

Needham Youth Commission

40 Years Young 1967 - 2007



1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02492
781-455-7518

www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission

A note from our sponsor...



Louise Condon Realty, Inc.

"Needham's Home Town Broker"

399 Chestnut Street, Needham, MA 02492

Office: 781-449-6292

Fax: 781-455-8260

I am pleased to support the Needham Youth Commission as they celebrate their 40th anniversary of outstanding service to Needham youth and families. As a resident and business in Needham, we are all enriched by the work of the Youth Commission, and we wish them the best in the future.

Why is Louise Condon Realty supporting this venture? We have always been a company dedicated to making Needham a community which cares about wellness. The name Louise Condon on the door since 1985 ensures the commitment of our realty office to quality residential and commercial real estate service in Needham, Massachusetts and the western suburbs of Boston as well as caring about the youth and families who work and reside in these properties.

We hope you enjoy this publication, and again, best to the Youth Commission.

Louise Condon



NEEDHAM YOUTH COMMISSION

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Dear Friends:

It is with tremendous excitement that we present you with this calendar spanning the 2007/2008 academic year. This is designed to help you keep track of the many things you do each week as well as provide you with information of interest focusing on youth, wellness, and families. I would like to acknowledge Louise Condon, President of Condon Realty in Needham for her generous contribution to this project --- without her support this project would not have become a reality. You can learn more about Louise and Condon Realty later in this publication.

This calendar is a celebration of the 40th year anniversary of the Needham Youth Commission. Established in 1967, over the course of the past four decades the Youth Commission has worked diligently to meet the needs of youth and families in Needham; the information in this publication is intended to continue our focus of supporting those who live in Needham. All of the articles contained in the following pages are original works created by the Youth Commission, except where a source is noted.

We thank you for your support over the years, and invite you to celebrate this milestone with us.

Sincerely,

Jon

Jon Mattleman, Director

40 Years of Board Leadership at the Needham Youth Commission

Over the past forty years, Board members have played a significant role in our creation, establishment, and growth in Needham. Below is a list of our Board of Directors over the last four decades (due to the lack of complete records, we apologize for any omissions).

Carol Anello	Warner B. Hartford	David Morse
Jessica Antonellis	Martin Healey	James Naughton
Robert Austin	William Healy	Joey Nowd
Connie Barr	Brian Hennigan	Valeria Nuncio
Ted Bennett	Daniel Herrick	Kevin O'Malley
Marcia Berkowitz	Melissa Hofeller	Michael O'Toole
Geoffrey Bertolet	Adele Hoffman	William O'Toole
Joshua Brodsky	Sarah Hughes	Dawn Pandolph
Judy Boucher	Jason Israel	Barbara Popper
Steve Brown	Roy Johan	Susan Posner
Elizabeth Burns	Phyllis Johnson	Kevin Potterton
N. Hoit Bussel	Debbie Joyce	Halbert Price
Stephen Cadigan	Arlene Karlin	Sharon Rapkin
Eric Carr	Arthur Karlin	Gabriel C. Rhoads
John J. Cleary	Kevin Kelly	Paul B. Robinson
Sarah Cocuzzo	Robert Kettlety	Richard Rolanti
Laura Connors	Paul Keyes	Robert Roman
Richard Creem	Sheede Khalil	John Romeo
Foster S. Crook	Donald E. Kidd	Joseph Savignano
Bismoy Dasgupta	John Kraemer	Colleen Schaller
Dorothy Davis	Thomas Lambert	Rebecca Sherman
Katherine Davis	Pamela Lebow	Charlotte Sidell
David F. Devine	Alexandria Lee	George F. Skinner
Merissa Devine	Doug Levy	Trudi Smith
Kenneth Dorn	Everett Lilly	Vin Springer
William Duncan	Robert E. Lowden	Mary Ellen Stevenson
Stephen E. Eaton	Jean Lucey	Gardner Stratton, Jr.
Alden Eberly	William Lundell	Harold T. Swendsen
David Eldridge	Cathy Lunetta	Tom Tannozzini
Robert Enos	Larry W. Luther	Laura Thompson
William English	Maurice May	Stephen Thomas
Katie Finesilver	Laura MacKenzie	Mary Unser
Lori Friedman	William McEvoy	Prosper S. Virden, Jr.
William H. Gorham	David McGuire	Carole Vollman
Michael Graber	Peter McLaughlin	Stanley Wilcox
Richard Grudinkas	Lorinda McMorran	Lorene Whyte
Ronnie Haas	John J. McQuillan	Deborah Winnick
Jonathan Handler	Wendell S. Moore	

40 Years of Great Staff and Interns at the Needham Youth Commission

Over the past forty years, many staff and interns have worked to establish the Youth Commission in Needham. Below is a list of those individuals (due to the lack of accurate/complete records, we apologize if there are any omissions).

Jennifer Booth
Victoria Clair
Katy Colthart
Michelle David
Lindsey DeBlois
Wayne Diette
Tom Engelman
Meaghan Flaherty
Alison Frisbie
Denise Gieras
J. Robert Griffin
Jene Hinds
Alexandra Hogan
Meredith Lasna
Angela LeBlanc
Karen Lee
Nicole Lesser
Jayme Lynch
Heather Lynch
Jon Mattleman
Erin McDonald
Susan Patkin
Nicole Rice
Rebecca Robbins
Col. Robison
Merri Rubin
Lindsey Roy
Carol Rosenstock
Merri Rubin
Lauren Russell-Birmingham
Sam Schachner
Sarah Schneider-Conrad
Kim Shanahan
Karen Wilk
Pam Winter

The Programs and Services of the Needham Youth Commission

Founded in 1967 by concerned residents, the Needham Youth Commission has earned the respect of the community for its dedication to providing quality services. Over the past three decades, as the needs of youth and families have evolved, the Youth Commission has kept pace by offering relevant programs and clinical services.

Presently, the Needham Youth Commission operates as a mental health resource providing professional and confidential clinical and programmatic services. We provide support, information, and direction to youth on issues such as family, social, peer, stress, loss, alcohol, drug, and other youth-related concerns. We base our services upon a self-help philosophy in which youth utilize the expertise of the staff to expand their awareness and understanding, and eventually learn the skills to more effectively take control of their lives.

The Youth Commission regularly collaborates with civic and community organizations on a variety of projects including our RAY of Hope Program (**R**ecognize **A** **Y**outh) and “Needham Unplugged,” presents to groups on youth and family-related issues, and facilitates workshops on a range of mental health topics.

The community’s support of the Youth Commission is critical if we are to remain a stable and effective organization.

Clinical Services:

- **Individual, Family, and Group Counseling:**

Free confidential individual and family counseling is available from our trained and committed staff. We also have extensive experience in the facilitation of groups and feel that group counseling offers a unique opportunity to gain insight into the process of how people think and act.

- **Substance Abuse Awareness Program**

This 15-hour assessment, education, and intervention program takes an innovative approach to the topic of alcohol and drugs. Participants investigate current levels of use and the internal and external motivations for their use of substances.

Seminars, Trainings, Events, and Workshops:

- Books and Bridges (parent/child book club)
- Loss Workshops
- Active Parenting of Teens
- A Conversation....For Parents of Teens
- Extreme Looks
- Babysitter Training Seminars
- QPR Suicide Prevention Trainings
- Teen Dating Violence Seminars
- Make A Statement Day
- Safe Surf: Internet Safety Workshops
- Picture Perfect
- PEEPS
- Patrick C. Forde Memorial Good Person Award

Programmatic Services

Employment and Volunteer Programs: This program assists youth in obtaining business and residential employment, as well as helping residents requiring assistance for around-the-house chores.

Peer Tutor Program: This exciting collaboration pairs high school volunteers with middle and elementary school students in need of academic/organizational assistance.

Diversion/Restitution Program: Working in collaboration with the Dedham District Court and Needham Police, the Diversion/Restitution Program provides the opportunity for youth who commit minor violations of the law to participate in community service work.

Project VAN (Volunteers Around Needham): VAN is a summer group program involving youth in volunteer opportunities. VAN benefits the community and is an empowering experience for youth.

RAY of Hope (Recognize A Youth): The RAY of Hope Program recognizes a young person each month that is making a positive contribution to our community.

Needham Unplugged: Needham Unplugged is an awareness campaign to remind families/residents to “unplug their electronics” and “plug into” each other. “Unplugged” includes a no-homework, no-sports, and no-activities night for students and no town or community meetings for parents.

Publications: We publish a wealth of original information of interest for youth, parents, and families.

Preparing for a New School Year: Adjusting to School



Studies show that children whose parents are involved in their education do better in school than children whose parents are not involved.

Be helpful in promoting good attitudes and practices in your child by:

- **Establish effective communication with your child's school**
 - Start communication when things are going well with your child. Give compliments to the teacher through notes or phone conversations.
 - When there are problems, share concerns while they are small. Ask how things are going.
 - When attending school activities, prepare yourself with questions or concerns that you want to address.
 - Join the PTA, or volunteer your time in order to share more of your child's world.

