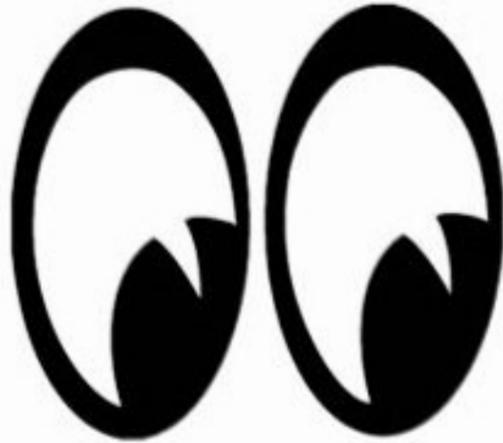


Look inside



for speakers, programs and important information from Ellington Youth Services!



Ellington Youth Services
31 Arbor Way, P.O. Box 187
Ellington, CT 06029



Parent Connection

Fall/Winter 2016

From the Director

The new school year is upon us and with it comes the excitement and anticipation of another year of learning and adventure. The staff at Ellington Youth Services extends to all students in our community best wishes for a healthy and happy school year.

The staff of Youth Services is here to support and assist children and their families. We provide programs and services that strengthen and develop essential life skills needed to succeed in many challenges facing the youth of today. I encourage you to check out our website at youth.ellington-ct.gov and look at some of our programs. We are adding new ones all the time and are always open to feedback on ideas for new initiatives and programs. Our hope is that by partnering with schools, community organization, and parents, we will meet the emotional and social needs of our children and families. We are here for you and your family. I am a licensed family therapist and here to assist your child through any transition or issue that may require help. My staff and I look forward to working with you and your family. Youth Services truly believes in caring for our future.

Sincerely, Diane Lasher-Penti

Speaker Series—Stop the Stigma

Ellington Youth Services and the Council for Developing Positive Youth Culture (DPYC) is proud to present the speaker series for this school year, **Stop the Stigma**. Mark your calendars please for October 24th, January 19th and March 9th.

On Monday, October 24th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Ellington High library we will host **Stop the Stigma: Let's Talk About Opioid and Heroin Addiction**. Join us for an evening of information from panelists speaking from personal experience, treatment, enforcement and addiction standpoints. Let's face the heroin epidemic together. Many resources will be available.

January 19th will be **Stop the Stigma: Let's Talk about Relieving Stress through Laughter**. Youth Services welcomes Robert Rivest from 6:00—7:00 pm at the Ellington Senior Center who will present his interactive stress relief show.

March 9th will be **Stop the Stigma: Let's Talk about The Teen Brain and Risk-Taking** in the Ellington Middle School library from 6:30—8:00 pm. We welcome Dr. Ruth Potee of Greenfield, Mass. Dr. Potee's expertise in the area of adolescent brain development and its impact on teenage risk taking, including alcohol and substance use, has been featured nationally. Details on this series can be found on our website.

Ellington Youth Services

31 Arbor Way

860-870-3130

Youth.ellington-ct.gov

Decidetobekind.com

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Developing Positive Youth Culture (DPYC)

The DPYC was created over 15 years ago and its mission has been to create and sustain a positive youth culture. This has only been possible because of the consistent collaboration among the community, schools and town agencies. The DPYC meets every other month during the school year and has a diverse membership. There is representation from businesses, faith communities, civic organizations, education, police as well as parent and student members. The DPYC also serves as the Youth Advisory board and in the past has served as the coalition for several grants for the prevention of underage drinking and prescription drug misuse. Members needed! Anyone in the community interested in being on the DPYC should contact Diane Lasher-Penti at dpenti@ellington-ct.gov. The first meeting of the new year is Tuesday, September 13th at 6:00 pm at Youth Services.



Sgt. Brian Santa and Trooper Brin Warendt with the Prescription Drug Drop Off box.

Youth Services and the DPYC work with our local Resident State Troopers and we welcome Sergeant Brian Santa to Ellington. Sgt. Santa has been in town for four months and looks forward to meeting community members. The State Troopers' office recently installed a Prescription Drug Drop Off box at their location on 33 Arbor Way that was provided by ERASE, our Regional Action Council. We appreciate the State Troopers' diligence in getting this drop box installed. For more information and hours of the Prescription Drug Drop Off box, please visit the Police page on the website ellington-ct.gov.

Decide to Be Kind

Ellington Youth Services and the DPYC created the Decide to Be Kind campaign last year to provide inspiration, education and resources to build a kinder and more compassionate community. A community committee with local businesses and community members was created and many activities took place. "Join the Moo-vement" lawn signs were distributed and many residents sent in photos with their sign. Visit the website for a look at the photos and other information at www.decidetobekind.com.



