



WINS Family August Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 1

Dear WINS family,

Greetings again... Summer is in full swing and the Academy is an exciting place to be, and WINS is the most exciting program here (at least to us).

As has been mentioned before, WINS is in its 25th year of operation! Appropriately, this year's WINS I class is one of the largest in WINS history—there are 31 new young ladies committed to learning about ecology. WINS II is up to 35 participants and there are even two recent alumni who are currently back, working with another program here at the Academy during their summer recess from college!

Furthermore, we are actively seeking previous WINS participants. Having access to a diverse pool of 25 years of achieving women is an amazing resource. The format and longevity of the program provides a framework not only for friendships, but for guidance and mentoring relationships as well. As such, we are trying to form a WINS Alumni Network where we can begin to develop links between alumni and current students. Thus, the asset for this issue is **Positive Peer Pressure** (see pages 3 and 4)...

Please note: all the information contained in these "asset" articles consists of general, simple, helpful ideas for navigating the teen years—not meant at all to be specific instructions for your family's dynamics. Please accept them as simple ideas for encouraging positive development, built around issues you have probably already considered.

Remember—if you have things that you want to share, or ideas about a topic, please drop it in the mail, send an email, or give us a call..

As always, working with you to ensure the girls' success...

Dates to Remember

WINS I

Regular Classes -
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Last day of Summer session - Aug. 24
PEEC trip - Aug. 13-17
First class of Fall session - Sept. 12
Maize Maze - Sept. 15

WINS II

Canoe trip - August 30
Maize Maze - Sept. 15

Assets:

What are assets?

**Assets are key
building
blocks that
help youth to
succeed.**

*Each newsletter will
feature a different
asset.*

THIS TIME:

**Positive Peer
Pressure**

Youth are more
likely to grow up
healthy when their
best friends model
responsible
behavior.

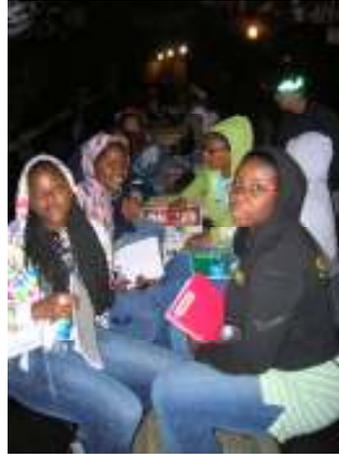
WINS I Overview

WINS I has kicked off to a great start. As previously stated, this year's class has 31 students! With such a large group, you cannot miss this boisterous group of young ladies eager to learn.

In that endeavor, WINS I has completed several weeks of class. Each week has a different theme and accompanying trips. To explore human and ecological concerns in public spaces, we visited Rittenhouse Square and the Wissahickon section of Fairmount Park. The follow-

ing week, Food Week, we foraged for nutrients at Whole Foods Market and visited some farmer's markets and community gardens. During energy week, we went to an anthracite coal mine in Ashland, PA and saw wind turbines in Atlantic City.

As if that were not enough, we also had a Safari Overnight at the Academy. WINS I, Najwa, Meagan, and Jas-



mine (a WINS alumni) slept (very little) overnight at the museum as the girls built bonds and had some fun.

Through all of these activities, friendships have blossomed and are deepening. We are so excited to see how this class will continue to interact

and the growth that is bound to happen.

WINS II

There are several new additions to WINS II. Nadaysha, Somaya, Saieda, Shahna, Shanaya, Nadiah, and Hadiyah have transitioned from WINS I to WINS II. All but Shahna (who is involved in a music project this summer,) have chosen to work at the Academy as Explainers. If you see them in North American Hall, stop by and be amazed by all the knowledge they can impart. (And of course, there are older Explainers throughout the other areas of the



museum as well.)

WINS II has also started this year's monthly projects. Fourteen students, Najwa and Meagan headed back up to the Rittenhousetown area of Fairmount Park, to work with our old pal, *Friends of the Wissahickon* Volunteer Coordinator

David Bower. We were also joined by several members of the Senior Environment Corps as we removed invasive plants in the historical area.

Invasive species can be detrimental to an ecosystem. These foreign plants and animals have been transplanted to new places where they do not occur naturally and where they have no predators to naturally check their populations. Therefore, they begin out-competing the native plants/ animals who use the same resources. This destabilizes the environment, and the effects can be devastating. Thus it is imperative that people try and get rid of the invasive species that we have introduced, and the WINS II group did a fantastic job doing just that!

