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Resolving to Resolve: Baby Steps are Still Steps

By Barbara J Green, Ph.D., YHC Medical Director

The year-end holidays are behind us and we have once again turned the calendar to January. In the spirit of a new year, January is traditionally the time when many of us set resolutions for change, improvement and new behaviors. But alas, in spite of our best intentions and sincerity, as the weeks and months go on, we often lose our focus on following through on those newly defined behaviors. This can be extremely demoralizing and defeating, but does not have to happen.

This year, YHC is staying focused on helping youth, families, communities, and professionals learn about stress and ways to live better and healthier lives. With that in mind, I will start the year

with some suggestions on how to realistically set a goal, and then plan for and act on its achievement.

First, I would like to challenge you to choose one thing you can do to make a small but positive change in your daily living that will make you feel better. In doing so, consider the following guidelines: Make the goal realistic, possible, doable, and approachable. Develop a concrete plan for what the goal is and how you will achieve it. Write down your plan and review it daily. Tell someone you love what you are doing and ask for their support. Take repeated actions toward achieving the goal for 21 days in a row.

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Youth Health Connection Upcoming Meetings:

January 9, 2012 from 3:30-5:30 PM School Nurse Advisory Meeting at Linden Ponds, Oakleaf Clubhouse, 2nd Floor Music Room, Hingham MA.

Learn about the new Independence Academy and much more!

January 11, 2012 from 8-9:30 AM School Mental Health Advisory Meeting at Hingham High School, Guidance Office, Hingham MA. We will be planning peer leader training dates as well as learning about the new Independence Academy. We will also have a speaker from OutHealth!

January 18, 2012 from 8:30-10:30 AM Parent Partner Advisory Meeting at Notre Dame Academy, Main St., Hingham, MA. We will have a presentation from Walden Behavioral Care.

Tip for Better Living:

"The important thing is not so much that every child should be taught, as that every child should be given the wish to learn."

**John Lubbock
(1834-1913)
British Statesman &
Banker**

New Program from the CDC

The PROTECT Initiative, led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is launching an educational program called **“Up and Away and Out of Sight.”** The goal of the program is to encourage parents of young children to follow a few simple steps to protect their children from unintentional medication overdoses.

Overdoses are a significant

public health problem. They can lead to harm, sometimes requiring emergency treatment or even hospitalization.

Children are especially vulnerable to unintentional overdoses, most of which can be prevented. The CDC website contains information on how to safely store medications, ways to teach your child about medication

safety, a reminder to speak with houseguests about medication safety and how to be prepared for an emergency.

There are a number of free downloads available to help household members remember the safety information. In addition, there is a section for families to take the pledge to store medications out of the reach of children.

Coalition Webinar and Apply for Coalition Awards

For more information on this webinar and the 2nd program to be offered visit:

<http://www.cadca.org/rainingevents/distancelearning/webinars>

CADCA's **National Coalition Institute** will kick off 2012 with two no-cost webinars to help coalitions learn about how to better evaluate and assess their work as well as how to implement effective strategies in their communities.

The first webinar, **“Got Outcomes? Building the Case for Your Coalition’s Contributions to Change.”** will take place from 3-4:30 p.m. EST on Jan. 12. This webinar will cover how coalitions can

evaluate and enhance planned coalition strategies and interventions by applying for CADCA's Got Outcomes! Coalitions of Excellence Awards.

In addition, CADCA's National Coalition Institute sponsors the **Got Outcomes! Awards** which provide coalitions an opportunity to highlight their outcomes and embark on a guided and intensive examination of their strategic plan.

Applying in one of three categories, applicants work closely with CADCA staff to revisit and refine their logic models, identify gaps in assessment and evaluation, and improve their data presentation skills.

While the ultimate goal for an applicant is to win the award, the process is useful for coalition planning and sustainability.

For more information on this award visit:
<http://www.cadca.org/gotoutcomes>

Teen Night at South Shore Y-Mill Pond Hanover

Looking for something safe and fun for your teenager to do outside of school hours this winter? The South Shore YMCA in Hanover offers a variety of programs and activities to keep your teens safe and active. The “Teen Friday” program runs every Friday night from 6:30pm-9:30pm. From open swim to

karaoke, this program offers activities sure to catch your teen's attention. Supervised by adults and college age staff, Teen Friday is an exciting outlet for local teens. All youth aged 10-17 are welcome to join in the fun. This program is free to all YMCA members and only \$7 for non-members. Carry on the excitement of Teen

Friday during school vacation weeks.

Consider indoor rock climbing or spy 3D activities at 5-Wits in Foxboro. Daily registration is available as well as a weekly rate. Teens are always welcome at the YMCA in Hanover. Stop in anytime and check out one of the great activities offered.

