

Mentor & Mentee

Welcome

Today's reminder: 'Each man must look to himself to teach him the meaning of life. It is not something discovered: it is something molded.'

--Antoine Saint-Exupery

By Sharon Sodekson, *Program Leader*

Hello there, Project RISE Mentors! A few months have gone by since the start of school and most of you are settled in to your mentor/mentee rhythm. I have been phoning veteran mentors and new mentors to acquaint myself to you and to receive feedback about the program. As many of you can attest, matching can take time and Drawdé, Tracey, and I appreciate your patience! So, to those of you in a relationship: yea! And to those of you yet to be matched: yea too!

Project RISE Meeting Summaries (October and November, 2008)

October's meeting featured **Amy Muldowney**, a guest speaker from the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State College, who addressed the topic of "*Teasing, Bullying, and Cyber-Bullying*," that was also included in the Parent Connection Series (co-sponsored by VIPS and Falmouth Public Schools, see www.falmouthvips.org for a schedule).

In November, **Wendy Risko**, adjustment counselor at **Mullen-Hall Elementary**, hosted the November meeting. Wendy started off by expressing her appreciation for mentoring and the positive impact it has on her students. Our guest speaker, **Boby Andersen**, is a former VIPS Project RISE mentor and a retired (Mullen-Hall) teacher. Bobye currently teaches graduate courses at Wheelock College. The topic of her presentation was "*Working With Students From Troubled Homes*." Bobye shared with the group the importance of respect: respecting students we mentor and respecting their families. She also talked about the concept of 'doing the best you can do today,' our responsibility to the children as a 'higher calling,' and validating children's feelings ("their emotions are real"), as well as the gift we give to them by being non-judgmental. Bobye also talked about the importance of consistency, urging

Reminders



Please be sure your CORI form is up to date! Not sure? Contact the VIPS office at 548-1621.

Be sure to log your hours! If you can't find the book, or just can't remember, send an e-mail to the office and we'll do it for you: vips@falmouth.k12.ma.us. You can always phone in your hours to the number above.

mentors to do their best not to cancel and meeting with a mentee, and being consistent with our moods as well as our visits (children may hear our words but they also observe our actions). Another point made was that it takes time to build trust and communication.

Project RISE News & Notes

Update on Mentor Library

I have slowly begun to gather resource books for a mentor reference library. As I was entering Falmouth Public Library, I saw veteran mentor **Judy Stetson**. She highly recommends any of Walter Wick's *ISpy* books—great picture riddles for early grades that are great conversation/connection starters. Another mentor, **Valerie Oppenheim**, suggests reading *Motherless Daughters*, by Hope Edelman. One of my favorites is *Prosperity Pie*, by Sark. *Do you have a book or article that you think other mentors could learn from? Please share them by providing me (or the VIPS office) with the title, author, and a descriptive sentence or two.*

Mentors Mentoring Mentors

Drawdé kindly printed up the list of mentors who expressed a willingness to help other mentors. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to be added to this list, or if you would like to benefit from the advice of experienced mentors.

Upcoming Events/Meetings:

January is National Mentoring Month!

VIPS is planning a few special events to celebrate the occasion:

Starbucks of Falmouth has donated space for **mentee artwork to be hung throughout the month of January**. If you and your mentee like to draw together, or if your student has an interest in art and would like to submit something for the show, please encourage him/her! The VIPS office can provide art paper. Artwork should be no larger than 8.5 x 11 inches. VIPS will mat the artwork and mount it for hanging. Poetry is also welcome. Questions? Contact the VIPS office!

Trainers from the **Mass Mentoring Partnership** will be back in Falmouth to offer a **special training workshop** on **Tuesday, January 13th**. The 2-hour workshop will be held at **Highfield Hall**. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m.; the workshop will be held from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Sessions will be targeted for both new and veteran mentors.

Mentor recruiting efforts will be a high priority during January! Do you have a friend, co-worker, or family member who might consider mentoring? Our mentors are our best source of new mentors. Please help us spread the word!

Gift-giving mentors

Over the years, we have been asked about the “appropriateness” or “rules” regarding mentors giving gifts to their mentees. To this we say, please *do not* feel obligated to do so, but if you wish to give a gift, please be discreet and avoid giving extravagant or expensive gifts. When in doubt, check with the school adjustment counselor, classroom teacher, or feel free to contact the VIPS office.

Mentee friends

Occasionally, **your mentee may ask to have a friend or classmate(s) join you**. Our thoughts: First, the mentor program is designed to be a one-on-one interaction between the mentor and mentee. Parent permission is required for a student to participate in the program. Having said that, if you don't mind having an occasional “extra” during your meeting time, **please check in with the school adjustment counselor or classroom teacher first**. That way, if the (non-mentee) student happens to bring up the interaction at the dinner table, the parent will be able to make an inquiry to the school and the school will be able to provide an informed response.

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