

DAET COALITION NEWSLETTER

A community resource to help prevent youth substance use in Ashland

Ashland's Kids Have...

Decisions at Every Turn

Prevent Youth Substance Use

SPRING 2017

A LETTER FROM THE COALITION

Dear Ashland Community Members,

Welcome to the Spring 2017 edition of the DAET Coalition newsletter. You will find highlights of the many ways we strive to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors to promote healthy choices in Ashland, especially for our youth. It has been my pleasure to participate in the work of the Coalition over the past four years. There are multiple individuals and groups contributing to the successes we have had in Ashland and as a coalition, as we continue to work toward solutions and strategies to safeguard our youth.

One of the roles dear to me is chairing the Social Norms Working Group, which at this time is primarily focused on the STAND (Students Taking A Noble Direction) social norms campaign at Ashland High School. Social Norms is a science-based, long term strategy to bring positive change to the community level. We have seen encouraging signs that it is becoming effective in sparking conversations among our youth as a way to think critically about their choices.

Partnering with the Friends of the Ashland Public Library, as well as other organizations, we have offered approximately 10 programs a year over the past three years. Our goal is to provide tools for our community to strengthen families, build resilience and awareness, and balance hope with concern. These programs provide tips on ways to foster a foundation of healthy communication to build upon. We also have our *Parenting for Prevention* tip sheets that supplement most program topics and concepts available on our website. The program series for 2017-2018 is being developed now, so if you have suggestions for new or repeat programs that you would like to see on the list, please submit your ideas to:

coalitioninfo@ashlanddecisions.org

Betsy Emberley

Chair, Community Programming
Chair, Positive Community Norms



A special thanks to Breaking the Barriers (BTB) for participating in the Ashland Family Fair and helping our young visitors participate in the DAET "My Healthy Choice Is ..." activity.

BRIDGES TOGETHER THE POWER OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING



The GI Generation ... Baby Boomers ... Millennials ... do these sound familiar to you? Throughout American history, people have been categorized based on the year they were born. For the most part, individuals within the same "generational group" experience the same historical events, cultural trends, and political change. While these labels might make it easier to understand how history shapes an individual's perspective, they also inadvertently create stereotypes and barriers between the generations. A unique organization called Bridges Together Inc. aims to knock down these barriers by bringing together people of all ages and enriching communities through intergenerational programming.

Recently DAET, the Friends of the Ashland Public Library, Ashland Public Schools, Ashland's Youth & Family Services, Ashland's Historical Society, Ashland's Senior Center, and the Ashland Business Association hosted the *Ashland Intergenerational Oral History Project* as an opportunity for Ashland youth and seniors to engage in a meaningful dialogue about history, family, and community.

Eleven Breaking the Barriers (BTB) youth group members and AHS students and 16 Ashland seniors participated in videotaped 1-on-1 interviews which explored different themes. The students asked questions about significant historical events, childhood friendships, first cars and jobs, family memories and living in Ashland. The seniors responded with amazing stories and an eagerness to share their experiences – a few even brought photographs and memorabilia to share. Later this spring, we will hold a participant reception & preview a video montage of the interviews.

There is so much more that Ashland can explore with regard to intergenerational programming. From a prevention perspective, intergenerational programming makes sense. Research shows that youth who feel connected to their community are more likely to make good choices and favor positive behaviors. More broadly, intergenerational programming offers opportunities to form relationships across age-groups, deepen an appreciation for personal experiences, and strengthen the community for all its members. Despite the differences that generational labels may lead us to believe; we all have more in common than we think.

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THE POWER OF CHOICE: A BEN SPEAKS LOUDER THAN WORDS PROGRAM

Mental health issues are often overlooked and underappreciated in the adolescent years as being part of the process of maturing to adulthood; social anxiety, peer pressure, and a desire to “fit in” can be viewed as rites of passage. However, these pressures can lead to poor decision-making and risky behavior. For children with a disability (intellectual, learning, mental, physical, or other), adolescence can be particularly challenging. How can we, as parents, family, and community, help all of our adolescents become emotionally prepared to withstand these social pressures in a safe way while teaching them to reach out to those different from themselves to find commonality? Judy Giovangelo, president and founder of the Holliston-based non-profit Ben Speaks Louder Than Words has an answer.

