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## Special points of interest:

- *100 Best Communities for Young People*
- *Free Holiday Store*
- *JGMS After School Program - Winter 2011*
- *Youth and Family Services Committee 2011-2012*
- *Fuel Assistance Available*
- *Safe Homes Directory*
- *Youth and Family Services Donors*
- *Bedford in Motion*
- *APPLAUDD Program*
- *VA Expands Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record*



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## 100 Best Communities for Young People 2011

Sue Baldauf, Director, Bedford Youth and Family Services, made the following remarks at November 7 Fall Town Meeting:

“For the fourth year in a row Bedford has been named one of the 100 Best Communities for Young People in the United States. This is no small feat when you consider we competed with over 300 municipalities and counties and are only 13,000 people strong. This honor is shared among all of us who work with you, have kids, teach kids, monitor youth programs, employ kids, talk to kids as well as all our youth.

Every year we need to submit with our application 3 or 4 youth testimonials as to why Bedford should be 100 best. This year we had more kids than ever respond to that request with some of the most touching and creative paragraphs we have ever seen.

I want to publicly thank the youth who submitted testimonials: Lori Merlo, Emily Gao, Brandon Rose, Michael Barkan, Anne Dickinson Meltz, Tony Waldron, Emelia Heckman, Julia Mason, Savannah En, Chris En, Hannah Kim, and

Geena Chen and also BHS Coach Jim Byrnes for his success story on Sean MacIver.

While we do not have time to read all their testimonials to you, I wanted to at least share a couple of sections from two of the ones submitted this year:

*Bedford is one of the best communities for youth because of the great opportunities that it offers for youth of all ages. Starting as early as preschool, the recreation department offers a wide variety of sports to youth all year round in a fun, safe environment. Many of these sports programs are offered to youth all the way through eighth grade, and some are even offered to high schoolers. However, these programs for younger kids offer opportunities for high schoolers to be coaches, referees, and umpires.*

*I think Bedford is exceptional because of its unique diversity and the kind, helpful adults who serve as role models to young people. Bedford High School students come from Bedford, Boston, or Hanscom Air Force Base, and their diverse backgrounds make the entire school experience much more interesting and moved to Hanscom Air Force Base last other's experiences, which results in a very*



*culturally rich than other suburban high schools. My best friend, for example, who moved to Hanscom Air Force Base last year, has lived in South Korea, Spain, Bahrain, and five American states. The diverse mix of students allows us to learn new perspectives and grow from each other's experiences, which results in a very accepting student body with hardly any bullying.*

This should be fitting testimony to the work we do here at town meeting and its value to our youth and our collective future.

Congratulations, Bedford - keep it up!”



## Free Holiday Store

Once again Bedford Youth and Family Services will be offering its free holiday shopping area for families in need of assistance from December 1st to 21st. Parents may contact YFS office for a confidential appointment to select holiday gifts for their children. For the last several years YFS has distributed gift items as well as gift cards to families in need through donations made possible by

generous Bedford companies, organizations and individuals.

Any resident able to donate a gift card to a local store should contact the office as soon as possible. Donations may be dropped off at the YFS office at Bedford Town Center Building,

12 Mudge Way, Bedford, MA 01730 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. Call 781-275-7727 to make arrangements for before or after hours delivery.

For more information or to make a Holiday Store appointment contact 781-275-7727. Residents will need proof of residency and need.



## JGMS After School Program Winter 2011



Bedford Youth and Family Services in collaboration with John Glenn Middle School is gearing up for another successful Winter After School program. Bedford TV is offering their very popular program: Shooting and Editing for TV.

The registration deadline for Shooting and Editing for TV is January 18th. 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](http://www.bedfordma.gov/youth)

Questions?

Contact Jessica Santos  
at 781/275-7727 x262 or  
[jessicas@bedfordma.gov](mailto:jessicas@bedfordma.gov)

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**2011-2012 Youth and Family Services Committee:**

Tom Pinney, Chair ♦ Sheryl Barkan, at Large ♦ Kristina Philipson, at Large  
Alison Malkin, at Large

Cathy Cordes, Selectman Liaison ♦ Jeff Wardwell, Police

Noreen O’Gara, School Committee ♦ Kevin Wormstead, Board of Health Liaison

## Fuel Assistance Available



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.

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.

**Income Guideline:**

Household Size	Yearly Gross Income
1	\$31,218
2	\$40,824
3	\$50,429
4	\$60,035
5	\$69,641
6	\$79,246

## Safe Homes Directory

The Bedford SAFE HOMES Directory for 2011-2012 was mailed to all families that made the pledge in November which is Substance Abuse Awareness Month. The updated Directory has listings for 251 families with 344 students in Grades 6-12 who have chosen to participate. Since it started in 2001, the Safe Homes program has grown steadily and has more than doubled in four years.

Thank you to all of the families who pledged, for your willingness to be part of this growing program - and for making a commitment to the *Safe Homes* principles that support the safety and well-being of our youth. Know that you are helping to set a norm in our town by sending a clear message to all youth and parents in Bedford. Have a great year!



## Bedford in Motion



Did you know that the CDC recommends an hour of physical activity for children each day, and the recommendation for adults is 30 minutes of physical activity on most days? Maybe you have heard that you could reach these goals by walking 10,000 steps per day and improve your health and fitness? Perhaps you are wondering how far is 10,000 steps anyway? The average person's stride length is about 2.5 feet long and that translates to just over 2,000 steps to walk one mile, and 10,000 steps is about 5 miles.

