



## Tri-Town Council: 45 years and Still Going Strong! A Small Agency Making a Big Difference

By Bethany Blake, TTC Communications Director

Tri-Town Council is 45! For almost half a century, TTC has remained steadfast in our mission to reduce and prevent at-risk behavior and to strengthen the social and emotional well-being of Tri-Town youth and families.

Founded by local parents in the 1960's concerned about youth alcohol and drug use, TTC today embodies the understanding that "it takes a village." TTC embraces the involvement and expertise of health care professionals, school leaders, guidance counselors and educators from elementary through high school, concerned parents, local law enforcement, and youth themselves to ensure a comprehensive approach. By harnessing the energy of the community, TTC is able to offer programming relevant to families with children pre-school age through teens and beyond while making a greater community impact.

The mission for 45 years has remained steadfast, but programming has progressed to keep pace with the topics and concerns families face today. This is reflected in the resources provide on our Facebook page, our website and in the information we have readily available in our 49 Main Street, Topsfield office (and at community and school events). It is also reflected in our myriad programs during the year. From social skills workshops for parents and educators of early elementary-aged youth, to in-school presentations on Internet safety and cyber-bullying, to parent discussion groups on tough challenges facing our children and teens, to after-school enrichment programs, to youth leadership groups and more.

This year is no exception! Horizons After-School Enrichment Classes will resume soon, with registration underway now with classes starting in October, and Horizons for Adults is on the horizon too! This fall we are featuring a new chance for parents to connect on relevant topics with "Drop-in Fridays." These will offer a relaxed opportunity during the school year to discuss a variety of topics and parenting challenges and will be inspired by books, Podcasts, or TED talks.

Our Youth Programs, which includes both Middle and High School Leadership Councils, are gearing up for a great year with community service projects, fun activities and more, including a High School Construction Retreat in Cherryfield, Maine to assist a needy community over Columbus Day Weekend. On September 21<sup>st</sup> you will be able to view the amazing photos which are the result of our middle school youth PhotoVoice project at the Topsfield Art Festival. In October, we welcome back nationally recognized expert Marilyn Belmonte to facilitate APPLAUDD (A Prevention Program About Underage Drinking and Drugs). TTC will also host our first quarterly meeting of the TTC Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition on October 7<sup>th</sup> from 9am-11am at the Topsfield Library. We welcome and encourage members of the community to join us.

October 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm will feature a screening of the documentary *Girl Rising* at the Masco Auditorium, a film gaining great attention and high praise regarding the education of girls around the world. This program is being done in conjunction our Youth Leadership Council and Masco HS. The end of October brings us to a "Community Conversation" held in the Masco café on the 30th at 7pm. We invite the community (adults and youth) to gather to discuss the data derived from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey conducted last fall with our middle and high school youth, as well as to review the results of the Adult Perception Survey from this past spring. Finally, on November 7<sup>th</sup>, we welcome back the popular speaker Lynn Lyons, who will talk with us about adolescent anxiety and depression.

And we're just getting started! Open Gym nights for middle and high school youth as well as more informative and insightful programming for youth and adults are planned for the winter and spring. Please watch your school newsletters for more information on these upcoming programs or stay informed by signing up for our e-news at [www.tritowncouncil.org](http://www.tritowncouncil.org). And be sure to like our Facebook page, for news on programs and insightful topics.

45 never felt so energized!