



Team Effort

The SUCCESS Foundation forms alliances with top youth organizations.

by David Lee

The great thing about setting goals is that when you reach them, you get to set new ones.

Just one year after its launch, the SUCCESS Foundation, created by *SUCCESS* magazine's owner Stuart Johnson, has distributed more than 1 million free copies of *SUCCESS for Teens*™ in print and audio through its partnerships with schools, churches and nonprofit youth-development organizations. The book is filled with inspirational stories written from teens' perspectives that encourage young people to set goals, pursue their dreams and understand how the choices they make on a daily basis can affect their lives. Distributing the book, as well as an abridged audio version in CD and MP3 formats, is the foundation's first initiative.

The eight principles described in *SUCCESS for Teens* are based on author Jeff Olson's book *The Slight Edge*®, which demonstrates how small, daily, positive choices add up to create a significant difference over time. A *SUCCESS for Teens Facilitator's Guide* is also available.

John Fleming, executive director of the SUCCESS Foundation, says that while skills such as goal-setting, dream-building and time management may be basic, they are not taught enough.

"The principles and values often associated with what we refer to as *personal development* are not typically taught in the traditional educational system," Fleming says. "This book can make a difference. It can say what a teacher may not be able to say or what a parent might not be able to articulate."

Tammy Oehlke, a high-school career preparation teacher in Garland, Texas, agrees. She teaches her students the life and career skills they need to succeed after high school, and she recently introduced her classes and other teachers in her school district to *SUCCESS for Teens*.

"It seems so many students today are not taught the essential skills needed for personal success, first from their parents and second by teachers," Oehlke says. "I wish all high-school students could have the opportunity to read *SUCCESS for Teens* in order to set goals and reach them, to develop character, to believe in themselves and to be successful people. *SUCCESS for Teens* is helping reinforce lessons I teach



students in goal-setting, self-esteem, time management and several other key points.”

Now, the SUCCESS Foundation is building on its momentum by forming alliances with several key organizations to help get more books into the hands of thousands more teens. The foundation is developing partnerships with youth-focused organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, America’s Promise Alliance, Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, Boys and Girls Clubs, Just Say Yes and Optimist International.

“These alliances add so much value to our efforts and reinforce our commitment to support leading organizations that are already working with youth through well-respected programs,” Fleming says. “Through organizations such as these, we reach a great number of teens who are already in some type of structured program.”

Big Brothers Big Sisters is the nation’s largest donor-based volunteer network of mentors for youth, working with some 250,000 young people annually. The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters is to enrich, encourage and empower children to reach their highest potential through safe, positive, one-to-one mentoring relationships.

“Together, we [the SUCCESS Foundation and BBBS] are changing what it means to grow up in America,” says Todd Bristow, North Texas director of resource development for BBBS. “The gift of literacy is the most valuable gift that can be transferred to a person of any age. During these times, our children urgently require the skills, tools and sustained encouragement that will guide them through a range of needs. It is my belief, through partnerships of this kind, we can guide our children through the steps required to reach self-fulfillment and become a whole person. If we achieve that goal, we can truly change the way children grow up in America at every level.”

The executives at America’s Promise Alliance are also excited to partner with the SUCCESS Foundation. Founded by Gen. Colin Powell, APA is a network of more than 300 corporations, nonprofits, faith-based organizations and advocacy groups that aim to improve the lives of children. The Alliance ensures that all young people graduate from high school armed with the knowledge and tools to succeed in college, work and life.

“America’s Promise Alliance is excited to share the work of the SUCCESS Foundation and its *SUCCESS for Teens* project with our youth-focused partners as a complement to programs directed at keeping our kids in school and better prepared for life,” says Elaine Leibsohn, vice president of national action strategies.



SUCCESS Foundation Director of Development Katharine Gardner with Conrad Algaban, a *SUCCESS for Teens* reader.

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—Todd Bristow, Big Brothers Big Sisters

“The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship is so pleased to be partnering with the SUCCESS Foundation,” says Laura Maczka, executive director for NFTE, which helps low-income youth build skills and teaches them entrepreneurial creativity through the core values of individuality, initiative and community.

“We will be facilitating distribution of the *SUCCESS for Teens* book to all 2,500-plus of our young entrepreneurs in our program in the Dallas Independent School District,” Maczka says. “This is a perfect partnership from our perspective. The NFTE curriculum teaches youth how to successfully take control of their futures by starting their own businesses. The ‘value added’ piece that the *SUCCESS for Teens* book provides will teach them how to successfully take control of their lives. Feedback from NFTE teachers who were trained on the Success Principles has been overwhelmingly positive.”

The SUCCESS Foundation has also enlisted the help of a talented and unique speaker to help in its mission. Dalton Sherman is an 11-year-old who believes in himself and his possibilities. He has appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and spoken to teachers’ organizations and churches about the importance of self-motivation and discipline. Now, Sherman has been named youth spokesperson for the SUCCESS Foundation. He will share his belief in himself and the work of the foundation, while serving as a role model for kids everywhere.

“I am excited about being the youth spokesperson for the SUCCESS Foundation,” Sherman says. “SUCCESS and I believe that all kids have the potential to do great things. And with belief like that, we can change the world!”

So, what’s the next goal for the SUCCESS Foundation? To get 10 million copies of *SUCCESS for Teens* into the hands of young people. “Through this foundation, we hope to inspire kids to treat education seriously, to treat their futures seriously, and to realize that their day-to-day decisions have an impact on what they do in life,” Fleming says. With the help of the foundation’s new partners, it could be just a matter of time before that goal is reached as well.

If you’re interested in getting these life-changing personal-development materials in the hands of teens, visit SUCCESSFoundation.org. Your donations make it possible for these materials and programs to be available free of charge to nonprofit organizations. **S**



Dalton Sherman