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Celebrating Safely with Joy, Pride & Fun By Barbara J. Green, Ph.D., YHC Medical Director

Spring is finally here, and with that comes the time of year when we celebrate many events: proms, award ceremonies, & graduations. Each school & community has its traditions and unique way to say bravo and congratulations. This is the season when we commemorate and mark milestones. While doing so, it is critical to consider not just what the party theme might be, but to give equal thought and importance to how we keep our teens safe and how to prevent tragedy. As adults, we are responsible for setting the rules, discussing the rules, and enforcing the rules, while providing legal, sound, fun ways to celebrate and share. In Massachusetts we have a strong Social Host Law. Richard Campbell, Esq.

of Campbell and Campbell has created a wonderful program, "Be A Parent, Not A Pal." Please refer to their website: www.SocialHostLiability.org for a comprehensive education on social host liability law. It is absolutely clear: The legal drinking age is 21. Serving or providing alcohol to underage guests or allowing them to drink alcohol in your home or any other property you control is against the law. If you furnish alcohol to those under 21 you are subject to criminal prosecution. You may also be sued civilly. Dr. John Knight of Children's Hospital Boston has created a website: www.teen-safe.org which provides a candid discussion and video presentation of the hazards

of teen drinking. Taking away car keys has proven not to work and has led to a number of South Shore fatalities in the past.

We do want our youth to have fun, to enjoy the moment, to play and celebrate. It is vital that the message be clear: Drinking is unacceptable but fun is available. There is no room for turning a blind eye or being naïve. It is imperative for us to provide safe, healthy options for communities, families, and friends to gather together. We must do the right thing for our teens by role modeling and displaying appropriate behavior and choices. Parents who band together become part of the village dedicated to helping our youth safely navigate another major milestone.

Youth Health Connection: Last Program of the 2010-2011 Year!

June 6th: Educational Program "Supporting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender & Questioning Youth" from 3:30-5:30 PM at Braintree High School, Media Center. We are pleased to have Marisa Kaplan-Harp, Program Director of The GLBT Youth Support Project at Health Imperatives as our speaker. **Seating is limited** for this **FREE** event, contact karin_farrell@sshosp.org to reserve your seat!



Tip for Better Living:

"Ambition is the path to success. Persistence is the vehicle you arrive in"

Bill Bradley
American Hall of Fame Basketball Player, former U.S. Senator
b. 1943

For information on **Caron Boston** contact Danny Lynch, CAS, LADC-I, BRI-I 781-878-9809 Dan-lynch@comcast.net (will eventually change to: dlynch@caron.org)

For information on **Caron Student Assistant Services** contact Traci Wojciechowski 800-678-2332 twojciechowski@caron.org

To link to the Caron website visit: www.caron.org

Caron Now In the Boston Area!

Caron Treatment Centers is pleased to announce the new Caron Boston regional office. This center was established as a key local resource for professionals, the recovering community and Caron alumni. The office provides information, referral services, and a close working relationship with Caron Treatment Centers' personnel to ensure that patients leaving treatment at one of Caron's treatment facilities (PA, FL & TX), who live in and around the Boston area, are aware of the

numerous services available to keep them connected to the Caron Continuum. A key service of Caron Boston is our **Massachusetts Student Assistance Program**. As a leader in the adolescent treatment industry, Caron Treatment Centers is one of the few treatment facilities to recognize the importance of working collaboratively with schools in providing prevention education and early intervention as a critical element in reducing the

devastating effects of substance abuse and dependency. Thousands of students, teachers and parents have benefitted from some aspect of student assistance programming in this area. We offer a full continuum of services that include psycho-educational support groups, prevention programs, direct student services, faculty in-services, parent programs as well as trainings and health fairs. For more information on Caron's Student Assistance

*The aquatic professionals at the South Shore YMCA believe greater awareness of the dangers of water may assist in preventing tragedies and have developed the **Aquatic Safety Initiative** to promote water safety, preventative programs and educational opportunities for the community.*

South Shore YMCA-Aquatic Safety Initiative

by Cheryl Botieri, Ex. Director of Mission Advancement South Shore YMCA

As summer approaches, children and families prepare to spend more time in and around water. While this can be a fun and exciting time, it can also be a dangerous time. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death in children ages 1 to 19, the risk being highest in toddlers and teenage boys. Of all preschoolers who drown, 70% are in the care of one or both of their parents at the time of the drowning. The tragic

drowning of two sets of twins in Massachusetts last summer highlighted the frightening reality of these statistics.

Many imagine the typical drowning episode to be much like a scene from a movie; a person begins splashing and screaming for help, calling attention to themselves and letting others know they are in danger. Next, the lifeguard or other adult will run to their assistance and make a courageous rescue.

This image is far from reality. Most times, people drown silently. They do not scream. They do not wave their hands. They do not call for help. In fact, often, there is no warning at all; the victim will struggle quietly at the surface for several seconds, looking very similar to other swimmers. They will be in a vertical position and bob up and down in the water several times before slipping silently underwater. (See next article for Water Safety Tips)

Water Safety Tips:

by Cheryl Botieri, Ex. Director of Mission Advancement South Shore YMCA

Caregivers should keep water safety as a top priority at all times. Supervision of children is crucial to the prevention of drowning. Children should never swim without a lifeguard or other adult actively supervising—When there are multiple adults present, one adult should be designated to be “on guard” whenever there are children in the water. Never assume that someone else is watching.

