

# Parents@TOGETHER

A Newsletter for Greenwich Parents of Adolescents ©  
www.parentstogetherct.org

## Parenting and... the College Application Process by Claire Friedlander

WHAT CAN BE MORE confusing, disorienting, exasperating and exciting than getting-ready-for college-time in a 21<sup>st</sup> century household here in Fairfield County? Today's teens, and their parents, face an increasingly difficult challenge as they embark upon the next critical phase in the educational journey. The college process has become such a maze in terms of trying to figure out a pathway as well as a destination. Why is this the case? What has changed in what had always been seen as the normal progression from high school to college? What is happening these days that turns the college selection process into an obstacle that threatens tranquility and hovers over the high school years?

Parents believe that everything will work out in the end if their teens follow the rules in high school: do homework regularly; study for tests; select courses of study that are recommended by teachers; participate in after-school activities; etc. But as we all know, this does not always seem to be the case these days. The times are changing and there is much to understand during the process.

Many articles have been written attempting to explain why college admissions today have taken on such a puzzling twist. For one thing, getting into college is no longer the simple application and selection process of days gone by. That fact can be seen in the college section in your local bookstore: one can select from among scores of books on the shelves in the local book store written by

former admissions officers, learned education writers, self-proclaimed researchers, and just about anyone with special "insight" into what is really important today in becoming the ideal candidate.

Let's begin by recognizing that, just as the "ratings game" has taken hold in motion pictures, TV programming, fashion and business, mass media and mass marketing have taken hold in the front offices of colleges and universities as never before. College presidents have had to adopt a *business* focus in addition to an *educational* one. How they are perceived is seen as a direct reflection on how they raise funds, gain increased endowments and interact with alumni. Popularity is important in signifying the greater appeal of the college. And what can signify popularity more clearly than dramatic increases in the number of freshman applications for the same number of slots each year?

The introduction of heavy recruitment practices to expand an institution's recognition factor all over the country as well as internationally, has increased the applicant pool exponentially. More applicants mean a decreased possibility of gaining admission. More equally or slightly better qualified applicants mean a smaller chance of being selected. Geographic diversity appeals to college admissions personnel - if new territory yields enrolled freshmen, then more from that region will most likely apply in years to come. All things being equal, will a Fairfield County student be selected for a historically popular Eastern school over one from Wyoming or South Dakota or Iowa? Marketing factors have become the relatively new, but increasingly important, items on the check list for those serving on the admissions committee. It should not be surprising, then, to learn that colleges are

*continued on page 2*

### To all our readers:

Wishing you a happy,  
healthy, safe  
and relaxing summer  
with friends and family.

### In This Issue

Cyberbullying, p. 3

Teen Drug Use: Monitoring the Future, p. 5

Our Heartfelt Thanks, p. 6

continued from page 1

said to be spending up to \$2,500 for each student that actually enrolls in the freshman class.

The climate and competition that is nurtured through increased exposure, increasingly involved alumni, and many other factors have changed the college admissions process dramatically from the time you, the parent, went off to college. One of the few factors that may be the same is when the child of an alumnus/a applies to their parent(s) alma mater early in the application process. While this does not automatically qualify an applicant for admission, if the student is qualified, the odds tip strongly in their favor. This is a practice long common at the college level, but it may be beginning to lose favor as all equity issues are being studied.

So, how do parents stop, take hold, and insist that their family will not step into the whirlwind that has all too often has been described as a “nightmare”? The secret is to firmly stick to those personal values you hold as a family when the issue of college comes up. The whole process may be disconcerting, particularly when your first child is going through it. Recognize that times have changed, and then take a good hard look at what factors are important to you, your teen, and your family, and stick to them. Remember this is a process that stretches over several years.

Consulting neighbors on the check-out line at the grocery store for a list of “good” schools may be an oversimplification of what not to do, but the point to be made is clear. This is an important and uniquely personal process. To the extent that you can, and want to, keep confidential as to how you are proceeding, the more

serenity and calm will reign in your household. Your teen is part of a large group at school all going through the same thing. Being discreet may be helpful to you and your teen.

