

DIAMOND GIRL AND BEST MEN LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION PROGRAM

DIAMOND GIRL
LEADERSHIP



To recognize the achievements of
the Diamond Girl Leadership
and Best Men Leadership
and the dedication of their
school principals, coordinators,
parents and teacher mentors.

BEST MEN



LEADERSHIP

FRIDAY, JUNE 17TH, 2011

THE NATIONAL 4-H YOUTH CONFERENCE CENTER
Chevy Chase, MD

24 years of service to youth

BEST FRIENDS FOUNDATION

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Rita Kelly Burns - Leadership Manager and Leadership Dance Troupe Manager	Mario Lopez - Director of Finance
Jon Carter - Best Men Leadership Manager and Step Drill Team Manager	Robin Williams - Metropolitan Healthy Marriage Educator and Diamond Girl Leadership Choir Manager
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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Diana Davis Spencer Foundation

24 years of serving youth

BEST FRIENDS FOUNDATION

Featuring Diamond Girl Leadership and Best Men Leadership Programs

DIAMOND GIRL AND BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

24th Annual Family and School Recognition Program

Parent and Student Luncheon

Welcome

Pauline Hamlette

Introduction: "Yellow Dress"

Elayne Bennett

"Yellow Dress"

Amie Cazell, Deana's Educational Theater

"Do You Know the Facts?"

*Signs: Judah Delaney, Christopher Holness,
Tori Dugger, David Parker*

Discussion: Yellow Dress

Amie Cazel, YaaYaa Hunt

Skit: "Tommy Gets Served"

Lesley Long and DeAngelo Anderson

"Love the Way You Lie"

*Sylvana Christopher Sandoz and Gwoping Yang
College Council: Jamila Lee and Corey Ellis*

"Friends Have a Voice Too"

Lesley Long and DeAngelo Anderson

*Students: Brandon Artis, Tori Dugger,
Adrian Johnson, Mbachur Mbenga*

Diamond Girl Theme Song

Robin Williams and Performance Dance Troupe

"Drug Free Me"

Diamond Girls and Best Men Leadership

Recognition of Scholarship Recipients

Elayne Bennett

Recognition of College Council, Coordinators, Principals and Parents

Pauline Hamlette

Leadership Essay Winners

Robin Williams, John Carter

YaaYaa Hunt

Anacostia Senior High School

DeAngelo Anderson

McKinley Technology High School

Diamond Girl Leadership Awards

*Elayne Bennett, Pauline Hamlette,
Rita Kelly Burns, Robin Williams*

Portia McKay

Paul Public Charter School

Monique Garey

Dunbar Senior High School

Chyna Cotton

McKinley Technology High School

Kevwe Ajueyitsi

Columbia Heights Educational Center

Best Men Leadership Awards

Elayne Bennett, Jon Carter

Gavel Award

Tarrence Cross

HD Woodson Academy

Anchor Award

Danny Johnson

HD Woodson Senior High School

Lion Award

Brandon Artis

Banneker Academic High School

Eagle Award

Cameron Harris

McKinley Technology High School

"Shining Star"

Robin Williams

Closing Remarks

Elayne Bennett

Diamond Girl and Best Men Leadership Step Teams



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Parents, Students, Friends and Colleagues,

Best Friends Foundation is now completing our 24th anniversary year. After nearly a quarter century, when I consider our achievements, I have so much pride in just how much we have accomplished together. Aside from all our many activities, the Health is Happiness Days, the Health is Fitness Days and 24 yearly Family and School Recognition Programs (yes, 24 years of Recognition Programs for over 25,000 students, parents, teachers, donors and community leaders!), we have delivered a highly researched and highly regarded character enhancing Diamond Girl and Best Men Leadership in-school curriculum to at least 5,000 DCPS high school students. This Leadership curriculum has also been utilized nationwide in public schools in Newark, NJ; Milwaukee, WI; Charlotte, NC; Newport News, VA; Clay County, KY; Martinsville, VA; and Los Angeles and San Diego, CA. It was also cited again in the publication, “Smart and Good High Schools: *Integrating Excellence and Ethics for Success in School Work and Beyond.*”

Everyone is fully aware of the impact that the economy has had on Federal grant awards. Sadly the Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) grant, which would have provided Best Friends Foundation funding for three more years was eliminated. The Best Friends middle school program was subsequently without funding. The Healthy Relationships/Healthy Marriage grant from HHS awarded in 2006, for 5 years, provided us with the funds to expand and develop our high school Diamond Girl and Best Men Leadership program. The goals of this grant, which ends in September, were to educate high school students on the benefits and importance of a healthy marriage in one’s future. The grant specified the following curriculum components: Conflict Resolution; Financial Planning; Communication; and Dating Violence Prevention.

