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Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

Coalition news

An update from

nbCC

April 2023, Volume XXXVII, Number 10

March Youth Led Forum: Growing Up in North Berkshire



▲Above: The members of the Youth Health Collaborative wrap up their presentation with a lively Q & A session with the forum attendees.

The 2022-23 Youth Health Collaborative group was faced with a tall task for this year's youth-led forum: respond to the question "What is it like growing up in North Berkshire County?". The question was an amalgamation of several of the responses from the community needs assessment process, resulting from many community members' desire to have a better understanding of the challenges facing young people, and the opportunities that are available to them. The opportunity to provide an insight into the lives of young people was not lost on this group.

The process of planning this forum took the form of in-depth and heartfelt conversations for much of the early stages. The 8 members of the group took on the task of highlighting the unique aspects of being young here and now, and discussed what exactly that means to them in detail. The group spent many Thursday evenings examining their lives, their communities, and their roles within each. What followed was an inspiring combination of challenging each other, sharing vulnerable insights into their lives, and really examining what it means to be growing up in the North Berkshires.

Over the course of these conversations, several themes began to emerge. The first was

that there are divides, both real and perceived, that separate community members along a variety of lines. These divides can take the form of socio-economic standing, race, religion, or even geographic location. As conversations continued, it became clear that these divides, and the narratives that surround them, impact young people's lives in a variety of ways. The group then focused on schooling, activities and opportunities available to young people, and the impact of relationships with adults. In this way, they hoped to highlight some of the most impactful and important elements of their lives, and the lives of their peers.

The presentation portion of the evening provided the community members in attendance with a lot to consider as they listened. The group then took the opportunity to open up the room to dialogue and discussion, and those in attendance asked pointed and thoughtful questions. The resulting exchange was, in many ways, an example of the powerful impact intergenerational dialogues can have.

The group shared some simple yet powerful pieces of wisdom for the audience members, centered mostly around listening and mutual respect. Both of those things were very much on display as the Health Collaborative groups

thoughtfully responded to the questions posed. Many members of the group, and undoubtedly many of the community members in attendance, left feeling buoyed and optimistic by the respect and curiosity on display.

One of many positive outcomes of the forum was the exchange of ideas between community members and young people in attendance. Many of the gathered audience members expressed a desire to involve young people in decision making processes, many of them in very tangible terms. Information was exchanged and plans were made for future endeavors to involve young people in the process of shaping programs and projects throughout the area.

For more information about the forum, the Youth Health Collaborative, or to share information with the group about upcoming opportunities for youth involvement, you can contact Tim Shiebler at 413-663-7588, or email him at tshiebler@nbccoalition.org.

—Tim Shiebler, Youth Development Coordinator



▲Above: Carly Garofano from the Berkshire County D.A.'s Office stands with Youth Development Coordinator, Tim Shiebler and Executive Director, Amber Besaw.



Northern Berkshire Community Coalition
Community Empowerment • Prevention & Wellness

Our Mission

"Empowering the Northern Berkshire region to enhance the quality of life through our efforts at connecting, convening, and supporting all facets of the community."

In pursuit of this mission, we place particular emphasis on the following:

- Strengthening neighborhoods and community life
- Preventing alcohol/substance abuse and supporting recovery
- Promoting health and wellness
- Helping families to be strong and resilient
- Supporting positive youth development
- Building bridges between residents and service agencies

Coalition Supporters

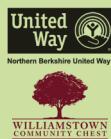
Public Sources

- MA Dept. of Children & Families/EOHHS
- MA Cultural Council
- MA Department of Public Health
- MA Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Addiction Services
- Mass Service Alliance

Local Support

- Contributions from our many individual supporters

The Coalition is a member agency of the Northern Berkshire United Way and the Williamstown Community Chest.



To submit announcements to the Coalition E-zine:

The *Coalition E-zine* is a weekly e-blast, published every Thursday, with news and announcements from Northern Berkshire agencies and organizations. Submissions must be received by 9:00 am Tuesday morning to be considered for inclusion in that week's issue. All submissions are subject to editing and should be 50 words or less. All events related to Northern Berkshire community public health will be considered for publication. Banner ads are available. For more information, please call 413-663-7588, or to submit an announcement, please email phzine@nbccoalition.org.

