

Time



TEENS

Peer to Peer

Livingston Youth & Community Services

Winter, 2009

WARNING SIGNS OF A DANGEROUS RELATIONSHIP

The physical altercation between Chris Brown and Rihanna in February of this year has thrust domestic violence into the spotlight. Rihanna discussed the attack and her relationship with Chris Brown for the first time publicly with Diane Sawyer earlier this month. In the interview, Rihanna stated that she eventually ended things with Chris Brown after thinking about the example that she was setting for other people that are experiencing domestic violence. Rihanna stated: *“When I realized that my selfish decision for love could result in some young girl getting killed, I could not be easy with that.”*

For anyone that saw the pictures of Rihanna’s battered face following the attack, hopefully it serves as a reminder of the severity of domestic violence. In addition to Rihanna speaking out against domestic violence, teenagers are sharing their advice regarding the warning signs of a dangerous relationship. In an article on “Teenhealthfx.com”, teenagers identified the following warning signs:

- Jealousy and possessiveness as opposed to mutual caring and respect.
- Drugs and alcohol use. Teens state that drug/alcohol use *“are never an excuse for inexcusable behavior... A boyfriend or girlfriend who has a problem with drinking or drugs may be more likely to become abusive.”*
- Bullying and intimidation.
- Being embarrassed or criticized in public. This kind of verbal abuse is unacceptable and can be just as hurtful as any other kind of abuse. Do not let any kind of abuse go unnoticed.

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Remote Control

Performance & workshop

by Deana Educational Theater

January 29, 2010

5:30-7:00 pm

@ Monmouth Court Community Center
(26 Monmouth Ct)

Learn to identify potentially abusive behaviors and develop healthy relationships

Open to teens and/or parents

Email RSVP by Jan 22

lycs@livingston.org

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Livingston Youth & Community Services



Celebrating A Drug Free Life
Through Leadership



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello Readers,

In this issue of Time 4 Teens we have some great articles about community events as well as topics of interest to teens.

Our feature story highlights the warning signs of abusive relationships. Other articles highlight important issues facing teenagers and their families. These topics include suggestions on how to raise your GPA, incorporating aspects of wellness into your life and warning signs of dangerous relationships.

LYCS Peer Leaders program will be incorporating some exciting changes for 2010. Peer Leaders is open to Livingston middle school students (grades 6-8) and provides an opportunity for students to gain meaningful experiences and create a supportive environment as they go up through the grades and into high school.

Please feel free to submit your articles for consideration in future issues of Time 4 Teens, or for inclusion in our online column at The Alternative Press,

Enjoy the newsletter!

The Editor

email: lycs@livingston.org

write to: Time 4 Teens - LYCS,
PO Box 822, Livingston, NJ 07039

or Fax: 973-992-9318

RAISING YOUR GPA ADVICE FROM TEENS



For most high-school students, the largest barrier to academic success is not their level of intelligence. Instead, it comes from a variety of other problems including a lack of interest in what you are learning and/or problems with your time management and study habits. The result can be a feeling of hopelessness and a lack of motivation to honestly assess what you could be doing differently. Luckily, your peers have a few suggestions of ways you can become more invested in what you are learning and more productive in how you are learning it.

There are undoubtedly classes in your schedule that are boring. This may be because you are not interested in the material, or perhaps the teacher is not very exciting or charismatic. Regardless of the specifics, here is one suggestion that will help you to pay more attention in class; **make a habit of asking at least one question in every class.** In order to ask a question, you have to be paying attention to what the teacher is saying. Try and make it into a fun game where you come up with questions that require the teacher to do some thinking as well.

In addition to asking questions, another way to stay focused in class is to **answer questions.** According to most students, the reason they shy away from answering questions is not because they don't know the answer. Rather, they are afraid of looking foolish in front of their peers. Abraham Lincoln once said "*better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt*". While this may be true in some situations; for a student it is exactly the opposite. Even if your answer is wrong, you are made aware of the right answer and you are more likely to retain the information. If you are right it gives you increased confidence while you are taking tests.

