

Time



TEENS

Peer to Peer

Livingston Youth & Community Services

Fall, 2009

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IRL: IN REAL LIFE COMES TO LIVINGSTON

On **November 25th** and **Dec 11th**, students attending Heritage Middle School (11/25) and Mount Pleasant Middle School (12/11), respectively, will have the opportunity to view a cyber-bullying program called **In Real Life (IRL)** by R. N. Sandberg and performed by George Street Playhouse. This is a compelling performance about the complex world of cyber-bullying and its 'real-life' consequences when social networking circumstances spiral out of control.



In Real Life tells the story of two students who find their feud surfacing on friends' cell phones, emails and the world-wide-web. Insecurity, fear and humiliation surround their every move. From shared texts, exploited secret photos and threatening online conversations, cyber-bullying reaches every facet of the students' lives and leads to consequences everyone needs to face. In this play, students will be faced with the choice to stand-up for a friend, find the power to confront a bad situation and walk-away and begin the discussion on how to take an active role in ending cyber-bullying. The performance ends with an open forum for questions and answers between the audience, performers, school administrators and D.A.R.E officers.

Parents - Save the Date: December 2nd @ Heritage Middle School (7:30 pm). Parents will have an opportunity to see the IRL performance and participate in a workshop and discussion on the how to keep their children safe from cyber-bullying, what they should do if their child is being cyber-bullied or if their child is the cyber-bully. Let's work together to stop this NOW!

This presentation is a collaborative program by D.A.R.E., Livingston Youth and Community Services (LYCS), Livingston Municipal Alliance Committee(LMAC) and the HSA of MPMS & HERITAGE Middle School. For further information contact:

Gary Mankowitz, D.A.R.E and Community Policing at 973-992-3000 x 2300 or email: gmankowitz@livingstonnj.org

Susan Ridley, Director LYCS: 973-535-2646,

email: lycs@livingston.org or visit our website: www.livingstonlycs.org

Livingston Youth & Community Services



Celebrating A Drug Free Life
Through Leadership



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello Readers,

This is the first issue for this 2009-2010 academic year and we have some great articles about community events as well as topics of interest to teens.

Our cover story on cyber-bullying highlights an important event for both Livingston students and their families. The article also provides details about IRL, an upcoming local performance by George Street Playhouse.

Several of the other articles highlight issues that affect teenagers and their families. These articles discuss teenage relationships and both the positive and negative effects of working during high school.

The newsletter also features a poem by one of our students, our very popular "Dear Syd" section and a "Top Ten" page.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. There will be many more and I encourage you to keep reading.

Feel free to send in articles you would like in the newsletter. If you have any questions or comments, please email: lycs@livingston.org, or write to: Time 4 Teens - LYCS, PO Box 822, Livingston, NJ 07039.

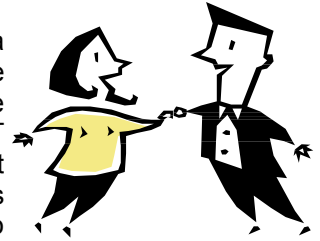
Enjoy the newsletter!

Sincerely,

The Editor

RELATIONSHIPS: TOXIC OR TERRIFIC?

As we all know, adolescence can be a tumultuous and difficult time as teenagers are being confronted with decisions that can have a large impact on their future. Are my SAT scores high enough? Am I going to make it onto the basketball team? What colleges should I apply to? With all these things to consider, sometimes an important question gets lost in the shuffle; how healthy are my relationships?



Given the importance of interpersonal relationships, it is vital that adolescents and youth question whether their friends and significant others are people who truly enrich their lives. This process of reflection about one's relationships shouldn't stop during your high school or college years. Instead, people should always think about whether they are surrounding themselves with positive people.

So what are the components of a healthy relationship? Here are a few concepts and questions you can ask yourself to test the merits of your relationships?

- **Equality:** do you make decisions together, or does one person have more control over the activities that you do?
- **Honesty and Respect:** are you treating each other the way you would like to be treated?
- **Comfort and Physical Safety:** do you feel safe at all times; not only from being hurt or mistreated, but safe to be yourself?
- **Humor**– Do you have fun in this relationship?

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of a healthy relationship; particularly an intimate relationship is **Independence**. Do you depend on this relationship in order to feel good about yourself? Do you have other friends and hobbies that are completely separate from your relationship? If you needed to end the relationship, would you feel comfortable doing so?

