

PRESS RELEASE

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Churches to enlist mentors to curb dropout rates

On **Sunday, November 9, 2008**, Muskegon County Cooperating Churches will launch its first ever campaign to urge church members to become mentors. “Mentor Sunday” is being funded by a grant from the Community Foundation for Muskegon County. Over 250 churches and faith-based organizations have been asked to put up posters, include information in bulletins, and speak about the life-changing impact mentors have on children. The goal: to recruit hundreds of caring adults willing to serve as mentors to children in the community.

Staff from Muskegon County Cooperating Churches will collect contact information from interested volunteers by phone at 727-6000 throughout the month of November. Information will then be shared with members of mentoring organizations within Muskegon County.

“We strongly believe that church members will answer the call to become mentors,” said Reverend John Brown who is chairing the effort. Brown said that linking a child with a mentor can impact whether or not a child experiments with drugs and alcohol, whether or not a child succeeds in school, and whether a child is self-confident and has a strong sense of their future.

Mentor Sunday is a collaborative effort of United Way of the Lakeshore, Muskegon County Cooperating Churches, Graduation Generation Leadership Summit, Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Lakeshore, Journey 4-H Mentor Program, and Dare to Care. This collaborative group has established an overarching goal to cut the number of high school dropouts in half within the next 10 years.

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