Many families find it helpful to turn to a qualified, certified, or licensed higher education consultant when embarking upon the college search. If your school counselor is experienced in the first hand, current knowledge of colleges, then working with an outside college consultant may not be necessary. This is one of the decisions a family should make fairly early in their teen’s high school years.

College choice is heavily influenced by everything that occurs during the high school years. Having a trained professional provide guidance in all the steps during this time can be helpful. Some of the decisions may seem minor, but they can impact the course selection for all four years of high school. For example, what level of math should your teen select in ninth grade? Although recommended by the eighth grade teacher, one mother rejected the suggestion that her child take the honors class because she did not want her young teen to be pressured in the first year of high school. Is there a

long range implication to this decision? Strange but true: decisions about courses to take in ninth grade have an effect on the college admission process. Through open and honest discussion with a

counselor the reasons should be listed and the options considered before a decision is made. The student should be part of that process. Examples can be found in every aspect of high school life. Should a teen take an after-school job or join teams or clubs at the high school? All options need to be explored. What colleges look for in assessing out-of-class activities should

be considered in making that decision.

How summers are spent is another family issue to be considered. There are no right or wrong choices, but there needs to be a choice. Hanging out with one’s friends all summer, while fun, may not be the best option when so many interesting options and alternatives exist. Guidance along the way allows decisions to be made in a timely and appropriate manner. To the extent that the academic record is an important indicator for potential college choice, discretionary time during those high school years also counts.

Colleges see the *whole* person when making their selections. Parents who buy in to the “whole person” concept in working with their teen during these high school years will find the time spent in listening and suggesting and concurring *with each other* to be important preparation for the steps ahead. This is, in fact, a part of the college readiness process. Families communicating in this manner will find each step logical and sequential - and not startling and scary.

It is important to remember that you, the parent, do not have to have the knowledge of every single college at your fingertips. That is what the professional provides. Just as in the examples cited above, following the process and assessing and evaluating using the best knowledge you have about your teen will take you all the way through the college search and selection experience. You and your teen, armed with your sense of shared family values, will be able to navigate rationally in what, hopefully, will be still waters.



Claire D. Friedlander is a licensed Professional Counselor in Connecticut and a National Board Certified Counselor. She is the College Consultant for JumpStart at Jewish Family Services of Greenwich. For more information call 622-1881.

# Cyberbullying

## Goes Beyond the Playground

by Elizabeth Ramirez

**I**N THE LAST TEN YEARS technology has dramatically changed communication. The proliferation of the World Wide Web, cellular telephones, and instant messaging has enhanced our lives. We now have, at our fingertips conveniences such as online transactions, job applications, business and school research, video game play, music downloads, and even video viewing. E-mails and text messaging are quickly replacing the art of letter writing. The wealth of these technologies, however, has also posed new challenges to parents and their children. Computer-hackers, swindlers, and even child predators have made the Internet a potential hazard. Added to this, our children are now facing the threat of cyberbullying.

### What is cyberbullying?

At present, there is no accepted legal definition for cyberbullying. The general consensus is that cyberbullying is "the use of any electronic device to send unwelcome messages that are intended to embarrass, intimidate, threaten, or humiliate the intended victim." Unlike the more traditional schoolyard bullying of our youth, cyberbullying can occur any time, any where. Cyberbullying occurs under the radar of most parents so it is important to raise our awareness.

### How is cyberbullying carried out?

The two main tools of the cyber bully are the personal computer and the cellular telephone. Using the personal computer's internet connection, the bully can send harassing emails and instant messages, and even create personal web spaces or weblogs, blogs, dedicated to attacking a person's character. These attacks can

come in the form of altered pictures, for example pasted photos of the victim on pornographic pictures, caricatures, and slurs. Cyber bullies have even learned to use legitimate website functions such as instant polling to set up polls such as "Who's the ugliest person in school?" A group of bullies may also gang up on one child in chat rooms and bombard him/her with insulting messages and emails, or simply exclude the child from conversations. Such incidents can even occur in chat rooms dedicated to children. In one example, a seven-year-old girl, participating in a children's-only website monitored under adult supervision, was subjected to insulting comments and name calling from other children using the site.

