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Special points of interest:

- 100 Best Communities for Young People
- Parent Education offerings
- JGMS After School Program - Winter 2010
- Youth and Family Services Committee 2010-2011
- Fuel Assistance Available
- Trunk or Treat
- Youth and Family Services Donors
- Safe Routes to School
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Safe Homes
- Bedford Veterans



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100 Best Communities for Young People

The efforts of Bedford civic and community leaders were honored when America's Promise Alliance (the Alliance), the nation's largest partnership organization dedicated to youth and children, announced Bedford had been named a winner of the Alliance's 100 Best Communities for Young People (100 Best) competition presented by ING, a global financial services company and leading provider of retirement plans and programs for teachers. Its 2010 recognition marks the third for Bedford in the competition.

The 100 Best designation recognizes those communities that make youth a priority by implementing programs that help keep children in school and prepare them for college and the 21st century workforce. In addition to enhancing local educational opportunities, most winning communities have taken steps to facilitate improved access to health care for its young people, encourage youth

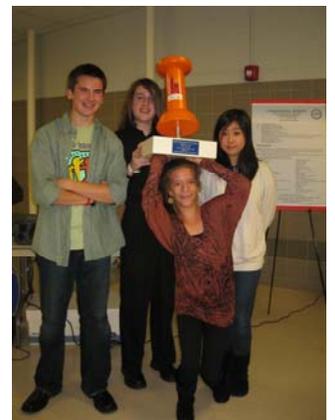
civic engagement and supply developmental resources that create better places for young people to live and grow. The entire 2010 list of 100 Best Communities for Young People and their accomplishments can be found at www.americaspromise.org/100Best.

"Through its innovative and far-reaching programs, Bedford is taking bold and effective steps to help their young people graduate and lead healthy, productive lives," said Marguerite W. Kondracke, America's Promise Alliance President and CEO. "Bedford serves as an example to inspire and educate other communities across the nation to tackle the challenges facing their city and children, and to implement initiatives that give them the essential resources they need to succeed in life."

Bedford was named one of the nation's 100 Best because of its commitment to being a healthy and safe place for young people. With a 99 percent graduation rate, Bedford has recently focused its attention on



"CONGRATULATIONS, BEDFORD"



providing solutions to the health services gap for young people.

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Parent Education Spring

Have you marked your calendar for the upcoming Spring parent education events for the Town of Bedford Parent Education Series for this year?

After a brief break for the holidays, the series continues with an outstanding array of speakers and topics for parents of children of all ages. Upcoming spring workshops include the following:

Are Your Kids Addicted to the Internet? will be presented **Wednesday, March 2, 2011 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.** at **Bedford Town Hall** in the Auditorium. Featured presenter will be Benjamin Silverman, M.D., an Addiction Psychiatry Fellow at Partners HealthCare System. Silverman is also affiliated with Massachusetts General Hospital, McLean Hospital, and Harvard Medical School. A

graduate of John Hopkins University School of Medicine, Dr. Silverman has a long standing interest in technology and addiction issues of all types, including Internet and social networking addiction in particular. This parent education event is appropriate for parents of youth computer users of all ages. Come and find out how to ensure your child uses computers and the Internet wisely and safely.

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JGMS After School Program Winter 2010



Bedford Youth and Family Services in collaboration with John Glenn Middle School is gearing up for another successful Winter After School program with a focus on the most popular activities: Babysitter Training with Carol Eaton, Girl Talk with Bedford High School student leaders, Wordsmiths with Lisa Fontaine-Rainen. Bedford TV is offering two sessions of the same special program: Shooting and

Editing for TV.

The registration deadline for Babysitter Training, Girl Talk and Wordsmiths is January 7th. The registration deadline for the first session of Shooting and Editing for TV is December 30th, and the deadline for the second session is January 31st. Space is limited; be sure to sign up as soon as possible to secure your spot.

Flyers are available at the JGMS

main office, at our BYFS office and you can also view our flyer and download a registration form at: www.bedfordma.gov/youth

Questions?

Contact Jessica Santos

at 781/275-7727 x262 or

jessicas@bedfordma.gov

2010-2011 Youth and Family Services Committee:

Tom Pinney, Chair ♦ Sheryl Barkan, at Large ♦ Kristina Philipson, at Large ♦ Alison Malkin, at Large
Cathy Cordes, Selectman Liaison ♦ Dave Ellis, Recreation Commission ♦ Jeff Wardwell, Police
Noreen O’Gara, School Committee ♦ Kevin Wormstead, Board of Health Liaison

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Fuel Assistance Available



To apply, Bedford residents under age 60 should call Bedford Youth and Family Services (BYFS) at 781-275-7727 and those age 60 or older should call the Bedford Council on Aging (COA) at 781-275-6825.

