



From Dayna's Desk...

Happy Spring! I was fortunate to escape the gray skies of Vermont for a bit, having gone to visit a friend in New Orleans during Jazz Festival. While the weather there was gorgeous and the music was fantastic, I couldn't help thinking, "This city is in serious need of some substance abuse prevention!" (They believe in "cocktail YEAR" not "cocktail HOUR"!)

But it was also a great example of the power behind community norms—that together as families, schools, and towns, we set the tone (and expectations) around substance abuse and other risky behaviors.

Speaking of risky behaviors, as the warmer weather approaches, we tend to see a spike in teen parties that involve alcohol. I want to personally encourage all adults reading this to set a norm of no use for their children. Not only are there countless potential dangers that can arise (falls, alcohol poisoning, assault to name a few), but there are also serious liability issues around hosting parties with alcohol. (Visit our website for more info!)

As always, please feel free to contact me at 383-1211 or dscott@cssu.org if you want to chat.

Thanks and be well,

Dayna Scott, Coordinator & Editor



Broken Together

What comes to mind when you hear the word "addict"? If you are like many people, you picture someone in ragged clothes, not particularly clean, wandering the streets and begging for quarters. But this is the big myth around addiction—that it only happens to so-called "down and out" people, not people like you or me.

In his book *Broken*, William Cope Moyers explores the many myths of addiction first-hand with gritty realism. The fact that the book was written by the son of a prominent journalist, someone showered with love and opportunity while growing up, is a potent reminder that addiction affects all walks of life, all cross sections of the community with no regard to race, ethnicity and socio-economics.

Misconceptions about addiction abound. In our society we use the term freely--"I'm addicted to Facebook" or "Have you tried the chocolate mousse? It's so addictive!" **In actuality, addiction is a diagnosable, progressive disease that kills people.** In America alone there are 23.2 million people suffering from addiction, yet only a fraction who seek help through treatment. Addiction is based on criteria from the DSM-IV and the World Health Organization. The cornerstones of the disease are loss of control over use, tolerance—or needing more of the substance to get the same desired effect, and

withdrawal—the physical and/or psychological effects that occur when someone stops using.

My family didn't see the addiction and neither did my friends, my pastor, my co-workers or my therapists because my face wasn't anything like the face of the stereotypical drug addict...I had a job, a car, a home, a wife. I paid taxes, helped the needy, I volunteered at church. How could I be an alcoholic and a drug addict?" (Broken, p. 342.)

The biggest barrier to treating addiction is the stigma associated with the disease. *"The stigma envelops all who are suffering (including family members) in secrecy, silence and shame."* (p. 345.) Many people do not understand addiction and mistakenly believe it is a question of willpower or strength of character. Can you imagine anyone saying that about other chronic illnesses such as diabetes or asthma? **The good news is that addiction IS treatable.** Usually this is a long-term process that involves multiple interventions and regular monitoring—and often relapse. Combinations of behavioral therapies, medications, and support groups such as AA or NA are the most effective treatment.

As William Cope Moyers says, *"We are all broken and the only 'cure' for our brokenness is to be broken together."* (p. 348)



“Reeling” In Smokers

How do Big Tobacco companies recruit new customers? Easy—they “reel” them in by making smoking look glamorous and fun in the movies! Did you know that 4 out of 5 movies show somebody smoking? Did you realize that teens who see smoking in the movies are almost three times more likely to start smoking? Media does have an influence, whether teens realize it or not. That’s why our local VKAT groups (Vermont Kids Against Tobacco) are working hard to educate people about smoking in the movies. Middle school youth in Charlotte, Hinesburg, Shelburne and Williston are participating in the statewide campaign to help their peers think critically about what they see on the screen and how it can influence their decisions. For more information, please visit www.ovx.org or www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu.



A Web of Support

To grow up healthy and happy, children need to be surrounded by a sustained network of adults—in addition to their parents—who choose to know, support, guide and affirm them in their development! But this requires that every adult cultivate on-going, meaningful relationships with children in their lives. Over time, hundreds of small gestures—knowing neighborhood kids’ names, thanking youth for doing nice things—are woven into a web of support for young people. This work is at the center of helping foster “developmental assets” in youth. To learn more about this, visit <http://search-institute.org>.



