

Town of Bedford, Town Center, 12 Mudge Way, Bedford, MA 01730-2171

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Web Site: www.bedfordma.gov/youth



Special points of interest:

- *2015-16 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results*
- *Under Construction: What Everyone Must Know About Tween/Teen Brain Development & Substance Abuse*
- *Youth and Family Services Committee 2016-2017*
- *Fuel Assistance*
- *Introducing the DASH!*
- *Walk Like A Penguin*
- *Watch Your Drinking This Season*
- *JGMS After School Program - Winter 2016*
- *Youth and Family Donors*
- *Town of Bedford Counseling Services*
- *Local Help with Opioid Addiction*
- *Teens and Technology*

Inside This Issue:

2015-16 Youth Risk Behavior Results cont'd.	2
YFS Committee 2016-2017	2
Fuel Assistance	2
Introducing the DASH!	3
BYFS Staff Inquiries	3
Walk Like a Penguin	4
Watch Your Drinking This Season	4
Winter 2017 JGMS After School Program	5
YFS Donors	5
Town of Bedford Counseling Services	5
Local Help with Opioid Addiction	5
Teens and Technology	6

2016 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results

The Bedford Youth Risk Behavior Survey was administered to John Glenn Middle School and Bedford High School students in April of 2016. Well, the results are in! Keep reading to get an idea about how Bedford students' lifestyles and behaviors affect their health.

The data are largely positive, with improving trends and positive state comparisons for important issues. Our substance use rates are well below state averages across the board. Alcohol use remained level, while cigarette use went down. There was an increase in the percent of Middle and High

School students who reported having a trusted adult in school they can talk to, and we saw an increase in active bystander responses to bullying. Sexual behavior data show improvement in the level of condom use after years of declines, and our rates of sexually active high school students have gone down.

We saw an increase in marijuana use, but rates are still well below prior historical highs and the state average. Bullying continues to be an issue at the Middle and High School, with slight but consistent increases in the percentage of students who reported being bullied at school and bullied

electronically. Our mental health data is also of concern with consistent increases in stress levels, depression, self-harm, and suicidality among Middle and High School students. We want no students to see self-harm and suicide as a problem solving technique.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Areas of Prevention for Families:

- ◆ Parents are the most important influence on their teen when it comes to risky behaviors. It's important to talk often, listen regularly,

Cont'd on page 2

Under Construction: What Everyone Must Know About Tween/Teen Brain Development & Substance Abuse

Thursday, January 19th
7:00 p.m.,
Bedford High School
Auditorium -
9 Mudge Way,
Bedford
with Dr. Ruth Potee

Dr. Potee's expertise in adolescent brain development and its impact on teenage risk-taking, including alcohol and substance abuse, has been featured nationally. She blends scientific research with an understanding of the challenges of raising healthy teens. Come learn

more about what parents and other interested members of the community can do to keep their tweens and teens safer, healthier and substance-free through middle and high school years. The presentation is open to the community. Students are welcome.



Dr. Ruth Potee is a nationally renowned family physician who specializes in addressing the opioid epidemic in Massachusetts.



Sponsored by:

- School Wellness Committee**
- Bedford Public Schools
- Youth & Family Services
- Board of Health
- Healthy Bedford
- Bedford Fire Department
- Bedford Police Department
- Parents and
- Community Partners in Health

