



The DREAM Program, Inc.

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**Franklin Square DREAM Update
February 2006**

At present, there are 29 children from 15 different families involved in the DREAM Program at Franklin Square. These children range in age from 6 to 13 years of age.

February has been a crazy month for Franklin Square DREAM! The mentors began to lay the foundation for community development initiatives which will be built upon in the upcoming months. These included: team building activities with the children of Franklin Square, a family-style dinner celebration for the entire program, and invitations to DREAM parents for a Mentor/Parent Social even planned for the first week of March. The mentors focus this month was on the relationships between the mentors and children as a cooperative group. By bringing children together around common experiences and goals, DREAM mentors are able to build connections between families of different backgrounds and experiences that strengthen and reinforce the sense of community and identity around the Franklin Square neighborhood.

To these ends mentors provided crafts and silly nonsense games onsite one week. The focus of the day was to have activities that foster individual development through participation in group programming. The afternoon was a success for the children and the mentors response during their weekly meeting was that events onsite in the community can be awesome as long as they are well planned ahead of time ... always a good lesson to learn!

The mentors and office staff continued developing team building skills when planning Winter Adventure Camp. The theme of the event was the Olympics with the following objectives: team work, competition, celebrating uniqueness and sportsmanship. Unfortunately, the overnight was cancelled due to high wind advisories however the mentors and office staff carried out an afternoon of games meeting the objectives and a dinner followed.

They ended their month with a family style dinner on campus which was a huge success, celebrating each other and the relationships between the mentors and children living at Franklin Square.

The mentors also spent the month working with DREAM office staff to plan and construct next months events, which involve DREAM parents more regularly in an effort to strengthen the sense of community among program participants. Mentors are planning a parent/mentor social, a mentor retreat, as well as transition strategies for the outgoing senior mentors recruiting tactics (for new mentors and children), and program evaluation.

The Franklin Square DREAM Program is aiming to continue fostering reflection on the individual and their role in the greater community through Friday programming, community events, and increased connection with DREAM families. February was a fabulous month which has created the groundwork for a super-tastic spring.

Keep DREAMing!
Elizabeth

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