



ACT Happenings

Take Home and Share with Your Family!

Fall 2007

www.abingtonact.org for expanded information

Building Resilience in Children Presented December 5

Coping skills make a great difference in how one approaches and lives life. Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg, a nationally recognized pediatrician specializing in Adolescent Medicine at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), will speak on **Building Resilience in Children** at the December 5 Parent Council meeting at Abington Senior High School, 7:00 p.m. in the Audion. A dynamic speaker, Dr. Ginsburg will offer immediate practical ideas on parenting.

In addition to his position at CHOP, Dr. Ginsburg is an associate professor of Pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. He also serves as Director of Health Services at Covenant House of Philadelphia, a shelter for homeless and disenfranchised youth.

Throughout his career, Dr. Ginsburg has followed a medical model based on integrity that encourages adolescents to develop their own strengths, competencies, and resilience. He aims to start a national

dialogue among parents and children of all ages to redefine perceptions of success and evaluate the significant physical and emotional damage that stress and everyday pressures can have on development. He seeks to create strategies to raise resilient children who are capable of dealing with life's difficulties and who learn from personal defeats.

Parent Council is an umbrella organization of PTOs/PTAs in the Abington School District. Its goal is to promote better understanding of issues concerning the children's education. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend bi-monthly meetings held in various schools. Representatives from the School Board, administration, and faculty also attend meetings. Parent Council will offer special presentations throughout the school year. These events will be posted on the ACT web site. For more information, contact Parent Council President Janet Seydel at 215-379-2097.

Attention High School Seniors: Apply for ACT Award

The Abington Community Taskforce (ACT) is looking for two high school seniors who are making a difference in the community through their service. In recognition of their volunteer efforts, ACT will present two \$500 awards at its spring Citizens That Care Recognition Reception.

Eligible seniors must reside in Abington Township or Rockledge Borough but may attend a high school within or beyond the community. However, they must perform a portion of their volunteer hours locally and be in good standing regarding citizenship, behavior, and scholarship and should demonstrate high moral character.

To apply for this award, students should submit their name, address, and phone number, along with a typed or neatly hand written one-page write-up about themselves, the details of their service, and how they are making a difference in their community. Students are also asked to include two letters of recommendation, one from a teacher who knows them well and one from an adult involved in their community service.

Send write-ups and letters together in one envelope to ACT, c/o Ellen Mishel, 1130 Old York Road, Abington, PA 19001. Submissions must be received by Monday, January 21.

**Use Anonymous, 24-Hour Abington Police Tip Line
to report threats of violence, crime, and safety concerns.**

1-877-APD-TIPS

Always Call 911 for Emergencies.

Aikido for All Ages Plus New Teen Leadership Program

Aikido teaches self-defense, using techniques of evasion, immobilization, and redirection. Students learn how to avoid an attack and how to neutralize an aggressor's actions. Aikido is offered to all age groups from **Little Ninjas** (ages 4 and 5) and **Children** (ages 6-12) to the new **Teen Leadership** classes (ages 13-17).

The 8-week Teen Leadership Program teaches students how to be part of a team, what a leader is, how to speak in public, and how to teach Aikido. The Children's classes are open to all skill levels and emphasize physical fitness, coordination, and confidence, while

Little Ninjas focuses on developing eight major skills that are necessary for participating in any sport or activity. Those skills are focus, team work, control, balance, memory, discipline, fitness, and coordination.

Aikido courses are taught at Ardsley Community Center, 2828 Spear Avenue, Ardsley. Session II runs from November 12 through January 4. Session III begins January 7. For costs, class times, and registration, call the Ardsley Community Center at 215-576-1630 or register online at www.abington.org under "Departments," then see "Parks & Recreation."

Parent Programs Presented by Abington Guidance Counselors

It's not too early to mark your 2008 calendar for programs directed to junior and senior high parents. The Abington Junior High School Guidance Department is offering a Parent Seminar Series that will run from January to May. Held on Thursdays, 7:00-8:00 p.m., in the Junior High School Library, the Series is free and will focus on issues specific to this age group. It begins January 10 with **School Success**, discussing homework, organization, and working with school staff. February 7 will feature **Better Safe Than Sorry** to deal with drugs, alcohol, and internet safety; March 5 (note Wednesday) will focus on **Helping Your Teenager with Relationship Issues** involving friends, peer pressure, and dating; April 10 is **No Means No** for maintaining clear and firm expectations; and May 8 targets **Your Child's Changing Mind, Body, and Needs** concerning sleep, nutri-

tion, and exercise. For more information, contact Claudia Carabelli at 215-884-4700 ext. 2336.

