

Counseling Communiqué

Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Counseling Department
<http://ab.mec.edu/abrhs/counseling/index/shtml>

“Spark”

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I can think of ten good reasons not to exercise today. I need to finish this article, I have to go grocery shopping, and the list goes on. I recently read a book entitled, "Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain" by Dr. John Ratey. He explains the science behind the mind body connection and why you feel better after you work out. The book emphasized that we need to switch our thinking and prioritize exercise. Dr. Ratey discusses how exercise, particularly cardio, increases focus and attention. He cites one study that looked at students who were not reading at grade level and had them work out in the morning before school. Their reading classes were scheduled right after this. What they found is a dramatic increase in the student's reading scores as well as in their confidence across the board.

Another correlation that Dr. Ratey looked at was Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and exercise. For his patients who have ADD he prescribes consistent exercise. He mentions that he prescribes exercise in the middle of the day to a number of his clients, because exercise increases focus for the remainder of the day. It is not feasible for many of us to work out in the middle of the day. However, you can encourage your son or daughter to take a break after school in the form of movement before they start their homework. There are many reasons we all can think of NOT to exercise but there are many compelling ones to exercise. Exercise counteracts stress, can increase focus and productivity, can improve sleep, and the list goes on.

Any type of exercise can help. Pick an activity or a combination of activities such as running, walking, yoga, or aerobics. The key is that it is enjoyable and can easily fit into your schedule. It often helps to exercise with a buddy. For many people, meeting someone at a class or going for a walk with a friend increases motivation. I know it is hard, especially in the winter, but now might be the time we all need the benefits of exercise the most.

Try to flip your priorities around and move exercise closer to the top. The rest of your "to do" list may not seem quite as important. (Author's note: I did finish this article, did not go running, and will take my own advice tomorrow.)

Jennifer Legg Gabel
School Counselor

On-line Course Registration for 2011-12

On-line course registration week is here! Students received instructions in homeroom at the start of the day on Monday Feb. 28th. Students in grade 11 may access course registration via the PowerSchool Parent Portal beginning March 1st, grade 10 beginning March 2nd, and grade 9 beginning March 3rd. Students may work on their selections until March 8th at which point the selections become final and the course registration page of the Parent Portal will be closed. Students who are not able to access the Internet from home should contact their counselor. Students and parents can find all the information they need about course registration on the ABRHS website <http://ab.mec.edu/abrhs>.

Dates of Interest March

- 2 Spring College Night for juniors and parents—7 P.M.
- 10 Career Speakers
- 10 & 11 Sophomore Groups-Round 2
- 12 SATs administered
- 17 Early Release Day



Coming in April

- 6 Term 3 Ends
- 9 ACTs administered
- 14 Report Cards issued
- 18-22 Spring Recess

Information for College-Bound Seniors



Financial Aid Information: Web Connections

Q: How will I pay for my college education and where can I find information to help me?

A: You can:

- use web sites.
- talk to financial aid consultants, college financial aid representatives and counselors.

There is a financial aid link on the Counseling Department web page (ab.mec.edu/abrhs/counseling/index.shtml). One place to start is “FinAid! The SmartStudent Guide to Financial Aid” (www.finaid.com) Topics covered are loans, scholarships and financial aid estimation calculations. There are also scholarship listings on Naviance.

College: It’s Not Too Late To Apply

Seniors who do not have definite plans or who have not yet applied to college, take heart! Although there are many colleges whose application deadlines have passed, there are still a great number that have a rolling admissions policy. This means that the college does not have a specific deadline but will accept applications right up until the start of the new semester, often as late as August or September. Students interested in seeking schools with a late deadline or a rolling admissions policy should contact their counselor.

Local Scholarships

All seniors going on to further education are encouraged to complete the application for all local scholarships that are awarded to seniors at graduation time. Seniors can access applications through Naviance under the ABRHS Local Scholarship Application 2011 link. Applications must be submitted by March 7th. **This is a firm deadline.** Please note there is not a submit button, but the form will save automatically.



The Grand Lodge Knights of Pythias Scholarship

The Grand Lodge Knights of Pythias, in Stoughton, Massachusetts, will award 3 scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each, to students who have made altruistic contributions to their community. Students should send a resume of achievements and reasons why they feel qualified for the award. Two recommendations confirming these achievements are also necessary. Applications are due on April 1 and can be sent to the following address: 458 Pearl Street, Stoughton, MA 02072, Attn: Humanitarian Award. Please call Rudoph Medeiros at 781-344-4096 with any questions.

Luke and Jerusha Vose Blanchard Scholarship

These scholarships are provided to graduating seniors who have been residents of the town of Boxborough for at least one year and are graduates of the Blanchard Memorial School with at least one year’s attendance. Eligible students were notified through Naviance. This application is separate from the local scholarship application and must be printed and mailed in. Questions regarding the scholarship process should be directed to Susan Sousa at ssousa@mail.ab.mec.edu or June Kfoury-McNeil at the Mellon Bank, 617-722-7121. The deadline is April 1, 2011

Information for College-Bound Juniors

College Night

On Wednesday, March 2nd, junior class parents and students are invited to attend A-B's annual College Night. Students and parents should report to the auditorium by 7:00 P.M. This year's presentation will feature a panel of admissions counselors from several area colleges. Since this poses a wonderful opportunity for all of you to interact with well-seasoned admissions officers, we would like to solicit your inquiries beforehand to present your questions to our panelists ahead of time. Therefore, please feel free to email your questions or topics of interest to Wioletta Pawlowska at wpawlowska@mail.ab.mec.edu

A portion of the night will be designated to a presentation on Naviance, a web-based college search program that A-B student, parent and counselor populations have successfully utilized for the past six years.

