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Special points of interest:

- *Navigating the Cyber World for Parents of Teens*
- *Sexting, Selfies, and Snapchat*
- *JGMS After School Program Fall 2015*
- *Youth and Family Services Committee 2015-2016*
- *How to Keep Your Cool*
- *Veterans' Services District*
- *Youth and Family Donors*
- *Clearing Away the Smoke: Facts & Fiction About Marijuana & Youth*
- *Healthy Bedford Update*
- *Job Match*
- *Safe Homes*
- *How Should My Child Get To And From School?*
- *10 Ways to Keep Children Safer*
- *Remember to Unplug Regularly!*

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Navigating the Cyber World for Parents of Teens

Why do high school teens take approximately 1,000 selfies each day? What is YikYak and why should I be concerned? New social media platforms are giving teens more access to one another than ever before, and often parents can feel confused and cut off. If you are a parent of a high school youth and are concerned, join us for **Navigating the Cyber World**. This interactive, insightful parent education workshop will be presented by Middlesex Assistant District Attorney Kristen Noto. ADA Noto is a member of the Special Investigations Unit and oversees the office's Cyber Protection Program, where she investigates and prosecutes cyber-related crimes.

Geared primarily for parents of High School youth and part of Bedford High School Back to School Night, the program will also be valuable to middle school age

parents and parents who may be considering getting their child a cell phone, for instance. The program will review the challenges and dangerous situations that arise through use of the internet, social media and smart phones. As children have access to powerful devices younger and younger, it is necessary for parents to be aware of the trends in criminal behavior online, popular apps and programs used by youth, and understand the issues and consequences of cyber-bullying and sexting.

Navigating the Cyber World will be offered **Thursday, September 17th, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Bedford High School**. This event is FREE thanks to Bedford's membership in Middlesex Partnerships for Youth (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. This community education event supports Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan's continuing school safety initiatives and is part of training offered by MPY to their member communities. Bedford Public Schools is a long-standing member of the MPY and is cosponsoring this event in collaboration with Bedford Youth and Family Services, Bedford High School and the Bedford High School Parent Association.

Questions? Call Youth and Family Services at 781-275-7727.



Sexting, Selfies, and Snapchat

Why do middle school teens and tweens take approximately 1,000 selfies each day? What is YikYak and why should I be concerned? New social media platforms are giving teens more access to one another than ever before, and often parents can feel confused and cut off. If you are a parent of a middle school youth and are concerned, join us for "Sexting, Snapchat & Selfies: What Parents Need to Know About Teens Online." This interactive, insightful parent education workshop will be presented by Sophie Godley, MPH, Clinical

Assistant Professor & Director of Undergraduate Education, Boston University School of Public Health, and offered **Thursday, October 1, from 5:45 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at John Glenn Middle School**.

Boston University Professor Sophie Godley will share the latest information on adolescent development and interactions with social media. She will give an overview of the most popular social networks being used today, including Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram, discuss the dangers lurking in cyberspace, and offer

potentially dangerous tips for parents to guide their children through confusing and dangerous situations.

Godley has an extensive background as an expert on adolescent health and has presented locally, regionally, and nationally on these issues. Primarily geared for parents of Middle School youth, this event is FREE thanks to Bedford Youth and Family Services, John Glenn Middle School, and the Middle School Parent Association.

Questions? Call Youth and Family Services at 781-275-7727.

JGMS After School Program Fall 2015

**BABYSITTER
TRAINING**

**FITNESS AFTER
SCHOOL**

GIRL TALK

**SHOOTING &
EDITING FOR TV**

Attention all students that will be attending the John Glenn Middle School in the Fall! Bedford Youth and Family Services in collaboration with John Glenn Middle School is gearing up for another successful Fall 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 Nicole d'Entremont, and our always popular Shooting

& Editing for TV with Greg Dolan and Brian Dorrington.

Tuesday activities begin October 13th and Thursday activities begin October 15th. The registration deadline for all programs except Shooting & Editing for TV is October 1st. The registration deadline for Shooting & Editing for TV is September 25th. 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 Youth Development). Flyers are also available in our office and at the JGMS Main Office. Also, feel free to call Jessica Wildfong at 781-275-7727 ext. 262 or email at jessicaw@bedfordma.gov with any questions or concerns.

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2015-2016 Youth and Family Services Committee:

Tom Pinney, Chair ♦ Alison Malkin, at Large ♦ Peter Ricci, at Large

Caroline Fedele, Selectman & Recreation Liaison ♦ Jeff Wardwell, Police

Ann Guay, School Committee ♦ Caroline Donnelly, Board of Health Liaison

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 Sarah Hollaway x261, Lynne Chapas x260; 978-369-1113 Kristen Herlihy x115, Holly Boker x134

How to Keep Your Cool

How does sitting in traffic sound to you? What about arguing with your children? Being late on a work deadline? These activities likely make you feel stressed, but there are some quick and easy steps you can take to combat stress before it becomes a problem.

