



**Best Friends
Mentoring Program**

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

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Kris Fehr

Generosity Continues to be American Way

The Best Friends Mentoring Program's mission statement can seem daunting at times, yet as we reflect on our 2009 activities, we see that we are meeting our mission, as you will read on page two, "2009 Mentoring Impact."

A recent *Parade Magazine* study showed that 94 percent of the population believe it is important to be personally involved in a community cause, with 75 percent wanting to make the world a better place—motivation we continue to see at the Best Friends Mentoring Program! A heartfelt thank you goes out to all of our volunteers – mentors, special events workers, board members and office helpers – upon whom the success of this program depends. In 2009, more than 350 community members volunteered thousands of hours with Best Friends.

The *Parade* survey showed that America is in the midst of a compassion boom, with 87 percent of the population financially supporting a cause in the last year. You can continue to help make a difference in southwest North Dakota by watching your mailbox, email and our website for opportunities to support the Best Friends Mentoring Program, financially and by volunteering your time. **YOU** will make a difference!

~Kris Fehr
Best Friends Mentoring Program
Executive Director



Laurie Karie

My Mentoring Story

I began working with my junior friend five years ago when she was in the second grade. When we first started meeting, we would meet at her school to have lunch together and then we would do a craft in her classroom or read books at the library. We both like to read, so we always could find something to do together.

When my junior friend was in the fourth grade, we decided to do community activities together rather than meet at the school. This gave us a chance to get to know one another better and work on some new activities. One of the things I have enjoyed is being able to spend time with a girl since I only have sons. I have been able to do the shopping, hair, make-up and "girl" things that we both enjoy.

One of the things we work on together is learning how to be independent and improve social skills. We have worked on ordering food at a restaurant, going to the bank, asking for help in a store, etc. I believe these skills are beneficial for all young people so that they learn to interact with others.

One thing we also like to talk about is the future. I would love to see my junior friend be able to go to college. She is very smart and loves to read. I think she would make a great teacher one day!

~Laurie Karie
Western Wellness Foundation
Board of Directors



Before joining the Best Friends Mentoring Program...

- 45 percent of youth who were evaluated by teachers were below proficiency in reading.
- 48 percent were below proficiency in math.
- 34 percent were rated as having “poor” social skills.
- 16 percent had a “poor” attitude—higher than national studies.
- 25 percent had “poor” behavior—higher than national studies.

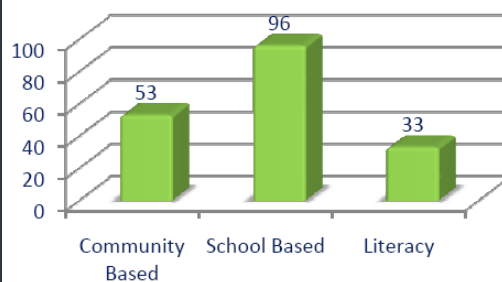
2009 Mentoring Impact

A record number of children were matched with trained and caring mentors last year, with 182 youth benefitting from the extra positive adult guidance provided through the Best Friends Mentoring Program. A record 80 percent of mentors returned to the program from the previous year.

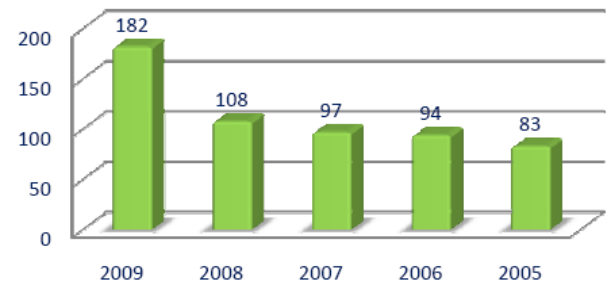
The independent evaluation of the Best Friends Mentoring Program showed that we are meeting the mission and making a difference: parents, youth and mentors continue to be satisfied with the program, with more than 90 percent reporting a rewarding experience. And more than 82 to 97 percent of children improved their academic proficiency, behavior and social skills – due mainly to the child’s mentor spending just an hour a week with them for the year.