Ashland Parent Advisory Council (ASHPAC) together with DAET, Friends of the Ashland Public Library, and Ashland PTO was pleased to co-sponsor Ms. Giovangelo as she presented her “Power of Choice” program at Ashland High School. Ms. Giovangelo shared her experiences with raising Ben, a child with mental disabilities (Bipolar Disorder and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), and her insights after Ben’s suicide at age eighteen. Ms. Giovangelo spoke of explicitly teaching our children that everyone has self-doubts and that this is a shared common bond, but finding and actively embracing our strengths and self-purpose is often harder. She spoke of teaching our children how to be mindful of their strengths and weaknesses, and how to practice daily affirmations to support their emotional health. As parents, caretakers, and educators, we need to be aware of the labels and words that we communicate to and about our children, remembering that our children are not broken, but are individuals with individual challenges and gifts; our job is to find and nurture these gifts.

We thank our co-sponsors for their support in bringing the message of Ben Speaks Louder Than Words to Ashland; we are excited to work together on additional programming for our students and community. Please visit us at www.ashpac.org for more information about our role in advocating for children with special needs within the Ashland Public Schools.

Diana Davis

Member, Ashland Parent Advisory Council

EVERY TEEN IS DIFFERENT. FIGURE OUT WHERE YOURS NEEDS LIMITS.



Some teens need a lot of structure to be successful; others don't. Depending on your teen's personality and routine, you might consider setting boundaries that spell out:

- *What he/she can and can't do after school.*
- *When he/she has to do homework.*
- *When he/she can use the computer & what he/she can use it for.*
- *When he/she needs to be home at night on weekends.*
- *What kinds of parties he/she can go to and who he/she can go with.*
- *When and why he/she can use a car and ride in one.*

Teens are much more likely to obey rules and limits that they help to create. Work with your teen to figure out what you both can live with. Be open-minded about his/her goals and needs — and crystal clear about yours. Remember, each rule/limit has to work for both of you and expectations must be clear.

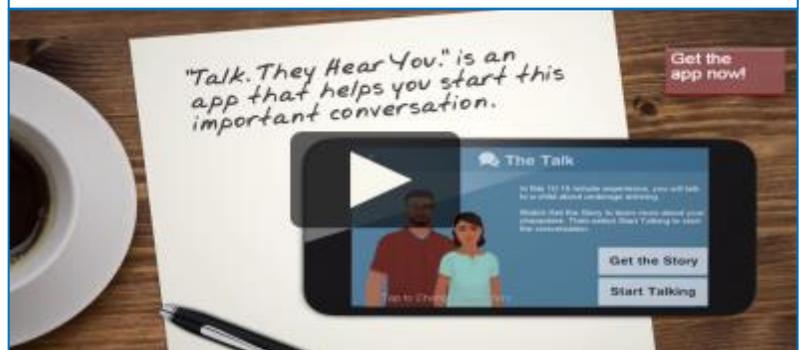
Learn more at: <http://drugfree.org/>

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT ALCOHOL USE

Research shows that the earlier we have conversations with kids about the risks of underage drinking, the more likely they are to delay alcohol use. Many adults find it difficult to begin the conversation or know how to keep the conversation going. The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has created the “Talk.They Hear You.” campaign to help parents and caregivers address the issue of alcohol with their children ages 9-15, a critical time where attitudes and behaviors are formed.

Learn more about the campaign and access parent resources at <https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking>.

You can also download the “Talk.They Hear You.” Mobile App, an interactive tool that helps you learn the do's and don'ts of talking to kids about underage drinking. Get the app here: <https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/mobile-application>.



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COALITION REWIND

January

- Hosted the Community Program “Addressing Challenging Behaviors with RESPECT”
- Published “Fostering Resilience in the Winter Months” in *Ashland Directions*
- Published “Protective Factors & Reducing the Risk for Substance Use” Ashland Town Pages
- Sent one staff member to the Bridges Together Intergenerational Training

February

- Published “The A, B, Cs of Sustainable Change” in *Ashland Directions*
- Published “Spotlight on Resilience” in Ashland Town Pages
- Kicked off the 3-part Community Programming series “Putting the Fun in Family Dinners”.
- Six Breaking the Barriers (BTB) youth, 1 DAET staff and 2 volunteers attended the CADCA Forum in Washington D.C.

March

- Published “Coalition Youth & Adults Talk Prevention in Washington D.C.” in *Ashland Directions*
- Sent one staff member to “Essential Facilitation” training
- Co-hosted “The Intergenerational Ashland Oral History Project” with AHS, the Friends of the Ashland Public Library, Ashland Youth & Family Services, the Historical Society, the Ashland Senior Center, and the Ashland Business Association
- Endorsed “Ashland Is United”, a statement to promote an inclusive and respectful community
- Published “Ten Tips for Communicating with Your Grandchild” in Ashland Town Pages
- Conducted a STAND activity to engage AHS students to think critically about their concerns and questions about how the new marijuana law would affect them

April

- Published “Bridging Ashland’s Generations” in *Ashland Directions*
- Co-Hosted “Ben Speaks: The Power of Choice” featuring Judy Giovangelo with ASHPAC, the Friends of the Ashland Public Library, and the Ashland PTO
- Supported the Community Book read featuring “*The Gift of Failure*” by Jessica Lahey
- Conducted the STAND intercept survey to assess the current campaign delivery method and to inform next year’s strategy

STAND: Marijuana Q&A.

