

Niagara Wheatfield Community Education a great way to learn and have fun

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“Come together” is the theme for Niagara Wheatfield Central School District’s fall 2022 Community Education program. Registrants are invited to come together and join our outstanding instructors and fellow participants to learn, share and have fun!

Our fall session, which runs Sept. 14 through Dec. 15, offers many new and exciting offerings. There are free classes, classes for a fee, face-to-face classes, as well as online classes – a little something for everyone! Come together and try all the arts and crafts offerings ranging from making beautiful hand-woven baskets, and crafting wooden decorations for Halloween, winter and your family tree. Participants are invited to come together to learn to sew, paint, draw and recognize creativity skills they did not know they possessed! Our early morning adult morning lap swim class is back, as well as an eight-session line-dancing class.

Drawing has proven to help students with fine motor skills, encourage visual analysis, teach creative problem solving, establish concentration, improve hand-eye coordination, and increase individual confidence. This session, we are proud to offer an afterschool abstract artist series for children in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. Students will be introduced to the works of art-

ists, create an art piece, and end each meeting with a game reinforcing the artist’s style.

In addition to the afterschool abstract artist series, students in grades K-5 can participate in a six-week afterschool program specifically designed for young students to learn the Spanish language. Older students are encouraged to enroll in many of our college prep courses.

Returning this session is the engaging “The Fun Defensive Driving Course.” This one-of-a kind Improve Aware Traffic School Point and Reduction program is New York State Department of Motor Vehicle’s only humor-based approved course. “Laugh a little and live a lot” and you will laugh our points off and save 10% on your car and motorcycle insurance as well as knock 4 points off you DMV record.

As requested by former participants, we are pleased to offer a three-session American Sign Language course. Participants will learn proper hand shapes, sign space, parameter of a sign, alphabet, numbers, introductions, personal information, yes/no questions, basic greetings and education on the deaf culture.

Musical offerings consist of both face-to-face and online guitar lessons, piano lessons and singing lessons. Our ever-popular health and fitness (body, mind and spirit) and financial classes offer a variety of offerings, which accommodate many different schedules. A “Monthly Book



Pictured is AFAA Certified Group Fitness Certified, owner of Brave Life Yoga, RYT 200 hours, Kathy Noakes’ beginning and all-level yoga classes.

Club” will be held for the duration of the session. Participants are encouraged to register and view the requirements in order to be prepared for the first meeting.

We are always seeking optimistic, enthusiastic instructors who have skills, hobbies or an expertise that they would like to share with our community. First-time

instructors, as well as seasoned presenters, are encouraged to propose classes for spring 2023. Community Education classes are a great way to promote your work, network, and meet new clients.

Come together to try new or familiar classes! Early, preregistration for each class is required. In-

structors need to know how many students will be attending to help them plan materials. Late registration may cause a class to be canceled due to low enrollments. Participants can view and sign up for classes through our registration software at <https://nwcsd.coursestorm.com/>.

Back-to-school could mean back to nicotine addiction for some teens

New York State Smokers’ Quitline offers free resources to help teenagers and their parents on a journey to become nicotine-free

GUEST EDITORIAL BY
THE NEW YORK STATE
SMOKERS’ QUITLINE

With back-to-school season drawing near and COVID-19 protocols becoming less restrictive, teenagers will soon encounter more opportunities for socialization. This, unfortunately, could mean exposure to vape products, which often have high concentrations of nicotine and harm the still-developing brain.

The New York State Smokers’ Quitline wants teenagers and their parents to know free resources are available for learning how to overcome nicotine addiction to tobacco and/or vape products.

During a recent webinar hosted by the Quitline, titled, “Addressing Tobacco and Nicotine Use by Youth and Young Adults,” the Quitline partnered with two top pediatricians and a representative from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Together, they discussed the challenges teens face with nicotine addiction and how both parents and health care professionals can offer support.

Dr. Rachel Boykan, a clinical professor of pediatrics at Stony Brook University’s Renaissance School of Medicine, explained that, while overall prevalence of tobacco product use has decreased among New York state teens, the frequency of use has increased. She said this creates a concern for potential long-term addiction.

“Teens are particularly susceptible to addiction; the brain con-

tinues to mature through about age 25,” Boykan said. “If it’s hard for an adult to stop using nicotine products, it’s even harder for a teen. Early data shows vape products – the most popular products among teens – are associated with symptoms of depression and anxiety, difficulty concentrating and sleeping, behavioral concerns, low self-esteem and impulsivity.”

Julie Gorzkowski Hamilton, director of adolescent health promotion for the American Academy of Pediatrics, warns parents that one “pod” or disposable vape cartridge can have as much nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes. Once teens start using vape products regularly, she said, they may want to use them more and more.

“Many teens don’t recognize they’re addicted. Parents and health care professionals need to let them know they’re there for support,” Gorzkowski Hamilton said. “Some pediatricians have found success offering a ‘two-week challenge,’ a strategy for teens who don’t think they’re addicted. Ask them to try stopping for two weeks and see how it goes. If they have trouble, they may come back with interest in trying to quit.”

Dr. Sara Siddiqui, a clinical assistant professor of pediatrics at the NYU Grossman School of Medicine, noted that preaching to teens is often counterintuitive. Instead, teens need education that tobacco and vape products do not relieve stress, but rather add to stress.

“Children will need their parents’ support for help,” Siddiqui said. “This is an addiction, and quitting is hard. To parents, I say: Your child needs you more than ever now.”

The Quitline posted the webinar recording, slides and a youth and young adult cessation guide at its online news room. Additionally, the Quitline promotes a New York state-specific version of the Truth Initiative’s text-based intervention, “This is Quitting.” New York state youth and young adults can text “DropTheVape” to 88709; the program offers age-appropriate quitting recommendations for both 13-17 and 18-24 age ranges. Parents also can receive daily advice to help youth by texting “QUIT” to 202-899-7550.

The Quitline continues to provide coaching support seven days a week via phone at 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), through text messaging and online at nysmokefree.com. Most participants aged 18 and older are eligible to receive a free starter kit of NRT medications shipped to their home address, usually consisting of nicotine patches and/or nicotine gum or lozenges.

Today’s youth and young adults face mental health challenges and peer pressure at seemingly every turn, and the rigors of school are taxing enough on their brains. The Quitline hopes teens never turn to nicotine products, especially due to the high potential for addiction and adverse health consequences.

For those who are addicted and

struggling, the Quitline is here to help. Health care professionals and parents, likewise, should of-

fer support and encouragement as part of a journey to become nicotine-free.

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