Sadly, the evaluation also showed that 68 percent of youth enrolled in the Best Friends Mentoring Program lived at or below the poverty level; that’s more than double the poverty rate of children in Stark County and in the state of North Dakota. Mentoring can help break the cycle of poverty, with mentors providing the needed support and guidance to help youth graduate from high school and gain the skills needed to be successful in the job market and higher education.

2009 Total Matches



Years in Comparison



2009 Year in Review

Spectacular Spring Celebration—April 4, 2009, Prairie Hills Mall

The Spectacular Spring Celebration created a carnival-like atmosphere that was enjoyed by children and families. Children were able to test their skill at games such as, beanbag toss, the fishing pond, a hoop shoot, and others. Children were also able to register to win a free savings bond and an Easter basket fill with gifts. Children also had the opportunity to visit and have their picture taken with the Easter Bunny.



2009 Year in Review Continued

Family Fun Day—July 4, 2009, Jaycees Park

Family Fun Day provided a festival of giant inflatable bouncers, joust, train rides, petting zoo, horse rides, giant slide and food concessions, along with Bodiddly the Clown, a giant art mural and the custom and classic car show.

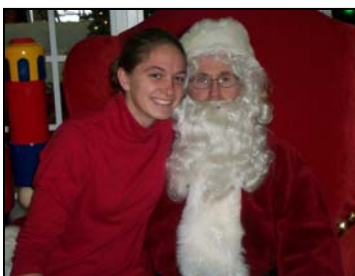


Tutoring Program

In 2009, Dickinson State University added a new class to conform to similar classes across the North Dakota University System. Each semester there is approximately 35 DSU students who are matched with a student in either elementary, junior, or high school. DSU education students are matched to tutor in their field of study (math, reading social studies, etc.). Although the DSU tutors will change each semester, we will keep the elementary and secondary students continually matched for the school year, which is an objective of the Mentoring Grant.

Santa Pictures—November/December 2009, Prairie Hills Mall

The purpose of Santa pictures is to raise money for the Best Friends Mentoring Program. Santa pictures began the weekend before Thanksgiving and ran every weekend after that until Christmas, and included the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Christmas. Overall, more than 40 individuals volunteered for Santa picture shifts, totaling over 200 hours of time volunteered. A total of 791 pictures were taken during 2009 season.



VISTA Worker

The Best Friends Mentoring Program welcomed Casey Peterson as an AmeriCorps VISTA. Her work includes supporting the mentoring program, special event planning, marketing, communications, and volunteer coordinating. AmeriCorps VISTA is a national service program designed to fight poverty. A recent program evaluation showed that 68 percent of youth in the Best Friends Program qualify for free or reduced cost meals, which is almost double the state average. VISTA stands for Volunteers in Service to America.

After joining the Best Friends Mentoring Program...

- 83 percent of youth improved their academic competency
- 91 percent of youth improved their social skills.
- 97 percent improved their attitude.
- Overall, the majority of youth enrolled in BFMP were reported to show improvement in social skills, attitude, behavior, and academic competencies.
- Those youth who engaged in a wide variety of activities with their mentors demonstrated a greater improvement in academic proficiency than those who engaged in only one or two activities.



Mentoring Works!

A study found that youth involved in the Best Friends Mentoring Program were...

