

THE BROMFIELD SCHOOL

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Tom Hall
Principal

Cindy Hurley
Middle School Counselor

June 15, 2006

Mimi Doward
Harvard Schools Trust
PO Box 450
Harvard MA 01451

Dear Harvard Schools Trust Directors,


We want to thank you for your generous contribution to our Wellness Day for 7th grade students of Harvard Public Schools. The event was held on Friday, May 26th at Quinsigamond Community College. Parents and students attended three workshops each, some together and some apart. We are enclosing a package that was given to each attendee so that you can see the topics we covered and the workshop leaders who participated.

As you will see from the enclosed article that appeared in our local newspaper, Wellness Day was the first event in an effort by the community to begin to address the health and well being of Harvard's school children. We are embarking upon a mission to provide greater education, conversation and community involvement on issues that affect our town's youth. To us, the event was a great success, not only for the day but for the doors it is opening. Thank you again for your generous contribution.

Please feel free to contact either one of us if you would like more information.

Sincerely,


Cindy Hurley
Guidance Counselor


Ellen Sachs Leicher
Parent

Bromfield 7th Grade Wellness Day, May 26, 2006

Schedule of Events

Purpose: Project Wellness is an integral element of the middle school curriculum. It addresses students' needs for improved insights into the physical, psychological and emotional changes they're undergoing as teenagers. Teenagers are individuals with rich interior lives, and complex relationships with family members and friends: all of which directly affect their performance and success as students. Project Wellness workshops provide students with improved understanding of issues not regularly addressed in the middle school curriculum, but that are important to their ability to understand their intellectual and social development. The participation of 7th grade parents provides families a shared understanding and vocabulary for discussion of hard-to-address but important issues.

Schedule: Your particular schedule, including workshop registrations, room numbers and lunch selection, is noted on the sticker on the front of this package.

8:15 – 8:30: Registration in Hebert Auditorium

8:30 – 9:00: Kick off

9:00 – 10:10: Workshop #1

10:15 – 11:25: Workshop #2

11:30 -12:15: Surprise Presentation in Hebert Auditorium

12:15 – 12:45: Lunch (A-K in Administration Cafeteria L-Z in Harrington Learning Center)

12:50 – 2:00: Workshop #3

2:00 – 2:20: Closing in Hebert Auditorium

Workshop Locations: All workshops will take place in the Hebert Auditorium Building. Classrooms are located on all three floors of the building. Workshop locations are noted outside classroom/meeting room doors.

Restrooms: Restrooms are outside the main auditorium and women and men's rooms are located on alternative floors – men on floors 1 and 3 and women on floor 2.

Food and Beverages: Quinsigamond College asks that we restrict food and beverages to common areas. They are not permitted in the Hebert Auditorium. We will be providing a mid morning snack.

Lunch: Lunch will be provided in two different locations - the Administration Building Cafeteria and the Harrington Learning Center Conference Room. As noted above, depending upon your last name, A-K will have lunch in the Administration Cafeteria and L-Z will have lunch in the Harrington Learning. Box lunches should be picked up at Hebert Auditorium before making your way to the lunch location. Weather permitting, we may be able to picnic outside in designated areas (to be announced).

Program Evaluation: Please provide your honest assessments of the overall program and particular program elements on the evaluation worksheet provided in this package, so that faculty and volunteer organizers can refine its content for next year.

Bromfield 7th Grade Wellness Day, May 26, 2006
Donors

We want to sincerely thank the following donors for their generous support of Wellness Day. Without their contributions, this day would not have been possible.

Acton Medical Associates
Digital Credit Union (DCU)
Emerson Hospital
Fitchburg Savings Bank
Harvard Public Schools PTA
Harvard Schools Trust
Lions Club
Nashoba Valley Medical Center
Parent Donations

Bromfield 7th Grade Wellness Day, May 26, 2006

Workshop Descriptions

Each adult and student will participate in 3 workshops. All attendees will participate in the Parent/Child Communications workshop described below. Please select your choices for the remaining workshop sessions. On the *Registration Form*, mark your choices in order of preference. We will do our best to put you in the workshops you have selected.

