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Special points of interest:

- *Teen Brain Development and Substance Use*
- *National Eating Disorder Awareness Week*
- *JGMS After School Program Spring 2017*
- *Youth and Family Services Committee 2016-2017*
- *Safe Homes*
- *Staying Calm during Stressful Parenting Moments*
- *The DASH*
- *Summer Walkabout Save the Date*
- *Massachusetts Walk and Bike to School Day*
- *Family Rules: Setting Limits and Boundaries*
- *Youth and Family Donors*
- *National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week*
- *Memorial Day Save the Date*

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Teen Brain Development and Substance Use

Were any of you at Bedford High School Thursday 1/19/17 to hear Dr. Ruth Potee's talk "Under Construction: What Everyone Must Know About Tween/Teen Brain Development & Substance Abuse?" If not, you missed a truly powerful message. Dr. Potee, a nationally renowned family physician from western Massachusetts, specializes in helping students, parents, professionals, and communities address the opioid epidemic in the state. Sponsored by the School Wellness Council and organized by Board of Health, the presentation was in part funded by the Northwest Suburban Health Alliance, aka CHNA 15.

Potee began the evening highlighting how addiction settles into the survival section of the

brain, no matter what the substance - e.g., sugar, tobacco, coffee, marijuana, heroin, sex. Genetics, early use, adverse childhood experiences, and poor mental health are all factors, with genetics accounting for 50% of the risk for addiction. If first use starts while the brain is developing between the ages of 12 to 24, one is 40% more likely to become addicted. If a teenager can delay use until the age of 21 or 22, there is only a 7% chance of addiction.

Potee spent a little time discussing marijuana, stating that consumption of marijuana on the developing brain was not helpful. Due to federal law, science to back that statement up was unavailable. She cited studies of marijuana users over a 25 year period in Australia and New Zealand that

evidenced an 8% drop in IQ among participant users of marijuana.

One of her most telling analogies of the evening followed the hospitalization of a man having a heart attack, the interventions at the hospital to save his life, the amount of time, machinery, and staff involved, the cost being something over a million dollars. No one denied him treatment or shamed him for his condition, and costs were covered by insurance. Compare

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National Eating Disorder Awareness Week - February 26 - March 4

What: National Eating Disorder Awareness Week, held February 26 - March 4, brings attention to the critical needs of people with eating disorders and their families. Screening for Mental Health provides anonymous eating disorder screenings at my-bodyscreening.org for the months of February and March.

Where: Individuals can locate an eating disorder site or take an online screening by visiting my-bodyscreening.org.

When: National Eating Disorder Awareness Week is held February 26 - March 4.

How: Thousands of organizations nationwide will host an Eating Disorder event or provide access to online screenings on their website. A screening consists of a series of questions designed to indicate whether symptoms of an eating disorder are present and if clinical help is needed. After completing a screening, participants receive immediate feedback and referral information for local resources that offer further evaluation and treatment.

Why: Online screenings are an effective first step in eating disorder intervention. Similar to other illnesses, early intervention can significantly increase recovery. National Eating Disorder Awareness Week, held February 26 - March 4, brings attention to the critical needs of people with eating disorders and their families.

Screenings are available year-round, 24/7 on the Town of Bedford website www.bedfordma.gov/youth under the "screenings" section.



JGMS After School Program Spring 2017

Fitness After School
Babysitter Training
Girl Talk
Shooting & Editing for TV
Advanced Video Production

Bedford Youth and Family Services in collaboration with John Glenn Middle School is gearing up for another successful Spring After School program with a focus on the most popular activities including **Babysitter Training** with Maureen McDermott, **Fitness After School** with Marcy Beinert, **Girl Talk** with Bedford High School

student leaders and advisor Wendy Tanahashi-Works, and **Shooting & Editing for TV** and **Advanced Video Production** with Greg Dolan. Activities begin the week of April 3rd and the registration deadline for all programs is Friday, March 24th. *Space is limited; be sure to sign up as soon as possible to secure your spot.*

Flyers are available in our office and at the JGMS Main Office. Feel free to call 781-275-7727 with any questions or concerns.