Thanks Friends! You've Made a Positive

Since its inception, nbCC has been a crucial link between those in need Northern Berkshire residents the tools needed to improve their lives and financial contribution to the Coalition, but we want you to know that no

The 2022-23 Friends of the Coalition (as of March 24, 2023)

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Susan Smith
Stephen & Elizabeth St. Clair
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Jonathan Swartz
Curt Wells & Sarah Jacobson
Herb Wilkinson
Bill & Adrienne Wootters

ASSOCIATES

John & Jane Allen
Alfred Bedini Jr.

Impact Right in Your Own Community!

and those who can help. With your assistance, we can continue to provide their neighborhoods. We understand that not everyone is able to make a amount is too small to be helpful. Thanks for all you do to support nbCC!

Thomas & Jennifer Bernard
 Linda Biros
 Ralph Bradburn & Zelda Stern
 Anne Crider
 Mary Ellen Czerniak
 Richard Davis
 Gerald & Mary Jane Desmarais
 Mary Katherine Eade
 David & Martha Elpern
 Robert Fachini
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 Gary & Sandra Tatro
 Kurt Tauber
 Gracie Vincent
 Douglas & Dorothy Wandrei
 James Wolfe
 Marcia Wright
 Susan Zoltek

IN MEMORY OF

Steve Green & Sue Walker in memory of John
 Olver

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE COALITION?

Contributions can be mailed to:

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

**61 Main Street, Suite 218
 North Adams, MA 01247**

Champion: \$5,000 & above	Booster: \$100 – \$249
Advocate: \$2,500 – \$4,999	Associate: \$50 – \$99
Leader: \$1,000 – \$2,499	Supporter: \$1 – \$49
Guardian: \$500 – \$999	
Benefactor: \$250 – \$499	

Donations can also be made online: nbccoalition.org

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition Board of Directors Fiscal Year 2023

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MARISSA PARKER
 Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

You're Invited!

Berkshire Babypalooza 2023

Saturday April 15, 2023
11AM to 2PM
Greylock Works
North Adams

Join us for fun, games and door prizes!

Local Agencies & Vendors will be on hand to answer questions about pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, baby safety, family planning and more!

Win door prizes by visiting information booths and attending educational sessions.

The first 250 families will receive a gift bag

This event is being presented by Berkshire Area Health Education Center's Tobacco Free Community Partnership Program and the Berkshire Babypalooza 2023 Planning Committee Members from, Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, North Adams Public Schools, Berkshire Bounty, WIC and Childcare of the Berkshires.

SAT. **APRIL 29TH** **11AM-3PM**

9TH ANNUAL LGBTQAI+ LIVE OUT LOUD CONFERENCE

MCLA MURDOCK HALL | 375 CHURCH ST. NORTH ADAMS

10:30-11AM | Check-in & Resource Fair
11:30AM-Noon | Panel Discussion
12:30PM | Lunch & Resource Fair
1PM | Break out sessions I
2PM | Break out sessions II

MORE INFO: LIVEOUTLOUDBERKSHIRES.ORG

REGISTER



MCLA

MCLA'S 31ST ANNUAL SPRING COMMUNITY DAY OF SERVICE

Register here -<https://forms.office.com/r/EahrKw4Rt4>

Sign up now to participate and volunteer for the Spring 2023 Community Day of Service on **Saturday, April 15, 2023** in the Quad (Venable gym if raining).

Check-In and Pizza- 11:00 AM
Welcome - 11:30 AM
Departure for Service Sites 11:45
Service 12:00 - 3:00

Please email christopher.hantman@mcla.edu or volunteercenter@mcla.edu with any questions!

NONPROFIT CENTER FOR THE BERKSHIRES
Funding for Faith-Based Organizations -
APRIL 17 | 2PM

Presenter: Alice Ruhnke, President of Grant Station

Program: 30 minutes of practical instruction (plus 15 minutes of Q&A Zoom version only)

Cost: FREE

Registration: sarah@npcberkshires.org Closes 10:00 a.m. on the day of the workshop.

