

# Mentor & Mentee

## Welcome 2008–09

Today's reminder: *"Self-discipline is self-caring."* M. Scott Peck

By Sharon Sodekson, Program Leader

Hello there, Project RISE Mentors! Welcome to our first **Mentors and Mentees (M&M)** newsletter. The name came from a Project RISE mentor while we chatted after our first meeting. I am happy to begin the year as your brand-new VIPS mentor programs leader. In speaking with Tracey and Drawdé, we decided to create a brief newsletter for Project RISE that would feature highlights of our meetings, as well as additional news and reminders for mentors and counselors. Thanks to all of you who were present at our first meeting of the 2008–09 school year, held at Morse Pond School. We had about 25 people—including five school adjustment counselors and three prospective mentors—all eager to start another great year of Project RISE!

### REMINDERS



Don't forget to check in at the main office and sign-in. If it's your first visit of the year, please check in with the school adjustment/guidance counselor.

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

Don't forget to **log your hours!** Can't find the book? Download a form from our website!

## Project RISE Meeting Summary (September 9, 2008)

After brief introductions around the room, we asked each counselor present to talk about how Project RISE works at their school. Each spoke briefly on their appreciation for the program and its importance and impact on their students, and how the procedures are similar at each of the elementary and middle schools: mentors sign-in, pick up a "volunteer" badge, and log their time in the VIPS volunteer book, all located near the entrance of each school. The initial visit of the year should include a visit to the school counselor (see *Contacts* for listing) to find a good meeting time and meeting location. A suggestion was made, and echoed by several mentors, to call the school prior to each visit, identify yourself as a mentor, and inquire whether your student is in attendance that day. This would be especially recommended for mentors of students with tardiness or absenteeism.

Each of the veteran mentors expressed how they felt about the program and the importance of their connection with their child. We then did a little deep breathing to connect us to ourselves. I learned again by watching that it is uncomfortable to do the uncomfortable! However, everyone gave their best to an interactive exercise on connection. What is your favorite part of nature? And how does this relate to who you are

and your relationship [with others]? This exercise led to lots of conversations—always great to see—and we concluded with some Q & A time. I also sent around a sign-up sheet for veteran mentors who might be willing to answer questions or provide advice for new mentors (**mentors helping mentors**). If you didn't sign up but would be willing, please contact me. Or, if you are in need of some advice, let me know!

At the FHS Mentor meeting the previous day, we talked about starting a **mentor reference library**. Perhaps you are interested in learning more about the concerns, characteristics, developmental and emotional stages of your student, or issues relevant to your mentee's age group. We will be looking into setting up a bibliography on our website, and will speak to the staff at Falmouth Public Library (a parent reference section currently exists and we will explore the existing resources and possibly add to them). Have you read a book or article that other mentors may benefit from? Please feel free to call or e-mail me or Tracey and Drawdé at the VIPS office with details. We would also be interested in forming subcommittees or small groups of mentors—and possibly mentees—with a topical or issue-specific focus (e.g., anger management, self-esteem building, etc.).

**Upcoming Events/Meetings**

**VIPS Feasts of Falmouth & Beyond**

Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>  
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Marine Park Bandshell, Falmouth Harbor

**FHS Mentor/Project RISE Meeting**

“Teasing, Bullying and Cyber-bullying”  
Guest speaker: Amy Muldowney,  
Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Ctr.  
Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>  
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
Falmouth Public Library

**Project RISE Meeting**

Wednesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 am – 11:00 am  
Mullen-Hall School

Lastly, we recognize that our Project RISE meeting/training schedule precludes some of you from attending. We will be investigating the possibility of having alternate or additional meeting times, recognizing the value of mentor-to-mentor sharing and the importance of learning new skills and acquiring additional resources that may help you as mentors.

I was moved by your commitment and desire to make a difference in a child’s life. I welcome your thoughts and ideas to network via print (how can this M&M newsletter serve you best?) or in person. Please give me a call or send an e-mail. I look forward to a very successful year of mentoring at the K-8 schools and connecting with you all.

**VIPS Office**

Tracey Crago, Director  
Drawd  Geishecker, Secretary  
(508) 548-1621  
vips@falmouth.k12.ma.us

**Mentor Programs Leader**

Sharon Sodekson  
(508) 472-8548  
sharonsodekson14@yahoo.com

**Volunteers In Public Schools (VIPS)**

113 Lakeview Avenue  
Falmouth MA 02540  
www.falmouthvips.org



Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Falmouth, MA  
02540  
Permit no. 35