Relationships are a difficult endeavor for people of all ages. However, they are even more challenging for adolescents as they are still trying to learn and carve out their own identity. Therefore, to devote a large amount of time and energy into learning about another person can be a challenging task. If you are up for the challenge, or are in the midst of a serious relationship, make sure you take some time to reflect on this article and question the healthiness of your relationship.

Adapted from following website:

www.tcfv.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/healthyvsunhealthyrelationships0907.pdf

POSITIVE ROLE MODEL: OPRAH WINFREY



Oprah Winfrey was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi and was reared by her grandmother. From the age of six to thirteen she lived with her mother in Milwaukee. After suffering child abuse and molestation she ran away and was sent to a juvenile detention home at the age of thirteen but was denied admission due to a lack of space. She was then sent to live with her father in Nashville who was extremely strict and forced her to read a book and write a book report each week. With regards to living with her father, Oprah stated *“As strict as he was, he had some concerns about me making the best of my life and would not accept anything less than what he thought was my best.”*

Oprah Winfrey’s broadcasting career began at the age of 17 when she was hired by WVOL radio in Nashville. She attended Tennessee State University, where she majored in Speech Communications and Performing Arts.

In 1976, she moved to Baltimore to join WJZ-TV news as a co-anchor and in 1978 discovered that she had a talent for hosting talk shows when she became the co-host of WJZ-TV’s “People are Talking” while continuing her responsibilities as an anchor and news reporter.

In January of 1984, she came to Chicago to host WLS-TV’s “AM Chicago” a struggling local talk show. In less than one year, “AM Chicago” had become the hottest show in town and the show was extended to one hour. In September of 1985 it was renamed “The Oprah Winfrey Show”. The Oprah Winfrey Show became the number one talk show in national syndication in less than one year. In 1987, in its first year of eligibility, the show received three Daytime Emmy Awards and received a consecutive Daytime Emmy Award in 1988. In that year, Oprah herself received “Broadcaster of the Year Award” from the International Radio and Television Society. She was the youngest person and only the fifth woman ever to receive this honor.

Oprah was also nominated for an Oscar and a Golden Globe Award in the category of Best Supporting Actress for her work in “The Color Purple” in 1985. In 1986, Oprah formed her own production company, Harpo Productions which is based in Chicago. In October of 1988, Harpo Productions acquired ownership of “The Oprah Winfrey Show” making Oprah Winfrey the first woman in history to own and produce her own talk show. The following year, Harpo produced its first television miniseries, “The Women of Brewster Place” with Oprah as star and executive producer.

In 1991, Oprah Winfrey initiated a campaign to establish a national database of convicted child abusers, and testified before a US Senate Judiciary Committee on behalf of a National Child Protection Act. Acting President, Bill Clinton signed the “Oprah Winfrey Bill” into law on 1993. This database is now available to law enforcement agencies and concerned parties across the country.

Oprah Winfrey was named one of the “100 Most Influential People of the 20th Century” by Time Magazine and received a “Lifetime Achievement Award” in 1998. She then began an “on-air book club” and her selections became instant best-sellers. In 1999, she received the National Book Foundation’s “50th anniversary Gold Medal” for her services to books and authors.

Oprah is one of the partners in Oxygen Media; a programming network designed primarily for women. In 2000, Oprah’s “Angel Network” began presenting awards in the amount of \$100,000 for people who were recognized as using their own lives to improve the lives of others.

When Forbes Magazine published its first list of America’s billionaires in 2003, it disclosed that Oprah Winfrey was the first African-American woman to become a billionaire.

Quotes taken from the following article (<http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/win0bio-1>).

“ Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down ”

Oprah Winfrey

Working During High School: Positive Preparation or Dangerous Distraction

Every family has a different perspective when it comes to their children working once they turn 16 or 17. Some families see it as an opportunity for their child to learn a sense of financial independence and responsibility. Other parents feel as though it is a major distraction from their child's primary focus; succeeding academically! As far as the students are concerned, some have no interest in working, some do not feel as though it is an option due to other time commitments and others are eager to join the work force or are required to do so due to individual or family financial constraints.



With all these different choices and perspectives, what does the research say about long-term effects of children working during high school? According to an article in USA today (http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2005-02-21-highschool-work_x.htm), there is an ongoing debate as to the benefits or disadvantages of adolescents working while they are in school. This article refers to one study which states that "high school students who work 20 hours a week or less reap the benefits including increased confidence, improved time-management skills and enhanced academic success". However, they also refer to other studies which argue that working during high school hampers academic achievement.

