

Counseling Communiqué

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

Teenagers and Cell Phones

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Do you remember when you were in high school and the only telephone that you could use was the family telephone which was attached to the wall? Your parents could not only monitor how long you were on the phone, but could hear every word. Times have certainly changed, and the change has been rapid. Today's teenagers cannot imagine a world without cell phones (or Facebook), and many do not realize the level of responsibility involved.

Kids text far more than they talk. It is not uncommon to hear stories of kids sending and receiving as many as ten thousand texts in a single month! When you text with a high level of frequency, it is virtually impossible to attend fully to your day. Kids text during school, homework, family time, and when they should be sleeping. Kids have become so fast at punching out texts, that it leaves them thinking "it's okay, I'll just do this quickly", which has led to the alarming trend of texting and driving.

An additional problem associated with cell phones is the social issues that can arise. With the use of cell phones and networking sites such as Facebook, the drama no longer ends at 3:00. While we as teenagers could get a break, it is now twenty-four hours a day. If you happen to be at the center of that day's drama, the emotional drain is tremendous. You would also be surprised at how many kids are up texting until well after midnight and then leave their phones on "in case one of my friends needs me." You can imagine their level of fatigue in school the next day, and how it impacts their ability to learn.

I am frequently asked about whether parents should "spy" on their kids by reading their text messages or monitoring their Facebook activity. While it is true that issues of privacy and trust are important, I believe that as a parent, if I truly have reason to be concerned, whether it be drama or immaturity, I have a responsibility to monitor such things.

What is a parent to do? Here are some ideas:

Convey the idea to your child that having a cell phone is not a right, but a privilege and that as a parent, it is your responsibility to take that privilege away if it is misused. Talk to them about some of the problems associated with cell phones.

Remind your child frequently that texting and driving is against the law even at red lights.

Don't be afraid to say no or set limits. Even if they don't like limits, kids expect and need them.

Keep yourself educated and informed. While you probably won't ever need to, be aware that you can contact your carrier to get a printout of text messages. You can also block certain phone numbers and disable internet access.

If you have reason to believe that your child is texting late at night, take the phone away. Don't be swayed by "but I need it as an alarm clock."

Remember that appropriate cell phone etiquette is a social skill that kids need to learn. If we let them text at inappropriate times, they may be stunned and embarrassed one day when an employer objects.

Cindy Sweeney-Adamchek
School Psychologist

Dates of Interest

October

- 1 SATs and Subject Tests administered
- 10 Columbus Day—no school
- 15 PSAT administered at ABRHS
- 20 Career Speakers
- 22 ACTs administered

Coming in November

- 1 Professional Day No school for students
- 9 Term 1 ends
- 11 Veterans Day—no school
- 22 Report cards distributed in home-room

Information for College-Bound Seniors 2012

College Application Procedures

Student Responsibilities:

Students are responsible for sending their own applications to colleges.

Note: Information you will need to fill out your application.

- High School CEEB Code: 222297
- Address: 36 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720
- Telephone: 978-264-4700
- Fax: 978-264-3346
- The e-mail address format for counselors is first initial, last name (one word)@mail.ab.mec.edu



The Counseling Department will be sending all student records electronically. Please make sure you have completed the privacy notice located in Naviance under Colleges I am Applying To. This will authorize the Counseling Department to send your records electronically and indicate whether you have waived your right to access teacher and counselor letters of recommendation. Please also provide your Common Application user name and password when completing this section.

Students should determine the number of specific Teacher Recommendations required by each institution and request teachers to complete a letter of recommendation. Students will then select the teachers name from the drop down menu on Naviance located under “colleges I am applying to”. Teachers’ recommendations will be sent electronically along with any teacher evaluation forms.

Complete the Consent for Release of Student Records for each school to which you are applying. Bring the forms to the school Registrar’s office or give them to your counselor. You must include a check made out to ABRHS for \$4.00 for each transcript that you would like sent. The \$4.00 fee covers the cost of sending the initial transcript, mid-year report, and final grades. All requests for transcripts must be submitted to the Counseling Department at least 20 school days before the application deadline. For example, for a deadline of November 1st, requests must be received by October 3rd.

SAT and other College Board scores: In order for your application to be considered and reviewed you must have your SAT Reasoning Test and SAT Subject Test scores sent directly from the College Board in Princeton, NJ. This can be done online at www.collegeboard.org. ACT scores can be requested online at www.act.org.

Please pay attention to deadlines! Make an appointment to meet with your counselor, who is here to help you. Senior Drop-In Day will be October 14th, when counselors will be available to help you with your applications during all four lunches. Refreshments will be served.

The Common Application

The Common Application is a tool that can simplify the application process to 400+ member colleges across the United States. Students applying to colleges and universities which use the Common Application are able to complete one application and submit a copy to each member school they are applying to. The Common Application is given equal consideration to applications produced by the member college. Some Common Application member schools require a short supplement in addition to the universal form.

The Common Application, a list of member schools, and individual school contact information and requirements are available at www.commonapp.org.

Bulletin Board

Senior Drop In Day

Seniors are invited to come to the Counseling Center during their lunch period on October 14th to have any of their college application questions answered. Counselors will free up their schedules to work exclusively with seniors during all four lunches! Light refreshments will be served.

College Planning for the Special Education Student

- Learn about the college application process as it relates to students with IEPs and 504 Plans.
- Learn about available support services.
- Learn strategies to navigate the admissions process.
- Understand how special education testing and SATs impact your college planning.

Wednesday, October 19th from 7:00 - 9:00 PM in Room 217E

Students and parents/guardians are invited to attend this informative evening brought to you by the Acton-Boxborough Pupil Services Department.

