



Parent Connection



June 2014

Prescription Drug Take Back Day June 7th

Ellington Youth Services and Ellington Resident State Troopers are sponsoring another **Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, June 7th from 9 am to noon** at the Ellington Resident State Troopers' Office on 33 Arbor Way in Ellington.

Residents are asked to bring in any old and unused prescription drugs so they can be disposed of in the proper manner. Only prescription drugs in their original containers will be accepted. *Over the counter medications will not be accepted. Items also not accepted are prescription ointments, inhalers or syringes.*

HANDLECARE with prescription drug safety



Ellington was awarded \$29,000 in grant money to address misuse of prescription drugs. This is the last take back day with this grant.

Ellington also participated in the National Take Back Day on April 26th.

Recently all Ellington residents received a post card in the mail. The new "drug dealer" could be your medicine cabinet.

Please keep all prescriptions out of sight or locked up. When done with medications, do not flush the remaining down the toilet. This contaminates rivers and waterways. Please keep our environment and youth safe and drop off your medications on the 7th.

Student Survey Results



Results from the 2013 Ellington Youth Culture Survey have been released and the results are encouraging. The survey, completed in partnership with the schools, was administered last May to students in grades 6

through 12. The survey is done every four years and asks about use of several substances, particularly alcohol. The survey results show 30 day use rates for alcohol in high school students dropped 10% since 2009. Substance use went down across the board from the 2009 survey with alcohol

use having the biggest drop.

While this is great news, the DPYC will continue its efforts to inform and educate the youth and adults in Ellington of the dangers of underage drinking and other substance abuse.

Coming Soon: Our New Space

Ellington Youth Services has a new look. Some time in June we will be moving into our expanded space at 31 Arbor Way and will also be launching our revamped website at youth.ellington-ct.gov on June 1st.

Now you can access our programs offered and sign up for them through *activenet*. You can also visit the Rise Above page and the DPYC (Developing Positive Youth Culture) page to see our current efforts in the community. We are excited for our new look and hope to hear from you!



“Just Girls” Series for Middle School Girls a Success



The “Just Girls” program for 7th and 8th grade girls wrapped up its inaugural year with a presentation and lively discussion about social media.

High school leaders, Kelly Gorman and Sarah Riley created “Just Girls” to give middle school girls an opportunity to hear from guest speakers and share ideas on



EHS students Kelly Gorman and Sarah Riley

a variety of topics with a goal of cultivating self-confidence, self-respect, and self-worth. The pro-

gram, and its leaders, received rave reviews from the 12-15 middle school girls who attended the four Friday evenings from October to March.

Kelly and Sarah are looking forward to running the program again next year and hope to see many new faces. Parents will be notified about the “Just Girls” program via the EMS Newsletter in the fall and will also be listed on the Youth Services website.

Summer Fun, Fitness and Learning

Youth Services is sponsoring several summer programs. Visit youth.ellington-ct.gov for details.

SUMMER THEATRE

Arts from the Heart in collaboration with Ellington Youth Services and Parks and Recreation is bringing summer theatre with camps, workshops and a musical production of **HONK! Jr.** A Big Kids Imagination Camp and Summer Theatre Camp is available for kids ages 5-9 and a

Summer Theatre Workshop for ages 10-15. Camps and auditions begin June 16th. For more



information and to register for the theatre camp, visit their website, www.ArtsFromtheHeart.net. For more information, email Jane at tcmusictogether@comcast.net.

SUMMER FITNESS

CHALLENGE

Calling all high school students and recent graduates to join fitness instructor Tressa Giordano for a summer of indoor and outdoor exercise. Workouts are customized to your fitness level. The location is Ellington High School on Tuesdays and Thursdays July 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, August 5, 7, 12, 14, 19 and 21. from 9:00 am to 9:45 am. Register at Youth Services/Recreation Dept. located on

31 Arbor Way or online via activenet on the Recreation website (parkrec.ellington-ct.gov). The fee is \$5.00 for walk-ins or \$25 for a 6 class punch card. A Health PAR-Q must be completed prior to participation.

SOCIAL FIT CLUB

Incoming 7th and 8th graders are invited to get outside and stay active by playing backyard team sports with their friends. The location is at Ellington Middle School on July 22, 24, 29, 31, August 5, 7, 12 & 14. Girls are from 10 am to 11:30 and boys are from 12:30 pm to 2:00. The fee is \$25. Register online at youth.ellington-ct.gov.

Council for Developing Positive Youth Culture—DPYC—is a subgroup of Ellington Youth Services

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Helping Your Anxious Child or Teen

Does any of this sound like your child or teen?



- Clinging, crying when separated
- Excessive shyness, avoid social situations
- Constant worry
- Avoiding situations or places because of fears
- Complaints of frequent stomachaches or headaches
- Experiencing sudden and frequent panic attacks

If so, your child may be experiencing anxiety. As a parent, you are the most influential person in your child's life and you can help him/her to overcome anxiety.

Anxiety is a normal part of life and we all experience it from time to time. But for some people anxiety can be

extreme. Children, teens and adults experience anxiety in three ways: **Physically, mentally and behaviorally.** Anxiety is felt in the body. For young children, they do not recognize or describe it as nervousness or anxiety. Instead, they may say they feel sick or have a stomachache or headache, chest pains or sore muscles. There are many physical signs of anxiety such as rapid heart rate, rapid breathing or shortness of breath, pain in stomach or nausea, sweating, trembling or shaking, tingling or numbness, headaches, dizzy, lightheaded, lump in the throat and feelings things are unreal or feeling detached from oneself. If many of these physical signs happen suddenly or intensely, your child may be having a panic attack. Panic attacks are uncomfortable but not dangerous. If anxiety interferes with normal activities or causes significant distress, professional help may be necessary to determine if it is an anxiety disorder.

Here are five ways to deal with anxiety:

1. **Be a relaxation expert.** Find the relaxation technique that works for you and use it often.
2. **Get enough sleep, nourishment and exercise.** It keeps your mind and body strong to handle life's ups and downs.
3. **Connect with others.** Spend time with family and friends. Find someone who listens and understands.
4. **Connect with nature.** Taking a walk or hike often brings peaceful feelings.
5. **Think positive.** A great way to keep our minds off the worry track is to focus our thoughts on things that are good, beautiful and positive.

Source: www.anxietybc.com,
www.kidshealth.org

Rise Above Student Leadership Group



What a year it has been for over 60 bright, energetic, and selfless high school students who have spent countless hours planning and executing community events and activities as part of Rise Above. In October, Brookside Park came alive with hayrides, games, and crafts at our annual Fall Festival in collaboration with Ellington Parks and Recreation. EHS and EMS students came out in droves in November and December to participate in Rise Above's annual dodge-

ball tournaments. During the holidays, a Rise Above member organized a Toy Drive, others helped out at the Troy Russell 3v3 Basketball Tournament and five enthusiastic members dressed up as elves at the Youth Forum Kids' Holiday Party in Hartford. After the holidays, members geared up for the Small Town Big Talent Community Variety Show and put on a spectacular event raising money for EHS's Relay for Life. The group bonded at a member-only Laser Tag outing in



February and in March created a teen center atmosphere for the annual Game Night for high school students. Sadly, the spring Kids' Fair at Brookside was canceled due to rain. During our last meeting of the year, several prior Rise Above members returned from college to share their experiences as part of a panel discussion about the college process and college life.

It's been an exciting, fun-filled year for Rise Above and we wish all of our members a safe and happy summer.