If you are shy and do not feel comfortable asking or answering questions in front of the class, there are other strategies that you can employ. Write down the questions that the teacher and students are asking, as well as the answers to those questions. Pay particular attention to the questions that no one seems to know, as these may be difficult questions on future tests. When it comes time to study for tests, write these questions and answers on index cards and quiz yourself. Also think about studying in a group setting with other students. (Choose the ones that are asking and answering questions)

Lastly, go over your notes every night before you go to sleep; even if its only for ten or fifteen minutes. Research suggests that information you are exposed to in the last hour before sleep has a greater chance to stay embedded in your memory. Scientists are still trying to understand the neurological reasons behind this effect. However, don't you always remember the last thing you did before you went to sleep, while other details of the day are much harder to grasp?

These strategies can have a strong impact on your ability to retain information and your subsequent academic performance. However, they must coincide with a genuine desire and motivation to improve. If you are committed to applying these strategies on a consistent basis, you should definitely see results.

Adapted from: <http://teenadvice.about.com/od/currenteventsissues/a/betterlearning.htm>

POSITIVE ROLE MODEL:

The following article is an interview conducted by an eighth grader at Heritage Middle School, Alex Ehrlich.

Alex decided to interview Alan Karpas, President of Health Community, Healthy Initiative of Livingston (HCHY) and a founding member and chairman of the Livingston Vision 20/20 committee.

Alex: When you were a kid, did you help out in your community?

Alan: No, not really, because I grew up in Brooklyn and all I did was go out and play stick ball. I did do Boy Scouts and became an Eagle Scout, but that didn't have much to do with the community, just scouting.

Alex: What made you first start out volunteering for the town of Livingston?

Alan: That's an interesting question Alex. I moved to Livingston in 1970 and worked very hard, traveled a lot, and was away 2-3 weeks of the month. I was not really around to get involved. When I retired in 2003, I was invited to come to a township meeting for the long-range planning committee. Next thing I knew, I was on the Vision 20/20 Committee and Mayor Steve Santola came up to me and asked if I wanted to chair it. Since I was retired, I said yes. That's how it all started.

Alex: What are the things that you are most proud of that you have done for the community?

Alan: Definitely HCHY. I am very proud of what it has grown into. My involvement in HCHY helped propel it to become the factor within the township that it is today. I am also very proud of my involvement and accomplishments with the Vision 20/20 group. We have gotten a lot of stuff done for the town. The skate park idea came to us through Vision 20/20 and then went to HCHY to become a reality. That's how I got involved with the skate park and many other things that we have done with 20/20 and HCHY. Also with 20/20 we have had transportation issues. We are close to having a shuttle to the train stations. We are proud of all of the things we have done with the 20/20 group.

Alex: What is the reason you have helped out for so long in the community?

Alan: Once I get involved with something I like to make sure it succeeds, it's a personal thing. One of my sons and my grandchildren live in Livingston and I like to see that everything is good for my family. I am very proud that everything that I have gotten involved with happens and happens well.

Alex: What advice would you give to a person that would like to start out volunteering?

Alan: Be very patient, be very understanding and be very patient over and over again. I always had my own companies where democracy ended at the front door. I could do what I want. Now I have to deal with the procedures of a municipality. When you get involved with a municipality you have to follow many rules and regulations. You have to get beyond all the frustrations and just deal with it and understand the process. Joining and helping the community and being involved was spectacular for me. If we can just get one thing done, it will make me happy.

"Our aspirations are our possibilities."

Robert Browning (1812-1889), English poet and critic

The ABC's of Wellness

Being good to your body can be hard work! After a long week, it is easier to sit on the couch and watch TV than to go for a walk. It is also much easier to pull through the drive-thru at your local fast-food restaurant, than to go home and eat a healthy meal. Perhaps this is why 34% of adolescents (ages 12-19) are overweight. (Center for Disease Control, data from 2003-2006 research) According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), adolescents and adults who are overweight are more susceptible to the following health concerns; Coronary Heart Disease, Heart Attacks, Stroke, Diabetes, Cancer, Hypertension, Liver and Gallbladder Disease, Sleep Apnea and Respiratory Problems, Osteoarthritis and Gynecological Problems.



So what are the necessary steps you can take to avoid these problems and to make sure you are on the road to wellness? There are two different steps that you must take to ensure you are living a healthy lifestyle; a nutritional diet and regular exercise. A nutritional diet does not mean starving yourself or searching the internet for this week's most popular diet. Instead, go back to the basics and refresh your memory with the Food Guide Pyramid. (<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>) The pyramid provides an outline as to the different food groups that exist, and how many servings you need from each group per day.