"Kindness Challenge" videos were posted on the Facebook page and website to encourage kindness, a Kindness Clean-Up Day happened at Brookside Park, a poster contest, American Karate performed at half-time at a basketball game and the high school Teen Diversity Club hosted the cultural event "Around the World in One Knight." T-shirts, key chains, magnets, pencils and wrist bands were also given out throughout the year. Windermere School embraced the campaign and an assembly took place and the Kindness Ambassadors Club was created. Ellington Middle School students designed posters encouraging kindness throughout their school.

The campaign continues! Our first meeting of the school year is Wednesday, September 21st at 7:30 pm at Ellington Youth Services at 31 Arbor Way. We will be brainstorming new ideas for activities for the year. Also, we will once again be distributing pencils and magnetic school calendars at all the school open houses and curriculum nights.

We welcome suggestions from community members and local business partnerships. This past year we partnered with American Karate Center, Integrated Rehabilitation Services, Oakridge Farms and Kloter Ice Cream Barn. Please contact us at Youth Services at 860-870-3130 or email youth@ellington-ct.gov for more information or to join the Moo-vement! We still have "Join the Moove-ment" lawn signs for anyone who would like to place it in their yard!

A Word About Mental Health



Mental Illness is used to describe a variety of psychiatric disabilities including depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, panic/anxiety disorders and post traumatic stress disorder. Like most illnesses, mental illnesses have intertwined biological, psychological and environmental roots. Mental illnesses can affect ANYONE at all levels of functioning and intelligence. They are as prevalent as other medical illnesses and are a major public health problem, yet are difficult to talk about.

Many people who struggle with mental illnesses also struggle with alcohol or drug habits that may have begun in their mistaken belief that they can use the substance to "medicate" the painful feelings that accompany their mental illness.

Children and Mental Illness

Health professionals once thought disorders discussed above occurred after childhood but now it is widely held that these disorders can begin in early childhood. According to the Surgeon General, one out of every five children has a diagnosable mental illness. Action such as anxiety, anger and shyness can be part of developmental growth or a temporary condition rather than an illness. When troubling behaviors occur over a period of time or in a way that disrupts daily life, they are considered symptoms of a disorder. Some disorders begin in childhood and continue into adolescence and adulthood. Others go away or improve with age, and some begin later in life. Although parents want to avoid medication or the stigma of a mental diagnosis, the prognosis is brighter with proper treatment. If a child does not receive necessary care, the illness may continue into adulthood, creating high risks for issues such as substance abuse, antisocial behavior or suicide.

Resources for Getting Help

By Phone

Diane Lasher-Penti, LMFT- Director, Ellington Youth Services-**860-870-3130**

Infoline—**Dial 211** from anywhere in Connecticut and you will reach a highly-trained contact specialist who will assess your needs and provide referrals to the resources in your community.

Capitol Region Mental Health Center-**860-297-0999**. Located at 500 Vine Street in Hartford. Hours are 8:00 to 8:30 pm Monday-Friday.

Community Health Resources (CHR)-**877-884-3571**. There are many locations throughout the state. CHR offers the most comprehensive array of mental health, substance abuse, child welfare, supported housing, foster care, prevention and wellness programs and integrated care services to children, adults and families in Central and Eastern Connecticut.

InterCommunity (IC) - **860-569-5900**. Located at 281 Main Street, East Hartford. They are there to help people improve their quality of life by providing physical, mental health and addiction services for optimum health and recovery.

Wheeler Clinic Crisis Services-Adults-Central Connecticut: **860-747-3434**, Adults-Hartford Area: **860-524-1182**, Children: **866-870-5484**.

Websites for more info

CHR-www.chrhealth.org/

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)-www.ct.gov/dmhas

Infoline 211-www.211ct.org

Youth Services Spotlight—Kayla Condron



Kayla Condron has been an integral part of Youth Services for over four years. The recent Ellington High School graduate has been teaching *Discover Art* classes to youth in town all throughout her high school career. She hopes to be an art teacher so this experience has been perfect for her. The *Discover Art* classes she teaches consist of using different mediums and have included painting and sketching. She will continue teaching art classes while she attends Eastern Connecticut State University. This fall she is offering intermediate painting and drawing classes for those who would like to take their skills to the next level. She will teach a regular *Discover Art* class as well for 2nd and 3rd grade. In addition this year she added a *Holiday Art* class that begins in November. Students will make holiday and seasonal themed art. Youth Services welcomes high school students who have a hobby or interest and would like to develop a program to teach younger students. Contact Diane Lasher-Penti at Youth Services for more information. There is also information on the high school program page on our website under “**Launch My Idea.**” Kayla has combined her love for art and teaching and gained valuable experience through her *Discover Art* classes as well as earning money. Way to go Kayla!

