

# NEWS

## VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

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[www.bergenvolunteers.org](http://www.bergenvolunteers.org)

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### **Become a Volunteer—Mentor a Mom!**

**Bergen County**--Make a difference in a family's life! Mentoring Moms, a program of the Volunteer Center of Bergen County, trains volunteers to serve as mentors to overwhelmed mothers in need of guidance in parenting and life skills, particularly those who have been in child service programs or who are moving from welfare to work. When a parent is supported by a mentor, the entire family is helped, because mentors become important role models for the children, as well.

Mentors focus on parenting, child development and utilization of community resources to help mothers become more responsible parents and achieve self sufficiency.

"My mentor helped me become a better parent by being there for me when I needed someone to talk to. She has made my family stronger and has taught me what a healthy relationship is," says Mary, a mother who has benefited from a relationship with a volunteer mentor from Mentoring Moms.

Mary's mentor, Sue, adds, "Our relationship has developed into a very warm friendship. We have been meeting for more than 2 years, usually over a meal, where we catch up on one another's lives. Many of the mentors in the program continue to see their mentees for years far beyond the original one year commitment. A very special bond forms."

Comprehensive training will be provided this coming October in a five session, 12 and a half-hour training program. During this time, the volunteers take workshops on developing listening skills, communication and problem solving. Guest speakers such as current mentors, mothers who have participated in the program, and social services case

workers share their experiences so that new mentors have the background and knowledge to help support moms who may be single parents, or struggling with a child's illness, or who are simply overwhelmed. Volunteers are asked to make a one-year commitment to spend 2-3 hours a week with a mother simply talking, sharing activities and offering support.

Training begins Monday, October 6, 2008 from 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm at the Volunteer Center of Bergen County, 64 Passaic Street, Hackensack. Mentoring Moms training is free of charge to adult women age 18 and over. Call Susan Hogge at (201) 489-9454, ext. 124 for more information or visit [www.bergenvolunteers.org](http://www.bergenvolunteers.org) and click on mentoring programs.

The Volunteer Center of Bergen County strengthens the community by connecting people with opportunities to serve, operating model volunteer programs, building capacity for effective volunteering and participating in strategic partnerships that meet community needs.

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