

A Friend Indeed

September 22, 2011

As intense as Benet boys' basketball coach Gene Heidkamp is on the court, he's as nice off of it.

Heidkamp, his Redwings players, and assistant coaches will conduct a pair of charity basketball clinics for grade school students this Sunday at Benet.

All proceeds of the clinics (3-5 p.m. for kindergarten through fourth-grade, 5-7 p.m. for fifth- through eighth-grade; \$30 per child) will go to the Danny Did Foundation, which was started in January 2010.

"It means a lot to me," Heidkamp said. "The people who run this foundation are lifelong friends of mine."

The Danny in question is the son of Mike Stanton, who lived just down the block from Heidkamp when they were tots in Chicago; Mike's brother, Tom, coached with Heidkamp at Nazareth. Danny Stanton was just 4 years old when he died in December 2009 following a seizure while he slept.

The Danny Did Foundation (DannyDid.org) attempts to prevent deaths caused by seizures by, in part, advancing awareness of Sudden Unexplained Death in Epilepsy; and also through the mainstreaming of seizure detection and seizure prediction devices. The timing of the clinic, which is a community service project for the Benet players, also is an awareness builder for National Epilepsy Awareness Month. The condition affects 3 million people in the United States and 50 million worldwide.

Heidkamp calls the clinics "a combination of instruction and fun."

"I also think it's a good opportunity for our kids to be involved with service," he said. "It's something we take a lot of pride in, something the kids do a great job of: getting involved with different causes."

Registration for Coach Heidkamp's clinics at Benet is online at events.org/basketball.

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