



The DREAM Program, Inc.

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Franklin Square DREAM Update November 2006

November was an awesome month for Franklin Square DREAM. Despite the holiday break it was full with DREAM events and plans for the end of the semester! Franklin Square DREAM currently consists of 24 children, and 26 mentors (with 2 of these mentors currently away on study abroad). These children come from 14 different Franklin Square families. DREAM mentors range from freshmen to seniors at St. Michael's College.

This month kicked off with the first ever DREAM coffee talk. Hosted by a DREAM staff member this event was a chance for mentors from all of the DREAM programs in Chittenden County to come together and learn from one another. The focus of this first Coffee Talk was "What does it mean to be a mentor?" DREAM mentors from UVM, Champlain, and St. Michael's College spent the evening together discussing some of the more challenging questions about what it means to mentor a child, and their role in DREAM housing communities. Refreshments were donated by Panadero (a local bakery), and Viva Espresso (a local coffee shop/roaster).

Mentors planned a number of great activities for the three DREAM Fridays in November. One afternoon spent swimming in the college's pool the group was visited by Christine Zachai, the Executive Director of the Vermont Permanent Fund – a Vermont foundation which was seeking to learn more about DREAM's Local Programs. As the group swam and played water games Christine was able to meet DREAM mentors and kids and learn about DREAM at Franklin Square. The mentors and children enjoyed having her there, and the opportunity to share more about their program!

After much discussion about potential partners, DREAM mentors decided to spend one Friday this month testing out new one-on-one relationships. Since the mentor turn-over of last spring children and mentors had not formally partnered off – so mentors were excited and nervous to test out possible relationships. The afternoon went well - many child/mentor teams went off in small groups all around campus. This afternoon provided new mentors with a deeper understanding of what it's like to work one-on-one with a child. The group has planned to discuss this more after Thanksgiving break as they make final decisions about their DREAM partners.

Another Franklin Square parent/mentor meeting was held in the middle of November. The purpose of this event was to discuss any concerns/questions that DREAM parents might have, provide a forum for mentors to learn more about DREAM families, and discuss an end of the year spaghetti dinner for all DREAM families.

The meeting was well attended by five DREAM families, eight mentors, and a number of the older DREAM children. After a few get to know you games, parents and mentors began discussing transportation concerns and the idea of a spaghetti dinner. The date for the dinner has been set for Sunday, December 10th from 4-6pm. The mentors will be getting food donated from the St. Michael's College food service program, Sodexo and transportation will be provided for all by the DREAM Bus!

To close off the month and celebrate the fall the mentors planned a Thanksgiving Dinner for the entire program. This event was held on the last Friday before Thanksgiving Break and was complete with donated turkeys and homemade stuffing. This annual tradition for the program is a favorite for DREAM children. The event was definitely a challenge for the mentors – to balance time cooking dinner and keep

up with their individual child. A number of children and mentors were still developing one-on-one relationships and this event reinforced their desire to nail down one-on-one relationships and develop Friday plans that are even more structured around these relationships when they return from break.

The DREAM Central Office was excited to present this year's Winter Adventure Camp (WAC) themes to the mentors of Franklin Square DREAM. WAC is an overnight at Camp DREAM that is open to all DREAM children ages 10 and up. Mentors enthusiastically chose their group's theme – Safari! This themed overnight is a chance for DREAMers to explore different adventures around the globe, learning about what “winter” adventure is like in other countries, trying some new winter sports, and maybe even seeing some native wildlife! Mentors are excited to invite the children to WAC in the upcoming months!

Lots of exciting things happening with DREAM as we close up this fall and get excited for the Winter months. To see more updates about the program please check out our newly published newsletter at: <http://www.dreamprogram.org/blog/2006/10/fall-newsletter-supportive-community.html>

Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or ideas. We'd love to hear from you!

Keep DREAMing!

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