Naviance Revisited

Last year at this time the current members of the junior class were introduced to the Naviance Family Connections Succeed computer program and parents were sent registration information at that time as well. Some of you have visited the site several hundred times and some of you have not returned since last March. Now is the time to reacquaint yourself with the many features of Naviance.

Naviance is not only your source for career, college and financial information but it is also the application we use to send out students transcripts and letters of recommendation. It is therefore important that we have your current email address, the one you are most likely to look at on a regular basis.

It should be noted that the parent portal and student portal to Naviance are not the same. Some forms are to be completed by the student and only appear on their page and some forms are for parents and are only visible to them. For instance, parents can add colleges to a student's list but they can not remove a college from a student's list.

Spring College Fair: FREE !

The Sudbury Education Resource Fund (SERF) will host a Free Spring College Fair at Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School on Saturday, March 26th from 12:30-4:00. The event will feature Special Keynote Speaker, Marty O'Connell, Executive Director of "Colleges That Change Lives". To view seminar details and a current list of Colleges and Universities, visit the SERF website: <http://serfsudbury.org/>.



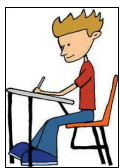
Checklist for Juniors

As students step into the world of college research it is important to be aware of current "to dos" that will help them stay on track. Now is the time for Juniors to take charge and engage in the process!

- * Make an appointment to meet with your counselor in the next couple of months to go over a plan for research and use of your Naviance account. If parents have questions they are also encouraged to contact counselors. The sooner you start, the more comfortable you will be in understanding and navigating the months ahead.
- * Juniors should be thinking about taking the SAT or ACT this spring. Check **www.collegeboard.com** or **actstudent.org** for information on test dates and registration procedures.
- * Letters of recommendation: Remember that current teachers are the ones from whom you will choose to request college recommendations. Keep up the good work and open up lines of communication to ensure good options this spring.

Bulletin Board

Advanced Placement Exam Registration



Advanced Placement Exam registration begins on March 1st and continues through March 15th during Periods 4,5,6&7. Students may pick up registration forms in the Counseling Center. Payment is expected at the time of registration in the form of a check made out to ABRHS. The cost of each AP exam is \$87. Late registrations will take place from March 16th-March 22nd and any new registrations or changes made to the registration form after March 15th will cost \$30 extra per exam. No registration will be accepted after March 22nd.

Career Speakers on March 10

The Career Exploration Program will host ten career speakers during first period on Thursday, March 10th. Juniors and seniors are invited to sign up for one of these presentations. Registration forms with a list of the speakers are available in the Counseling Center and will be distributed through junior history classes. The Counseling Department is grateful to parents and other community members who have participated as career speakers during the year.

Summer Opportunities

Stop at the front table in the Counseling Center to check out summer opportunities for high school students. Information is available for students interested in something different for their summer. Programs may be local or international, artistic, academic or adventurous, involving community service or language immersion. Programs may be small and specific, while others may be all inclusive. Counselors are available to answer questions.

Health and Wellness: Caffeine and Teens—Is it Really a Big Deal?

Does it seem like everyone is walking around carrying a cup of coffee or an energy drink? Marketing endeavors are making it easy and appealing for teens to get turned on to caffeine at an earlier age. Often this caffeine, in the form of frappuccinos, sweetened teas, energy drinks and soda, is accompanied by lots of sugar. Teens like the way these drinks taste, but many say they drink them for the caffeine boost.



Caffeine is considered a drug, and one of the world's most widely used drugs. Caffeine is a mild stimulant that works by exciting the nervous system. It may make one feel more awake and alert. However, having too much caffeine can cause side effects like "the jitters," restlessness, anxiety, trouble sleeping, headaches, high blood pressure and increased heart rate. Caffeine can stay in your system for six to eight hours; therefore it should not be consumed late in the day to ensure that sleep is not disturbed.

Caffeine's effect on a person depends on several factors, including body weight, the amount of caffeine ingested, and how often it is consumed. The amount of caffeine that is safe for teens to have in a day has not been determined. For adults, a moderate dose of caffeine is 200-300 mgs a day. The caffeine content of some popular beverages are: Dunkin Donuts: 16 ounce coffee – 206 mgs, Starbucks Café Latte: 16 ounces -150 mg, Starbucks Frappuccino: 9.5 ounce – 115 mgs, Coke: 12 ounces – 35 mgs, Monster: 16 ounces – 160 mgs, Red Bull: 8 ounces– 76 mgs, Snapple Iced Tea 16ounce – 18mgs.

Regular use of caffeine does cause mild physical dependence. If you think your child is having too much caffeine and you want him to cut back or stop, the best way to do so is gradually. Stopping too fast can lead to headaches, fatigue, lack of energy, and irritability or crankiness for a few days.