For more information, call the
Bedford Board of Health
781-275-6507

2016 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results

Cont'd from Page 1

- and communicate clearly that you do not want your teen using alcohol or drugs. Using alcohol or drugs before the brain has fully developed increases your risk for future addiction dramatically.
- ◆ Families need to continue to remind kids about NOT drinking or using any substances and driving, or riding with someone who has, and be sure they can call home for a ride no matter what. Research shows that kids who learn the risks of drugs and alcohol from their parents are up to 50% less likely to use than those who do not.
- ◆ Parents can help to keep stress levels down by being certain that kids have a balance between activities, school, and unstructured leisure time. A good rule of thumb is involvement in one sport and one kind of other activity at a time.
- ◆ Be sure to spend enjoyable time together so that interactions aren't only about school and other "chores." Eat a meal together, watch a television show, go to a movie, read a book they have to read for school, do a project. Stay connected.
- ◆ If you are worried about your child's mental health, take advantage of Bedford Youth and Family Services mental health screenings section of their webpage www.bedfordma.gov/youth. The screening is anonymous and confidential. After answering a few questions, you will receive customized feedback, educational materials, and treatment resources if necessary.
- You can view the full executive summary of the 2016 Bedford Risk Behavior Survey as well as some of the main survey findings related to substance use, violence and safety, and mental and physical health on Bedford Youth and Family Services website www.bedfordma.gov/youth under the Youth Risk Behavior Survey section.
- We will be working over the next year to share this information as broadly as possible. We will also be working with youth at both JGMS and BHS to get the results to students in a way that supports their healthy choices. For more information or to schedule a presentation to your group contact Jessica Wildfong, Prevention Services Coordinator jessicaw@bedfordma.gov or 781-275-7727

2016-2017 Youth and Family Services Committee:

Alison Malkin, Chair ◆ Tom Pinney, at Large ◆ Peter Ricci, at Large ◆ Marcia Morgan, at Large
 Caroline Fedele, Selectman & Recreation Liaison ◆ Jeff Wardwell, Police ◆ Mary Seymour, Health Liaison
 JoAnn Santiago, School Committee

Fuel Assistance

If you could use some help paying your home heating bills, the Commonwealth's Fuel Assistance Program may be for you!

Bedford residents of all ages are invited to apply for the program which provides a benefit to those who meet certain income guidelines to pay fuel bills.

To be eligible, you must be a Bedford resident and have an income ranging from \$34,001 for a one-person household to \$86,311 for a six-person household. The income limit is higher for families with more than six members. The amount of money the program provides depends on the number of household members and the household income.

Those who enroll in the Fuel Assistance Program may also be

automatically eligible for a free home weatherization program, free heating system repair or replacement, free energy-saving devices, and discounts for many utilities.

To apply, Bedford residents under age 60 should call Bedford Youth and Family Services (BYFS) at 781-275-7727 and those age 60 or over should call the Bedford Council on Aging (COA) at 781-275-6825. BYFS or COA will set up a time to assist you with the application in their offices. The agencies will hold appointments beginning November 1. Please be assured that all information given to the friendly agency staff who help you will be held in the strictest confidence.

Remember, your taxes paid for this program, so if you think you qualify, apply for the benefits you deserve!



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Income Guideline:

Household Size	Yearly Gross Income
1	\$34,001
2	44,463
3	54,925
4	65,387
5	75,849
6	86,311

Healthy Bedford



Introducing the DASH!

Have you heard about Bedford's pilot transportation project? The DASH is a local shuttle which will operate between September 2016 and June 2018, offering transit service between noon and 6 PM on Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. TransAction Associates has provided a 14 passenger, WiFi enabled, handicapped accessible vehicle, which accommodates a combination of fixed route service and "on demand" rides. This new program complements services already provided by Bedford Local Transit.

Adult riders ages 18-64 pay \$2.00 each way for in-town services and \$4.00 each way for out-of-town destinations. Currently, the bus will go to locations in Bedford Billerica, Concord, Lexington and Burlington. Youth, seniors, Veterans, and Medicare card holders will pay \$1.00 each way in-town and \$2.00 each way out-of-town. Riders must pay exact change as they board the bus. Discounted pre-paid cards are available from the driver or can be ordered online for \$20.

When it is time to give your kids some independence, the DASH can offer an alternative to the need of your parental taxi service. Youth ages 12 and over can ride the DASH independently, but must have a permission slip on file. Forms can be found on www.BedfordDash.com. Bus travel is one of the safest ways to get around and very cost effective. Teaching kids how to ride the bus fosters a greater sense of independence. Navigating around the community by bus also builds a sense of confidence young people can use for the rest of their lives.

If your child has never ridden the bus, you might be anxious about figuring out how to get him or her where they are going. Don't worry - we've made it easy. All you need is to dial the phone or use a computer and you can plan a DASH trip. To book a future ride, or for questions about the service, call 781-275-DASH(3274), or go online at www.BedfordDash.com. For more information about the program, call Carla Olson, Healthy Communities Coordinator at 781-275-7727.