Take deep breaths. Focus on breathing in deeply through your

nose and breathing out slowly through your mouth which can imitate the relaxed feeling your body gets when it's sleeping.

Practice acceptance. Next time you find yourself stressed out about something you can't change, focus on acceptance. Long commute? Tell yourself you have accepted it, it's part of your life, and you're doing your

best to make the most of it.

Assume positive intent. Next time you find yourself stewing about something a person said or did, try assuming that their intent was good. This can be especially helpful in the workplace.

If stress has you tied up in knots and these simple management techniques are not working,

check your mental health with this screening at

www.bedfordma.gov/youth under the "screenings" section.



Veterans' Services District



Save the Date

Annual Veterans' Breakfast

Saturday, October 31st at 8:30 a.m.

This event honors Lexington and Bedford Veterans and is open to any Lexington/Bedford Veteran and one guest. Tickets are \$5 and available for purchase September 1st at the

Community Center in Lexington or in Bedford from Veterans Agent Bill Linnehan. For more information call Gina Rada at 781-698-4848.

Veterans Day

The Patriotic Holiday Committee is planning its annual Veterans Day event for Wednesday, November

11th, 2015 with guest speakers as well as local and state officials. This year's event will also include the unveiling of a sign for Veterans Memorial Park. Watch for more information later in October! Call 781-275-1328 for more information.

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

Screening for Mental Health

Have you been feeling sad, blue, stressed, anxious, or generally out of sorts? Is your drinking pattern risky?

If so, we invite you to take a free, confidential online screening. Completing these screenings will help you determine if your recent



thoughts or behaviors may be associated with a common,

treatable mental health issue. It takes only a few minutes per screening, and at the end you will be presented with information and next steps.

Screenings are available at www.bedfordma.gov/youth under the Screenings section.

Clearing Away the Smoke: Facts & Fiction About Marijuana & Youth

Ever since Massachusetts decriminalized marijuana some three years ago, we have seen an increase in youth use as well as some confusion about whether decriminalization means it is now 'legal'. With marijuana for medicinal use now sanctioned by law, concerns exist about its use continuing to spread among youth. Parents need to learn the facts and latest scientific research regarding marijuana and youth. Whether their child is in high school or just starting elementary school, it's never too late or too early to begin the conversation about challenging choices and decisions.

The two communities of Bedford and Concord are proud to jointly sponsor a parent education event **Clearing Away the Smoke: Facts & Fiction About Marijuana & Youth** featuring Dr. Kevin Hill, McLean Hospital Director of Substance Abuse Consultation Service and Author of *Marijuana: The Unbiased Truth About the World's Most Popular Weed*. The event will be held **Tuesday, November 17, 2015** from 7 to 9 p.m. at Concord-Carlisle High School Auditorium, 500 Walden St., Concord, MA.

Sponsored by Bedford Youth and

Family Services, Concord-Carlisle Youth Services, Bedford Police Department, and Concord Police Department, the event is free and open to the public. While geared primarily for parents, the information may be appropriate for some high school and middle school students, at parents' discretion. Dr. Hill's book will be available for purchase at the event thanks to Concord Bookshop, and a book signing will follow his presentation.

Questions about the event? Call 781-275-7727 in Bedford or 978-318-3043 in Concord-Carlisle.

Thank you to our Donors:

American Legion
Women's Auxiliary

Anonymous (4)

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of Bedford

O'Malley and
Colangeli CPA's

Staples

FWF Post 1628

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The Residents of
Bedford through
your Taxes

Healthy Bedford Update



Bicycling and walking provide health benefits for individuals, communities and the environment. With alarming increases in diseases related to sedentary lifestyles, reducing barriers to active commuting is an effective way to combat ailments related to inactivity. Furthermore, research demonstrates that communities where destinations are easy to reach by bike and foot create a more balanced transportation system and more welcoming neighborhoods. Additionally, it is important to remember that approximately one-third of the population is unable to drive due to age, ability, choice, or economic restrictions, so bicycling and walking are vital transportation options for many Bedford residents.

Healthy Bedford has many activities underway to further our mission to ensure that the built environment promotes wellness and health. Mark your calendars for **Wednesday, October 7** when Bedford will once again join over 40 countries around the globe celebrating *International Walk and Bike to School Day*. These events, and others like it, are very popular with Bedford families. In addition to

helping raise awareness of the need to create safer routes for walking and bicycling to school, they emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, and concern for the environment. These celebrations build connections between families, schools and the broader community-plus they are lots of fun!