- **Be available to encourage your child.**
 - Show your child you are interested by being consistently available at predictable times each day. Do not attempt to protect your child from negative consequences by doing the homework assignment yourself (or by "helping" too much). This will seriously detract from your child's confidence to cope successfully with future school demands.

- **Display a love of learning at home.**
 - To fuel your child's natural interest and curiosity, celebrate learning. Ask questions, exchange ideas and allow your child to arrive at his or her own conclusions. Provide a home environment rich in books, games and projects. Above all, let your child see you enjoying new challenges and activities.

September

Monday
Labor Day

3rd

Tuesday

4th

Wednesday
First day of school in Needham

5th

Thursday

6th

Friday

7th

Saturday

8th

Sunday

9th

101 Ways To Praise A Child

* Wow * Way To Go * Super * You're Special * Outstanding * Excellent * Great * Good * Neat * Well Done * Remarkable * I Knew You Could Do It * I'm Proud Of You * Fantastic * Super Star * Nice Work * Looking Good * You're On Top Of It * Beautiful * Now You're Flying * You're Catching On * Now You've Got It * You're Incredible * Bravo * You're Fantastic * Hurray For You * You're On Target * You're On Your Way * How Nice * How Smart * Good Job * That's Incredible * Hot Dog * Dynamic * You're Beautiful * You're Unique * Nothing Can Stop You Now * Good For You * I like You * You're A Winner * Remarkable Job * Beautiful Work * Spectacular * You're Spectacular * You're A Darling * You're Precious * Great Discovery * You've Discovered The Secret * You Figured It Out * Fantastic Job * Hip, Hip, Hurray * Bingo * Magnificent * Marvelous * Terrific * You're Important * Phenomenal * You're Sensational * Super Work * Creative Job * Super Job * Fantastic Job * Exceptional Performance * You're A Real Trooper * You Are Responsible * You Are Exciting * You Learned It Right * What An Imagination * What A Good Listener * You Are Fun * You're Growing Up * You Tried Hard * You Care * Beautiful Sharing * Outstanding Performance * You're A Good Friend * I Trust You * You're Important * You Mean A lot To Me * You Make Me Happy * You Belong * You've Got A Friend * You Make Me Laugh * You Brighten My Day * I Respect You * You Mean The World To Me * That's Correct * You're A Joy * You're A Treasure * You're Wonderful * You're Perfect * Awesome * A Plus Job * You're The Best * A Big Hug * A Big Kiss * I Love You! * You're A-OK * You made my day * Give them a big smile *

September

Monday

10th

Tuesday

11th

Wednesday

12th

Thursday

13th

Friday

14th

Saturday

15th

Sunday

16th

Don't Sweat...the Small Stuff

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar... and the coffee...

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things-your God, family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite passions-things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, and your car. The sand is everything else-the small stuff."

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out to dinner. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

Source: Laura Bankston

September

Monday

17th

Tuesday

18th

Wednesday

19th

Thursday

20th

Friday

21st

Saturday

22nd

Sunday

23rd

Please Don't Say Anything... Just Listen

Listen

When I ask you to listen to me,
And you start giving me advice
You have not done what I asked.
When I ask you to listen to me,
And you begin to tell me why I
shouldn't feel that way,
You are trampling on my feelings.
When I ask you to listen to me,
And you feel you have to do
something to solve my problems,
You have failed me, strange
as that may seem.

Listen: All that I ask is that you listen,
Not talk or do - just hear me.
When you do something for me
That I need to do for myself,
you contribute to my fear
and to my feelings of inadequacy.
But when you accept as a simple fact
That I do what I feel,
no matter how irrational,
Then I can quit trying to
convince you
And go about the business
Of understanding what's behind
my feelings.
So please listen and just hear me.
And if you want to talk,
Wait a minute for your turn -
And I'll listen to you.

September

Monday

24th

Tuesday

25th

Wednesday

26th

Thursday

27th

Friday

28th

Saturday

Needham Harvest Fair

29th

Sunday

30th

Help! I Don't Understand My Parents



Being a teenager is a difficult challenge. You frequently bounce between childhood and adulthood, being irresponsible and responsible, testing parental authority and then depending on it. Parents often do not know what to expect. Many often find it difficult to understand your growing need for independent action, and even for rebellion.

Some adults view adolescence as a period of friction, change and problems. For you, it may be a time of concern about acne, weight problems, menstruation, late development, early development, sexual arousal, school pressures, girlfriends, boyfriends, boredom, parental hassles, peer pressures and your future.

It's easy to understand why many find this a difficult time. But once it's over, you realize that most of your parents' "irritating" behavior was motivated by feelings of love and concern. Yes, adolescence can be a trying time. But if you and your parents communicate and try to understand each other, this period will be less trying and more fun for everyone.

Here are a few tips to improve the communication you have with your parents: be honest with your feelings; don't get defensive; don't yell; calmly tell your parents what's on your mind; avoid "you" statements like, "You don't give me enough freedom" and instead use "I" statements such as "When I go out with my friends, your early curfew makes me feel as if you don't trust me"; and listen to what your parents have to say.

When you're talking to your parents, if they say something you disagree with, don't immediately overreact. Give them a chance to express their feelings and then calmly explain why you may disagree with them. Try to identify what you need from them and tell them (they may not know).

October

Monday

1st

Tuesday

2nd

Wednesday

3rd

Thursday

4th

Friday

5th

Saturday

6th

Sunday

7th

Memo from Your Child

(Author unknown)

- Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all that I ask for, I'm only testing you.
- Don't be afraid to be firm with me, I prefer it. It makes me feel more secure.
- Don't let me form bad habits; I have to rely on you to detect them in the early stages.
- Don't make me feel smaller than I am; It only makes me behave stupidly big.
- Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins; it upsets my set of values.
- Don't be upset when I say "I hate you", it's not you I hate, but your power to hinder.
- Don't protect me from consequences; I need to learn the painful way sometimes.
- Don't make rash promises, remember I feel badly let down when promises are broken.
- Don't be inconsistent, that completely confuses me and makes me lose faith in you.
- Don't tell me my fears are silly, they are terribly real to me and you can do much to reassure me if you try to understand.
- Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible. It gives me to great a shock when I discover that you are neither.
- Don't forget that I can't thrive without lots of love and understanding, but I don't need to tell you that do I?

October

Monday
Columbus Day

8th

Tuesday

9th

Wednesday

10th

Thursday

11th

Friday

12th

Saturday

13th

Sunday

14th

Understanding Loss

Learning about and understanding the grief process can be helpful in order to know some of the feelings and stages a person might go through when experiencing a loss. These are some of the typical responses people in general have, but they are by no means the only feelings one can have. Often a person can repeat parts of the process --- grieving is indeed a very personal experience --- but it helps to know what some of the typical responses might be. The following stages refer specifically to reactions to a death, but they can be applied to all losses.

Denial: Even though intellectually you know the person has died, the death doesn't seem real to you. Teenagers, in particular, may show little signs of grieving in the beginning. You're not aware of feeling much of anything. This can be a useful way of coping. Denial protects us from feeling much of anything. This can be a useful way of coping. Denial protects us from being overwhelmed by emotions. When the numbness begins to wear off, the feelings find their way in. Denial acts as a shock absorber that helps us assimilate the difficult truth.

Anger: When we have been abandoned by death, anger can be very powerful. Because it is often difficult to express anger towards the person who died the anger is taken out on the people and situations that are available. Sometimes in cases of loss through death, the anger can be directed at the deceased for dying, leaving. A certain amount of anger is a healthy indication that we are beginning to accept the facts.

Depression: As we begin to acknowledge the loss and the reality sets in, we can begin to feel depressed. Depression has been described as anger turned inward. One can feel sad, hopeless, unprotected. Withdrawal from friends is a common response. One can feel isolated. Depression doesn't equal weakness. Depression is part of saying good-bye to someone you cared about.

Acceptance: Acceptance doesn't mean you have to like what has happened. It means that you know life has changed and that you need to find new ways of responding to that.

October

Monday

15th

Tuesday

16th

Wednesday

17th

Thursday

18th

Friday

19th

Saturday

20th

Sunday

21st

Needham Domestic Violence Action Committee

The Needham Domestic Violence Action Committee (DVAC) is a community-based interagency and interdisciplinary team formed to raise awareness of domestic violence. They provide school and community-based education outreach, and information, resources and referral services.

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive control that one person exercises over another. Domestic violence is the actual or threatened physical, sexual, psychological, or economic abuse of an individual by someone with whom they have or have had an intimate or significant relationship.

Are you in an abusive relationship?

- **Does your partner try to control what you wear, what you say, how you act, and who you spend time with?**
- **Has your partner ever pushed, shoved, slapped or hit you?**
- **Do you feel nervous or afraid for your safety when your partner becomes angry?**

If you answered, "yes" to any of these questions, you may be in an abusive relationship. You are not alone and the abuse is not your fault. If you have question or need support please call the resources in your community.

