



DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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2011 Holidays Observed

Teens In "Our Piece Of The Pie" Program Produce Record

By Steve Coates, Our Piece Of The Pie



A thumping bass groove fills the air in Our Piece of the Pie's® Northend Youth Center in Hartford. It's not your typical after-school program.

Entering OPP's Multi-Media classroom, you might think you were interrupting the recording session of a world famous band. The studio is filled with state of the art recording equipment, microphones, keyboards and drums. OPP youth are cutting their latest single "The DCF Song"—a soulful tribute to the state agency that has brought them together, and made their lives so much better.

All seven, who wrote, produced and recorded the track, are DCF youth referred to OPP by the agency.

Our Piece of the Pie, a leading youth development agency, helps Hartford youth overcome economic and social barriers to find success and achieve financial independence. Multi-Media is one of OPP's 7 youth businesses which give young people hands-on training in fields such as media, computer technology, manufacturing, graphic design and advocacy.

The partnership between DCF and OPP helps dozens of DCF youth prepare for success in education and employment. The bond also helps these young people come together as a team and resist the temptation of the streets.

Ted, 16, is one of the co-writers of "The DCF Song."

"All the kids here have been through some serious stuff," said Ted. "We have so much in common. We're like a family now."



The chorus of the DCF song says it all: "Through all the troubles, through all the pain, through all the struggles, I'll be okay. Someone is there for me, I'm thanking them for that, as long as I'm around somebody has my back."

"It's great for the youth to be able to express themselves and show their talent," said Multi Media Integrated Learning Trainer Jaime McDonald. "They wanted to show how much the DCF has meant to them."

"The DCF Song" is just one of the tracks on Multi-Media's latest CD "Talents from The Streets II".

"We've all had our struggles," said Sarah, 15, one of the performers on the CD. "The song lets kids know that there is always someone out there who cares about them."

This winter OPP's Multi-Media is working on the video for "The DCF Song." They want to bring their positive message to the screen.

Ted says he wants to be a lawyer if a career in music isn't in his future.

"I feel blessed that I'm in this program," Ted said

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