WINS Alumni

Hello! We are thrilled to be in contact with you again! WINS is not only about teaching ecology, but also about building a network of ambitious, creative women who can influence positive change in the world, from the age of 13 onward. For years, the networking element of WINS has been on a student-by-student basis. Some of you kept in touch with fellow classmates, but to

a large degree, we all sort of fell out of touch.

WINS is unique in that we have 25 years of women to draw from- for inspiration, professional networking, mentoring and role models! We are currently planning a WINS 25th Anniversary celebration for the fall, but this is just one night. In order to develop a truly useful network, more communication needs to occur. We are currently

considering various ways to facilitate this communication.

Please peruse the enclosed list of alumni that have and have not been located. If you know of alumni that have not been found, please send their information to us (Meagan's contact information is on the back cover). Also, if you see a name on the "found" list and are anxious to rekindle your friendship, let us know and we can help to reconnect you...

Photos of Friends: Snapshots of Responsibility

The best way to encourage children to choose positive, healthy relationships is to model them ourselves. Take out an old yearbook or photo album. Look at pictures of the friends you had as a teenager.

Think about the friends who acted in ways you admired. Most people can remember at least one person who always sensed when things weren't going well and called, sent a note, or showed up to find out what was wrong. Often, these are the people who turned out to be life-long friends.



How about people who weren't such true friends? Was there someone who spread rumors about you, or talked behind your back? Did you ever have a friend who tried to get you to do things you didn't want to do? The pain of these kinds of experiences often teaches young people a lot about how they want to be treated by others. No one forced you to like people who were good to you, or feel angry at people who hurt you. You had to make your own choices about who your friends were. In the same way, we can't control who our daughters



choose as friends. They are exploring their world, themselves, and the people around them. Sometimes they're attracted to people we don't approve of (and that, deep inside, they probably don't approve of either). Other times, they say the "good" kids are boring. However, if we model responsible relationships, talk to our daughters about how others act, and are involved in their lives, gradually they'll see that friends who act, talk, and think in positive ways will bring out the best in them.

Quick tip:

Examine your own friendships before you examine your child's.

Time Together

Three easy ways to help your child to choose responsible friends:

- 1. Make sure your kids get to know your friends. The best way to teach is to be a role model.*
- 2. Include your daughter's friends in some family activities. Get to know them.*
- 3. Talk about your childhood friends and why some friendships end.*

Helpful Hints

Tips to support girls in choosing responsible friendships:

- Get to know your daughter's friends and their families. Point out what you like about them.
- Get to know the parents of your daughter's friends. Share your values and rules with them and ask about theirs.
- Don't jump to conclusions based on what friends look like.
- Be honest with your daughter when you're concerned about a relationship.

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TALK TOGETHER

What's **RESPONSIBLE**?

Our children may need guidance in choosing friends who model responsible behavior. Use this "responsible" checklist with your daughter to evaluate a few friends. Discuss with your daughter what each word means:

- Reliable**
- Equal**
- Self-controlled**
- Principled**
- Open-minded**
- Nurturing**
- Sensible**
- Intuitive**
- Brave**
- Lovable**
- Ethical**

Questions to discuss with your daughter:

- Which of your friends would you most want to be like? Why?
- What bothers you about your friends? Why?
- How do you feel when you are with your friends? Do they bring out the best in you?

Final Word

"A friend is an extension of yourself, without which you are not complete."

- Susan Polis Schultz, poet

Meanwhile, some of our friends have reason to celebrate!-
Happy Birthday to You...



Christina Newton - Aug. 4 (17)
Daekyah Brown-Dinwiddie - Aug. 7 (14)
Demetra Davis - Aug. 7 (16)
Carriene Mosley - Aug. 8 (16)
Araya Shepherd - Aug. 20 (14)
Ishara Pinkney-Lee - Aug. 26 (16)
Maria Elena Nieves - Sept. 11 (15)
Kenya Thompson - Sept. 5 (17)
Sade McClinton - Sept. 6 (18)
Somaya Anderson - Sept. 9 (15)
Maria Elena Nieves - Sept. 11 (15)
Saieda Bethea - Sept. 14 (15)
Evelyn Ogden - Sept 17 (15)
Arith Reyes - Sept. 17 (17)



WINS I eating lunch before heading into Pioneer Tunnel...