BYFS Staff Queries - Main Number: 781/275-7727

Sue Baldauf, Director, x263 - Counseling referrals or questions ~ General dept. questions ~ Community concern ~ Issue related to Violence Prevention Coalition, Bedford Community Partnership, Business Diversity Training, Progress Fund ~ Parenting Education Topic

Fran Stander, Administrative Assistant, x264 - General questions ~ General community & Resources ~ Job Match ~ Events & Press Releases ~ New Resident Packets ~ Volunteer Opportunities

Jessica Wildfong, Youth Development/Prevention, x262 - JGMS After School ~ Peer Mentoring ~ Youth Website ~ Other youth related issues - Alcohol, tobacco, or drug education ~ Diversion ~ Youth Risk Behavior Survey ~ Safe Homes ~ Fuel Assistance

Carla Olson, Healthy Bedford Coordinator, x260 ~ Safe Routes to School & Healthy Bedford initiatives

Bill Linnehan, Veterans Agent, 781/275-1328 - Any veterans related question

Eliot Counselors: 781-275-7727 Lynne Chapas x261; 978-369-1113 Kristen Herlihy x4132, Lindsey Kalendar x4134, Holly Boker x4117, Andrea Vana x4159

Healthy Bedford



Walk Like a Penguin!

Many of our families walk and bike to school regularly. However, our New England winters often cover our sidewalks with everything from sleet and ice, to snow and whatever you call that gray slush churned up by cars and plows. Regardless of weather conditions, we need to walk, whether for exercise or to reach our destination. The following are tips to help you and your family navigate the cold and slippery weather on the way to school and elsewhere:

Be safe and be seen. Follow basic safety rules, like looking both ways before you cross a street, crossing at marked crosswalks, watching for traffic, paying attention to cyclists and walking to the right on trails and paths. Assume drivers can't see you and proceed with caution, especially when days are short and weather conditions unfavorable. Always make sure vehicles have come to a complete stop and that you have made eye contact with the driver before venturing out in front of them. When dressing, wear layers, making the top layer a bright color, and/or reflective. Don't put your hands in your pockets; this limits your ability to catch yourself if you start to fall.

Start your walk INTO the wind: You'll be better able to judge just how cold it is and whether you have dressed appropriately. Wear a hat and keep in 35% of body heat.

Walk like a penguin! On obvious or suspected slippery areas, point your feet out slightly, and extend your arms slightly away from your body. Both of these actions reinforce your center of gravity and balance. Move your feet slightly apart as you walk. This will give you better support and balance. If the street is really slippery, bend your knees a little bit. You may feel that you look funny, but it's worth it! When going down an incline, consider turning sideways. Do NOT cross one foot over the other, as you will have no balance while your feet are crossed. If the ground is steep, bend your knees.

For more tips on staying safe in winter see:

<https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2016/01/prepared-penguins-tips-for-a-safe-and-healthy-winter>

For more walking and biking ideas, see www.bedfordma.gov/Healthy-Bedford

Watch Your Drinking This Season

The holiday season is upon us, which means we all amp up our lives with extra parties and other social events. All the added stress and parties can tempt even the most disciplined person when it comes to alcohol. It's great to celebrate with family and friends with some drinks, but how do you know if your drinking is becoming a problem?

Some symptoms of alcohol problems include: having times when you ended up drinking more or longer than you planned, trying to cut down or stop drinking without success, or continuing to drink even though it was making you feel unhappy. In addition, getting into situations that are risky because of drinking - like driving, having unsafe sex, or doing other things that are

potentially unsafe - can mean your drinking is a problem.

About 17 million adults in America have an alcohol use disorder. There are several successful ways to treat alcohol use disorders. **Bedford Youth and Family Services** offers free and anonymous alcohol use self-assessments at www.bedfordma.gov/youth under the screening section.



You can visit the site, answer a few questions and get information about whether you may have an alcohol problem and resources for where you can get help, if necessary.