BERKSHIRE COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

We are hiring for a Full-Time Resident Service Coordinator- From \$40,000 a year - Full-time
(413) 443-7138 | Pittsfield, MA

Two Special FRC Programs Starting in April

Parenting Journey in Recovery

At Parenting Journey, we believe that all parents and caregivers want to be strong, positive role models. First and foremost, we believe that the best way to raise hope and build stronger family relationships is to start by identifying your strengths and build from there.

In Parenting Journey in Recovery, a small group of parents and caregivers meet for 2 hours a week for 12 weeks. The program includes activities, discussions, a family-style meal, and complimentary childcare.

Substance use disorders are complicated and difficult to overcome. Parents and caregivers living with addiction face the additional challenge of building strong, positive relationships with their children while maintaining their recovery, which can be both rewarding and daunting. Parenting Journey in Recovery provides a valuable source of fellowship and support and enhances awareness of potential triggers that may escalate re-occurrence.

In a safe and caring setting, you will explore past and present patterns of emotional regulation and thoughts and behaviors related to addiction that influence your choices. With hard work and honesty, you will create a new path that strengthens recovery, accountability, and positive actions, while facing the daily challenges of living with addiction.

Parenting Journey in Recovery is open to anyone who has at least 30 days in recovery. Each group typically is limited to 14-16 people. All Massachusetts residents, no matter where you are from, no matter what your background, you are welcome at Parenting Journey. We work with mothers, fathers, and caregivers from all walks of life, raising children of all ages.

For more information or to register for this program, please reach out to our office by calling 413-663-7588 or by emailing Nancy Kennedy at nkennedy@nbccoalition.org

Women's Money Matters

The second workshop series we want to highlight is a partnership between the Coalition and the nonprofit, Women's Money Matters. Women's Money Matters helps women regain control of their finances, reduce financial anxiety, increase economic self-sufficiency and transform their lives by teaching core money management skills.

This twelve week series is targeted specifically to women with a series of weekly workshops starting April 26th. Workshops will take place every Wednesday Evening from 6:00 to approximately 7:30pm at the UNO Community Center. The actual workshop lesson plan runs for one hour each week.

Each participant is matched with their own personal volunteer coach! Matches are based on application data & info shared at the introduction meeting with the Program Leader. Coaches and participants attend workshops together, and coaches and participants also plan a time to meet in between workshops to work on the participants personal financial goals. The workshops are interactive and include guest presenters.

This program uses community based learning where all participants are encouraged to share ideas and experiences. There will be interactive exercises with both small group and paired breakouts, plus guest presenters from financial institutions to answer tough questions from the group. No two workshops are alike.

For more information or to register for this program, please reach out to our office by calling 413-663-7588 or by emailing Nancy Kennedy at nkennedy@nbccoalition.org

SAVE THE DATE! FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 2023

nbCC's 37th Annual Meeting

11:30am-1:30pm | Greylock WORKS

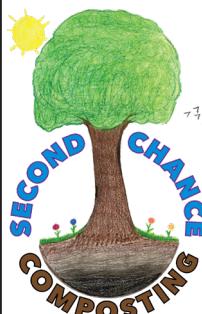
Keynote Speaker: State Senator, Paul Mark

Details on how to reserve your tickets COMING SOON!

Food Access Collaborative Updates

413 207 2745

secondchancecomposting.com



Residential Community Composting Program. Sign up for a membership, \$2.30 per week, bring your food scraps and drop off to a location in Adams, Williamstown or North Adams at their convenience. People can come as often or as little as needed. Call or email for more info: 413 207 2745

RED SHIRT FARM: UPDATE

We are breaking ground this week on our new Farm Store and Community Commercial Kitchen. Located right on Route 7, the Store will be a convenient one-stop shop for year-round farm-fresh products from us and our farm friends around Berkshire County.

The Community Commercial Kitchen will enhance food security, local resilience, and provide sliding-scale workshops to reconnect people with their food and culinary traditions. The Kitchen will be available to individuals and organizations working to address food insecurity as well as to local farmers who want to value-add their products.

