

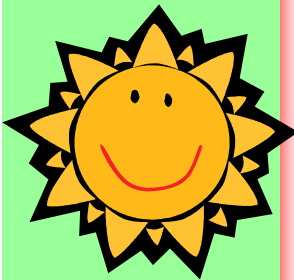
# WELCOME SUMMER 2009!

## Losing Less Over the Summer



### SPECIAL THANKS To

The Western Massachusetts Out of School Time Network (WestMOST) for their generous support.



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What is the first thing that you think of when we say “Summer?” Usually, when we think of summer, we envision vacations, relaxation, campfires and fun in the sun. Summer can also be an important time of learning for youth. Research indicates that most children experience a “loss of learning” over the summer months when they are no longer in school.

According to The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School time, findings indicate:

- All children learn at similar rates during the school year, despite different social and school conditions
- All children experience summer learning loss in math skills
- As summer learning losses accumulate over the school years, low-income students fall further and further behind.
- The accumulated skills losses due to lack of summer opportunities has long-lasting results for low-income students
- Children who do not have constructive opportunities during the summer are more likely to engage in risky behavior and have poorer physical health.

Beth M. Miller, Ph.D. of Miller-Midzik Research Associates describes this as a faucet of resources that are available to youth:

According to the “faucet theory,” all children benefit during the school year, when learning resources are “turned on” for all children. During the summer, the faucet is “turned off”, and the flow of resources to a child depends on what his or her parents can provide. While all families want the best for their children, there are significant differences between the resources that different families and communities can offer.

Also, according to Miller, “Given wide disparities in resources, families alone cannot close the summer opportunity gap. Communities, with public support, must take responsibility for providing opportunities for educational, enriching experiences for all children during the summer months.”

For more information about summer learning loss, check out The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time website at

<http://www.massafterschoolcomm.org>

The ACS Youth Coalition is working hard with our members and the community to be sure to keep you informed about things to do with your family throughout the summer. Be sure to check our on-line summer fun page and our calendar of events for the latest news and info.



The Bridging Schools and Afterschool Project, coordinated by Western Mass Out of School Time (WestMOST) Network has been working with a team from Adams-Cheshire to identify ways to increase the connections in area communities regarding youth development. Goals are to:

- Identify priorities for youth outcomes and strategies to reach those outcomes.
- Increase communication, coordination, and collaboration.
- Identify ways to increase quality of and access to afterschool and out of school time programs.

We all want what is best for our families. In this economy, it can be difficult to find fun things to do that won't break the budget. We've spoken with our members, done tons of research and have found many fun and exciting opportunities for the families of our community.

## ANNUAL 4-H FAIR

The Annual 4-H Youth Fair is on August 15 from 9-5 at the 4-H Fairgrounds in Pittsfield on Utility Drive off Holmes Rd. The event itself is FREE (no parking fee - no entrance fee!!) Also, ANY youth between 5-18 can enter the fair, topics include (but not limited to) photography, sewing, baking, flowers, veggies, arts, crafts, canning, etc. The only rule is that the item must be made/grown by the youth themselves (it can be a craft they made at summer camp or school or anywhere, etc...) For more information contact Angelica Paredes at (413) 448-8285

## BREAKFAST & LUNCH

CT Plunkett Elementary School will host a free breakfast/lunch program for ANYBODY under 18 years old in the town of Adams. It will be Mon-Thurs beginning on July 6 for 6 weeks. Breakfast will be available from 8:30 - 9:30 and lunch will be available from 12:30 - 1:30. For further information, please call (413) 743-0876.

## CONCERTS AT THE CLARK

Enjoy free concerts on every Tuesday evening at 6:00 pm in July at the Clark Art Institute. For more information, call (413) 458-2303

## CONCERTS ON THE COMMON

All summer long, enjoy free concerts on the Town Common in Adams. Concerts are every Thursday night at 7 pm.

## GARDEN CLUB

The "Growing Together" Garden Club starts on June 29 and will take place every Monday from 3:30-4:30pm, at the Youth Center, Inc. Drop-In Center. Youth will maintain, harvest, and snack on produce that they grow themselves. This program is free and open to Adams youth 7 years old or older. For more information contact Jen Munoz at REACH Community Health Foundation. (413) 664-5284.