More information about the Needham Domestic Violence Action Committee can be found online at: www.town.needham.ma.us/BOH/BOHDomesticViolence.htm

October

Monday

22nd

Tuesday

23rd

Wednesday

24th

Thursday

25th

Friday

26th

Saturday

27th

Sunday

28th

10 Tips

To Keep Your Kids Safe on Halloween



- **Make your child eat dinner before setting out.**
- **Children should carry quarters or a cell phone so they can call home.**
- **Ideally, young children of any age should be accompanied by an adult.**
- **If your children go on their own, be sure they wear a watch, preferably one that can be read in the dark.**
- **If you buy a costume, look for one made of flame-retardant material.**
- **Older children should know where to reach you and when to be home.**
- **You should know where they're going.**
- **Although tampering is rare, tell children to bring the candy home to be inspected before consuming anything.**
- **Look at the wrapping carefully and toss out anything that looks suspect.**
- **Try to go light on the rules --- Halloween is for fun!**

Happy (and Safe) Halloween

October/November

Monday

29th

Tuesday

30th

Wednesday

Halloween

31st

Thursday

1st

Friday

2nd

Saturday

3rd

Sunday

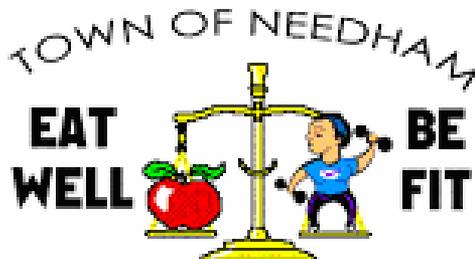
4th

Eat Well.....

.....Be fit

The Needham Health Department oversees the Eat Well/Be Fit Needham committee. It is comprised of the Needham Health department, Needham Public Schools, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital/Needham, nutritionists, physicians, Needham Park and Recreation Department, Council on Aging, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, resident advocates and business. Eat Well/Be Fit Needham addresses the youth, adult and senior populations in their communities. The committee is focusing on nutrition and physical activity and to help find concrete ways to offer healthier choices for today's citizens. One out of every two Massachusetts adults is either overweight or obese according to a new survey released by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The prevalence of obesity continues to rise at an alarming rate --- particularly for children. It is the understanding of the committee that promoting healthier dietary patterns and age appropriate physical activity will lead to a healthier lifestyle and better quality of life.

For further information, please contact the Health Department at 781-455-7523 or visit the Eat Well/Be Fit website at: www.town.needham.ma.us/BOH/BOHEatWellBeFit.htm



November

Monday

5th

Tuesday

6th

Wednesday

7th

Thursday

8th

Friday

9th

Saturday

10th

Sunday

Veterans' Day

11th

Needham Coalition For Suicide Prevention

Suicide is a serious problem and one of the leading causes of death and injury nationwide. It has also significantly and negatively impacted our town. In response, a broad-based coalition has been created in 2006 to study the problem and make recommendations to the community. The work of the Coalition is broadly based on the 1999 National Strategic Goals for Suicide.

The goals of the Suicide Coalition are:

- **Develop and implement strategies to reduce the stigma associated with being a consumer of mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention services.**
- **Improve access to and community linkage with mental health and substance abuse services.**
- **Promote efforts to reduce access to lethal means and methods of self-harm.**
- **Develop board-based support for suicide prevention.**
- **Improve reporting and portrayals of suicide behavior, mental illness, and substance abuse in the media.**
- **Improve and expand surveillance systems.**
- **Promote awareness that suicide is a public health problem that is preventable.**
- **Develop training for the recognition of at-risk behavior and effective referral.**
- **Examine research on suicide and suicide prevention.**
- **Implement proven educational suicide prevention programs.**
- **Develop effective procedures for school and community response to issue of suicide.**

To learn more about Needham's Coalition for Suicide Prevention or to contact them, please visit their website: www.needhamacts.org

November

Monday

12th

Tuesday

13th

Wednesday

14th

Thursday

15th

Friday

16th

Saturday

17th

Sunday

18th

25 Stress Reducers...

1. Get up fifteen minutes earlier in the morning. The inevitable morning mishaps will be less stressful.
2. Prepare for the morning the evening before. Set the breakfast table, make lunches, put out the clothes you plan to wear, etc.
3. Don't rely on your memory. Write down appointment times, when to pick up the laundry, when library books are due, etc.
4. Procrastination is stressful. Whatever you want to do tomorrow, do today; whatever you want to do today, do it now.
5. Eliminate (or restrict) the amount of caffeine in your diet.
6. Have a plan "B."
7. Relax your standards. The world will not end if the grass doesn't get mowed this weekend.
8. Say "No!" Saying "no" to extra projects, social activities, and invitations you know you don't have the time or energy for takes practice, self-respect, and a belief that everyone, everyday, needs quiet time to relax and be alone.
9. Turn "needs" into preferences. Our basic physical needs translate into food, water, and keeping warm. Everything else is a preference. Don't get attached to preferences.
10. Get up and stretch periodically if your job requires that you sit for extended periods.
11. Get enough sleep. If necessary, use an alarm clock to remind you to go to bed.
12. Check your breathing throughout the day, and before, during, and after high-pressure situations. If you find your stomach muscles knotted and your breathing is shallow, relax all your muscles and take several deep, slow breaths.
13. Talk it out. Discussing your problems with a trusted friend can help clear your mind of confusion so you can concentrate on problem solving.
14. Learn to live one day at a time.
15. Every day, do something you really enjoy.
16. Add an ounce of love to everything you do.
17. Take a hot bath/shower (or a cool one in summertime) to relieve tension.
18. Do something for somebody else.
19. Schedule a realistic day.
20. Become more flexible. Some things are worth not doing perfectly and some issues are fine to compromise upon.
21. Eliminate destructive self-talk: "I'm too old to. . .," "I'm too fat to. . .," etc.
22. If an especially unpleasant task faces you, do it early in the day and get it over with, then the rest of your day will be free of anxiety.
23. Don't forget to take a lunch break. Try to get away from your desk or work area in body and mind, even if it's just for 15 or 20 minutes.
24. Have a forgiving view of events and people. Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world.
25. Have an optimistic view of the world. Believe that most people are doing the best they can.

November

Monday

19th

Tuesday

20th

Wednesday

21st

Thursday

Thanksgiving

22nd

Friday

23rd

Saturday

24th

Sunday

25th

Discussion Points Regarding Suicide

The issue of suicide is complex and over the past few years new information is emerging regarding this issue. Below are a few points of information that may be helpful to you when talking about suicide:

- **People who are thinking about suicide typically do not want to die ---- rather they cannot figure out a way to go on living.**
- **In Massachusetts, there were 429 completed suicides in the last full reporting year, 2004 --- 342 male and 87 female.**
- **In Massachusetts there were 4,343 hospital stays for self injury, and 6,938 Emergency Room visits for self injury.**
- **Myth: Suicidal people keep their plans to themselves.**
- **Fact: Most suicidal people communicate their intent sometime during the week preceding their attempt.**
- **Myth: Confronting a person about suicide will only make them angry and increase the risk of suicide.**
- **Fact: Asking someone directly about suicidal intent lowers anxiety, opens up communication, and lowers the risk of an impulsive act.**
- **The leading method for male suicide is hanging/suffocation and firearms; for female it is poisoning and hanging/suffocation.**
- **At Needham High School: 11% of students (145) reported that they have had suicidal thoughts; 8% (102) said they had made a suicide plan; and 4% (51) said they had attempted suicide one or more times according to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.**
- **At Pollard Middle School: 11% of students (115) have thought about suicide; 7% (73) have made a suicide plan; and 2% (21) said they had attempted suicide one or more times according to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.**
- **Risk Factors and Behavior Clues include: previous attempts, mental disorders, alcohol/substance abuse, impulsivity, access to lethal means, putting personal affairs in order; giving away prized possessions; unexplained anger, aggression, and/or irritability; loss of any major relationship; and being fired or being expelled from school.**
- **It has been stated that "Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem."**

November/December

Monday

26th

Tuesday

27th

Wednesday

28th

Thursday

29th

Friday

30th

Saturday

1st

Sunday

2nd

Ten Ways to Help Your Child

Tackle His/Her Homework

1. Have him use an assignment notebook so he knows what homework is required each day.
2. Introduce a planning calendar and show her how to use it when she begins to have long-term assignments.
3. Each day he should preview the assignments that he has to do and get the tough tasks out of the way first. He should write down the order in which he will do assignments.
4. Teach her to review her work frequently.
5. Get him an organizer, and show him how to use it so that he has a system for organizing all his school papers.
6. Have her use a book bag to transport books and papers.
7. Encourage him to establish a regular time for doing homework.
8. She should keep old quizzes and tests to prepare for future tests.
9. Eliminate distractions such as phone calls and television during homework time.
10. Establish a regular place for doing homework.

December

Monday

3rd

Tuesday

4th

Wednesday

5th

Thursday

6th

Friday

7th

Saturday

8th

Sunday

9th

What We Can Learn From the Geese



In the fall when you see Geese heading south for the winter flying along in the "V" formation, you might be interested in knowing what science has discovered about why they fly that way. It has been learned that as each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own. Quite similar to people who are part of a team and share a common direction can get where they are going quicker and easier, geese can because they are traveling on the trust of one another and lift each other up along the way.