We are gratified that our Leadership students gained the necessary knowledge to demonstrate positive gains in our pre/post measurements for required HHS reporting. We are so proud of their accomplishments this year and are especially happy that the Potomac Job Corps students are a part of this vital initiative.

To our wonderful Leadership students I could just say, “Congratulations, you have your high school diploma and you are going to college or to vocational school, and sooner or later you will go out and get a good job.” That would be simple, but life is not simple, it is a hard road – with many miles to go. You are envied by those of us who are on the final part of our journey. You have a wonderful, wonderful gift that the wealthiest people in the world cannot buy. You have youth, you have your health and you have your future. Treasure your youth, take care of it, nurture it and make it count. Do not waste it on activities that will fill you with regret the next morning and negatively affect your future. Know how to keep your head when others about are losing theirs, and while an open mind can be a good thing don’t keep your mind so open that your brains will fall out.

And, finally while you have learned much this year continue to learn and seek to learn every day of the rest of your life. Sir Francis Bacon said, “Knowledge is power.” The more you learn, the more you know, the more you can do. It has been an honor and a privilege to know and to teach all of you. You will always be in our hearts and prayers.

Elayne Bennett
President and Founder



RON BROWN-WOODSON ACADEMY

Principal: Darrin Slade

Woodson Academy Coordinator: Shirley Dozier

Woodson Academy Assistant: Robina Hughey



DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP

9th Grade

Shaniece Childs
Dione Adams
Jasmine Christian
Tykira Dunbar
Johnetta Evans
Diamond Evans
Donae Fleming

Ne'Shaun Flemmings
Shanice Griggs
LaSharron Hughes
Breonna Hughey
Mi'Asia James
Shanai McCall
Darneya Monk
Dominique Shaw

Laquana Stover
Rickay Thompson
Mickay Thompson
Jasmine Tibbs
Taneka Tolen
Monae Washington
Kendra Woodberry

BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

9th Grade

William Adams
Duane Anderson
Stepherson Burrell
Marquise Carter
Harry Cassell
Terrance Cross
Burke Davis
Jamal Fryer

Albert Fuller
Larry Green
Ian Jackson
Harvey Jones
Terrance Jones
Derrick Judd
Lavonte McCloud
Jamal Montgomery
Rantrez Purnell

Devon Scurry
Jabari Smith
Jawan Smith
Howard Smith
Kenneth Smith
Harry Terrell
Lawrence Washington
TerVonn Williams
John Womack

“Instead of writing 250 words about what this Foundation means to me, one can just look at my life and see what it has done for me.... At the end of the day, without Best Friends I could not have realized that I cannot affect the world if I cannot change myself first.”

Kevwe Ajueyitsi
Columbia Heights Educational Campus





FLETCHER JOHNSON-HD WOODSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Principal: Thomas Whittle

HD Woodson SHS Diamond Girl Coordinator: Kimberly Wright

HD Woodson SHS Best Men Coordinator: Cortez Robinson



DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP

10th Grade

Genia Graham
Asia Kiah
Tamiesha Thompson
Miche' Williams
Monique Wilson
Miley Diggs

11th Grade

April Allen
Jasmine Bridge
Shanell Butler
Victavia Crews
Kendra Crews
Nakia Ferguson
Brittany Foyer
Sabrina Hopps

Sheirra Jennings
Rozine Johnson
Britanny Kilgore
Keyonnah Napper
Ayannah Napper
Imani Owens
Latonya Pinkard
Nyla Roy
Jasmine Spriggs
Tiquanna Thompson
Breona Vaughn

12th Grade

Cornesha Banks
Darmia Clarke
Sheron Fleming
Mariah French

Shadia Gaither
Kimani Gilbreath
Misha Hailes
Muriel Hamilton
Tequanithia Harris
Breannah Johnson
Hillary Jones
Janay Jones
Brittany Morris
Tinisha Scott
Octavia Smith
Victoria Sminson
Aniesha Swinton
Jasmine White
Nichelle Williams

BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

10th Grade

Terrell Atkins
Anthony Bynum
Michael Clark
William Edwards
Harrison Farmer
Raynard Hall
Danny Johnson
Paul Jones
Westbrook Little-John
Jonathan McCray
Perez-Beal Plummer
Rantrez Purcell
Antwon Renwick
Michael Ruff
Justin Taylor
Michael Weaver
Damien White
Tahvian Williams

