Mental Health Awareness. The Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton, and First Lady Michelle Obama are working hard to end the stigma associated with mental illness. In her role as guest editor of the Huffington Post, Kate Middleton touted the importance of taking care of one’s mental health and acknowledged the challenges that parents of children with mental illness may face. We hope that these two powerful role models will continue to lead the way toward greater acceptance of children with mental illness as well as the parents and guardians for care for them! To read the full Huffington Post article, go here http://goo.gl/nJv5Bh

Science Alert: Depression Screening Guidelines for Children and Adolescents. A recent article on behalf of the US Preventive Services Task Force* outlines guidelines for depression screenings for children and adolescents. Importantly, the majority of children and adolescents with depression are currently undiagnosed and untreated. After reviewing previous studies, the Task Force found benefits associated with screening children and adolescents between 12-18 years of age for depression in primary care settings. Adolescents who are identified as having major depressive disorder through screenings show improved symptoms following a medical intervention (e.g., medication, therapy). The Task Force was unable to make a recommendation for children under 12 given the lack of research in this population.

Did you know? A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), which may be part of an IEP, can help determine the underlying cause of a child’s “problematic behaviors” by defining these behaviors, examining factors preceding the occurrence of these behaviors, and determining the child’s response to different interventions.

For questions or comments about this newsletter, please email concordsepac@gmail.com.

Calling all volunteers! It’s that time of the year again – the time when flowers start pushing up out of the ground, bringing with them thoughts of the end of one school year and the beginning of the next. As we look ahead, we are looking to fill a few positions for next year’s SEPAC board and would love to hear from you! If you are interested in working together with a group of smart, dedicated, and fun parents who are interested in making a difference in special education in the Concord/Concord-Carlisle region while connecting with other parents, please email us at concordsepac@gmail.com or come to our next meeting on March 3rd (details below) to hear what we do.

If you are a parent or guardian of a child with an out-of-district placement, please join us for our monthly informal networking group. Our next get-together will be on March 29th, from 9:30-11AM, at Farfaile Italian Market and Café.

On Thursday, March 24th, from 9:30-10:30 AM, Principal Lynne Beattie and the Concord Middle School Special Education Department will be hosting a coffee and presentation at CMS Peabody for parents of who are interested in learning about the support CMS offers for special needs students. This presentation is sure to be informative for all current elementary school families who have children on an IEP and/or receiving accommodations as well as current middle school families.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 3: SEPAC Meeting
7:30 P.M.
Hunt Recreation Center
*followed by get-together at Trail’s End Café

March 24th: Transitioning to Middle School
9:30-10:30 A.M.
CMS Peabody

March 29th: Out-of-District Networking Group
9-11:30 A.M.
Farfaile Italian Market & Café

For more information, visit www.concordsepac.org. If you would like to connect with us, please follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter: Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Public Schools SEPAC concordsepac@gmail.com www.concordsepac.org @concordsepac

Concord Public and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
March 2016 Newsletter