Whenever a Goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go through it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the power of the flock. If we have as much sense as a Goose, we will stay in formation and share information with those who are headed the same way that we are going. When the lead Goose gets tired, he rotates back in the wing and another Goose takes over. It pays to share leadership and take turns doing hard jobs.

The Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep their speed. Words of support and inspiration help energize those on the front line, helping them to keep pace in spite of the day-to-day pressures and fatigue. It is important that our honking be encouraging. Otherwise it's just - well honking!

Finally, when a Goose gets sick or is wounded by a gunshot and falls out, two Geese fall out of the formation and follow the injured one down to help and protect him. They stay with him until he is either able to fly or until he is dead, and then they launch out with another formation to catch up with their group. When one of us is down, it's up to the others to stand by us in our time of trouble. If we have the sense of a Goose, we will stand by each other when things get rough. We will stay in formation with those headed where we want to go.

The next time you see a formation of Geese, remember their message:
**"IT IS INDEED A REWARD, A CHALLENGE AND A PRIVILEGE
TO BE A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER OF A TEAM"**

December

Monday

10th

Tuesday

11th

Wednesday

12th

Thursday

13th

Friday

14th

Saturday

15th

Sunday

16th

Tips for Parents from Teens on Getting Along With Your Teenager!

- **Trust my judgment of my friends; there's a reason I'm friends with them. I know more about them than you.**
- **Don't label kids because of one good or one bad thing.**
- **Don't break promises; say what you mean & mean what you say.**
- **Don't be a hypocrite.**
- **We don't like to fight either. Try to talk about it peacefully.**
- **Try to understand; the same things happened when you were young and they always will happen. Try to be cool.**
- **Share your experiences; they comfort and help communication.**
- **Keep a sense of humor. Think about how we feel; try to get our perspective. Remember, we're still young.**
- **Don't dwell on things; be forgiving.**
- **Punishment isn't always the way to teach a lesson.**
- **If there is a punishment, make it fit the crime.**
- **Don't lay on a guilt trip; it makes it harder to talk.**
- **Don't blow up or always get mad; it's easier to hear the message when you're calm.**
- **Deal with things when we're both ready.**
- **If I'm crying, I really need help. Please pay attention.**
- **Be a friend to your kid and treat them that way. They will talk more.**
- **Don't draw out issues that are old news.**

December

Monday

17th

Tuesday

18th

Wednesday

19th

Thursday

20th

Friday

21st

Saturday

22nd

Sunday

23rd

Keeping Your New Year's Resolutions



Choose One Goal - If you are focusing on too many issues, this can be confusing and undermine your ability to achieve any one of your goals. In addition, if you have multiple goals, they can potentially conflict with one another.

Set Goals That Are Realistic - It is critical to set goals that are within reason. If you select goals that are not attainable, you will not only fail to succeed, but you run the risk of feeling like a failure personally. You might want to ask a friend what they think of your goal to get a better sense of whether it is within reason.

Have a Game Plan - Simply having a goal is not enough; you need to identify the steps that will get you from where you are today, to where you want to be by a specified time. Many failures to succeed are due to poorly thought out plans.

Talk To Other People - Ask other people who have been successful how they were able to accomplish their goals. They may have ideas or strategies you have never considered.

Think About and Identify Any Obstacles For Success - Pre-thinking what might be obstacles to success so that you will be prepared. For example if you were trying not to overeat, you might want to start making changes after the holidays, as this time of year offers more than the usual number of tempting treats.

December

Monday

24th

Tuesday

Christmas

25th

Wednesday

26th

Thursday

27th

Friday

28th

Saturday

29th

Sunday

30th

Inspirational Quotes

To start a happy and healthy New Year!

**"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned
about life: It goes on."**

~ Robert Frost

**"Do not follow where the path may lead.
Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."**

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

**"After the game,
the king and the pawn go into the same box."**

~ Italian Proverb

**"There are no classes in life for beginners:
right away you are always asked to deal with
what is most difficult."**

~ Rainer Maria Rilke

**"As I grow to understand life less and less,
I learn to love it more and more."**

~ Jules Renard

**"Happiness resides not in possessions and not in
gold; the feeling of happiness dwells in the soul."**

~ Democritus

**"There is only one way to happiness, and that is
to cease worrying things which are beyond
the power of our will."**

~ Epictetus

December/January

Monday

31st

Tuesday

New Year's Day

1st

Wednesday

2nd

Thursday

3rd

Friday

4th

Saturday

5th

Sunday

6th

What is Bullying?

Bullying is not always easy to define.

Bullying can include:

Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats.

Verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, persistent teasing.

Emotional: Excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.

Racist: Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.

Tips to Turn Off Bullies

- Tell a friend or adult what is happening.
- Try to ignore the bullying.
- Try not to show that you are upset or angry.
- Don't fight back if you can help it.
- Try to think up funny or clever replies in advance.
- Try to avoid being alone in the places where you know you might get picked on.

What Should a Bystander to Bullying Do?

Do:

- Persuade the person being bullied to talk to an adult- this may be a teacher or parent.
- Offer to speak to an adult on the bullied person's behalf.
- Let the bullies know that you are not so frightened of them that you will do nothing and that you are determined to see that they stop.

Don't:

- Do not use violence against the bullies-you may end up being accused of being a bully yourself.
- Do not try to deal with things on your own. Talk to a teacher, counselor, parent or other adult you feel comfortable talking to, or call the Melrose Alliance Against Violence at 781-662-2010.

January

Monday

7th

Tuesday

8th

Wednesday

9th

Thursday

10th

Friday

11th

Saturday

12th

Sunday

13th

Suggestions Created by Youth For Parents to Consider When Dealing with Divorce

- **Don't fight in front of your kids.**
- **Know that your divorce affects me—which I think about a lot.**
- **In stepfamilies—treat people equally.**
- **Don't put me in the middle.**
- **Talk with me—ask me my opinion.**
- **Ask me what/where I would like to do/go—don't just tell me.**
- **Talk to me about the other people in your life—girl/boyfriends, roommates, and friends.**
- **Tell me things even if you think I won't understand or I'll be mad.**
- **Give me credit.**
- **Make me part of the planning/decision making process.**
- **Don't take your bad moods out on me.**
- **Respect my schedule and my time.**
- **Try to be nice to one another in front of the kids.**
- **Have boyfriends/girlfriends respect the rules of “our house.”**
- **Don't take your anger out on the kids.**
- **Advice for parents' significant others—don't try so hard to be our friend.**
- **Be respectful in the house—don't do things you wouldn't have us do.**

January

Monday

14th

Tuesday

15th

Wednesday

16th

Thursday

17th

Friday

18th

Saturday

19th

Sunday

20th

Allowing Youth To Drink In Your Home.... What will it cost??

- You will have to answer to yourself.**
- You will have to answer to other parents.**
- You will have to answer to the courts.**
- You will have to answer with your wallet.**

Social host liability: You can be held financially responsible if your child or guest injures or kills another person after you permit your child or guest to drink alcohol in your home or other property you control.

Can I be sued if my child or a teenage guest at my home drinks alcohol and harms another person?

Yes. Under the principle of social host liability you can be held financially responsible if your guest harms or kills another person after having consumed alcohol at your home.

Why should I be liable for the criminal or negligent acts of my guests? If my guest kills or injures someone in a drunk driving accident after drinking in my home, why should that be my problem?

If your guest was under age 21 and you allowed him to consume alcohol, you committed a crime. Violation of a criminal statute is powerful evidence that you were negligent. There is no good reason to allow anyone under 21 to drink alcohol. If your guest was an adult who was visibly impaired, you were negligent if you permitted him to drink alcohol at your home. There is no good reason to serve any impaired guest more alcohol.

**Don't give kids alcohol.
It's not worth it.**

January

Monday

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

21st

Tuesday

22nd

Wednesday

23rd

Thursday

24th

Friday

25th

Saturday

26th

Sunday

27th

It's Never too Late To Learn to communicate effectively...

Ways to Promote Effective Communication:

- Be respectful
- Use humor
- Compromise
- Be empathic
- Be honest
- Be considerate
- Forgive
- Stay calm
- Listen attentively
- Use “I” statements
- Make eye contact
- Be available/Put time aside to sit down and talk
- Acknowledge what someone says
- Offer guidance but encourage independent thinking and decision making

Barriers of Effective Communication:

- Using a negative tone of voice
- Making assumptions
- Rolling your eyes
- Being rigid and inflexible
- Yelling
- Interrupting
- Being sarcastic
- Threatening

January/February

Monday

28th

Tuesday

29th

Wednesday

30th

Thursday

31st

Friday

1st

Saturday

2nd

Sunday

3rd

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

Below are statements concerning relationships. You can use these as points of discussion with your child to learn more about how they are thinking about relationships and to discuss your viewpoint with them. Remember to respect their opinion, even if it's different from yours; kids' opinions and values may change over time but if they don't feel heard and respected you may lose further opportunities to get to know them as they grow.

