Mentoring USA Meets San Patrignano

Azzurra Giorgi (October 18, 2012)



In 1987, Matilda Raffa Cuomo, wife of the former governor of the state of New York, started a project named "Mentoring." Her mission was to drive children to gain success in their life, despite economical or social program. Now Mentoring found an allied in Letizia Moratti and her "San Patrignano."

A mentor for success. A mentor to evaluate skills, ideas and to face fears. Based on these beliefs, Matilda Raffa Cuomo [2], wife of the former governor of the state of New York, started a project called “Mentoring [3]” in 1987.

Her mission was to drive children to gain success in their life, despite economical or social problems. So she decided to found the New York State Mentoring Program, whose goal was to create positive connections between designed mentors and children, ages seven to twenty one.

“We have to control and supervise our children,” said Mrs. Cuomo, recalling her own personal

experience with her grandson: “When I go visiting him, I always see him playing with his iPad or Mac, he doesn't even turn to say 'hello!' because he is too concentrated on what he is doing,” admitted her. “I'm grateful to Steve Jobs because he simplified our lives, but these kids are totally into these kind of technologies and relationships. We have to supervise them in order to let them know what real life and real relationships are” - she continued.
During her speech, she pointed out the fundamental foci of her mission: home, school and community. “With the support of these institutions,” she said, “children and teenagers will be able to gain success in their lives.”

The project, which became a non-profit in 1995, got the attention of some important figures, such as Barbara Bush, who described the program as a “model for the whole country,” and President Barack Obama, who designed the program as a tool for success for the young generations.

But Mentoring also had success abroad. In fact, Mrs Cuomo found an allied in Letizia Moratti [4], former Minister of Public Education, who started a similar program in Italy, in San Patrignano [5], near Rimini. San Patrignano is a community whose goals are based on
the recovery, and especially the prevention of addictions in teenagers, giving them the support they need.

“San Patrignano” and “Mentoring USA/Italia” have now started an exchange program between communities and mentors, in order to connect two cultures and two countries.

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