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

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Sign up for Bedford's Safe Home Program



The Safe Homes program is a support network for Bedford parents with children in grades 6-12 who are concerned about alcohol and drug use at pre-teen and teen parties and gatherings.

Families who join SAFE HOMES promise to provide a safe and supervised home for teen parties. You can sign up online for Safe Homes by going to our website www.bedfordma.gov/youth (Click on Safe Homes).

Participating families will receive a directory booklet containing contact information of others who have joined. The directory will be mailed in late fall to all families that have signed up.

For more information or questions about the Safe Homes Program please call 781-275-7727.

Staying Calm during Stressful Parenting Moments

How do you keep your cool when you're embarrassed, stressed, angry, sleep-deprived, or simply at your wits' end? Staying calm in the midst of your child's meltdown will help your child settle down sooner.

Use these instant techniques when you're in the midst of a stressful parenting situation. Here are some options.

- *Physical techniques:* Take a long, deep breath and slowly, blow it out. Or, sit down on the floor or ground (lower than your child) and take deep breaths.
- *Verbal technique:* Say to yourself, "I am the adult here. I can handle this calmly and kindly."
- *Visual technique:* Turn and look out the window or away from the chaos. Notice the color and texture of the clouds or walls.

These general calming strategies can be used to restore calm *after* a stressful parenting moment.

- *Self-nurturing techniques:* Get yourself a cup of your favorite beverage - tea or hot chocolate are good choices - and sit down with a book.
- *Physical techniques:* Take a walk with your dog. Go for a bike ride. Do yoga.
- *Auditory technique:* Listen to music—either soothing or rousing, depending on your needs.
- *Creative techniques:* Work a crossword puzzle. Bake bread. Write in your journal.

3/23/14 Parenting Calendar article. Adapted from "Dealing with Disappointment: Helping Kids Cope When Things Don't Go Their Way," by Elizabeth Crary, 2003

Healthy Bedford



The DASH

Finding it challenging to get your kids to and from afterschool activities? Want to help your child flex their independence muscles? The DASH can offer an alternative to the need of your parental taxi service, while helping your kids learn to navigate in the community! The DASH is for all Bedford residents and provides portal to portal shuttle service Monday through Friday 12 noon—6 p.m. in Bedford, as well as locations in Concord, Billerica, Burlington and Lexington. Youth ages 12 and over can ride the DASH independently, but must have a parental permission slip on file. Forms can be found on www.BedfordDash.com

Youth, seniors, veterans, and Medicare card holders pay \$1.00 each way in-town and \$2.00 each way out-of-town. Adult riders ages 18-64 pay \$2.00 each way for in-town services and \$4.00 each way for out-of-town destinations. Exact change is required. Discounted pre-paid cards for the Dash are available from the driver or can be ordered online for \$20. Booking and forms available online at www.BedfordDash.com or call 781-275-DASH (3274).

Save the Date:

Summer Walkabout - Thursday June 22, 2017 - 4:30-6:30 p.m.
featuring family activities, music and fun for all! Watch for details in
upcoming Newsletters and on the Healthy Bedford Facebook page!

Massachusetts Walk and Bike to School Day!



Wednesday, May 10th, thousands of elementary and middle school students will participate in hundreds of events throughout Massachusetts as they walk and bike to school.

Massachusetts Walk and Bike to School Day is a statewide event through the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. Last year, the Commonwealth celebrated the biggest event to date with over 300 events held statewide and over 42,000 elementary and middle school students and their families walking or biking to school. The goal of this event and others like it is to increase

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Healthy Bedford



Massachusetts Walk and Bike to School Day! Cont'd from page 3

the visibility of walking and bicycling in Massachusetts communities and to highlight the benefits of healthy transportation options for youth and families.

Massachusetts Walk and Bike to School Day began in 2007 as a statewide initiative to encourage healthy transportation choices around our school communities. According to the US Department of Transportation, less than 16 percent of children walk or bicycle to school. However, school-related traffic can contribute more than 10 percent of morning rush hour traffic volumes in some communities as well as significant air pollution. Increasing the number of students who walk and bicycle to school helps improve students' health, reduce traffic congestion, and improve air quality in our communities.

The Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Program through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) works with students, parents, school staff, and local police departments across the Commonwealth to promote safe walking and bicycling to school through the five E's: Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation. Through our SRTS partnership, Bedford has been approved for funding for improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access to the John Glenn Middle School from Great Road via the Bedford High School lot. See details on that project, scheduled to begin construction in summer 2017, at www.bedfordma.gov/department-of-public-works

A very special thank you to our partner schools, community champions, and the many stakeholders who are working to make this a wonderful day for children and families in Bedford. We hope to make this year our biggest event yet! Watch for updates in school newsletters or on the Healthy Bedford Facebook page. For more information on Safe Routes to School visit www.bedfordma.gov/healthy-bedford/pages/safe-routes-to-school

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, Lindsay Kalendar x4134, Holly Boker x4117, Andrea Vana x4159

Teen Brain Development and Substance Use Cont'd from Page 1

that to a person addicted to an opioid and who overdoses. That person might be given Narcan by an EMT to revive them but then what? Are there hospital beds, sober houses, treatments available? More often than not these folks are referred to counseling and expected to get a handle on this disease with minimum support and often times without the help of insurance. Society makes them feel ashamed for their problem, making it more difficult to ask for help. Potee made the claim that the heart attack victim is as much to blame for his

condition as the addict is for the substance use, especially if the heart attack victim eats regularly at fast food establishments, is sedentary, smokes, and generally does not practice healthy habits. She highlighted how differently society treats these two cases. Potee issued a challenge to the medical community to demand better treatment for people with addictions, including 6-, 9-, and 12-month sober living facilities as well as addiction therapy services in the county jail.

To see Dr. Potee's presentation

from Bedford check out the Bedford TV website www.bedford.tv for viewing times. The slides from that event will be posted on the Board of Health website at www.bedfordma.gov/bedford-board-of-health Dr. Potee has several other presentations to various local groups viewable on Youtube, including "Addiction is a Brain Disease," "Physiology of Addiction," and "Marijuana Awareness." All are 45 minutes to an hour and will help you be a more aware citizen and parent. Check them out! Let's save all the lives we can...

Family Rules: Setting Limits and Boundaries

Learn what to expect from children. Discipline at one age may not work for another.

Infants:

- ◇ Infants are not capable of bad behavior. When a baby cries, it is usually for a reason such as being hungry or tired. Learn your baby's cues.

Toddlers:

- ◇ Limit the number of rules and keep them realistic and age appropriate.
- ◇ Move breakable and dangerous things out of a child's reach.
- ◇ Use physical redirection. If a child reaches for something he shouldn't touch, hand him a better plaything, saying "Look at THIS toy."

Preschoolers:

- ◇ Establish routines, like reading a bedtime story. This lets children know what to expect and helps them feel more secure.
- ◇ Give realistic, not open ended, choices. Instead of saying "What would you like to wear today?", say "Would you like to wear your red dress or your blue dress?"
- ◇ Plan transitions. It's difficult for kids to change activities. Prepare them. For example, "when you finish your juice, it's bathtime."

Older Children:

- ◇ Give older children a voice. When children are allowed to help make the rules they are more likely to obey them.
- ◇ Be clear. Say "Be home at 9 p.m." instead of "Don't be home too late."
- ◇ Say "Subject closed." When you've heard the request and stated your answer, there is no need to continue it further.

3/30/14 Parenting Calendar article. Adapted from Children's Trust Fund materials.

Thank you to our Donors:

American Legion
Women's Auxiliary
Anonymous (4)
Bedford Motel
Bedford Post Office
Employees
Bedford Schools
Administration
Employees
Callahan's Kenpo
Karate
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Bedford
O'Malley & Colangeli
CPA's
Staples
VFW Post 1628
Whole Foods
&
The Residents of
Bedford through your
Taxes

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week 1/23-29/2017 Recap

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week was a week-long health observance from January 23rd-29th where communities around the country organize events and activities to get teens involved in learning about the science behind the effects of drug and alcohol abuse and addiction on their brain, body, and behavior. Here are the facts if you missed it:

Monday Facts of the Day: How does alcohol affect the teenage brain?