While most of us think of the personal computer as the bully's weapon of choice, the cellular telephone is rapidly becoming the favored tool of harassment. 16 million American children between the ages of 10 to 18 now own cellular phones and many children consider it to be a vital accessory. It has become the umbilical cord to their social life and gives them constant access to the outside world. Text messaging is a popular new way for children to communicate. But, in the hands of the bully, hurtful or threatening messages can be sent to the victim and forwarded to other students in a matter of seconds. Some cell phones have internet access with integrated digital still and video cameras. A recent trend known as "cyber bashing" is the video recording of

people being bullied or beaten up. The video material is then uploaded to internet domains such as My Space®, You Tube™, and Google video™. A recent case of cyber bashing occurred in Long Island, New York, in which a 12-year-old girl was recorded being beaten by two 14-year-old

...the cellular telephone  
is rapidly becoming  
the favored tool  
of harassment.

girls and the recording posted on a My Space® web page. The two attackers were subsequently arrested.

Unlike hurtful notes of years past, these humiliating images or videos can't be torn up and thrown away. Once on the World Wide Web, they can remain in the public domain indefinitely. An example of this kind of harassment is the story of Ghyslain Raza, also known in the internet world as the, "Star Wars Kid." In 2003, Ghyslain Raza brought the issue of cyber bullying to the forefront of the Canadian education system. This 15-year-old student made a two minute video using a golf club to duplicate the sword swinging light saber moves of Darth Vader. Though the video was intended to be a school project, three classmates posted it on a website. The video quickly spread across the web and Ghyslain was subjected to constant harassment from fellow students and strangers. Ultimately he required psychiatric treatment for severe emotional distress. The video of Ghyslain remains on the web to this day.

### How is cyberbullying different from schoolyard bullying?

While cyberbullying might be considered an extension of schoolyard

*continued on page 4*

*continued from page 3*

bullying, it is different in a number of ways. In traditional schoolyard bullying, the bully gets the immediate “gratification” of seeing the victim suffer. The bully achieves the desired result and then usually backs off. In cyberbullying, tormentors do not see their victims’ suffering and therefore, don’t know when to stop.

Cyberbullies also have the benefit of anonymity, which provides a sense of power and a lack of accountability or consequences. Thus, cyberbullies are more likely to push the boundaries of cruelty.

When combined with the continuous, intrusive access that technology provides, bullies are able to reach their victims at all hours, and even in their own homes. It is this ability to abuse victims in their own homes that makes the greatest distinction between traditional and cyberbullying. In traditional scenarios, the child can at least find some respite at home. The loss of this barrier between victims and their tormentors has, in some cases, led to devastating results. In one case constant, intrusive bullying eventually led to suicide.

Ryan Halligan was a kind and sensitive child who was never a discipline problem. Issues of bullying started in fifth grade and continued to worsen during middle school. During the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Ryan became very interested in computers, especially in instant messaging. His parents established the typical internet safety rules early on but never thought to cover online bullying. During this time, the bullying at school had worsened to an all-time high, eventually leading to Ryan’s death by suicide. After Ryan’s death, his father logged onto Ryan’s internet account and discovered the true extent of the bullying his son had been subjected to. He discovered that Ryan was not only being intensely bullied at school but was also receiving harassing e-mails and instant messages at home. He also found that Ryan was

communicating with a peer whom Ryan’s father had never met. This peer, it turned out, was encouraging Ryan to take his own life.

### **How common is cyberbullying?**

The National Children’s Charity (NCH), in England, was the first organization to recognize the trend of cyberbullying and to take the issue to a national level. In 2005, the NCH surveyed youngsters ages 11 to 19 and found that one in five young people had been bullied via cellular phone or the internet. While there are no hard statistics for the United States, the research team for i-SAFE™ surveyed 1500 students ranging from the fourth to eighth grade. They found that a staggering “58 percent of students admitted someone has said something mean or hurtful to them while online” and “42 percent said they have been bullied online”. This study corresponds to results found by the non-profit organization “Fight Crime, Invest in Kids”. They surveyed 1000 students nationwide ages six to 11 and 12 to 17 and estimated that 13 million children aged six to 17 were victims of cyber bullying. They also found that one in six pre-teens and one in three teens have been victims of cyber bullying. Pre-teens were just as likely to receive harmful messages at school (45 percent) as at home (44 percent), while teens received 30 percent of the messages at school and 70 percent at home. The poll revealed that approximately 2 million of the children who were bullied online told no one.

