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Parenting Speaker Coming to Ellington

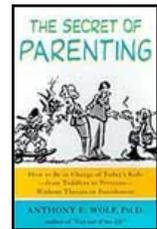
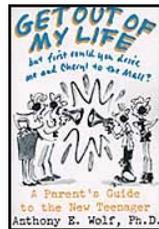


The Parent Connection will sponsor psychologist, columnist and author *Anthony E. Wolf, Ph.D* on Thursday, October 23rd at 7pm at Ellington High School. Dr. Wolf is a well

known speaker and has written five books on parenting. He is a frequent contributor to parenting magazines and currently writes a bi-weekly column on parenting teenagers for the Toronto Globe. Dr. Wolf has appeared on many television shows including

Today, Donahue, The View and CBS This Morning. He was featured on a PBS Television special on tweens last fall. He is known for his humor and wit. A \$5.00 donation is requested at the door and will go to the Ellington Safe Graduation Committee.

Tips on Parenting Tweens and Teens in Today's World



For more information on youth and alcohol, check out the following websites:

- <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>
- www.theantidrug.com
- www.stopalcoholabuse.gov
- www.preventionworksct.org
- www.housepartybill.org
- www.madd.org/under21
- www.mourningparentsact.org
- www.dontserveteens.gov
- www.alcoholfreechildren.org
- www.Alot2Lose.com
- www.thecoolspot.gov
- www.sadd.org
- www.niaaa.nih.gov
- www.notmykid.org

Youth Services Shopping Bags Available at all School Open Houses



Ellington Youth Services and The Parent Connection will be distributing free "green" reusable shopping bags filled with information and gifts. Be sure to get your free bag at EHS and Crystal Lake School open houses on September 4th, Windermere Elementary Open House on September 8th, Center School Open House on

September 9th, Ellington Middle School Open House on September 11th and Windermere Intermediate on September 15th.

Ellington Youth Services has a brand new website. Check it out!
<http://youth.ellington-ct.gov> and <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

What parents need to know about the new teen driving laws for those 16 or 17 year old drivers who receive a driver's license ON OR AFTER August 1, 2008.

- Permit holders may not have any passengers except for a licensed driving instructor or his/her parents or legal guardian, at least one must hold a valid driver's license.
- In addition to classroom work, permit holders need at least 40 hours of behind-the-wheel training before applying for their driver's license. **Also, parents or legal guardians are required to complete a two-hour class concerning teen driving laws.**
- Curfew is now 11 pm to 5 am for 16 and 17 year old drivers-unless the teen is traveling for employment, school, religious activities or medical necessity.
- During the first **six** months the newly licensed driver may NOT have any passengers except for a licensed driving instructor or his/her parents or legal guardian, at least one must hold a valid driver's license.
- During the second **six** months the only additional passengers allowed in the vehicle are members of the driver's immediate family.
- All passengers must wear seatbelts in the vehicle of a teen driver.
- There are increased penalties as well for teens who speed, drive recklessly, use cell phones or a mobile electronic device, or drive under the influence. Go to ct.gov/teendriving for more details on all the teen driving laws.

Every year, about 1,900 people under 21 die from car crashes involving underage drinking.

Rise Above Student Leadership Group



Rise Above Student Leadership group was formed in the fall of 2007 and has grown and made a name among students at Ellington High School. Their mission is a simple one: to act as role models who make positive choices. Watch for more news in the coming months on Rise Above activities. They are in the planning process now for the year. Activities may include dodge ball, game night and a family dinner for middle school students and their families in early spring. Visit our website at <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov> for more information on joining Rise Above.