Winter 2017 JGMS After School Program

Bedford Youth and Family Services in collaboration with John Glenn Middle School is gearing up for another successful Winter after school program with a focus on the most popular activities including Babysitter Training with Maureen McDermott, Girl Talk with Bedford High School student leaders and advisor Wendy Tanahashi-Works, Fitness After School with Marcy Beinert, and our always popular Shooting & Editing for TV and Advanced Video Production with Greg Dolan.



Activities begin the week of January 4th. The registration deadline for all programs is December 16th. *Space is limited; be sure to sign up as soon as possible to secure your spot.*

You can find our flyer and registration form at: www.bedfordma.gov/youth (Click on the Youth Development section). Flyers are also available in our office at Town Center and at JGMS. Feel free to call Jessica Wildfong at 781-275-7727 ext. 262 or email: jessicaw@bedfordma.gov with any questions or concerns.

Town of Bedford Counseling Services

The Eliot Center provides a variety of counseling options for Bedford residents through its contract with Bedford Youth and Family Services (BYFS). Services are provided in Bedford and in Concord by

appointment. Our clinicians work with a full range of emotional, adjustment and educational concerns. The clinical team currently includes Lynne Chapas, MA, Holly Boker, LICSW,

Kristen Herlihy, LICSW, Lindsay Kallander, LCSW, and Andrea Vana, LCSW. Please contact our Clinical Coordinator, Lynne Chapas at 781-275-7727 x261 to inquire about counseling.

Local Help with Opioid Addiction

Bedford Police in collaboration with Bedford Youth and Family Services are reaching out to Bedford residents who may need help with an opioid addiction or may have a family member in need of help. Resources are available both regionally and locally. Regionally, Learn to Cope runs a peer-lead support group for parents/caregivers struggling with a member of the family who is addicted to opioids, alcohol, and /or other drugs.

them in the administration of intranasal naloxone (Narcan). Training and enrollment in Narcan administration is available at every Learn to Cope meeting throughout the state of Massachusetts. Participants receive two doses of Narcan free at the initial meeting as well as assistance with any detox or treatment issues. Overdose prevention and Narcan administration has reversed thousands of potentially fatal

overdoses in Massachusetts, keeping the hope for recovery alive for many families.

The Lowell Group is the closest one to Bedford and meets every Wednesday from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the 1st Floor Conference Room at Lowell General Hospital's Saints Campus. For more information call 508-801-3247 or visit www.learn2cope.org

Locally Bedford Police and Fire have access Narcan and can be of assistance in the event of an emergency and also provide training for a resident privately in how to administer the dose. Please call 781-275-1212 for more information.



Supported by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, Learn to Cope became the first peer-led family support network in the country to train family members in overdose prevention and certify

Thank you to our Donors:

- American Legion Women's Auxiliary
- Anonymous (3)
- Bedford Motel
- Bedford Post Office Employees
- Bedford Schools Administration Employees
- Callahan's Kenpo Karate
- Cambridge Savings Bank
- Carleton Willard Village Resident's Association
- Carriage House
- Doubletree Bedford Glen
- First Parish in Bedford Social Responsibility Council
- Flatbread Company
- Michael & Lea Ann Knight
- Mettler Toledo
- Millipore Corporation
- Moison Ace Hardware of Bedford
- O'Malley and Colangeli CPA's
- Staples
- VFW Post 1628
- Whole Foods
- &
- The Residents of Bedford through your Taxes

Teens and Technology

This fall Bedford parents have had several opportunities to hear presenters related to cyber safety for their teens with presentation at both the high school and middle school back to school nights and then with the Screenagers presentation in Concord and then at Bedford High School (BHS), the latter sponsored by the BHS Black Students' Association. Middlesex Partnerships for Youth (MPY) sponsored the back to school night presentations and offers a wealth of resources at their website www.middlesexpartnershipsfor-youth.com. Bedford is a long-standing member of MPY, a private, non-profit organization affiliated with the Middlesex District Attorney's Office and designed to foster collaboration among community leaders, public safety agencies, and educators to safeguard students in Middlesex County. Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan has continuing school safety initiatives and offers free training by MPY to the member communities.

