



STAY CONNECTED™

A community supporting
teens & young adults

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DONATE AT:

www.StayConnectedCommunity.org

Donations are Tax Deductible

*No one was prouder of
Giovanna than her son Coty
when she graduated from
Seattle University.*



December 16, 2017

Dear Friend:

Relationships matter. Healthy relationships help children grow up to a stable, healthy, fulfilling life.

Please join me in seeing that all kids in South Bellevue have a chance for healthy relationships with adults in their neighborhood who care. STAY Connected is building that community.

When we met Giovanna, we were just friends looking out for neighborhood kids. Her life was never easy—born in California to deaf, immigrant parents, the fourth of eight children. Yet she was determined to go to college. When she became pregnant at 14 and refused to leave school, it was clear that nothing would stop her from getting a degree.

Giovanna needed adults to support her then; but now, others rely on her. Seattle University recognized what Giovanna could offer with her leadership and determination; she received a scholarship to help earn her BA. After graduation she went to work helping teens at a youth-services agency.

Still eager to help teens, Giovanna volunteers with STAY Connected. Always the learner and leader, she's back in school at the University of Washington where she will graduate in 2018 with a master's in social work.

From Caring Friends to a Nonprofit Organization

Meanwhile, STAY Connected grew up as well. We saw what a difference relationships made in young lives. To bring that advantage to more children, we built a small organization that could train more community advocates to support neighborhood children. We received tax-exempt status two years ago.

STAY Connected helps Bellevue students access the 40 Developmental Assets they need to grow up strong. The Search Institute identified these essentials that give children the concrete basic needs, educational environments, and social-emotional skills to grow into healthy, responsible citizens.

"Soundview was a place where I could let go of the daily problems in my life and focus on being a kid—having fun, making new friends. I learned more about myself in a few weeks of camp than an entire year of sitting at home. Without Soundview, I doubt I would be as confident or as honest in my people skills as an adult. It really helped me break out of that awkward teenage shell."—Jacob Easter, Age 27, STAY Connected camper, ages 9-18



These young people attended Soundview Camp on STAY Connected scholarships. Now high-school graduates, their involvement with STAY Connected gave them camp, advocates, and lifelong friends.

Building Community Around Young People

Recently, we began hosting workshops that bring diverse community members together to understand the impact on our youth of adverse childhood experiences ([ACEs](#)). Participants learn how relationships help young people develop resilience skills to overcome the impact of those negative experiences. We look forward to having you join us for an event where we build community and understanding.

As a registered state organization, we can connect with community agencies to access resources for our youth members. Our relationships with public schools, colleges, and state and local family and children's service

agencies allow us to advocate for appropriate support for each individual. Our direct services focus on the relationship supports and educational enrichment that are not available without your support and donations.

STAY Connected has reached a critical moment. To maintain tax-exempt IRS status, we must show broad community support. While our adult advocates will remain volunteers, we need your donations to train and support additional volunteers and to continue our community education outreach and relationship development with young people.

Our youth members also continue to require concrete supports for basic needs and enrichments so they can thrive.

"I saw that there were children in my son's class who lacked school supplies, materials, and even food. It seemed so easy to invite the boy home with us after school. That snack break began a pivotal relationship for that child, and for us."

—Marci Hennes, STAY Connected Advocate

Please visit [our website and give generously today to support youth with relationships and enrichment](#) that build success:

- \$500 provides a one-week experience at camp including a sleeping bag, camp supplies & transportation.
- \$250 provides a basic cell phone for one year, which keeps us connected to our young members.
- \$200 buys winter clothes for a teenager and a guided shopping trip to help them learn to shop for value.
- \$30 provides a movie and simple meal for a child and a friend—a connection to healthy relationships.

Many thanks from all of us, adults and youth, at STAY Connected for your kindness, your support, and your donation to these children.

Sincerely,

Marian Peiffer, President—Alison Uppendahl, Vice-President/Secretary—Lisa Snyder-Stone, Treasurer

Make your tax-deductible donation now at www.StayConnectedCommunity.org