

# The Wellness Word

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## ACCESS Health, HMP (Healthy Maine Partnership)

### Special points of interest:

- Kick Butts Day
- Who's in the Access Health Office?
- Upcoming Events
- Samantha Skunk Who?!
- Kimberly Rowe & Mindfulness

### WOWW: Freeport Wellness Program Soars in 2008

Freeport High School has a small but mighty team of students who plan and organize their Wellness Wednesday program. The WOWW group which stands for "We Organize Wellness Wednesday" meets every Tuesday during lunch with school advisor and nurse, Mrs. Barbara Chisholm and Access Health youth coordinator, Heather Van Dam. Several years ago this group began as an anti-tobacco group. They worked with Access Health to produce an anti-tobacco public service announcements which you may have seen on one of the major television stations! Their PSA was about a "beauty con-

test" of smokers and what smoking had negatively done to their hair skin and nails (yellow teeth, dry brittle hair, weak, jagged yellow nails etc..) As time progressed and new people

their peers various options for wellness and enhanced health. This is the second year of the WOWW program, which they sponsor once a month during a one hour free period called,

Falcon period. To date, they have had singing bowls, a Hannaford nutrition presentation, a panel on decision making, formal dance class, yoga, among other events. And this year, they worked on securing a grant from the Let's Go! Program sponsored by the United Way which helps educate and encourage healthful eating and

physical activity. Freeport High School is the first to receive funds and is a pilot program.



Some of our WOWW group posing with Kalee Coombs after her relaxing singing bowls performance.

came in and others graduated, the focus and interest of the group became about offering themselves and

### UPCOMING EVENTS: SAVE THE DATE!!!

Congratulations on being a youth who takes time to care about your health, your peers' and community health! Thanks to your interest, participation and openness to learn we are able to continue offering fresh, innovative and youth driven projects & programs. To thank-you we have 2 events we would love to see you

attend!!!!!!!

**Tuesday, APRIL 29th** you are invited to the annual Access Health Celebration from 4-6:30pm held in the café at Mid Coast Hospital in Brunswick. There will be light refreshments, beverages and chocolate covered strawberries! Please RSVP by Friday April 18th

to Heather 373-6927 or by email.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Free Galatic Bowling in Brunswick at SPARE TIME 5-7pm on **Saturday, May 17th**. Pizza and snacks provided.

RSVP BY: FRIDAY, MAY 9th!!!!!!

## Kick Butts Day, KBD APRIL 2008

Kick Butts Day is a yearly event which is held in cities and town across the country to educate youth and the community on the hideous lies and dangers of tobacco companies along with the very real dangers and sad realities of tobacco addiction. For example, did you know that every day in the United States approximately 1,200 people DIE of tobacco related disease? That equals 400,000 people dying from tobacco related disease EVERY year. This is a preventable tragedy!! You might know someone who has died from a tobacco related dis-

ease or you might have a friend who does.

In the state of Maine we are very fortunate to have laws that protect us all from second hand smoke in restaurants, schools, shopping centers and other places of public gathering. This legislation was due to the hard work of many dedicated people who wanted to be able to breathe while they ate their hamburger or enjoyed a concert.

So why do we still have an event like Kick Butts Day?

Because every day the tobacco companies need to entice new smokers, youth like you, so that you can get hooked and be a new customer they can make money from.

Learn more about Kick Butts Day at [kickbuttsday.org](http://kickbuttsday.org)

Also check out IGNITE, a national youth movement which is a youth run nonprofit organization which empowers young people to hold the tobacco industry accountable by directing elected officials to ACT responsibly.

**“ If you have health you probably will be happy, and if you have health & happiness, you will have all the wealth you need, even if it is not all you want.” –Elbert Hubbard**

## Who is in the office at Access Health?!

Access Health is located at Mid Coast Hospital (the old hospital) located at 66 Baribeau in Brunswick. We are a small staff of 4. Linda Christie is the director and oversees many programs including our youth wellness as well as our work healthy programs. Linda is an avid music enthusiast and will likely be able to jam with the best of you! Susan Van Note is our fabulous project assistant. She is the yin to our yang and is

able to balance the multitude of projects, questions and deadlines going on at any time in our office. Susan is also the busy mother of 4 boys, one recently starting college at UMO. Amanda Hopkins is our newest addition and has filled our new position as the Healthy Maine Partnership Coordinator. She specializes in nutrition and dietetics. An interesting tid-bit fact: Amanda finished hiking the entire Appalachian trail this summer.

Only 3% of women complete hiking the Appalachian trail!

I, your fearless, youth wellness coordinator, organize and inspire the various projects, events and programs you all attend and/ or coordinate. Currently I work in 4 school systems. In my spare time, I write prose, non-fiction, fiction and poetry, have a daily yoga practice and am a pampered chef consultant.