## HIKE & LEARN

Join Northern Berkshire Community Partnership and Northern Berkshire Family Net for a Hike and Learn Program For Families with Young Children on June 13 from 10 am - 11:30 am at the Greylock Glen. Stacy Chapman, Preschool Teacher and Local Conservationist. From points north or south on MA Rte. 8 in downtown Adams, at William McKinley statue, turn onto Maple St. and follow to end. Turn left onto West Rd. and continue for 0.8 miles. Turn right onto Gould Rd. and continue uphill. Turn left at intersection continue on Gould Rd., trailhead parking and information kiosk is on right. For information call (413) 664-4615

## HISTORICAL WALKS

Local Historian Paul W. Marino presents another season of free, entertaining historical walks around various locales in the city of North Adams. As with all Marino walks, participants are advised to wear a good pair of walking shoes, sun block and a hat with a wide brim; carry a canteen or bottle of water. Be prepared to have your ears talked off. Walks will take place at 2:30 on: June 6, June 20, 2:30 July 4, July 19, August 8, August 19, (5 pm), August 22, Sept. 5, Sept. 19, and Oct. 3 For information: historyman@copper.net

## KIDSPACE AT MASS MOCA

Explore the galleries and create artwork for free! Call Kidspace at (413) 664-4481 x8131.

## LIBRARY STORY-TIMES

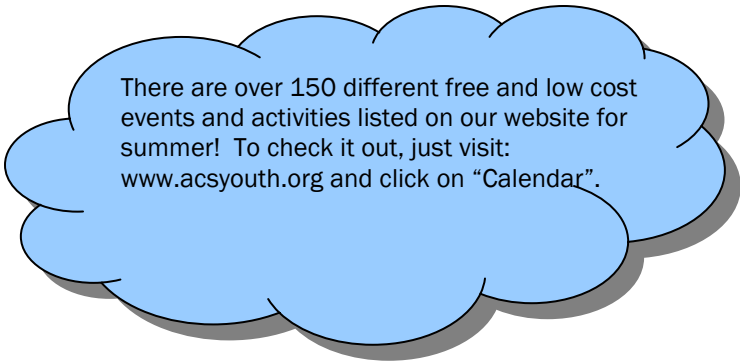
Local libraries offer great story time programs! The Adams Free Library offers story time at 10:00 on Tuesday mornings, call (413) 743-8345 to register. Preschool Story Time at the North Adams Public Library is on Monday evenings at 6:30 and at 10:00 am on Tuesday; and Toddler Time is Tuesday mornings at 9:30. For more information call (413) 662-3133

## MOVIES

Beginning on Friday, July 10, view family movies for free every Friday night on the lawn of Adams Town Hall. The shows start at dusk.

## SUMMER READING PROGRAM

Starship Adventure at Your Library! Massachusetts Regional Library Systems 2009 Statewide Summer Reading Program will take place at The Adams Free Library and the North Adams Public Library. Sign Ups begin on June 1. For more information contact the Adams Free Library or North Adams Public Library at (413) 743-8345 or (413) 662-3039 respectively.



There are over 150 different free and low cost events and activities listed on our website for summer! To check it out, just visit: [www.acsyouth.org](http://www.acsyouth.org) and click on "Calendar".

Whether you'd like your children to learn a new skill, or brush up on skills they already have, here are some great options for summer classes and instruction.

## BEGINNING COMPUTING

Move from beginning computer user to experienced internet user in 7 weeks! Topics include: using Windows, Email, Using the World Wide Web, Email and more! For more information, contact the Northern Berkshire YMCA at (413) 664-6529 \$40

## BING'S STRING FLING

Young students (Ages 6-12) will meet in groups to work on tone production, proper positions and posture, intonation and bowing. For more information, contact the Berkshire Music School at (413) 442-1411. \$150 Fee

## CATCH PHYSICAL FITNESS PROGRAM

Learn exciting games and activities for keeping fit! Sessions are on Monday mornings from 10:30 until 11:30. For more information contact Youth Center Inc. at (413) 743-3550. \$2 per session; discounts available for multiple sessions

## CLAY WORKSHOP

Learn new and creative ways to express yourself! Sessions are on Tuesday afternoons from 1:30 - 3:30. For more information contact Youth Center Inc. at (413) 743-3550. \$2 per session; discounts available for multiple sessions

## DROP-IN ART CLASSES

Kidspace at MassMOCA offers Drop In Art Classes on Tuesday and Thursday mornings for 6 - 12 year olds from 9:30 - 11:00. Drop In Parent & Preschooler Art Classes are also available on Monday mornings. For more information or details, contact Kidspace at (413) 664-4481 x8131 \$10 per Youth Class; \$7 per Parent & Preschooler Class

## FOLLOW-ME GYMNASTICS

45-Minute program provides parents with opportunity to stimulate their child's early physical development. Specially designed for parents and children up to age 3. Pre-school program for 3 & 4 year olds also available. For more information contact Gymfest of the Berkshires at (413) 445-5689. \$100 / 8 week session