For more information or to make a donation, please visit: <https://www.redshirtfarm.com/>

Advocacy Postcards:

The Food Bank's Advocacy Team is busy advocating for public policy priorities. If your program is interested in receiving postcards for participants to fill out and send to legislators, email Naomi at naomid@foodbankwma.org with an approximate number of postcards you would like for your program. The postcards will have a brief request to increase MEFAP funds, including the line item and amount, a space for participants to write a message to lawmakers, and a place for them to write their name, the name of the pantry/meal site at which they filled out the card, and their zip code. The Food Bank will collect and send them out to legislators based on the participant addresses.

SATURDAY APRIL 1

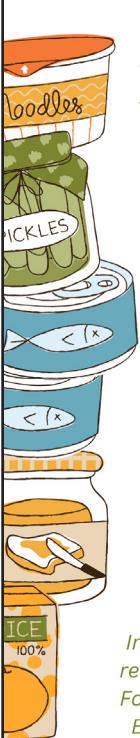
9AM -1PM

North Adams Farmers Market

85 Main Street, North Adams

DOUBLE SNAP up to \$30!

HIP Vendor: Full Well Farm



North Adams Mobile Food Bank

FRIDAY, APRIL 7TH AND APRIL 21ST 10-11 AM

BRIEN CENTER PARKING LOT

ALL ARE WELCOME!

GROCERY AND PRODUCE ITEMS PROVIDED BY THE FOOD BANK OF WESTERN MA.

In the event of a potential weather related closure or cancellations The Food Bank has set up a Mobile Food Bank hotline to provide updates: (413) 419-0079

Introducing the coop explorers!

Kids 12 and under are invited to join Wild Oats Market Co-op Super Official Co+op Explorer Kid Card program to receive a piece of free fruit when they shop with your parent or guardian at the store in Williamstown, MA. It's healthy and delicious.

Ask the cashiers how they can join free when they shop our local Wild Oats Market Co-op in Williamstown, MA

Coalition Events

April DIY Craft: Funny Bunny

All month long

Open to kids of all ages and their families. Share your finished craft on our Facebook page for a chance to win a prize! Call our office to register for your FREE craft kit: 413-663-7588

Easter Festival

Saturday, April 1, 11:00am - 1:00pm, North Adams Armory, 206 Ashland Street, North Adams

Join the City of North Adams, the nbCC and the Easter Bunny for some FREE Easter FUN! Schedule: 11-1 PM: Photos with the Easter Bunny 11-12:30 PM: Games and Arts and Crafts 12 PM: Storytime with Mayor Macksey 12:30-1:00 PM: Cottontail Obstacle Races For more information gglasier@nbccoalition.org or by phone at 413.663.7588

Parenting Journey in Recovery (12 WEEKS)

Starting Monday, April 3, 4:00-6:00pm, nbCC, 61 Main Street, Ste. 218, North Adams

This parent education program is FREE, but space is limited. Substance use disorders are complicated and difficult to overcome. Parents and caregivers living with addiction face the additional challenge of building strong, positive relationships with their children while maintaining their recovery, which can be both rewarding and daunting. Parenting Journey in Recovery provides a valuable source of fellowship and support and enhances awareness of potential triggers that may escalate re-occurrence. In a safe and caring setting, you will explore past and present patterns of emotional regulation and thoughts and behaviors related to addiction that influence your choices. With hard work and honesty, you will create a new path that strengthens recovery, accountability, and positive actions, while facing the daily challenges of living with addiction. Snacks are provided. Transportation and child care available upon request. Contact us at 413-663-7588 or nkennedy@nbccoalition.org

Active Parenting of Teens (5 WEEKS)

Starting Friday, April 7, 10:00am-12:00pm, nbCC, 61 Main Street, Ste. 218, North Adams

This program provides the guidance and support you need to turn the challenges of raising a teenager into opportunities for growth. You'll learn:

Methods of respectful discipline
Skills for clear, honest communication
Concrete strategies to prevent risky behavior
How to be an encouraging parent
Snacks are provided. Transportation and child care available upon request. Contact us at 413-663-7588 or nkennedy@nbccoalition.org

Learn Through Play: POND LIFE

Saturday, April 8, 10:00 am - 11:00 am, UNO Community Center, 157 River Street, North Adams

In collaboration with Child Care of the Berkshires.