Parents of Junior and Senior High School students will want to take note of the **College Planning** seminars presented by the Senior High School Guidance Department throughout the current school year. These seminars are held in the Senior High School Audion from 7:00-8:00 p.m. They include **How to Evaluate a College: Is It Right for My Child?**, December 6; **Financial Aid Process** with a guest speaker from a local university, January 9; **Completing the Admission Application**, February 6; and culminating with **College and Career Night**, April 17, featuring representatives with information from a wide variety of colleges, technical schools, and the military. For more information, contact Ernest Johnson at 215-884-4700 ext. 2365.

Opportunities to Give to Your Community through Abington YMCA

The Abington YMCA offers the community several opportunities to support local families in need. Non-perishable food will be collected between November 1 and 19. Bring contributions to the lobby at the YMCA, 1073 Old York Road, Abington. Similarly, between November 1 and 22, donations will be accepted for gently used coats and new hats and gloves. These items may be left at the collection place in the lobby or

brought to the Gobble Wobble registration desk on November 22 (see Fun for All article, page 4). To provide a happier holiday for a family in need, the YMCA will have a giving tree with gift tags bearing suggestions for gifts. Tags will be available beginning December 3; gifts must be delivered to the lobby by December 18. For more information, contact the YMCA at 215-884-9622.

Abington Memorial Hospital Programs for Children and Teens

As a major community partner to ensure health and well-being, Abington Memorial Hospital offers many programs for children and teens. **The New Weigh To Go for Kids** (215-481-2204) is a comprehensive weight management program for children ages 9-13 and their parents or guardians. A registered dietitian and certified counselor offer a positive, hands-on approach to eating, exercise, and esteem dilemmas. **The Why and How to Safe Exercise and Weight Loss for Kids** (215-

481-5900) is a 12-session program that promotes fun, safe exercise for this same age group, using Physioball®, Theraband® sessions, and kick boxing.

Teens who would like to stop smoking can register for **N-O-T (NOT-ON-TOBACCO)** (215-481-8950). In this 6-week program, teens learn about goal setting, stress management, coping, proper nutrition, physical activity, and interpersonal skills. For dates and times, call the number listed for each program.

Kiwanis Invites New Members to Explore Service Opportunities

Abington-Rockledge can boast many fine service organizations working to enhance the community's quality of life. One outstanding group is the Glenside Kiwanis Club with its mission of being "... Dedicated to Changing the World, One Child, and One Community at a Time."

The Glenside Kiwanis has been serving this area since its creation on December 1, 1926, and has placed community service projects as its main objective. Several larger projects undertaken over the years included planning and building a recreation center for the Girl Scout Camp Kiwanis, helping to bring Good Will Industries to the area, supporting the construction of the Glenside Library, and donating \$10,000 to Abington Memorial Hospital for the Occupational Therapy Unit.

In recent years, the Club has focused on area youth with its K-Family program led by long-time, dedicated member Donald Neiman. In the Abington School District, approximately 700 students benefit from leadership and volunteer training provided through Glenside Kiwanis. The Key Club at Abington Senior High School has more than 300 members pursuing community service project opportunities almost every weekend, while the Builders Club at Abington Junior High School

has close to 200 members who stay extremely active with service projects and mentoring tasks for other students. At Copper Beech, McKinley, and Rydal Elementary Schools, K-Kids Clubs have 25 to 50 active members each. In addition, Glenside Kiwanis sponsors a college level club at LaSalle University and a 25-member Aktion Club for challenged individuals. Each of these youth groups has a faculty advisor and two or more Kiwanians who attend Club meetings to assist with planning, development, and advice.

Glenside Kiwanis offers other service opportunities, such as delivering Thanksgiving meals to needy families, being a "hugger" at the Special Athlete Basketball Tournament held on the last Saturday of March, and getting involved with the PA Literacy Project by reading periodically to nursery school children.

The Glenside Kiwanis Club invites anyone who is interested in community service to attend one of the regular meetings held the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the North Penn VFW, 2519 Jenkintown Road, Glenside. For more information, contact Club Secretary Marty Ewer at 215-887-3039.

VNA Children's Health Center Serves Insured, Underinsured, Medical Assistance

Families who currently find themselves in the position of having inadequate or no health coverage for their children or are on Medical Assistance can contact the Children's Health Center of Visiting Nurse Association—Community Services (VNA) to obtain primary health care for their children from birth through age 21. The Children's Health Center staff takes time to listen to and understand the issues facing each child and works with parents and caregivers to provide necessary

follow-up care.

Health services include physical exams, care for sick children, school and sports physicals, immunizations, vision and hearing screening, parenting education and support, home visits, and 24-hour on-call. This Center is located locally at the VNA, 1421 Highland Avenue, Abington, and is open Monday through Friday. To schedule an appointment, call 215-572-7880.

Babysitting Workshop Fall and Early Winter Course Dates

Boys and girls age 11 and up who would like to become more qualified babysitters can sign up for a one-day **Babysitting Workshop**. Offered through Child, Home & Community, Inc., this 6-hour program covers basic child care, age-appropriate activities, and how to handle family routines and emergencies. The workshop will be held at Abington Memorial Hospital's Lenfest Pavilion on December 1, 2007 and February 2, 2008. The cost is \$50. For information and required registration, call 215-348-9770.

