

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For further information:

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Strengthening Families, a program for families with children ages 10-14, will be offered at Starmont Middle School this spring, beginning on Tuesday night, May 6.

Strengthening Families is a fun and interactive program that helps prepare children for teen years and avoid problems with drugs and alcohol. Developed by Iowa State University Extension, Strengthening Families is recognized nationally as a program that improves family communication and encourages healthy family interaction. The program begins each week with a meal that allows families to talk and connect. Then for the first hour of the program parents and youth meet separately. Parents have a chance to talk about their successes and frustrations with parenting and learn some new skills. Youth meet to play games, role play and talk about stress, peer pressure and making healthy choices. Families then meet together to create projects and talk about what they have learned about each other.

One parent who went through the six session program said “I learned things about my children that I never knew- and I consider myself a well informed, very involved parent. Their being able to discuss some of these issues and then spend time with us immediately following was very beneficial. Thank you.” An 11 year old boy who attended the program said “I love the one on one time I get to spend with my Mom and Dad.”

“We have been very gratified at the changes that parents who have participated in this program have experienced”, says Bill Deutsch, Prevention Specialist with Helping Services, and one of the facilitators of the program.

The six session program begins on May 6, taking place on Tuesday nights from 5:30-8:00 p.m., at Starmont Middle School. A meal will be provided at 5:30; the program will begin at 6 p.m. There is no charge for the program; to register, contact Sandy Klaus at 563-933-4902, or Bill Deutsch at 563-387-1720. This program is being sponsored by Helping Services for Northeast Iowa, Building Directions for Families, the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Program and Prevent Child Abuse Iowa .