Youth Services Spotlight—Michelle Catania, LMFT



Michelle Catania has joined Youth Services to present the parenting series *Circle of Security* on Wednesdays beginning September 21st. Michelle is a Marriage and Family Therapist licensed in the State of Connecticut. She was a preschool teacher for over 15 years and has children of her own, two naturally and one through special needs adoption.

The Circle of Security Parenting program is based on decades of research about how secure parent-child relationships can be supported and strengthened. Michelle will run the program every Wednesday from 7:00 to 8:30 pm from September 21st through November 16th at Ellington Youth Services. At times all parents feel lost or without a clue about what their child might need. A great program for caretakers, parents and teachers of children 0-5 years old. To register visit in person at Youth Services or visit the website youth.ellington-ct.gov.

Michelle uses both her personal experience and professional training to help her clients and participants. Welcome Michelle, we look forward to seeing you on Wednesday evenings.

Check out our fall programs and other services available in this newsletter or on our website youth.ellington-ct.gov



Rise Above Student Leadership Group

Rise Above is a community based student leadership group offering high school students the opportunity to learn and apply leadership skills by hosting a variety of events for the school and community. This past year the students hosted two dodgeball tournaments, one for their peers at Ellington High and one for middle school students. They also hosted College Night in January, Gallery Night in February, Community Variety Show in April, mentored students at Ellington Middle School and had fun at Laser Tag. Members learn about leadership with these activities while serving the community at the same time. Any interested high school student who lives in Ellington is welcome to join. Rise Above also has a Core Group comprised of students from each grade level who meet regularly and also run meetings and make decisions. Any involved Rise Above member is welcome to apply. Activities are still being planned for the year. The first activity will take place on September 24th at USA Ninja Challenge in South Windsor.



Rise Above welcomes Tressa Giordano as Advisor to Rise Above. The group meets every second Wednesday during the school year at 7:30 pm (new time) at the Ellington Senior Center located at 40 Maple Street. **The first meeting is Wednesday, September 14th.** All members are required to complete an application and medical form before they can participate in any Rise Above activity. Forms can be downloaded and printed from our website, youth.ellington-ct.gov. Rise Above also has a Facebook page with information on past events and lots of photos. Any questions about the group, please contact Tressa Giordano at tgiordano@ellington-ct.gov or call 860-870-3130.



Addiction Facts

Addiction is a chronic brain disease and not simply the result of bad choices made. It is a progressing and relapsing disorder that if left untreated generally worsens over time. Heroin has been around for quite some time. In the 60's more than 80 percent of people entering treatment for heroin addiction started directly using heroin. Now, more than 75 percent of heroin addiction began with a prescription opioid. Opioids are what is in prescription painkillers such as OxyContin, Codeine and Percocet. According to the CDC, 2014 saw the highest number of drug overdose deaths and opioids were involved in 61 percent of those fatalities. The switch is made to heroin for many reasons such as easy access and lower price. Once the prescriptions run dry, the addictive nature of the drugs leads users to turn to other options which in many cases is heroin. The CDC says in 2012 healthcare providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for painkillers. Enough for every American adult to have a bottle of pills. Many of these painkillers go unused and sit in medicine cabinets waiting for someone to misuse.



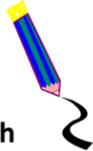
The most common cause of a death from heroin abuse is respiratory depression, a side effect of the drug. The user falls asleep and his or her body “forgets” to keep breathing. A drug called *Narcan* is now carried by many ambulance, fire and police personnel and if given in time stops the heroin effects on the brain receptors and reminds the body to breath.

Prevention is the best approach. Visit www.preventionworksct.org for guides on how to talk to your child about drug abuse and addiction. Nine out of ten people with a drug or alcohol problem started using as a teen. Studies have shown that a child who gets through his or her teen years without abusing drugs or alcohol is highly unlikely to develop a problem as an adult.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services launched an 800 number this year that connects those seeking treatment in Connecticut to the right locations. **The number is 1-800-563-4086.** Residents are urged to drop any unused prescriptions off in the prescription drug drop off box at the Resident State Troopers' Office at 33 Arbor Way or State Police Troop C in Tolland.

