



Helping Westlake Parents to Keep Their Kids Safe and Healthy since 2002

Autumn 2008

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Can We Talk?

Dani Altieri Marinucci, WPC President

This has been an amazing summer! We hope you've enjoyed the brilliant weather and time with your families. At the Marinucci house things have been wild. Joe and I were really getting use to just being down to two kids – we embraced the one-on-one time we had with our two youngest. Welcoming home the entire brood always unsettles me a bit. But we've ironed out the bumps (I only had a few meltdowns – way under score for me!) and we'll be a little sad and a little happy to send the two eldest back to college. And now we have both younger ones at the same school! We're doing a little happy dance on Savannah Parkway.

Get ready for a school year packed with underage drinking awareness and prevention programming and events. You can read more about it in the next article, but here's a little tease: we'll be expanding on the plan we employed with Dr. Madeline Levine's successful visit by bringing in three authors who will conduct parent programming in three Northeast Ohio locations: east, west and south. Now no one will have an excuse to miss out on what promises to be some truly exceptional programming.

I hope you will reflect on the work the WPC has accomplished over the last six years. We strive to deliver parents the tools they need to help their kids make healthy choices.

The Westlake Parent Connection is committed to educating parents about the risky behaviors impacting our children, preschool through college. We provide families with useful programs, events, and helpful tools to help parents talk to their kids. The WPC is a one-stop shop for information on preventing risky youth behavior.

Why it is so important to support the Westlake Parent Connection:

Good kids can make bad choices – but parents can positively impact those choices. We give parents the tools necessary to help their kids negotiate through risky waters.

We respond quickly to our community's needs; be it by assembling community information nights, keeping parents in the know on trends and studies, or guiding a family on where to go for help; since 2002 the WPC has been responsive and timely.

We hope you will take this opportunity to pledge your financial commitment to Westlake's children's health, safety and wellbeing. Your contribution is 100% tax-deductible.

<http://www.westlakeparentconnection.com/forms/2008-09supportdrive.pdf>

Here's to a great start to the 2008-09 school year!

...Dani

Our hearts go out

To our neighboring affiliate communities who have lost children this summer. Brecksville, Avon Lake and Bay Village lost young men. These heartbreaking realities make the work we do so very important. Not all children make unhealthy choices, but every child is at risk. Please remember these young men and their families.

Underage Drinking Awareness & Prevention



The P2PN's educational focus
for the 2008-09:

Underage Drinking Awareness and Prevention (UDAP).

The P2PN has asked its affiliates from 20 different communities in Lorain, Cuyahoga and Geauga counties to collaborate on alcohol prevention and awareness programming throughout the 2008-09 school year.

The headline events in September 2008 and April 2009 feature six days and evenings filled with multiple programs for students, teachers, parents, community members, school professionals and alcohol and drug treatment professionals. Sandwiched between these events over the 8-month period are individual community-based programs.

The WPC's Contribution to the UDAP:



The WPC will host author, educator, and publisher Judy Galbraith conducts multiple programs on the *What Kids Need to Succeed: the Search Institute's 40 Assets* for students, teachers and parents.

3 days and locations to choose from:

•September 22, 7:00pm – 8:30pm

Westlake Performing Arts Center

27830 Hilliard Blvd., Westlake, OH 44145

•September 23, 7:00pm – 8:30pm

Corporate College East

4400 Richmond Rd., Warrensville Heights, OH 44128

•September 24, 7:00pm – 8:30pm

Brecksville-Broadview Hts. Auditorium

6380 Mill Road, Broadview Heights, OH 44147

1.5 FREE CEUs provided through Beech Brook

1.5 FREE RCHs provided through The Ohio Resource Network

For more info e-mail: p2pn@parentnetwork.org.

OCTOBER Book Discussion on Galbraith's Book

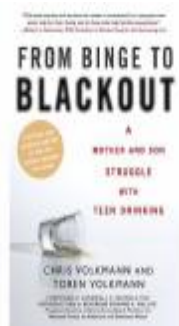
2 & 9, 7PM-8PM, Book Club

Event: Parent discussion group on What Kids Need to Succeed: Proven, Practical ways to Raise Good Kids, by Peter L. Benson, Ph.D., and Judy Galbraith, M.A.

Host: Westlake Parent Connection

Location: Borders Music and Books, Promenade of Westlake, 30121 Detroit Rd., Westlake, 440-892-7667

Winter Book Club and Spring time author visit



The WPC will host book clubs leading up to the author visit with *From Binge to Blackout* authors Chris and Toren Volkman. This program will be open to students, teachers, parents, community members, school professionals and alcohol and drug treatment professionals over a three day period.

News from the Partnership for a Drug-free America:

Nearly 5 college students are killed every day because of alcohol

This month, millions of teens will be heading off to college — many for the first time. The presence of alcohol is an issue on campuses everywhere — between football games and Greek life, college towns' cheap bars and students' newfound freedom, drinking has simply become a part of the American college experience. And unfortunately, hard partying and binge drinking are not just limited to college kids. With classes starting up again soon, many middle- and high-schoolers are going to turn to alcohol to relieve stress.

