

*“For a list of all the ways technology has failed to improve the quality of life, please  
press three.”*

Alice Kahn

# Grey Matters

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If you received this newsletter via email, it means that we have finally gotten our email list back up and running. Although many members of the RJG community thought they were the only ones not getting our messages, the reality is that for the last two weeks we have been unable to send email to anyone on our list. The cause of this fiasco has been upgrades to our spam filtering software, and it has taken a considerable amount of time and effort to override this security feature. Thanks again to Steve Hall and the rest of the TRC for re-opening the doors of communication. Please remember that each issue of *Shades of Grey* (under the “Publications” link) and all current daily announcements (under the “What’s New” link) can be found on the RJG web site ( <http://ab.mec.edu/rjweb/index.html> ).

Last week the students and staff of RJG participated in a successful evacuation practice. Everyone left the building quickly, safely, and in an orderly fashion. Over the next couple weeks, we will continue to review our emergency management plans and practice a variety of scenarios. Parents and guardians, please remind your children that we are preparing for things that quite likely will never happen, but their cooperation and appropriate behavior during these rehearsals will help us maintain a safe environment for everyone in the unlikely event that there is an emergency.

According to the 2002 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, many middle level students in Acton and Boxborough reported participation in and thoughts about unsafe behavior. These feelings and actions included, but were not limited to: eating issues; lack of sleep; stress; use of alcohol and drugs; as well as thoughts of and/or attempts to harm themselves. These alarming statistics lead to the key question, “What can we, as communities, do to help our children make healthy decisions?”

As a result of conversations between parents and school staff regarding this data, RJG Project Wellness was created. This year, the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Project Wellness will be held on March 9<sup>th</sup> at Merrimack College in North Andover, Massachusetts.

Project Wellness is an all day forum for RJG parents/guardians of seventh graders and their children. On this day, a series of workshops are given to provide an opportunity to learn about and discuss issues like those reflected in the above data. It is clear that as much as the school can help educate our students about making good decisions, nothing is more essential than the relationships between children and their parents or guardians. Statistics and common sense has shown us that, as much as middle school aged youngsters need to start developing their independence, they still need to keep the lines of communication open with their parents or guardians. Simply put, the goal of Project Wellness is to foster the habit of open family communication around these important topics. Seventh grade parents/guardians, please remember to reserve March 9<sup>th</sup>, you don’t want to miss it!