

MILFORD'S PROMISE



The Alliance for Youth

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President's Message

By Wendy Gibbons-Shepro and Michael Jacobsen

At a time when many people feel overwhelmed by the problems and challenges facing families, children and adolescents, communities across our country are finding hope in working together toward a positive vision for young people. Uniting a community to nurture the positive development of youth is much like playing on a sports team. Each player must know the game plan and watch the other players; all players must improvise together — sometimes taking the lead and sometimes blending into the background. To create a community-wide commitment to youth, all the "players" need to be a strong team — working toward a common vision of what is needed to promote the healthy development of young people.

This is truly the essence of Milford's Promise. We encourage every individual, school, organization or business of promise to work together to influence the choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults. Long-lasting success happens by merging the capacities of all community members-in all the settings where the lives of adults and youth intersect. This combination has proven to bring about long lasting positive change.

We hope that you enjoy reading about the many exciting programs and initiatives in our community that are described here in our newsletter. Please call on us for help and support in your efforts to impact the lives of the children and youth in our community. We wish you a healthy, safe, productive and fun summer! Hope to see you all at the Red Wagon Youth Fair on September 13.

*"*Note: As of July 2009, due to scheduling conflicts, Barbara Walsh has stepped down from her position as Co-President of Milford's Promise. She still remains an active member of the Board of Directors. We thank her for her time and expertise shared as Co-President and look forward to continuing our relationship with her as a board member. As of July, the position of Co-President will be filled by Michael Jacobsen from the Milford Recreational Department. We welcome Michael to this new position.*

Three New Organizations of Promise named in May!

Congratulations to East Shore Middle School Platt Technical High School and the Young Parents Program of Milford on being named Organizations of Promise. Organizations of Promise are recognized for their commitment to delivering the 5 promises to all youth in Milford. Once again, the five promises are to provide all youth with Caring Adults, Safe Places, Healthy Starts, Marketable Skills and Opportunities to Give back to the community. If you feel that your organization (school, church, business or agency) meets these 5 promises for youth and you would like to apply for this honor, please download an application from our website at www.milfordspromise.org or contact us to learn more.



Milford's Promise is on Facebook!

Become a fan of Milford's Promise and get linked to programs and events being offered for youth in Milford. As a fan you will be able to read about our organization, link to our website (www.milfordspromise.org), see our calendar of events, views PSAs, related videos and share your ideas with us on future programs for youth.



Milford's Promise to Host a Toy Tag Sale

We will be hosting a gently used children's toy tag sale on **Saturday August 15th from 10:00am to 6:00pm at the Milford Oyster Fest**, in the Milford Bank parking lot near the Green. We will be sharing the parking lot space with Good Shepherd Church who will be hosting a children's used book sale at the same time. Come down and check it out!

SAVE THE DATE: 4th Annual Red Wagon Youth Fair Coming Soon!



Milford's Promise' 4th annual Red Wagon Youth Fair will take place on **Sunday, September 13th** at Fowler Pavilion. This year, Milford's Promise will be partnering with Organization of Promise, Bridges, A Community Support System Inc on their 18th annual Folks on Spokes / Folks of Foot event. Go to www.bridgesmilford.org for details on FOS/FOF. Come with the family to bike or walk for a good cause and stay for some fun at the fair. As always the fair will feature food, games, and entertainment for the family as well as informational booths on programs and resources offered for youth in Milford. If you are interested in having a booth at the fair, please contact Danielle Dumont, Executive Director for Milford's Promise for more information at milfordspromise@gmail.com or 490-9160. Non-profit booths available for \$20 donation and vendor booths \$50 fee. Milford's Promise is also looking for local businesses sponsorships. Cross promotion / logo sharing offered.

Milford Pedicab Becomes a Partner of Promise

Milford's Promise has partnered with the newest business in town, Milford Pedicab, LLC. Recently featured on the front page of the New Haven Register (June 9, 2009), Milford Pedicab is bicycle taxi service that prides itself as being the clean, green way to experience Milford. Co-owners Mark Kaminski and former Milford Promise vice president, Joe Meade have teamed up to bring the business to downtown Milford and beyond.

"Milford's Promise Co-Presidents Wendy Gibbons-Shepro and Michael Jacobsen go for a ride in a Milford Pedicab



Young Parent Program of Milford Reaches Out To Teens

The Young Parent Program of Milford is a community-based program that provides confidential parenting and pregnancy prevention services to teens and young adults to promote healthy choices, responsible decision-making, healthy birth outcomes and prevention of future unwanted pregnancies. This program of 24 years helps youth to make appropriate choices regarding sexual activity and parenting while assisting them to become self-sufficient individuals leading to independent and productive lives. Childbirth classes are offered. All services are free. Call: 876-4285 for information.