## GYMNASTICS CLASSES

The Northern Berkshire YMCA offers gymnastics classes for Toddlers through Advanced gymnasts. For more information, contact the Northern Berkshire YMCA at (413) 664-6529. Toddlers, Beginner & Intermediate Classes: \$65 non YMCA members; \$45 basic members. Advanced Classes: \$85 non YMCA members, \$65 basic members

## HIP HOP DANCING

The Northern Berkshire YMCA offers Hip Hop Dancing co-ed instruction for ages 5 - 9 or ages 10 and older. For more information, contact the Northern Berkshire YMCA at (413) 664-6529. \$65 Non-Members; \$45 Basic Members; \$35 Complete Members

## INSTRUCTIONAL GYMNASTICS

90 Minute classes teach developmentally appropriate activities designed to each student's needs. There will be instruction in all Olympic events. Designed for ages 6 and up. For more information contact Gymfest of the Berkshires at (413) 445-5689. \$160 - 8 week session

## JUNIOR PLAYER GOLF ACADEMY

For juniors, with or without experience, wanting to learn the fundamentals of the game or greatly improve their skills. Learn swing mechanics, short game skills, drills, course etiquette, strategies, rules, and on-course playing. Recommended for ages 8-14. For more information, contact Berkshire Community College at (413) 236-2122 or (800) 816-1233. \$150 - 5 Meetings

## SCIENCE EXPLORATION

Explore the wonders of Science at Youth Center Inc. on Friday afternoons from 2 - 3. For more information, call (413) 743-3550. \$2 per session; discounts available for multiple sessions

## SIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Learn sign language! Classes will be held on Wednesday afternoons from 2-3 pm. For more information contact Youth Center Inc. at (413) 743-3550. \$2 per session; discounts available for multiple sessions

## SONG WRITING WORKSHOPS WITH DAVID GROVER

New Berkshire Music School faculty member David Grover will work with younger students (Ages 10-15) and adult beginners during separate sessions from July 27 - 31. For more information, contact the Berkshire Music School at (413) 442-1411. \$100 Fee (call for partner rate)

## SWIMMING LESSONS

The Northern Berkshire YMCA offers swimming lessons for learners of all ages and ability levels. For more information, contact the Northern Berkshire YMCA at (413) 664-6529. Price varies depending upon class selected

## UECHI-RYU KARATE

Anyone can learn! Open for men, women and children ages 6 years and older. Monday nights - 6:00pm to 7:30, and Saturday afternoons - 2:00pm to 4:30. Classes are held at the Adams Community Center, provided by volunteer instructors and Youth Center Inc. For more information call (413) 743-3550. \$5 per class for Youth Center Inc. Members; \$6 per class for non-members

## YOUNG CHEF'S COOKING ACADEMY

Through this unique and fun learning experience, children ages 9-13 learn basic cooking techniques, kitchen safety, how to follow recipe directions, and ways to help their parents in the kitchen. Learning how to prepare meals and desserts for the family gives children a sense of pride and accomplishment. For more information, contact Berkshire Community College at (413) 236-2122 or (800) 816-1233. \$150 - 5 Meetings



Here are some tips to keep your family safe from the American Academy of Pediatrics

## DON'T FORGET THE SUNBLOCK



Babies under 6 months:

- The two main recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn are to avoid sun exposure, and dress infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats that shade the neck to prevent sunburn. However when adequate clothing and shade are not available, parents can apply a minimal amount of sunscreen with at least 15 SPF (sun protection factor) to small areas, such as the infant's face and the back of the hands. If an infant gets sunburn, apply cold compresses to the affected area.

For Young Children:

- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15 and protect against UVA and UVB rays.

For Older Children:

- whenever possible, and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand as they reflect UV rays and may result in sunburn more quickly.

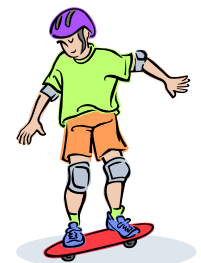


## HEAT STRESS IN EXERCISING CHILDREN

- The intensity of activities that last 15 minutes or more should be reduced whenever high heat and humidity reach critical levels.
- At the beginning of a strenuous exercise program or after traveling to a warmer climate, the intensity and duration of exercise should be limited initially and then gradually increased during a period of 10 to 14 days to accomplish acclimatization to the heat.
- Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well-hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced, for example, each 20 minutes, 5 oz of cold tap water or a flavored sports drink for a child weighing 90 lbs, and 9 oz for an adolescent weighing 130 lbs, even if the child does not feel thirsty.
- Clothing should be light-colored and lightweight and limited to one layer of absorbent material to facilitate evaporation of sweat. Sweat-saturated shirts should be replaced by dry clothing.
- Practices and games played in the heat should be shortened and more frequent water/hydration breaks should be instituted.

