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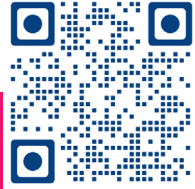
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Scan the QR code to hear our Spotify playlists of encouraging songs for our Matches!

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April 2024

The Good News

A Quarterly Newsletter for Friends of Save Our Youth

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Recently, I spoke with Bob, one of our mentors, about the extent of his role in supporting his mentee, John, academically. Bob understands that although his primary role isn't to act as a tutor, teacher, or parent, he still wants to ensure John receives the support he needs in his schooling. To provide some context, John is soft-spoken and driven, and he greatly values Bob's opinions. Having a highly educated mother figure, but lacking male role models, John sought out a mentor for guidance.

While speaking with Bob, he shared that he has been helping John study for tests, but noticed John only studies the night before and expects to get A's. When he doesn't achieve these grades, he becomes deflated. Bob described a hard conversation with John, explaining that studying at the last minute is not an effective strategy for achieving A's. He encouraged John to change his study habits, plan ahead, and review the material multiple times. Although this advice was necessary, given John's timid nature, I realized it might have been hard for him to hear. I kept these thoughts to myself, unsure if expressing them was necessary.

On my drive home, I listened to a podcast pointing out the benefits of male role models and father figures. One of the benefits listed was sternness and allowing kids to feel the consequences of their actions. I was blown away! I thought of this match, how the mentor saw this trait following his mentee throughout his life, knowing it would hinder him. I thought of his bravery to let his mentee be uncomfortable, to tell him what he wouldn't want to hear. This mentor could have let it slide, could have chosen to let his mentee go on not seeing why he was failing. At Save Our Youth, we push our matches to strive for excellence and offer support to do so through our mentoring specialist's support. One way that mentors do this in their matches is by having the hard, uncomfortable conversations that lead to change. In other cases, mentees need a mentor to come in and tell them all the ways they are winning.

As mentoring specialists, we take the time to understand our matches thoroughly, enabling us to effectively coach mentors in various situations. We strive for excellence, providing mentors with a support system to help them identify and address their blind spots. Our role involves knowing when to encourage and when to redirect, a balance that sets our organization apart. Offering personal support to mentors not only sustains these relationships longer, but also provides the encouragement needed in what can often be a thankless role. We are truly blessed to support and encourage such a dedicated group of mentors!

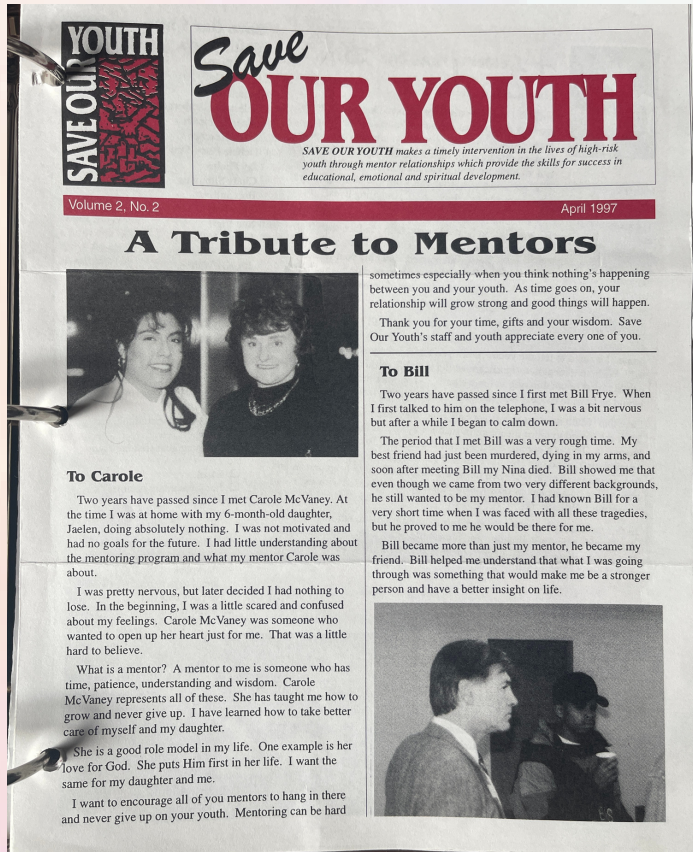
Ashleigh Birkholtz
Mentoring specialist

Names have been changed to respect privacy.

We connect young people to hope through long-term mentoring relationships.



30 Years of Connecting Youth to HOPE



Here's a snippet from an **April 1997 Save Our Youth newsletter!** It's encouraging for us to now see past mentees enrolling their kids in the program because of the positive impact their previous mentors had on them. We thank the Lord for allowing us to continue this great work for the last 30 years, and we look forward to the **next 30!**

As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of Save Our Youth in 2024, we are intentionally praying for an increased sense of hope within the mentees, mentors, volunteers, donors, community partners, and staff.

