

# United Way of Laramie County End-of Year Report

Page 1

<b>Agency Name:</b>	Special Friends of Cheyenne (SF)		<b>Program:</b>	Mentoring Children at Risk	<b>Reporting Period:</b>	Jan - Dec 2009
---------------------	----------------------------------	--	-----------------	----------------------------	--------------------------	----------------

<b>Contact Person:</b>	Ann Swisher	<b>Phone:</b>	307-637-6480	<b>E-mail:</b>	aswisher@cheyennecity.org
------------------------	-------------	---------------	--------------	----------------	---------------------------

<b>Agency Mission/Vision:</b>	The Special Friends Program seeks to strengthen the bond between adults and youth and provide opportunities for positive community involvement. The unique and highly effective feature of the program is the pairing of adult mentors with young children and adolescents, either one on one or in a group setting.
-------------------------------	--

<b>Community Issue Program Targets:</b>	<b>Helping Youth Succeed:</b> "In order for youth to build confidence and help them avoid negative influences, there is a need for increased access and availability of mentors and role models. This involves programs that provide ongoing education and support for both parents and kids."
---	--

<b>Program Target Population:</b>	
1	Children, ages 6-17, predominantly from low-income, single-parent homes and children, ages 12-17, involved in the juvenile justice system.
1	At least 48% of the populations served are Hispanic, African American, Bi-racial, or Asian.
1	The children generally have a high number of risk factors including: poverty, drugs and alcohol, lack of resources, increased school attendance problems, poor academic performance or mental health diagnosis.
1	The parents are generally experiencing feelings of being overwhelmed, having economic stress, needing support and respite, and stress in their relationship with their child.
1	45 families served report either a parent or child has a physical or mental health disability.

<b>Trends:</b>	
1	The state of the economy has increased the number of requests for mentors from families.
1	There has been an increased need for group after-school mentoring activities to accommodate the increased number of mentor requests.
1	The stress the economy places on families has increased parent's need for resources, including reliable transportation.
1	There continues to be increased severity of the behavioral and emotional issues of the some of the children referred for mentors.

<b>Program Significance to the Community</b>	
<p>The mentoring initiative at OYA/SF began in 1971 and is an established best practice program in Laramie county. As a result of the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SF data suggests youth strengthen relationships they have with peers, family and adults.</li> <li>• Parents in the program gain support and education which has a positive influence on parenting skills and potentially decreases risk factors.</li> <li>• SF is identified as a primary resource for developing mentoring programs within the county and the state.</li> <li>• SF is the primary resource for one-to-one mentoring.</li> <li>• SF is responsible for developing mentoring partnerships with community agencies.</li> <li>• SF data suggests youth with mentors are less likely to use alcohol, drugs, skip school, or engage in delinquent behavior; and are more likely to pursue interests or such as sports or music.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agency Name:</b>	Special Friends of Cheyenne (SF)	<b>Program:</b>	Mentoring Children at Risk	<b>Reporting Period:</b>	Jan - Dec 2009
---------------------	----------------------------------	-----------------	----------------------------	--------------------------	----------------

<b>Program Resources</b>	<b>Program Activities</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff: 8 Board Members, 1 FTE, 4 PTE, and 97 volunteers.</li> <li>2. Facility and Equipment: 3 offices; shared reception, copy and file room area; 1 meeting and activities area; 1 vehicle.</li> <li>3. Administrative, case management and counseling support from Youth Alternatives.</li> <li>4. Partnerships with various community agencies such as the Police Department, Parks and Recreation, LCCC, YMCA, LCSD #1, WAFB, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Taco John's Events Center, Local Businesses, etc.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Recruiting, screening and training adult mentors to work with children and adolescents.</li> <li>* Matching adult mentors with children, ages 6 - 17.</li> <li>* Conducting assessments on each referred youth and parent(s).</li> <li>* Providing ongoing mentor and parent support.</li> <li>* Conducting pre and post evaluations to determine program effectiveness.</li> <li>* Providing weekly after-school activities for children on the waiting list.</li> <li>* Provide parent/family group 2x per year.</li> </ul>

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Method of Measure</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comparative analysis of pre and post evaluations.</li> <li>2. Conduct longitudinal study to measure number of SF participants prevented from entering juvenile justice system.</li> <li>3. Comparative analysis between juveniles placed with mentors and juveniles in a control group not placed with mentors.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 75% of parents will report improved relationship.</li> <li>2. 75% of parents will report improved behavior.</li> <li>3. 70% of youth will show improved performance in school.</li> <li>4. 90% of youth will not be involved in judicial system.</li> <li>5. Mentored youth will score 1 point higher in relationships.</li> <li>6. Mentored youth will score 1 point higher in behavior.</li> <li>7. 75% of court-mentored youth will successfully complete their probation program compared to non-mentored youth.</li> <li>8. There will be a 5% increase in adult/youth mentor matches.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pre and post evaluations of parents and youth.</li> <li>2. Teacher surveys.</li> <li>3. Comparative analysis between mentored and non-mentored youth.</li> <li>4. Monthly file review, case reports: i.e., parents, mentors, youth, case manager, counselor and probation officer.</li> </ol>

<b>Program Results</b>	<b>Results Analysis and Next Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 129 youth were matched with mentors over the year.</li> <li>* On average, there we 60 active matches between youth and adults per month.</li> <li>* 21 out of 21 categories measured showed improvement.</li> <li>* Four categories demonstrating most significant improvement included: ability to express emotions, interests and hobbies, ability to avoid substance abuse and relationship with peers.</li> <li>* Three categories demonstrating least significant improvement included: relationship with family, ability to show trust towards parent and school preparedness (homework).</li> <li>* 86% of youth were from low to moderate income households.</li> <li>* 67% of youth were from single parent households.</li> <li>* 36% increase in volunteers of all capacities: board, support, involvement in special activities, group and 1:1 mentoring.</li> <li>* An average of 15 youth participated in SF after-school activities each week.</li> <li>* Parent education, support and opportunities for parental involvement offered on a regular basis.</li> <li>* Longitudinal judicial review was not completed due to loss of funding.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Results Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistical data gathered, successful completion of matches, and monthly input are indicators of the program's effectiveness.</li> <li>• Youth mentored by a probation officer and court mentor compared to youth mentored by an OYA probation officer showed insignificant differences in number of improvements.</li> <li>• SF needs to continue providing more structured opportunities for parental involvement.</li> <li>• There continues to be a significant need for mentoring support in low-income and single-parent families.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with community agencies to meet mentoring needs of all adolescents.</li> <li>• Conduct longitudinal study of SF youth entering the judicial system.</li> <li>• Increase number of family activities.</li> <li>• Seek solution to attendance barrier created by lack of reliable transportation.</li> <li>• Provide structured activities to youth and mentors 9x a year.</li> <li>• Continue previous services offered.</li> </ul>