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Brain Injury Awareness Month!

by Carly Desmond, RN; UMass student; YHC Volunteer

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month, and concussions are one of the most common types of brain injury. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or a jolt that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions occur when the head and brain move too quickly back and forth. According to the CDC, most concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Around 1.7 million estimated deaths, hospitalizations, and visits to the emergency department in the US are caused by traumatic brain injury. The CDC states that 75% of these injuries are mild traumatic brain injuries or concussions.

Timely and appropriate treatment of concussions can

prevent further injury. The CDC recommends that all parents, coaches and teachers learn about the signs and symptoms of a concussion. After impact, some signs of a concussion are change in mood, sleepiness, and the inability to concentrate or think clearly. Some of these symptoms occur immediately, while others may appear days or weeks later. When a concussion occurs, it is very important to receive help from a health care professional.

There are danger signs to be weary of, such as change in pupil size, slurred speech, nausea and vomiting,

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To Access the HeadSmart:
A Healthy Transition after Concussion booklet go to:

www.southshorehospital.org

On left toolbar click on Youth Health Connection, then click on Helpful Information & Affiliations, click on download!

Please print this booklet in color

Tip for Better Living:

"Your goals are the road maps that guide you and show you what is possible for your life."

Les Brown
Motivational speaker, author b. 1945

Youth Health Connection: Upcoming Meetings & Trainings

April 6th: Parent Partner Advisory Meeting from 8:30-10:30 AM at Notre Dame Academy, Main St. Hingham. We will meet in the Board Room.

New Members always welcome!

May 2nd: School Nurse Meeting CANCELLED

YHC will hold a special creative problem solving training on this date for our faculty advisors. **Want to learn more??** Contact Kimberly_noble@sshosp.org

May 4th: JOINT MEETING School Mental Health Providers, School Nurses & Parent Partners
8-9:30 AM at Hingham High School, Guidance Office.

This is the LAST ADVISORY Meeting for this academic year! **Curious** about Youth Health Connection? Join US!

CDC's Heads Up on Brain Injury

Follow us at [Facebook.com/cdcheadsup](https://www.facebook.com/cdcheadsup)



Brain Injury Month Awareness!

by Carly Desmond, RN; UMass student; YHC Volunteer

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weakness, numbness and decreased coordination.

Recovery from a concussion can vary. Most people with a concussion recover quickly and fully. But for some people, symptoms can last for days, weeks, or longer. In general, recovery may be slower among older adults, young children, and teens. Those who have had a concussion in the past are

also at risk of having another one and may find that it takes longer to recover if they have another concussion.

Appropriate diagnosis, referral, and patient and family/caregiver education are critical for helping patients with a concussion achieve optimal recovery and to reduce or avoid significant adverse health outcomes.

Concussions can be prevented. Remember to always wear your seatbelt in a motor vehicle. Children should be in a car seat or booster seat. Wear the appropriate helmets for recreational activities such as bike riding, skiing, and horseback riding.

For more information, check out the CDC's site :

<http://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/index.html>.

Turn-Off-the-TV Week Is Now Screen-free Week!

by Carly Desmond, RN; UMass student; YHC Volunteer

What will you do the week of April 18-24, 2011?

Screen-free Week is coming up. The Campaign for a Commercial-free Childhood (CCFC) asks for all children and families to turn off the TVs, computers, and video games for the whole week. This year Screen-free Week correlates with April Vacation. The CCFC offers an organizer's tool kit for \$17.95 to help with creating events in your

community or school.

www.commercialfreechildhood.org

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that kids under 2 years old not watch any TV, and that those older than 2 watch no more than 1 to 2 hours a day of quality programming.

Encourage both outdoor and indoor activities that do not

involve the screen. Turn your kids on to life!

Check out the local playgrounds and parks, such as Norris Reservation in Norwell, MA. Or, become a member of the Mass Audubon Society and have free access to all their wildlife sanctuaries and farms in Massachusetts!

http://www.massaudubon.org/support/support_join.php



Report Links:

To access the full report visit: <http://www.firstfocus.net/library/reports/children-in-immigrant-families-ensuring-opportunity-for-every-child-in-america>

Improving the well-being of immigrant children, fact sheet:

<http://www.firstfocus.net/sites/default/files/ImprovingtheWellbeingofChildrenofImmigrants.pdf>

First Focus: Status of Children in Immigrant Families in the U.S.

by Carly Desmond, RN; UMass student; YHC Volunteer

First Focus is a bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions.

In early March 2011, First Focus released a publication on the status of children in immigrant families in the United States. As of 2010,

children in immigrant families accounted for 24% of all children in the U.S., with the vast majority (88%) of those children being U.S. citizens. The report focuses on the health and well-being of immigrant children in the US. The report's data suggest that children of immigrants and children of native-born

families living in low-income families face similar challenges related to health, poverty, and access to a high quality education. The same policies and programs aimed at safeguarding children in low-income families can sometimes impose barriers to children in immigrant families.

New Car Safety Recommendations

by Carly Desmond, RN; UMass student; YHC Volunteer

The American Academy of Pediatrics advises parents to keep their toddlers in rear-facing car seats until age 2 or until they reach the maximum height and weight for their seat.

