



October 2007

Welcome to the Northfield Area Parent Communication Network's monthly e-newsletter! You are a member of a network of unbelievable parents that do make a difference and help create a healthier and safer community for all our youth.

**We want your feedback!**

PCN has collaborated with the Northfield Mayor's Task Force on Youth Alcohol and Drug Use Adult Responsibility Committee to develop and distribute postcards informing parents and teens of local ordinances and Minnesota law. One postcard outlined the Northfield curfew law and a second focused on unintentional teen parties when youth are left alone and the consequences for both adults and youth. Along with providing information, the intent of the postcards is to generate positive discussion between parents and teens. We want to hear your thoughts on the postcards.

[Did you notice the postcards and did you find them valuable? Yes or no](#)

Please take a moment and respond by replying to this e-newsletter email you received and answer yes or no. Please send your reply/thoughts by October 31.

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**NHS Student Directory**

PCN has been working to compile and print the 2007-08 NHS Student Directory. The directory is a valuable tool for connecting with other parents also finding phone numbers quickly! (*PCN members are designated with an asterisk.*)

Directories will be distributed during the NHS Parent/Teach Conferences on October 15 & 16.

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**Teens Behind the Wheel**

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of teens, claiming more than 6,000 young lives each year (*according to new research by AAA*). Teens, not necessarily by choice but by inexperience, are at a much higher risk for serious injury and death due to traffic crashes.

Teens need parents to be positive role models and to play active roles in their driving lives. In addition to spending ample time in the vehicle during the learner's permit stage of licensing, parents also need to start a dialogue with their teens to discuss leading risk factors for teens such as obeying speed limits, wearing seat belts, and the dangers of distracted driving (*teen passengers and cell phones*).

Here in Minnesota, we continue to see the tragic result of unbelted young drivers and passengers. A group of Northfield High School students recently conducted a survey to look at the use of seat belts among teen drivers and passengers at NHS. The teen volunteers conducted pre-test observing cars as they exited the NHS parking lots after school dismissal and then repeated the test three weeks later. During the three weeks, they distributed brochures and posters reinforcing the importance of seat belt use.

Here are the results:

**Pre-Test**

% of drivers with safety belts	76%
% of passengers with safety belts	86%

**Post Test**

% of drivers with safety belts	85%
% of passengers with safety belts	87%

**Remind your teen driver to buckle up!**

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**Save the Date**

Plans are in the works for parent/community information event on October 30 from 7-8:30 pm at the Northfield Middle School. The evening will include a keynote speaker and several break out sessions. Watch for more information.

## Reporting Underage Drinking Activities/ZAP efforts

Several parents have requested information on the process for reporting an underage drinking party. Roger Schroeder, Captain Northfield Police Department, clarified the following points:

1. When calling about a concern regarding underage drinking parties the caller maybe aware of and/or is observing, the caller may request that the dispatcher transfer their call directly to a Northfield Police Officer on duty.
2. Callers do have the right to remain anonymous.
3. Upon investigation, the officers on duty determine if this warrants a ZAP approach. They then follow through with acquiring a search warrant from a Rice County judge, as well as requesting other local law enforcement officers.

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## Parent Communication Network (PCN)

Thank you for your support of the Parent Communication Network (PCN). This newsletter is just one of the efforts of PCN to help facilitate communication among parents and teens. Other efforts include publishing the parent-student directory each year for Northfield High School and providing resources and education for parents.

*We want to do more!* We want to reach as many parents as possible in the Northfield Middle and High Schools. If you know of a family that is interested in becoming a member of PCN, please let them know it only takes a few minutes to fill out the on-line form on [northfieldhci.org](http://northfieldhci.org). Also remind them of the PCN mission to foster communication among parents, help parents develop good parenting skills and prevent risky situations for all Northfield teens.

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## “New Phase Encourages Parents to Get Involved”

As part of its continuing Parent Chronicles initiative, the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign has developed a new set of action items and quiz questions that encourage parents to further explore their teens’ lives and help bridge the generation gap. Many parents are in the dark when it comes their teen’s world—they don’t understand the lingo, the pressures they face, or even how their child relates to his/her peers. Learning more about their teen’s world helps parents better communicate and relate to their child.

With the launch of Parent Chronicles we encouraged parents to take a glimpse into today’s teen culture including what’s happening on the Web. Upon completion of these action items, parents joined one another online to share their thoughts on our parent-to-parent forum. We encourage parents to keep returning to the forum (<http://theantidrug.com/advice/chronicles-forum.aspx>) and chronicling their experiences as they dive into the world of teens.

**Pop Culture Quiz:** After taking our last teen pop culture Quiz, many parents learned that they still have a way to go in better understanding the world that their child lives in. Knowing more about the messages they are exposed to is one of the key ways parents can better connect with their teens and also help keep them safe. Take the latest pop culture quiz to find out whether you’re “in-the-know” or “clueless” about your teen’s world. <http://www.theantidrug.com/advice/chronicles-home.aspx>

**Expert Columnist:** Parenting expert Alison Birnbaum has a new column this month sharing some of her own personal parenting experiences and offering tips for parents on how to set limits and rules without sounding like a drill sergeant! <http://www.theantidrug.com/advice/chronicles-column.aspx>

**MEDIA CAMPAIGN FLASH** is your source for the latest news on the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. Feel free to forward this information to your community partners and announce this information on your Web site or in your organizational newsletter. Free materials from the Media Campaign are available to distribute in your community by calling (800) 788-2800 .

**ABOUT THE MEDIA CAMPAIGN:** The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy’s National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign reaches youth ages 9-18, with emphasis on adolescents aged 14-16, their parents and other adults who influence choices young people make to lead drug-free lives. For more information on the Media Campaign, check out [www.MediaCampaign.org](http://www.MediaCampaign.org).