



The DREAM Program, Inc.

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February 8th, 2005

**The Forest Park DREAM Update
September 2005**

Greetings from DREAM! Here is a summary of the exciting events and developments that occurred during September. You can always look back at past monthly reports or other programs' reports by going to: <http://www.dreamprogram.org/about/localprograms.htm>. And please, do not hesitate to contact us with questions or ideas.

September was a great month for DREAM with the mentors and the children finally seeing each other after a long summer away! The mentors were anxious to see the children and wasted no time to DREAM started back up once they were all on campus for the fall semester.

Highlights from this month include:

- Four great Friday DREAMs,
- The recruitment of 6 new mentors,
- Bringing on 5 new children into DREAM, and
- DREAMstock – our annual statewide mentor retreat

Fridays: The core of DREAM happens every Friday when DREAM mentors meet with their partners in group and one-on-one settings. The meetings occur on college campuses, onsite at the children's homes, and at spaces around the community. This month, Friday program included:

- Starting the fall off with a group of mentors heading over to Forest Park to see the kids! This summer's DREAM intern, Morgan Stevens, introduced new children that they might be able to bring into the school year DREAM Program,
- Going apple picking at Mendon Orchard, to enjoy the fall weather and to enable mentors to interact with the children in smaller groups while still doing a full group activity. Mendon Orchards was excited to welcome DREAMers for a second year in a row!
- A massive kickball game at Castleton, to help new children and new mentors to get to know one another and begin to feel comfortable as a group, and
- A group hike at Killington, to get the children outside and active. Mentors organized the afternoon with children in smaller groups to help mentors feel out which child they might want to partner up with!

LABs/Parental Involvement: Local Advisory Board (LAB) meetings are where parents, mentors, and other community members come together to learn more about each other, build trust, discuss ideas and issue, and build stronger lines of communication. This month, the mentors talked to parents of DREAMers (and potential new DREAMers!) on DREAM Fridays to plan for the upcoming months. By going door-to-door at the beginning of the month, mentors had a chance to connect with each family individually and discuss the upcoming year.



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Capacity Building: The mentors are constantly working on bringing new children into the program and improving the program. This month a major focus has been on recruiting new mentors to grow the size of the program and enable the group to take on more children at Forest Park. The mentors are planning to continue recruiting in the coming months and have brought on 6 new amazing mentors already this month! Additionally 5 new children have been invited into the school-year DREAM Program.

Mentor Training: The DREAM Central Office is in close communication with the mentors as to their individual and group needs. The Office continues to develop training modules to fit the mentors' needs, and encourages them to go on retreats and have other bonding events – it is important for the children and mentors to have a tight and energized mentor group.

On September 30th DREAM held its 3rd annual DREAMstock at Camp DREAM. This weekend event is a chance for all DREAM mentors around the state to meet up and spend the weekend together. After riding the DREAM bus up to Camp mentors spent the rest of the weekend doing service projects to help build Camp, meeting other mentors, sharing best practices and brainstorming upcoming events, working through trainings led by DREAM staff and outside community partners, and enjoying the fall weather in DREAM's home away from home. Eight Forest Park mentors and mentors from 7 of the 8 DREAM programs around the state were in attendance for the weekend! It was an incredible way to kick off the year for the organization.

Look forward to October's monthly report to learn more about the new children and mentors and hear of their plans to partner into one-on-one relationships. The DREAM Central Office is excited to support them during this time of growth!

Keep DREAMing!

Chad Butt
Programs Director