An appointment will be set up to assist you with the application. Please be assured that all information given to the friendly agency staff who help you will be held in the strictest confidence.

If you could use some help paying your home heating bills, the Commonwealth’s Fuel Assistance Program may be for you!

Bedford residents of all ages are invited to apply for the program which provides a benefit to those who meet certain income guidelines to pay fuel bills.

Those who enroll in the Fuel Assistance Program may also be automatically eligible for a free home weatherization program, free heating system repair or replacement, free energy-saving devices, and discounts for many utilities.

Income Guideline:	
Household Size	Yearly Gross Income
1	\$30,751
2	40,213
3	49,675
4	59,137
5	68,598
6	78,060

Trunk or Treat



Bedford Youth and Family Services staff participated in “Trunk or Treat” sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and The Goddard School on October 29th in Whole Foods Parking lot.

100 Best Communities

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Through the Bedford Community Partnership and the Youth Policy Task Force, a coalition of residents, social services, law enforcement, businesses, government and other partners work to meet the healthy development of all Bedford children from birth to age 21.

Youth and Family Services Director Sue Baldauf coordinated the application process and expressed her excitement at the announcement: "We are just ecstatic to be named 100 Best for the third time! The partnership between the youth serving groups in town has led to this success and shows our respective commitment to the young people in Bedford. I want to especially thank students Bennett Driscoll, Emily Gao, Julie Reynolds, Emily Moss, Adam Fisher, and Samantha Karanian for writing youth testimonials for our submission - it is their experience

that not only impacts the selection but informs our ongoing efforts."

A special thank you to all of the community members who came out to the 100 Best Communities for Youth Dinner Celebration on November 8th before Fall Town Meeting where they had the opportunity to Jonathan F. Zaff, Ph.D., Vice President, Research and Policy Development for America's Promise. Zaff was also the presenter for the award at Town Meeting.

Additional thank you's, to Dave Ellis, Bedford Youth Task Force, Abbie Seibert, School Committee, and Mike Rosenberg, Chair, Bedford Selectmen and MA Rep. Charles Murphy for his attendance and kind words as well. Special thanks for generous contribution for the community

dinner go to **America's Promise Alliance for Youth, Carriage House, Whole Foods, Bedford Police Department, Bedford Public Schools, and Doubletree Bedford Glen.**

The 100 Best award is for every member of the community whose life intersects with a young person, whether you are a professional teacher, coach, or mentor or a caring parent, neighbor, or friend.

We are nurturing the future every time we get to know a child, know their name and their interests and listen to their stories and their worries. We understand the legacy we are leaving when we know our youth are comfortable calling Bedford 'home.'

Thank you, Bedford, for being that kind of community. We should all be proud!

Parent Education Offerings

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In **Raising Financially Fit Children**, parents will learn a variety of tips and techniques to help raise a financially fit child. The two-hour workshop will be offered twice, on **March 30, 2011**, a morning and an evening to accommodate the different schedules of today's parents. NOTE: SIGN UP IS REQUIRED AND SPACE IS

LIMITED! Call 781-275-7727 to sign up for either the **10:00 a.m.** or the **7:00 p.m.** session. While the workshop is free and geared to parents of Middle School youth it is open to all on a first come, first served basis. The workshop will be held at **Bedford Town Center** in the **Mudge Room** on the second floor.

Other Spring offerings will be:

Social Host Liability - All You Need to Know! - April 6, 2011

and

Yikes! They Are Growing Up! On April 27th, 2011

Questions about the series may be directed to 781-275-7727.



Safe Routes to School

As the cold New England weather approaches, fewer people can be found riding their bikes around Bedford. However, even here in the northeast, there are often many mild days, and with Bedford's accessibility to bike paths and trails, bicycling is still a viable transportation and recreation option. Some tips for

Bicycle Safety: Always wear a helmet! - Be seen: wear bright clothing so others can see you better - Learn the rules of the road and obey traffic signals and lights - Use hand signals when stopping or turning - Stay alert - Use your eyes AND ears - Look Left, Right, Left for traffic at stop signs and

driveways before riding out into the street - Make sure your bike is in good working order, and always check your brakes before riding.

