

# What Do Kids Need to Succeed?



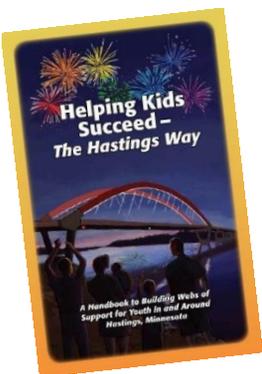
# Hastings Youth Tell Their Stories

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.



**GET THE  
HANDBOOK  
READ IT  
APPLY IT  
PASS IT ON**

## 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

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in collaboration with other community groups.

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

Hear from Natalee . . .



. . . a personal account of how youth overcome adversity

Learn about  
Helping Kids Succeed –  
The Hastings Way





**NATALEE** Natalee Chapin was three years old when her parents divorced. She and her four-year old sister began life with their mom. While Natalee's dad was around, he drank too much and would be in and out of her life. Natalee was ultimately raised by a single mom, which meant a single income, living paycheck to paycheck. Life was hard.

At about the same time that things were going better at school, Natalee learned about getting involved with Helping Kids Succeed (HKS). She was identified by school counselors as an emerging leader and was asked to be a leader in the community. Natalee was taught about the HKS model, the web of support. By 11<sup>th</sup> grade, Natalee was very involved with HKS. She talked in the community and at school about the web of support, she collected feedback for the publication of the *Helping Kids Succeed—The Hastings Way* handbook, and . . . she got more adults in her web of support. At the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade, Natalee thought about how much she loved school and cried when it ended for the summer. It was the first time that she realized that the teachers were not there to just teach . . . they were there to help her grow and succeed.

Now Natalee has ventured off to college. She believes HKS helped her find her true self and she blossomed. If Natalee could have one wish for HKS, it would be to have it reach every kid in Hastings so that each kid feels as if he or she belongs. Sounds like a web of support for every youth in Hastings! **HKS**

***More youth stories at  
[www.unitedwayofhastings.org](http://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.

As Natalee got older, her dad's health worsened. Natalee tears up when she thinks of seeing her dad on his deathbed, time after time, and having to deal with the rollercoaster of serious health issues.

Natalee talks with great respect about her mom, who made sacrifices for her daughters. Natalee's mom made sure that her daughters were kept very involved in church. Natalee liked it because it was a constant in her life . . . it was always predictable that they would go to church. But inside Natalee, there was a deep feeling of anger that she couldn't get away from.

In middle school, Natalee had a tough time because other kids would push her and call her names. Natalee grew to hate going to school. It came to a boiling point when one of the bullies made it personal by involving Natalee's family. There was a fist fight and Natalee had to attend an alternative learning program and deal with the legalities of the occurrence.

At the alternative learning program during Natalee's 8<sup>th</sup> grade year, a teacher made a difference in her life. “Mrs. Angell changed my life. I would be in jail if it wasn't for Mrs. Angell. I was just done with school.” Natalee learned about consequences from Mrs. Angell. When Natalee wasn't at school, Mrs. Angell called. In the alternative learning program, Natalee had her own space and she learned about community service.

When Natalee reached high school as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader, she was terrified. She was in a new environment back with some of the same kids that caused problems in middle school. It took courage for her to go to school every day. She recalls being in a special study class that helped her do better in classes. Natalee gradually gained confidence and began to like school more.