



# The Best News

Queen City Area Best Friends Program

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## *Mentoring: 'The best thing we did'*

Breanna, a withdrawn 10-year-old, was having school problems and didn't want to socialize with other children. Her mother had surgery and she had no relationship with her dad. A school counselor mentioned the Best Friends Program as source of help.

Tracie, who lives on a farm with her husband and two toddlers, "always wanted to do something like mentoring. I really like kids and I like to help people."



In January, Best Friends matched Breanna and Tracie. The two share similar interests and have enjoyed cooking and baking, collecting eggs from the chickens on Tracie's farm, picnicking, horse riding, family Bible camp and Sunday School. They get together for several hours each week.

"It's satisfying to know you're helping a kid and it's a lot of fun," Tracie said. "Her grades improved in just the first couple of months; I didn't realize that would happen."

Breanna, now 11, recently started fifth grade. She cares more about her appearance and she's more active, her mom reports. And, Breanna looks forward to hearing from Tracie.

"She loves going out there and they include her in everything with their family," Breanna's mom, a Dickinson State University senior, said. "As long as we live here, those two will be together. It's the best thing we could have done for her."

## *New case manager joins Best Friends*



A new face joined the Queen City Area Best Friends Program to kick off the program's expansion to include mentoring in schools during the school day. Tracy Schagunn, who has a bachelor's degree in behavioral sciences and experience with at-risk youth and prevention programs, began working at the end of August. She will be matching Friends, collecting data for the program evaluation, and planning activities. Regina Murray, Best Friends' case manager for the past two years, will continue to train new Senior Friends and assist in the transition to a new case manager.