

Fall 2021

Call 435-260-9646
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www.grandmentoring.org

GRAND AREA MENTORING COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

“Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do them beautifully.”
–Phillip Brooks

Grand County School District



Mentoring Resilience

A study in the American Journal of Community Psychology looked at the effects of the pandemic on mentoring. *Mentoring in the Time of COVID-19* outlined a host of challenges that confront mentoring relationships, including:

- Risks of meeting face-to-face
- Families' lack of tech devices to facilitate communication
- Overall decline in youth mental health and wellbeing
- And feelings of isolation for both mentor and mentee.

Fifteen difficult months put Grand Area Mentoring's matches through the same

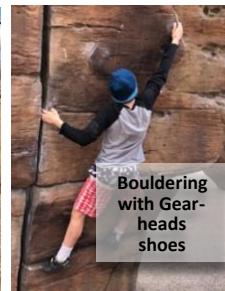
stresses. Remarkably, Moab's pairs weathered the storm with great resilience. When relationships did end, they closed on average after 3.4 years. This was an improvement from 2020 when the average match length was 2.9 years, and it was much higher than the national average of 6 months. Match duration positively correlates with better youth outcomes, so these numbers illustrate program vitality.

How can we account for these positive indicators? The study offers some explanations, including mentor commitment at a crucial time. "A majority of mentors participating in the study were committed

continued on reverse...

Partnerships for Progress

Mentoring is about role modeling, discussing difficult topics, and helping children find their way. But it's also about providing new opportunities and expanding horizons. Over the years, generous local businesses have invested in Moab's mentees. The BLM recently offered a guided tour of a dinosaur track site. Gearheads donated climbing shoes. The Golf Course hosted mentees at their driving range. Raven's Rim invited matches to fly over their zip line course. WabiSabi provided Wabi Bucks for every match. OARS provided raft trips. Back of Beyond offered books. The museum gave personal tours. The National Parks hosted field trips. And more. Mentors can't do it alone. It does indeed take a village. Thank you to all who support Moab's youth!



Major Partners:

- George S. & Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation
- Grand County School District
- Laurie Michaels & David Bonderman
- Jennifer Speers
- Red Cliffs Lodge
- Sorenson Legacy Foundation
- Carl George Bjorkman Foundation
- The Synergy Company
- Moab Sun News
- Best Western Plus Canyonlands Inn
- Rocky Mountain Power Foundation
- HMK Community Council
- Grand County Education Foundation
- City of Moab
- Grand County
- Moab BASE Jumpers
- WabiSabi
- Back of Beyond Books
- OARS Moab
- Karen Schlom
- Kelly & Thatcher Vagts
- Moab Regional Hospital
- Moonflower Community Co-op
- Episcopal Church of St. Francis & St. Claire's Guild
- Moab Gear Trader
- Moab Times-Independent
- Stacey & Jerry Savelle
- Red Rock 4 Wheelers
- Gregory Hood
- Moab Multicultural Center
- Naanue Gowan
- Beth Anne Barlow
- Raven's Rim Adventure Tours
- www.AWebStudio.com

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About GrandAM...

This is Grand Area Mentoring's 16th year of service. Adult mentors meet with promising students one-on-one to provide care, offer opportunities, and encourage growth. Their weekly sessions might include homework, basketball, and computers. Other matches pursue crafts, reading, and talking about life. Under Grand Area Mentoring's supervision, mentors and students build relationships that usually last for years, pointing youth toward promising futures.

Mentored young people earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, get along better with others, and report being happier.

Grand Area Mentoring is dedicated to expanding the reach of mentoring during the 2021/2022 school year. Over twenty youth sit on the program's waiting list. Donations of money, time, goods, and experiences make new matches possible. Please join us as we:

- Recruit and screen mentors
- Provide top-notch training and match support
- Focus on proven, data-driven mentoring strategies
- And work with mentors, youth, families, and teachers to get the most out of every session.

The Importance of Prevention

Although the costs of youth dysfunction are difficult to measure, one need only consider the many effects of misbehavior and anti-social attitudes to get an idea of their long-term repercussions. Impacts of disordered youth behavior include:

- Loss of productive, happy citizens
- Medical costs to individuals and the government because of injuries
- Costs to government of operating the criminal justice system (police, prosecution, courts, probation, incarceration, parole)
- Loss of productivity to society because of death, medical problems, and mental disabilities
- Stolen or damaged property
- Loss of work time by victims and their families
- Pain and suffering of victims, their families, and friends, as well as communities plagued by crime.

In the prevention world, agencies strive to get ahead of these issues. Grand Area Mentoring, for example, matches at-risk youth aged seven to ten with responsible

role models. Over many years, consistent, dependable adults meet each week with students who face considerable barriers.

Youth with such hurdles are predicted to do worse over time, to fail, and to drop out, but thanks to mentoring:

- » **73% earn higher grades**
- » **74% get in less trouble**
- » **62% are more likely to trust teachers**
- » **64% develop better self-confidence**
- » **and 98% report being happier.**

Ben Franklin said, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Everyone understands the downstream positive effects of better academic performance, healthier friendships, improved student-teacher relations, & boosted mental health.

These thriving children are more likely to pursue post-secondary education. They're more likely to add to society rather than weigh it down with disruptive, unhealthy, or illegal conduct. They're more likely to raise functional families. This is mentoring serving up a mighty ounce of prevention.



Resilience (continued from front)

to their respective mentoring relationships and were willing to adapt their practices to suit the needs of their mentees." We saw this in Moab too. Mentors stuck with their mentees through the trials of masks, class quarantines, school closures, and off-site meetings. They communicated via text, email, phone, and video chat. They wore masks and socially distanced. As the study explained, "...mentors continued to engage with mentees, offering valuable support during a confusing and scary time... Their effort showed commitment, intentionality, and depth."

What better moment for mentors and students to connect than during a global

catastrophe? The program adapted its policies and procedures, and it provided resources. Volunteers increased their efforts and accepted the associated risks, which were considerable, particularly for vulnerable retired adults. The study said: "...many youth had reduced opportunities for social-emotional interaction due to necessary school closures and distancing. Despite this interruption during a critical youth developmental stage, mentors had the opportunity to fill the gap, and those participating in the study stepped up in many instances." In a year of difficult stories, this is a bright spot, and it speaks to the quality of Moab's mentors.