A sedentary person averages only about 1,000 to 3,000 steps a day. For these people adding walking and counting steps

provides many health benefits. A reasonable goal for most people is to increase average daily steps each week by 500 per day until you can easily average 10,000 per day.

So, how many calories are burned by walking? If you are walking at a brisk clip (think late for a meeting, or getting your child to school on time!), the body burns calories at a net rate of 1.38 calories per kilogram of body mass per mile. That's about 63 calories per mile of fast walking for every 100 pounds of body weight. A 150 pound person will burn 94 calories per mile and a 200 pound person will burn about 126 calories per mile.

Experts suggest that this activity can be done throughout the day with measurable health benefits. This writer clocked walking from the Lutheran Church to Davis School at 500 steps - each way! If you are a parent who drops off or picks up - this is one way to consider accumulating a chunk of steps in your day. There are many options for integrating walking and biking into your daily routines. For more ideas and resources, plus upcoming events and activities see Bedford in Motion on the Bedford Town Website: [www.bedfordma.gov](http://www.bedfordma.gov) under the "Community" tab.

## APPLAUDD Debuts in Bedford

For four Wednesday evenings in October, a group of 30 parents, grandparents, teachers, or social workers made it to Bedford Town Hall to be part of APPLAUDD: a Prevention Program Learning About Underage Drinking and Drugs. Developed and led by Burlington Drug and Alcohol Task Force Co-Chair Marilyn Belmonte, this prevention workshop for parents of children in grades 5 to 12 **promised to deliver the following:**

- Learning About the Effects of Drugs and Alcohol on Academic Potential
- Improved Parent-Teen Communication Skills
- Prevention of Underage Drinking and Drug Experimentation
- Learning About the New Marijuana Law and Social

### Host Liability Law

- Increased Protective Factors Believed to Help Raise Healthy Teens

From narcotics to prescription medication to marijuana and alcohol, Belmonte gave the audience a thorough education about the science and effects of each substance as well as an understanding about how our youth are marketed to use in subtle ways. She discussed current science about the adolescent brain not being fully developed until age 25 and why preventing use and misuse of substances is so critical.

Throughout the presentation Belmonte stressed the pivotal role of parents in preventing adolescent substance use, quoting statistics that show parents are the number one deterrent for kids. She focused

on how parents could remain engaged with their adolescent by using the "Four C's:"

1. Compassion - say something that shows you feel for what they are going through to keep conversation going.
2. Communication - use sentences that will encourage feedback.
3. Comprehension - show you understand what they are saying instead of reacting to it.
4. Competence - give them the tools to deal with their anger or disappointment.

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## Thank you to our Donors:

- American Legion Post #221
- American Legion Women's Auxiliary
- Anonymous (4)
- Bedford Car Wash
- 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 Café
- Doubletree Bedford Glen
- First Parish in Bedford Social Responsibility Council
- Flatbread Company
- Fuji Film
- Michael & Lea Ann Knight
- Mettler Toledo
- Middlesex Bank
- Middlesex Savings Bank Employees
- Millipore Corporation
- Moison Ace Hardware of Bedford
- O'Malley and Colangeli CPA's
- St. Paul's Church
- Staples
- VFW Post 1628
- Whole Foods
- &
- The Residents of Bedford through your Taxes

## APPLAUDD

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Belmonte also highlighted the 40 Developmental Assets as developed by Search Institute and available on their website at [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org) as a way to assess what strengths your child might need more of. She also left attendees with a "What Now?" Action Plan that includes

- Anti-Drug messages
- Monitoring their whereabouts and friends
- Supporting their ideas and

dreams

- Building their self-esteem
- Setting rules and enforcing them consistently
- Being flexible for special occasions
- Being a good role model in your own use of alcohol, medications, and cigarettes
- Having dinner together as often as possible
- Disposing of unneeded medications
- Monitoring over-the-counter and prescription medications
- Short, frequent conversations
- Listening better
- Being compassionate even if you disagree
- Finding healthy outlets for stress
- TALK, TALK, TALK!

For more information about APPLAUDD presentations in other communities contact Belmonte directly at [Marilyn@DrugAbuseRecognition.com](mailto:Marilyn@DrugAbuseRecognition.com) or visit her website at [www.DrugAbuseRecognition.com](http://www.DrugAbuseRecognition.com)

If you have questions about an issue with your son or daughter please contact Bedford Youth and Family Services at 781-275-7727.

## VA Expands Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record



The Department of Veterans Affairs is expanding its pilot for the Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER), which enables sharing of veteran's health records. "The expansion of the VLER pilot program will allow more veterans and facilities to participate in this exciting new technology," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "I invite veterans to

sign up for the program. It will keep health care providers informed, improve continuity and timeliness of care and eliminate gaps in health care information." VLER is a multi-faceted business and multi-technology initiative that includes a portfolio of health, benefits, personnel and administrative information sharing capabilities.

The pilot expansion is designed to share veterans' health information electronically, safely and privately between the Veterans Administration (VA), The Department of Defense (DOD) and selected private health care facilities that are members of the secure Nationwide Health Information Network.

The VA is on track to implement health information exchange at 11 VA Medical Centers and to partners with both DOD and private health care entities. This expansion will enable authorized users to access health information and will provide seamless service to America's service members and veterans.

### 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

## 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.

