

## **CoC Kick-off: Food for Thought ... Helping Our Youth Be Brain Healthy**

During October 2, 3, and 4, Hall and Conard students and parents met Dr. Wilson in small groups, in a student leadership workshop, in school assemblies, and in an evening parent presentation. The topic: how substance abuse impacts an adolescent's developing brain.

On Oct. 4, prior to Dr. Wilson's presentation- we were treated to a wonderful dinner: the annual Hall/Conard PTO dinner, with music provided by Hall jazz musicians Aaron, Connor and Dan. Thank you all!

**“Adolescents are not young adults,”** said Dr. Wilkie Wilson. “The human brain is not fully ‘wired’ until about age 21. The last parts to develop are those that make us human... those that allow us to plan complex projects... hold several thoughts at once... to inhibit inappropriate behaviors.”

A few notes from Dr. Wilson's program...

### **Adolescence is a critical period:**

- The adolescent brain has enhanced learning capacity.
- We remember what happens in our adolescence better than any other time in our lives.
- We need to learn as much as possible in adolescence.
- The response to recreational drugs at this time of life is different.

### **Keep your brain healthy through:**

- high quality sleep,
- exercise (it creates more brain cells),
- nutrition (which raises the blood glucose).

[Got 30 minutes?  
Take the e-learning quiz at  
www.thecommunityofconcern.org](http://www.thecommunityofconcern.org)

### **How to improve learning:**

- sleep, sleep, sleep – for better long term memory. Your brain consolidates information when it receives adequate sleep,
- study in bursts with short breaks,
- supply the brain with adequate nutrition,
- reduce stress
  - stress chemicals suppress brain plasticity and can kill neurons,
  - stress can promote forgetting & forgetfulness.

### **Upcoming events:**

◆ We invite you to our signature forum, the Decaf Coffeehouse, a place to gather for conversation on pertinent issues. While the coffee may be decaf, the conversation is guaranteed to be lively. You'll sleep better for coming! We have 2 planned!

**Decaf Coffeehouse at Conard on:  
Monday, November 13, 2006 at 7 pm**

**Decaf Coffeehouse at Hall on:  
Wednesday March 28, 2007 at 7 pm**

◆ Dr. Wilson returns to West Hartford. His topic will be on stress

**Kingswood- Oxford, auditorium  
November 15, 2006 at 7 PM.**

### **WE HAVE A WEBSITE!**

The link to the COC website can be found on Hall's homepage.

Thank you to Matt B. '08, for developing the website!