- I want a partner with a great sense of humor.
- I want a partner who has the same interests as me.
- In choosing a date, looks are important to me.
- I would have a hard time if my partner had a close friend who was the same gender as me.
- I want a partner who enjoys being affectionate in public.
- Romantic relationships always include sex.
- It is acceptable for girls to ask boys out.
- On a date, all costs should be split evenly.
- It's okay to date more than one person at a time.
- Jealousy is part of most healthy relationships.
- If you feel jealous, you should just keep your feelings to yourself.
- A person who gets jealous is more in love with their partner than someone who doesn't get jealous.
- People feel jealous because they are insecure and afraid of losing their partner, not because of what their partner does.
- If you don't know how your partner feels about you, it's okay to find out by seeing if they get jealous when you flirt with someone else.
- I like it when my friend/partner gets jealous.
- If jealous feelings go away, you've probably lost interest in the person.
- There is nothing wrong with being infatuated with someone.
- There is such a thing as love at first sight.
- You can only have one a best friend.
- Honesty is always the best policy.

February

Monday

4th

Tuesday

5th

Wednesday

6th

Thursday

7th

Friday

8th

Saturday

9th

Sunday

10th

Needham Youth Card

The Needham Youth Card is a plastic, wallet-sized card with “Numbers that could save your life or a friend’s” created by the Youth Commission. Cards are available at no cost at the Youth Commission office or by e-mailing us at Needhamyouthcommission@town.needham.ma.us.

Below is a listing of the numbers on the current edition of Needham Youth Cards.

■ Needham Youth Commission	781-455-7518
■ Needham Police Department	781-455-7570
■ Support for Battered Women (24/hr)	800-899-4000
■ Rape Crisis Hotline (24/hr)	617-492-7273
■ HIV/AIDS Hotline (24/hr)	800-342-2437
■ National Runaway Hotline (24/hr)	800-621-4000
■ Substance Abuse Hotline (24/hr)	800-327-5050
■ Youth Crisis (24/hr)	800-448-3000
■ Alcoholics Anonymous	617-426-9444
■ Al-Anon, Alateen	508-366-0556
■ Narcotics Anonymous (24/hr)	866-624-3578
■ The Bridge (24/hr alcohol/drug support)	617-423-9575



February

Monday

11th

Tuesday

12th

Wednesday

13th

Thursday

14th

Friday

15th

Saturday

16th

Sunday

17th

Information on Working Papers/Permits for Youth

The law requires that young people under age 18 must obtain a working permit before starting a new job. Employment requirements differ according to age and are described below.

Working Papers for Youths Age 14 through 17:

- You must have a job offer from an employer.
- Pick up an Employment Permit Application at Needham High School, Main Office, Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 2:30pm (their telephone number is 781- 455-0800 x 805) or at the Needham Youth Commission, located in Town Hall.
- Employer must complete and sign the Promise of Employment section.
- A Physician must complete and sign the Physician's Certificate of Health section for 14 and 15 year-olds only. If you are a student at Needham High School you may skip this step as your health records are already on file.
- Take this completed form to the Main Office at Needham High School. You should bring with you proof of your age, such as a copy of your birth certificate, passport, or immigration record, in order to receive working papers from the Superintendent of Schools/Authorized Agent.
- Minors who are 17 years of age, who can show documented proof of a high school diploma or the equivalent to the school official authorized to issue work permits, do not need a signed work permit, but still must complete this permit application.

For more information on Working Papers/Permits,

Please contact the Youth Commission.

February

Monday
Presidents' Day

18th

Tuesday

19th

Wednesday

20th

Thursday

21st

Friday

22nd

Saturday

23rd

Sunday

24th

More Guidelines for Working Teens ...

...Should I be working this late or this long?

For 14 and 15 Year Olds:

- **Work Hours:**
 - Only 7am or after 7pm during school year
 - Not during school hours
 - Only between 7 am – 9 pm during the summer
- **Maximum hours when school is in session:**
 - 18 hours a week
 - 3 hours a day on school days
 - 8 hours a day on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays
 - 6 days a week
- **Maximum hours when school is not in session:**
 - 40 hours a week
 - 8 hours a day
 - 6 days a week

For 16 and 17 year olds:

- **Work hours:**
 - Only between 6am and 10pm (on nights preceding a regularly scheduled school day) – if the establishment stops serving clients or customers at 10:00 pm, the minor may be employed until 10:15 pm. Only between 6am and 11:30pm (on nights not preceding a regular scheduled school day). Exception for restaurants and racetracks: only between 6am and 12:00 midnight (on nights not preceding a regularly scheduled school day)
- **Maximum hours when school is not in session:**
 - 48 hours a week
 - 9 hours a day
 - 6 days a week

For questions about wages or the child labor laws:

- Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, Fair and business Practices Division (enforces the state child labor laws) 617-727-3465 or www.ago.state.ma.us
- U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (enforces federal child labor laws) 617-624-6700

Note: After 8:00 pm, all minors must have the direct and immediate supervision of an adult who is located in the workplace and is reasonably accessible to the minor, unless the minor works at a kiosk, cart or stand in the common area of an enclosed shopping mall that has security from 8:00 pm until the mall is closed to the public.

February/March

Monday

25th

Tuesday

26th

Wednesday

27th

Thursday

28th

Friday

29th

Saturday

1st

Sunday

2nd

Parent Guideline To Teen Parties

When your teen is having a party...

- **Plan in Advance**

Check party plans with your teenager and know the guest list; if you agree with who is invited, you can curb an “open party” situation.

- **Set a Time Limit**

Set a definite start and end time. Consider daytime parties as an alternative to evening ones.

- **Agree To Rules Ahead of Time**

No drugs, including alcohol; No smoking; No leaving the party and returning; No gate crashers allowed; Lights should be left on; Some rooms in your house are off limits; etc.

- **Know Your Responsibilities**

Adults at a teenager’s party should be visible and aware. Remember, it is illegal to provide drugs, including alcohol, to minors. You are legally responsible for anything that may happen to a minor who has been served drugs or alcohol in your home.

- **Invite Another Parent Or Couple Over**

Plan to stay home during the entire party. Other adults are company for you during a long evening and can help with any problems. If parents have driven teenagers to your house, you might consider inviting them in to meet you.

When your teen is going to a party...

- **Call The Host**

Before giving consent that your teenager be allowed to attend a party, make sure of the basic rules, such as parental supervision and that no alcohol will be allowed.

- **Check Party Plans Beforehand With Your Teenager**

Know where your child is going and with whom. When taking your teenager to a party, wait to see that he/she is inside the house. If you don’t know the host parents, introduce yourself.

- **Make It Easy For Your Teenager To Leave A Party**

Prearrange with your teenager to call you (or a designated adult) for a ride home, if there is drinking, drug taking or any reason that he or she wishes to leave the party. Urge your teenager never to ride with a driver who has been drinking. You might have an understanding that there will be no punishments or restrictions for a call letting you know that things are getting out of hand.

- **Greet Your Teenager When They Come Home From a Party**

Monitor and process with your child when they return from a party.

March

Monday

3rd

Tuesday

4th

Wednesday

5th

Thursday

6th

Friday

7th

Saturday

8th

Sunday

9th

The Month of March is

Needham Unplugged.....

Electronics are a wonderful part of life --- we learn, communicate, and access information from electric powered devices; we watch TV or surf the Internet as a way to relax and to relieve the stress of daily life. Unfortunately, being so “plugged in” can isolate us from other people. Instead of interacting with family and friends, we all too often become passive voyeurs.

Needham Unplugged is a month long awareness campaign to remind Needham families and residents to “unplug their electronics” and “plug into” each other. It is a reminder that there is more to life than what is on the other side of a plug.

The highlight of this year’s program will be a no-homework, no-sports, and no-activities night for Needham Public School Students on March 13, 2008. In addition, there will be no town-related meetings and virtually no community, school, or religious meetings held on that night.



For more information about Needham Unplugged please contact the Needham Youth Commission at 781-455-7518, stop in our office located in Town Hall, or visit our website at www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/needhamunplugged

March

Monday

10th

Tuesday

11th

Wednesday

12th

Thursday

13th

Friday

14th

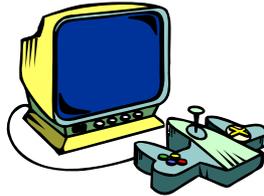
Saturday

15th

Sunday

16th

Game Over: What to Do When Technology Takes Over Quality Time



On average, kids spend 35-40 hours a week with TV, movies, video and computer games and videotapes; these distractions isolate them and immerse them in sex, violence and materialism. We must realize that video games and TV are not surrogates for a parent, and that there are actions families can take to make things better.

- **Make sure you *really* know what your child is reading, watching and listening to.**
- **Set clear media viewing rules for your child.**
- **Use available technology to block objectionable media from entering your home.**
- **Help your child be media aware, and put media content into an appropriate context.**
- **Encourage your child to enjoy healthy entertainment and activity alternatives.**

Although you can't control the larger cultural environment, you can create an "oasis" for your children in your own home. Television sets, stereos, VCRs, CD and DVD players and computers all come with "off" buttons. Don't be afraid to push them! Turn down the volume of pop culture by creating quiet zones and quiet times in your home when family members have time to read, play, think and converse. This will encourage your kids to develop other resources and skills when they can't rely entirely on the media to keep them entertained.