Activities and circle time will focus on pond animals and environments. Best for ages 0-5 years. Registration required. Space is limited. Contact us at 413-663-7588 or nkennedy@nbccoalition.org

Cheshire Meet & Greet BINGO!

Wednesday, April 12, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Youth Center Inc., 191 Church Street, Cheshire

Join the nbCC for a fun evening of food and bingo! Learn more about what the Coalition does and help us learn more about you! Prizes for bingo winner, plus food will be provided. For more information contact us: 413-663-7588 or gglasier@nbccoalition.org

April Forum: Online Safety & Social Media Literacy

Thursday, April 13, 4:00-6:00 pm, Terra Nova, 85 Main Street, North Adams

All are welcome! A presentation & discussion led by Operation250: Trends of unsafe online behavior in adults and youth. Identifying misinformation and the risks of fake online information. The realities of risks online and ways they are different from expectations. Massachusetts-specific trends with online risks, particularly online and offline hate. The psychological changes caused by the internet and their relation to risk

W.o.W. Workshop:Celtic Fest

Thursday, April 20, 4:00 - 6:00 pm, Terra Nova, 85 Main Street, North Adams

Join Barb Malkas and Jessi Byrne for a FREE two hour workshop with a Celtic twist. The workshop will begin with an hour long yoga class, modified with chairs and assists, provided for those comfortable. In the second half of the evening, we will share Celtic recipes, light refreshments and nutrition of traditional Celtic foods. Bonus points for wearing green! Please bring a mat as nbCC has a limited number to share. To Register, contact: (413) 663-7588 or jbyrne@nbccoalition.org

Look for the Lorax Earth Day Scavenger Hunt!

Saturday, April 22, 12:00pm-2:00pm, starts at Williamstown Community Chest, 84 Spring Street, Williamstown

Join us for this FREE community scavenger hunt around downtown Williamstown. Search for the Lorax hidden in local businesses to get stamps to fill your card for a prize once it's completed. More information: 413-663-7588 or gglasier@nbccoalition.org

W.o.W. Workshop:Bike Skills Clinic

Tuesday, April 25, 4:00pm-6:00pm, UniTY Skate Park, State Street, North Adams

All levels skills clinic lead by Josh Fridette from Gravity Sleighaz Youth Mountain Bike Team. Learn skills from how to ride a bike, maintaining balance to ramps, jumps and more with professional instructors. Get safety gear for recreational rides, your commute to work or the store. We will be giving out helmets, reflectors, bike lights and quick how to maintenance to get you safely from point A to B. If you do not have a bike, let us know and we can outfit you with a bike from the nbCC Bike Collective before the clinic. Contact/ Register: 413-663-7588 or jbyrne@nbccoalition.org

Women's Money Matters Workshop (12 Weeks)

Starts Wednesday, April 26, 6:00 - 7:30 pm, UNO Community Center, 157 River Street, North Adams

Women's Money Matters helps women regain control of their finances, reduce financial anxiety, increase economic self-sufficiency and transform their lives by teaching core money management skills. Every Wednesday Evening from 6:00 to approximately 7:30pm. Each participant is matched with their own personal volunteer coach! Coaches and participants attend workshops together, and coaches and participants also plan a time to meet in between workshops to work on the participants personal financial goals. The workshops are interactive and include guest presenters. Snacks are provided. Transportation and child care available upon request. Contact us at 413-663-7588 or nkennedy@nbccoalition.org

W.o.W. Workshop: Spring Gardening

Friday, April 28, 10:00 - 12:00 pm, UNO Community Center, 157 River Street, North Adams

Wondering how to start a garden? Are you looking to learn more about growing herbs, vegetables or flowers? Are you looking to get involved in the Community Gardens? Join Jenn Munoz at the UNO Community Center from 1-3 to learn more about starting a garden whether in a pot or garden bed. Bring your questions for the Q+A, and dress for the weather as we will be gardening come rain or shine! RSVP at 413-663-7588 or jbyrne@nbccoalition.org

nbCC Bike Collective Open Hours*

WINTER HOURS 1st & 2nd Mondays, 3:30-5:30pm, The Armory, 206 Ashland St., North Adams

Bring your own bike or work on a bike at the bike collective. You'll have the opportunity to learn from other community members on basic bike fixes, or team up with more experienced bike mechanics to rebuild a bike. Tools and stands are provided. All NB residents are welcome! For more info, call us at 413-663-7588.

nbCC Youth Empowerment Program

Mondays, 5:00-6:30 PM, 61 Main Street, Rm. 213, North Adams.

