



The Mentors Plus Match

For members of the Mentors Plus Family

April, 2015

Volume 3, No. 4

Cranbrook Institute of Science,
Saturday, April 25th, 2:45-6:00 p.m.
Planetarium Show, 2:30 p.m.
Let us know, if you'll join us!

Quote of the Month

“Sometimes, life threw up problems that even the wisest, most trusted mentor couldn't solve for you. It was part of the pain of growing up. And having to stand by and watch was part of being a mentor.

From: John Flanagan,
The Siege of Macindow

Some of the young people in Mentors Plus are facing a variety of challenges right now. Don't hesitate to call to talk about situations. Be a listening ear and if further support is needed, I'll contact the local caseworker to seek additional help. Thanks, again, so much for what you do!
Julie Stitt

We Want to Hear from You!

The Match Monthly Newsletter wants to hear your ideas. Have a suggestion for an event? Went some place great with your mentee? Did a fun craft together? Well, it would be great to let other mentors know. Just e-mail your suggestions and pictures to StittJ@oakgov.com and we will try to include them in next month's newsletter. Thanks, Julie

Fun Things to Do Anytime

- *Tie-dye T-shirts with a cool design of your own.
- *Wash your car together – get rid of the salt & watch it shine in the sun.
- *Prepare garage sale items, for when the weather gets just a little warmer and get organized. Go to grandparents.com for 6 tips for success.
- *Begin tilling the soil to plant healthy vegetables or beautiful flowers for spring and summer.
- * Make a fruity and healthier dessert. Go to grandparents.com to explore recipes you'll enjoy.

April Announcements

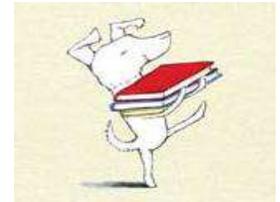
★ Please turn in your *Monthly Reports* by Friday, April 10th.

★ *Mentors Plus Orientations:*
Saturday, 4-25-15, 10:00 a.m.
Please send anyone interested!



A group of mentors and their matched are attending *The Globetrotters*, on Saturday, April 18th, 7:00 p.m. Sorry, there are no Piston's Tickets available this month.

Julie's Corner



NEW Meadowbrook Theatre Opportunity: Dog Loves Books, By Louise Yates Saturday, April 4th, 1:00 p.m. Call in advance to reserve your free tickets: (248)370-3316



Once on an Island

At Meadowbrook Theatre

There we were on a Caribbean Island swaying to tropical music, feeling the warm breezes on our cheeks and brushing the sand from our feet. If you had attended the Meadowbrook Theatre play with Madeleine and myself (Sharon), *Once On This Island*, you might have felt the same experience.

From the moment we entered the theater we felt as if we were on a vacation. The stage (Continued on page 3.)

Oakland County Youth Assistance



Mentors Plus

Be a friend. Show the way.

Oakland County Circuit Court-Family Division
Oakland County Youth Assistance
1200 N. Telegraph Road, Building 14 East
Pontiac, MI 48341-0452
248-858-0041





(Once on an Island, Continued from page 1)

was designed like an island setting with hanging lights, palm trees and winding paths leading to thatched huts. The story of a peasant island girl's life won us over as she followed her dreams and the love of a boy, who seemed out of reach. She was poor and he was rich. She was warned to give up her dreams, but she stayed true to herself.

Many questions entered our minds as the play continued. Would the boy let himself be loved by the island peasant girl? Would each of them bend towards their families' wishes to follow tradition or their hearts? We wanted a happy ending and eventually there was such an ending, but not one we expected. Her love will be remembered by all islanders in the future in a beautiful palm tree that blows with the breezes whispering of the love we all experience at some time in our lives.

Madeline and I have attended the Meadowbrook Theatre to see the Christmas Carol twice. We were amazed to discover that this is the 50th anniversary of the theater. We definitely plan to enjoy more plays in the future.

Sharon Barksdale and Madeleine Brown.



Did you know that Mentors Plus is on Facebook? Be sure to check out our Facebook page for updates about Mentor Plus and for photos of past events. <https://www.facebook.com/mentorsplusprogram> While you're there, be sure to share and click "Like" on posts to improve our visibility on Facebook timelines. Are you not familiar with using Facebook? The following are links to tutorials: <http://goo.gl/SncwQm>, <http://youtu.be/ewlC5p851KE>, <http://freefacebooktutorials.com/>, and <http://youtu.be/ZpLiODJsp4Q> **HELP RECRUIT MORE MENTORS AND SUPPORT MENTORS PLUS!**



Youth Focus:

The Language of Respect

Walking our talk with teenagers

Post published by [Marilyn Price-Mitchell Ph.D.](#) on Feb 10,

TWEET

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What does it mean to build respect between adults and teenagers? Respect means we have high regard or admiration for another's views and feelings. We value their abilities and inner qualities.

