

Directions

A newsletter for
those inspired by
Compass Mark

Our Vision: To guide and empower all people toward healthy, fulfilling lives free from addiction

www.compassmark.org | 717-299-2831 | info@compassmark.org

Spring 2019

Expanding School-Based Programs Shaping the Leaders of Tomorrow

When the students of the Leaders of Future Generations initiative begin the eight-week program, they are asked to brainstorm about how to change the world, starting with their own community. The students' answers to those questions become the backbone of the after-school program as they plan and implement a service-learning project aimed at making identified positive changes, all while gaining invaluable leadership skills.

"Students identified something that was important to them or that they recognized as a need in their school or community, and then that project idea fuels the leadership-based lessons throughout the course of the eight weeks they are with us," explained Compass Mark prevention coordinator Matthew Weaver.

"My favorite part is the growth of each student ... they all really gain a sense of belonging in something greater than themselves."

Throughout the past school year, Landis Run Intermediate School, Lincoln Middle School, and Reynolds Middle School have each hosted three sessions of the program, and the resulting student-led projects and the growth in many of the students has been impressive.

"My favorite part is the growth that each student gains throughout the eight weeks," said Weaver. "It's not very long



Landis Run Environmental Protector's presentation to the principal and Compass Mark staff.

to be with students; we're with them for eight weeks, two days a week. From the very beginning to the last day, they all really gain a sense of belonging in

something greater than themselves which is really cool to see happen. They come in as individual students and then they leave as a unified unit that has completed something together."

"At Reynolds, one group had a youth homelessness awareness day and made care packages for students in the school who are experiencing homelessness," said Richard Khuu, a Compass Mark

Youth Leadership Advocate. "During the last group, we did a project on stress management where they brought in therapy dogs from Keystone Pet Enhanced Therapy Services for a quick session in the morning to help de-stress some of the kids. They also made a cart for the school counselor which has a bunch of fun items that can help alleviate tension for students in the classroom.

"I like that the projects are student led," continued Khuu. "I'm not telling them what they have to do, so they're really more invested in what they want to do and their ideas; they get so creative. It's so impressive to see what they can do if given the tools and opportunities."

No matter the focus of the project, the impact of the student-led initiatives has stretched well-beyond those directly

Continued on next page

Making a Difference

Corporate Donor Support Amplifies Impact of Compass Mark's Initiatives

The number of Lancaster and Lebanon County residents impacted by Compass Mark's programs has grown exponentially each year. From 2016-2017 through 2018-2019 alone, the number grew from 96,520 to 220,342 and Compass Mark's donors are largely to thank for this exciting growth.

Driven by generous donor contributions, Compass Mark has been able to launch new initiatives like the Leaders of Future Generations program and grow and improve long-standing programs such as Lions Quest®.

Preventing somebody from getting involved with drugs or alcohol prevents a whole host of other potential problems. If you can stop it before it starts, it's a great benefit to the whole community.

"Donor support certainly helps to fund the programs and make them successful, but it's also an affirmation of the community's support for their mission," said Mark Zettlemoyer, who

wears two hats as both a Compass Mark board member and a partner at RKL LLP, an accounting and business consulting firm and generous corporate supporter of Compass Mark.

Most recently, RKL LLP donated \$1,500 toward the purchase of Q-Bears for the elementary school students involved in the Lions Quest® prevention program. With donations toward the cuddly stuffed bears also received from Chubb North America and BrickStreet Insurance, Compass Mark is able to present one of the Q-Bears to each student who

completes the Lions Quest® life skills education program.

Throughout the program, topics including conflict resolution, dealing with peer pressure, and managing emotions are addressed, and vital skills like communication and positive coping strategies are taught. Students each take home a Q-Bear as a reminder of what they've learned. For Zettlemoyer — a grandfather to two young grandkids — it is an initiative well worth supporting.

"My grandkids are young now, but they were really my driving factor to get involved. Preventing somebody from getting involved with drugs or alcohol prevents a whole host of other potential community problems. If you can stop it before it starts, that's a great benefit to the whole



Mid Penn Bank has been one of Compass Mark's generous Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) donors.

community," he says.

Seeing the value that Compass Mark brings to the community is also what has led other area businesses, including Mid Penn Bank, to stand up and take notice. For the last two years, Mid Penn Bank has been one of Compass Mark's generous Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) donors, contributing \$4,000 each year to the Leaders of Future Generations Program.

"We're looking to support organizations that empower young people; that's always on our radar," said Janet DiCecco, the assistant vice president of Mid Penn Bank. "We felt that it was a great fit with our EITC dollars knowing that Compass Mark is focusing on future generations."

Companies interested in learning more about making an EITC donation to Compass Mark can contact Eric Kennel at ekennel@compassmark.org or 717-299-2831.

A longer version of this story, with more details on EITC donations, appears online at compassmark.org/blog/.



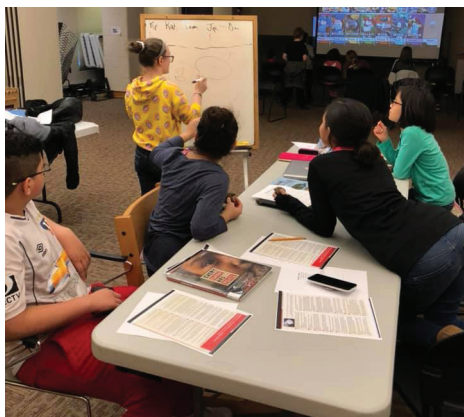
Support from donors helps Compass Mark enhance and expand prevention programs that stop addiction before it starts, here in our local communities. You can make an impact by sending your gift in the enclosed envelope. THANK YOU!

