

Mentoring Picnic in the Park!

Often, heroes don't receive the recognition they deserve. Mentoring Programs at Helping Services thanked two local groups for their hard work on Thursday, June 17, when the U.S. Army and Decorah Fire Department were guests at our picnic at Phelps Park in Decorah.



New match Olivia and Shari enjoying the picnic together.

Over 90 mentees, family members, and mentors attended the mentoring picnic! Staff Sergeant Peach and Specialist Fedotovski brought a Hummer and everyone enthusiastically asked questions. Each youth received a key chain, football, or water bottle, and both youth and adults posed for pictures in the Hummer.



The Decorah Fire Department brought two trucks to the picnic. Children were fascinated by the gear firefighters use, and took turns trying on helmets and fire suits. Firefighters Lee Bjerke and Darin Sander happily answered questions, showing off their equipment, and talked about fire safety. "I was so excited to see the fire truck and Hummer pull into our picnic! I am so proud we could offer this opportunity for the youth in our programs," shared Rosa Grant, mentoring coordinator. We extend a special thank you to the Events Committee: Sherry, Alison, Rylee, and Crystal, who put together a fun evening for everyone.

Rethinking Modules of Mentoring.

Mentoring is a powerful tool. When youth feel accepted by caring adults in their life, peer pressure is less likely to impact them and the likelihood of making healthy choices increases. Modules of Mentoring are tools for mentors, created by Helping Services; they offer fun activities for building mentee's social and academic skills. These activities may also help to develop stronger mentoring relationships.



Get to Know Me Jenga is a wonderful way for mentors and mentees to get to know each other while having fun. Contact your coordinator to sign out a Jenga game.

Mentors often inquire about altering module activities, and it is okay to change these activities. For example, the popular "Overcoming Obstacles" activity in the Social Skills section of the module binder turns into summer fun by replacing the egg with a water balloon. This is an engaging way to get active while defining obstacles and resiliency, determining who could help with overcoming an obstacle, or developing a plan of action. This process will support your mentee's well-being personally and academically.

The next set of modules will be distributed this summer and will focus on supporting mentees' career explorations and development. They'll be simple activities for exercising skills through everyday activities including: a good handshake, making eye contact, making a request, and asking a question.

We will also simplify the process for reporting the completion of module activities. When mentors submit monthly activity logs, there will be a section for recording the modules completed that month. We greatly benefit from your feedback and from reading about your mentoring interactions. Please feel free to include personal comments too. If your contact hours are submitted by email, your mentoring coordinator will be contacting you soon with instructions.

Medical Authorization Forms

When mentees enter the mentoring program, their parents/guardians complete a Medical Authorization Form. This form has important information such as the youth's current doctor, allergies, and medications. We give a copy of this form to the mentor in case of an emergency. Annually, we have this form completed and signed by parents/guardians so mentoring staff and mentors have current forms. Parents and guardians: please complete and sign this form coming by mail. A self-addressed, stamped envelope will be enclosed, so please return them as soon as possible.

Your Vote Is Needed!

Mentoring Programs at Helping Services sponsors many exciting events. Each year, program participants vote on ideas for upcoming events. Attached with this newsletter, mentors will find their ballot. There is also a space for making suggestions about upcoming events. For those receiving the newsletter by mail, the return postage is prepaid. Please vote today! This ballot also has a space for **Mentor Trainings**. Only mentors should complete this section. We greatly appreciate your input.

July Calendar of Events

- Thursday, July 8 - Winneshiek County Fair, Discover Your Spark, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Check your fair schedule for the location.
- Tuesday, July 13 Mentoring Break, 12:00 - 1:00p.m., Cresco A&W Long John Silvers
- Saturday, July 17 - Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, Dubuque, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, July 20 - Mentor Training: Youth Affected by the Current Economy, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m., Decorah Public Library, lower level, Public Meeting Room.
- Saturday, Aug. 7 and Saturday Aug. 21 - Go-karting in La Crosse. Please make reservations for one date only.

For more information contact: 563-387-1720

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Understanding Family Dynamics

On Thursday, June 3 in Waukon, Mentoring Programs offered a mentor training, "Understanding Family Dynamics," led by Karen Hertges, Elementary Guidance Counselor, and Steve Fate, In-Home Therapist. The informal discussion included how to respond to mentees when they experience challenges in their life.

Using discussion and role-play, the presenters provided mentors with practical tools, information on how to bond with mentees, and how to empower



Steve Fate is available for counseling and family centered services by calling (563) 380-4629.

mentees in problem solving and making decisions. In developing relationships and supporting families, Steve Fate offered his invaluable insight, "I have never met a parent that has not done the best they can do, but sometimes they don't have the tools required to meet their child's needs."

Fulfilling the role of a mentor can be a balancing act. Karen and Steve helped with finding its center. If you missed this opportunity, there will be another offering. Please watch for upcoming details in our newsletter.

Find Mentoring Programs on Facebook!

Mentoring Programs at Helping Services has recently created a Facebook page and Facebook group! Our Facebook page, along with the newsletter and flyers will keep you updated on events and happenings in our programs. We want everyone to know how to get connected with Mentoring Programs on Facebook.

Not on Facebook yet? Go to www.facebook.com and fill out your information where it says "Sign Up" and then click the "Sign up" button at the bottom. Follow the directions from there. If you need more help setting up your profile call or email Rosa at (563) 387-1720 ext. 110 or rgrant@helpingservices.org. You can also check out this website for more detailed instructions: <http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Facebook-Profile>. Once you have a profile, follow the instructions.

Already on Facebook? After logging into your profile, find the search box at the top of your screen. Type in "Mentoring Programs at Helping Services." You should see our logo pop up with two possible options: 1) Non-Profit Organization and 2) Organizations.

The Non-Profit Organization is our Facebook Page that is open to the public. Click on that option. When the page loads, select the "Like" button right next to the title. If you don't see the "Like" button, then you have already joined the page. This page is used as a tool to let the public know about our program, see some pictures, and get general information about becoming a mentor or a mentee.

The Group option is a closed group for mentors and mentees. You can also click on that option. When the page loads there will be a button that says "Request to Join" next to the title of the group. Click on that button and once the administrator has approved your request you will have access to event invitations, pictures from events, discussions, wall postings, etc. If you do not see the button, you've already joined the group. Once you 'Like' our page or join our group, please post on our wall, check updates, start discussions, or tag photos. We'll be watching for you on Facebook!



The Allamakee Mentoring Birthday Party had a good turnout for their pizza party.

Farewell and Best Wishes

We regretfully announce that Jill Hollowell, Mentoring Plus Coordinator, will be leaving Helping Services and she will be moving to Springfield, Missouri mid-July. She shares, "I value the wisdom and sound work ethic of my co-workers, and it has been a wonderful experience working at Helping Services." A new mentoring coordinator should be hired by September. We wish Jill well!



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