Safe Grad Looking For Volunteers



The Ad Hoc Substance Free Graduation Party Committee is in need of new faces. The committee has been around for 20 years and provides a night of fun, games, music, food and prizes for Ellington High School graduates. It is held the night of graduation and goes through the night until 5:00 a.m. The committee depends on donations from the community and volunteers to make it a success. Many members of the committee have been on it for years and their children have graduated. The intent when the committee was formed was for it to be run by underclassmen parents but less and less parents have stepped up and every year senior parents have had to carry the load. This worthwhile night cannot continue unless volunteers step up. If you have been looking for something that you can help make a difference, then the Safe Grad Committee is the place for you! You need not have a child in high school to join. Their first meeting is Tuesday, September 9th at 7 pm in Room 239 at Ellington High School. For more information on how you can help out, contact Natalie Lapointe at 875-8983 or email her at natalie@laprjns.com.

Surgeon General Recent Report

Many of the nation's estimated 10.8 million underage drinkers are turning to their parents or other adults for free alcohol. The office of the Surgeon General reported in June findings from a study of teens from 2002 to 2006 that 40% said they got alcohol from an adult for free. Of those, about one in four said they got it from an unrelated adult, one in 16 got it from a parent or guardian and one in 12 got it from another adult family member.

More than 80% of underage drinkers said they were with two or more friends the last time they drank. The study found that when there were two or more people present, underage drinkers drank an average of up to two more drinks. More than half of underage drinkers said they were at someone's house when they had their last drink, and 30 percent were in their own home.

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The Dangers of Energy Drinks



Most “energy” drinks such as Red Bull contain as much caffeine as a standard eight-ounce cup of coffee (80 mg). (A 12 oz soda contains 18-48 mg of caffeine). Some are loaded with two to three times that amount. In addition to large doses of caffeine, energy drinks contain excessive amounts of sugar and legal herbal stimulants like Ginseng and Guarana. Herbal ingredients are not regulated by the FDA. Many of these drinks contain several servings in one can and youth tend to drink several at a time.

Despite manufacturer claims to the contrary, marketing of energy drinks is targeted to high school kids and adults who are under the age of 30. Caffeine is a stimulant, a diuretic and is addictive. As a stimulant, caffeine can cause anxiety attacks, heart palpitations and insomnia. It can make you jittery or irritable. As a diuretic, caffeine causes your kidneys to remove extra fluid from your body. If you consume energy drinks while sweating, these effects are particularly dangerous because it can cause severe dehydration rather quickly.

A recent fad on college campuses is mixing alcohol and energy drinks. Since energy drinks are stimulants and alcohol is a depressant, the combination of effects can be dangerous. The stimulant effects can mask how intoxicated you are and prevent you from realizing how much alcohol you have consumed. The stimulant effect can give the person the impression they are not impaired. No matter how alert you feel, your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the same as it would be without the energy drink. Once the stimulant effect wears off, the depressant effects of the alcohol will remain and could cause vomiting during sleep or respiratory depression.

Poison control centers and emergency rooms nationwide have noted a spike in calls about caffeine poisoning. Teenagers do not realize how much caffeine they are ingesting and do not know you can suffer from caffeine poisoning. It is important to read labels and know what you are drinking!!

Substance Abuse Counselor at EHS

This past school year Ellington High School was fortunate to have Ms. Carleen Longano LPC, a substance abuse prevention counselor. We are happy to report she will return again this school year to the school every Thursday. Students who are experiencing difficulties with drugs or alcohol, are concerned about friends or family members, or have questions regarding drugs, alcohol or any other issue may seek Ms. Longano’s services. She welcomes visitors! Ms. Longano works out of New Directions based in Enfield. She has a masters in Psychology and Applied Counseling/ Addictions Studies and has worked with adolescents in the adventure based/ counseling field.



Your input and support is needed! The

Parent Connection welcomes new members. Please call Deborah Stauffer at 870-3130 or email dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov for more information.

Did you know?...



Parents who communicated and were involved with their children at ages 10 and 11, set clear expectations for their children’s behavior, practiced good supervision and consistent discipline, and minimized conflict in the family found them at ages 11 and 12 to be more likely to see alcohol use as harmful and less likely to initiate alcohol use early. They were also less likely to misuse alcohol at ages 17 to 18.

*According to SAMHSA