



## Winter 2009 Informational Update

### Middle Earth Keeps Its Promises to Youth



Middle Earth is committed to insuring every child is the beneficiary of all “Five Promises” laid out by the America’s Promise Alliance (learn more at [www.americaspromise.org](http://www.americaspromise.org)). Each newsletter, we plan to elaborate on how Middle Earth keeps each of those promises to the local youth we serve. In this issue, we are focusing on Promise #4 for an Effective Education: “All children need the intellectual development, motivation and skills that equip them for successful work and lifelong learning. These result from having quality learning environments, challenging expectations and consistent guidance and mentoring.”

Our two Community Youth Centers offer a great deal of academic assistance and tutoring, including homework club opportunities. The Centers also open an hour early for those who simply come to do, and receive help with, homework. Our programs provide access to [www.graderesults.com](http://www.graderesults.com), a 24/7 online interactive tutorial service that assesses the student’s level by subject and provides tutorial instruction based on the youth’s actual textbook. All assessments and progress are recorded and monitored.

Youth in our programs who have struggled with education are encouraged to re-enter school. If that’s not appropriate, they are encouraged to obtain a GED. Middle Earth provides individual assistance and tutoring to prepare for the GED and provides transportation for the young person to get to the testing site. All of our programs encourage our youth to see college as an opportunity available for them. We provide field trips to college campuses. Many of the young people we serve are never encouraged by others to see college as a viable option for their future. Our youth often come back years later to tell us that our staff opened their eyes to possibilities they had never considered before or thought were unattainable. If they decide to attend college, our staff assists them with the enrollment process and helps them secure financial aid. We are offering each youth the chance to obtain marketable skills so that they can be an independent, responsible, productive adult.

#### Valuable Tips and Advice on Teens

Parents, teachers, coaches, and mentors to teens should consider subscribing to a valuable resource: our blog covers a wide range of adolescent issues from school, peer pressure, drugs, health or safety, sex, and more. <http://middleearthnj.wordpress.com>

#### Sign up to Receive this Newsletter Via Email

Visit our website to sign up to receive this newsletter over e-mail, saving stamps and paper. We do not use your e-mail in any way other than to occasionally update you on Middle Earth news.

#### Stars and Promises Holiday Concert

On Friday, December 11, The Peter Mayer Group will perform a holiday concert at the United Reformed Church in Somerville. Tickets are \$25 and benefit local charities. You can get more info, learn about the beneficiaries, and listen to their music at: [www.middleearthnj.org/starsandpromises/](http://www.middleearthnj.org/starsandpromises/).



### Affinity Federal Credit Union Donates Ten Laptops



Middle Earth is truly grateful to Affinity Federal Credit Union for donating 10 IBM Notebooks. Many of the youth we serve do not have computers at home. We offer computer labs for the kids to do homework and research, conduct employment searches and career planning, and generally improve their computer skills. Computers are a vital resource for our youth to attain marketable skills, which is a major step towards becoming responsible adults.





## Winter 2009 Informational Update

### Middle Earth Opens Eyes of Local Teen to the Future

Richard (name changed for privacy) wasn't worried. He was only 18-years-old, and he felt sure that his future would look much different than his present. Richard was currently on probation, in a gang, struggling with substance abuse, and was testing at a 9<sup>th</sup> grade level for reading and a 5<sup>th</sup> grade level for math. He wasn't employed and certainly didn't have any of the qualities an employer would look for, so it was much easier for Richard to focus on having fun in the present.



The staff at Middle Earth worked hard to garner Richard's trust and soon began to teach him about accepting the consequences of his actions and planning for the future. Once the staff helped him see clearly the future of his current path, he had all the motivation in the world to change course. Richard and the staff worked on his resume, phone skills, volunteering, academic skills, money management, career planning, and more. The staff advocated for Richard to be enrolled in summer school, and within 5 weeks, Richard received his high school diploma. Middle Earth helped him enroll in technical school and secure financial aid and housing. By the time Richard left for school, he had his substance abuse under control, his test scores had gone up to 11<sup>th</sup> grade for reading and 12<sup>th</sup> grade for math, and, perhaps most importantly, he understood the process for getting help and finding resources. Richard had this ability within him all along – the staff at Middle Earth just helped draw it out. Now, this blossoming adult doesn't make impulsive choices based on the short-term because Middle Earth helped him realize that the horizon of his future is endless.

If you would like to learn more about a topic in our newsletter, please call 908-725-7223 or e-mail [office@middleearthnj.org](mailto:office@middleearthnj.org).

P.O. Box 8045  
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