March

Monday

17th

Tuesday

18th

Wednesday

19th

Thursday

20th

Friday

21st

Saturday

22nd

Sunday

23rd

Bill of Dating Rights

I Have the Right to —

- Trust myself above all others
- Decent treatment by anyone I date
- Refuse to date anyone
- Be safe on a date
- Pay my own way on a date
- Be assertive on a date
- Have mutually consenting and pleasurable sex
- Refuse to have sex
- Be respected as a person
- Disagree with my date
- Say NO
- Get angry
- Fulfill myself with or without a partner in my life
- Know who I am
- Know who I am dating
- Determine who I will date
- Use my own transportation on a date
- Leave any dating situation my instincts tell me to
- Prosecute for battery and sexual assault
- Receive emotional support and understanding
- A healthy dating relationship
- Control my own destiny
- Be loved
- Be cared about
- Experience intimacy
- Maintain high self-esteem
- Trust myself above all others

March

Monday

24th

Tuesday

25th

Wednesday

26th

Thursday

27th

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28th

Saturday

29th

Sunday

30th

Safe Surf—Internet Safety

Email/Chatting Lingo

Ever wonder what all those letters you see your kids typing mean? Here is a list of common acronyms that kids use while IMing and chatting online.

- afk-** Away from keyboard
- bbl-** Be back later
- bfn-** Bye for now
- bg-** Big grin
- brb-** Be right back
- cul8r-** See you later
- eg-** Evil grin
- fiiooh-** Forget it. I'm out of here
- g-** Grin
- gtg-** I've got to go
- imho-** In my humble opinion
- jk-** Just kidding
- l8r-** Later
- lol-** I'm laughing out loud
- ne1-** Anyone
- nm-** Never mind
- pos-** Parent over shoulder
- rofl-** Rolling on the floor laughing
- ttyl-** Talk to you later
- wb-** Welcome back
- wtf-** What the F ***

March/April

Monday

31st

Tuesday

1st

Wednesday

2nd

Thursday

3rd

Friday

4th

Saturday

5th

Sunday

6th

Resisting Negative Peer Pressure



Develop a good relationship.

The stronger your relationship is with your children, the less likely they are to follow bad examples.

Teach your children to think when others try to get them to do something.

Your children should ask themselves questions like: Is it wrong? Why do they want me to do it? Is it illegal? Why am I tempted to go along? Am I afraid that they will laugh at me?

Teach your children to decide for themselves whether something is right or wrong, helpful or harmful.

Bring up examples of situations they may be in; then explore what might happen if they respond a certain way. Let them think about the consequences of their actions. If they have an uneasy feeling, something is probably wrong.

Sometimes children just need help getting away from a bad situation. Provide them with some responses they can use to resist peer pressure.

Encourage them to avoid giving an immediate "Yes" or "No" answer when friends want them to do something questionable. They can buy time to make a good decision by saying, "Maybe later," or "I'll wait and see." Let them use you as an excuse: "I will be grounded forever if I try that."

Practice situations with your children, trying various responses that they are comfortable saying.

Let them play themselves and the peer when you practice. Ask your child what gives him or her trouble when faced with a tough decision, and incorporate that in the practice. Use it to help your children build confidence in their ability to say "No."

April

Monday

7th

Tuesday

8th

Wednesday

9th

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11th

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12th

Sunday

13th

Suggestions for Parents on the Run...

If you are a parent who works, you may find that your life has too many demands. Work may require significant time away from the kids such as late nights in the office as well as occasional work on the weekends. And, for many, when you get home from work all you might want to do is “crash.” Kids are the priority, but unfortunately it is hard to balance work and home life.

Read books with them- This helps bring you closer emotionally, physically and intellectually. Kids will also be more likely to enjoy reading if a parent encourages it and enjoys doing it with them.

Start a weekend tradition- Try having breakfast with your kids on either Saturday or Sunday. Make it a special occasion that they look forward to on the weekends instead of cereal or something quick.

Have a “Dad” or “Mom” night- Plan a night with your children only and let your husband or wife head out to do his or her own thing.

Encourage their innovative spirit- Help them run a lemonade stand during the warm weather.

Show them your interests- Invite the kids to do things that you are interested in and enjoy doing.

Get active- Start playing a family sport together at home. This will help teach your kids the importance of team work and give them memories to remember as they continue to play these games as they grow.

Be a kid- If your children play video games, let them teach you. There are plenty of family and kid friendly games that you can play together and have fun.

Comfort them- Comfort your kids if they get hurt. It is ok for fathers to be nurturing too.

Be honest - Let your kids know your frustration surrounding the fact that you need to work to provide for the family, yet you want to be home with them more. This will show them that you do miss them when you are at work and that you do make an effort to spend time with them when it allows.

April

Monday

14th

Tuesday

15th

Wednesday

16th

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17th

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18th

Saturday

19th

Sunday

20th

Thoughts for a **Busy and Stressed Mom?**

Sometimes the stressors in life can cause a mom to tense more than usual. Life is a constant juggle between getting the kids one place or another, house work, errands to run, perhaps a job, and a marriage. Who wouldn't be stressed out? In instances where you are so overwhelmed that you cannot take anything else on, we encourage you to reassess what is going on around you. Here are some helpful hints to you and your family.

- Give your kids an avenue to discuss their concerns. Make them aware that you and your partner are people to go to when they are feeling overwhelmed.
- Encourage them to have FUN! They are children after all and they should be enjoying life without worrying.
- Keep your SELF in mind: Sleep, Exercise, Leisure, and Food. If you are able to balance these activities in your life you are more likely to be less stressed. Take your dog for a walk at a dog park, the Arnold Arboretum, Back Bay Fens, or even Fort Independence where your dog can get exercise and your family can learn some history.
- Set aside time in your weekly calendar for a family “date night” on a regular basis. That way you have a set time for a family check-in and time to catch up.
- The solution isn't to figure out how to do it all, it's to figure out what to eliminate. Less is more!
- Learn to say “no” more often. Be sure to arrange time to check in with your spouse. Date night can take place after the kids are in bed and it doesn't have to involve an elaborate night out.
- Give yourself a “timeout” at least once a day to organize your thoughts and let go of things that are not important.

April

Monday
Patriots' Day

21st

Tuesday

22nd

Wednesday

23rd

Thursday

24th

Friday

25th

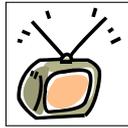
Saturday

26th

Sunday

27th

Suggestions for Monitoring your Child's T.V. Intake



- View programs with your children and help them select individual programs.
- Select developmentally appropriate shows that meet the needs of your child. Children's shows on public TV are appropriate, but soap operas, adult sitcoms, and adult talk shows are not.
- Place limits on the amount of television viewed (per day and per week). Don't allow children to watch long blocks of TV and set certain periods when the television will be off.
- Turn off the TV during family meals and study time. Study time is for learning, not for sitting in front of the TV doing homework. Likewise, meal time is a good time for family members to talk with each other.
- Turn off shows you don't feel are appropriate for your child - refuse to let the children see shows known to be violent, and change the channel or turn off the TV set when offensive material comes on, with an explanation of what is wrong with the program.
- Point out positive behavior, such as cooperation, friendship, and concern for others.
- Make connections to history, books, places of interest, and personal events.
- Talk about personal and family values as they relate to the show.
- Ask children to compare what they are watching with real events.
- Talk about the realistic consequences of violence.
- Discuss the role of advertising and its influence on buying.

April/May

Monday

28th

Tuesday

29th

Wednesday

30th

Thursday

1st

Friday

2nd

Saturday

3rd

Sunday

4th

How to Keep Your Kids Drug Free



- Know where your child is when they are away from home.
- Have your kids check in with you regularly.
- Give them coins, a phone card, or a cell phone so that you can get a hold of them whenever you feel you need to, and so they can get into touch with you if they need you.
- Get numbers to places where your child will be, and have them contact you at certain times to check in.
- Make a list of activities for the coming day and put it on the fridge, on a calendar, in your wallet, or in a pocketbook.
- Walk through your neighborhood and note where kids your child's age hang out.
- Know your child's friends. Invite your child's friends over and have them stay for dinner. You can then ask them about who they are and what they like to do. In short, make a point to meet your child's friends.
- Work with other parents to get a list of everyone's addresses, emails, and phone numbers so you can keep in touch with your child.
- Show up a little early to pick up your child so that you can observe their behavior.
- Occasionally check to see that your kids are where they say they're going to be.

May

Monday

5th

Tuesday

6th

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Saturday

10th

Sunday

11th

Sun Safety Tips



Protect Yourself and Your Family Year Round

- Seek the shade, especially during the sun's peak hours (10:00 am- 4:00 pm).
- Always wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Sun damage occurs even on cloudy days.
- Cover up with clothing, especially a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses. Use long sleeve rash guards with a high SPF rating if you are on the beach or in the water.
- Avoid tanning parlors and artificial tanning devices.
- Get vitamin D safely through a healthy diet that includes vitamin supplements.
- Keep newborns out of the sun. Sunscreens can be used on babies over the age of six months.
- Check with your doctor to be sure.
- Teach children good sun-protective practices.
- Examine your skin from head to toe once every month.
- Avoid tanning and especially - **DO NOT BURN!** One blistering sunburn can double your risk of melanoma.