When teens drink, alcohol affects their brains in the short-term - but repeated drinking can also impact it down the road, especially as their brains grow and develop.

Short-Term Consequences of Intoxication (being “drunk”):

An intoxicated person has a harder time making good decisions. A person may be more likely to engage in risky behavior, including drinking and driving, sexual activity (like unprotected sex), and aggressive or violent behavior. A person is less likely to recognize potential danger.

Long-Term Consequences as the Teen Brain Develops:

Research shows that drinking during the teen years could interfere with normal brain development and change the brain in ways that:

- Have negative effects on information processing and learning.
- Increase the risk of developing an alcohol use disorder later in life.

Tuesday Facts of the Day: What is Drug Addiction?

Addiction is a chronic brain disease that causes a person to compulsively seek out drugs, despite the harm they cause. The first time a person uses drugs, it’s usually a free choice they’ve made. However, repeated drug use causes the brain to change which drives a person to seek out and use drugs over and over, despite negative effects such as stealing, losing friends, family problems, or other physical or mental problems brought on by drug use - this is addiction.

Wednesday Fact of the Day: What is an alcohol blackout?

An alcohol blackout is a gap in a person’s memory for events that took place while he or she was drinking. When a blackout happens, a person’s brain does not create memories for these events as they are happening. For people who have had a blackout, it can be frightening to wake up the next day and not remember what they did the night before.

Thursday Facts of the Day: Which three primary areas of the brain are affected by drug use:

The brain stem is in charge of all the functions our body needs to stay alive-breathing, moving blood, and digesting food. It also links the brain with the spinal cord, which runs down the back and moves muscles and limbs as well as lets the brain know what’s happening to the body.

The limbic system links together a bunch of brain structures that control our emotional responses, such as feeling pleasure when we eat chocolate. The good feelings motivate us to repeat the behavior, which is good because eating is critical to our lives.

The cerebral cortex is the mushroom-shaped outer part of the brain (the gray matter). In humans, it is so big that it makes up about three-fourths of the entire brain. It’s divided into four areas, called lobes, which control specific functions. Some areas process information from our senses, allowing us to see, feel, hear, and taste. The front part of the cortex, known as the frontal cortex or forebrain, is the thinking center. It powers our ability to think, plan, solve problems, and make decisions.

Friday Fact of the Day: Heroin Use

Heroin use and overdose deaths have dramatically increased over the last decade. This increase is related to the growing number of people misusing prescription opioid pain relievers like OxyContin and Vicodin; many who become addicted to those drugs switch to heroin because it produces similar effects but is cheaper and easier to get. Nearly 80 percent of people who use heroin report having first misused prescription opioids.

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week Recap 1/23-29/2017

Test your knowledge by taking the interactive National Drug & Alcohol IQ Challenge quiz!

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/quiz/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week/take-iq-challenge/2017>

For more information on National Drug & Alcohol FactsWeekSM visit the website www.teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drugalcohol-facts-week

What should I do if someone I know needs help?

If you, or a friend, are in crisis and need to speak with someone now, please call: **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK** (they don’t just talk about suicide-they cover a lot of issues and will help put you in touch with someone close by.) If you need information on treatment and where you can find it, you can call: **Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator at 1-800-662-HELP** or visit www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov For more information on how to help a friend or loved one, visit our Have a Drug Problem, Need Help? Page.

Veterans’ Services News - Save the Date for Memorial Day May 29th

The Memorial Day observance on May 29th will begin with a remembrance at the American Legion at 8:30 a.m. followed by a march to the Shawsheen Cemetery where several speakers memorialize deceased veterans.

Participants proceed to the Shawsheen River for a brief reading memorializing the deceased Navy veterans and a wreath is placed in the water. Readings continue at The Old Burial Grounds and Bedford High School

with the procession leaving the school at 11:30 to march to Memorial Park for the closing ceremony. Details will follow the Public Holiday Committee meeting in early April.

Bedford/Lexington Veterans Services

781-698-4848 Lexington

Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30 Lexington

781-275-1328 Bedford

Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:30-4:30 Bedford

