

VOICES



The Newsletter of the Touchstones' Discussion Project

www.touchstones.org

Touchstones builds critical thinking, communication, leadership, and community through discussion-based programs for all people.

Touchstones Reaches Two New Communities

by Lynn Coultier
Touchstones Office Manager

At Liberty Place in Whitehall, Montana people who have been affected by severe brain injuries have an opportunity to improve their condition. For some that means relearning to walk, and for some that means returning to work. The overall goal is to improve and hopefully regain lost ground from the time of the injury.

The motto at Liberty Place is *Freedom to Try and Courage to Soar*. The clients participate in a variety of activities ranging from learning to farm to being part of music ensembles. Recently, Liberty Place added Touchstones to the list of available programs offered to the residents, and two groups are now meeting weekly in Touchstones discussions. Through Touchstones they are practicing and, in some cases, relearning the skills of listening attentively, speaking publicly, reasoning, practicing leadership, and working as part of a team. These skills assist them in discovering possibilities and building on current strengths. Liberty Place takes pride in fostering a culture that encourages residents to strive for the best life has to offer, and Touchstones is proud to be part of their programming.

Touchstones has also been introduced to another new adult population at the Langton Green Community Farm, located in Annapolis, MD. The mission at Langton Green is to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live with the highest possible degree of independence and quality of life. Langton Green serves more than 100 individuals, who participate in a variety of programs, with Touchstones as one of their newest additions. Through Touchstones discussions, participants have the opportunity to enhance their communication skills, learn other new skills useful in employment, and engage in an activity they may otherwise not have been given the chance to.



“The Touchstones Project at Liberty Place continues to be a wonderful addition to our programming. It really allows our residents to speak and discuss their thoughts freely. The text is easily understood and allows for the exploration of many ideas. Participation is high, and everyone speaks at some point during group. Some of the residents want to read ahead in the books which shows that they really enjoy the stories. I have taught many groups with our residents and Touchstones continues to get more participation than many of the other classes we provide. Touchstones is a valuable learning tool that is allowing our residents to expand their knowledge.” – Beth Miller, Liberty Place Staffer

We thank everyone who brings Touchstones programs to life for hundreds of thousands of students of all ages, every day.

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