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

<http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>
www.settherulesct.org
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
www.drugfree.org

Speakers Coming to Ellington

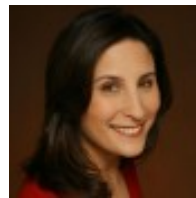
Two dynamic speakers will be speaking to students and parents this fall.



Jeff Yalden

On October 29th Jeff Yalden will be speaking to students at Ellington High School. Jeff is an internationally renowned youth motivational speaker and has addressed youth representing over 48 countries, more than 3,500 middle schools, high schools, leadership/youth conferences, colleges and universities.

www.jeffyalden.com



Rosalind Wiseman

On October 22nd Rosalind Wiseman will be coming to Ellington High School (7pm). She is an internationally recognized expert on children, teens, parenting, bullying, social justice, and ethical leadership. Wiseman is the author of Queen Bees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and Other Realities of Adolescence. Twice a New York Times Bestseller, Queen Bees & Wannabes was the basis for the 2004 movie Mean Girls.

Her follow-up book Queen Bee Moms and Kingpin Dads was released in 2006, and she is a monthly columnist for Family Circle magazine. Her new book, Queen Bees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and The New Realities of Girl World, will be released in October and Ellington is very fortunate to have her as part of her book tour!

www.rosalindwiseman.com

Both speakers are sponsored by the Drug Abuse Prevention Council

School Open Houses

The Drug Abuse Prevention Council will again this year be giving away bags filled with information and other incentives. This year the DAPC will emphasize the theme **BE THE CHANGE** to both students and parents. The drawstring backpack will be distributed to all parents at every open house. We hope to see you there!



Parent Survey

PLEASE take a moment and take our parent survey located on our website.

<http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>



Be sure to check out our websites!

<http://youth.ellington-ct.gov> and <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

Tips for Parents of New Drivers



- **KNOW THE LAWS!** Stress to them to have no passengers the first six months and only siblings or immediate family the next six months. It is *THE LAW!*
- Even after the year has passed, you as a parent can limit the number of passengers your child has in his/her vehicle. The risk of a crash increases dramatically when occupants are added to the car.
- Set check-in rules for your teen to call or text when they arrive at their destination and when they are heading home.
- Know who your teen is with and where they are going at all times. And discuss your expectations for celebrating special occasions like prom and graduation responsibly, even when your teen is NOT behind the wheel.
- Talk to your teen about the dangers of drugged, drunk, and distracted driving. **BE A ROLE MODEL!** You can help by being a positive role model behind the wheel.
- Make sure your teen is completely aware of safety issues, like keeping passenger distractions to a minimum and never driving and using the cell phone at the same time. *THAT IS ALSO THE LAW!*

Rise Above



Rise Above, Ellington's Student Leadership Group, will be starting its third year with an open house for interested students as well as current members. This open house will be in September right after school in the library at Ellington High School. Students should listen for announcements for the date. Any student at Ellington High School who does not use alcohol, drugs or any other type of substance and is interested in being role models for their peers and younger students is welcome to join Rise Above. For more information, please contact Debbie Stauffer at dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov or call 870-3130.

Teens and Stress



With each passing day, it seems there are more things for teens to worry about—school, sports, SATs, friends, and even the economy. Parents know firsthand that stress can wreak havoc on the body and mind, but they may not realize how stress manifests itself in their kids. While stress is a natural part of life, it creates imbalances in the body, especially a teen's body, which is already experiencing so many changes. Girls also report feeling "frequently stressed" more than boys. Visit www.theantidrug.com for more details on teens today and the day-to-day pressures they experience. According to a recent survey, 43 percent of 13 to 14 year olds say they feel stressed every single day; by ages 15 to 17, the number rises to 59 percent. If stress becomes unmanageable and teens are left to their own devices with-

Some Pressures Teens Experience

- Pressure to fit in
- Pressure to be perfect
- Pressure to be sexually active
- Pressure to pick on others
- Pressure to be successful

out guidance from a parent or caregiver, they may find their own ways of coping. Sometimes these coping mechanisms involve unhealthy behaviors such as drinking, smoking marijuana, and engaging in other risky behaviors. Here's how you can help the teen in your life with healthy, productive coping strategies.