## SKATEBOARD, SCOOTER, IN-LINE SKATES & HEELYS SAFETY

- Children should never ride skateboards or scooters in or near traffic.
- All skateboarders and scooter-riders should wear a helmet and other protective gear; wrist guards are particularly important.
- Communities should continue to develop skateboard parks, which are more likely to be monitored for safety than ramps and jumps constructed by children at home.
- While in-line skating or wearing Heelys, be sure to wear appropriate protective equipment and only skate on designated paths or rinks and not on the street.



## Summer Safety Tips



### KEEPING BUGS AT BAY

- Don't use scented soaps, perfumes or hair sprays on your child.
- Avoid areas where insects nest or congregate, such as stagnant pools of water, uncovered foods and gardens where flowers are in bloom.
- Avoid dressing your child in clothing with bright colors or flowery prints.
- To remove a visible stinger from skin, gently scrape it off horizontally with a credit card or your fingernail.
- Combination sunscreen/insect repellent products should be avoided because sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours, but the insect repellent should not be reapplied.
- Insect repellents containing DEET are most effective against ticks, which can transmit Lyme Disease, and mosquitoes, which can transmit West Nile Virus and other viruses.
- The current CDC and AAP recommendation for children over 2 months of age is to use 30 percent DEET. DEET should not be used on children under 2 months of age.
- The concentration of DEET in products may range from less than 10 percent to over 30 percent. Ten percent DEET only protects for about 30 minutes – inadequate for most outings.
- The concentration of DEET varies significantly from product to product, so read the label of any product you purchase. Children should wash off repellents when back indoors.

For more information on DEET: <http://www.aapnews.org/cgi/content/full/e200399v1>



### BICYCLE SAFETY

- Do not push your child to ride a 2-wheeled bike until he or she is ready, at about age 5 or 6. Consider the child's coordination and desire to learn to ride. Stick with coaster (foot) brakes until your child is older and more experienced for hand brakes.
- Take your child with you when you shop for the bike, so that he or she can try it out. The value of a properly fitting bike far outweighs the value of surprising your child with a new one. For more information on finding the proper fit, go to <http://www.aap.org/family/bicycle.htm#choosing>
- Buy a bike that is the right size, not one your child has to "grow into." Oversized bikes are especially dangerous.
- Your child needs to wear a helmet on every bike ride, no matter how short or how close to home. Many accidents happen in driveways, on sidewalks, and on bike paths, not just on streets. Children learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride, put on your helmet.
- When purchasing a helmet, look for a label or sticker that says the helmet meets the CPSC safety standard.
- A helmet protects your child from serious injury, and should always be worn. And remember, wearing a helmet at all times helps children develop the helmet habit.
- A helmet should be worn so that it is level on the head, not tipped forwards or backwards. The strap should be securely fastened, and you should not be able to move the helmet in any direction. If needed, the helmet's sizing pads can help improve the fit.

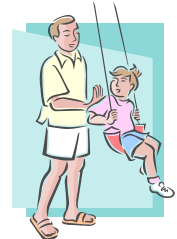


## POOL SAFETY



- Install a fence at least four-feet high around all four sides of the pool. The fence should not have openings or protrusions that a young child could use to get over, under, or through.
- Make sure pool gates open out from the pool, and self-close and self-latch at a height children can't reach.
- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook - a long pole with a hook on the end - and life preserver) and a portable telephone near the pool. Choose a shepherd's hook and other rescue equipment made of fiberglass or other materials that do not conduct electricity.
- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children may not be developmentally ready for swim lessons until after their fourth birthday. Swim programs for children under 4 should not be seen as a way to decrease the risk of drowning.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's length, providing "touch supervision."

## PLAYGROUND SAFETY










- The playground should have safety-tested mats or loose-fill materials (shredded rubber, sand, wood chips, or bark) maintained to a depth of at least 9 inches. The protective surface should be installed at least 6 feet (more for swings and slides) in all directions from the equipment.
- Equipment should be carefully maintained. Open "s" hooks or protruding bolt ends can be hazardous.
- Swing seats should be made of soft materials such as rubber, plastic or canvas.
- Make sure children cannot reach any moving parts that might pinch or trap any body part.
- Never attach—or allow children to attach—ropes, jump ropes, leashes, or similar items to play equipment; children can strangle on these.
- Make sure metal slides are cool to prevent children's legs from getting burned.
- Parents should never purchase a home trampoline or allow children to use home trampolines.
- Parents should supervise children on play equipment to make sure they are safe.

## LAWNMOWER SAFETY



- Try to use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
- Children younger than 16 years should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers. Children younger than 12 years should not use walk-behind mowers.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers on ride-on mowers.