### **What can parents do to protect their children from cyberbullying?**

The first and most important thing that we, as parents, must remember is that cyberbullying must be taken seriously. It is easy for us to tell our child to simply delete or ignore hurtful messages. To the child, however, reputation and self-image means everything. This constant damage to their self-esteem can pose a genuine danger.

There are a number of steps that parents, children, and educators can take to put a stop to cyberbullying before it poses a danger to your child.

#### **1. Let your child know that they should not suffer in silence.**

Talk about the issue of online bullying. Encourage your child to come to you if they feel threatened, uncomfortable, or if they know of someone else who is being bullied.

#### **2. Keep the computer out of your child’s bedroom.**

Computers should be kept in the common areas of the house. This not only provides a safety barrier against bullies, but against other threats such as online pedophiles.

#### **3. Know the law.**

Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) applies to the online collection of personal information from children ages 13 and under (<http://www.coppa.org/comply.htm>). This law requires that websites remove the information immediately.

#### **4. Teach your child not to respond to or engage in the abusive behavior.**

Remind them that whatever they write, type, or text in anger will be permanent. Explain that engaging the bully online gives the bully the feedback they are looking for.

#### **5. Do not erase harassing messages.**

These may be needed later for evidence.

#### **6. Ask your child to show you their cellular phone or email ‘buddy’ list.**

Ask for the real names and how they know that person. You may be surprised to find that one of these ‘buddies’ is someone the child has only met online.

#### **7. Teach your child never to give out private information.**

Passwords, PIN numbers, and Social Security numbers should never be revealed by your child. This is especially true for someone they’ve only met online.

#### **8. Contact the cellular service provider.**

If your child is being bullied via the

cellular phone you should call your provider. Each cellular phone company has a different policy. Some companies may require you to file a police report before they can change the number. Again, teach your child to save any messages.

**9. Does your child’s school have an anti-bullying program?**

Every school should have an anti-bullying program that addresses any form of bullying, including those perpetrated by cellular phone or computer.

**10. Contact your ISP provider.**

Find out what their rules are concerning harassment and bullying.

**11. Invest in software that allows you to monitor your child’s activity while on-line.**

The product “Web Watcher” ([www.AwarenessTech.com](http://www.AwarenessTech.com)) allows you to see everything your child does online from any computer.

**12. Ask yourself: “Does my child really need a cellular phone?”**

If you must give your child a cellular phone, consider phones that are designed specifically for kids, such as Firefly®. These phones do not have text messaging features or internet access. They also have a limited number of programmable phone numbers and can screen out calls from unknown numbers. Remember, it is much harder to monitor the activities that are taking place through cellular phones.

**13. Take Nothing For Granted!**

Remember that our children will always test the boundaries of our rules. Don’t hesitate to engage and reengage your child. Ask if there are problems at school. Don’t be afraid to check on your child’s internet and cellular phone activities.



*Elizabeth Ramirez has over 15 years of experience working with children with various behavioral issues. She is the mother of two children who attend Cos Cob School.*

# Teen Drug Use

## Prescription-type Drug Use Remains High

**A**CCORDING TO the 32nd annual Monitoring the Future survey, adolescents in the United States who use illicit drugs or drink alcohol continued a decade-long drop. The 2006 survey of 50,000 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in more than 400 schools nationwide revealed that a fifth (21 percent) of today’s 8th graders, over a third (36 percent) of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and about half (48 percent) of all 12th graders have ever taken any illicit drug **during their lifetime**. The proportion saying they used any illicit drug **in the prior 12 months** (called “annual prevalence”) continued to decline in 2006, and the rates (15 percent, 29 percent, and 37 percent in 8th, 10th, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, respectively) are now down from recent peak levels in the mid-1990s by about one-third in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, one-quarter in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and one-eighth in 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Drugs showing some **declines** in use include marijuana, methamphetamine and crack cocaine while many drugs showed no or very little further decline in 2006 at any grade, including inhalants, LSD, hallucinogens other than LSD, powder cocaine, crystal methamphetamine (“ice”), heroin, narcotics other than heroin, tranquilizers, sedatives, several “club drugs” (Ketamine, Rohypnol, and GHB), and steroids. However, apart from Ecstasy there was very little evidence of **increasing** drug use this year.