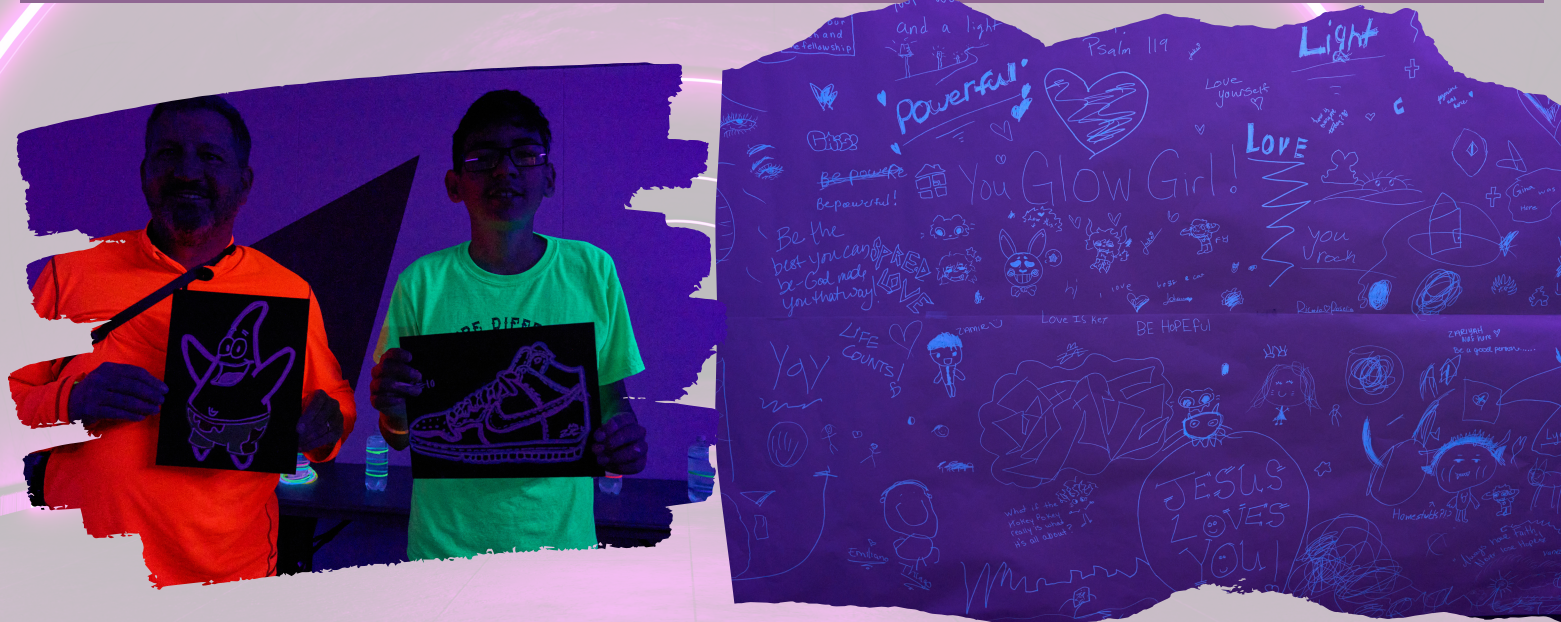
Graduation



We look forward to celebrating the achievements of our 2024 high school and college graduates! We are thrilled to honor the hard work and dedication of 33 cumulative graduates at our upcoming celebration on May 9th. As they prepare to take their next steps, we warmly invite you to support them through your prayers and encouragement. This is a proud moment for our community, and we look forward to sharing this special day with the mentees, scholars, their mentors, and loved ones.

Family Fun Day

We had a blast at this year's Family Fun Day! It was a joy to see the families of our mentors and mentees come together, building on the strong one-on-one connections fostered through Save Our Youth. Embracing our 2024 theme, "Illuminate," we hosted a glow-in-the-dark party where everyone enjoyed letting their lights shine. A special thanks to Crossroads Community Church for providing the perfect space for our community to gather and celebrate!



Run for Save Our Youth



Did you know that **you can run for a nonprofit at the Denver Colfax Marathon?** Simply select a charity partner during registration (if you have already registered, you can add a charity partner retroactively). **Save Our Youth Mentoring is an official charity partner and we'd be honored to have you select us as your partner!** This will greatly help to raise awareness and funds for the organization and individuals we serve. Take your pick among a 5k, 10m, 13.1m or full marathon! Head over to www.runcolfax.org to take your pick, and we hope to see you during marathon weekend, **May 18-19, 2024!**

