

## **A Child Nearby Needs You!** by Nancy Torrison, Kinship

“Josephine”, a lonely 10 year old living in Hopkins, is on Kinship’s waiting list for a mentor because she is starting to struggle in school, is becoming shyer and more withdrawn, and is picked on by other children. Josephine’s father passed away several years ago and she still misses him. She loves her step-father, but he is no longer living with their family. Josephine’s mother works full-time and has a new baby, so there isn’t a lot of time for her right now at home.

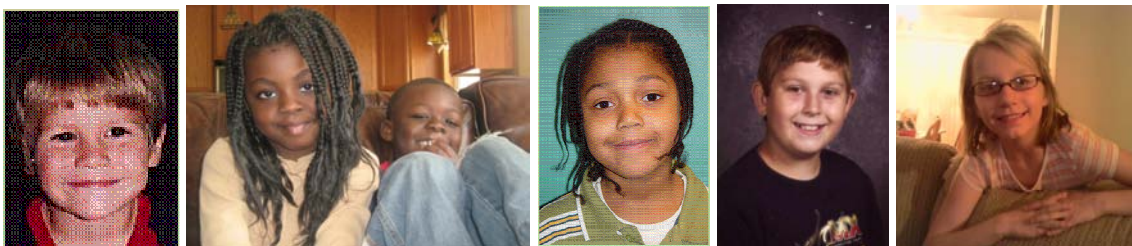
When you meet Josephine, you will be delighted. She lights up with a little attention and is fun to be around. She wishes she had her own Kinship friend (mentor) to talk to, have fun with her, and help her with her reading. Josephine is one of 150 children on our capped waiting list who are in need of additional adult support in their young chaotic lives. Josephine’s help will come from someone who knows their own blessings and is eager to give back.

Our work at Kinship of Greater Minneapolis, a 52 year old faith-based mentoring nonprofit, exposes us daily to children, ages 5 to 15 throughout the metro area, who know discouragement and hopelessness. Some of these children have encountered more crises in their first ten years than most of us have ever seen. And while most of us have never wanted for support during our times of trial, many of the children we work with have few adults to turn to when life gets confusing and dark. We are endlessly amazed by the redeeming power of these simple friendships we create between a loving adult and a child in need. And, we are eternally grateful for the loving adults who make time for a child in their busy lives.

So many of us have felt deep helpless pain for those who know endless suffering in their lives and our hearts break for mothers and fathers who cannot protect their families from violence, hunger and illness. Our sense of justice and decency is challenged by watching children try to protect themselves from the unfair circumstances into which they have been born. As educators, you have all seen these kids who know every day as a challenge. As educators, you probably know the power of advocacy – in our business, we call this mentoring. Did you know that studies show that mentoring reduces:

- Drug Abuse by 46%
- School Drop-outs by 52%
- Teen Pregnancy by 35%, and
- Violent Behavior by 52%

For more information about mentoring a child in your community, please call 612-588-4655 or visit [www.kinship.org](http://www.kinship.org).



150 children waiting – each with their own stories and their own dreams!

**Do you have a few hours a week to help?**