# Summer Sports

 <p>BICYCLING</p>	<p>Bring your bike, roller blades or walking shoes: The Ashtiwilticook Rail Trail is accessible from dawn to dusk. Commuters with appropriate lights may use the trail after dark at their own risk. Roller bladers please use non-metal tipped poles. During the winter the trail is open to cross-country skiing or snowshoeing, conditions permitting.</p>	<p>Bicycles are available from Berkshire Outfitters. Please call (413) 743-5900 for rates &amp; details.</p>
 <p>CANOE &amp; KAYAKING</p>	<p>Berkshire Outfitters provide canoe and kayak rentals with paddles and safety life jackets. Take the boat on your vehicle to area ponds, lakes or rivers. Shuttles available to Cheshire (Hoosic) Lakes. Delivery to other areas available.</p>	<p>Please call Berkshire Outfitters at (413) 743-5900 for rates &amp; details.</p>
 <p>FISHING</p>	<p>Fishing Licenses are required for all persons age 15 and older. Licenses may be purchased at your local city or town clerk's office, at sporting goods stores, or the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, 400 Hubbard Avenue, Pittsfield. For lists of local fishing spots, contact visit masswildlife.org or call (413) 447-9789</p>	<p>License Fees: Resident Fishing- \$27.50 Resident Minor Fishing (Age 15-17) -\$11.50 Resident Fishing Age (Age 65-69)- \$16.25 Resident Fishing (Age 70 or over, or paraplegic, blind, mentally retarded) FREE</p>
 <p>GYMNASTICS</p>	<p>Gymfest of the Berkshires offers open gym for students six and up (as well as adults). For more information contact Gymfest of the Berkshires at (413) 445-5689</p>	<p>\$10 per visit nonmember; \$5 per visit member</p>
 <p>ICE SKATING</p>	<p>The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Rink will open on June 29! Times and schedule are to be determined. For more information, call (413) 664-8185.</p>	<p>Admission: \$3.00 Children (under 18), \$4.00 Adults, \$1.00 Seniors Skate Rentals: \$3.00 per pair</p>
 <p>SOCCER</p>	<p>The Hoosac Tunnel Youth Soccer league is accepting registration for their fall league For more information, contact the Northern Berkshire YMCA at (413) 664-6529</p>	<p>\$45 - Non YMCA members, \$40 Basic Members, \$35 Complete Members</p>
 <p>SWIMMING</p>	<p>The Northern Berkshire YMCA BETTA swim team gives your child the opportunity to have a great time while learning self discipline, respect and commitment. For more information, contact the Northern Berkshire YMCA at (413) 664-6529</p>	<p>\$110</p>

The Adams Cheshire Savoy Youth Coalition has been recognized as an official "Promise Place" by the America's Promise Alliance for their hard work and dedication to ensuring that the youth of our community are granted the Five Promises. The coalition's goal is to ensure that all youth have access to: Caring Adults, Safe Places, A Healthy Start, Effective Education and Opportunities to help others.

So, what is a Promise Place? According to the America's Promise:



A Promise Place can be a school, community organization, church, business, or any other organization that provides all Five Promises to young people in their community. .

Promise Places inspire others to take action on behalf of youth by raising awareness of local outlets providing the Five Promises to young people. The America's Promise Alliance promotes and celebrates the Five Promises as a model for youth development.

Youth who receive four of the Five Promises are far more likely to be successful, twice as likely to get A's, twice as likely to avoid violence, and 40 percent more likely to volunteer. Receiving four of the Five Promises has the potential to level the playing field for youth across racial and economic lines.

This is a great achievement for the coalition, and it speaks volumes to the commitment of our community to grant the Five Promises to youth.

## Los Angeles Times

Special Thanks to Jenna Cece of Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol and Dianne Cutillo for forwarding this important Los Angeles Times article to us!

THE M.D.

### Parents: Kill a buzz, save a life

Failing to set no-use rules for alcohol and drugs, or assuming teens will be fine without guidance, is to risk tragedy.

By Valerie Ulene

June 8, 2009

My 14-year-old daughter insists that she's never experimented with alcohol or drugs. The statistics tell me that I'll be lucky if she can say that for very long – or at least say it and have it be true.

Drug use among teens is pervasive. Nearly 45% of teenagers in grades 9 through 12 drink alcohol, and more than 25% of them binge drink, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance. Further, 1 in 3 teens has smoked marijuana, and 1 in 5 has abused prescription medication, according to a recent survey by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America.

With numbers like these, parents of teens can almost be certain that their children won't make it to 21 without tossing back a cocktail, smoking a little pot or trying to get high on cough syrup.

