

Queen City Area Best Friends Program

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Best Friends expands mentoring into Dickinson's public schools

Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, more children will have the opportunity to have a mentor.

The school-based mentoring program is available at each of the Dickinson public elementary schools, Hagen Junior High, Dickinson High School and the Southwest Alternative High School. In school-based mentoring, each adult volunteer meets with his or her Junior Friend at the student's school, during the school day. School-based mentoring is ideal for working adults who have their own families or other commitments outside of school and work time. Several Dickinson State University students and Dickinson business professionals have volunteered as mentors for this program. Many businesses are donating an hour per week of employee time to support this mentoring effort.

"We are so pleased by the initial response from our business community," said Tracy Schagunn, coordinator of the school-based mentoring program. "We have already trained a group of potential mentors, and we've matched several Senior Friends with children in our schools. By volunteering, businesses are telling us that our youth are important to the future of our community and that they want to help."

The school counselor, teacher, principal or parent refers students to the program. After Best Friends receives an application, Tracy interviews the child and parent about the child's needs and interests, then matches the child with a trained volunteer mentor who shares their interests.

Mentors must apply, consent to a law enforcement and welfare background investigation, submit five references and complete an interview with staff. Mentors next must attend training sessions.

For information on school-based mentoring, call the Best Friends Program at 483-8615 or 1-877-877-8685.

**Western Wellness Foundation Inc.
Queen City Area Best Friends Program
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Inside: School-based mentoring comes to Dickinson!

Contributors' Corner

* Albertson's * Arby's * Otto Bremer Foundation *
* U.S. Department of Education *
* United Way * G & G Recycling *

Enjoy being a friend?

It takes only an hour each week to make a difference in the life of a child! Best Friends' waiting list has grown to 11 boys and 3 girls! Can you help? Call 483-8615 or 1-877-877-8685 to **volunteer** for either community mentoring or school-based mentoring!