Parent & Student Communication Workshop. (Everyone will be attending this workshop.) Even though we appreciate how important it is to maintain an open and rational dialogue, it's way too easy for seemingly innocuous parent/teen interchanges to become emotionally charged. Parents and students will be presented with positive strategies for strengthening family communications, from students learning how to handle frustration and peer pressure, to parents learning how to set limits, solve problems, and show love and support.

Adult/Student Workshop Description: (Both parent and student must list this as a selection.)

Safe Surfing on the Internet: Parents and Kids Make the Rules. Parents and students will discuss the impact of technology on their family life. See some survey results about internet use in other families. Apply what you learn in this workshop to establish guidelines for internet use in your own home.

Adult Workshop Descriptions:

Nurturing Your Family. Parents often express concern about how to support their stressed-out teenagers. The basic nurturing that parents offer in providing a loving and comfortable home is your first line of defense. It's extremely important that teenagers get the message that their parents are there for them. Talk with other parents about how to make your home a place where kids can re-charge their batteries, and feel safe and supported.

De-Mystifying Teens. Wondering who that person is who seems to be occupying the body of your formerly congenial and easygoing son or daughter? This workshop will provide parents with improved understanding of the social, emotional and physical influences working on teens' psyches and how parents can respond.

What's Normal Teenage Behavior and When Should You be Concerned? Adolescents undergo rapid growth in their physical, social and emotional behavior. Yet there are times when something else may be going on. What, as a parent, should you look out for? What influence do you have over whether or not your teen engages in risky behavior? Mental health professionals often describe behaviors in terms of intensity and duration. This workshop talks about the issues many adolescents deal with that may lead to risky behavior.

Student Workshop Descriptions:

Sticky Situations. Do you ever run into situations where you're not sure what you should do? Whether the issue is "The dog really did eat my homework" or "How can I let my friend know I don't like it when he good-naturedly punches me on the shoulder," this workshop is for you. This small group format will allow discussion and information sharing. Students will get the opportunity to submit "sticky situations" anonymously and get the group to help put together plans of action.

How to Keep Your Cool When You Really Feel Like Losing It. Part of getting along with adults, teachers and friends is being able to recognize your emotions and express them in ways that won't get you into trouble. Have you ever thought that, if you'd reacted differently, you might not be in the bad situation you ended up in? This workshop will give you great suggestions, and allow you to role play and try out a few tough situations.

The Pressure Cooker! Sometimes the equation of schoolwork + homework + family obligations + extracurriculars = too much! How do you stay sane! This workshop will address a very important issue for teens: Why am I doing all these things and how do I pick which ones are really important to me?

Am I a "Normal" Teenager? As an adolescent, more than at any other time, you're undergoing changes in your physical, social and emotional sense of well being. So what's normal and what isn't? When should you ask an adult for help because what you're feeling or experiencing seems like more than what your friends are feeling or experiencing? The workshop leader will help you understand the changes you might be going through and why, when to ask for help, and who to go to for help.

So Many Decisions: How Can I Make Sure I Make The Right One? Do you know that there are actual steps you can take that will help you cut through all the confusion and make the decision that is best for you? This workshop will offer suggestions on how to discover what you really want, and how to prioritize all the factors that go into making a good decision.

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Workshop Presenters

Sue Blaney is the author of *Please Stop the Rollercoaster! How Parents of Teenagers Can Smooth Out the Ride*, a guide for parents and parenting discussion groups. Approved by the National Middle School Association and endorsed by professionals like Dr. Laura Schlessenger, this book and the associated program have changed thousands of parents' lives. Ms. Blaney has been interviewed on CBS, Fox, MSNBC, and radio stations around the country, and she has written articles for *American School Counselors Journal* and *PTO Today*. She is a Certified Professional Behavior Analyst (CPBA) with a degree in communications from Northwestern University who resides in Acton, Massachusetts with her husband and family.