Parents' role in preventing or at least delaying this type of experimentation has been clearly spelled out by the experts: Adults should not only talk openly with their children about the dangers of drugs and alcohol but also articulate and enforce very clear "no use" rules. Such rules have been shown to greatly reduce the likelihood that teens will use drugs and alcohol. (And the logical assumption is that they're then less likely to get wasted, be involved in an alcohol-related car accident, etc.)

However, many parents can't seem to bring themselves to impose such rules.

"I recommend that parents tell their children that they expect they will not drink until age 21 and that they'll never use drugs," says Dr. John Knight, director of the Center for Substance Abuse Research at Children's Hospital Boston. "If parents set the bar lower, they risk tragedy."

He recommends that parents not give in to the data.

"I know what the statistics on teen drug use are," Knight says. "But that doesn't mean that kids should be given permission to do it."

To some parents, no-use policies seem draconian and the mind-set behind them simplistic.

*(Continued on page 9)*

## Coalition News

They assume experimentation is inevitable and that no-use policies are doomed to fail. Further, some simply don't see drug use as a major issue.

"Currently, 61% of parents tried drugs or alcohol while they were kids," says Steve Pasierb, director of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. Those who never got into too much trouble because of such use often view their children's use as relatively harmless experimentation.

Adolescents need increasing amounts of freedom and independence, and buckling down on them feels counterintuitive to some parents. They take the position that teens learn best from their own mistakes and that strict rules won't teach them to make good decisions over the long haul.

Some parents fear that no-use rules will undermine their relationship with their child. They worry that their kids will stop communicating openly with them, making them less likely to reach out for help if they do get into a bind. For instance, rather than call Mom or Dad for a ride home after a beer or two, they fear, teens might try to drive themselves in an attempt to stay out of trouble.

Other parents are concerned about the way no-use rules will affect their kids' friendships with peers.

"There's a lot of concern about popularity," Knight says. "If parents don't let their kids drink, they think they won't be popular."

But no-use rules work. In a recent survey, the Partnership for a Drug-Free America asked teens about their use of drugs and alcohol on prom night. Among kids whose parents forbid them to drink or do drugs, only 16% did so anyway; among kids who received no clear directives, use topped 45%.

Preventing kids from drinking and taking drugs is critical. Compared with adults, teens are twice as likely to engage in risky binge drinking. Alcohol also has a different effect on their brains, making them particularly dangerous drunks. While adults tend to get sleepy after a drink or two, teens get revved up. They're far more likely than older people to climb behind the wheel of a car or take a chance performing a risky stunt.

"As many as 40% to 50% of deaths among teenagers are alcohol- and drug-related," Knight points out.

But perhaps the most compelling reason to keep kids drug-free is that it reduces their chances of addiction. The earlier teens start drinking or using drugs, the greater the likelihood that they'll develop an addictive disorder later in life. A child who starts drinking before age 15 has a 50% chance of becoming alcoholic; the risk falls to 9% for those who wait until they're 21.

Although teens want to be perceived as independent and in control of their lives, they're still looking for guidance and direction from their parents.

"They complain bitterly when you set limits but are actually grateful for them," Knight says.

That doesn't mean they won't slip up, and parents need to build some flexibility into the rules for when it happens. The Contract for Life developed by SADD serves as an excellent example of how this can be done. Children pledge their best effort to stay drug- and alcohol-free and promise that they'll call for help if they're ever in a situation that threatens their safety; at the same time, parents pledge to provide safe transportation home and promise to remain calm and understanding should a dangerous situation ever arise. (The Contract for Life is available online at [www.sadd.org/contract.htm](http://www.sadd.org/contract.htm).)

At this point, my daughter quietly abides by our household rules on drugs and alcohol. However, I have little doubt that there will come a time when she'll roll her eyes in disgust or storm out of the room when my husband and I revisit the topic. She's a teenager, and that's simply what she's supposed to do.

But we're her parents, and we have a job to do too. We need to keep her safe. She has a lifetime to enjoy wine, beer and spirits, but she has to survive her adolescence first.

Ulene is a board-certified specialist in preventive medicine practicing in Los Angeles. The M.D. appears once a month.

