



East Haddam
Youth & Family Services, Inc.

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Spring 2015

Upcoming Events

Teen Coffee House

Thursdays (beginning 3/26)
6:30-8:00pm
Two Wrasslin' Cats
Open to all HS students

Stronger Together: Mean It. Live It. Do It.

Tuesday March 31
6:00-8:30pm @ NHRMS

Polar Plunge Fundraiser

Saturday April 4
3:30pm @ Town Beach

Coffee Talk

Tuesdays April 14 & May 12
10:00am @ Two Wrasslin'
Cats

Ladies Night Out

Wednesday April 29
6:00-8:00pm @ Grange Hall

Contact Information:

Telephone: 860-873-3296
Fax: 860-873-3243
Email:
youthandfamily@prodigy.net

Visit www.EHYFS.org for
additional information or
if you are interested in
receiving future editions of
this newsletter.

You can also find us on
Facebook

A Note From the Director:

Promoting community conversation and building consensus around shared community values and expectations that relate to the healthy development of our youth is a cornerstone of our work at EHYFS. It is a big job and we are continuously looking for ways to encourage that dialogue.

Parents Helping Youth is a new, developing group of parents who are working with EHYFS and the local prevention council to create a project that builds on the MEAN IT campaign launched last year by our High School Youth Helping Youth group. Made up of elementary, middle and high school parents, this group is coming together to discuss the issues, opportunities, and challenges that our youth face. Their plan is to identify ways in which parents and other adults can actively support our youth by developing positive experiences, relationships and opportunities that encourage them to make healthy choices and positive decisions in their lives. Their goal is to become a leading force in strengthening the capacity of our community to meet the needs and improve the well-being of our kids.

Parents who are interested in joining this effort are encouraged to contact Tammy Spurgeon (PTO), Trish Tarnowski (MPAC) or Lenore McLean (Connections) or to call EHYFS at 860-873-3296.

Coffee Talk is a monthly gathering sponsored by EHYFS and funded by donations from East Haddam Lions and Community Lions. It is an open forum for community members to come together to discuss issues and concerns affecting our youth. Recently, we have seen attendance at Coffee Talk increase and the conversation has become more focused on how the community can come together to address youth substance use. The importance of having these kinds of open conversations with different segments of our community represented cannot be overstated. Community awareness, concern and active involvement are essential to our success in decreasing substance use among our youth.

Coffee Talk happens the second Tuesday of the month, from 10:00 to 11:00 am at Two Wrasslin' Cats. Join the conversation and have a cup of coffee on us.

- Toni McCabe

Asset Building in Action:

In their own words: A few of our neighbors who make a difference everyday

There isn't anything magical or mysterious about creating building blocks with and for our youth. It happens every day, whenever someone intentionally sets out to make a real connection, to establish a caring relationship, or to make a positive difference in the life of a child. You have heard us say, "Anyone can build assets...everyone has a role to play."

There are asset-builders among us who "mean it, live it and do it" every day:

"I volunteer my time as an Assistant Teacher at Doreen's Dance Studio in order to provide instruction and support to younger dancers and peers. As a role model, it is my responsibility to put forth my best effort and ensure that fellow dancers are in a positive learning environment."

- Meghan Quinn (Student, NHRHS)

"My involvement in our community focuses on providing our youngest children with meaningful experiences, acting as a positive role model, and letting them know that they are supported in school, as well as in the community. My hope is to help our children be their best selves and strive for the things that are meaningful to them as individuals."

- Tammy Spurgeon (Parent & PTO President)

"I'm proud to teach at Nathan Hale-Ray High School, and to call East Haddam my home. Acting as 2015 Class Co-Advisor has allowed me to witness the authenticity and character of our soon-to-be-graduates. Overseeing Mock Trial and Debate has enabled me to support students' efforts to cultivate 21st skills that will serve them outside the halls of Hale-Ray."

- Meg Dedman (English Teacher, NHRHS)

"I have actively supported youth in East Haddam for many years - as a coach, scout leader, and mentor. I do these things because I feel that raising our children properly and giving them every opportunity to succeed is one of the most important jobs that we have as adults in our community."

- Chris James (Parent & Volunteer Coach)

"I support kids in our community by building bonds with them when they are young. This helps them to be comfortable with older kids and to have someone to look up to."