1. Recognize when your teen is stressed-out. Is your teen getting adequate rest? Are they eating well-balanced meals? Do they ever take breaks to restore their energy? If these needs are unmet, your teen will show it through chronic moodiness, irritability, anxiety and/or long bouts of sadness. If you have a teen daughter, be particularly aware if she is obsessing about looks or weight.
2. Introduce positive coping strategies to your teen. Stress is inevitable. It is important to help them identify ways in which they can relieve their stress in a healthy way. It can be as simple as having your teen talk to you about their problems or pressures. Other ideas include: exercising, getting enough sleep, listening to music, writing in a journal, keeping a healthy diet, seeing a counselor and reminding them of their accomplishments.
3. Be a good example. Young people often pick up their coping strategies by watching their parents. If a child sees a parent drink an alcoholic beverage or smoke a cigarette every time they are overwhelmed they are more likely to imitate the same behavior. So, be mindful of your own reactions to stress and set a good example for your children.

Source: www.theantidrug.com

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~ Email: dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov

Website-<http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

Teens and Technology

Whether we like it or not, the age of technology is here to stay and as parents it is important to try and keep up with what is out there and what our tweens and teens are doing. Below is a brief description of some things to watch.

Computers-Social Networking



Social networking sites are becoming more and more mainstream and according to Nielsen/NetRatings reach 45% of active Web users. Some of the most popular social networking sites for teens include MySpace, Facebook, and Bebo. These sites allow teens to design their own personalized page on the internet, much like an interactive scrapbook. Many of the sites have age requirements, but teens often get around those limits. By doing that, they enter a world that is intended for adults who are 18 or older. When your teen is involved in these sites, it is often a portal into an adult world that you may not want them to have. They can be exposed to pornography, forms of sexual activity, and discussions about drug use and alcohol parties. All too often, many teens do not set sensible limits for how much information to share. They put themselves in danger by giving out too much personal information. Youth are more readily exposed to inappropriate content, misinformation about drugs, identity theft and even cyberbullying. Some teens post inappropriate content, such as pictures from a drinking party, postings about drugs, real or invented sexual activity, or gossip about school peers. While social networking can help a shy teen meet other kids their age and can offer an avenue for teens to be creative, a parent's watchful eye is necessary so teens are aware that information they post about themselves are open for the world to see.

You Tube



You Tube, a video sharing site where users can upload, view, and share video clips, is one of teens' four favorite and most visited sites (along with Google MySpace, and Facebook). Other than recommended guidelines, there are no barriers to what content is portrayed in those videos or who can view them. The top online video destination for 2 to 11 year olds is Disney and You Tube! Each video has a "comment" section. If your child does post a video, it is advisable to approve all comments or not allow comments at all. Many videos contain obscene comments from viewers! Also, teens who watched videos online in a one-month period were exposed to 1.2 million drug-related videos. While a lot of videos posted on You Tube are entertaining there are those that have content inappropriate for teens. In a study by Cox Communications in 2006, 75% of teens said their parents "almost never" monitored the Web sites they used or the time they spent on them.

Cell Phones



These days you won't find many tweens or teens who do NOT own a cell phone. Many have text messaging capabilities. Text messaging allows a short message to be sent and received discretely. It is convenient if you are in a public place and can't hear the other caller or if you just need to make plans with someone but don't want an in-depth conversation. However, for these same reasons, texting can also be a tool that teens prefer to use when sharing information they don't want overheard. Teens use their cell phones in creative ways. Instead of passing notes in class, they sometimes send text messages. They can receive messages from anyone, friend or not. This can include spammers, scammers, identity thieves, online predators and cyberbullies. In addition to texting, teens can also access the internet and download pictures and videos. Some are sending sexually explicit messages, (called "sexting") while others are mixing cell phone use and driving-a dangerous, deadly and illegal combination. Too much technology can also be detrimental to teens' health. New Technologies such as cell phones and social networking sites give teens easy access to their friends 24 hours a day. Many teenagers alone in their rooms stay up extremely late hours on their cell phones and computers while their parents sleep.