The other key aspect of wellness is a steady dose of physical activity. The word "exercise" tends to make it sound like a chore, but it doesn't have to be that way. Instead, think of it as a fun physical activity and it immediately sounds more enjoyable. The activity can be anything you want from walking to roller-blading, dancing, football or soccer with friends. The only necessity is that you get your body moving. Try and do thirty minutes of physical activity every day!

In addition to preventing the health concerns mentioned above, regular physical activity gives you strength, endurance, flexibility and a healthy heart and lungs. It can also help you think more clearly (having healthy habits can keep your mind sharp), feel better about yourself and relieve stress, anxiety and depression.

So if a healthy lifestyle can be achieved simply by a nutritional diet and thirty minutes of physical activity every day, why is obesity such a problem in the United States? Some people have more than likely developed the mindset that their schedule is too busy for exercise. As far as diet, often times people get into a routine of eating certain unhealthy things, and change is always difficult.

Unfortunately, your schedule is always going to be busy and it will not get any easier as you get older. So here are some helpful hints to incorporate aspects of wellness into your busy schedule:

- 1). If you don't have thirty minutes for physical activity, break it up. How about ten minutes, three times per day.**
- 2). Get active whenever your can;** take the stairs instead of the elevator, walk to the store instead of getting a ride, do some push-ups or sit-ups during television commercials; anything that keeps your body moving is a good thing.
- 3). Take a closer look at the fast-food menu.** It is inevitable that you will find yourself in restaurants with plenty of greasy and unhealthy options. However, most restaurants now have a compliment of healthy choices. Think about what you are putting in your body and give the healthy ones a try.
- 4). Drink some water instead of soda.** Water has lots of nutrients and helps the body digest food, excrete waste and regulate body temperature. You can start off slow, but try and get to eight glasses per day.
- 5). Balance your snacks.** If you eat a snack that is not good for you, try and eat a healthy one next time around. Some examples of healthy snacks are apples, oranges, raisins or trail-mix.
- 6). Don't expect to be perfect;** it is unrealistic to expect that every meal you eat will be nutritious. Take small steps and remember to focus on moderation and progress, not perfection.

Adapted from the following sources: <http://www/cdc.gov/obesity/causes/health.html>

<http://definition of wellness.com/dimensions-of-wellness/physical-wellness.html>

WARNING SIGNS OF A DANGEROUS RELATIONSHIP (CON'T FROM PAGE 1)

- If games/ playfulness within the relationship mess with your mind or feelings, this is a cause for concern.
- ANY ATTEMPT TO HURT OR SCARE YOU PHYSICALLY IS A LOUD AND CLEAR SIGNAL THAT YOU ARE IN A VOLATILE AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATION!!
- Talk! Talk! Talk! If you feel like something is wrong, trust your gut instincts and talk with a trusted adult. Talk about your concerns and do not become another statistic of domestic violence!

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

(<http://music-mix.ew.com/2009/11/05/rihanna-diane-sawyer-interview-1/>)

QUOTES REGARDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

"If you give me any problem in America I can trace it down to domestic violence. It is the cradle of most of the problems, economic, psychological, educational." **Salma Hakek**

"One in three women may suffer from abuse and violence in her lifetime. This is an appalling human rights violation, yet it remains one of the invisible and under-recognized pandemics of our time." **Nicole Kidman**

"The schools play an important role when it comes down to protecting children against violence. Violence is one of the principal reasons why children don't go to school. It's also one of the causes of the alarming school dropout rates." **Shakira**



PEER LEADERS CLUB



Starting in January 2009, the Peer Leaders program will be open to all Middle school students in the Leaders program (grades 6—8). Peer Leaders will be held at Monmouth Court Community Center (26 Monmouth Ct) from 5:30-7:00 pm, once a month.

This change in programming is part of our continual improvement plan and will allow more meaningful and informative classes to be held that are not restricted by the current situation and limited time available at MPM school (last bell to last bus). In addition, this change will allow cross-age teaching and mentoring with our Peer to Peer High School student program and will help middle school students make healthy choices as they move up grades and into the high school. Students will have the use of the game room at Monmouth Court Community Center as part of the recreation that is incorporated into the program. Pizza and refreshments will be provided for this evening program.

The Peer Leaders program will be modeled on our Peer to Peer program and will include core topics around leadership skills, substance abuse prevention and healthy life choices, Adopt-a-Charity and community service opportunities and editing of our Time 4 Teens newsletter. All grades are invited to submit articles including poems, Top Faves, Positive Role Model in the community, favorite quotes etc... The Time 4 Teens newsletter is quarterly: Autumn issue (Oct), Winter (January), Spring (March) and Summer (June). In addition, there is a special issue in May that covers the Peer to Peer Teen Conference which will be held on Friday, May 28, 2010 at the Senior Community Center during Youth Appreciation Week.