Not all drugs have shown appreciable declines from their recent peaks. In particular, the use of prescription-type drugs like narcotics, tranquilizers, and sedatives remains at relatively high levels. This general class of drugs contains narcotic pain relievers, two of which are OxyContin and Vicodin. Younger students, who had not previously been showing much increase in their OxyContin use, reached their highest levels observed so far. Vicodin, another specific narcotic drug used for pain control, has an even higher prevalence rate than OxyContin. Sedatives, including barbiturate sedatives, also showed a gradual, but substantial, increase over a period of years. Amphetamines constitute the only class of prescribed psychotherapeutic drugs used outside of medical regimen that have not been showing a recent increase in use.

In 2006, the study included a new question on the use of over-the-counter cough or cold medicines for the explicit purpose of getting high. The drugs in these classes that are abused usually contain dextromethorphan, a cough suppressant, which can cause alterations of consciousness and mood when taken in high doses. Street names for these drugs include “DXM,” “Dex,” and “skittles.” About one in every twenty-five 8th graders abused cough or cold medications fairly recently, as did about one in every fourteen 12th graders. Because these drugs are available over the counter, students may not fully recognize the dangers of using them.

The good news is that, among 8th graders, 30-day prevalence of alcohol use has declined by more than one-third since its peak level in 1996. Although the proportional declines from recent peaks have been smaller among 10th and 12th graders, the 30-day smoking rates continued a very gradual decline in all three grades in 2006.



For more information visit [www.monitoringthefuture.org](http://www.monitoringthefuture.org)

## Our Heartfelt Thanks

Your donations are continuously needed to fund the eight newsletters (four issues of *Parents Together* and four issues of *Primer* we publish each school year. Our sincere thanks to the contributors listed below whose gifts were received in response to our 2007 appeal letter. *List complete as of April 2. Our apologies for any errors or omissions.*

### Workshops \$1000 or more

Central Middle School PTA  
Alexandra M. & Steven A.  
Cohen Foundation  
Eastern Middle School PTA  
Greenwich High School  
PTA  
Mary Q. Pedersen

### Guidelines \$500 or more

Anonymous  
The Archer Family  
Lisa & Clifford Berger  
Cindy & Mike Biondi  
Carol Browne  
Courtney B.I. Combe  
Convent of the Sacred Heart  
Patricia & Eric Fast  
Paul E. Gaston Foundation  
Greenwich Academy  
Polly & Mark Hyman  
Marina & Andres Jacobson  
in honor of Meg Drake  
Terry & Richard Lubman  
Lori & Chris Niehaus  
Parkway School PTA  
Debi & Jay Shaw  
Wendy & Peter Wright

### Sponsors \$250 or more

Steve & Kathy Anderson  
Betsy & Michael Benenson  
Debbie & Michael Clain  
Chris Coats  
North Street School PTA  
Riverside School PTA  
Debra & John Rogan  
Amy & John Weinberg  
Western Middle school PTA

### Speakers \$100 or more

Susan & Perrin Arturi  
Amy Sue Badini  
Carlo Badioli  
Jenny & Michael Baldock  
Nancy & Bruce Barker  
Robert Barolak  
Nancy & James Better  
Susan Bevan  
Cynthia & Richard  
Blumenthal  
Patricia & James Brett  
Elizabeth & Douglas Brown  
Lindy Camel  
Gail & Frank Cammisa  
Lynn & Michael Canning  
Children's Day School  
Margaret & Jeff Cianci  
Amy Clark  
Jenny & Wylie Collins  
Carol Ann Coughlin  
Irene Cunanan &  
James Finn  
Andrea Dabney  
Cathy & Alain DeCoster  
Marie & Patrick Dolan  
Calvine & Doug Dunnan  
Lisa & Thomas Edmundson

