

Change a Life Through Mentoring

By: Sarah DeYounge, Public Outreach Intern, Reach and Rise Program at the YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties

When you look back to your childhood, do you get nostalgic over memories of playing on a team with a coach who helped shape your skills and character? Or maybe you remember someone who helped spark a love for a craft or class? Or even just draw up memories of an adult in your life you knew you could turn to and trust?

Most of us can recall a grownup who provided us with a sense of support and inspiration while we were growing up. However, one in three kids in the United States are missing that key influence in their lives. This National Mentoring Month, we're working to change that troubling statistic, and to lift up youth in need in our community through mentoring!

The Reach and Rise Mentoring Program at the YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties is working to help more kids in the Fargo Moorhead community gain a mentor, friend, and confidant through our One-on-One Mentoring Program and our Group Mentoring Program. Each of our mentors is as unique as the child they mentor, and every one of our mentors has a different background or story as to why they want to get involved with Reach and Rise.

For Carman, becoming a mentor meant having a new way to volunteer in her free time.

"Becoming a mentor means that I get to help someone and be there for somebody," she said.

In her role as a mentor, Carman hopes to instill the confidence and hope that she will always be there for her Mentee and will always be cheering her on to be the best that she can be.

For Rachel, getting involved with Reach and Rise meant becoming a friend that her Mentee can not only depend and trust in, but also someone to laugh and cry with.

"I would love to see more people get involved because it is SO rewarding," Rachel said. "To go to their house and see their faces light up when they see you is one of the best things you can witness. That they look forward to seeing you. You're not only bettering yourself but you're helping a child who really needs someone in their lives."

It doesn't take super powers to impact the life of a child in your community - it only takes human connection. Our mentors are the everyday heroes who are making real change in the lives of the kids they mentor! This National Mentoring Month (and all year long!) we're celebrating the mentors and mentees in our program who are making strides every day to ensure better futures and happier, more confident kids!

Check out ymcacassclay.org/reachrise to learn more about the program and how to get involved with Reach and Rise today!