If you have anything of interest, please submit the articles to Time 4 Teens LYCS, PO Box 822, Livingston, NJ 07039, fax: 973-992-9318 or email to: lycs@livingston.org

Q: *I will be in High School next year and I am kind of scared! Most of my closest friends drink a lot, smoke and pop pills. I want to stay best friends with all of them without harming my body. My best friend has an older sister with a car and they have already invited me to go out and “party” with them. I think drinking is okay and I want to drink at parties because I can’t say no to things. How do I handle this?*

A: We’re concerned that you believe you “can’t say no to things” but are encouraged that you are “kind of scared” and concerned about harming your body. “Partying” with someone’s older sister who is drinking and driving represents a huge risk of injury and death. Never get into a car when the driver has been drinking! Practice your refusal skills by role-playing with your friend who doesn’t plan to drink or with your parents or another trusted adult. If these are truly your friends, they will respect your healthy and safe decisions not to “drink, smoke, or pop pills.”

Q *I don’t have that many friends. I don’t know why people don’t like me. What should I do to keep friends?”*

A: The best way to make and keep friends is to find others who share your interests. This can be as simple as a shared interest in shopping, sports or music. That old saying is also true— that the best way to have a friend is to be a friend. Reach out to the others who share your interests, sit with them at lunch, invite them to join you in the activities you all like, listen to their thoughts and tell them yours.

Q *I am in all honors classes, music, sports and so on. I usually get straight A’s and I’ve noticed that my friends treat me like some kind of freak. How can I get them to stop without quitting everything?*

A: It is great that you are doing so well. Don’t try to change that. But you’re right; it does make you slightly different from other students. Your friends, though, don’t really want you to be just like them. What most people look for in a friend are these things; respect, consideration, loyalty, tolerance, support, sincerity, someone who listens and understands, honesty, sharing and generosity. What your friends are saying when they tease you, in essence, is that they don’t feel very competent in the areas that you are. So you might try asking if they are having trouble in a particular subject (listening and understanding), if they need help (sharing, generosity and support), and otherwise praising them for the things they do well (respect and consideration).

Adapted from www.TeenGrowth.com

Dear Syd



QUOTES

"The only man who makes no mistakes is the man who never does anything."

Theodore Roosevelt

"Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish."

John Quincy Adams

"I destroy my enemy when I make him my friend"

Abraham Lincoln

"Believe when you are most unhappy, that there is something for you to do in the world. So long as you can sweeten another person's pain, life is not in vain."

Helen Keller

Addict

A Poem by Jordan Stone



Dread, disgust, hate, despair
Life sucks and you really don't care.



Everything people say just goes away.
Your body's still hurting and your lungs decay.

A song to your heart and your heart can't listen.
Black and dark dirt, no glisten.

You're an **addict** and it hurts to be...
Somebody that can't give his body any sympathy.

The patch on your arm and the gum in your mouth,
doesn't have any effect, but increase the doubt.

You want to be cool like the other kids,
thoughts and decisions like education, they miss.

Love is gone and your parents lose hope.
Upon fallen tears which they choke.

Understanding is different than doing, and seeing is different than believing.
Funeral, parents grieving.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



Livingston Youth and Community Services (LYCS) is proud to announce that Peer to Peer's (P2P) inaugural podcast is now available on-line at our website: www.livingstonlycs.org. The podcast is an audio interview with Officer Gary Mankowitz (D.A.R.E and Livingston Community Policing). The topic is one that is relevant in this age of technology, Cyber-bullying. The interview was followed closely by the successful parent performance by the George Street Playhouse, In Real Life, which was presented at Heritage Middle School on December 2, 2009. LYCS is planning a follow-up workshop in January, 2010 which will provide tangible solutions to the problems created by Cyber-bullying. In addition to the workshop, P2P students will be hosting another podcast interview with a panel of community leaders to further discuss these issues. If you are interested in participating in the panel discussion, please call Susan Ridley, Director, LYCS (973) 535-2646 for further details.