- Carson Hemphill (Student, NHRHS)

"I support the youth of East Haddam by making myself available to them - at the high school especially. I offer an ear for listening, do not judge them but accept them where they are. I want them to know that I feel that what they have to say or what they are involved with is important to me. When asked I will offer my honest feedback. I try to let them know that they are welcome in my office any time and that I am always happy to see them and care about them and what is important to them."

- Mary Tomasi (Staff, NHRHS)

"Through the years I've seen what an impact upperclassmen can have on their peers, (especially the younger ones), in really any activity, but I have witnessed it mostly in the Performing Arts areas. I've made it my personal mission to ensure that I set up the most optimal opportunities for the Hale Ray Drama Club by getting us involved in the Halo Awards, helping to market our great productions, and working alongside my amazing peers to create this art."

- Simone Liberty (Student, NHRHS)

Stronger Together: Mean It. Live It. Do It.

March 31, 2015

6:00-8:30pm

Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School

Light dinner and registration at 6:00pm

Program begins promptly at 6:30pm

Please RSVP to Colleen Sullivan (860-873-3296).

The East Haddam Local Prevention Council will host an interactive community presentation to find out what's happening with our youth. Participating individuals will learn what our youth are thinking, understand how youth and adults can build partnerships, and gain tools to use in their everyday lives. This event is open to all community members.

The Local Prevention Council believes that together we can make a positive impact on our town. Together we are stronger!!!

Local Prevention Council:

During the next few weeks, East Haddam Local Prevention Council will offer a merchant education program for all businesses in town who sell alcohol. This program educates participating individuals on responsible service, sale, and consumption of alcohol. All business that sell or serve alcohol are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The LPC will continue to host monthly coffee talks at Two Wrasslin' Cats. We invite all community members to come and speak with neighbors in the community to help each other build strong, safe and substance free youth in East Haddam. Your first cup of coffee is on us! Come, listen, and discuss among yourselves at this informal get together. Our spring coffee talks dates will be April 14th and May 12th.

We will be planning additional events throughout the spring and summer. If you are interested in helping the LPC with our efforts, please contact Colleen Sullivan at 860-873-3296 or visit our webpage www.ehlpc.org.

Youth Helping Youth:

By Michaela Paduch: YHY Public Relations Coordinator

Youth Helping Youth is a leadership group that works in conjunction with East Haddam Youth and Family Services to serve the youth of East Haddam. Our goal is to bring the community together to promote a positive and healthy community in which all youth feel supported. The group has recently organized 4th and 5th grade socials where high school students participate in activities and games with the younger students. Youth Helping Youth also volunteers with Elementary School Family Nights and Homework Hangout sessions for Middle School students.

Currently, Youth Helping Youth is planning the 4th annual Polar Plunge Fundraiser (scheduled for April 4th), a sticker shock event, and prevention projects for prom and graduation.

If you would like to learn more about Youth Helping Youth, please email youthhelpingyouth@hotmail.com.

Ladies Night Out:

Wednesday April 29
6:00-8:00pm
Grange Hall

Open to girls in 4th and 5th grades with their mothers/caregivers

Get ready for change! Join us for a fun, informational night designed to give girls a better understanding of the changes their body will go through during puberty. Topics will also include the importance of maintaining a positive body image and how to deal with difficult situations during this dynamic time. This event includes resource materials, goodie bags and dinner.

Middle school health educator Patty Cournoyer will facilitate this course.

There is no cost to attend this event, but space is limited. Call East Haddam Youth & Family Services to register 860-873-3296.

East Haddam Confidential Tip Line:

The East Haddam Police/Resident Troopers Office have established a confidential and anonymous Tip-Line to receive information from concerned citizens about parties or gatherings where underage alcohol and/or drug use is happening and other crimes or suspicious activity. The Tip-Line is answered by a voice mail system and reviewed by a Police Officer. You may leave crime information or suspicious activity information anonymously. The Tip-Line has no Caller ID and your contact information is not available to the police unless you provide it. You will receive a return call only if you provide your contact information and request a callback. All information is kept confidential.

Because the Tip-Line is anonymous and confidential, it is important that you provide as much information and detail in your message as possible.

**See Something, Hear Something,
Say Something!**

**Report Underage Alcohol and Drug Use
Call the Anonymous Tip Line**

860-873-5013

*Sponsored by
East Haddam Youth & Family Services, Inc.
State and Local Police
East Haddam Local Prevention Council*