May

Monday

12th

Tuesday

13th

Wednesday

14th

Thursday

15th

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16th

Saturday

17th

Sunday

18th

Safe Surf – Internet Safety

What are Online Risks?

Bullies	Violence	Hate
Predators	Spam	Misinformation
Pornography	Gambling	Internet Addiction

You can help to protect your child online by:

- Becoming familiar with how your child uses the internet
- Keeping the computer in a common, visible area in your home
- Monitoring and supervising your child's internet use
- Educating your child about the risks online
- Teaching your child to be respectful when online
- Limit the amount of time spent online
- Encouraging face-to-face friendships

Technological tools may provide additional protection:

- **Blocking software-** This is software that uses a "bad site" list and blocks access to chosen sites.
- **Filtering-** Filtering software uses certain keywords to block sites or sections of sites on-the-fly.
- **Outgoing Filtering-** This software ensures that your child won't be able to share certain personal information with others online.
- **Monitoring and Tracking-** Some software allows parents to track where their children go online, how much time they spend online, how much time they spend on the computer.



May

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19th

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21st

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23rd

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24th

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25th

Fostering Positive Body Image in Children

Model acceptance and appreciation of your own body - or at least try to avoid making body complaints in front of your child.

Discuss body image issues when they arise. Listen to your child's concern and always affirm your child's body, and his/her uniqueness and individuality.

Reassure your children that the physical changes associated with adolescence (especially weight gain for girls) are normal and that everyone develops at their own rate.

Read your child stories where the hero and heroine offer alternative role models to our current stereotypical ideals (e.g. of thin, beautiful women or of tall, muscular men). Stories also allow your child to create his/her own mental picture of characters, rather than have them imposed.

Limit the amount and type of media your child watches, uses or reads (e.g. magazines, television, computer games, websites). Have conversations with your child that help them develop a critical awareness of the images and messages we receive from the media.

Keep body image and appearance in perspective - by talking to your child about *all* the characteristics that make up a person.

Affirm your children for who they are, as well as what they do and what they look like. The more robust children's self esteem, the less vulnerable they will be to thinking that their self worth depends on their appearance.

May/June

Monday
Memorial Day

26th

Tuesday

27th

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28th

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29th

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30th

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31st

Sunday

1st

10 Tips for Talking about The “Facts of Life” to Your Child

Initiating conversations about the facts of life may be difficult for some parents because they did not grow up in an environment where the subject was discussed. Some parents may be afraid they do not know the right answers or feel confused about the proper amount of information to offer. To help, here are 10 tips from Advocates for Youth:

1. First, encourage communication by reassuring kids that they can talk to you about anything.
2. Take advantage of teachable moments. A friend's pregnancy, news article, or a TV show can help start a conversation.
3. Listen more than you talk. Think about what you're being asked. Confirm with your child that what you heard is in fact what he or she meant to ask.
4. Don't jump to conclusions. The fact that a teen asks about sex does not mean they are having or thinking about having sex.
5. Answer questions simply and directly. Give factual, honest, short, and simple answers.
6. Respect your child's views. Share your thoughts and values and help your child express theirs.
7. Reassure young people that they are normal—as are their questions and thoughts.
8. Teach your children ways to make good decisions about sex and coach them on how to get out of risky situations.
9. Admit when you don't know the answer to a question. Suggest the two of you find the answer together on the Internet or in the library.
10. Discuss that at times your teen may feel more comfortable talking with someone other than you. Together, think of other trusted adults with whom they can talk.

June

Monday

2nd

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3rd

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4th

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5th

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6th

Saturday

7th

Sunday

8th

Daddy's Footsteps

"Walk a little slower, Daddy",
Said a little child so small.
"I'm following in your footsteps,
And I don't want to fall.

Sometimes your steps are very fast,
Sometimes they're hard to see;
So walk a little slower, Daddy,
For you are leading me.

Someday when I'm all grown up,
You're what I want to be;
Then I will have a little child
Who'll want to follow me.

And I would want to lead just right,
And know that I was true;
So, walk a little slower, Daddy,
For I must follow you."

(Author unknown)



June

Monday

9th

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10th

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Thursday

12th

Friday

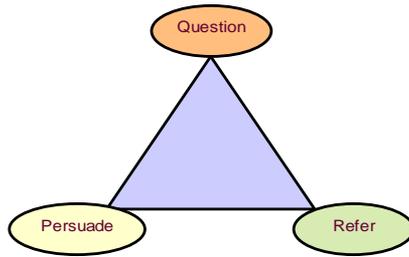
13th

Saturday

14th

Sunday

15th



QPR Suicide Prevention Training

Over the past few years, the Needham community has experienced several suicides that have impacted the town on many levels. To address this issue, the Needham Suicide Prevention Coalition is offering a program entitled “QPR — Question, Persuade, Refer.” This program was created by Paul Quinnett, Ph.D. and is modeled after the success of the CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) medical intervention. QPR is based upon the several basic concepts including:

- **The notion that those who most need help in a suicidal crisis are the least likely to ask for it.**
- **That the person most likely to prevent a person dying by suicide is someone they already know.**
- **That prior to making a suicide attempt those a person typically sends warning signs of their distress and suicidal intent to those around them.**
- **That when we solve the problems people kill themselves to solve the reasons for suicide disappear.**

QPR is known as a gatekeeper training. According to the Surgeon General’s *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention*, “key gatekeepers” are “people who regularly come into contact with individuals or families in distress.” To learn more about QPR, visit their website at: www.qprinstitute.com. Gatekeeper training has been identified as one of a number of promising prevention strategies. Trainings are one hour in length. Please contact Jon Mattleman at Jmattleman@town.needham.ma.us for more information.

June

Monday

16th

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17th

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18th

Thursday

19th

Friday

20th

Saturday

21st

Sunday

22nd

Ten Ways to Nurture Tolerance



1. Talk about tolerance.
2. Identify intolerance when children are exposed to it.
3. Challenge intolerance when it comes to your children.
4. Support your children when they are victims of intolerance.
5. Foster a healthy understanding of group activities.
6. Showcase diversity materials in your home.
7. Create opportunities for children to interact with people who are different from them.
8. Encourage children to call upon community resources.
9. Be honest about differences. Do not tell children that we are all the same; we're not.
10. Model the behavior you would like to see.

June

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23rd

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27th

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28th

Sunday

29th

Promoting Youth Volunteerism

- ❖ Volunteering can help you to explore your interests
 - If you like animals, you can help out at an animal shelter or at your nearest zoo.
 - If you like working with kids, get involved at a summer camp or help younger students with their schoolwork.
 - If you enjoy playing sports, play games with the kids at a Boys & Girls Club.
- ❖ Volunteering can help you learn about possible careers
 - If you think you'd like to work in the medical field, volunteer at a retirement or nursing home.
 - If you're interested in teaching, spend time with younger children, helping them with their homework.
 - If you'd like a job in an office someday, offer to help with filing and data entry at a nonprofit organization.
- ❖ You can meet people you might not ordinarily meet
 - By volunteering in a group, you'll meet other people with the same interests you have.
 - By volunteering to work with people with physical or mental challenges, you'll find out that they're not so different from you after all.
- ❖ Volunteer activities look good on college applications & resumes
 - College admission staffs want to know who you are as a person. They want to know more about you than your high school grades and SAT score.
 - Potential employers want to know if you show up on time, can take direction, are responsible, and work well with others. A good reference from an agency you've volunteered with can help them decide this.
- ❖ It's fun
 - People who volunteer often say that they get more out of the experience than they give.
 - Giving of your time and energy makes you feel good about yourself and raises your self-esteem.
 - Working with other volunteers builds friendships.

June/July

Monday

30th

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1st

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3rd

Friday

Independence Day

4th

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5th

Sunday

6th

Kids and Smoking: Preventing Your Child From Picking Up the Habit

Kids tend to be drawn to smoking and chewing tobacco for any number of reasons - to look cool, act older, lose weight, win cool merchandise, seem tough, or feel independent. But you can combat those draws and keep your child from trying - and getting addicted to - tobacco. If you establish a good foundation of communication with your child early, it will be much easier later on to work through tricky issues like tobacco use. Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind:

- Emphasize what your child does right rather than wrong. Self-confidence is your child's best protection against peer pressure.
- Encourage your child to get involved in activities that prohibit smoking, such as sports.
- When it comes to the dangers of tobacco use, it's important to keep talking to your child about it over the years. Even the youngest child can understand that smoking is bad for the body.
- Ask your child what he or she finds appealing - or unappealing - about smoking. Be a patient listener.
- Read, watch television, and go to the movies with your child. Compare media images with what happens in reality.
- Discuss ways to respond to peer pressure to smoke. Your child may feel confident simply saying "no." But also offer your child alternative responses such as "It will make my clothes and breath smell bad" or "I hate the way it makes me look."
- Encourage your child to walk away from friends who don't recognize or respect his or her reasons for not smoking.
- Explain how much smoking governs the daily life of kids who start doing it. How do they afford the cigarettes? How do they have money to pay for other things they want? How does it affect their friendships?
- Establish firm rules that exclude smoking and chewing tobacco from your house and explain why: Smokers smell bad, look bad, and feel bad, and it's bad for everyone's health.

