with your mentee, and what a great connection to both our Creative Mentoring and Seasons of Respect program! Congratulations and good luck to Joyce with this book!

[We're All Special](#) is available in paperback on Amazon.com or signed copies can be obtained by contacting Joyce at jtdennis15@yahoo.com.

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