We asked AHS students to share their concerns & questions about how the new marijuana law would affect them. Anonymous notes from 65 students were compiled into ten questions & answered by community leaders including DAET leadership, the Town Manager, the APS Superintendent, and the Police Chief. Read the responses:

<http://www.ashlanddecisions.org/stand--student-marijuana-q-a.html>

PROM & GRADUATION SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

Tis the season for teen celebrations as they participate in end-of-the-year traditions such as prom and graduation. You can help your teen enjoy these landmark occasions safely with a few important tips:

Leading up to prom or graduation

- Have a conversation with your teen about substance use. Be clear that you do not want your teen to drink alcohol or use other drugs.
- Discuss your expectations regarding alcohol use, driving, and curfew. Make sure your teen understands the consequences for violating the rules.

Hosting a party

- Set clear rules and consequences for violating these rules in advance. Communicate the rules ahead of time to your guests.
- Do not serve alcohol. Do not allow alcohol to be brought into your home.
- Secure all alcohol. Lock liquor cabinets and remove alcohol from the refrigerator and put in a safe place.

Before your teen attends a party

- Know where your teen is going, who your teen will be with and when you expect your teen to be home.
- Remind your teen to wear a seatbelt (when driving or as a passenger) and to never get in the car with someone who has been drinking or using any other substance, like marijuana.

KNOW THE SOCIAL HOST LAW

The Social Host Law is in place to protect youth from unsafe behavior and for parents to support healthy community norms. All students and parents should be aware of the critical aspects of the law:

- The legal drinking age is 21. Serving or providing alcohol to underage guests or allowing them to drink alcohol in your home or any other property you control is against the law.
- If you furnish alcohol to those under 21, you are subject to criminal prosecution.
- You may also be sued civilly. It may be up to a jury to decide whether you are liable and how much you will have to pay for injuries caused by, or to, your guests.
- You could be civilly liable if you knowingly allow a guest under 21 to drink in your home or any other property you control, if he or she becomes very ill or dies from alcohol poisoning or other injuries.
- The law does not allow you to give permission for your underage child to drink in someone else’s home or any other property they control.

You can find additional parent tips, conversation starters and Social Host Law information on our *Parenting for Prevention Safe Prom and Graduation* tip sheet at:

<http://www.ashlanddecisions.org/parent-tip-sheets.html>

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COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING 2016 – 2017

Ashland's Decisions at Every Turn (DAET) Coalition and the Friends of the Ashland Public Library are pleased to be co-hosting programs for parents and the community. Programs will provide parents with strategies, the opportunity to collect new skills, and get answers to compelling questions. Programs are free and open to all. For questions about programs at the library, please contact president@friendsoftheapl.com. For questions about programs at other locations, please direct inquiries to CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org.

Topic	Speaker	Date, Time, Location, Audience
College Transition: A Program for Parents	Janice Kassman, Former Dean of Students at Colby College; Bev Madden, Parent & co-chair SPAN-DS; and Jake Disanto, Masters Candidate at Babson College	Date: Tuesday, May 2, 2017 Time: 7:00 – 8:30 PM Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of high school seniors
Summer Send off for AHS Junior & Senior Students and Parents	Chief Craig Davis, APD; Marian Ryan, Middlesex County DA, and John Morello, Actor/Comedian	Date: Tuesday, May 9, 2017 Time: 7:00 – 9:00 PM Location: Ashland High School Auditorium Audience: AHS Juniors/Seniors and parents

COME TO A COALITION MEETING

Coalition meetings are open to anyone in the community. Come learn about the Coalition, our current initiatives, and volunteer opportunities. New members are welcome! An orientation meeting can be made by prior arrangement.

September 13	5:30 – 7:00 PM	February 14	5:30 – 7:00 PM
October 4*	2:30 – 4:00 PM	March 14	5:30 – 7:00 PM
November 1	5:30 – 7:00 PM	April 11	5:30 – 7:00 PM
December 13	5:30 – 7:00 PM	May 9*	2:30 – 4:00 PM
January 10*	2:30 – 4:00 PM	June 6	5:30 – 7:00 PM

The Coalition meets monthly on Tuesdays. Administration Building/Ashland Middle School - Room #5

**Meetings will be held from 2:30PM – 4PM and youth are encouraged to attend.*



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Decisions at Every Turn



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@AshlandDAET



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AshlandDecisions.org