Catherine & Long Ellis  
Cathleen & Bill Ellsworth  
Laura & David Erickson  
Mark Figgie  
The Fitzgerald Family  
Patricia & Robert Flippin  
Carol Gellos  
Christy & Sheldon Gordon  
Annmarie & Tim Graham  
Antoinette &  
Michael Griffith  
Annette Grueterich  
Monica & Mark Hantho  
Donna & Glenn Hascher  
Elizabeth Hawks  
Nicole & Larry Heath  
Kathy Heidt  
Anne & Robert Ivanhoe  
Lori & Allen Jackson  
Karen & Jim Joyella  
Nancy Kail &  
Marcos Rodriquez  
Dr. & Mrs. Jed Kaminitsky  
Sheila & Lawrence Kantor  
Ellen Keats & Irv Goldstein  
Chris Keaveney  
Nancy Korobkin &  
Jerry Rosenband  
Katharina & Marc Lewis  
Michelle Litt  
Barbara & Rick Levy  
Ann Lockyer  
Annesley &  
David MacFarlane  
Jill & Glen Marchak  
Crozer Martin  
Virginia & Doug Marzonie  
Dana McAvity  
Mary Jane & James McCann  
Patricia &  
Anthony McCausland  
The McMullin Family  
Abby Meiselman &  
Kenneth Bloom  
The Meyer Family  
Foundation, INC

Lori Milton  
Mary & Garrett Moran  
Foundation  
Laura More  
Debra Nelson  
New Lebanon School PTA  
Beth & David Nixon  
James O'Brien  
Kathryn & Thomas O'Leary  
Catherine & Louis Paglia  
Suzanne & Andrew Peisch  
Sherri & Kim Purcell  
Patricia Read  
Anne Marie Reilly &  
Joe Hadley  
Nancy & Robert Risman  
The Robbins Family  
Foundation  
Leslee & David Rogath  
Cheryl Saban &  
Michael Siegmund  
Kim & Marty Sands  
Nancy & Mark Schroeder  
The Simmons Family  
Foundation  
Jane Sims  
Pam & Bob Speer  
Susan & Per Tetzlaff  
Mary & David Versfelt  
Marie & Dave Wardell  
Anne & Bruce Wernert  
Marian & Michael  
Yagemann

### Friends up to \$100

Barb & Jim Amen  
Dr. & Mrs. Mark Armstrong  
Donna Arnold &  
Thomas Cerio III  
Susan Baer & Ben Chan  
Deborah Bandanza &  
Alexander Crawford

Rina & Paul Bellamy  
 Leslie Bhutani  
 Amy Bibb  
 Alison Birnbaum  
 Betsey Blessing  
 M/M James Boardman  
 Anne & Randy Bourne  
 Cecilia Bowers  
 Liz & Brian Callahan  
 Sherry Delany  
 Kate & Peter Demmerle  
 Robin Edelson  
 Julie Faryniarz  
 Denise Fava  
 Cristy Fraser  
 Carrie Frey  
 Laura & Tolman Geffs  
 Merritt Greene  
 Kate Howell  
 M/M R. S. Ingraham  
 May Jaffe  
 Mary & Allen Jay  
 Peggy & Scott Kalb  
 Cate Keeney  
 Virginia Keeshan  
 Christine & Leonard Kim  
 Rachel Latto  
 Robin & Norman LeBlanc  
 Nancy & Peter Levy  
 Peggy & Jack McDermott  
 Anne Miller  
 Colleen & Greg Moroney  
 Lucy Pecover  
 Nancy Pivorotto-Barbe  
 State Rep. Claudia  
 "Dolly" Powers  
 Melissa Rozmus  
 Mellisa & Felix Rovelli  
 Christy & Meredith Sadler  
 St. Paul's Day School  
 Jennifer & David Snyder  
 Helene Stancato  
 June & Glenn Sussman  
 Donna & Scott Tagliarino  
 M/M G. Tubridy  
 Nancy Voye &  
 Mark Weissler

## Dear Readers

This issue concludes our 25<sup>th</sup> year of publishing *Parents Together*, a unique resource for Greenwich parents. This nonprofit, advertisement-free quarterly newsletter, which contains articles of interest to the community, is possible only because of the generous support of our contributors, both editorial and financial. Please let us know the topics you would like to see covered in future issues by either contacting your *Parents Together* school delegate or by e-mailing us at [togetherparent@aol.com](mailto:togetherparent@aol.com).