The Screenagers movie also provides a wealth of information and resources, many of which can be accessed after the movie at www.screenagersmovie.com and via an email blast every Tuesday called "Tech Talk Tuesday." These emails offer insightful topics for family discussion as well as resources and hints for parents to help their children and youth with limits around technology as well as appropriate behavior related to use. One tidbit from the movie was a "contract" developed by the parent of a middle schooler who desperately wanted an iPhone like her friends had and that a parent in the movie decided to use with her own daughter. Take a peak.....

Gregory's iPhone Contract

Janell Burley Hofmann, July 08, 2013 Journal

Dear Gregory,

Merry Christmas! You are now the proud owner of an iPhone. Hot Damn! You are a good & responsible 13 year old boy and you deserve this gift. But with the acceptance of this present comes rules and regulations. Please read through the following contract. I hope that you understand it is my job to raise you into a well rounded, healthy young man that can function in this world and coexist with technology, not be ruled by it. Failure to comply with the following list will result in termination of your iPhone ownership.

I love you madly & look forward to sharing several million text messages with you in the days to come.

1. It is my phone. I bought it. I paid for it. I am loaning it to you. Aren't I the greatest?
2. I will always know the password.
3. If it rings, answer it. It is a phone. Say hello, use your manners. Do not ever ignore a phone call if the screen reads "Mom" or "Dad". Not ever.
4. Hand the phone to one of your parents promptly at 7:30 p.m. every school night & every weekend night at 9:00 p.m. It will be shut off for the night and turned on again at 7:30 a.m. If you would not make a call to someone's landline, wherein their parents may answer first, then do not call or text. Listen to those instincts and respect other families like we would like to be respected.
5. It does not go to school with you. Have a conversation with the people you text in person. It's a life skill. *Half days, field trips and after school activities will require special consideration.
6. If it falls into the toilet, smashes on the ground, or vanishes into thin air, you are responsible for the replacement costs or repairs. Mow a lawn, babysit, stash some birthday money. It will happen, you should be prepared.
7. Do not use this technology to lie, fool, or deceive another human being. Do not involve yourself in conversations that are hurtful to others. Be a good friend first or stay the hell out of the crossfire.
8. Do not text, email, or say anything through this device you would not say in person.
9. Do not text, email, or say anything to someone that you would not say out loud with their parents in the room. Censor yourself.
10. No porn. Search the web for information you would openly share with me. If you have a questions about anything, ask a person - preferably me or your father.
11. Turn it off, silence it, put it away in public. Especially in a restaurant, at the movies, or while speaking with another human being. You are not a rude person; do not allow the iPhone to change that.
12. Do not send or receive pictures of your private parts or anyone else's private parts. Don't laugh. Someday you will be tempted to do this despite your high intelligence. It is risky and could ruin your teenage/college/adult life. It is always a bad idea. Cyberspace is vast and more powerful than you. And it is hard to make anything of this magnitude disappear - including a bad reputation.
13. Don't take a zillion pictures and videos. There is no need to document everything. Live your experiences. They will be stored in your memory for eternity.

14. Leave your phone home sometimes and feel safe and secure in that decision. It is not alive or an extension of you. Learn to live without it. Be bigger and more powerful than FOMO - fear of missing out.
15. Download music that is new or classic or different than the millions of your peers that listen to the same exact stuff. Your generation has access to music like never before in history. Take advantage of that gift. Expand your horizons.
16. Play a game with words or puzzles or brain teasers every now and then.
17. Keep your eyes up. See the world happening around you. Stare out a window. Listen to the birds. Take a walk. Talk to a stranger. Wonder without googling.
18. You will mess up. I will take away your phone. We will sit down and talk about it. We will start over again. You & I, we are always learning. I am on your team. We are in this together. It is my hope that you can agree to these terms. Most of the lessons listed here do not just apply to the iPhone, but to life. You are growing up in a fast and ever changing world. It is exciting and enticing. Keep it simple every chance you get. Trust your powerful mind and giant heart above any machine. I love you. I hope you enjoy your awesome new iPhone. Merry Christmas!

Xoxoxoxo Mom

The contract is a reminder that we as parents need to always set limits with our children and youth, regardless of what popular society says or does and what our kids think they should have or do. Use the resources available to you and ask for help if you need it! The schools as well as MPY, Screenagers, our office, and a host of good websites can help you navigate these murky waters successfully.

