

## About Junior Friends

Junior Friends are school-aged boys and girls, generally between the ages of 6 and 16, who could benefit from positive adult attention, affection, recreation or guidance.

These young people may be having difficulty in school, experiencing emotional or social problems, or needing a meaningful relationship with a caring adult role model. Children enter the program through referrals from teachers or other school personnel, social service agencies, churches, counselors, parents, relatives, or others.

## About Senior Friends

Senior Friends are trained volunteers willing to spend at least one hour each week to be a special friend to a child. They have the interest and ability to be a role model and friend to children, both individually and in groups, and can tolerate minor frustrations that may arise in a friendship.



Before becoming a mentor, each volunteer must complete a formal application, provide references, consent to law enforcement and social services background investigations, participate in an orientation session, and complete an interview with program staff.

Mentors who volunteer in schools must be at least 16 years old and at least high school juniors. Mentors who volunteer during non-school and non-work hours must be at least 18 years old.

## About Western Wellness Foundation

The Best Friends Mentoring Program is a project of the Western Wellness Foundation, Inc. A non-profit, 501 ©(3) organization, Western Wellness Foundation formed in 1995 to promote support of children and families through mentoring and other programs across southwest North Dakota.

Western Wellness Foundation, Inc. and The Best Friends Mentoring Program receive funding from federal, state and local grants; special events; recycling and other fundraising activities; and individual and business contributions of time and treasure.

To ensure the long-term financial stability of its programs, Western Wellness Foundation has established an endowment fund. Through the fund, the Foundation receives bequests, cash contributions and other gifts for future use in support of its mission: "making a positive difference in children and families, one at a time." For details, contact the executive director.

*Mentoring Makes a Difference!*

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# Best Friends Mentoring Program

*Mentoring Makes a Difference!*



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**135 W. Villard St. P.O. Box 542**  
**Dickinson, ND 58601**

*"Making a positive difference  
in children and families, one at a time."*

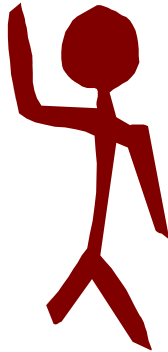
## Mentoring: a proven way to make a difference

**M**entoring is a proven approach to preventing delinquency and violence among children who could benefit from additional, positive adult attention — either on a one-to-one basis or in a small group.

**C**hildren who benefit from mentoring may be at risk of dropping out of school; drug, alcohol or other substance abuse; or delinquent or risky behaviors. They may be lonely and just need a friend. Or, they need extra help with their homework.

**N**ational studies show that children who are mentored are:

- 52% less likely to skip school.
- 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs.
- 32% less likely to hit someone.
- 27% less likely to be using alcohol.



**T**hey also felt more competent about their ability to do well in school and reported more positive relationships with friends and parents. These outcomes occurred for both boys and girls and across all races.

- from *Making a Difference: An Impact Study*

## What parents, teachers and youth say about the Best Friends Mentoring Program

It's been a great experience for my son. His Best Friend is a great mentor who really listens.'

~ Parent of Danny, a Junior Friend

A great program that has brought smiles & excitement into the life of this child. She has someone that loves to share time with her.'

~ Second Grade Teacher

Johnny used to be referred to the office for behavior problems every week. Since being matched with a Best Friend last year, he hasn't been referred once.'

~ Elementary School Principal

It makes me feel special when my Best Friend comes. He helped me to make more friends my age.'

~ Michael, 10-year-old Junior Friend

I'm really pleased with the program. Not only as a single parent, but also as an elementary teacher, I see the positives in so many children that the program has benefited.'

~ Parent of Dillon, a Junior Friend

### Our Mentoring Programs

**S**chool Based Mentoring takes place at the Junior Friend's school and only during the school day, during the school year.

**C**ommunity Based Mentoring takes place outside of the school day, at various times and places in the community throughout the year.

**L**iteracy Mentoring focuses on academic assistance and takes place both in school and community settings throughout the year.