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## PITCHING IN FOR PROM

I received a great note via email from Gretchen Wells, the Facilitator of PAT (Parents as Teachers). I was so touched by it, that I had to pass it along:

On May 22nd, Jessica Camacho and the class of 2009 from Hoosac Valley High School enjoyed their prom at the Williams Inn in Williamstown. Jessica was not your "typical graduate", she is a teen mom. Knowing that the prom would be a financial burden for the graduate, HVHS donated 2 prom tickets. But that was just the beginning! Jessica was attending her weekly meeting for teen moms (PAT: Parent's as Teachers at St. John's Church in North Adams) when she mentioned prom and not being able to attend due to the lack of funds to rent a tux. A facilitator from the group asked if she could make phone calls to see if one could be donated, Jess agreed. The facilitator contacted Kim Oaks, owner of Shear Madness in North Adams. Kim took on the situation and ran with it. She had contact with Connie Grey, owner of KC Bridals in Florida, MA, and Jared Burdick, owner of Tux Express in Pittsfield, MA. Together they made Jess's night a success! Her hair, nails, and makeup, were all done for free at Shear Madness, her beautiful purple gown was donated by KC Bridals, and the tux looked sharp on her date donated by Tux Express. Thank you to our community for helping out in these tough economic times and showing that giving comes full circle.



## A HAPPY ENDING



It is every parent's worst nightmare. Their child does not come home from school one day. In our community last month, this happened when a teen ran away from her foster home. The foster mother contacted the coalition, and the community jumped into action. The child's photo was sent out to all media outlets and to all of our member agencies. There were literally hundreds of people in our community on the lookout for her.

Incredibly, she was found safe and unharmed within 48 hours. Now, she is getting the help she needs. Thank you to everyone who helped in finding her. On page 11 is an article from Focus Adolescent Services about what to do if a teen runs away from home. I sincerely hope that this is information that you will never need to use, but feel it is important to be aware of.



## WHAT TO DO IF YOUR TEEN RUNS AWAY FROM HOME FROM FOCUS ADOLESCENT SERVICES

Fifteen years ago, federal legislation was passed directing police to take reports immediately on any missing children under age 18, including runaways. Under the law, that information must be entered into the National Crime Information Center, a computerized database of victims and criminals maintained by the FBI. However, that doesn't mean police start to search immediately.

While police officers are required to take a report and assess every missing child case, only the children who are believed to be in danger or are under age 13 or mentally or physically disabled are automatically classified as "critical missing persons."

The Amber Alert is not intended for runaways or parental abductions except in life threatening situations and is intended only for the most serious, time-critical child abduction cases.

**Dial 911** as soon as you suspect your child has disappeared and demand that a police report be filed immediately.

- **Record the officer's name, badge number, telephone, fax and report numbers.** Ask who will follow up the initial investigation.
- After you call the police, **call the Sheriff's Department, state police, and police from adjoining jurisdictions.** File reports, record the officers' names, badge numbers, telephone, fax, and report numbers.
- **Check with your child's friends,** work, neighbors, relatives, or anyone else who may know of your child's whereabouts. Ask them to notify you if they hear from your child.
- **Go to your child's school,** speak with teachers and staff, and go through your child's lockers and desks.
- **Find out if any of your child's friends are missing.** They may be together.
- **Notify the [local FBI office](#)** and have your child's description entered into the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) computer. Obtain the nine-digit NCIC number for your child's case.
- **Notify border patrols.** Ask your local law enforcement agency or missing child agency to provide these numbers.
- **Check home computers** for leads such as online contacts and details of a planned meeting.
- **Call missing children helplines,** such as the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#) at 1-800-THE-LOST and [Operation Lookout](#) at 1-800-782-SEEK.
- **Call runaway hotlines** if you suspect your teen is a runaway, such as the [National Runaway Switchboard](#) at 1-800-621-4000.
- **Notify [your state's missing children information clearing-house](#)** and other helping organizations.
- **Keep a record** of everyone you contact, including date and time, name of person, organization, phone number, and information received.
- **Keep your home phone staffed and record conversations.** This may be the only way your child knows how to reach you.
- **Close the door to your child's room** and don't touch anything in there.
- **Find pictures of your child** to use in the search. Choose photographs that are recent and realistic.
- **Check telephone bills** for the past few months for any unfamiliar long distance calls.
- **Cooperate** fully with the police and the media.
- **Contact runaway shelters** in your area and in nearby areas and states. Give them your child's photograph. If your teen gives an incorrect name and age, it will help identify him/her.
- **Contact hospitals, abortion clinics, drug treatment centers, and counseling services** in your area.
- **Leave flyers** at youth hangouts, malls, and recreation centers. You can [create, display, and print a Missing Person Flyer](#) from your computer.
- **Offer a reward.** The [Carol Sund / Carrington Memorial Reward Foundation](#) provides Missing Person-Criminal Apprehension Rewards of up to \$10,000.
- **Hire a private investigator.**

## Summer Camps!

There are also over 50 different summer camp options for youth in the Berkshires! From half-day programs, to programs that last all summer long—you'll find the option that best suits your family on the ACS Youth Coalition website. Just visit [www.acsyouth.org](http://www.acsyouth.org) and click on "Summer Fun" Here is a list of the different places where you can find a camp for your child.

