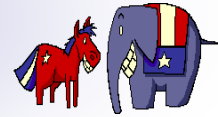


Wholly Healthy



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Happy Thanksgiving

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SMOKING: A MATTER OF LIFE AND BREATH

The first Surgeon General's report on smoking and health was published in 1964. Since then 27 more reports for the Surgeon General on tobacco use written by leading scientists have found that tobacco causes people to become sick, disabled, or to die.

It is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States.

Parents are key to prevention! If you smoke, it's time to quit. Until you quit, don't smoke or handle tobacco products in front of your family or friends. Explain to your children it's a bad habit you hope to break.

Take advantage of teachable moments regarding tobacco and its dangers.

Wellness Council

- Parents, vaccinate your children against the seasonal and H1N1 flu! It's not too late!
- In December, the S.O.S. (suicide prevention program) will be presented to gr.9. Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among young

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO.....

- Make sure your children understand that it is NOT ok to experiment with tobacco products
- Communicate short-term as well as long-term health consequences of using tobacco, such as yellow teeth, bad breath, wrinkles, shortness of breath, and cancer.
- Set a good example. Children with parents who smoke are at higher risk of becoming smokers themselves.
- Don't be afraid to approach any family member or friend about quitting. Your encouragement shows you care.

FLU PREVENTION

The best way to prevent *flu* is to get vaccinated. Because the flu virus changes, it is important to get newly vaccinated **every year**. This season is unique because you could be exposed to 2 different viruses: the *seasonal flu* and the *H1N1 (swine) flu*. This **2009 H1N1 flu** is very contagious and expected to infect even more people than the *seasonal flu*. For reasons unclear, school-aged individuals (5yrs-18yrs) have been primarily affected by *H1N1*, (accounting for 63% of the confirmed cases in Massachusetts.) Read more on the **FLU** on page 2!!!

November is.....
TOBACCO
AWARENESS
MONTH

More on the FLU...

- At this time, MA is experiencing a shortage of seasonal flu vaccine. The best way to stay informed about it's availability is through your health-care provider, and by visiting: <http://flu.masspro.org> where you'll find locations offering flu vaccines, searchable by your zip code.
- The H1N1 vaccine is available **now** to pediatricians. Your children fall into one of the *priority groups* (6 mos.- 24 yrs) for the vaccine. Please call your daughter's MD today.
- The H1N1 is different from the seasonal flu because:
 - * different viruses/different vaccine
 - * pregnant women and children are more susceptible to H1N1 and may experience more serious complications.

The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated, wash hands often and well, practice cough etiquette, stay away from people who are sick, and stay home when you are sick. Keep students home for T>100.3* accompanied with a cough OR sore throat. Students may return to school when fever free for 24 hrs without the use of fever-reducing meds,

S.O.S. : Signs of Suicide

Our S.O.S. suicide prevention program will be presented to all grade 9 students this fall. Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among young people 15 to 24. In response to these alarming statistics, *Screening for Mental Health* developed this program for high school students.

The goals of the program are to:

- Help teens understand the important connection between undiagnosed, untreated depression or other mental illness and suicide.
- Teach teens the Signs of Suicide.
- Outline action steps for dealing with these signs as a mental health emergency.
- Encourage students to consult with a school professional or other responsible adult if they are concerned about themselves or a friend.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE LAW

Each family has received a packet of medical forms to be completed. To date, we have not received the completed forms from all families. They are:

- **Updated YEARLY Physical Exam with Immunization Record.** This applies to **all** students, not just those participating in sports. However, students will be exempt from sports without these requirements.
- **Authorization form for Tylenol/Ibuprofen** State law requires the signature of your daughter's **physician** on these forms. Unfortunately I have received many forms with just the parent's signature. Many girls are receiving the HPV vaccine. This is a perfect opportunity to have your MD sign this form. I really don't like to deny a student medication when needed!
- **Emergency Contact Numbers** The emergency contact form requests contact information in the event we cannot reach either parent. Most girls have your numbers programmed into their cell phones and cannot recall them when asked. **Please** take a moment to ensure we have current phone numbers for you. We need to be able to contact you in a timely fashion to keep your daughters safe at all times. Please call, write or email me with any changes or updates.

* * *

The program is designed to make the action step—**ACT**—as instinctual as the Heimlich Maneuver. **ACT** stands for **A**cknowledge, **C**are and **T**ell.

The program is presented in two class periods in conjunction with Theology and the value of every life is stressed. We also open up avenues for communication on this extremely important topic and ask you do the same at home.

ACT

Acknowledge the signs of suicide and take them seriously.

Care about yourself or friend.

Tell a responsible adult.