It also advises that most children will need to ride in a belt-positioning booster seat until they have reached 4 feet 9 inches tall and are between 8 and 12 years of age.

New research has shown that

children under the age of 2 who are in rear-facing seats are 75% less likely to die or suffer severe injuries.

“A rear-facing child safety seat does a better job of supporting the head, neck and spine of infants and toddlers in a crash, because it distributes the force of the collision over the entire body,” Dr. Dennis Durbin said. “For larger children, a forward-facing seat with a harness is safer than a

booster, and a belt-positioning booster seat provides better protection than a seat belt alone until the seat belt fits correctly.” (Dr. Durbin is the lead author of the policy statement)

The report is to be published in the April 2011 journal and is a new recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

<http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/carseat2011.htm>

A Natural Sense of Wonder, book review

by Terri Baker, Silver Lake Middle School

This book, “A Natural Sense of Wonder: Connecting Kids with Nature through the Seasons” by Rick Von Noy; is written for parents/adults encouraging them to connect with their children through nature. It is not a technical research book but an easy read of a parent’s adventure of sharing time through nature with his children. The author encourages adults to not only urge their children to play outside but to join

them in the free activities provided by nature.

He gives very specific descriptions of his time with his children while walking; viewing vultures, catching salamanders or building tree houses throughout the seasons. He describes the wonders and gifts of nature clearly and it made the reader feel like joining him in his adventures. There are times in the book when the author tells that it is not all

beautiful, fun and exciting and things can go wrong. There are challenges and the weather doesn’t always cooperate. But, the end result is usually a feeling of exhilaration and achievement.

At a time when computers and video games are drawing our children to sit down for long periods of time, this is a timely book for parents to read **AND** act on!



National Alcohol Awareness Day: April 7, 2011

By Julie Nussbaum, SADD

Alcohol Awareness Month opens an important window of opportunity to not only raise awareness of but also address underage alcohol use and its devastating effects on our youth, families, and communities. To help organizations across the country honor Alcohol Awareness Month, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services developed a [toolkit](#) that offers tips and

guidelines for taking action to raise awareness and encourage people to make healthy, safe choices. In addition, the [National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism](#) provides resources, including “[Parenting to Prevent Childhood Alcohol Use](#)” — a research-based flyer that describes how parents can help their children develop healthy attitudes toward drinking while minimizing the risk of their

children abusing alcohol. Help youth make this year’s Alcohol Awareness Month memorable by providing them with tips on how to throw a “booze-free bash” for their friends. Resources to get you started include the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s. *A Guide to Safe and Sober Event Planning and The Sara Bellum Blog.*

For more information on any of these resources, visit

<http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/>.

Facts on Tap is a website with prevention resources for high school and college age students, families and educators. The site includes information on alcohol and older teen’s brain development, alcohol screening tools and many resource links for both students and parents. To access this information visit:

<http://www.factsontap.org/>.

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Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore Hospital dedicated to the positive mental health and physical well-being of youth. Our programs collaborate with schools, community health providers, law enforcement officers, state agencies, religious leaders, parents and peer leaders to help young people deal with the various challenges they face and the decisions they must make as they grow and mature. By combining efforts, we can ensure that local youth have access to the health-related knowledge, skills and resources they need to make healthy decisions throughout their lifetime.

Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore

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karin_farrell@sshosp.org

**Health Knowledge
and Risk Prevention
through Collaboration,
Respect, Connectedness
and Coalition Building**



Waiting To Hear, Then What??

By Barbara J. Green, PhD; YHC Medical Director

Even though it does not feel like spring in New England, we know it is coming. Gardens are beginning to come back from a long winter, driveway snow stakes are being removed and the Red Sox are one week away from opening day in Texas. In addition, high school seniors are eagerly searching both electronic and snail mail boxes for word from the colleges to which they applied. Parents are trying very hard to maintain a "Steady Eddie" stance while also awaiting word. For many of our students this decision represents one of the most profound life moments they have faced. With that can come intense emotional reactions. While we as adults have the wisdom and perspective gained from accumulated experience, our teens may not yet have the ability to not feel defeated by a rejection letter. During this time

it is crucial to remind ourselves and our teens that they have accomplished many other developmental milestones, and that this is another one of those to navigate. It is a myth that there is one right college for a student. We know from the research that while colleges differ dramatically what really matters is how our seniors approach school. Having curiosity for learning, ability for critical thinking, good academic background, strong organizational skills, solid foundation for decision making and judgment, good social skills and relationships, healthy lifestyle habits of sleep, nutrition, exercise and a

clear sense of self is essential for sending our students off to college successfully. As the adults who have helped them mature to this point, we should take a deep breath, center ourselves and remember how we felt about our own college acceptance dreams. Taking an empathic stance and guiding them through the decision making process we can help them remain clear headed during this time.



A good read about the whole admissions process is:
Crazy U: One Dad's Crash Course in getting His Kid

Into College by Andrew Ferguson, Simon & Schuster. In a recent review of Ferguson's book, David Shribman wrote; "What we need now is less advice on how to get your child into college. What we need is more advice on what she should do with the college education she gets." Ferguson writes, "Getting into a good college means a student will get a good education. It does not mean she will get a good job. "It is up to all of us to help our students embrace all the learning and experiences college offer and then take the next step and find a passion and job that allows them to put it to good use.