Belvoir Terrace at (413) 637-0555  
 Berkshire Community College at (413) 236-2122 Berkshire Country  
 Day School at (413) 243-2686  
 Berkshire Humane Society at (413) 447-7878 ext. 29  
 Berkshire Museum at (413) 443-7171, ext. 13  
 Berkshire Music School at (413) 442-1411  
 Berkshire South Regional Community Center at (413) 528-2810  
 Berkshire West at (413) 499-4600  
 Boys & Girls Club at (413) 448-8258  
 Camp Ashmere at (413) 655-2650.  
 Camp Danbee at (413) 655-8115  
 Camp Emerson at (800) 782-3395  
 Camp Half Moon at (413) 528-0940  
 Camp Lenox at (413) 243-2223  
 Camp Mah-Kee-Nac at (800) 753-9118



Camp Mohawk at (413) 499-3039  
 Camp Taconic at (413) 655-2717  
 Camp Watitoh at (413) 623-8951  
 Camp Winadu at 800-494-6238.  
 Christian Youth Center at (413) 445-5496.  
 Clark Art Institute (413) 458-0524.  
 Girl Scouts of Central and Western Mass. at (413) 584-2602  
 Gymfest of the Berkshires at (413) 445-5689  
 Montessori School of the Berkshires at (413) 637-3662  
 Northern Berkshire Creative Arts at 413 663 8338  
 Northern Berkshire YMCA at (413) 664-6529  
 Pleasant Valley Sanctuary at (413) 637-0320.  
 Undermountain Farm at (413) 637-3365  
 Williamstown Youth Center at (413) 458-5925

**Our member agencies are dedicated to the youth of Adams, Cheshire and Savoy. The Coalition's mission is to ensure that all youth in Adams, Cheshire and Savoy have the resources they need to live healthy, happy, productive lives.**

Adams Ambulance Service Inc  
 Adams Cheshire Savoy Youth  
 Coalition  
 Adams Cheshire Savoy Youth  
 Soccer  
 Adams Free Library  
 Adams Little League  
 Adams Memorial Middle  
 School  
 Adams Police Athletic League  
 Adams T-Ball League  
 Adams Turners Gymnastics  
 Adams/Cheshire Head Start  
 Bascom Lodge  
 Berkshire Art and Technology  
 Public Charter School  
 Berkshire Coalition to Prevent  
 Teen Pregnancy  
 Berkshire Dance Theatre, Inc.  
 Berkshire Family and  
 Individual Resources  
 Berkshire Food Project  
 Berkshire Humane Society  
 Berkshire Music School  
 Berkshire North WIC  
 Berkshire Violence Prevention  
 Center  
 BerkshireWorks One-Stop  
 Career Centers  
 Big Brothers Big Sisters

Boy Scouts, Troop 38  
 Cheshire Elementary School  
 Cheshire Parent-Teacher  
 Group  
 Cheshire United Methodist  
 Church  
 Child Care of the Berkshires  
 Community Consulting  
 Services  
 Community Families and  
 Youth Program  
 Counseling Center in the  
 Berkshires  
 CT Plunkett Elementary  
 Parent Teacher Group  
 Cub Scout Pack 38  
 Department of Conservation  
 and Recreation  
 Department of Social  
 Services  
 Ecu-Health Care  
 Elizabeth Freeman Center  
 Family Life Support Center  
 First Congregational Church  
 Friends of The Glen  
 Girl Scouts of Western  
 Massachusetts  
 Girls Incorporated of the  
 Berkshires  
 Gym Fest of the Berkshires

Hoosac Valley High School  
 Student Council  
 Hoosac Valley Leo Club  
 Mass MoCA  
 MediaX Productions  
 Museum of Natural History  
 North Adams Historical  
 Society  
 Northern Berkshire  
 Community Coalition  
 Northern Berkshire  
 Community Partnership for  
 Children  
 Northern Berkshire Creative  
 Arts  
 Northern Berkshire Early  
 Intervention  
 Northern Berkshire Family  
 Net  
 Northern Berkshire Get Fit  
 Program  
 Northern Berkshire Habitat  
 for Humanity  
 Northern Berkshire  
 Neighbors  
 Northern Berkshire Toy  
 Library  
 Office for Lifelong Learning  
 REACH Community Health  
 Foundation

Saint Stanislaus Koskta  
 School  
 Savoy Elementary School  
 The Brien Center  
 The Center for Service and  
 Citizenship  
 Transportation Association of  
 Northern Berkshire  
 Twenty-First Century After School  
 Program  
 U Mass 4-H  
 Uechi Rye Karate Do  
 Unity NBCC  
 Vietnam Veterans Memorial  
 Skating Rink  
 Williamstown Youth Center  
 Youth Center Inc



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