JUST ASK JEN

*Dear Jen, Lately I’ve been hearing the phrase “binge drinking” and was wondering exactly what that is. I know that some teens drink, but many of them seem to have it under control. I realize that underage drinking is illegal but I drank on occasion when I was a teenager and never had a problem. Should I be concerned?
Sincerely, Questioning Parent*

Dear Questioning Parent,

As one prevention slogan says, “Underage drinking is not just a MINOR problem!” **There are an estimated three million young people, under the age of 21, who fit the diagnostic criteria for alcoholism.** Several million more have serious drinking problems that affect their lives in negative ways. Annually, there are approximately 5,000 young people whose deaths are closely linked with alcohol use. So, yes, there is cause for concern!

When I ask kids what “binge” drinking means, the most common response is “drinking to the point of acting really, really stupid.” However, this is not the technical—or accurate—definition! Binge drinking is defined for men as having five or more drinks in a row in a few hours and for women as having four or more drinks in a row in a few hours. Unfortunately, this behavior is far too prevalent among youth. In the US, about 90% of the alcohol consumed by those under twenty-one is in the form of binge drinking, with the express purpose of getting “drunk.” More locally, according to the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 38% of all Vermont 12th graders report binge drinking in the past thirty

days. This number is even higher for our District, where 43% of CSSU 12th graders report binge drinking in the past 30 days.

The next point is very important so I’ll say it in bold: **Any alcohol use for those under the age of 21 can be dangerous.** Why? Because decades of research say so. We know that someone who begins using alcohol in their early teens is five times more likely to become dependent than someone who begins later in life. We also know that the human brain does not fully develop until the mid- 20’s, and for an undeveloped brain, alcohol can cause problems with memory, impulse control and learning.

So what are the risks associated with binge drinking? According to recent studies, compared to non-drinkers, teen binge drinkers are:

- * 11 times more likely to ride with a driver who had been drinking alcohol in the past 30 days
- * 4 times more likely to be in a physical fight in the past 12 months
- * Nearly 4 times more likely to have ever been raped or subjected to dating violence in the past 12 months
- * 4 times more likely to have attempted suicide during the past 12 months
- * More than 5 times more likely to be sexually active during the past 3 months.

I urge parents to talk their children about the dangers associated with binge drinking. For more information, you can contact me at jbickel-hayes@cvuhs.org.

Happy Springtime! Jen





CY Youth "All-Stars"



Name: *Konnor Fleming*
Grade: *10*
Hometown: *Charlotte*
Years in CY: *3ish?*

"Why do you choose to be drug-free?" For a variety of reasons. First off, it's completely senseless. There is, and I really do mean this, no possible up side to doing those kinds of things. Also, I've got some family history that has placed an extremely large bias against the use of those kinds of things.

"What stresses you out most in life?" I think the accumulation of things on my schedule. Recently, I had to balance drama and baseball and school and just life in general, so that was extremely difficult. But I found that I was able to get through it by just remembering all the good people I know in my life and all the people that I have to turn to...I'd say I manage that stress by keeping in touch with people...that, and Guitar Hero.

If you could choose one superpower what would it be and why? (One MORE superpower that is. It's

obvious that I already have so many...) it would be the power of flight. I would want to be able to fly because 1.) I wouldn't have to worry about getting my stupid old license, 2.) I could go just about anywhere that I want, and 3.) It's flipping awesome!

"Someone who has been very influential in your life?" My dada, Rahn. He's been there quite literally from the very beginning, and I don't think it's possible to express just how grateful I am for everything that he has done for me...He's someone I know I can always count on, and someone who is consistently consistent (if that makes sense?!) I'm not going to lie—he's a great guy.

"A dream or goal in life?" To be happy with whatever it is that I end up doing. Just as simple as that.



Name: *Starr Whitney*
Grade: *9*
Hometown: *Charlotte*
Years in CY: *1*

"First CY sponsored activity that you participated in?" The overnight LEAD

retreat in 2008—it was fun, entertaining, met a lot of people!

"Why you choose to be drug-free?" 'Cause i want to have a long, healthy life!