For more information about bicycle safety or Safe Routes to School, contact Carla Baer at saferoutes@bedfordma.gov

Thank you to our Donors:

- American Legion
- Women's Auxiliary
- Bedford Motel
- Bedford Post Office Employees
- Bedford Schools Administration Employees
- Callahan's Kenpo Karate
- Cambridge Savings Bank
- Carleton Willard Village Resident's Association
- Carriage House
- Doubletree Bedford Glen
- First Parish in Bedford Social Responsibility Council
- Flatbread Company
- Michael & Lea Ann Knight
- Mettler Toledo
- Millipore Corporation
- Moison Ace Hardware of Bedford
- O'Malley and Colangeli CPA's
- Staples
- FWW Post 1628
- Whole Foods
- &
- The Residents of Bedford through your Taxes

Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Safe Homes

In November the results of the 2010 Bedford Youth Risk Behavior Survey were presented to the community in a panel discussion that is being aired on Bedford TV. The presentation includes 2010 data as well as trend data from the past surveys and a review of our community efforts to ensure youth are safe. Panelists include: Dr. Maureen LaCroix, Superintendent of Schools, Chief James Hick, Bedford Police, and Jackie Supprise, School Health Coordinator. Make sure to check out our website for the latest Youth Risk Behavior Survey results at www.bedfordma.gov/youth

The 2009-10 Bedford Youth Risk Behavior Survey shows that:

Alcohol is the substance of choice among Bedford middle and high school students, with more students reporting use of alcohol than any other substance, including cigarettes.

By Spring of their 8th grade year, **17% of Bedford students have tried alcohol** (more than a sip), and that figure jumps to **75% by 12th grade**. Parents, either intentionally or not, are the main source of alcohol among middle school students, with 55% of 8th graders who drink alcohol reporting that they usually get the alcohol they drink by either taking it from their parents or parents of their friends (25%) or having it given to them by their parents (30%).

As students age, they are more likely to seek out other sources of alcohol beyond parents, often "third party adults" who purchase alcohol for them. For example, only 12% of Bedford 12th graders who drink alcohol report that they usually get it by asking someone of legal age to buy it for them, 19% get it from older friends, and 3% get it from older brothers or sisters.

The Bedford SAFE HOMES

Program is designed to address youth alcohol use by having families make a pledge to provide a safe, alcohol and drug free environment. The updated Directory has listings for 258 families who have students in Grades 6-12 and who have chosen to participate in the program. Since it started in 2001, the Safe Homes program has grown steadily each year, and participation has more than doubled in four years. The goal of the Safe Homes program in Bedford is to ensure families with children in Grades 6-12 agree to provide a safe, alcohol and drug free environment and to discourage underage drinking parties.

A big thank you to all the families who pledged for their willingness to make a commitment to the Safe Homes principles that support the safety and well-being of our youth. Know that you are helping to send a clear and positive message to all youth and parents in Bedford. If you find out your teenager has

been to a party where alcohol or drugs were present, discuss the situation and your concerns with the parents who were hosting the party. Let them know that you plan to share this information with other parents, especially Safe Homes parents, so everyone is informed of the potential danger of letting their children go to a party there. Let your son or daughter know what you are doing and why they will not be allowed to attend future parties in that home. Consider informing the police of the violations as well. Massachusetts has a strong Social Host Liability law, and the police can help educate you and any parent when you have concerns. Mark your calendars now for the April 6, 2011 training on **Social Host Liability!**

BYFS Staff Queries - Main Number: 781/275-7727

Sue Baldauf, Director, x263 - Counseling referrals or questions ~ General dept. questions ~ Community concern ~ Issue related to Violence Prevention Coalition, Bedford Community Partnership, Business Diversity Training, Progress Fund ~ Parenting Education Topic

Fran Stander, Administrative Assistant, x264 - General questions ~ General community & Resources ~ Job Match ~ Events & Press Releases ~ New Resident Packets ~ Volunteer Opportunities

Jessica Santos, Youth Development/Prevention, x262 - JGMS After School ~ Peer Mentoring ~ Youth Website ~ Other youth related issues - Alcohol, tobacco, or drug education ~ Diversion ~ Youth Risk Behavior Survey ~ Safe Homes ~ Fuel Assistance

Carla Baer, Safe Routes to School Coordinator, x260 most Thursdays

Fred Gordon, Veterans Agent, 781/275-1328 - Any veterans related question

Eliot Counselors: Debby Hardy & Kate Imhoff x261, Lynne Chapas x260, Melinda Gonyea 781-275-7727

Veterans Agent Hours

Veterans Agent Fred Gordon is in Bedford on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. by appointment and Thursdays from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for drop in visits and unscheduled appointments.

The Veterans Office is located

in Bedford Town Center Building in Room 210. Town Center is the yellow building directly behind Bedford Town Hall. Any Bedford veteran or family member of a veteran with questions about veterans

benefits and services can drop by the office.

Contact **Fred Gordon** at **781/275-1328** or by email at **fgordon@bedfordma.gov** to schedule an appointment at your convenience or drop in

Thursday from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. at his Town Center office.

