

What Do Kids Need to Succeed?



Hastings Youth Tell Their Stories

Hastings Teen Key Opinion Leaders



Our youth leaders are playing a key role in designing, developing, and implementing activities that support the Helping Kids Succeed – The Hastings Way initiative

Hear from Judd . . .



. . . a personal account of how youth overcome adversity

Tight webs of support help youth develop resiliency. This web is made up of “protective factors,” guiding youth to make good decisions and to grow to be healthy, principled, and successful.

The supportive adults (“Anchors”) in a young person's life offer both tangible and intangible protective factors – which we call “strings” – to guide their growth and development.

The Hastings Way initiative gathered inputs from around our community. These inputs have been compiled in a handbook for use by adults and youth throughout Hastings. The handbook is full of great ideas for strengthening webs.

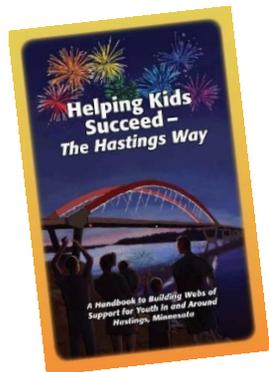
A web with many strings provides a strong safety net, with anchors providing authentic caring and high expectations. Every youth in Hastings needs a strong web! Join us in making that happen.

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in collaboration with other community groups.

***A donation of \$5 per handbook
is appreciated***



**GET THE
HANDBOOK
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Learn about
Helping Kids Succeed –
The Hastings Way



Hastings Youth Stories
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Ed. 2





JUDD Judd O'Connor is a junior at Hastings High School. With working, participating in football and wrestling, hunting, spending time with his friends and girlfriend, and participating in Young Life, he doesn't have a whole lot of spare time. But Judd makes sure he always has time for strengthening his web of support and helping others strengthen theirs.

Judd's story begins in Hastings where he was born. But his family moved to Rochester when he was very young and spent several years there. Judd liked life in Rochester and had a lot of fun playing with neighborhood friends and his two younger brothers. When Judd was in the fifth grade, his grandmother passed away and his family decided to move back to Hastings to be closer to his extended family. Judd remembers that it was hard to leave his friends in Rochester but making friends in Hastings came easily for Judd.

Over the next two years, Judd and his brothers settled into their schools and lives in Hastings. But a big change was going to happen in his family that he didn't anticipate – his parents decided to get a divorce. This was huge for his family. His parents both stayed in Hastings, and as with many divorces, Judd and his brothers divided their time between both parents' homes.

Judd remembers how good his parents were in helping their family adjust. They were really good about talking to their kids regularly, and Judd took their lead by watching out for his younger brothers and making sure to talk with them regularly.

Judd counts himself very lucky that his parents' divorce went well. His parents talk with each other and come to Judd's events. One thing Judd had to learn, with living in two homes, is organization. Judd learned to make sure that he had all the clothes that he needed, shoes, his cell phone charger, headphones, etc.

When asked about what his family does to stay connected, Judd ponders a bit. Judd responds that staying connected has probably had something to do with his parents being good at asking if he and his brothers

want to talk about anything, keeping the lines of communication open.

In the ninth grade, when Judd received a "green slip" to leave class and visit the counselor's office, he tried to think of what he could be in trouble for but he couldn't think of anything. When Judd got to the meeting, he learned that he had been selected as an emerging leader. The Helping Kids Succeed (HKS) model was explained along with how it can work in the community. Judd felt that every kid needed to know about it and every family deserved to know about it. Judd began working with other teens and spreading the word about the model and how to strengthen webs of support.

How has HKS impacted Judd? He indicates that it has helped him change how he talks with adults and considers how adults play into his web of support. It has helped him talk with his friends and his brothers and help them improve their webs of support. Judd says that HKS provides the tools to be proactive and connect with others and ultimately build a strong web. Judd also feels that it's good for adults as they learn how to approach kids better.

Judd's one wish for HKS is that it could reach every child and adult in Hastings and they could learn how to apply the model. Judd explains that when every individual gets better connected, the whole community gets better. **HKS**

***More youth stories at
www.unitedwayofhastings.org***

Strong Webs of Support

More than 50 years of research proves tight webs of support between teens and caring adults lead to success in school, acceptance of others, and avoidance of alcohol, drugs and violence.

Strong webs of support are a better indicator of eventual adult success than income, demographics, race, or a wide range of other factors.

"Webs of support" come from 5 or more adult anchors in a youth's life. Anchors: 1) care for the youth's well-being, and 2) expect more of young people than they expect of themselves, and 3) guide youth into achieving those expectations. Hence, the Rule of Five!



Webs are built at home, school, church, on a team, on the job, in quiet conversations, etc. Kids need adults in their lives more today than ever before.

Adults must focus on growing the positive attributes we want to see in our young people, and in the next generation.