

BEST FRIENDS MENTORING PROGRAM

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*Best Friends
Mentoring Program*

The Best News

www.westernwellness.org

Volume 8, Issue 1

January-March 2008

Mentor provides positive influence & fun times

The oldest of three boys, Levi Dietz was looking for someone to be a positive influence in his life and to fill a big brother role.

At the same time, Zach Keller was looking to have some fun with a younger guy who needed someone.

They found each other in October 2007 through the Best Friends Mentoring Program. Zach comes once a week to Levi's elementary school to eat lunch with him. During the lunch recess they play football and tag and sometimes work on Levi's homework.

"This is a wonderful program," says Levi's mother,

Tiffany Dietz. "I had heard great things about the program and thought it was a good idea."

She said she enrolled Levi when his parents were separated. Levi has been in the mentoring program for three years and Zach is Levi's third mentor. Like Zach, the previous mentors were seniors at Dickinson High School.

Through the program, Levi has learned that "not all men will run away," his



Zach Keller, right, has mentored Levi Dietz for nearly a year. They have lunch together once a week a Levi's school.

mom says. She says she has noticed that Levi has become more patient and that he enjoys his time with his friend.

Zach says he enjoys his time with Levi, especially when they can play outside.

New Program Specialist joins Best Friends Program

Lylie Weeks is the new Program Specialist at the Best Friends Program. She began Jan. 29 and will be coordinating both the community-based mentoring program and the recycling program, and will assist in finding volunteers for mentoring and for special events.

Lylie holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education, has experience working with youth and families, and has volunteered in sev-

eral youth-related groups and at youth events.

"I am grateful to be part of a program that truly makes a difference," she said.

Lylie joins Program Coordinator Kim Dockter and Director Kris Fehr. With an additional staff member, the Best Friends Program is expanding to serve more youth and recruit more mentors for southwest North Dakota.

Meet Lylie at the March



Lylie Weeks

15 Spring Carnival at Prairie Hills Mall. Lylie, her husband and daughter make their home in Dickinson.



Junior Friend Profile: Looking for a male friend

Needing a self-esteem boost and a reliable friend, Shane recently moved to Dickinson with his mother and younger siblings.

He's struggling with peer pressure in school and is looking for someone who genuinely cares. He's also worried about going to high school.

Shane's mother says

he's a sensitive 13-year-old who misses having an older brother in his life to hang out with. His father has no contact with the family.

Shane enjoys skateboarding, paint balling, watching movies and going to events with his friends.

If you could spend an hour a week with Shane, call the Best Friends Pro-

gram at 483-8615. Could you be a mentor to these youth on the waiting list?

- A fifth grade boy looking for someone to help him with his Cub Scouting achievements and day camping.

- A first grade boy who likes outdoor activities.

Could you give an hour each week of your time and make a difference?

Mentor Profile:

Josh Zellers wants to be involved in community

'Every kid needs a mentor.

Everybody

needs a mentor.'

~Donovan Bailey

A pilot and outdoor enthusiast, Josh Zellers recently joined the Best Friends Mentoring Program's school-based program. He is matched with a 6th grader who also enjoys the outdoors and some sports, along with reading.

"It's the highlight of my week, going to see him," Josh said. "I'm having fun."

Josh lives in Sioux Falls, S.D. and flies to Dickinson

every day, Monday through Friday, and returns home in the late afternoon.

Josh said his father is his hero and his mentor, and said everyone should have a mentor in his life. He has wanted to be a mentor for a long time and is glad for the chance.

Josh is also a Red Cross volunteer. His hobbies include fishing, hiking,

playing board games and bike riding.

He loves animals and enjoys the West River Community Center. Also a part-time flight instructor, Josh has a great sense of humor and keeps a positive outlook on life.



Josh Zellers

Contributors' Corner

Holiday Promotion: Thank you to Papa Murphy's for conducting a special holiday promotion that benefitted the Best Friends Mentoring Program!

Friendship Drive contributors will be recognized in the Annual Report, coming in March! Thanks to Friendship Drive Committee members Clyde Frank, Ken Nelson, Dean Rummel, Rick Backes and Shirley Dukart!

Grants

MDU Resources Foundation
ND Community Foundation
Ronald McDonald House Charities
US Education Department

Please save & recycle:

- Cell phones (all types)
- Used printer cartridges
- Aluminum cans

Thank You!
Thank You!

