



YPA partners with Goodwill to hold GoodGuides Youth Event



By [Christine Schirato](#)

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□ Tonight, kids will be heading to Grove United Methodist Church in Moxham to play some games and possibly meet a mentor.

"There are a lot of kids who need some guidance and they need the right direction and some support," said Cindy O'Connor, GoodGuides Youth Mentoring Program manager.

GoodGuides is a national program and is "designed to divert youth between the ages of 12 and 17 from the juvenile justice system and support them in making positive choices, contributing to the community and exploring appropriate career choices."

This event, which will run from 6 to 8 p.m. June 30, is one of many events to come, O'Connor said.

"It is the kick off for one of many activities we would like to do."

Kids can expect board games, chess and possibly more.

"Maybe even matching up some kids," O'Connor said.

"If we see chemistry going on, we would like to see if they can be matched up (with mentors)."

Possible mentors are members of the Young Professionals of the Alleghenies.

Megan Seese, of YPA and who is helping to organize the event, said the group wants to get involved to help out, even if weekly mentoring isn't a possibility.

"We still wanted to be involved and wanted to help in some way," she said.

The group hopes that kids come and have fun.

"We have planned several different activities. We are going to do some career related games with them," she said.

Village Street Cafe is donating food, Seese said.

Being involved in some way is a way of giving back.

"The main thing we always say is that kids are the future," she said. "Many of us as young professionals have gone off to college and have come back and we live here and work here."

O'Connor said she hopes other groups step up and help mentor the kids involved in the program.

"We want the program to continue to grow and have more involvement from the community. We are working with a lot of youth service organizations who have referred youth to us. We are in a working partnership with the Community Foundation (of the Alleghenies) and the Community Foundation Intervention," she said.

"We have a collaboration and we are working with different folks to make sure kids are getting mentored throughout the community," O'Connor continued.

"There are a lot of kids who need some guidance. They need the right direction and some support."

For more information, or to become a mentor, email O'Connor coconnor@goodwilljohnstown.org or call her at 536-3536.

More information can also be found at www.goodwillsouthcentralpa.org.

