

Courage: Fuel for Next Steps

by Barbara J. Green, Ph.D., YHC Medical Director

As we approach the end of the school year I want to introduce the notion of Courage: Courage for Next Steps. With endings come new beginnings and opportunity. However, as we move forward with the next steps we let go of what has been familiar, routine, and automatic. As we do so we may find ourselves in foreign and uncharted territory not just physically but emotionally, intellectually, with personal relationships and supports.

Seniors in High School who will be graduating shortly. They will be taking next steps whether to college, training school or work. The day to day of family life and structure will be soon replaced with the new world of dorm life, college classes, and freedoms not previously known. Everything will be new and therefore presents challenges across virtually every dimension of living.

Courage is a concept often overlooked as we imbue qualities to our teens for healthy living and navigating next steps.

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Tip for Better Living:

“The path from dreams to success does exist. May you have the vision to find it, the courage to get on to it, and the perseverance to follow it.”

Kalpana Chawla

1962-2003

American astronaut, engineer

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Youth Health Connection Meetings and Events:

Summer YHC Newsletter Editions

will be published on:

July 18th, August 8th and August 29th.

**Questions for YHC over the
summer? Contact:**

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Marijuana Policy in MA a Statement of Concern

In May 2019 “*A Statement of Concern on Marijuana Policy in Massachusetts*” was written by Pediatricians, Mental Health and Addiction Clinicians and Scientists in the Commonwealth and published by the Massachusetts Prevention Alliance.

Within the report is information on:

- Recent scientific findings.
- A request for action using a Public Health Framework.
- A summary of concerns on the health and safety impact for communities and children.
- A list of science-informed recommendations.

To read the full 14 pages of content *Marijuana Policy in MA-May 2019* visit: <http://bit.ly/2JxvqNk>

To learn more about the Massachusetts Prevention Alliance visit: <http://bit.ly/2Kxih6X> ■



Family Summer Safety

The sun is finally out. Let's repeat that “the sun is finally out!” We have all survived a very wet, damp and cool spring this year and many of us wondered if the sun would shine again. Now, that it is out and the air temperatures are beginning to rise, it is a great time for a few family summer safety reminders:

Water Safety: We live in an area with close proximity to lots of water options-the ocean, rivers, lakes/ponds, and pools. This means many families will spend time on or in the water.

- For those boating, kayaking, canoeing or using stand-up paddle boards a reminder to always use approved personal floatation devices (PFD). (for information on how to choose an appropriate PFD by the U.S. Coast Guard visit: <http://bit.ly/2JSd4H2>)
- Drowning remains a leading cause of death in children ages 1-4 years old-make sure to always supervise children when they are near water. A reminder that drowning does not in fact, look like the splashing and noise typified in movies and television, to learn more check out this article link from Slate “Drowning Doesn’t Look Like Drowning” by Mario Vittone: <http://bit.ly/2WciUOr>

Sun Safety: Every time any of us are out and about in the sun we should be thinking of sun safety and prevention of melanoma by applying sunscreen. Find out more information and resources on the Children’s Melanoma Prevention Foundation page under “What We Do-Education” tab.

For more **general summer safety information** and resources visit the CDC at: <http://bit.ly/2Xr8see> .

For more information from the **Children’s Melanoma Prevention Foundation** visit: <http://bit.ly/2JYm7GC>.

To learn more about the “Slip, Slap, Slop, Wrap,” safety campaign visit: <http://bit.ly/2WgRJIZ> .

To watch the **Holderness Family video**-“Mimic Mommy” on applying sunscreen visit: <http://bit.ly/2XsXxk2> ■

Courage: Fuel for Next Steps (*continued*)

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It does take courage to step out into the unknown. But courage does not mean reckless. Courage means believing, trusting in learning, thinking before acting, breathing, connecting with family and friends, baby steps, one step at a time, evaluating and then taking next steps. Courage means knowing that we learn from “skinned knees”, by trying the new, by exploring, by embracing the unfamiliar.

