



2008 Informational Update

Peter Mayer Stars and Promises Holiday Concert

On Friday, December 5, 2008, The Peter Mayer Group will perform a holiday concert at the United Reformed Church in Somerville. Doors will open at 7pm, and the concert will begin at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$25. Peter Mayer will donate a portion of all the proceeds to be distributed equally among three local organizations: the North Branch Reformed Church, the United Reformed Church and Middle Earth. The two churches will use the funding to invest in social ministries. Middle Earth will invest its funding in youth programs.



Guitarist, vocalist and songwriter, Peter Mayer has been quietly and steadily building a fervent following across the country, stepping outside his role as one of Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefers to front his own band, The Peter Mayer Group. Melding a unique and eclectic writing style, a distinctive voice, and virtuoso musicianship, Peter and his band create compelling and accessible music that is electrifying in live performance. You can obtain more concert information, learn about the beneficiaries, and listen to the band's music at: www.middleearthonline.org/starsandpromises/.

Visit Our Website

www.middleearthonline.org



boasts an online copy of our annual report, explanations of our programs and news on upcoming events.

Strategic Planning Process

One of the major responsibilities of a non-profit board of trustees is to ensure that the agency has a long range plan. In 2007, the board revisited our strategic planning process. On March 27, 2008, Middle Earth convened a visioning meeting that included all staff, partner agencies, funders/contributors, volunteers and other stakeholders. More than 30 individuals invested two and half hours in significant discussions to determine the best course of action for Middle Earth's next three to five years. Middle Earth partners made it very clear that they want to see Middle Earth continue to provide programming for Somerset County's most vulnerable youth – they encouraged us to do more of what we already do and to consider expanding services both programmatically and geographically. The board is nearing completion of the planning process. A summary of the strategic plan will be provided in a future update and on our website in late Fall 2008.

2009 Board

We are seeking board members for 2009. Please call 908-725-7223 or e-mail MddlEarth@aol.com if you are interested.

FACT: Studies have shown a correlation between frequent attendance in out-of-school time activities and positive outcomes, including an increase in academic achievement, school attendance, time spent on homework, extracurricular activities, improved effort in school, and better behavior.

Outcome Measures - Measuring for Effectiveness



Middle Earth is actively revising our methods for measuring our success in an effort to increase the effectiveness of our programs and to communicate our value to the community. We want our outcomes to focus on the program participants, not the program, and to be specific in showing how the youth have changed as a result of Middle Earth's influence on their lives. We are creating outcome measures that will do the following: (1) assure that we are achieving meaningful benefits for the intended beneficiaries, (2) communicate the value of our program, and (3) guide program managers and staff in increasing the effectiveness of our program. It is a long process to find the right outcome for each program component and to then find a measurable indicator of that outcome, but it is an important and worthwhile goal to which we are striving.



Middle Earth ♦ *providing prevention, intervention and crisis services to youth for over 3 decades*
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21st Century Community Learning Center



Middle Earth has been working with middle and high school youth during their out of school time for over 30 years. With this foundation, all of our programs also instill all of the Five Promises set forth by America's Promise Alliance (learn more at www.americaspromise.org). In an effort to further support the fourth element of America's Promise — seeing that youth have an effective education available to them to develop marketable skills — Middle Earth submitted a 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) grant application to the New Jersey Department of Education. Our grant was approved, and Middle Earth implemented a 21st CCLC for the 2007/2008 school year within the Smalley School. The program provides both Bound Brook and South Bound Brook middle school students after-school programming until 6pm. Our youth were provided with a snack, academic support for the first hour and club activities for the remainder of the day.

The mission of the Middle Earth 21st CCLC program is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for Middle School age students from Bound Brook and South Bound Brook who are in need of, and can benefit from, an after-school program. Youth will have opportunities to choose activities designed to promote their intellectual, physical, mental, social, and emotional development in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

More than 80 children were able to participate this past year. In addition to the already mentioned components of the program, Middle Earth also provided a four week summer program, field trips to a variety of museums, plays and parks, and parent and family activities. Planning for the 2008/2009 academic year is nearly completed with programming to resume on September 29th. We're looking forward to supporting our youth, families, and the Boards of Education by providing a quality out of school time program.

The program is funded in part with federal funds from Title IV, Part B, 21st Century Community Learning Centers program in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 awarded to the New Jersey Department of Education.



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