YOUTH VOICE : A Message from SR³

Liz Denhup

SR³ is a city wide high school respect initiative sponsored by Milford's Promise which stands for "Students for Respect, Responsibility and Resilience". Students from Foran, Law and Platt Tech are currently involved in this project. The group is facilitated by adult advisors, David Ullman and Michael Jacobsen, from Milford's Promise. SR³ is pleased to be moving forward with plans to raise awareness about the importance of character and integrity among all youth in Milford. At the city's recent "Respect" celebration, the members of SR³ were proud to unveil a compilation of "video shorts" that serve as humorous and friendly reminders to viewers to continue making decisions that positively affect those around them, as well as the community at large. These will be posted on YouTube so be sure to look them up! Kyle Charron and Rachel Lang, students at Foran High School and two of the major players behind the production report that they are "pleased to have worked on a project with such a potential for impact in the community." SR³ members also displayed their devotion to the cause by participating in both the Memorial Day parade on Sunday May 24 as well as in the Milford Youth Commission's annual "March for Respect" on Saturday June 6. As Foran student, Andrea Mavrogannis eloquently explains it, "If by marching on that day we were able to make even one person give serious thought to the issue, then by all means, the day was a success." Next school year, the students plan to implement a project called "HERO" <Have Empathy & Respect for Everyone>, created by Milford's Promise board member, Cheryl Fitzpatrick. HERO is an initiative aimed at elementary and middle school students that will seek to further reinforce the importance living respectfully. As always, SR³ welcomes new members. "If you're interested in making a difference, and SR³ sounds like something you would like to be involved in, definitely considering joining," says Caroline Berkovich. Interest can be directed to Michael Jacobsen, Advisor for SR³ at mjacobsen@ci.milford.ct.us or 203-783-3387.

Milford Mentoring Collaborative Honors Mentors

On Friday June 12, a group of approximately 100 people gathered at City Hall to honor the various mentoring programs and mentor relationships across Milford. The event was sponsored by the Milford Mentoring Collaborative which is made up of representatives from each of the mentoring programs in Milford including, Milford's Promise, Bridges Across Ages Program, Big Brothers Big Sisters and St Gabes Mentoring Program. Mayor James Richetelli was also there to show his support and recognition as well as share his thoughts on the importance of caring adults in the lives of our youth. A certificate was given to each mentor to thank them for their service and commitment to the youth of Milford. Matches from each organization were invited to speak about their experience and how mentoring had changed their life. The overall sentiment was that mentors go into the relationship looking to make a difference in the life of a child and what they find is that the child actually makes a difference in their life as well. There were many smiles shared that evening as well as hugs and even a few tears over how much lives are changed for the better through mentoring relationships. Visit our website www.milfordmentoring.org

Milford Celebrate Respect Month

Executive Director, Danielle Dumont

This May, Milford's Promise sponsored it's 9th annual Respect initiative in all Milford schools. The month began with Respect calendars being sent to all schools. Each day a message was shared with the students on how they could increase the respect they show to themselves and others on a daily basis. Throughout the elementary schools and middle schools, peers nominated each other as "Stars of Respect" identifying students that exemplify the message of respect in each classroom. From that group, the Principals at each school chose a few Ambassadors of respect from each school to represent the school at the 9th Milford's Promise annual Respect celebration at City Hall. The event was held on Thursday May 21 and over 200 people were in attendance. "We had so many excited students and proud families in attendance that we had to open the balcony and the people were even standing in the back of the room!" commented Executive Director, Danielle Dumont. The event also featured a logo contest for the Milford Anti Hate task Force. Nanci Seltzer of MAHTF presented the winners with certificates and assorted gift cards for local stores and restaurants. The high school SR³ group spoke about their initiative and shared video PSAs they have been working on. We are planning to share these PSAs with younger students next school year and also post on youtube for other communities to see. Mayor James Richetelli and Superintendent Dr. Harvey Polansky were also there and shared their thoughts on respect and sincerest congratulations with the students. The month culminated with all Stars and Ambassadors of Respect, along with several of their parents, SR³ members and Milford's Promise board members marching in the Memorial Day parade on Sunday May 24. The day was beautiful and we had over 200 people marching with us! Thank you to everyone who came out to show your support.