Based on current research and opposing arguments, it does not appear that a blanket statement can be made as to "the right decision." Instead, the answer may be for each family to evaluate their individual circumstances in determining whether a part-time job would have a positive impact on their child's current academic performance as well as their long-term occupational development and success.

In order to make this decision, here are a few questions that you might want to ask yourself. ***Am I an organized person with good study habits?*** Having a part-time job will require a high level of organization and strong study habits to make sure that you stay on top of your academic responsibilities. ***Do I make good use of my free time, and can I realistically fit a part-time job into my schedule?*** A part-time job can create conflicts with other extra-curricular activities and will certainly cut into your social calendar. After you've asked yourself these questions, make a "pros and cons" list with your family to get a visual picture of all the ways that a job will impact your schedule.

If you and your family decide that the benefits outweigh the costs, here are a few tips to keep you on the right track.

- 1). ***Try and schedule your classes and your shifts as far in advance as possible to avoid scheduling conflicts.***
- 2). ***Use your time efficiently;*** ask your employer if he/she objects to you doing homework when the work is slow, and do homework on your way to the job if you take public transportation.
- 3). ***Be prepared for the possibility that you might have to make some sacrifices.*** You will have to prioritize your time and you might have to cut down on some things to make sure that you are fulfilling all your responsibilities.
- 4). ***Start off slow at work as far as the amount of hours that you take on.*** Make sure that you can handle 5-10 hours before you try and do 15-20.
- 5). ***If you start to feel that you are doing too much, admit it and change your schedule.***
- 6). ***Lastly, make sure that there is time in your schedule for some fun and relaxation;*** it's a must in order to stay happy and successful!

Wings of Frozen Tears

by Sydelle Barreto



I watch her from across the room
She bows her head, covers her face
But I know what she's trying to hide,
the tears that fall like bitter rain.

Yet they soothe as they go.
She's hurting more than I can know
And more than I'll ever feel.
I have my pain, but hers is worse.

Even when her tears have ceased,
her eyes reflect her real grief.
I see the pools of pain.
Sadness, anger, pain, regret,

Directed towards the person
that was never there and never is
that tears a family apart.
Do they know the damage they've done?

I hope she knows I'm here for her
Though there's not much I can do.
I'll be her shield so she can heal, from the harsh wounds inflicted.
I'll stand by her and hold her as
she braves this storm again.

The scars she may never heal,
But I know the pain will fade.
It will be a ghost of the past, and she'll sail onward in the ocean of her life.
One day she'll return, as strong and fierce as ever.

But until then...
I'll hold her hand and lift her up; I'll never let her fall.



PARENTS VS. FRIENDS - TEENS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Teenagers are in a position where they have relied on their parents and caregivers for love, support and guidance for their entire lives. However, as they begin to assert their independence, the advice and acceptance of their peers takes on a much greater level of importance. So what happens when your family expresses a strong sense of dissatisfaction with your friends and in some instances, forbid you to associate with particular people? This article will provide some helpful hints if you are looking to de-escalate the situation.



Your first move should be to recognize that your parents and family are only looking out for your best interests and trying to make sure that you are safe. Try to look at the situation, at least temporarily, from their point of view. Take an honest look at the relationship(s) that they do not support and ask yourself these questions; Has this person ever steered me in the wrong direction or gotten me into trouble? Have I ever found myself in a dangerous (physically or emotionally) situation as a result of this relationship? Is this person adding something positive to my life, or has it simply brought more stress and tension? Once you **HONESTLY** answer these questions, you will be in a better position to discuss the relationship with your parents. Perhaps you will realize that you're family is correct, in which case, you should end the unhealthy relationship.

After examining the relationship, you might still feel that this is a valuable friend and blatantly disagree with your family's objections. If this is the case, it is time to sit down with your parents/ family and have a mature discussion. In a respectful and calm way, ask them to explain why they feel that this person is a bad influence. Some of their reasons may seem petty, others might seem completely off base, and perhaps some might have merit. Let your parents know that you hear their objections and that you agree with some of the points that they are making (provided that you do actually agree). Your parents and family may be more likely to see things from your perspective if you acknowledge that some of their concerns are legitimate. Also, feel free to express your opinions if you disagree with some of the things that your parents or family are saying. However, keep in mind that they might not agree with your assessment of the situation.