NCAA Initial Eligibility



Students who are planning to enroll in college and participate in Division I or II intercollegiate athletics must have their eligibility status determined by the NCAA Clearinghouse. The NCAA Clearinghouse registration form is available online at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net and should be completed by the fall of the senior year. Students will need to print a copy of the Student Release Form and give it to the high school registrar. Once the NCAA has received the official six semester transcript, ACT or SAT scores, and required fee, a preliminary certification report will be available online. After graduation, if eligibility status is requested by a member institution, the Clearinghouse will review the final transcript and proof of graduation to make a final certification decision. Specific information regarding eligibility requirements is available at the NCAA web site.

Career Exploration at Acton-Boxborough

A-B's Career Exploration Program offers students a variety of opportunities to gain information about careers and about the skills that are important for career success. Presentations in all US History II classes in September introduced juniors to this program. At a series of Career Speaker Programs, scheduled for October 20th, December 13th and March 15th, juniors and seniors can choose from one of ten or twelve career presentations. A list of the speakers for the October 20th event will be posted early in October. Questions about the Career Exploration Program can be directed to Kay Steeves (ksteeves@abschools.org or 978-264-4700, ext. 3444).

Testing: PSAT/NMSQT Information

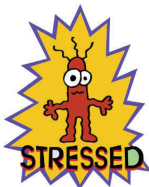
Students who have registered for the **October 15th** administration of the PSAT/NMSQT should review the registration bulletin and take the practice test to become familiar with the format of the PSAT. Any questions should be directed to Shannon Dandridge at 978-264-4700, ext. 3430. Juniors will be receiving PSAT orientation in their English classes. This preparation should give students a better understanding of the test instructions and familiarize them with various types of questions which they will encounter.



On the Saturday morning of the test, students should be sure to arrive at 7:30 A.M. when the school opens. Each student should bring a calculator, two or three #2 pencils, and a good eraser that does not smudge. Wearing a watch to keep track of time is helpful. A good night's sleep the night before and some breakfast are also important. Testing will be completed around 10:30 A.M.

Registration for juniors will be from September 20th to October 3rd in the Counseling Center. The fee for taking the test is \$25.00 payable by check to ABRHS (no cash). Please make sure the student's name is on the check. There will be a \$5.00 late fee for any junior registration after October 3rd. Due to limited test availability, we will open registration to sophomores on a first come, first serve basis on October 3rd. Please note that we only suggest taking the PSAT a sophomore year if currently enrolled in Algebra II after having completed a full year of geometry. The final deadline for all registrations is October 12th.

Health and Wellness...and *STRESS*



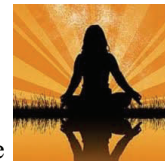
Stress is a normal part of life. Children may exhibit signs of stress when reacting to their environment, family situations, peer issues or academic challenges. Small amounts of stress can motivate people in a positive way, but too much stress can actually be harmful. Stress can be experienced as feelings of fear, anxiety, worry or general discomfort and can manifest itself by an array of physical symptoms: headache, stomachache, irritability, restlessness and sleep difficulties to name a few.

You can help your child cope with stress by promoting a healthy lifestyle. Encourage your child to eat properly which includes having breakfast. Encourage regular exercise. Limit over-scheduling, allowing for unstructured opportunities for relaxation. Foster adequate sleep by establishing a regular bedtime routine.

Focused deep breathing is a simple, but very effective, method of relaxation. It helps reduce anxiety and tension immediately. It is a stress reducing technique that is easy to learn and can be done any time or anywhere and no one will know you are doing it.

We tend to have shallow breathing or even hold our breath when we feel anxious. Sometimes we are not even aware of it. Shallow breathing limits oxygen intake and adds further stress to the body. Try the following breathing exercise with your child.

1. This exercise can be done lying, sitting straight, or standing.
2. First exhale completely through your mouth. Place your hands on your stomach, just above your waist. Breathe in slowly through your nose, pushing your hands out with your stomach. This ensures that you are breathing deeply. Imagine a balloon inflating.
3. As you inhale count very slowly to yourself up to four.
4. Slowly and steadily breathe out through your mouth, feeling your hands move back in. Imagine a balloon deflating.
5. As you exhale count slowly back to one.
6. Repeat several times. After you practice this several times you will not need to use your hands to check your breathing.



<http://kidshealth.org>

www.stress-relief-exercises.com

www.aap.org

Colleen McGovern, RN, BSN, NCSN

DiscoverSTEM2011 Science & Technology Fair

Save the Date: Thursday, November 10, 2011 (No School on Friday, November 11)

Save the Time: 6:00-8:30pm

DiscoverSTEM2011 is an interactive career fair at ABRHS showcasing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) products, services and innovations for 7-12th grade students, parents and the community.

DiscoverSTEM2011 needs student volunteers to meet and work with the exhibitors, STEM exhibitors to demonstrate their products or services, and sponsors to participate and donate. **Would you like to get involved?** Is your high school student interested in exploring STEM careers and discussing STEM ideas with industry professionals? **Would your company like to exhibit? Does your company offer sponsor opportunities or matching gifts?**

Join us for the next **DiscoverSTEM2011** event planning meeting or contact us at actonpip@gmail.com. See actonpip.org/discoverstem for more details on this exciting STEM exploration event!

DiscoverSTEM2011 is brought to you by Acton-Boxborough PIP (Parent Involvement Project) STEM. Check out our website at <http://www.actonpip.org> for the latest event calendar, resources and volunteer opportunities.