

Stan presents Ask Your Financial Advisor at 7 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Downtown Senior Center. His topic on January 20 is "2011-What Do You Do Now?"

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Program seeks senior volunteers to mentor teen mothers

Senior Services, Inc. of Wichita is partnering with Child Start Inc. for a project that will match senior women with teen mothers.

Child Start Inc., the local provider of Head Start and Early Head Start programs, received a federal stimulus grant to expand their services to young children.

Mothers of these children need lots of support and that's where Senior Services, Inc. comes in. They will be responsible for recruiting and training women 55 and older to match with the teens.

Child Start staff will recruit the teen mothers. Staff from both agencies will be involved in monitoring the matches.

Mentors can spend time with the teen doing a variety of activities, which can include cooking and eating together, shopping, playing games or just visiting.

A mentor can make a big difference in the lives of these young women. Research

shows that parenting teenagers in a mentor relationship are three to four times more likely to postpone a second pregnancy.

Pregnant and parenting teenagers who have mentors have lower levels of depression and feel less socially isolated.

The babies of these mothers benefit as well. Babies of teen mothers with mentors are breastfed longer and are taken to the hospital less often.

Being a mentor has its own rewards. According to Angelina Vaquera-Linke, recruiter and coordinator of the project, there is much to be gained by the senior mentor as well.

"Aside from making a difference in the life of a young mother, studies show that mentoring contributes to a greater sense of purpose and allows mentors to feel more connected to the community."

Mentoring also leads to a longer, better quality of life and improves mental

and physical health. Mentors even have decreased risk of illness and disease.

The project is looking for women age 55 and older who would like to share their experiences with a parenting teenager and develop a positive relationship with her.

Applicants must pass background checks and commit to six months of mentoring activities twice a month for 8

hours. Training will be provided before the match and is available throughout the mentoring process.

Those interested in applying may contact Angelina directly at 316-267-0302, ext. 203. She is also available to speak to groups who want to learn more about the program.

Workshop offers tips for clutter control

If your possessions are about to overtake your home—or you know someone in that situation, a free workshop in January may offer just the help you need.

"What a Mess: Understanding the Continuum of Clutter," is Friday, Jan. 14 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the American Red Cross, 1900 E. Douglas.

Nancy Trout, LSCSW, of Prairie View will lead a workshop designed to help you

learn factors that lead to accumulating and keeping stuff and understanding what hoarding really is.

Participants will also learn strategies to tackle the mess and recognize that it's more than just cleaning up the mess and what community resources are available to help.

To register, call the Central Plains Area Agency on Aging at 660-5144.

YOUR LIFE,

Vickie Pennick, MS, LMFT *Take the first*

step to improve