



### Important Dates:

- ☺ February 8—SFC Meeting, 5:30pm.
- ☺ February 9—PTS Conferences, 5:00pm-8:00pm.
- ☺ February 9—Student Government PASTA SUPPER, 5:00pm - 8:00pm.
- ☺ February 11—Progress Reports Sent Home.
- ☺ February 12—AP Science Study Session, Methuen, 8am-3pm.
- ☺ February 14—Yankee Candle Fundraiser Begins!
- ☺ February 15—First Form, Museum of Science Trip.
- ☺ February 16—Board of Trustees Meeting, 6:00pm.
- ☺ February 19 through February 27—NO SCHOOL—FEBRUARY BREAK. Classes will resume for students Monday, February 28th, 2011.
- ☺ March 2—Coffee & Conversation with administrators, US, 7:45am.
- ☺ March 3—Coffee & Conversation with administrators, LS, 7:45am.

### News and Notes

The next SFC Meeting for parents & families has been rescheduled to Tuesday, February 8th, 2011 from 5:30pm - 6:30pm. The agenda will include school reports and discussion of parent sponsored programs. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend!

**Alert: Monday, February 28 will be a regular school day, not a professional Day as planned.** This is in response to the need to make up instructional class time lost to snow days. Please contact the school with any questions: (978) 744-2105.

### Raising Funds for Childhood Cancer Research.

Mrs. Berry will have a new look by the end of the day on Tuesday, February 8. After careful thought, she is joining her daughter Kendall, by shaving her head to raise \$\$\$ for childhood cancer research. She has set a goal of \$1,000. It's been almost a year since her grandson Walter passed away and she strongly feels this will be a fitting tribute to his life, battle and the everyday struggles of other families and their children with cancer.

She is joining thousands of others who have raised money for the efforts of The St. Baldrick's Foundation. Of every dollar raised, 78% funds search to find a cure. Mrs. Berry has challenged the Lower School students to raise \$200, offering a delicious homemade breakfast to the Connections who raises the most towards the cause.

The St. Baldrick's Foundation currently funds more in childhood cancer research grants than any organization except the U.S. government. What began as a challenge between three friends on March 17, 2000, has grown into the world's largest volunteer-driven fundraising opportunity benefiting childhood cancer research. Over the past 10 years, more than \$90 million has been raised to fund the most promising research to fund cures for childhood cancers and give survivors long and healthy lives.



Mrs. Berry with her grandson Walter.

The Foundation raised over \$22 million in 2010 alone. "Each year, 160,000 children are diagnosed with cancer worldwide. Cancer is the number one disease killer of children in the U.S. and Canada. One in five kids diagnosed with cancer won't survive. Research saves lives." "It takes you - Let's conquer!" Students may bring cash or checks made payable to The St. Baldrick's Foundation to their Connections' teachers. "Thank you for being a hero for kids with cancer!"



### ~ Winter Weather Advisory Information ~

Since our students use the Salem Public School buses, Salem Academy Charter School will follow the Salem Public Schools regarding delayed openings or school closings due to bad weather. We do not call the radio and TV stations. We do, however, place a "one-call" telephone call to all families confirming the information. **Please be sure that we have the proper telephone number so that we can reach you with a "one-call". Call to confirm at: (978) 744-2105.**

This week the Salem community experienced a tragic loss -- a ninth grader at Salem High School committed suicide. Many Salem Academy students are coping with the loss of their friend and former classmate. Enclosed are some tips and resources for parents.



## After a Suicide: Helping Students Cope

The aftermath of a youth suicide is a sad and challenging time for a community. However, during this time, you can be a powerful role model for students.



### Tips for how to respond to students:

- It is important to normalize and validate feelings such as anger, sadness, shock, fear or confusion.
- It is certainly acceptable to show your own emotions to students.
- There will likely be a wide range of emotions. Respect that some students may not want to verbalize their feelings, some may want to mourn openly, and still others may not be significantly affected.
- Remind students that there are positive coping strategies (talking to a trusted friend or adult, writing thoughts or feelings, exercise, rest) for life's difficulties and that there are resources for anyone contemplating suicide.
- One of the most precious gifts you can give a grieving teen is the gift of your presence.
- Do not feel you must give advice or suggestions. It is acceptable to say, "I don't know, or "This is hard on us all".
- Do not attempt to impose your explanation on why this has happened.
- Do not attempt to reassure that everything is okay.
- Do not tell them you know how he/she feels (because you probably don't).
- Be willing to say nothing.
- Do not lecture or use well-intentioned clichés that minimize or take away from a student's need to mourn.

### Helpful Resources:

[Bertolon Center for Grief and Healing](#) -- Offering support groups for children, counseling referrals & phone consultation.

[http://www.hns.org/Bertolon\\_Center\\_for\\_Grief\\_Healing/Children\\_and\\_Grief.aspx](http://www.hns.org/Bertolon_Center_for_Grief_Healing/Children_and_Grief.aspx) phone: 978-774-5100 email: [grief@hns.org](mailto:grief@hns.org)

[Salem Academy School Adjustment Counselors](#)—If you are worried about your child and want to have one of our counselors check in with them please contact:



Sarah Pickens  
Lower School Adjustment Counselor  
[spickens@salemacademycs.org](mailto:spickens@salemacademycs.org)  
(978) 744-2105 ext. 128



Beth O'Brien  
Upper School Adjustment Counselor  
[bobrien@salemacademycs.org](mailto:bobrien@salemacademycs.org)  
(978) 744-2105 ext. 105

### Commonly asked questions and appropriate responses:

**Why did he/she die by suicide?** We are never going to know the answer to that question as the answer has died with him/her. The focus needs to be on helping you with your thoughts and feelings and everyone working together to prevent future suicides rather than explaining "why".

**What should I say about him/her now that they have made the choice to die by suicide?**

It is important that we remember the positive things about them and to respect their privacy and that of their family.

**Didn't he/she make a poor choice and is it okay to be angry with them?** They did make a very poor choice and research has found that many young people who survived a suicide attempt are very glad to be alive and never attempted suicide again. You have permission for any and all your feelings in the aftermath of suicide and it are okay to be angry with them.

**How can I cope with this suicide?** It is important to remember what or who has helped you cope when you have had to deal with sad things in your life before. Please turn to the important adults in your life for help and share your feelings with them. It is important to maintain normal routines, proper sleeping and eating habits and to engage in regular exercise.

([www.dcsdk12.org/portal/page/...and.../Tips\\_after\\_Suicide.pdf](http://www.dcsdk12.org/portal/page/...and.../Tips_after_Suicide.pdf))