July

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13th

Curing the “I’m Bored” Syndrome In Children

All parents have heard it time and time again – “I’m bored!” Yet despite hearing this from your kids and knowing all of the books, games, activities and sports equipment you have supplied them with, it still makes you cringe. With all of the extra curricular activities, programs, sports, academic clubs, music classes and friends your children have, it can be difficult to find time to wind down and enjoy it.

Children today are extraordinarily busy, with jam-packed schedules that take up more and more of their time. Kids need guidance about the importance of editing their lives so they can carve out hours to explore, create, connect, contemplate or just be. By introducing a bit of intentional boredom, you can help your children become more relaxed, more self-sufficient and, ultimately, happier people.

Give them some do-nothing time and odds are pretty good they will find an interesting way to fill it. Institute “Do-Nothing Days”, on which you gently steer your children toward imaginative activities and allow them to make their own fun. Your children will begin to cultivate their creative side and make use of all the great things you as parents have given them as tools. Some great things to try are:

- ❖ **Building a fort, either indoors or outside**
- ❖ **Creating musical instruments with household objects**
- ❖ **Allowing them to prepare a meal or dessert for a family**
- ❖ **Trust them with the family camera or video camera and let them create their own story or film about their lives and your family**
- ❖ **Encourage them to explore nature**
- ❖ **Create your own family board game**
- ❖ **Give them free reign to create their own adventure**

July

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Self-Injurious Behavior

According to the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavioral Survey 18% of students had participated in self-injurious behavior in the last year. This can be a difficult topic to approach with your family, however it is something that parents should be aware of and speak with their children about. Self-injurious behaviors are present with youth in middle and high schools, young adults enrolled in colleges and universities and even adults in the community. While most self-injury is modest it is still something to be aware of.

A common misconception is that self-injury is linked to suicide. While there are some people who self-injure that do commit suicide, self-injury is generally not about suicide.

There are varying levels of self-injurious behavior. Some of the practices are cutting, hitting, burning, and excoriation on the body. These are seen as a way to alleviate stress, depression or anxiety that the person may be feeling at the time. These practices are usually repetitive and chronic with some people doing them multiple times a day.

Be aware of your child's behavioral patterns. Be sure to ask them if you see cuts on their arms, a change in clothing to something that is more covered than usual, razors being broken or missing in the home or matches being thrown in the trash more frequently.

Treatment for self-injury depends on the level of physical damage and the location of the injury on the body. Professional therapy and/or treatment are important in order to treat and prevent these behaviors from continuing. It is important for the child to identify the triggers for their behaviors so they may be able to control the urge to further practice the self-injury in the future.

July

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21st

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Tips to Help Your Child Survive

Freshman Year of College

- **Go to all orientations.** The faster you learn your way around campus the more at ease you'll feel and the better prepared you'll be when issues arise.
- **Get to know your roommate and others in your residence hall.** The people you live with, most of whom are going through similar experiences and emotions, and are your main safety net.
- **Get Organized.** In high school, the teachers tended to lead you through all the homework and due dates. In college, the professors post the assignments. Buy an organizer, a big wall calendar -- whatever it takes for you to know when assignments are due.
- **Find the ideal place for you to study.** Avoid as many distractions as possible.
- **Go to class.** Obvious, right? Maybe, but sleeping in and skipping that 8 am class will be tempting at times.
- **Become an expert on course requirements and due dates.** Professors spend hours and hours preparing course syllabi and calendars so that you will know exactly what is expected of you -- and when.
- **Meet with your professors.** Professors schedule office hours for the sole purpose of meeting with students -- take advantage of that time.
- **Get to know your academic advisor.** This is the person who will help you with anything and everything having to do with your classes.
- **Seek a balance.** College is a mixture of social and academic happenings. Don't tip the balance too far in either direction.
- **Strive for good grades.**
- **Take advantage of the study resources on campus. Make time for you.** Be sure you set aside some time and activities that help you relax and take the stress out.
- **Don't feel pressured to make a hasty decision about a career or a major.**
- **Take responsibility for yourself and your actions.** Don't look to place the blame on others for your mistakes; own up to them and move on. Being an adult means taking responsibility for everything that happens to you.

July/August

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Depression and Suicide: Signs and Symptoms

Depression and suicide can be scary topics to discuss, especially for young people who may have difficulty expressing their feelings. Most people who are considering suicide reveal their need for help through non-verbal messages. Learn to recognize the following warning signs of depression and suicide risk.

Signs and Symptoms to Look For:

- ☑ Feeling worthless, withdrawn, helpless, and overwhelmed: “Nobody cares.” Loss of hope for future, sense of futility: “Things will never get better.”
- ☑ Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities: “I don’t care anymore.” Isolation, loss of interest in friends: “leave me alone.”
- ☑ Feelings of guilt, self-blame, self-hatred: “It’s my fault; I hate myself.”
- ☑ Abrupt change in personality: mood changes, irritability, agitation, and apathy.
- ☑ Fear of losing control, hurting self or others: “I don’t know if I’m in control.”
- ☑ Change in sleeping pattern, insomnia, extreme difficulty getting out of bed.
- ☑ Change in behavior: poor school performance/attendance, change in routine.
- ☑ Suicidal talk, plans, or statements: “I should just kill myself.” Suicidal gestures: taking pills, self-mutilation.
- ☑ In children, depression can be seen as agitation, hyperactivity, and restlessness.

August

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4th

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10th

How can I help my child avoid alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs?

Here are 5 ideas....

1. Educate yourself

- What are the home and school rules about alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.
- How medicines and illicit drugs differ.
- The harm alcohol, tobacco, and drugs can do.
- How alcohol commercials may impact them.
- What defines a friend and which adults they can go to in an emergency.

2. Talk to your children

- Spend time together.
- Ask questions like “why do you think kids drink or drug?”
- Avoid simple “yes” and “no” questions.

3. It's 3:45p.m. --- Do you know where your kids are in cyberspace?

- Stay in touch with your children as they explore Internet sites and chat rooms.
- Young people need to understand that not everything that they see on the Internet is true or valuable.

4. Do you know your son or daughter's friends?

- Who is most likely to give your son or daughter alcohol, tobacco, or drugs? A friend.
- Discuss how to say “no.”

5. Be aware of outside influences

- Be aware that movies, music, and advertisements can influence a young person's decision to experience with substances.

August

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11th

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12th

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17th

What to do if your child is under the influence of alcohol/drugs at this moment...

➤ **Right Now**

- Remain cool and calm.
- Try to identify what he/she has taken.
- Call a doctor or take him/her to a hospital if they are incoherent or appear seriously ill.
- Tell him/her that you will talk to them about the matter the next day.
- Don't shout, excuse, or use physical force --- this will only make matters worse.

➤ **The very next day**

- Talk to him/her as soon as possible.
- Have him/her assume responsibility for their actions (this may include any clean up if necessary).
- Try to find out the circumstances under which he/she used the illicit substance.
- Consider calling other parents for information and/or simply to confer.
- Seek help from school and/or community supports.
- Don't blame, discuss, or threaten anything with him/her if you are too angry.
- Enforce consequences.

August

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18th

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21st

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24th

With the school year around the corner...

Teach Children About Bus Safety

- Always get to the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the bus is due to arrive.
- Running across the road to catch the bus isn't smart
- When crossing the street to get to the bus, always look left, then right, then left again. Cars will approach on the left first.
- When the bus approaches, do the smart thing: step back and stand at least **THREE GIANT STEPS** away from the curb.
- Wait until the bus stops, the door opens, and the driver says it's okay to board before stepping onto the bus.
- Never walk behind the bus or close to the side of the bus. You could be in the driver's blind spot.
- If you drop something near the bus, don't pick it up until you tell the bus driver or he may not see you.
- When you get on the bus, take your seat quickly.
- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk on the sidewalk (or along the side of the road) to a point that's at least 5 **GIANT STEPS** ahead of the bus before you cross. Be sure that the bus driver can see you, and you can see the bus driver.



August

Monday

25th

Tuesday

26th

Wednesday

27th

Thursday

28th

Friday

29th

Saturday

30th

Sunday

31st

Needham Youth Commission

1471 Highland Avenue - Town Hall Needham, MA 02492

Phone: 781-455-7518 Fax: 781-449-4569

Needhamyouthcommission@town.needham.ma.us

www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission

The mission of the Needham Youth Commission is to provide leadership and a community focus on youth and family issues and to promote community wellness by:

-  Identifying and addressing youth and family needs;
-  Advocating for youth and family interests;
-  Partnering with other youth and family serving agencies;
-  Developing and implementing quality programs and services; and
-  Educating and communicating with the public regarding youth and family issues.

The Needham Youth Commission operates as a mental health resource providing professional and confidential clinical and programmatic services. We provide support, information, and direction to youth on issues such as family, social, peer, stress, loss, alcohol, drug, and other youth-related concerns. We base our services upon a self-help philosophy in which youth utilize the expertise of the staff to expand their awareness and understanding, and eventually learn the skills to more effectively take control of their lives.