Fall 2016 Programs



| Program | Description | Days | Location/ Fee |
|---|--|--|------------------------------|
| Circle of Security Presented by: Michelle Catania, LMFT  | At times all parents feel lost or without a clue about what our child might need from us. Imagine what it might feel like if you were able to make sense of what your child was really asking from you. The Circle of Security Parenting program is based on decades of research about how secure parent-child relationships can be supported and strengthened. | Dates: Wednesdays, September 21 st through November 16 th Times: 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm For: Caretakers, Parents and teachers of children 0-5 years old (although only one parent at a time from a 2 parent household should attend) | \$25.00 31 Arbor Way |
| Decide to Be Kind Monthly Meeting Members of the Community and local business are welcome to participate. | The Decide to Be Kind committee was formed in the summer of 2015 by Ellington Youth Services and the Council for Developing Positive Youth Culture (DPYC) with a mission to provide inspiration, education and resources to build a kinder and more compassionate community. This group plans events and organizes ways to reach our community through kindness. | September 21 st at 7:30 pm www.decidetobekind.com  | 31 Arbor Way |
| Discover Art: Intermediate Drawing Grades: 4th, 5th, & 6th  | Take your skills to the next level of drawing | Nov. 4th, 11th, 18th and Dec. 2nd 6:30 to 7:30 pm Instructor: Kayla Condon | Fee: \$20.00 31 Arbor Way |
| Discover Art Grades: 2nd and 3rd  | Each night a different art medium will be explored including: painting, sketching, clay etc. Come and let your imagination soar. | Friday Nights: Sept. 16th, 23rd, 30th, Oct. 7, 14 and 21st. 6:30 to 7:30 pm Instructor: Kayla Condon | Fee: \$30.00 31 Arbor Way |
| Discover Art: Intermediate Painting Class Grades: 4th, 5th, 6th  | Take your skills to the next level in painting. Instructor: Kayla Condon | Dates: Sept 12, 19th, 26th and Oct. 3rd. Monday nights from 6:30 to 7:30pm | Fee: \$20.00 31 Arbor Way |
| Holiday Art Grades: 2nd, 3rd & 4th  | Come and have great time making holiday and seasonal themed art. Different art mediums will be used. | Oct. 17th, 24th, Nov. 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th 6:30 to 7:30 pm Instructor: Kayla Condon | Fee: \$30.00 31 Arbor Way |

For more information and to register go to youth.ellington-ct.gov 860-870-3130.

| Program | Description | Days | Location/ Fee |
|---|--|---|--|
| In the Loop Knitting Group Ages 8 and up  | Whether you a beginner or a pro, come relax, learn and meet others. Instructors will be teaching knitting and crocheting. | Thursdays, October 20, 27, November 3, 10, 17. 6-7:15pm. Bring your own needles & yarn | 31 Arbor Way Cost: \$10 |
| Inside & Out Playgroup For ages 3 months to age 3  | Join us for socialization, arts and crafts, stories, snack, discovery and networking with other parents of toddlers at our new Crystal Lake School House location | Fridays 9:10 am-10:00 am Session 1: 9/16, 23, 30, 10/7, 14, 21, 28 Session 2: 11/4, 11, 18, 12/2, 9, 16 | \$18 for residents \$23 for non-residents. Crystal Lake School House, across from Sandy Beach |
| Inside & Out Child & Grandparent Playgroup for ages 3 months to age 3  | Join us for socialization, arts and crafts, stories, snack, discovery and networking with other grandparents of toddlers . | Wed 9:10-10:00 am Session 1: 9/14, 21, 28, 10/5, 12, 19, 26 Session 2: 11/2, 9, 16, 30, 12/7, 14 | \$18 for residents \$23 for non-residents. Crystal Lake School House, across from Sandy Beach |
| Little Hands Art & Discover For ages 1-3 and their parents  | Come join us to release that creative energy! We will explore colors, texture and fun painting techniques with sponges, brushes, fingers and so much more!! Enjoy a fun age appropriate art project, yummy snack, story and meet new friends with that special little person in your life. Adult participation required. | Thursdays: 9:10 -10:00 am, Session 1: 9/15, 22, 29, 10/6, 13, 20, 27 Session 2: 11/3, 10, 17, 12/1, 8, 15 | \$40 for residents \$45 for non-residents Crystal Lake School House, across from Sandy Beach |
| Mind, Body, Spirit  | Once a month join Youth Services in exploring new, fun, creative, mindful ways we can fine tune our emotional, physical, playful health. All ages and families welcome! Each month we will hold three different activities for the group to try in areas of creativity, mindfulness (relaxation), and movement. About half-hour for each activity. | Oct. 4th, Nov. 1st and Dec. 6th from 6:00 pm to 7:15 pm | \$5 per person/ per class 31 Arbor Way |
| Anxiety Worry Nervous  | Four nights of information, skill building and understanding for parents and community members who have children or know of children with anxiety, worries and nervousness. | Thursdays from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Oct. 20th, Nov 3rd, Nov. 10th and Nov. 17th. Facilitated by Diane Lasher-Penti, LMFT. | 31 Arbor Way |
| Parents Supporting Parents  | This peer led group will support each other in helping to advocate for their children. We will meet on a monthly basis and discuss topics of interest, support and encourage each other, and seek out special guest speakers that the group has interest in. | Our first meeting will be Tuesday, September 27th from 6 pm -7 pm | 31 Arbor Way |