11th Grade

Damon Allen
Victor Brown
Qedian Chaplin
Zachery Clark
Stephen Derry
Brandon Everett
Raymond Hall
Timothy Hall
Alex Hodge
Raheem Jackson
Alexander Jones
Craig Jones
Willie Logan
Keion Mahoney
Marceese Marbury
Rico Mitchell
Taylor Sanchez
DeAndre Scott

Robert Simpson
Kyree Walker
Avery Witherspoon
Diandre Williams

12th Grade

Maurice Baker
Tavon Barnes
Mitchell Hill
MoShawn Magruder
Markel Massey
Stephon Perkins
Daitham Plater
Nate Robinson
Anthony Settles
Theodore Tinker



McKINLEY TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL

Principal: David Pinder
McKinley Technology High School Coordinator: Lisa Devlin



DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP

9th Grade

Breana Carter
Dayna Downs
Zakiya Gore
Anisa Jordan

10th Grade

Ayanna Felix
Arnasha Jones
Raeyona Redhead
Rica Spriggs
Lishiona Young

11th Grade

Samantha Brew
Kimberly Brewer
Angel Brock
Justice Chestnut
Kimani Clark
Chyna Cotton
Autumn Fennell
Kenya Holmes
Tekiah Jones
Sarah Kennedy
Porsha McLaurin
Maya Morrison
Shalay Nelson
Venecia Perkins
Racquel Reed
Cherelle Spears
Racquel Young

12th Grade

Hope Ajayi
Alexis Carter
Jasmine Chestnut
Destinee Crutchfield
Tori Dugger
Raven Fortune
Malaika Gardner
Jourdan Glenn
Dominece Gregory
Lauren Mauney
Mbachur Mbenga
Ciara Moat
Diamond Odom
Lauren Price
Monique Turner
Alessian Wright

BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

9th Grade

Moulaye Abdy
Elijah Boardley
Darren Boykins
Samuel Broughton
Anthony Carthen
Albert Chilsey
Lamar Davis
Woodie Gill
Caleb Gray
Carilto Hamilton
Juwon Huntley
Fatoumata Mare
Paul Minor
James Peterson
Monte Prillman
Manuel Suber
Tay'Vone Williams

10th Grade

Stephen Dorsey
Antoine Fryer
Davon Little
Kyron Walker
Cameron Walker

11th Grade

Axum Agyer
Drew Campbell
Kimanni Clark
Judah Delaney
Andre Hawkins
Anthony Jenifer
Charles Johnson
Tyrone Litman
Bashir Mangum
Bruce Mann
Endre Osborne
Yobo Oviasogie

12th Grade

Charles Ragland
Trebor Raines
Terrell Reid
Maurice Rucker
Derrick Taylor

DeAngelo Anderson
Edward Brooks
Jamal Childs
Cashis Colgert
Bernard Fernandez
Cameron Harris
Amir Henriquez
Ryan Howard
Adrian Johnson
DeAndre Lewis
Cameron Monk
Rashaad Patterson



NCCPUD

*(National Capitol Coalition
to Prevent Under Aged Drinking)*



NCCPUD Coordinator: Nadine Parker
Diamond Girl Leadership Program Manager: Rita Burns
Best Men Leadership Program Manager: Jon Carter
Leadership Educator: Robin S. Williams

DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP

Jacqueline Burnett
Amber Coleman
Monet Corbett
Ashley Freeman
Courtney Grayton

Kristina Harris
Kendra Hazel
Andrea Isacc
Leesa Manley
Bianca McIntosh

Rachelle Montague
Andranae Nelson
Chinwe Obodo
Jasmine Wrenn

BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

Khary Edwards
Aaron Harris
Brandon Holden
Dominique Magruder

Donte' McCormick
Lanre Orekunrin
Marcus Peasant
Christopher Smith

Jonathan Taylor
Franklin Thompson



“Best Friends means to me another family I have gained. A program that does not have cliques and has just one giant group of friends who treats everyone like brothers and sisters.”

Cameron Harris
McKinley Technology High School



POTOMAC JOB CORPS

Diamond Girl Program Manager: Rita Burns
Best Men Leadership Program Manager: Jon Carter
Leadership Educator: Robin S. Williams
Director of Programs: Pauline S. Hamlette
Potomac Job Corps Coordinator: Harold McKelvin
Potomac Job Corps Assistant: Joy Stevenson



DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP

Bria Askew
Marquita Boomer
Zenita Brown
Sophia Cain
Mia Crawford
Georgeat Cunningham
Melissa Exum
Grisel Herrero
Shaquina Holden
Michaela Hunt

Deidra Key
Ayele Kissimbo
Theendra Little
Donna Marcos
Tavasha McDade
Ajee McLary
Keirra Moore
Alaysha Odom
Taikia Pace
Brianna Phillips