As part of community programming, LYCS is co-sponsoring the Livingston Chinese Community's Chinese New Year 2010 celebrations on February 6, 2010 at Livingston High School (4:00-9:30 pm). Save the date and join us for Chinese cultural performances, exhibits, Chinese Arts workshops, children's games and fun activities for seniors. There will also be a food court available. Details on pre-orders for performances and/or food court will be forthcoming. These celebrations are brought to you by the Livingston Chinese Association (LCA), Livingston Huaxia Chinese School (LHXCS), Livingston Chinese School (LCS), Living Stone Christian Church (LSCC) and Livingston High School (LHS).

LYCS Upcoming events:

January 20, 2010 – CareOne at Livingston community service program, 6:45-8:00 pm. Leaders are invited to volunteer their time to play Bingo and socialize with residents at the nursing home. Bring a smile to a senior's face. Email RSVP: lycs@livingston.org by January 15, 2010.

January 24, 2010 – Swim & Gym and Parent Social will be at West Essex YMCA from 4:00-6:00 pm. Leaders may invite siblings. Email RSVP: lycs@livingston.org by January 18, 2010

January 29, 2010 – REMOTE CONTROL presentation and workshop by the Deana Educational Theater at Monmouth Court Community Center (26 Monmouth Ct) starting at 5:30 –7:00 pm. Open to teens and/or parents. Email RSVP: lycs@livingston.org by January 22, 2010

Wishing you all a happy and prosperous New Year

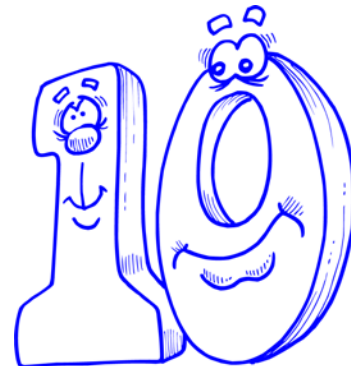
10 Keys to a Good Friendship

- 1). Pick people who have similar interests as you, so you have things in common, but don't rule out people who aren't exactly like you. It's good to keep an open mind.
- 2). Remember the Golden Rule - Treat others the way you would like to be treated, if you respect others, others will respect you.
- 3). Realize that nobody's perfect, everyone has quirks and flaws, and accepting those flaws is the key to friendship.
- 4). Value each other's opinions
- 5). Realize that even best friends cannot be together 24/7, develop other interest and avoid jealousy.
- 6). Communication is vital, if something is affecting your friendship, talk with your friend about it.
- 7). Don't let outside factors like stress affect your friendship. A good friend will let you vent to them, but don't only use them to vent and be ready to listen in return.
- 8). Learn from each other.
- 9). Don't talk behind your friends back. Remember that honesty, trustworthiness and loyalty are vital aspects of a good friendship.
- 10). Choose your words wisely, because you can never take them back.



Adapted from <http://teenhealthfx.com>

TOP



FAVES

1. **"Eclipse"** by **Stephenie Meyer**
(Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette Book Group USA).
2. **"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows"** by J. K. Rowling (Scholastic).
3. **"Diary of a Wimpy Kid"**
by **Jeff Kinney** (Abrams Books for Young Readers).
4. **"Vampire Academy"** by **Richelle Mead** (Razorbill).
5. **"Maximum Ride: Saving the World and Other Extreme Sports"** by **James Patterson** (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette Book Group USA).
6. **"City of Bones"** by **Cassandra Clare** (Margaret K. McElderry).
7. **"The Sweet Far Thing"**
by **Libba Bray** (Delacorte).
8. **"Extras"** by **Scott Westerfeld** (Simon Pulse).
9. **"Before I Die"** by **Jenny Downham** (Random House/David Fickling).
10. **"Twisted"** by **Laurie Halse Anderson** (Viking Juvenile).

Source: <http://www.ala.org/>

Livingston Youth & Community Services



**Celebrating A Drug Free Life
Through Leadership**

PO Box 822, Livingston NJ 07039

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.LIVINGSTONLYCS.ORG

The Livingston Youth and Community Services program (LYCS) is funded by the Township of Livingston and the Livingston Municipal Alliance Committee (LMAC).

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
- Build stronger healthy families through workshops and programs

Things Teenagers Hate to Hear Parents Say

I'm disappointed in you

You should have known better

You're heading down the wrong path

Life isn't fair

You can when that room of yours is clean

You don't deserve to

Don't even think about it

I have never heard of those people, no you can't hangout with them

Sounds suspicious

NO!!

What time to you call this?