Arden Bowser received her masters' degree in counseling psychology from Northeastern University and is a licensed mental health counselor. Ms. Bowser is an experienced therapist with an expertise in working with adolescents and families. She has worked in a variety of treatment settings, most recently at Eliot Community Human Services' outpatient clinic and a residential treatment program for court involved youth. She has extensive knowledge of the various issues facing adolescents, such as academic and school problems, peer and family relationships, substance abuse, and more significant psychiatric problems. Ms. Bowser is committed to developing resiliency in youth and comes from a cognitive behavioral and strengths based perspective.

Diane S. Cooper is a mental health therapist doing agency-based work at MSPCC (Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) for six years concentrating on adolescents, adults and family work. In addition, Ms. Cooper runs groups at Barnstable Middle School related to Anger Management/Conflict Resolution and Social Skills. She has also worked in school settings with the Special Needs population. Ms. Cooper has her BS in Juvenile Justice and Master in Education/Mental Health Counseling obtained from Cambridge College.

Julianne Flynn, has worked as a LICSW with adolescents for over 17 years. Her work is predominantly as a child, family, and group therapist to at risk and incarcerated youth at Germaine Lawrence, Inc., Department of Youth Services (Chrysalis House, New River Academy, and Harvard House), and Cambridge Family and Children Services. She has facilitated numerous trainings on the nature and treatment of Substance Abuse, Trauma, Managing difficult Behavioral Issues, and Assessing and Managing Mood Disorders. She has been awarded a \$1.7 million dollar grant by the Federal Department of Education to set up a comprehensive Reintegration program to serve the students graduating from vocational training through the Division of Inmate Training and Education of the Massachusetts Department of Correction.

Beth C. Fredericks has served as a childcare specialist, public policy advocate, work-life strategist, event manager, and writer. She holds a B.A. in education from Eastern Michigan University, and a M.Ed. in early childhood development from the Eliot Pearson School at Tufts University. Ms. Fredericks began her 25-year career in the evolving work-life field as the executive director at one of the country's first on-site childcare centers in Cambridge, MA. She helped launch Work/Family Directions, Inc. (now WFD, Inc.), providing advice and guidance to companies dealing with employees' off-the-job pressures and on-the-job productivity. She was the Director of Corporate Partnerships at the Boston College Center for Work & Family. Ms. Fredericks is now working independently on various consulting, writing, and training projects

with a focus on work-life initiatives and healthy families. Ms. Fredericks lives in Newton, MA with her husband and teenage daughter and son.

Tina Grosowsky is the Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator at the Board of Health in Westford, MA and has facilitated the Strengthening Families Program for four years. She has been a member of the Acton/Boxborough Superintendent's Health Task Committee for eight years and is currently the co-chair of the Community Alliance for Youth (CAFY) in Acton. She worked as a child and family therapist for fifteen years. Tina has been married for 24 years and has a 13-year-old daughter.

Kim Kusiak is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist. She trained at UMASS Medical School and Medical Center in Worcester and has worked there since 1988. Dr. Kusiak has worked in the areas of Emergency Mental Health, Consultation to Residential Schools, Consult Liaison to Inpatient Pediatrics, and Outpatient Services for Child Mental Health throughout the past 18 years. She teaches and supervises residents in Adult Psychiatry and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Her area of specialization is treating Eating Disorders. She currently has a private practice in West Boylston and consults to the Family Practice Residency Training Program in Fitchburg and the Eating Disorder Treatment Team at Milford Whitinsville Hospital.

Michael Rater is the Medical Director of McLean Hospital's Adolescent Residential Treatment Programs. He works with all psychiatric disorders among adolescents, with special focus on substance abuse and self-injurious behaviors in adolescents. Dr. Rater also has an interest in Geriatric Psychiatry and consults at a nursing home in Lexington, MA. He is board certified in Forensic Psychiatry and does Risk Assessment work for school violence and work involving Disability Determinations for adults and children. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin Medical School and completed his internship, psychiatry residency, and child & adolescent psychiatry specialty training at Massachusetts General Hospital and McLean Hospital. Dr. Rater is a Clinical Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Rater lives in Cambridge, MA. with his wife and four children.

