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Goodwill Industries® of the Conemaugh Valley is proud to launch a new program in Cambria, Bedford and Blair Counties designed to assist youth in overcoming disadvantages and avoiding delinquency. The effort is part of a national mentoring program known as Goodwill® GoodGuides™ that helps teens finish school and transition into productive careers through the guidance of trusted adults.

“Goodwill has a long history of helping people find work,” said Phyllis J. Bandstra, Goodwill of the Conemaugh Valley Inc., President and CEO. “A crucial part of that history is making sure that families are strong. Goodwill GoodGuides™ can help keep youth who are at-risk get on the right path, away from trouble and toward a better future. That’s good for everyone involved.”

The Goodwill GoodGuides™ program is made possible through a two-year grant awarded to Goodwill of the Conemaugh Valley, Inc. The donation is part of a grant award to Goodwill Industries International from the U.S. Department of Justice and dispersed to 56 independent Goodwill agencies in 38 states, including 4 in Pennsylvania.

The overall goal of the Goodwill GoodGuides™ program is to help youth build career plans and skills, and prepare for school completion, post-secondary training and productive work by providing structured and supportive relationships with trusted adult mentors. It targets youths between the ages of 12 and 17 who are at-risk for dropping out of school, facing legal troubles, or are at risk for delinquency due to issues such as abuse, disability, drug or alcohol dependence, or gang membership.

“With GoodGuides™, we will be able to offer expanded mentoring services to the youth of our community,” said Bandstra. “Goodwill will recruit, train and support volunteer mentors to engage youth in promoting their career development and life skills.”

If you’re interested in becoming a volunteer mentor or know of a youth who would benefit from this program, please call (814) 536-3536 ext. 304.