Frances Riggs
Nicole Terry
Trenisha Terry
Morgan Thomas
Tameshia Toliver
Lisa Trotti
Jalisa Watson
Andrea Williams
Pamela Williams

BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

Zeweter Asaminew
Brian Askew
Edward Bryant
Shaneek Bueffer
Jose Cerus
Tory Copper
Daniel Cox
Chris Deamork
Chris Diamond
Ronald Durbin

Robert Espimal
Tavon Evans
Victor Ford
Melson Garcia
Chris Green
Ryan Grier
Keith Hamlett
Ronnell Harley
Franchott Harris
Dorian Hernundle

DeAndre Jackson
Teone Keels
Johnny Knuckles
Dian LeSure
Lamont Lou
Brian Monson
Davis Moore
Jordan Murray
Shelton Oliver III

“This Foundation has also served as a second family to me. There has always been someone there to talk to when I feel like I don’t have anyone to turn to. The adults never cease to show their support in not only our academics but also in the personal aspect of our lives. They encourage us to keep reaching up and never quitting even when we do reach the top.”

Jamal Childs
McKinley Technology High School





SATURDAY PROGRAM



Director of Programs: Pauline S. Hamlette Leadership Program Manager: Rita Burns
Best Men Leadership Program Manager: Jon Carter
Leadership Educator: Robin S. Williams

DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP

9th Grade

Mary Beard - Hospitality High School
Lakea Dade - Friendship Collegiate High School
Shirley Devore - Ballou Senior High School
Jessica Devore - Ballou Senior High School
Danyelle Franklin - Ballou Senior High School
Dijon Hill - Hospitality High School
Angelica Hutchins - Hart Middle School
Destinee Jackson - Stuart Hall Boarding School
Suzana Kiela - Roosevelt Senior High School
Crystal King - Ballou Senior High School
Sara Lamar - Thurgood Marshall Academy
Public Charter School
Ediliza Ledesma - Banneker Senior High School
Sierra Logan - Capitol City Public Charter School
Portia McCay - Paul Public Charter School
Kyree Mitchell - Anacostia Senior High School
Charity Williams - Heritage Home School

10th Grade

Monique Boyd - Kipp College Preparatory School

Alexis Devlin - Herndon High School
Monique Garey - Dunbar Senior High School
Tenena Grymes - School Without Walls Senior
High School
Quenita Simms - Banneker Senior High School

11th Grade

Jasmine Brown - Cardozo Senior High School
Ava Lindsay - Don Bosco Cristo Rey
Joi Neverson - Bell Multicultural High School
Quannice Simms - Banneker Senior High School
Chenel Washington - Largo Senior High School

12th Grade

Kevwe Ajueyitsi - Columbia Heights Education Campus
Yaa Yaa Hunt - Anacostia Senior High School
Daeshae Phillips - Ballou Senior High School
Colissa Pugh - Ballou Senior High School
Destiny Franklin - Sidwell Friends School

BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

9th Grade

Damonte Bridgworth - Friendship Collegiate
Stephon Broadwater - Ballou Senior High School
Landon Carvee - Ballou Senior High School
Donell Ennells - Meade High School
Rajae Fryer - Ballou Senior High School
Donavin Hamilton - Ballou Senior High School
Marquise Haskins - Ballou Senior High School
Chrissen Hodges - Wilson Senior High School
Keith Howard - Wilson Senior High School
Quenton Hughtes - Cesar Chavez Public Charter School
Bryan Johnson - Ballou Senior High School
Karl Lewis - Wilson Senior High School
Hector Maduro - Bell Multicultural High School
Duante McKeever - Cesar Chavez Public Charter School
Kyree Mitchell - Anacostia Senior High School
Randi Smith - Cesar Chavez Public Charter School
Roamario Spaulding - Wilson Senior High School

Tequan Taylor - Wilson Senior High School
Eric Williams - Ballou Senior High School
Raymond Williams - Phelps High School

10th Grade

Brandon Boykins - Ballou Senior High School
Dealto Davis - Wilson Senior High School
Aaron Hutchinson - Phelps Senior High School

11th Grade

Joshua Nelson - Wilson Senior High School

12th Grade

Edward Lytle - Ballou Senior High School
David Parker - Calvin Coolidge Senior High School
Marcus Peasant - Banneker Senior High School

BEST FRIENDS FOUNDATION

VIOLENCE AND ABUSE PROTOCOL

Best Friends Foundation Mission Statement

The Best Friends Foundation strives to provide a nationwide network of programs that is dedicated to the physical and emotional well-being of adolescents. It provides scientifically researched and developmentally sound curriculum designed for high school students. The Foundation promotes self-respect through self-control and provides participants the skills, guidance and support needed to avoid risk behavior that is destructive to relationships. In the spirit of true friendship, the Best Friends Foundation provides positive peer groups for adolescents and creates an environment that raises aspirations and promotes achievement.