**Libby & Kaitlyn bravely presenting at the Maine Youth Action Network Conference Autumn 2007**

## MYAN Conference 2007

The WOWW group attended the Maine Youth Action Network Conference which was held this year in Bar Harbor Maine at the Atlantic Oakes Inn. This event spanned Friday and Saturday and offered middle school & high school students a variety of youth related workshops and topics. MYAN participants come from every corner of the state; way up North, to the far south to the Down East region. There

are students from varied background and viewpoints. Topics of health and wellness abound. In the evening, there are fun activities such as art, swimming and a dance with a pretty decent DJ and light show. Students work on creating their own action plan to take back to their schools and community. This year, four of our WOWW group attended. Heather Thomas, senior. Elizabeth Chenevert, Senior,

Kaitlyn Beaulé, Senior. Jake Gore, Sophomore. This is the fourth year that Access Health has taken Freeport High School to the MYAN conference. Mt. Ararat High School also formed a group with one of their high school advisors and attended the conference for the very first time. I went to see their presentation to their teachers and I can say first hand they got a lot out of the experience.

## Samantha Skunk Who?!

Samantha Skunk is a story about a beautiful and unique Magenta skunk who chooses to try smoking and suddenly becomes a “sickly, swarmy” green! The story goes on to describe Samantha’s journey toward getting back to her beautiful Magenta color with the help of her fish friend, Soloman, who comes to speak with Samantha in her dreams. Samantha realizes that she will NEVER smoke again and she will teach other skunks and kids to not start. Samantha Skunk (or Sam Skunk if it is a male actor) wears the Sam/Samantha

Costume for about 20 minutes and brightly tells the story with the help of a story board which can be read by Samantha but none of the listeners. Sam/Samantha visit students in grades K-2 in local school systems from Freeport to Bowdoinham. Soloman is a large hand puppet which is played by another actor along with a stage director who turns the pages for Samantha and Soloman and directs the kids to repeat every so often, “SMOKING STINKS, LIKE CAMELS BREATH!” As this program was developed awhile ago, that line is in di-

rect correlation to the harmful marketing campaign of Camel cigarettes, which is no longer legal. However; the message is still clear and straightforward to the k-2 crowd. We have had many youth volunteers over the years be Sam/Samantha and if you are interested or know a school that could benefit from this service please contact Heather, 373-6927.



Heather Thomas as Samantha Skunk and Elizabeth Chenevert as the fish Soloman, from Freeport High School

## Get out & Bike this Spring!!

### BIKE SAFETY:

I know... I know... you probably know all this, but in case you are fuzzy here’s some info.....

\*Wear a Helmet! Please!!

\*Wear bright colors & reflectors

\*Pants legs should be close fitting or wear shorts

\*Stop at all appropriate

signs!!!

\*A big one: Always ride in same direction as the cars do! Never ride against traffic.

\*Try to use designated bike lanes or routes, not the sidewalk.

\* Don’t ride to close to parked cars, doors can open suddenly

\*Always walk a bike across a busy intersection.

\*Watch traffic closely for turning cars

\*Never wear headphones while biking; you want to hear what’s going on.

\*Take your bike for a maintenance check, keep it running smoothly

\* bike with a friend, its fun!

\* Biking in Maine is a great way to see some fabulous scenery!

**“Health is a state of complete physical, mental & social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” -World Health Organization, 1948**

## Mindfulness with Kimberly Rowe

Kimberly Rowe of Five Seeds is a repeat presenter for Access Health. She has done presentations on stress management, focus and mindfulness for the last two years for Access Health. She has done presentations both at Freeport and Brunswick High School. Many of our students have also experienced one of her presentations at the Maine Youth Action Network Conference or Tobacco Summit.

Kimberly works with teens/ young adults from around the state to learn about slowing down and seeing the world from a more relaxed and yet alert point of view. One example she uses to demonstrate mindfulness is holding a piece of chocolate in your hands and not opening the package. You just spend time with the chocolate; smelling it, holding it, just being with the chocolate. Eventually, you open the

chocolate and again use your senses. Finally, you are allowed to take a small, luxurious bite. Mindfulness. Try it with any food, it is a great sensory experience. Kimberly’s website is: [www.fiveseeds.org](http://www.fiveseeds.org)



Kimberly Rowe of Five Seeds sharing about mindfulness

## Access Health

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*“Make Health your  
Wealth!”- Heather Van Dam, 2008*

Access Health is on the web:  
[www.accesshealthme.org](http://www.accesshealthme.org)

### Mission Statement:

The mission of ACCESS Health is to work with community partners to contribute to the health and wellbeing of our communities by addressing the ten essential Public Health services. The emphasis of the coalition is on:

Tobacco prevention, cessation and reduction of secondhand smoke

Physical Activity

Healthy eating

Chronic disease management

Substance Abuse Prevention

## YOUR THOUGHTS HERE! PLEASE.



**Inspire! YOUth voice counts!!**

This is the very first newsletter, mostly constructed by Susan and myself. We have another annual newsletter that is put out to our stakeholders and the general adult population, but I thought it would be fun and worthwhile to have our very own monthly newsletter, with issues and information that are specific to you! I also thought this was a great way for every one to be on the same page (no pun intended =>) and for ideas, challenges and successes to easily be shared. That said, I think it

would be so much more exciting if you submitted entries to this newsletter. Your submission could be about an accomplishment, a health issue you want to address or just an editorial about something meaningful to you. Also updates and save the dates can be put in here as well. Photographs are also welcome!

This is the beginning of a great way for the Mid Coast & Southern Maine teen wellness community to reach out and share the “wealth of health.”

Warm regards,

Heather, youth program coordinator.