

AYS needs male mentors for troubled teens

Teen boys at HomeTies emergency shelter need positive male role models. Kansas City, Kansas nonprofit AYS (Associated Youth Services) provides 10 adolescent boys, ages 12-21, with shelter for 1 to 3 months while they transition into permanent placement. As many of these boys come from adjudication or psychiatric facilities, the dedicated staff at HomeTies give the boys the structure and care they need during this difficult period. But the staff at HomeTies cannot do it alone.

Community Health Case Manager for AYS, Kathleen Blackburn speaks openly about the need for male volunteer mentors at the shelter. Blackburn visits HomeTies once per week to talk to the young boys about health-related topics that affect their community. Although they appreciate her time, she sees the potential impact that male mentors could have. She states, "The young men at HomeTies desperately need adult volunteers to act as mentors and tutors. They especially need the guidance of adult males who can model positive behavior and teach basic skills to our youth. Volunteer mentors will show the youth at HomeTies that they have potential and teach them how to become successful adults."

The HomeTies staff also need help maintaining the HomeTies house. As one might imagine, a building that houses 10 adolescent boys is always in need of repair. AYS is looking for a group of dedicated adults who can do basic maintenance work at HomeTies on a monthly basis. By beautifying HomeTies on the outside, the young boys who visit HomeTies will, for once, live in a home they can be proud of.

Associated Youth Services (AYS), located in Kansas City, Kansas, is a non-profit organization with five services centered around the needs of youth in crisis: Adolescent Drug & Alcohol Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program; AYS Academy; Resource (Foster) Family Care; Community Health Program and HomeTies;. Although it began as a Mennonite-affiliated organization in 1912, it has continued to impact the lives of thousands of youths each year as a non-religious organization since 1972. The strides AYS youths make prove that it is not too late to break the cycles of poverty, crime and abuse. They are the inspiration that keep the organization committed to its mission.

If you are interested in either of these volunteer opportunities or other volunteer opportunities at AYS, please contact Katie Svoboda at 913-831-2820 x218. To find out more about AYS or to support the agency through monetary or in-kind donations, please visit our website at <http://www.aysusa.org>.