Free and open to youth, 6-8th grade, who live in or attend school in North Berkshires. A weekly group to talk about school, emotions, navigating teen years, making friends and more. Snacks provided; transportation available. Register: call 413-663-7588

Drop-in Art Club

Tuesdays, 3:30 pm-4:30 pm, UNO Community Center, 157 River Street, North Adams

A weekly after school drop-in Art Club, for youth, ages 8-19. Supplies and snacks provided. No registration required. Caregivers do not need to attend, but the program facilitators are not responsible for child care. Call us at 413-663-7588 or email gglasier@nbccoalition.org for more information.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 4:00pm - 6:00pm. nbCC's Conf. Room, 61 Main St., Suite 213, North Adams

This is a group for grandparents who are actively parent-

ing their grandchildren giving them a safe and confidential space to share similar experiences with other grandparents. Free pizza and childcare are provided, but you must register beforehand. 663-7588 or email dsenecal@nbccoalition.org.

Youth Leadership Program

Tuesdays, 5:00pm - 7:00pm, 61 Main Street, Rm. 213, North Adams.

Free and open to youth ages 14-19 who live in or attend school in North Berkshire. Young people are changing the world and you can too. Make a positive change in yourself and the world around you. Develop leadership skills, discuss what drives you, meet other young leaders and plan projects in your community. Snacks provided; transportation available. Register: call 413-663-7588

Teen Writing Workshop

Wednesdays, 5:00pm - 7:00pm, held at nbCC, 61 Main St., Suite 218, North Adams.

Free and open to youth ages 13-19 who live in or attend school in North Berkshire. Aspiring writers and poets! Join this incredibly supportive group and get 1-on-1 help with your writing and performance style. Opportunities to perform and be published. Snacks and supplies provided; transportation available. Register: call 413-663-7588

FRC Peer Parenting Group

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 3:30 am -4:30 pm, UNO Center, 157 River Street, North Adams.

A peer-driven/peer-supported group in a judge-free, confidential space. Snacks provided. Children welcome.

UNO Community Center Coffee Time

Fridays, 1:00pm - 4:00 pm, 157 River St., North Adams

Come on over and join the UNO neighbors for coffee and conversation. All are welcome.

Support nbCC this month at BigY!

\$1 of every reusable community bag sold will be donated to the Coalition!

1 | BIGY.2GIVELOCAL.COM



Coalition Staff

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Cat Record: srecord@nbccoalition.org

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or Current Resident

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North Adams, MA
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13

COMMUNITY FORUM: ONLINE SAFETY & SOCIAL MEDIA LITERACY

FREE! ALL ARE WELCOME!

A PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION LED BY OPERATION250:

- Trends of unsafe online behavior in adults and youth
- Identifying misinformation and the risks of fake online information
- The realities of risks online and ways they are different from expectations
- Massachusetts-specific trends with online risks, particularly online and offline hate
- The psychological changes caused by the internet and their relation to risk

OP 250

4-6PM | TERRA NOVA, 85 MAIN ST., NORTH ADAMS

**Thursday, APRIL 13, 4:00-6:00 pm, Terra Nova, 85 Main Street,
North Adams**

Please join us for a presentation & discussion led by Operation250:

-Trends of unsafe online behavior in adults and youth-

-Identifying misinformation and the risks of fake online information-

-The realities of risks online & ways they are different from expectations-

-Trends in Massachusetts with online risks, particularly online & offline hate-

-The psychological changes caused by the internet & their relation to risk-

For more information, contact us: 413-663-7588

or abesaw@nbccoalition.org

online at www.nbccoalition.org

Find this newsletter

61 Main Street, Suite 218, North Adams, MA 01247
Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