Purpose of the Protocol

The dating violence protocol was developed to ensure that the Best Friends Foundation will address dating violence in a comprehensive and appropriate manner. In 2005, the Teen Health “Am I in a Healthy Relationship” survey reports, 20% of American girls reported having been hit, slapped, or forced into sexual activity by their partners. Young men also experience violence, but they are much less likely to report. And 40% of all teens said they know someone at school who experienced dating violence.

Definition of Dating Violence

Dating violence is any intentional sexual, physical or psychological attack on one partner by the other in a dating relationship.

Identifying and Responding to Dating Violence Issues

We ask that all Best Friends Foundation replication sites coordinators and instructors be alert for the following signs that a teen may be involved in a relationship that is or has the potential to become abusive. When these changes happen suddenly, or without explanation, there may be cause for concern.

- Does the individual have unexplained bruises, scratches or injuries?
- Do you see signs that the individual is afraid of his/her boyfriend or girlfriend?
- Does the boyfriend or girlfriend lash out, or insult the individual?
- Has the individual’s appearance or behavior suddenly changed?
- Has the individual stopped spending time with friends and family?
- Has the individual recently started using alcohol or drugs?
- Have you seen the boyfriend or girlfriend become abusive towards other people or things?
- Does the individual seem to have lost interest or to be giving up things that were once important?
Has he/she lost interest in school or other activities?
- Does the boyfriend or girlfriend seem to try to control the individual’s behavior, making all the decisions, checking up on his/her behavior, demanding to know who the individual has been with, and acting jealous and possessive?
- Does the individual apologize for the boyfriend or girlfriend’s behavior to you and others? Has the individual casually mentioned the boyfriend or girlfriend’s temper or violent behavior, but then laughed it off as a joke?
- Have you seen sudden changes in the individual’s mood or personality? Is the individual becoming anxious or depressed, acting out, or being secretive? Is the individual avoiding eye contact, having “crying jags” or getting “hysterical?”

Protocol

1. The Diamond Girl / Best Men Leadership School Coordinator is informed by or suspects that a student has experienced abuse or violence in the home or dating relationship from a boyfriend or a girlfriend.
2. Ask the student about his/her relationship.
 - a. Be specific about why you are concerned. (i.e. “I saw a boy push you hard. Is he your boyfriend? Why did he do that?”)
 - b. If the student does not want to discuss this, encourage him / her to talk to a trusted adult (i.e. parent, school guidance counselor, Diamond Girl Leadership Coordinator / Mentor, or Best Men Leadership Coordinator / Mentor).
 - c. Give the student the **National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline number 1-866-331-9474** and the website **www.LoveIsRespect.org** for immediate and confidential advice and referrals.
 - d. If the student does want to talk, do not criticize or attack the abuser. Ask, “What can I do to help?”
 - e. The school coordinator must report the conversation to the school guidance counselor immediately. (Refer to step 3)
3. The Diamond Girl / Best Men School Coordinator immediately reports abuse and violence to the school guidance counselor and the school principal as it is their legal obligation as defined by the DC Law 2-22 (Child Abuse Act). The law states the following: School employees are directed not to try to resolve or investigate a suspected case of student abuse, violence, or neglect. Rather, an employee’s legal obligation is to orally report such knowledge or suspicion to either the Metropolitan Police Department (“MPD”) Youth Division, 202-576-6763; MPD non emergency, 202-727-1010; or, if a crime is in progress, 911, or the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Human Services (“CPSD”) 202-727-0995. A written report is required if requested from MPD or CPSD, or if the abuse involves drug related activity.

[The law provided that any employee who willfully fails to make a report when he or she suspects student abuse, violence or neglect shall be fined or imprisoned for not more than 30 days, or both.]

Note: Best Friends Foundation replication sites follow the abuse and violence protocol as determined and adopted by their respective school systems.



“The Best Friends Foundation means so much to me. I never took the word “Commitment” seriously until I became a member of Best Men Leadership. This program has helped me to grow and mature. Being a part of the program has helped me to understand so many things about myself I never knew and pushed me to my fullest potential.”

