



Mentoring Alliance celebrates 15 years

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On a recent
close to 700

balmy evening,
mentors, mentees

and families converged on the Flowery Elementary School playground to celebrate the place where the Stand By Me Mentoring Program first began some 15 years ago. What started in 1996 as a small academic tutoring program to help struggling readers at Flowery has grown into one of the largest and most respected one-on-one mentoring programs in the state. Today, 450 kids in local public schools are matched with caring adult role models from the community. The rewards are priceless.

The celebratory party wouldn't have been possible without the help of many more members of the community. Sonoma Market donated all of the hotdogs and hamburgers, members of the Kiwanis Club of Sonoma Plaza cooked them, volunteers from Travis Air Force base helped with set-up and clean-up, the Girl Scouts of Northern California worked the food buffet, the mentors contributed salads and desserts to share, and the parents brought beverages. Kids enjoyed the carnival setting, complete with a climbing wall, two-story slide, jolly jump, arts and crafts projects, festival games and more. Wonderful entertainment – drumming, hip-hop and break dancing – was performed by talented mentees, thanks to instruction by Sonoma Music Arts School, and the Sonoma Academy of Dance. The incredible evening celebrated 15 years of 'community support' for the children of Sonoma Valley.

For more information about the Sonoma Valley Mentoring Alliance, please call 938.1990, or visit sonomamentoring.org.