These Walk/Bike events are one of many initiatives on behalf of our Town to increase connectivity and transportation options, as well as to reduce vehicular traffic. The Healthy Bedford Task Force has fostered campaigns including Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programming which includes bicycle and pedestrian safety training at the elementary schools. We are pleased to announce that through our SRTS partnership, Bedford was recently approved for a federally funded infrastructure project specifically targeted to enhancing safe access to John Glenn Middle School and the surrounding town campus. This project is now in the development stage.

Also in progress is Bedford's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

currently nearing completion. This project has seen tremendous community participation and enthusiasm! The final plan will detail recommendations for improvements to streets and intersections, policies to support pedestrian and bicyclist transportation, and an action plan for implementation based on the input received from stakeholders. Look for the final version of this plan at the Town website on the Department of Public Works page: <http://bedfordma.gov/department-of-public-works> anticipated in late fall.

America has long been a car-centric country, but there is a growing shift in appreciation for alternate means of transportation. Walking, cycling, and public transit offer improvements for quality of life, but culture and routine can be challenging to change. However, Bedford is making strides to meet resident demand for increased connectivity. If you have questions about Healthy Bedford or any of the Healthy Bedford initiatives, please contact Healthy Communities Coordinator Carla Olson at: colson@bedfordma.gov

Job Match

Applications Online or at BYFS Office

Teens looking for part-time employment?

Residents looking for help with child care, yard work, snow shoveling, odd jobs?

Youths may register and enjoy the flexibility of not being locked into a job giving them the freedom to be involved in other activities.

After completing an application the teen is matched to a resident's request depending on their capability.

Applications can be downloaded at www.bedfordma.gov/youth under Job Match or in hardcopy at our office.

Residents with a job can call Fran Stander at 781/275-7727 or frans@bedfordma.gov

Sign Up For Bedford's SAFE HOMES 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. Through Safe Homes, we are encouraging parents of Bedford middle school and high school students to make a pledge that they will provide a safe environment for youth when they have parties or gatherings in their homes - safe from alcohol, drugs, firearms, and other hazardous items. Underage drinking is harmful to kids. Love them enough to say no.

Safe Homes brochures were included in middle and high school mailings in mid-summer. This is a reminder that you can complete the form on the back of that brochure, or you can sign up online via our website www.bedfordma.gov/youth by clicking on "Safe Homes" under the Homepage menu options. Participating families will receive a directory booklet in November containing contact information of others who have joined Safe Homes. Let's join together to keep all our youth healthy and safe.

Pledges Due By September 30th

For more information or questions call Prevention Services Coordinator Jessica Wildfong at 781-275-7727 ext. 262, or email jessicaw@bedfordma.gov

How Should My Child Get To And From School?

Bicycle Or Walk



WHY? It promotes physical activity and reduces traffic congestion around schools.

- *Students who walk or bike to school are more alert and ready to learn.
- *Walking or biking with parents or classmates helps kids learn independence and valuable safety lessons.
- *The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a minimum of one hour a day of physical activity for school-age children. Plus walking or biking to school with a parent fosters communication. You and your kids will **love** it!

Ride The School Bus

WHY? It can save you time and resources. Fewer cars on the road is better for all of us.

- *School buses are safer than cars.
- *There is no fee for bus service in Bedford.

Drive, But Only If You Must

WHY? Traffic congestion around our schools is dangerous for students.

- *Competition for parking creates unsafe situations, especially in inclement weather.
- *Emergency vehicles must have prompt access to our schools.
- *Most school related accidents are in parking areas during drop off and pickup time.
- *Idling cars contribute emissions, reducing air quality around schools.
- *If you must drive, consider carpooling with other neighborhood kids, and or picking a location a few blocks from school to pick up and drop off. Even a 5-minute walk will be good for your child and your school.

For more information contact: healthybedford@bedfordma.gov

Adapted from www.noodlesoup.com

10 Ways To Keep Children Safer

1. **Be calm and reassuring.** A child should learn to be cautious, alert and prepared - not fearful. Children are less fearful when they are given skills, information and confidence to act on their own behalf.
2. **Role-play with children.** Children learn by doing. They need to role-play and see how it feels to say "NO" in difficult situations.
3. **Review and practice often.** Research shows that safety skills need to be taught five to 10 times a year. Review them during car rides and other moments together.
4. **Set body boundaries.** Set specific body boundaries and teach children no one should touch their private parts.
5. **Give permission to say "No" and go and tell.** Explain that there are different kinds of secrets - okay secrets and tell secrets. Tell them they have the right to say "no" even to someone who threatens them or to someone they know.
6. **Teach them the buddy system.** Children should learn it is always safer to be with a friend or trusted adult than alone.
7. **Teach them to check with others first.** Teach children to check with others before changing plans or going anywhere - even with adults the child knows well.
8. **Help them identify trusted adults.** Talk openly about who a child would go to in an emergency. Cite specific examples such as: the person using a cash register at the mall, a mother with children or a teacher.
9. **Teach your children telephone skills.** Teach them their phone number, how to dial "0" and "911" for help.
10. **Ask for a FREE child assault prevention program in their school.** School programs provide children with structured opportunities to practice skills, as well as additional information for parents.