DeAngelo Anderson
McKinley Technology High School

2011 COLLEGE COUNCIL MEMBERS

DIAMOND GIRL LEADERS

Hope Ajayi

McKinley Technology High School

Kevwe Ajueyitsi

Columbia Heights Educational Campus

Tori Dugger

McKinley Technology High School

Jourden Glenn

McKinley Technology High School

YaaYaa Hunt

Anacostia Senior High School

Lauren Mauney

McKinley Technology High School

Mbachur Mbenga

McKinley Technology High School

Diamond Odom

McKinley Technology High School

BEST MEN LEADERS

DeAngelo Anderson

McKinley Technology High School

Edward Brooks

McKinley Technology High School

Mitchell Brown

McKinley Technology High School

Jamal Childs

McKinley Technology High School

Cameron Harris

McKinley Technology High School

Christopher Holness

McKinley Technology High School

Adrian Johnson

McKinley Technology High School

DeAndre Lewis

McKinley Technology High School

David Parker

Coolidge Senior High School

Marcus Peasant

McKinley Technology High School



“Best Friends means the world to me! The entire staff at Best Friends really has a heart for others and really wants to see all students achieve their goals in life. The program has shown me to recognize good relationships with both males and females. I will forever cherish all of the knowledge and experiences I have received during my time at Best Friends.”

Tori Dugger

McKinley Technology High School



2011 DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP ESSAY WINNER

YaaYaa Hunt *Anacostia Senior High School*

I never knew I had a choice. I did not know that it was easier to avoid risky behavior than to deal with the consequences. Until I joined the Diamond Girl program, I did not understand the impact of my decision on the outcome of my future. To me the Best Friends Foundation has been the reinforcement that I need in the face of peer pressure. Without the Foundation, I would not have gained the confidence to follow my own ethical standards and adhere to them. The Best Friends Foundation has been my backbone, my support system, and my hero.

One of the most valuable lessons I will carry with me forever from the Best Friends programs is the importance of good health, and nobody reinforced this more than Mrs. Burns. As a Diamond Girl Leader, I strive to be both mentally and physically healthy, to have healthy relationships, and to build a healthy community. The Best Friends Program gave me the courage to remove any person or activity from my life that would get in the way of my good health. And because of my involvement in Leadership I was able to meet

new people who believed in the same things I did, and those people became my friends and my support.

I am so grateful to have had such a strong support system throughout my high school career. When all else failed, I knew the Foundation would be there. No matter what was going on, I always had someone to turn to. During my junior year when I was facing some tough personal times, Mrs. Hamlette kept an open ear and always provided her words of wisdom, and for that I will be eternally thankful.

The Best Friends Foundation has given me so much in such a short amount of time. I have gained something special from Mr. Carter and Mr. Kistler to Mrs. Goldsmith and Ms. Long, and nobody has made me feel more special in the entire world than Mrs. Bennett. Mrs. Bennett is my fairy godmother who can solve every problem I have with just a hug. Every single person who has worked to keep the Best Friends Foundation in operation is truly my hero. If I could summarize what Best Friends means to me in one sentence it would be, dream big, and know that the only way you will reach that dream is by staying on a straight path. Best Friends showed me that path.



2011 BEST MEN LEADERSHIP ESSAY WINNERS

Jamal Childs *McKinley Technology High School*

LEADERSHIP Best Friends/Best Men means exactly what it states. The name isn't a cheesy way to grab attention but it states exactly what they are about. When someone asks you to describe what you think a best friend should be, what are some descriptions that come to mind? One is honest, another is supportive, and one more is positive. Now, this list can go on, but it would not be necessary for a list to understand that Best Friends fits all of those descriptions. When you are a member of Best Friends, you are showing the world what you stand for and what you support. You are staying true and honest to not only those around you but also to yourself. This Foundation has also served as a second family to me. There has always been someone there to talk to when I feel like I don't have anyone to turn to. The adults never cease to show their support in not only our academics but also in the personal aspect of our lives. They encourage us to keep reaching up and never quitting even when we do reach the top. My experiences in Best Friends/Best Men are those that will never be forgotten because of the place they occupy in my heart and mind. They will also be unforgettable because I have shared them with some of my closest friends who are fellow Best Friends/Best Men members. The relationships I have developed and built with people in the Foundation will be relationships which I

hope will not be weakened by time. I will always stay connected to the Best Friends Foundation.

DeAngelo Anderson *McKinley Technology High School*

The Best Friends Foundation means so much to me. I never took the word "Commitment" seriously until I became a member of Best Men Leadership. This program has helped me to grow and mature. Being a part of the program has helped me to understand so many things about myself I never knew and it has pushed me to my fullest potential. The Best Friends Foundation has taught me how to be a true friend, stronger person, dedicated, and dependable. The most important asset that they have shown me is how to become a leader.