Just this week, 100 university presidents asked lawmakers to consider lowering the drinking age from 21 to 18. They claim that the current laws are not working — and actually encourage binge drinking on campus. [Tell us what you think on this controversial topic.](#)

Either way, remember that it's never too soon to start taking measures to prevent young people from abusing alcohol. Know that it is possible for young adults to steer clear of alcohol-related injuries and accidents. You can help them prepare to make smart and responsible decisions by talking to them now about the dangers of binge drinking and hard partying.

Get the Facts: Alcohol: Myths + Truths

More than 1,700 college students in the U.S. are killed each year as a result of alcohol-related injuries. That's nearly 5 per day.

With drinking games gaining popularity, alcohol-induced deaths on college campuses are becoming everyday occurrences.

Nearly 30 percent of students who drink take 21 shots on their 21st birthdays, and many boost their social status by posting drunken or provocative photos on Facebook and MySpace. (Center for Substance Abuse Research, 2008)

To learn more about alcohol and binge drinking, visit [Alcohol: Myths + Truths](#).

What You Can Do:

Know a kid heading off to college? Reduce his or her risk of suffering an alcohol-related injury by following these 7 tips:

1. Make sure he knows where and how he can get help on campus — for emergency, general medical care, and mental health reasons — before he ever needs it.
2. Recommend she read the following “reality checks” on the dangers of binge drinking at college: *From Binge to Blackout* by Chris Volkmann and Toren Volkmann (the Volkmanns will be in Cleveland March 31, April 1-2) and *Dying to Drink: Confronting Binge Drinking on College Campuses* by Henry Wechsler and Bernice Wuethrich.
3. Help him realize that not everyone drinks in college. Suggest that he get involved in sports or student organizations to meet kids he clicks with without drinking or using drugs. And emphasize that even if he *does* end up making friends who drink, he doesn't have to drink just to fit in with them.
4. Suggest she consider living in a substance-free dorm. That way, she'll have less temptation to drink.
5. Remind him that underage drinking can result in serious and sometimes deadly consequences. For example, 95 percent of violent crime on college campuses is alcohol-related, and 90 percent of college rapes involve alcohol use by the victim and/or assailant.
6. Emphasize that *no one* can make her do anything she doesn't want to do. A Greek organization, club or team that hazes by forcing new members to drink is doing something *illegal*.
7. If you're his parent or play a significant role in his life, make sure he knows he can *always* ask you for help or support, no matter what. Even if you're many miles away, he should know that he can call you to discuss his problems so he doesn't have to turn to alcohol.

Westlake Community Wellness Forum

On August 5th the P2PN hosted a community wellness forum together with the City of Westlake, the Westlake City Schools, the Westlake Parent Connection (a P2PN affiliate) and the West Shore Chamber of Commerce.

Westlake is doing great things for kids, but at this forum community members created a new vision for their work and proposed ways to collaborate with each other. Their goal – to build a community that encourages wellness and is free from underage alcohol and tobacco use, illegal drug use, and violence.

Early in 2008 Westlake was handed a unique opportunity to address dangerous, risky behaviors when several high school students were arrested for serious drug offenses. Heroin may have made the headlines, but it is tobacco, alcohol and marijuana use that are the undeniable precursor drugs that lead to hardcore drug abuse.

Westlake recognized that if left unaddressed, drug use and underage drinking would continue to place children's lives and others in danger, as well as negatively impact all components of this community.

The forum was led by Mr. Joe Spiccia, principal of Mentor High School. Joe has successfully led the formation of several coalitions in Northeast Ohio and is recognized as a leader in helping communities guide their young people in a healthy direction.

Over 70 people showed up ready to work: city employees and council members, private and public school administrators and teachers, PTA leaders, school board members, students and alumni from public and private schools, concerned residents, parents and grandparents, faith community leaders, health care professionals, business owners, community and school organizations, athletic coaches and child advocates.

Other communities locally and nationally, including Shaker Heights, Mentor and Hudson, have discovered that when a community comes together and implements comprehensive strategies to address youth substance use, kids are less likely to partake in these unhealthy choices.

The launch and sustainability of this united coalition is financially supported by the City of Westlake, the Westlake Police Department, Saint John's West Shore Hospital, Crocker Park, and the Parent to Parent Network. In-kind support is provided by the Westlake City Schools, the West Shore Chamber of Commerce, Champ's Restaurants, and the Westlake Parent Connection.

Visit the P2PN Website - it has a Whole New Look!

While the rest of us were enjoying the beautiful Cleveland summer, Lynda Appel, P2PN vice president of communications, was giving the website a makeover.

When our month website visits climbed to over 3,400 last spring, we decided we needed to keep up with the informational demands our parents and affiliates were asking for. So please take a look for your self:

<http://www.parent2parentnetwork.org>

Drop down menus, a revamped Risk Resource Guide, information just for parents, an easy to navigate and read calendar, and timely In the News articles you might have missed. It's all there and much more. And if something is missing – by all means let us know:

p2pn@parent2parentnetwork.org

Our Partners and Sponsors

We are grateful for the support of our partners and sponsors who make all

we do in 2008-09 possible:

Collaborating Partners:

City of Westlake

Crocker Park

Westlake Police Department

St. John's West Shore Hospital

Corporate/Community Partners:

Borders Books and Music,

Churches of Westlake Ministerial Forum,

Westlake Porter Public Library, and

Westlake City Schools