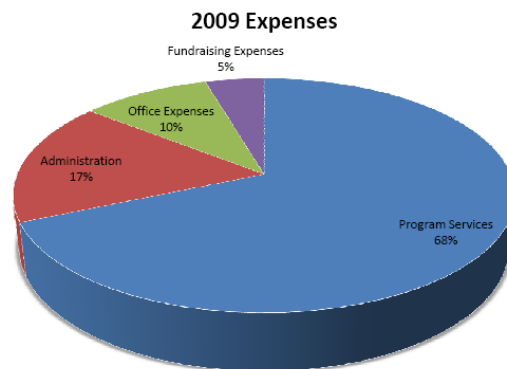
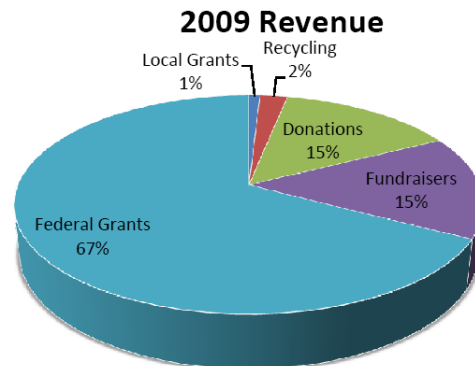
- 46 percent less likely to start using drugs and 27 percent less likely to start drinking.
- 52 percent less likely to skip a day of school.
- More likely to earn higher grades and felt better about school.
- One-third less likely to hit someone else
- More trusting of their parents and guardians.
- More likely to feel supported and less criticized by their peers and friends.

2009 Financial Information

Financially, the Best Friends Mentoring Program posted a strong year with an increase in support from the community during our Friendship Drive annual giving campaign, the Dickinson Community Recycling Program and our major fundraising event, Family Fun Day. Expenses were 10 percent less than budgeted.

Our endowment fund, dedicated solely to the Best Friends Program's future operations, has recovered from the losses sustained in the recession and amounts to less than half of a year's funding. The program's financial stability was maintained in a large part to the U.S. Education Department's Mentoring Programs grant. The 2009 year marked the second of three years for this important funding.

The new year poses a financial challenge: the federal Mentoring Programs grant will end in September, and the federal government will not be renewing the grant. You can continue to help make a difference in southwest North Dakota by watching your mailbox, email and our website for opportunities to financially support the Best Friends Mentoring Program. *YOU* will make a difference!



2009 Honor Roll of Donors

We make every effort to ensure an accurate list of our contributors; however, if we somehow made an error, kindly call our office at 701-483-8615 to help us correct our records.

2009 Friendship Drive

Champions (\$1,000+)

Fisher Industries

Partners (\$500-\$999)

Consolidated
Continental Metal Products
Dickinson Roughrider Kiwanis Club
Everett Real Estate
Fong, Brad & Brenda
Rotary Club of Dickinson, ND, Inc.
St. John Lutheran Church Trust Fund

Associates (\$100-\$499)

American Bank Center
Badlands Dental, P.C.
Bank of the West
Berg, Arley E.
Boespflug Trailer & Feed
Brady Martz & Associates P.C.
Brock, Harvey
Clinic Pharmacy, Inc.
Dakota Community Bank
Dickinson Press
Dickinson Ready Mix Co.
DLN Consulting, Inc.
Emmerich Eye Clinic
Eyewear Concepts
Fehr, Alan & Kris
Frank, Clyde & Eunice
Frenzel, Sandi
Fraternal Order of Eagles
Gate City Bank
Haas, C.B. & Bev
Hansen, Dale & Glenice
Jackson, Gene & Sue
Associated Pool Builders-Doug Jaeger
Johnson, Dennis & Nancy
Karie, Robert & Laurie

Associates Continued

Kontz, Gregory & Susan
Kroll, Eugene & Yvonne
Logo Magic, Inc.
Missouri Basin Well Service, Inc.
Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.
Mosbrucker Real Estate Development
Nelson Financial Services
Northern Improvement Co.
Osawatomie, Inc.
Oksa, Amy E., MD
Olin, Jack & Velma
Ozbun, J.L. & Sonja
Parke, Michael
Pokorny, F.K.
Rapp, Roger "Skip" & Nan
Rummel, Dean
Schwartz CPA, P.L.L.C.
Selle Family Dental, PC
Solarbee, Inc.
St. Anthony Charity Contribution Fund
Steir Oil
Swenson, Sheldon & Mitzi
US Bank
Virginia Sticka, CPA
Wal-Mart
Wardner, Richard & Kayleen
West Dakota Vet Clinic
Western Cooperative Credit Union