Deborah Weinstock-Savoy is a licensed psychologist with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology. With over twenty years of professional experience working with families with young children, she specializes in leading parenting workshops and support groups for various community organizations and schools. She is the mother of three children, ages 21, 16, and 11.

Anne Westcott is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who counsels children, adolescents and adults. In private practice in Concord, Ms. Westcott utilizes an active and supportive relational approach to guide her clients and their families through challenging times towards greater resiliency and improved relationships. Ms. Westcott offers 15 years of experience as an active participant in her clients' mental health journeys, ranging from New York City-based training, to integration of mental health programs in Boston Public Schools, to trauma and abuse treatment of adolescents and families. A Concord resident and parent of two children, she received her BA in International Relations from Carleton College and her MSW from Columbia University.

**Bromfield 7th Grade Wellness Day, May 26, 2006
Program Evaluation**

Please provide your honest assessments of today's program and particular program elements on this evaluation worksheet, so that faculty and volunteer organizers can refine its content for next year.

1. Title of your first workshop: _____ Presenter: _____

Overall Assessment: Excellent Good Fair Poor

What was the most important thing you learned from this workshop?

How could content and/or presentation be improved?

2. Title of your second workshop: _____ Presenter: _____

Overall Assessment: Excellent Good Fair Poor

What was the most important thing you learned from this workshop?

How could content and/or presentation be improved?

3. Yo-yo Momma Presentation: _____

Overall Assessment: Excellent Good Fair Poor

Did you feel this presentation provided a good message? Yes ___ No ___
Would you recommend having them come back next year? Yes ___ No ___

4. Title of your third workshop: _____ Presenter: _____

Overall Assessment: Excellent Good Fair Poor

What was the most important thing you learned from this workshop?

How could content and/or presentation be improved?

5. What stands out for you as the most positive aspect of the Wellness Day program?

6. Please comment on ways organizers can improve any or all of the following program aspects:

Location: _____

Speakers: _____

Workshop formats: _____

Workshop topics: _____

7. General Comments?

Person completing assessment: Student _____ Adult _____

Students participate in Wellness Day

To the Editor:

On Friday, May 26, Bromfield seventh-graders and their parents traveled to Quinsigamond Community College to participate in Wellness Day, a series of workshops on adolescent development. The objective of Wellness Day is to provide students and parents with information and skills to improve communication, and address everyday social and emotional issues. Workshops included such topics as De-Mystifying Teens, Nurturing Your Family, How to Keep Your Cool, and Sticky Situations. The program is being evaluated as a potential annual seventh-grade event as a means to address topics not currently covered by the schools' curriculum, yet important to adolescent development and student academic performance.

Wellness Day is part of a much broader effort to address the health and well-being of Harvard's school children. The Harvard School Committee recently adopted a policy that calls for the establishment of a Wellness Committee, with school and broader community participation, to develop and implement a comprehensive program. The committee will address physical and mental well-being in areas such as nutrition, physical education and social and emotional support systems. Harvard has a long-standing tradition of providing nutritious food and we are proud to have a food service program that is a model for communities throughout the commonwealth. Further, participation in recreational and interscholastic athletic programs stands at an all-time high. A district priority remains to help empower children with the knowledge and options they will need to make healthy decisions with respect to all aspects of their lives.

Wellness Day was sponsored, in part, by local contributors: Acton Medical Associates, Digital Credit Union, Emerson Hospital, Fitchburg Savings Bank, Harvard Schools PTA, Harvard Schools Trust, Harvard Lions Club and Nashoba Valley Medical Center. Should anyone wish to become involved with Wellness Day for next year, they can connect Cindy Hurley, Bromfield Guidance Department at 978-456-4152.

Ellen Sachs Leicher