As mentioned above, there may be some circumstances where your parents/ family are completely off base. Some of these examples could include objections that they have based on racism, classism, religious bias, or homophobia. If this is the case, it is important that you stand your ground and express yourself in an adult way. The way you present yourself will have an impact on how your argument is received by your family.

By the end of this process, you should be in a better position to determine if this relationship is worth fighting for. If you have handled yourself as an adult and want to continue the relationship, hopefully your parents/ family have heard your objections and are willing to compromise.

Adapted from the following website: <http://teenadvice.about.com/od/loveanddating/a/forbiddenlove.htm>

"Some of the biggest challenges in relationships come from the fact that most people enter a relationship in order to get something; they are trying to find someone who is going to make them feel good. In reality, the only way that a relationship will last is if you see your relationship as a place that you go to give, and not a place you go to take".

Tony Robbins

Dear Syd,

I was absent for a week of school because I was really sick. I missed a ton of homework, and now have to do my current homework. None of my teachers will give me extensions. It's way too much work for me to do!

- Homework Horror

Dear Homework Horror,

First, mark down the dates on a calendar for when each assignment is due. Then make a study schedule by keeping certain days for certain subjects. Most importantly, keep calm. Soon enough you'll be done.

- Syd

Dear Syd,

When I make a new friend, my BFF takes it personally. She says, "You'd rather talk to her than to me!" and stays mad for several days. What should I do?

- Friendship Probs

Dear Friendship Probs,

Clinger Alert! Having a clingy friend is a compliment to how great you are to hang with, but it can be frustrating. If she panics when you hang with new people, tell her it doesn't minimize your friendship. In fact, it might make it more fun. Include her in some plans with new friends so she won't feel left out. If she still overreacts, distance yourself from her controlling ways—and tell her why. No one should be limited to one friend. - Syd

Dear Syd,

My boyfriend is really sweet but doesn't do anything. We've been going out for several months but he is shy and I'm the one who asks him to dances, movies, or anything like that. My best friend's boyfriend does all of that plus gives her gifts for no reason. Should I dump him?

- Why Have a Boyfriend?

Dear Why Have a Boyfriend,

All guys are different, some are more romantic, outgoing, and attentive than others. Just because you are the more outgoing one in the relationship doesn't mean you should give up. Try encouraging him to talk more by asking him questions like "What's your all-time favorite movie?" or "What were you for Halloween when you were little?" or "What are your grandparents like?" or "Do you remember your dreams?" If you give your boyfriend a present (anything from a CD to a candy bar) he may reciprocate. But you know what? The feelings you exchange count more than the gifts.

- Syd

Dear Syd



QUOTES

"Give it all you've got because you never know if there's going to be a next time"

Danielle Ingrum

"I keep my ideals, because in spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart"

Anne Frank

And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years"

Abraham Lincoln

The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.

Winston Churchill

TOP TEN THINGS YOU HATE TO HEAR FROM YOUR PARENTS:

- 10). Why can't you be more like your brother/sister?
- 9). You're grades are terrible!
- 8). Clean your room!
- 7). Not everyone has a cell phone.
- 6). Get off the computer!
- 5). What's wrong with this shirt?
- 4). You don't need this.
- 3). Don't talk back.
- 2). No more candy for you.



And the number one thing that teenagers hate to hear from their parents is...

- 1). **Stop giving me attitude; change your tone right now!**

TOP TEN REASONS TO ENJOY YOUR TEENAGE YEARS!

- 10). You can eat lunch at McDonalds and not gain 4 Lbs.
- 9). You are free of serious financial responsibilities.
- 8). Usually, you only have 1 job; to succeed academically.
- 7). You get to enjoy as much physical exercise as you want without feeling sore for a week afterwards.
- 6). There are plenty of days where you get to sit around and do nothing.
- 5). Someone else reminds you of important to-do's.
- 4). You get to see your friends almost every day.
- 3). You have fun things lined up for the weekends and have have enough energy to do them.
- 2). You get to play all kinds of sports instead of having all of your hopes rest on your fantasy teams.

And the number one reason to enjoy your teenage years....