The Abington YMCA is offering an 8-week

Babysitting Beginners course for boys and girls ages 10-15. Participants learn responsible babysitting techniques with a Penn State 4-H course that focuses on life skills and child watching techniques. There is a strong emphasis on character development in honesty, respect, and responsibility. The next course begins November 2, 4:00-5:30 p.m. The cost is \$35 which covers materials and a field trip. YMCA membership is not required. For information & registration, call the YMCA at 215-884-9622 ext. 1856.

For a community to be healthy and whole, it must be based on people's love and concern for each other.

Millard Fuller

Fun for All: Gobble Wobble, Gingerbread Houses, Santa Breakfast

Have you signed up for one or more of these fun events—the Thanksgiving Day Gobble Wobble, decorating a gingerbread house, or having breakfast with Santa?

Plan to get in shape for your Thanksgiving meal by registering for the Gobble Wobble, a 5K run or a 2-mile walk, Thursday, November 22 at 9:00 a.m. This event is sponsored by the Abington YMCA and features door prizes, refreshments, and a stadium finish. The first 800 to enter will receive long-sleeve tee shirts. Participants can register either in person at the Abington YMCA, 1073 Old York Road, Abington, or online at www.abingtonymca.org. The cost is \$9 for children age 12 and under, \$20 for all others until November 20, and \$25 on the day of the event. There is a 10% family/

group discount for three or more registering together in person or by mail.

Children ages 7-12 are invited to decorate their own pre-made gingerbread house on Friday, December 7, 6:00 p.m. at Ardsley Community Center. The cost is \$7 and includes all needed materials. The houses are for decoration, not consumption. Register by Monday, November 26 at Abington Bureau of Parks & Recreation, 215-576-5213.

Families can plan to have breakfast with Santa at the Abington YMCA on Saturday, December 8, 9:30-11:00 a.m. There will be crafts and a photo with Santa. The breakfast is free to members and \$5 per child for non-members. For reservations, call 215-884-9622.

Center for Parenting Education Offers Variety of Groups and Workshops

The Center for Parenting Education at Abington provides many opportunities for parents to glean helpful information and parenting techniques. Here are highlights of fall and early winter offerings. For fees, registration, and a complete list of offerings, contact the Center online at www.centerforparentingeducation.org (note change from .com) or call 215-576-0586.

Recognizing the often isolating and exhausting demands of single parenting, a **Single Parents Discussion Group** meets monthly at the Center. Single parents can gain perspective on and support for their demanding role from other single parents. The next dates for this group—open to anyone at any time—are Tuesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m. on November 13, December 11, and January 8.

Another area of concern focuses on parents wanting to encourage daughters to develop themselves to the fullest but feeling unprepared to help them navigate some of the confusing or even harmful messages they hear from society, the media, and their peers. Parents can explore the special challenges facing this generation of girls and learn specific skills and techniques to support them as they grow during **Raising Strong Confident Daughters** on Saturday, October 27, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon for parents of girls age 10-17 and on Thursday, November 8, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon for parents of girls from birth to age 10.

Most parents have experienced feeling out of

control with anger over their child's behavior. To learn how to handle anger in healthy ways that maintain and build a positive relationship, parents can attend **Turning Down the Heat in Your Home: How to Keep from Boiling over with Anger** on Wednesday, November 7, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

As the holidays approach, parents often express concerns about the negative affects of their children receiving too many gifts. **From "Gimmie" to Grateful—Shifting Our Children from Greed to Appreciation** will explore the issue of over-indulgence, what it is, where it comes from, and how parents can shift children from a sense of entitlement to one of gratitude and personal responsibility. This workshop will be offered at the Center on Wednesday, December 5, 7:00-8:30 p.m. or online Thursday, December 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Understanding that children do best when conflict is kept to a minimum during their parents' separation and/or divorce, the Center will soon begin a series on **Parenting through Divorce**. Please call to submit your name to be part of a group discussion that will explore children's reactions, how to help them adjust, and how to co-parent with the ex-spouse to meet the children's needs. Individual sessions are also available for those who prefer to meet one-on-one with a parenting educator to discuss their specific situation and personal concerns.

The Abington Community Taskforce (ACT) is a coalition of diverse organizations working together to enhance the effectiveness of programs and services for youth and their families in order to ensure a safe and caring community. ACT's core values are caring, collaboration, community, integrity, proactive protection and intervention, and respect. ACT welcomes reader input. Visit ACT online at www.abingtonact.org and click "Contact Us," or call 215-517-2720. ACT would like to express appreciation to Abington Memorial Hospital for its assistance in printing this publication.

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