Many thanks to those of you who reponded to our 2007 fundraiser and appeal letter which was mailed in March. If you did not receive an appeal letter and wish to contribute, please complete the form below and mail to *Parents Together*, P.O. Box 4843, Greenwich, CT, 06831.

Thanks for your continued support!

Betsy Benenson  
 Polly Hyman  
 Co-Editors

-----

Name (please print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

My company has a matching gift program. I have enclosed the appropriate form.

**Please select payment type:**

\_\_\_ I have enclosed a check made payable to *Parents Together* in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Credit card payments (for donations of \$100 or more). Please check one:

Visa       MasterCard

Acct # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Name (as it appears on card) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to *Parents Together*, P.O. Box 4843, Greenwich, CT 06831

## Who We Are

*Parents Together* is an independent, nonprofit organization in Greenwich, CT, that offers ongoing opportunities for parents to communicate, share, support and learn together. We work in cooperation with the Parent Teacher Associations of the public, private and parochial schools in town. The *Parents Together* organization and delegates from Greenwich schools plan programs for parents in grades K-12. We also publish two quarterly newsletters: *Parents Together Primer*, for parents of children from birth through fifth grade, and *Parents Together*, for parents of adolescents. **Distribution:** *Parents Together Primer* is distributed to parents through their children's preschools and elementary schools. *Parents Together* is sent to parents of children in grades 6 through 12 in all Greenwich public and independent schools.

**Newsletter Subscriptions and Correspondence:** We invite parents and all other readers interested in local parenting issues to subscribe to either or both newsletters. For an **annual subscription**, please indicate which newsletter you wish to receive, and send your name, address and \$12 for each subscription with a check payable to *Parents Together*, to P. O. Box 4843, Greenwich, CT 06831-0417. Correspondence may be mailed to the same address.

#### NEWSLETTER STAFF:

*Betsy Benenson and Polly Hyman*, Editors  
*Nancy Barker*, Proofreader

#### EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD:

*Meg Drake and Donna Hascher*, Parents Together, Co-Chairs  
*Denise Dreskin*, Consultant  
*Dr. Betty Sternberg*, Superintendent, Greenwich Public Schools  
*Janice Richards*, President PTA Council

## RISE Task Force Developing Options

The RISE Task Force was recently established to address *racial imbalance*, *space utilization*, and *declining enrollment* in the Greenwich Public Schools (GPS), within the context of providing *enriched educational opportunities* and the need to be accountable for allocating *limited resources*. The Task Force has been charged with developing multiple, viable options to address these issues.

In response to data presented earlier this year, RISE summary statements were developed and subcommittees were formed to research data, sites, stories and culture, and communications.

The subcommittees will report back to the RISE Task Force on May 1 after which the task force members and administrative staff will develop emerging options. Input will be received from the community and the Board of Education in June, and the task force will work on refining the options over the summer. Final options will be presented to the Board of Education on September 27 and the Board will determine which option or combination of options to implement.

As a parent you can stay informed, participate and find out how it impacts you and your child's education by attending RISE Task Force, Board of Education and school PTA meetings, visiting the GPS website regularly, and participating in community forums and public hearings.

For key dates in the RISE process and for more information visit [www.greenwichschools.org/RISE](http://www.greenwichschools.org/RISE)

This issue of Parents Together Newsletter was made possible by the donations of generous supporters

**Parents**  **TOGETHER**

P. O. Box 4843  
Greenwich, CT 06831-0417

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Greenwich, CT  
Permit No. 734