Buddies (\$1-\$99)

Advanced Vision Centers, Inc.
Bertelsen, Mike & Sandy
Border States Electric
Briggs, Jeffrey & Carol
Combined Federal Campaign
Frank, Ben C.
Glasoe, Curtis & Carol
Heiser Motors, Inc.
Irsfeld Pharmacy, P.C.

Buddies continued

Klusmann, Terry & Kelly
Ladies Auxiliary
Melbye Law Office
Midwest Doors of Dickinson, Inc.
O'Brien, Darby & Renita
Olin, Bruce & Irene
Schnell, Larry & Judi
Sticha, Monte & Selma
Tangen, Steve & JoAn
Todd, Robert & Betty Jo
Western Fire & Safety, Inc.
Willy's Hydrotect Service, LLC
Zins, Audrey

2009 Family Fun Day

Event Sponsors (\$800+)

Roughrider Electric
Stark County Fair Board

Major Sponsors (\$100+)

American Bank Center
Badlands Dental, P.C.
Clinic Pharmacy, Inc.
Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Dickinson
Dairy Barn
Dickinson Press
Dickinson Optimist Club
Eyewear Concepts
Fisher Industries
Fraternal Order of Eagles
Funshine Express, Inc.
Gate City Bank
John Gaffaney Greenhouse
Kadramas Lee & Jackson
Karie, Robert & Karie
Kirkwood Bank & Trust Co.
Mackoff Kellog Law Firm
Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.
ND Pharmacy

Major Sponsors

continued
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Pepsi-Cola Bottling
Peters Chiropractic, P.C.
Pump Systems
Rummel, Dean
Schwartz CPA, P.L.L.C.
Smart Computers & Consulting, LLC
Stevenson-Mischel-Olson Chapel, LLC
Virginia Sticka, CPA
Western Cooperative Credit Union
Westwind Consulting Center, Inc.

Contributors

Bank of the West
Border States Electric
Continental Real Estate
Dickinson Dental Center
Dickinson Ready Mix Co.
Dickinson Roughrider Kiwanis Club
Dickinson Women of Today
Howe & Howe
Irsfeld Pharmacy, P.C.
Melbye Law Office
Midwest Doors of Dickinson, Inc.
West Dakota Vet Clinic
Yost Veterinary Service

2009 In-Kind Contributors

Baker Boy
Car Quest
Carter, Jim
City of Dickinson
Clear Channel Radio
Coca-Cola
Dan's Supermarkets
Dickinson Parks and Recreation
DJ's Amoco
Frito-Lay
Frontier Liquor

In-Kind Contributors

Continued
KDIX Radio
KQCD-TV
KXMA-TV
Loaf 'n Jug
M & H Gas Station
Pennysaver/Dickinson Finder
Pepsi Cola
Prairie Hills Mall
Praxair
Rosie's Food & Gas
Simonson's Station Stores
St. Benedict's Health Center
Tour Ice of Dickinson
Wal-Mart
Wells Fargo Bank
White Drug

Miscellaneous

American West
Realty-Bryan Nelson
Continental Metal
Dickinson Chamber of Commerce Jeans Day
Dickinson Rotary Club
Dickinson Roughrider Kiwanis Club
G&G Recycling
Herberger's
LoAnn's Marketing, Inc.
Western Wellness Foundation Board of Directors
White Drug
Wu, Sara

Grants

Qwest Foundation
U.S. Department of Education



2009 Western Wellness Foundation, Inc.



2009 Board of Directors

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or on

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Western Wellness Foundation, Inc. 2009 Annual Report



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