Remember to Unplug Regularly!



It is easy to get busy and stay busy in this vibrant community of Bedford, especially at the beginning of the busy September school year. In fact, it was because of this busy-ness that the Bedford Community Partnership (BCP) initiated Bedford Families Unplugged in October 2004. Supported by the Bedford Selectmen and Bedford Public Schools, Bedford Families Unplugged boasted a long list of endorsers and supporters. Due to the success of the program over the years a second Unplugged day was even scheduled for two springs with the full support of the Selectmen and School Committee. After 11 years, it seems the time has come for families to work towards this goal on their own with their children as no acceptable November date for Unplugged 2015 could be found.

According to Bedford Youth and Family Services Director Sue Baldauf, who

coordinated Unplugged efforts on behalf of BCP, the goal of Unplugged was to increase and improve family connection and relationships. "BCP remains interested in supporting families being connected to each other, especially in terms of providing support to our children and youth, not in mandating that people do nothing. We know that when kids have access to caring adults, they do better socially and educationally. We want our adults to remember that not only on Unplugged days but always."

Based on a program started in Needham, Bedford Unplugged Together hoped to remind people that life holds more than what is on the other end of a plug, be it a computer, a television screen, or a phone. The goal of the evening was to encourage various activities families can do together without electricity and that emphasize person-to-person interaction. Bedford

Public School students had no homework, evening sports, or required activities and the School and Town had no required evening meetings. Parents were encouraged to be home for dinner and families could have a night off from their respective "daily grinds" for engagement and fun. The School Committee had arranged for the no homework and no sports in the past while the Selectmen asked all Town boards and committees to reschedule any regular meetings on that Wednesday night.

Families are still encouraged to plan activities together just as they did with the original Unplugged day in November and the second spring one, the goal being to build activities like the Unplugged activities into their daily lives, whether the Town or the Schools declare "Unplugged" or not. If you have questions about the program or would like more information, contact Youth & Family Services at 781-275-7727.

Try some Special Activities!



Eat dinner backwards, starting with dessert first! ♦ Have breakfast for dinner one night ♦ Make your own pizza night ♦ Have an indoor picnic ♦ Play a board game with the entire family ♦ Kids plan & cook dinner for parents ♦ Eat out – kids' choice ♦ Read a book out loud together ♦ Eat out – parents' choice ♦ Wander in the Bedford Town Forest ♦ Go text free - talk face-to-face the whole day ♦ Illustrate a song that inspires you ♦ Go email free – talk in person instead of online ♦ Make a card for someone you love ♦ Go fish – get out the cards & play your favorite card game ♦ Design a family Jeopardy game or trivia contest ♦ Clean your closets & donate coats & clothes that you don't need ♦ Take cover -- build a fort out of tables & blankets ♦ Count the geese at Great Meadow Wildlife Preserve ♦ Tell 5 people why you are thankful for them ♦ Take a walk around the block by the light of the full moon ♦ Turn off all the lights & have a conversation in total darkness ♦ Organize a relay race or scavenger hunt for your neighborhood ♦ Send a thank you note to someone who has helped you ♦ Draw family portraits without looking at the paper ♦ Frame something you have been meaning to frame & choose a spot to hang it up ♦ Take a mini-vacation to Boston – visit a museum, walk the Freedom Trail, or explore ♦ Learn more about another culture & cook a meal from that country or region ♦ Visit Bedford Public Library & check out a book for the family to read ♦ Volunteer as a whole family at the Food Pantry, a church, or some other favorite charity ♦ Make a statement day – Put your favorite quote on a white t-shirt ♦ Trust Walk – Build trust by taking turns being blindfolded & being led around ♦ Puzzled – invite your neighbors to a puzzle & pizza party ♦ Organize a neighborhood clean up & recycle cans & bottles for a favorite charity ♦ Camp out inside – make popcorn, use sleeping bags, tell stories by flashlight ♦ Help a family in need with a donation of food to the Bedford Food Pantry ♦ Sign up for a Trails Committee walk in one of the Bedford conservation areas ♦ Walk in a conservation area near you – download a map from the Trails website

