

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JANUARY DECLARED MENTORING MONTH IN MENDOCINO COUNTY

Members of the Mendocino County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission (JJDP) and other mentoring partners are making the rounds in Mendocino County to the Board of Supervisors and all City Councils in order to declare January 2011 "National Mentoring Month."

Motivated by a successful collaborative convening in June 2010 that acknowledged mentoring as an effective and proven way to help our youth succeed, JJDP has asked the Board of Supervisors and City Councils to declare January as National Mentoring Month. Not only does this honor individuals who currently mentor our youth but it also raises the awareness of everyone in our county about this valuable approach to helping kids. "We want to inspire people to step forward and become a mentor. What impact did one adult have in shaping your life? Can you pass that gift on to the children and youth in our communities?" asked John Azzaro, Mentoring Committee Chair and JJDP Commissioner.

Studies have found that mentored youth have increased self-esteem, decreased school absences, improved academic performance and reduced involvement in drugs, criminal activity and teen pregnancies. The goals of mentoring are to support the development of healthy individuals by addressing the need for positive adult contact. This reduces the risk factors for youth while enhancing the protective factors.

There are many types of mentoring opportunities in our county and all age groups of kids that can benefit. The need for mentors is great because many of our kids lack the support they need. A successful mentoring program is highly dependent upon the quality of match that is made between youth and adult and the time commitment-- to meet weekly for at least one year.

In recognition of National Mentoring Month, we ask that adults, mature youth, and businesses, consider becoming a mentor by giving two hours of your time per week to a child or youth. Each of us can make a difference in the life of a child and ultimately, in the future of our community.

Locally: Please contact Kelley Kieve at Action Network 884-5413