Have you considered a bequest to the Best Friends Program?

Outstanding Mentors:

Six mentors win 'Kids with Heart' recognition on Valentine's Day

Six Best Friends mentors were selected by Prairie Hills Mall to receive the "Kids with Heart" Award, which was announced on Valentine's Day.

Of the 10 finalists, six are mentors nominated for the award. They include Stephanie Duchscher, Shaunda Dvorak, Sara Anderson, Jordan Wanner, John Hanstad and Tyler Steffan. All are seniors at Dickinson High School and

members of National Honor Society and several other community organizations.

Youth nominated for the award must be younger than 18 years and have made a difference in their community. Best Friends nominated six mentors for the award and all six were selected into the pool of 10 finalists. Each finalist received a \$100 Prairie Hills Mall gift certificate.



From left, Jordan Wanner, Sara Anderson and Stephanie Duchscher received the Kids with Heart award from Prairie Hills Mall.

Best Friends receives esteemed Anderson award

The Best Friends Mentoring Program was recently named as the 2008 recipient of the Louise Anderson Spirit of Giving Award.

This prestigious award is presented by the St. John Lutheran Church Trust Fund Committee to recognize individuals or organizations that further Christ's work in the world.

"Today we realize that children and youth should not be isolated from the

valuable relationships they can have with adults," said the Rev. Tangen said. "At the same time, adults should not be isolated from the valuable relationships they can have with young people.... We believe that adults and children can learn and grow together in faith."

He said there are "benefits for both adults and children when they are together in the mentoring program."

"We applaud the work of the Best Friends Mentoring Program for making a difference in the lives of children and families," he said.

Past recipients of the award include the St. John Quilters, Boy Scout Troop 32, Community Action and the nine past presidents of the church's Trust Fund Committee.

The recognition was kept secret until it was presented Feb. 4.

'I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

~Maya Angelou

Match Spotlight: Friendship Match Milestones



The Best Friends Program recognizes the anniversary milestones of long time mentors and youth in the program:

Five Year Anniversary:

Daryl & Jacob
Matched: 1/9/2003

Connie & Annie
Matched: 1/17/2003

Four Year Anniversary:

Bethany & Brittney
Matched: 1/14/2004

Samantha & Debra
Matched: 2/11/2004

Three Year Anniversary:

Linda & Jessica
Matched: 2/15/2005

Holly & Molly
Matched: 3/7/2005

Match Barometer

January 2008: 101

January 2007: 99

January 2006: 106



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

**BEST FRIENDS
MENTORING PROGRAM**

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**Inside:
Match Milestones
&
Senior Friend Profiles!**


*Address service
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www.westernwellness.org

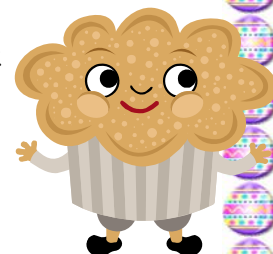
Sign up to receive this newsletter electronically: call 483-8615 or email friends@ndsupernet.com.

Upcoming Activities & Events:

 **March 15, 11 a.m.—3 p.m. Easter Carnival, Bake Sale and arrival of Easter Bunny** at Prairie Hills Mall. Carnival games, jumper, cotton candy, bake sale and Easter Bunny photos during the day. Proceeds will benefit the Best Friends Mentoring Program. Watch your mailbox for more details!

 **Bake Sale:** Bring your baked goods to the Best Friends office, 135 W. Villard St., by 4 p.m. **March 14!**

“James & the Giant Peach,” Children’s play at Dickinson State University, March 14 at 7 p.m., March 15 at 10:30 a.m. & 2:30 p.m., and March 16 at 2:30 p.m. Call the Best Friends office at 483-8615 to reserve **FREE** tickets for Junior and Senior Friends. Free tickets not available at the door.



Shrine Circus, April 6 at 3 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. AND April 7 at 4 p.m. & 7 p.m. Call the Best Friends office at 483-8615 to reserve free tickets for Senior Friends accompanying their Junior Friends to the circus. (Students in grades K-6 admitted free.) Free adult tickets not available at the door.

 *Denotes a Best Friends sponsored event.*