It's a GRAND Celebration for Children, Parents and Grandparents!

By Maureen Lindgren. Helping Children Cope with a Loved One's Cancer Volunteer

Sometimes we are lucky enough to attend events or parties that are great. Then... once in a while... we are invited to participate in an event that is sure to be GRAND!

You are encouraged to save the date, Saturday, February 4, 2012 for the "Isn't It Grand!" family celebration to be held at the Linden Ponds Auditorium, 203 Linden

Ponds Way, in Hingham from 10:30am to noon. Bring family, friends, or neighbors of all ages to this exciting morning of laughing, singing and storytelling.

The highlight of the event will be a live performance by award-winning humorist and entertainer Keith Munslow. Proceeds from this grand morning will support the program *Helping*

Children Cope with a Loved One's Cancer.

(www.helpingchildrencope.org)

Tickets are \$10 per adult and \$5 per child. Tickets can be purchased online at www.southshorehospital.org/events. You can also purchase tickets by phone by calling Barbara Wahlstrom at 781-624-4170, or purchase on-site at either Noble's Camera Shop in Hingham or The Village Toy Store in Canton.

Free Monthly Newsletter Coming from *ChopChop*

Governor Duval Patrick announced in December the launch of *ChopChop*, a free monthly newsletter offering fun, healthy recipes for Massachusetts families. Each edition of the *ChopChop* newsletter will include a personal message from the Patrick-Murray Administration highlighting the importance of parents spending time with their children preparing fresh, healthy meals. Also, it will

include a new recipe each month featuring Massachusetts-grown produce. The newsletter is available in English and Spanish.

The *ChopChop* newsletter is the product of an innovative partnership with *ChopChop* Magazine, a nationwide quarterly publication that focuses on fun, healthy cooking for families to compliment the Patrick-Murray Administration's

Mass in Motion Initiative.

The first edition of this free newsletter is posted on the Department of Public Health's Mass in Motion website at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/mass-in-motion/chopchop-holiday.pdf>

A new issue will be available at the beginning of each month February-December.

Please help spread the word about this great new resource to families in your community.



Webinar Archive Available

A recent TeenScreen National Center Webinar Event "Rethinking Adolescent Mental Health Care: Using Common Factors to Improve Your Practice Potential" is now available as an archive.

"Common Factors" focuses on the process of care, and

emphasizes the characteristics and interactions of providers, parents and others -- nurse practitioners, office staff, school health personnel -- in influencing patient behavior and improving outcomes. It challenges the need for a diagnosis and specific treatment for each patient, and instead maintains that

therapies can be designed to help broad classes of people.

Common Factors expert Larry Wissow, MD, Professor, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, discussed incorporating Common Factors principals into adolescent mental health care.

This webinar originally took place on Dec. 8, 2011 and will be **available online for 90 days.**

To access visit:
<http://event.on24.com/eventRegistration/EventLobbyServlet?target=lobby.jsp&eventid=383391&sessionId=1&key=7EF017F6648680C8F33D66BDE3426AC3&eventurlid=58061340>

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Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore Hospital dedicated to the positive mental health and physical well-being of youth. Our programs collaborate with schools, community health providers, law enforcement officers, state agencies, religious leaders, parents and peer leaders to help young people deal with the various challenges they face and the decisions they must make as they grow and mature. By combining efforts, we can ensure that local youth have access to the health-related knowledge, skills and resources they need to make healthy decisions throughout their lifetime.

Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore

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Health Knowledge
and Risk Prevention
through Collaboration,
Respect, Connectedness
and Coalition Building



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Give yourself daily credit for doing it; an "Atta Girl" or "Way to Go!" Remind yourself that even a marathon is run one step at a time; baby steps. Don't beat yourself up if you slip, but get back at it after addressing what happened to derail you.

There are also other things you can do to support achieving your goal by better coping with the natural stress that comes with life: focus on gratitude; exercise, eat nutritious food, and get regular, sufficient sleep; live with rational optimism, laugh and maintain a sense of humor; practice meditation and breathing exercises;

journal and surround yourself with loving supportive relationships, practice random acts of kindness, do something that matters and is a contribution.

In a recent presentation, Suzanne Brownell of Health Thysself suggested that three minutes of targeted breathing exercises each morning can make a difference. She offered that doing this just before or after brushing your teeth in the morning connects it to an existing and natural ritual. Even something that small and simple can make a big difference and create a "mini-moment."

Healthy change should not be

overwhelming or imposing, as that leads to collapse. Build with small, steady baby steps, just like we did when we all learned to walk.

Now, breathe and keep breathing. It will fill your heart and soul with peace.

Happy New Year...today and every day!