Local Coalitions Make Headway on Prevention Projects

In December of 2018, Compass Mark awarded grants to four deserving local coalitions that are undertaking various prevention projects in the community. These efforts were made possible thanks to funding received from the Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission. These coalitions are already making great strides. Here's a look at how they've already impacted their local communities in just four short months.

Ephrata Cares

The Ephrata Public Library, Ephrata Cares, and the Northern Lancaster HUB launched "Character Matters," a 21-week character education after-school program for tweens and teens in the Ephrata



community designed to strengthen community protective factors against substance abuse. The program, which enrolls students who have been identified as at-risk for addiction, is now at full capacity, and attendees and their parents and guardians have given positive reviews of the program. Many have even requested that the program return in the summer or fall.

Lancaster County Recovery Alliance (LCRA)

The Lancaster County Recovery Alliance is committed to educating the media about the disease of addiction and setting language and image standards. They are currently working with Wonderscope Cinema and several volunteer actors to create a Public Service Announcement, which will set a standard for how to promote recovery.

Donegal Substance Abuse Alliance (DSAA)

The DSAA is working to educate family members of those struggling with substance abuse. They held their first family retreat, which was well-attended and received positive reviews. According to Glover, "attendees learned about the disease of addiction and tangible

strategies that they can implement in their families to encourage a loved one to seek treatment."

Bridges Poverty Task Force

The task force held their first partnership breakfast in early April. The group identified an online platform that will help them stay in touch with all their partners, identify and meet needs of community members, and share important announcements and reminders. Partnership breakfast attendees were invited to add their information to an online directory of services, which will then be available to all providers and community members via Google maps.

The team at Compass Mark is excited to see how these programs continue to grow and develop and make an impact right here in Lancaster County. Their success is critical in working toward a shared goal of preventing drug and alcohol abuse and improving the overall health and safety of local communities. A special thanks to all those involved for the hard work that is being invested into these powerful projects!

A longer version of this story, including more details on the four coalitions, appears online at compassmark.org/blog/.

Expanding School-Based Programs *Continued from page 1*

involved in the Leaders of Future Generations groups.

Through the completion of the projects the involved students and student mentors are not only seeing their plans come to fruition and making positive impacts on those around them, they are reducing their own risk factors by developing new peer relationships and strengthening leadership skills and personal resiliency.

"We've had quiet kids really come out of their shell toward the end and develop friendships with other students in the program," said Khuu. "Throughout the projects, there are so many different aspects to take on, and a lot of the kids really thrive and contribute toward the group goal. I enjoy seeing them progress from beginning to end."

"The program has gone great so far, and we're looking forward to

continuing to grow it," concluded Weaver. "We'd love to be in one or two more school districts next year, and expand our work with students who have already gone through the program to give more of them opportunities to be involved as mentors."

A longer version of this story, with more details on specific projects that students have undertaken, appears online at compassmark.org/blog/.

Family Services Advocate Program Expands into Lebanon County

Compass Mark's Family Services Advocate program has been available in Lancaster County for the past four years and beginning in March, it is now available to serve children and caregivers in Lebanon County. The Family Services Advocate program identifies, supports, and advocates for the unique needs and rights of children whose parents are incarcerated, and helps to maintain healthy parent-child relationships when possible.

"These children serve time as well," says Bevan Allen, Director of Operations, explaining that they, too, pay a price for their parent's incarceration.

"A child not only loses their parent, but likely their healthcare benefits, housing, food access, and even their safety — real or perceived."

The Family Services Advocate receives a referral from the community, school, or often times the inmate themselves, according to Allen. Compass Mark then works closely with the caregiver and the child to offer support. If the caregiver is willing and able to accept responsibility for the child, Compass Mark staff works to identify the specific needs of the child through a thorough intake process.

What Types of Support are Available?

The Family Services Advocate essentially

helps a child and their remaining parent or caregiver make the difficult transition. Support may include:

- Directing now single-parent households to places that can help them with housing costs
- Arranging for healthcare since any public benefits (like CHIP) end for a child when they are carried by the parent who is incarcerated
- Referring children to therapeutic services where they can process feelings of loss and grief

What Difference Does the Program Make?

In Pennsylvania alone, more than 100,000 kids are being raised by relatives or guardians as a direct result of parental opioid-related death. "If this adverse childhood experience creates other negative experiences — homelessness, hunger, neglect, mental health issues — the children of the incarcerated will be at high risk of repeating their parents' mistakes," says Allen. "We are hopeful that we can break that cycle through this work."

Recently, a child whose only parent became incarcerated was being temporarily cared for by her grandmother. The child was scheduled to attend a summer camp program, but her grandmother was unable to afford the fee. Through her Family Services Advocate, a sponsor was identified to cover the camp fees and provide the child with an experience she'd been looking forward to. While this may seem insignificant to an adult, to a child, fulfilling this opportunity was life-changing.

To make a referral, please contact Denni Boger (Lebanon County Family Services Advocate) at 717-205-5832 or dboger@compassmark.org.

A longer version of this story, including more details on recent success of the program, appears online at compassmark.org/blog/.

