

# THE EMERALD COAST TRAINER



The Newsletter of the  
EMERALD COAST CHAPTER

December 2005

## TAKE STOCK IN CHILDREN: Making a difference in the Lives of Local Children

The Emerald Coast Chapter of ASTD is proud to support Take Stock in Children scholarships in both Okaloosa and Walton counties. Dort Baltes and Cindy Anderson, Program Directors of these two counties respectively, will be special guests at our December 13<sup>th</sup> general meeting and will share information and success stories from Take Stock.

Below is a reprint from Issue 133 of The Mentor Minute, (a publication of Take Stock in Children) describing the difference this program makes in young lives.

Does mentoring really help keep kids in school? To answer this question, we provide the following "Mentoring Overview" from the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network at [www.dropoutprevention.org](http://www.dropoutprevention.org).

**Mentoring is Needed.** When students who have dropped out of school are asked, "Why did you drop out of school?" the typical reply is: "No one cared if I stayed in school or not!" So the usual decision made by the student who does not have strong personal support from a parent, friend, teacher, or anyone who cares, is to drop out of school. These students usually drop out

of the community as well. The two-parent families, close-by grandparents and relatives, or the closely knit neighborhoods of years past are not as likely today to offer the support and guidance that youth need. Therefore, mentoring has surfaced as an effective strategy for working with youth in at-risk situations and who need role models and a positive support system.

**What Is Mentoring?** Mentoring has been a practiced art of developing and maintaining positive and helpful human relationships for hundreds of years, by nearly every culture, by varied individuals and groups, and in many different ways. It has survived the test of time and has been of enormous value to each mentee, and mentor, involved in a mentor program. It has proven to be effective with many different youth groups and has been extremely effective with youth in at-risk situations.

**Expected Benefits of Mentoring.** Mentoring programs across the country are developed with many different goals and objectives; however, most programs have been designed to expect changes and benefits in the general areas of academic achievement, employment or career preparation, social or behavior modification, family and parenting skills, and social responsibilities.

**The Impact of Mentoring.** Regardless of the format, structure, or institutional host of the program, mentoring is a community development program. Mentoring changes the structure and institutional boundaries of the community and the vision of the mentee. It serves as a powerful human force in a school, community, or state that can change the vision, health, or the economic base of the community.

Mentors have the power and influence to change the negative cycles of their mentees and their families. The impact of mentors in a well-structured mentoring program is boundless and serves as a powerful low-cost, low-tech strategy to help rebuild the dreams of youth in at-risk situations. Mentoring is clearly an effective strategy for keeping students in school. Programs across the nation have an abundance of solid evidence supporting this fact. For example, the most comprehensive national research evidence is from a thorough review of Big Brother/Big Sister programs (Tierney & Grossman, 1995) showing these results:

- 46% decrease in initiating drug use
- 27% decrease in initiating alcohol use
- 38% decrease in number of times hitting someone
- 37% decrease in skipped classes
- 37% decrease in lying to parents

Another nationwide study reported similar positive results from mentoring programs. The Commonwealth Fund's survey (McLearn, Colasanto, and Schoen, 1998) reported the following:

- 62% of students improved their self-esteem
- 52% of students skipped less school
- 48% of students improved their grades
- 49% of students got into less trouble in school
- 47% of students got into less trouble out of school
- 45% of students reduced their substance abuse
- 35% of students improved family relationships

**Conclusion.** Sometimes it's easy to conclude that students who were doing fairly well before they had a mentor do not really need one. This is untrue. Many low-income students drop out of school suddenly and for a wide variety of reasons. Statistics offer good evidence that mentoring does keep kids in school, but perhaps the best evidence is given by the student who quit school because nobody cared. Sometimes all it takes for a person to stay in school and go to college is one adult who cares. This person can be a mentor. Thank you for being that mentor!

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**ATTN: MEMBERSHIP CONTEST  
PARTICIPANTS**

Please make sure **Bridget Carnley** has the names of all new members and pre-registered guests you've brought into our local chapter by **December 7<sup>th</sup>**. Member with the most points will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Silver Sands Outlet Mall at the December meeting.

Coming Events	Mark Your Calendars!	
Dec. 13, 2005 11:30 – 1:00	Holiday Celebration – presentation of awards and officers	TBA
Jan. 10, 2006 11:30 – 1:00	"Speaking Under Fire and Diffusing Verbal Criticism"	Esin Gershaw and Marty Mears, Toastmasters, FWB
Feb. 14, 2006 11:30 – 1:00	"Liabilities Associated with Diversity Training"	John Sample, Assoc. Professor, FSU
March 14, 2006 11:30 – 1:00	News and Update on ASTD National	Jonathan Gerstner, Ph.D., ASTD Chapter Support Specialist
May 9, 2006 8:30 – 1:00	TBA	Dwight Baines, Life Works Group, Inc.

**To RSVP for these great presentations, e-mail Pam Walters at [waltersp@owc.edu](mailto:waltersp@owc.edu) or call 729-5291.**



## Emerald Coast Chapter 2005 Board Members

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Chapter Website: <http://www.astd-emeraldcoast.org>

National ASTD Website: <http://www.astd.org>

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