- 1). **You have your whole life ahead of you, and can take it in any direction that you want.**

TOP

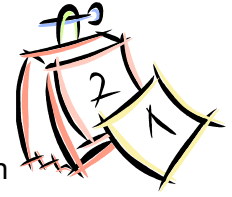


FAVES

THINGS TO HAVE IN YOUR CLOSET (FOR GIRLS)

1. Hoop Earrings
2. Cuff Bracelets
3. Scarves
4. **ANYTHING** animal print
5. Plaid shirt
6. Boots (leather, suede, fringe)
7. Converse
8. Ballet Flats
9. Skinny Jeans
10. Bar/Batmitzah Dress (LBD)

COMMUNITY NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



- **Hugs From Home– Thanksgiving Holiday Edition:**

The Young Leaders of LYCS and the Livingston Community are hard at work in collecting and distributing holiday baskets for the troops in Afghanistan. Hugs from Home baskets are currently located in all of the Livingston Public Schools (in the reception offices), as well as the Library, West Essex YMCA, Senior Community Center levels I and II, Livingston Fire Department Headquarters, Monmouth Court Community Center and the offices of the West Essex Tribune. Deadline extended to **Friday, November 20** for final donations.

Join us on **Saturday, November 21** at 10:00 am at Monmouth Court Community Center to help sort and pack donations ready for shipping overseas.

Upcoming Community Events:

- **Community Outreach at Care One:**

- Thursday, November 19: Bingo from 6:45pm - 8:00pm. Bring a smile to a senior's face!

- Wednesday, December 2: Talent Show from 7:00pm - 8:00pm. Share your Talent!

- **Holiday and Family Social**

Saturday, December 5, 2009, 2:00pm - 4:00pm. Music, games, food and refreshments.

- **Toys for Tots**

Starting in December, 2009, join Leaders in collecting toys for children in foster care, hospital and other children's organizations.

Keeping Our Kids Healthy:

Navigating the Emotional Well-Being of Teens & Young Adults

3rd Annual JFS Joseph F. Goldberg Memorial

Learning Disabilities Seminar

Thursday, November 19th, 2009

7:30pm @ Livingston High School (30 Robert Hobart Drive)

Sponsored by Jewish Family Services of Metrowest
and the "Got Blue Collaborative"

Pre-Registration is required. For more information or to register,

please call Sylvia Heller at JFS: (973) 765-9050, ext 262

or email: sheller@jfsmetrowest.org.

For additional programs visit our website at www.jfsmetrowest.org

FREE Event

Guest speakers: Alison K. Malmon and Jess Shatkin, M.D. will discuss:

- *Responses to stigma and mental health struggles*
- *Uniqueness of depression in adolescence.*
- *The vulnerabilities that accompany depression.*
- *Effects of stigma on college students.*
- *Mental health issues and trends in college students.*

Guest Panelists will include: high school guidance counselor, college clinical counselor, human resource professional and student who experienced depression.

Livingston Youth & Community Services



**Celebrating A Drug Free Life
Through Leadership**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.LIVINGSTONLYCS.ORG

The Livingston Youth and Community Services program (LYCS) is a collaborative community organization sponsored by the Township of Livingston, the Livingston Municipal Alliance Committee (LMAC) and the Mental Health Association of Essex County (MHAEC).

LYCS is a drug prevention program that teaches healthy life choices to Grades 3 to 12 after-school in the Livingston school district. The primary goal of LYCS is to be a community based mental health resource that identifies and implements Wellness programs.

Our program is designed to:

- Reduce the incidence of substance abuse among the adolescent population and to have Livingston's youth make healthier life choices
- Train Leaders and provide opportunities to practice leadership by participating in community service activities
- Empower parents with tools they need to communicate effectively with their children
- Provide opportunities for Livingston youth to engage in healthy social interactions

Cyber-safety Top Ten: Keeping Your Cyber-World Safe



- 10). Follow Internet safety rules at home and school.
- 9). Practice good netiquette– be nice, honest and considerate of others.
- 8). Recognize and report possible cyberbullying. Never participate in it.
- 7). Remember that a person you communicate with online may not be who he or she seems. Stick to chatting with people you know.
- 6). Do not post (or give out) **ANY** identifying information online– that includes your name, address and passwords.
- 5). Do not post personal photos or send them to someone you don't know.
- 4). **NEVER** agree to meet someone in person.
- 3). Beware of spam, pop-up ads and viruses– think before you click.
- 2). Never reply to any strange messages or open any unexpected or unknown attachments.
- 1). **Tell, Tell, Tell!**. Get help from a trusted adult if you run into any trouble online– Especially if you are worried about your safety, or the safety of someone else.