



**Health E-News** October 4, 2006

## GET CONNECTED!



**Ginny Fendell, MSW**, Mental Health Promotion Associate and Counseling Resident, says "We've all heard about studies that link social involvement to health, especially in regards to mortality rates. For example, people with a larger number of relationships and social connections live longer and recover from illness faster than those with fewer connections. While these studies merely look at the *number* of connections and do not take into account the *quality* of the relationships, the implications for health are still worthwhile." Fendell cites Jon Kabat-Zinn: "the fact that they show any correlation at all between social connections and the death rate suggests that even

loose connections with others may be better for our health than isolation and withdrawal," and adds "while mortality rates may not be foremost on college students' minds, the issues of relationships and connectedness certainly are. Although parents may believe that attention to academics is the top priority for their son or daughter, experts acknowledge that **the number one goal of most college students is to establish connections** (Kadison and DiGeronimo, 2004)." Unfortunately, she notes, "many students come to campus with poor skills for developing and maintaining those connections. They may find, as many do, that learning how to solve problems that arise from differences does not come easily. When students feel that they are lacking appropriate relationship skills, they may decide to withdraw, avoid other people, and isolate themselves. This behavior is not only unhealthy, it can be the reason some students ultimately leave school." **Fortunately, relationship skills, like any new behavior, can be learned**, and with practice students can improve their verbal, assertiveness, and conflict resolution skills. **For tips on building relationships and improving communication, as well as how to access Student Health Services professionals, [read the entire article on our website.](#)**

## RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS "HOOKING UP" (or thinking about it)

"Did you know that 25% of WU students report NEVER having engaged in vaginal, oral, or anal sex, and up to 40% of WU students report NO sexual partners within the last 12 months?" **Poli Rijos, MSW, Health Educator**, cites these data collected in the 2004 National College Health Assessment, and reminds you that "exploring sexuality is a natural part of adult human behavior. 'Hooking up' or having sex with a partner is a big decision." She adds "it involves many feelings, responsibilities, and choices. Before engaging in sexual activity with a partner, consider: (1) your personal values and goals, (2) your feelings about the emotional and physical risks you are willing to take, (3) whether you are feeling pressured, (4) your ability to be clear with your partner about what you want and don't want to happen, and (5) your willingness to take responsibility for your actions." **Resources at Student Health Services (SHS):**



### **MEDICAL SERVICES**

- Women's health: To make an appointment to see a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner or a gynecologist for the recommended annual exam and other concerns, including discussing contraception options, call 935-6666. (See Staff Spotlight below.)
- Men's health: To make an appointment with a medical provider for an annual physical exam, or to discuss concerns about male pattern baldness, erectile dysfunction, and/or testicular cancer, call 935-6666.
- Confidential STD and HIV testing and counseling. To find out about your options for STD and HIV testing on- and off-campus, [visit our web site](#) or call 935-6666.

### **HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES**

- To make an appointment for **FREE and Confidential HIV testing** and counseling, call 935-8761.
- Consultations, brochures, and more. To request a sexual health program, call Melissa Ruwitch at 935-7139.
- Male condoms, female condoms, dams, and lubricant are available in HPS, near the SHS waiting room.

### **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

- For an appointment with a professional counselor to work on relationship issues, call 935-6666.

### **NURSES TEACH STUDENTS SELF-CARE, COLD VS. FLU**

care of college students and teaching them to take care of themselves. She developed a series of algorithms which help students determine when medical care is necessary. They are available [online](#) and in Medical Services and Health Promotion Services. In addition, she brings them when she does programs with members of the **Student Health Advisory Committee** (SHAC) or the Health Promotion staff. "Many students are confused about the symptoms of a cold and the flu," she says. "They seem to appreciate this chart: [Cold vs. Flu.](#)"

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(SHS will offer flu shots to students in November.) Kelly says, "We also see many **students with allergies** who may not know what they are allergic to or understand their body's reaction. Sometimes the allergens in St. Louis really take them by surprise and make them miserable. We're happy to educate them about ways to reduce their symptoms so they can feel better."

If you feel you need to see a medical provider after looking at the guidelines mentioned above, visit our website to [schedule an appointment online](#).

## NEW WEBSITE FOR SOUTH 40 FITNESS CENTER



Check out the [new website](#) and Fall class schedule. For inquiries about personal training, write to [fitness@wustl.edu](mailto:fitness@wustl.edu). Massage therapy is available on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. Sign up at the Fitness Center in Wohl.

(Photo by Alwyn Loh)

## BICYCLE HELMET COUPON FOR STUDENTS

Check out Health Promotion Services' info on [bicycle safety](#), including a coupon toward a new helmet, and enjoy a ride on a beautiful Fall day.

## SHS STAFF SPOTLIGHT: KATHERINE URAM, RNC, WHNP



Katherine Uram joined SHS as Women's Health Nurse Practitioner in Medical Services last semester. Ms. Uram completed her undergraduate degree at Deaconess College of Nursing. After working as a surgical nurse, she obtained her MSN at the University of Missouri in St. Louis. Before joining SHS, she worked in a private OB/GYN practice. Her special interests at work include counseling students about HPV and other sexually transmitted infections. Outside of work, she loves to travel, spend weekends at the Lake of the Ozarks, and play with her two American Eskimo dogs. For more information on SHS staff, visit [the Student Health Services website](#).

## REMINDER: "GET A GRIP" WORKSHOPS START THIS MONTH



**management consultations** and **"Get a Grip" stress management workshops**. Individual consultations are available Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The Wednesday "Get a Grip" workshop will start October 18 at 3:00 p.m. The Friday workshop will start October 27 at 11:00 a.m. Workshops are one



hour, run for four consecutive weeks,  
and are held in the Habib Health and

Wellness Center. Contact Ginny Fendell at 935-4095 to sign up.