Caregivers of preschoolers should supervise from a “huggable distance,” meaning the child should stay within arms reach at all times. Lastly, Be ready! In the event of the worst case scenario, it has been shown that Cardiovascular Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) performed by bystanders has improved outcomes in the lives of

drowning victims.

To learn more about the South Shore YMCA's Aquatic Safety Initiative or to receive additional water safety materials please contact Jill McCusker, Sr. Aquatics Director—Hanover Branch at jmccusker@ssymca.org or Stephanie Higgins, Sr. Aquatics Director—Quincy Branch at shiggins@ssymca.org.

FreeRice: Learn While You Are Helping Feed Others!

FreeRice is a non-profit website run by the United Nations World Food Program.

FreeRice has two goals: Provide education to everyone for free and Help end world hunger by providing free rice to hungry people. These donations of rice are made possible by the generosity of the sponsors who advertise on the FreeRice site.

Users can answer questions in the following subjects: Math, English, Geography, Chemistry, Art, and Foreign Languages (German, French, Spanish, and Italian). For each question you answer correctly, 10 grains of rice are donated. There have been updates and changes to the site which is now a web 2.0 version. Participants can create or join groups (or just play from the home page); If

you register you can track your running total number of answers, help feed people around the globe, as well as enhance your own personal knowledge. There are different "difficulty levels" to keep the game play interesting for all. The art section has 10 different levels while the vocabulary section has a total of 60 levels! This is a great website to help keep the brain active no matter what your age!



www.freerice.com

Seeking a Volunteer Reader!

Once again we have a book in need of a volunteer reader! The current book is entitled "do i get my allowance before or after i'm grounded?: Stop Fighting, Start Talking and Get To Know Your Teen" by Vanessa Van Petten, 2011.

The book is almost 300 pages in length with Chapter titles such as: *Change How You Talk, What Happens Online, Stays Online, The New Bully,*

Risky Business: Smoking, Drinking, Sex and More, Handling High School and The Greatest Generation? Each Chapter ends with activities: Family Challenge and Personal Challenge questions.

All we ask of a volunteer reader is that you contact us to obtain the book, read the book in a 4-6 week time frame, then submit a brief, 200 word, book review to us that we will use in an upcoming YHC weekly update.

To learn more about the author visit her website at www.radicalparenting.com

To volunteer as a reader for this book please contact Karin Farrell at Karin_farrell@sshosp.org



Rachel's Challenge: Fall 2011

Rachel's Challenge, which focuses on inspiring, equipping and empowering individuals to create a permanent and positive culture change, will be back in the Boston area next fall presenting student assemblies.

The typical format of the day is two student assemblies, one student leadership training session and one

community event in the evening.

There are still dates available and there is a \$400 cost savings if you reserve your full training day event soon!

The current available dates are: September: 12, 15, 16, 28 or 30th or October 7th or 24th.

To learn more about Rachel's

Challenge or **for more information** or to inquiry about a reservation please contact:

Andrew Strait
Marketing Director for
CT, IA, MN, MA, NJ,
NY, CAN,
877.895.7060 x708
www.rachelschallenge.org

Youth Health Connection

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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 Hospital

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



Demystifying Vitamin D

by Maryellen Maguire-Eisen RN, MSN; Children's Melanoma Prevention Foundation

Vitamin D has been called the "super" vitamin because of its purported health benefits. One-hundred years ago, cod liver oil was found to prevent Rickets' disease, a disorder that causes softening of the bones. The vitamin in cod liver oil was the fourth discovered and therefore named vitamin "D". Since then, vitamin D has been shown to promote bone health by increasing bone density and reducing fractures. Recent reports have linked vitamin D with lower rates of cancer, diabetes, and multiple sclerosis. Based on

these reports health care providers began to recommend vitamin D supplementation to prevent these diseases. Vitamin D sources include ultraviolet B exposure, diet, and supplementation. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) is the organization charged by Congress to advise the nation on national health matters. It convened a panel of experts to review and evaluate current recommendations for vitamin D intake. The 2010 IOM report concluded that there was only clear evidence for the role of vitamin D in bone health and that other health claims could not be substantiated. Sunscreen prevents vitamin

D synthesis in the skin by blocking ultraviolet radiation. Despite limited use by Americans, sunscreen use has been blamed for most vitamin D deficiency. Since ultraviolet radiation is proven to cause skin cancer, the IOM has eliminated it as a healthy source of vitamin D and has recommended that Americans continue to use sunscreen. The IOM used a risk assessment model to determine optimal vitamin D requirements. They increased the recommended dietary intake from 400 IU/day to 600 IU/day for most people and 800 IU/day for the elderly. They also cautioned against adverse

effects of over-consumption including cancer, heart disease, and fractures and set a safe upper limit of 4,000 IU/day for older children and adults. The final chapter on vitamin D and health has not yet been written. But for now, we need to heed the advice of the Institute of Medicine to obtain vitamin D from diet and supplementation alone and to wear sunscreen. The Children's Melanoma Prevention Foundation recommends the proper use of a broad-spectrum, SPF ≥ 30 sunscreen and sun protective clothing including sunglasses year-round. Be Safe, be SunAWARE!