I have learned a great deal in the past three years, and I have come to know that the morals and ethics of society must not become extinct for the benefit of all of us. It is up to us to keep the principles alive. I have devoted my time and love to the Foundation and I hope that I can teach the next generation the leadership and organization abilities that the Foundation has instilled in me. I am a very confident young man. I hope to always be a leader, thanks to the Best Friends Foundation.

2011 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP

**Hope Ajayi George Washington University*

Kevwe Ajueyitsi North Carolina A & T

Tori Dugger University of New Haven

Yaa Yaa Hunt Pennsylvania State University

Lauren Mauney Bryn Athyn College

Mbachur Mbenga Trinity University

BEST MEN LEADERSHIP

DeAngelo Anderson Montgomery Community College

Jamal Childs North Carolina A & T

Cameron Harris Howard University

Christopher Holness Virginia Commonwealth University

**Hope Ajayi has received a full scholarship from George Washington University. Her Diamond Girl Leadership award is a U. S. Savings Bond to be utilized within the GWU scholarship guidelines.*

EVENT CREDITS

Choreography by Rita Kelly Burns

Music Direction by Robin Williams

Drug Free Me

When you look at me, what do you see?

A DRUG FREE ME!

When you look at me, what do you see?

A DRUG FREE ME!

Drug Free...

A DRUG FREE ME!

Drug Free...

A DRUG FREE ME!

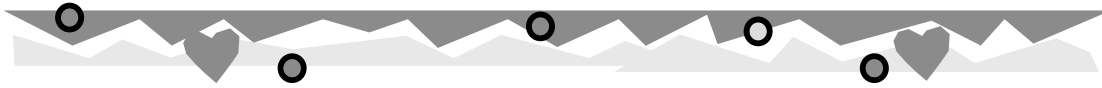
Clear head, clear mind

Drug free, I'm fine!

Clear head, clear mind

Drug free, I'm fine!





Facts About Dating Violence

It's very likely that you or someone you know has been abused in a relationship. Dating violence isn't just physical. It can include mental/emotional abuse and sexual abuse. It can occur in casual dating or serious long-term relationships.

MENTAL/EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Mental/Emotional abuse includes:

- Embarrassing you
- Put-downs
- Cussing
- Controlling you
- Making you feel bad about yourself
- Keeping you away from other friends and family

Threats of violence are abuse and should always be taken seriously.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse includes:

- Hitting
- Slapping
- Punching
- Shoving
- Kicking
- Biting
- Hair-pulling
- Using a weapon against a boyfriend/girlfriend

Both teenage boys and girls report being victims of physical violence in relationships. Normally, boys and girls use physical force for different reasons and with different results. Teens usually act violently because they are angry; boys are much more likely to use force in order to control their girlfriends, while girls more often act violently in self-defense.

Teenage girls suffer more from relationship violence, emotional and physical. Teenage girls are more likely than boys to have serious injuries and to report being terrified. In contrast, boys seldom seem to fear violence by their girlfriends, often saying that the attacks did not hurt and that it was funny.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is forced or unwanted sexual activity or rape. It is sexual abuse to force or pressure someone to engage in sexual activity. Trying to engage in sexual activity with someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol is also sexual abuse. Girls in opposite-sex relationships are much more likely than boys to suffer from sexual abuse.


HOW FREQUENTLY DOES DATING VIOLENCE OCCUR?

This is a difficult question to answer because some studies only ask about physical abuse, while others include questions about mental/emotional abuse and sexual violence. Past estimates of dating violence among middle school and high school students range from 28% to 96%.

One recent national survey found that 1 in 11 high school students said they had been hit, slapped, or physically abused in the past year. 1 in 11 students also reported that they had been forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to. 96% of teens report mental/emotional abuse in their dating relationships.

What You Can Do

KNOW THE EARLY WARNING SIGNS

- You are pressured to make the relationship very serious or to have sex early in the relationship. 
- Extreme jealousy and possessiveness, saying these emotions are signs of love.
- Controlling you and forcefully making all decisions where the two of you are concerned.
- Refusing to consider your point of view or desires.
- Keeping you from spending time with close friends or family.
- Verbal abuse, including yelling, cussing, manipulation, spreading rumors and making you feel guilty.
- Drinking too much or using drugs and then blaming the alcohol and drugs for his/her behavior.
- Threatening physical violence. Previous abuse of a boyfriend/girlfriend or defending violence by others.

If you're in a relationship that in any way feels uncomfortable, awkward, tense or even scary, trust your feelings and get out. It could become, or may already be, abusive.

