

## A Story of Success



Linda & Yuliana



Julie & Justin



Beth, Jacob, and Andy Nettell

### On the Topic of Self-Disclosure

Mentors, like therapists and teachers, may sometimes find themselves in a situation where a child asks for personal information or where sharing personal information seems right. This is perfectly normal. However, mentors may benefit from a little forethought to prepare for this moment.

#### *What Is Okay to Share*

Some Grand Area Mentoring volunteers have told their mentees stories about their family, childhood, and education. Such disclosures about personal background may help your mentee feel close to you and feel more comfortable sharing her feelings, especially when connecting to you over a similar story. To a child, self-disclosure may make a mentor seem warmer. Offering examples of how you overcame hurdles or solved a problem can also be an educational tool in your quiver of mentoring strategies.

#### *What To Think About Before Disclosing*

First, be responsible and consider that whatever you share may be passed on. Keep intimate information to yourself. Not all students exhibit the same level of discretion. Remember, this is not a peer friendship. This is a mentor-mentee interaction where the adult provides guidance and a positive example.

Second, think about what you might disclose. As mentioned above, recounting your strategy for dealing with difficult issues might provide your mentee with tips for addressing her problems, and it may help her feel less alone. For example, a mentor might talk about how getting along with a sibling was hard at some points but a specific strategy helped smooth things out. You might want to touch on how you and your mentee are similar, which can foster bonding. You might talk about how you enjoyed similar sports or interests when young (and still do!)

Third, consider your motive. Don't just share for any old reason. Disclose for specific purposes such as: fostering mentoring closeness, normalizing your mentee's emotions, helping your mentee identify her difficult feelings, building mentee self-esteem, offering helpful strategies, and having fun or a laugh (via a dramatic or humorous personal story).

If you'd like to explore, vet, or role-play a self-disclosure scenario that might help your mentee with a particular issue or build your relationship, feel free to talk with Dan (260-9646) or Megan (260-9645).



### *This Month in Mentoring*

- **May 7, 4:30, HMK Room 141: Student Mental health awareness MAKE UP training** with Holly Long of Four Corners. See reverse for more information.
- **May 22: Last Day of Mentoring for the School Year.**
- **May 23, 11am-noon: End-of-Year Celebration** at Gravel Pit Lanes. An hour of bowling and refreshment fun! Join us with your mentee and their family to celebrate a wonderful year in mentoring. This is a free event, and we will offer light refreshments. Bring your spouse or family. Can't wait to see you there!
- **May 29: Last Day of School**



**IMPORTANT!**

## Grand Area Mentoring

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One in four people has a **mental illness**.  
You can be the **one** that helps.

## Student Mental Health Awareness Training (Make Up Session from April)

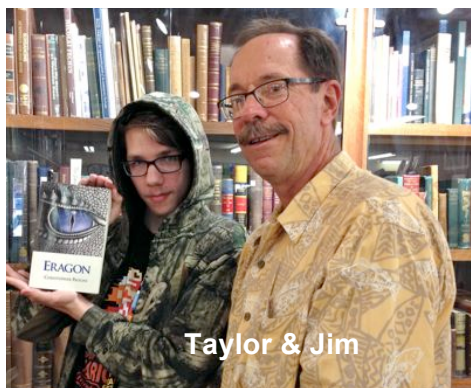
When: May 7, 4:30pm

Where: HMK Room 141

Who: Grand Area Mentoring volunteers, Beacon volunteers and staff, GCSD faculty and staff

To be covered: Holly Long of Four Corners will cover different types of mental health issues as well as “red flags” and symptoms to alert possibility of a concern. It will be a brief overview of the internalizing, externalizing, and combined disorders with which children often struggle.

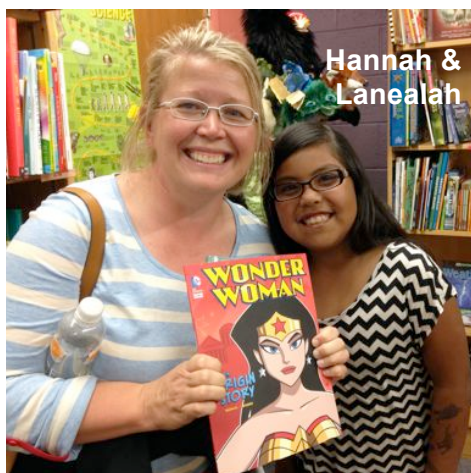
Come for the great information. Come to see fellow mentors and school staff. Come for the pizza!



Taylor & Jim



Wendy & Emma



Hannah & Lanealah

### Idea of the Month: Add your own touch!

A stack of beautiful prints featuring a hand-drawn locomotive engine can be found in the mentoring space (Thanks, Kathy C!) Mentees can bring it home as is, or you can spend some time decorating the print however you like...

- Put passengers on top!
- Draw in bubble letters telling us where it's headed!
- Give it a name, a smile, and googly eyes!
- Cut out the train and glue it upright on a diorama!
- Cut out a photo of you and your mentee and tape it on top!
- Add a setting or background! The sky's the limit! ;)

Do whatever you and your mentee dream up! To get you started...



As Charlie Appelstein always says, trains are a perfect metaphor for children. They're powerful! They're going places! They all get off track from time to time. We just need to remember to find those rails and get back on track, because we're powerful, and together we're on our way to great places!