

**Spring 2019**

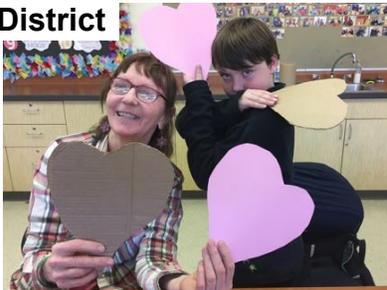
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[www.grandmentoring.org](http://www.grandmentoring.org)

# GRAND AREA MENTORING COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

“Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality” –Abraham Lincoln

## Grand County School District



## The Promise of Relationship

In a February 7, 2019 *Chronicle of Evidence-Based Mentoring* post, Dr. Jean Rhodes brought practitioners' attention to an important lens through which to view mentoring. She writes:

*In previous columns, I have discussed the benefits of drawing from prevention science – a field that provides a rigorous template for assessing and targeting youth needs and evaluating and disseminating successful program models (Cavell & Elledge, 2015). What can we learn from treatment science? Let's start by recognizing that mentoring relationships share many commonalities with therapeutic relationships.*

Rhodes goes on to explain how psychologists Jerome & Julia Frank, in their book

*Persuasion & Healing*, discuss four important elements common across all helping relationships, namely:

1. A “confiding relationship with a helper [who] genuinely cares about their welfare and has no ulterior motives.”
2. A “healing setting”
3. A “rationale, conceptual scheme, or myth that provides a plausible explanation” for their connection
4. And a believable intervention that will benefit the subject.

These conditions exist where programs like Grand Area Mentoring establish healthy, long-term relationships. Rhodes says,

*Formal mentoring occupies a place in the pantheon of healing interventions.*

*(Continued on reverse)*

## Advanced Mentoring Skills

The best school-based mentoring outcomes occur in programs that provide robust support to volunteers, including ongoing training. Throughout the school year, Grand Area Mentoring offers a variety of advanced workshops, and each mentor is expected to attend at least one. The 2018/2019 calendar included:

- Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity
- Common Mental Health Challenges in Youth
- Youth Neural Development

- Trauma-Informed Mentoring Part 1
- Trauma-Informed Mentoring Part 2
- Mentor Roundtable Discussion
- Mentor Self-Care & Experiences
- How to Talk about Nutrition and Health with Mentees

The program doesn't stop there. Monthly newsletters cover best practices, upcoming events, and policy reminders. Plus, as a form of recognition, they share photos of mentors and students in action. Grand

*(Continued on reverse)*

### Major Partners:

George S. & Dolores Doré  
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Next Mentor Orientation:

Call [435-260-9646](tel:435-260-9646).

### About GrandAM...

This is Grand Area Mentoring's 14<sup>th</sup> year of service. The program is generously funded by Grand County School District, the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, Jennifer Speers, Laurie Michaels & David Bonderman, Red Cliffs Lodge, the Carl George Bjorkman Foundation, Grand Co. Education Foundation, The Synergy Company, and many other kind organizations, partners, and donors.

Adult mentors meet with students in one-on-one settings to encourage growth and bolster self-confidence. Their weekly sessions sometimes include board games, basketball, and computers. Other matches pursue crafts, reading, and talking about life. Under GrandAM's care, mentors and students seek activities that are mutually enjoyable and enriching.

Grand Area Mentoring creates lasting and fruitful relationships using an evidence-based approach. New volunteers are trained in mentoring best practices and always supported with regular staff contact. Volunteers offer one meeting per week and receive the satisfaction of positively impacting a life forever.

## Advanced Mentoring Skills *(continued from front)*

Area Mentoring's mentor coordinator regularly reviews mentor logs and follows up with matches or individuals who need assistance. She drops in on matches while they're meeting to gauge their compatibility and relationship quality. The program holds a National Mentoring Month appreciation dinner in

January to honor the kind volunteers of Moab, and it follows with a mentor, mentee, and family event in May to celebrate the school year. All efforts aim at improving the mentor-mentee bond because closeness of the relationship correlates to positive outcomes for students.

## Best of Both *(continued from front)*

*And although rarely acknowledged and not yet particularly systematic, formal mentors frequently draw on an array of therapeutic approaches. For example, as a mentor encourages her mentee to think and act in more adaptive ways, she is likely employing principles of cognitive behavioral therapy. Likewise, efforts to encourage mentees to be more forgiving and accepting of themselves may pull from self-compassion, acceptance, and commitment therapy, and so forth.*

In fact, Moab mentors regularly employ strategies to bolster those four key conditions and incorporate intentional instruction. For example, one mentor helped her mentee with many projects,

including a health plan. She said, "Let's set some goals together. I aim to work out three times each week. What goals do you have? How can we make sure we get there? Let's come up with concrete steps. And let's choose a reward for when we reach our goals!"

Other mentors help their mentees build social connections through supervised practice. For example, they might say: "Today we're going to share this snack with other mentors and students. Let's go around and talk to everyone. You can make the offer."

Grand Area Mentoring will continue to capitalize on the natural therapeutic setting of mentoring and do as Dr. Rhodes suggests: "fully embrace the best that treatment and prevention science has to offer."

**Who needs a cape**

**when your life choices already say...Hero?**

100%

100% of teachers agree that mentoring is a good strategy to prevent anti-social behavior, unexcused absences, and academic decline among at-risk youth.