Always remember: You have every right to say no! No boyfriend or girlfriend has the right to tell you what you can or should do, what you can or should wear, or what kind of friends you should have.

IF YOU ARE IN A VIOLENT, OR POTENTIALLY VIOLENT, RELATIONSHIP, DO THIS:

Make a safety plan and get help. Talk with someone you trust: a teacher, guidance counselor, doctor, friend or parent. Contact the police or a local domestic violence center or call the **National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-SAFE**. Realize that violence will not just stop or go away. You cannot change your boyfriend/girlfriend by changing your behavior. You are not responsible for the abuse. Your boyfriend/girlfriend may need counseling or other help to change.

WATCH FOR FRIENDS WHO ARE ABUSED




Friends in abusive relationships may:

- Change their clothing or makeup.
- Lose confidence in themselves.
- Have difficulty making decisions.
- Stop spending time with you and other friends.
- Receive failing grades or quit school activities; and
- Turn to using alcohol or drugs.

If you think a friend is in an abusive relationship, try asking them:

- "You don't seem as happy as usual – are you okay?"
- "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

This indirect approach may prompt your friend to reveal what's wrong. Listen without judging, condemning, or giving unwanted advice. If a friend wants help, suggest that he or she take the steps listed above in order to find help. If you believe your friend is in serious danger, tell an adult you trust immediately. Do not try to "rescue" your friend and try to handle the situation on your own. 

TAKE ACTION IF YOU SUSPECT THAT SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS BEING ABUSIVE.

If you feel you are not in danger, talk to the person about his or her use of violence. Make sure that the person understands that it is both wrong and illegal. If the person is ready to make a change, help him/her get help.

IF YOU ARE HURTING SOMEONE ELSE, HAVE THE COURAGE TO GET HELP!

No matter what the other person does to provoke you. No matter how justified you feel. No matter what your friends do. It is never okay to harm someone else. Remember that violence is illegal and can land you in jail. You can learn new ways to:

- Deal with your anger
- Fight fair
- Communicate better
- Give and get love in relationships

Don't let shame or fear stop you. Talk to a parent, teacher, religious leader, doctor, nurse or guidance counselor immediately.

Or, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at **(800) 799-SAFE**. They can direct you to individuals and groups in your community who can help you to make a change.



HELP EDUCATE OTHER TEENS ABOUT DATING VIOLENCE

Counsel peers, staff a hotline, or speak to classes about the signs of an abusive relationship and where to find help. Encourage your church or school to develop programs to educate teens about dating violence, and work to make sure that there are resources for abused teens in your community.

National Domestic Violence Hotline
(800) 799-SAFE



The Dibble Institute
P. O. Box 7881
Berkeley, CA 94707-0881
1-800-695-7975
www.dibbleinstitute.org

Information provided by the Dibble Fund with permission from the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center. For additional information, please visit www.safeyouth.org.

WHAT IS THE BEST FRIENDS FOUNDATION?

The Best Friends Foundation strives to provide a network of programs that is dedicated to the physical and emotional well-being of adolescents.

It provides scientifically researched and developmentally sound curriculum designed for middle and high school students. The Foundation promotes self-respect through the practice of self-control and provides participants the skills, guidance and support to avoid risky behavior and reject illegal drug and alcohol use. In the spirit of true friendship, the Best Friends Foundation provides positive peer groups for adolescents and creates an environment that raises aspirations and promotes achievement.

WHAT IS DIAMOND GIRL LEADERSHIP?

Diamond Girl Leadership is a school based character-building program for girls that begins in the ninth grade and continues until high school graduation. Diamond Girl Leadership provides a developmentally sound curriculum in an educational setting which promotes fun, companionship, and caring. The Diamond Girl Leadership program is designed to keep girls interested, involved, and committed through high school and college. All Diamond Girls participate in the Diamond Girl Choir or Performance Dance Troupe which fosters discipline as well as the social and presentation skills important for future success. Our goal is for all Diamond Girls to graduate from high school with specific college, vocational, or career plans.

WHAT IS BEST MEN LEADERSHIP?

Best Men Leadership is a youth development program with a character-building curriculum, designed to provide positive and healthy answers to the challenges facing boys today. Due to the overwhelming demand for a boys' program, Best Men Leadership was created in the fall of 2003. It is modeled after the highly successful Diamond Girl Leadership program for girls. founded by Elayne Bennett in 1991. The primary goal of Best Men Leadership is to provide boys with the tools and the environment needed to help them develop into responsible young men worthy of respect.

DIAMOND GIRL
LEADERSHIP



24 years of serving youth

BEST FRIENDS FOUNDATION

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BEST MEN[®]



LEADERSHIP