



**The Stone Soup Leadership Institute's
Pilot Programs with book & curriculum**
Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes

The Children's Village

Prior to launching the book, we conducted a 12-week pilot program in partnership with the Children's Village, the nation's largest residential treatment center serving New York City's most seriously troubled students, many who have never been in school before. Few had been exposed to ordinary people who want to make a difference. Few of them believed that one person can do much.

Most had no hope for change. Their Greenburgh Eleven Union Free School District Middle School integrated the book, *Stone Soup for the World* into the school's Skill streaming Social Skills Program, a structured learning approach that teaches students pro-social skills in weekly counseling sessions. Teachers used these inspiring stories about African American and Hispanic teens like them who'd experienced similar challenges in their lives.

They connected storytelling with writing and language arts projects and discussions about sharing, caring and giving. Together they discovered how people can work together to improve their lives and their communities. This interactive learning led to many creative activities. Students made lists of "value" words about prosocial behaviors. They started participating in community service projects and involved with conflict management, peer mediation and trust initiatives. They came to see how one person could make a difference - and when they work together, they can change the world.

YMCA of the USA

The YMCA of the USA is working with us to pilot test the Leader's Guide for the book, *Stone Soup for the World*. The YMCA of the USA was chosen for this collaborative effort with the Foundation because of its outstanding leadership in developing after-school programs that help fulfill their vision of building strong kids, strong families and strong communities. Eight sites were selected from the 2,220 YMCAs across the country including: the YMCA of Metropolitan Minneapolis, the North Suburban YMCA of Greater Boston's Earth Service Corps (YESC) after-school program, the Partners Program at Springfield College's YMCA, the Allston-Brighton Family Branch YMCA with Boston College volunteers involved with their mentor-based counseling program, Virginia Tech's YMCA in Blackburg, VA, Grafton, West Virginia's HI-Y School Day Plus program, the Youth as Resources Program at the Muncie Family YMCA in Indiana and the Milwaukee YMCA's Passports for Youth Program. These YMCAs are integrating the book and the new Leader's Guide into the service-learning curriculum of their after-school programs.

The Guide serves as a reflection tool and action resource supplementing a variety of YMCA youth development programs. These eight sites are making an impact locally while helping the YMCA reach its commitment to America's Promise to increase the number of volunteers nationally to 580,600 and helping the Stone Soup Foundation move towards its commitment of getting the book into the hands of a million young people. In addition, they are contributing to the emerging field of service learning and those are looking for ways to teach young people about civic responsibility.

The Leader's Guide is also being used by:

- Mentors at Big Brothers, Big Sisters of New York City are using it as a handbook to teach young people values and character-building qualities and business and citizenship lessons.
- Teachers in public and private schools to help them meet the mandate of providing community service opportunities prior to their graduation.