

Letter to Editor – The Oregonian

October 8, 2008

As a volunteer for a local non-profit, I know firsthand the return on investment of programs funded by the City of Portland Children's Investment Fund (CHIF).

Since 2003, CHIF has provided funding to Metropolitan Family Service for its Experience Corps intergenerational mentoring program. The program places teams of volunteer mentors, aged 55+, at 8 Portland elementary schools where 64%-84% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Annually, 200 children receive one-on-one mentoring from a caring and skilled older adult. Experience Corps teams have made a marked improvement in the lives of the children they serve; 92% of teachers report "significant" or "extremely significant" progress among children with an Experience Corps mentor.

The Experience Corps program costs \$36 per student per month. Compare that to the price of serving a child in a correctional facility, which ranges from \$37,000 to \$60,000 per year.

Vote yes for Ballot Measure 26-94.

Josh Reynolds
Chair, Metropolitan Family Service
Board of Directors