"What stresses you out most and how do you manage stress in your life?" Grades really stress me out. I listen to music whenever I feel stressed.

"If you could choose one superpower what would it be and why?" I would want the power of invisibility— so when I get embarrassed I can just turn myself invisible!

What you get out of being involved with CY? Friends and food, lol!

A challenge you've experienced but overcome? The death of my grandfather on New Years Eve!

A dream or goal in life? To live a long, happy life...

Catch 'em being good! To nominate a student for our CY Youth All-Stars, please e-mail Dayna at dscott@cssu.org or call 383-1211.

A Sobering Experience for CVU Students

There were sirens, ambulances, fire trucks, even a trauma center helicopter! The week before CVU's prom, emergency services personnel from Shelburne, Hinesburg, Williston and Charlotte came together to present a Mock DWI Crash for 600+ juniors and seniors at CVU High School. Working in conjunction with students from CY's LEAD program, firefighters, EMT's and police officers staged a simulated crash designed to help students understand the far-reaching impact of underage



Student actors as crash victims.

drinking and driving under the influence. Afterwards students heard from Dan Melo, DMD, who was hit head-on by an impaired driver last fall. His message? This was 100% preventable! The event was part of National Alcohol Awareness Month and included many activities to promote safety. Student Kathleen Leach remarked, "I think the intensity and images of the crash will stay in students' minds and hopefully encourage them to make good decisions!"



Transitions



Parents



Links



www.seewhy.info

Community Calendar of Events

May and June

- * **Prevention Forum at the Vermont Statehouse:** **Wednesday, May 13th from 10 am to noon.** This event, sponsored by prevention coalitions across the state, will promote discussion of policies to reduce underage and binge drinking. For more information, e-mail Anne O'Sullivan at annieo3@myfairpoint.net.
- * **ARTfully Engaging Communities in Prevention Training:** **June 8th from 9 am to 4 pm at the Hampton Inn in Colchester.** Visit www.healthandlearning.org to learn more this training co-led by CY and the Flynn Center.
- * **CY Outstanding Leadership In Prevention Awards for 8th—12th graders:** To find out which 20 students will be honored for helping promote substance abuse prevention in their school, visit www.seewhy.info!

Looking Ahead

- * **CVU Summer Camp for Incoming 9th Graders:** This is a must-do experience for any entering 9th grader planning to go to CVU next year. Sign up for one or both sessions beginning on July 6th. For more information, contact Duncan at 482-7104 or e-mail Duncan@cvuhs.org
- * **"Staying Connected with Your Teen—Abridged Version:** Want some practical tips to improve your parenting skills? CY is offering a 3-week evening program for parents of 12 to 17 year-olds beginning Tuesday, July 7th from 6 to 8 pm at CVU High School. For details or to register, call Jen Bickel-Hayes at 482-6951 or e-mail Jbickelhayes@cvuhs.org.

Change your thoughts and you change your world!
Norman Vincent Peale.

I Care About Young People!

I would like to join—or renew membership with—CY. Please accept my tax-deductible 2009 contribution at the following level:

- \$100** will support our peer prevention and leadership activities, including the student-initiated See Why Improv Troupe.
- \$50** will support our Student Assistance Program which serves young people affected by their own or someone else's drug use.
- \$25** will support parent education and teacher trainings across the Chittenden South District.
- Larger contributions** will allow us to serve more people through programs like the CY Mentoring Program & ACCESS to CVU.
- I would like to donate my time or services**—as a chaperone for drug-free activities, by offering food or prizes for retreats, etc. Specify your interest below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

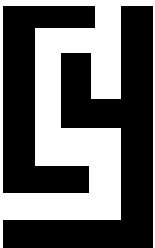
Phone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Would you like information on **becoming a mentor for a child** in our schools? ___ Yes ___ Not at this time

___ I would like to **nominate a volunteer to be honored at Aw Shucks Night**. This is someone from a CSSU town who has donated significant time helping youth or families. List name (s) here:

Please make checks payable to "CSSU" and mail to CY, 5420 Shelburne Rd., #300, Shelburne, VT 05482, ATTN: CY



Chittenden South S.U.
CY-Connecting Youth
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Shelburne, VT 05482

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