As adults who care and have held our youth close as they have moved forward one year at a time, it is now our job to help them know that they can take next steps, just as they once took first steps, literally. We were there to hold them when they fell. We will be behind the scenes now to help them one new baby step at a time, with courage in their souls to grow, have adventure, learn, satisfy curiosity and create memories that will fuel them each moment. ■

Curriculum Resource-Kindness & Caring

“Beyond Our Neighbors: A Curriculum for Expanding Empathy and Compassion to “Others” created by DGT™ (Doing Good Together) and Making Caring Common, a project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

The curriculum is available as a free download and each lesson includes discussion guides, group activities designed to inspire kindness and take-home activities to inspire children to lead related projects with their families. (*from the website*)

For more information and to access the 57-page Curriculum download visit: <http://bit.ly/2vvkuXB> ■



Community Documentary Screening-Opioid Crisis

Marshfield's Community Television (MCTV) has produced a documentary, by filmmaker Desmond O'Neill, about the opioid crisis and the local reaction to it.

On Tuesday, June 25, 2019, **Marshfield FACTS** is hosting a screening and discussion of this documentary at The Ventress Memorial Library, 15 Library Plaza, Marshfield.

The program will run:

6:30-7 PM: Documentary screening

7-7:45 PM: Q & A

All are welcome to attend and view the 30 minute documentary and engage in a discussion with Plymouth County District Attorney Tim Cruz, Marshfield Police Chief Phil Tavares, Marshfield Fire Chief Bill Hocking, Marshfield Selectman Mike Bradley, Dr. Joe Shrand (all interviewed in the film) and filmmaker Desmond O'Neill.

Unable to attend on June 25th, however interested in the video? Visit: <http://bit.ly/316bSVV>

To learn more about the signs and symptoms of an overdose and MA Good Samaritan Law visit: <http://bit.ly/2WaYewX> ■

A Reminder as We Conclude the Year

As we come to the conclusion of the 2018-2019 Youth Health Connection academic year in which our theme was *“Focus on Foundations: Healthy Youth and Communities,”* we wanted to share a reminder of some of the important content shared by our presenters during the year.

At our Annual Meeting in December 2018 we had a presentation by Nassir Ghaemi MD, MPH, Professor of Psychiatry, Tufts Medical Center when he presented on “Digital Depression.” Dr. Ghaemi spoke about the impacts of social media on mental health and sleep in teens and young adults and offered tips for parents/guardians.

At the South Shore FACTS meeting in January Cheryl Lang MPH, Education Coordinator of the MA/RI Poison Control Center shared information types of calls received by the Center. Changes in calls since marijuana’s availability in the home for those with medical marijuana cards and as retail stores began opening in the Commonwealth.

In April we hosted Judith Owens, MD, MPH; Director of the Center for Pediatric Sleep Disorders at Children’s Hospital Boston. Dr. Owens overviewed the importance of late start school days for middle and high school students as well as sleep hygiene practices for everyone to benefit our overall health.

Watch the video with **Dr. Ghaemi:** <http://bit.ly/2Ax8Le7>

Check out related content from CommonSense Media *“The New Normal: Parents, Teens, Screens & Sleep in the U.S.”:*
<http://bit.ly/2wCpgmQ>

In the Wall Street Journal *“Your Child’s Brain on Video Games,”* is eye-opening: <https://on.wsj.com/2ERhlGK>

Watch the video with MA RI **Poison Control** visit:
<http://bit.ly/2HTwUzB>

Hear tips from **Dr. Owens** on Teen Sleep visit:
<http://bit.ly/31aHHgy> ■

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Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore Health dedicated to the positive mental health and physical well-being of youth. Our programs collaborate with schools, families and community providers to help young people deal with the various challenges they face and the decisions they must make as they grow and mature. By combining efforts, we can ensure that local youth have access to the health-related knowledge, skills and resources they need to make healthy decisions throughout their lifetime. Youth Health Connection: Builds and Sustains Community Connections through Healthy Dialogue and Sharing Knowledge to Keep Our Youth Safe Today and Moving Forward.

To subscribe please visit:
<http://bit.ly/2CJppKj>

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