Sadly, many of today's teens feel undervalued and misjudged by adults. Could our language be part of the problem?

A teenager recently wrote to me, saying "I understand teens have issues... I am a teen. I get these things....I hate it when people generalize that teens love experimenting with drugs and sex and other risks and that we are 'little sponges' soaking up social norms that we must counteract. How are happy teenagers supposed to feel? Should they feel strange because they don't take part in what other teenagers do?"

I'm always grateful to hear what teens are thinking. And this young woman made a great point. When we generalize about teenagers, we run the risk of losing their respect.

You'll find lots of popular articles on "how to teach respect to children," but respect is assimilated through language and modeling, not through the act of traditional "teaching." Even young children understand when adults are not walking their talk. By adolescence, those mixed messages can cause deeper and deeper divides between teens and adults.

Respect is a Two-Way Street

Researchers Hal Holloman and Peggy Yates have studied the topic of respect and how it gets translated through the words we use. Their research, outlined in the *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, focused on teachers and students, but it is also applicable to mentors, parents and families.

What they learned is not surprising. When we give respect, we get it back in return. When we respect children and teens, they learn to believe in themselves and us. They feel valued and loved. We feel valued and loved.

Respect is a two-way street where adults are the pace-setter cars.

How does language change the course of our relationships with teens and build a culture of mutual respect? Holloman and Yates discovered eleven categories of words that foster respect. They found that rephrasing words from a negative to a positive context helps develop a culture of respect. The eleven categories are listed below, with word samples for each.

The Language of Respect: 11 Ways to Build a Culture of Respect in Families, Classrooms, and Communities

1. **Words of Encouragement:** Instead of complaining when teens feel discouraged, let them know how much you admire their ability to overcome tough challenges and recover from apathy or failure. *“I know things can be difficult, but I really admire how you reach deeply into yourself to find the right answers. I want you to know I’m here for you.”*
2. **Words of Grace:** Instead of blaming, always separate an adolescent from his or her behavior. Forgive them for mistakes or misjudgments. Give them a chance to get it right. *“You are not the same as your mistake. I know you to be a kind, caring human being. I forgive you and I’m here to help you learn from this setback.”*
3. **Words of Guidance:** Don’t just hope teens will find their ways. Encourage them to ask questions and give them words of guidance. *“Your questions help me know and understand you better. Please never think you have a dumb question. I want to help whenever I’m able.”*
4. **Words of Respect:** Rather than a narrow focus on academic successes, build a climate of respect with your mentee, as is needed in classrooms and families. *“While I care about your grades and other external measures of success, it’s also important to have a climate of mutual respect here. I plan to work hard to see that each of our opinions, thoughts, and feelings are respected.”*
5. **Words of High Expectations:** Rather than being discouraged when teens don’t show their best abilities, encourage them to envision and pursue goals that fuel their passion. *“I want you to achieve your potential, in whatever way you choose. What goals do you most want to achieve?”*
6. **Words of Hope:** Instead of helping teens get through another difficult day, help them envision a better tomorrow. *“You have such a kind heart and helpful way with people. Those abilities will see you through many of life’s challenges.”*

7. **Words of Love:** Don't just speak to the minds of teenagers. Speak to their hearts. Demonstrate how much you care for them every day.
8. **Words of Relationship:** Use words that build connection through the sharing of feelings. Help teens "feel felt" by you. *"I want to know and understand how you feel. Can you tell me?"*
9. **Words of Understanding:** Instead of making assumptions, discover a young person's perspective through empathy. *"I want to understand your perspective. Please tell me what you think and what led you to that conclusion."*
10. **Words of Unity:** Shed the attitude of "it's my way or the highway," and foster a culture of collaboration and cooperation. *"I'm your mentor, (or parent or teacher), but that doesn't mean I have all the answers. I respect your role as part of this relationship."*
11. **Words of Accountability:** Being respectful means holding everyone accountable. Instead of allowing disrespectful behavior, help young people stay on track. *"How you just behaved was unkind and disrespectful. How could you have handled that differently?"*

Walking Our Talk

While language is critical to building a culture of respect in mentoring relationships, families and classrooms, it can't stop there. It is only when we practice these eleven categories of words with everyone in our lives that we truly learn to "walk our talk." Children and teens know the difference!

Reference

Holloman, H., & Yates, P. H. (2013). Cloudy With a Chance of Sarcasm or Sunny With High Expectations Using Best Practice Language to Strengthen Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Efforts. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 15(2), 124-127.

Author

Marilyn Price-Mitchell, PhD, ([link is external](#)) is a developmental psychologist working at the intersection of youth development, [leadership](#), [education](#), and civic engagement.

PLEASE FIND AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR MENTEE.