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Project Number: KJR-9127-51

Wellness on the Web

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report:

submitted to the Faculty

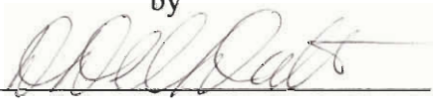
of the

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Science

by



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Date: July 31, 2002

Approved:

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- 1. Health
- 2. Web Development
- 3. High School

Abstract

The purpose of this project is to develop a health website for Ashland High School. The website will provide students with accurate, age appropriate, reliable information on health issues that are of importance to the students. Resources for students to seek additional information, such as hotlines, books, and other websites will be provided for each health topic. The website will also provide course information for ninth grade health students.

Executive Summary

The purpose of the 'Wellness on the Web' project is to create a health website for Ashland High School. Students will be able to use the website to find information on health issues that is accurate and age appropriate. Topics covered on the website are AIDS & HIV, Date Rape, Depression, Fitness, Nutrition, Pregnancy, Relationship Violence, Sexual Orientation, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and Suicide. For each health topic, suggested reading material, hotlines to call, and links to websites with additional information will be provided. For students taking the freshman health class, course information, such as homework assignments, project descriptions, a course calendar, and a link to email the teacher will be available.

In order to develop an effective website in an efficient manner a methodology must be designed and implemented. Existing web development processes were researched. Although different processes have been used by different web designers for different projects, it is customary to first determine the goals of the website, plan out what the website will contain, gather information to put on the website, design and create the site, test the website and update the website. Specific processes and details of the different stages are discussed, and used to create a method specific for this project.

The methodology used to develop the website for this project consisted of five steps; planning, research, design, implementation and usability testing. The planning stage involves surveying students and interviewing teachers so that project goals could be developed. In the research stage all of the content for the website was gathered and written up. The layout of the website was determined in the design stage and the actual

website was created in the implementation stage. The final step of the process was usability testing to make sure the website was easy to use and had no major problems.

The process used to create the 'Wellness on the Web' website was overall successful. The website was developed in a timely manner with no major unexpected problems. If more time was available additional health topics would be added to the website to provide a more complete resource of information. Areas for improvement are discussed in chapter four.

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1.0 Introduction

Development and maintenance of good health are essential parts of life. This process is best promoted by giving young people the opportunity to acquire accurate health information and to develop healthful attitudes and behavior patterns. Health education courses at school, and parents at home are two resources for adolescents to obtain information about health issues. Many times, however, teens are too shy or embarrassed to ask questions in the classroom, and may not be able to, or may feel uncomfortable talking to their parents. Information on any topic can be found on the internet, but many sites are outdated or contain incorrect information. What is needed is a resource for young people to have access to health information in a confidential manner so that they feel comfortable finding help or advice.

The purpose of this project is to create a health website for Ashland High School. The website will be used as part of the ninth grade health class. Homework assignments and projects will be posted on the website as well as a course calendar and a link to email the teacher. For all high school students, the website provides accurate, age appropriate, reliable information on health issues that are of importance to the students. Resources for students to seek additional information, such as hotlines, books, and other websites are provided for each health topic.

The website is only the final product of the project. In order to create a site that will be of value to students, a process for developing this website must be used. Part of the project is about determining what process will be used to create the website. Research was done to see what web development processes have been used by web

developers in the past. Chapter two describes existing web development processes. These processes were examined and used to create a new process tailored for this project. The methodology used to develop the website for this project consisted of five steps; planning, research, design, implementation and usability testing. The process used to create the 'Wellness on the Web' website is described in detail in chapter three. This process can be used as a model for future school websites.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In order to create a successful website a methodology or organized process is necessary. New web pages are created every day, thus many different processes exist for creating a website. People develop their own ways of forming websites that fit their specific needs. Many existing websites offer advice or methodologies for creating web pages. Most of these processes share many similarities. Other methods are more specific and may be tailored to the needs of certain groups of web designers. John December has designed a web development process which is available online and has been used as a model for many other instructional guides. Tom Brinck, Darren Gergle, and Scott D. Wood, authors of *Usability For the Web*, developed a methodology for designing web sites based on meeting the needs of the users. Susan Hixson and Kathleen Schrock, authors of *Developing Web Pages for School and Classroom*, created a handbook to be used when making a web page for the school or classroom. These and other methodologies can be used as a guideline when developing a website.

2.2 General Website Development Processes

The first step in creating a website is to determine the content for the website. A purpose statement should be written so that the goals of the website are clear. The

intended audience of the website needs to be determined so that it is clear whether the website is geared towards youth, teens, adults or any specific group of people. The content on the website should appeal to the audience and should be age appropriate.

The next step in the development process is to find a web server, or a place to build the website. Free servers, such as Geocities, Angel fire, and Tripod, are available or web space may be included in the package offered by the Internet Service Provider. The designer must also decide whether the web page will be created using HTML or a page builder, and which programs are going to be used. A page builder, a tool used to automate the web development process, allows those who do not have experience with HTML to create websites and easily modify them. This is a good approach for those with basic computer skills. Using HTML to create a webpage allows for many more options and flexibility when designing the site. Advanced computer users are best off using HTML when designing a webpage.

After it has been determined how the website will be created, the focus of the process shifts to style and organization of the site. The pages need to be organized so that information is easy to find and the site is easy to navigate. Important information should be placed at the top of the page. Content should be written clearly and be brief and to the point. Care should be taken not to include too many complex graphics on the pages because people won't want to wait to download them. Pages should be kept relatively short, so information should be broken up into chunks. For easy navigation, an index or table of contents should be included. Also include an email link on the site so that users can offer comments, complaints, or suggestions. Make sure to proofread the site for spelling and grammar. In order to capture the attention of the audience, make the website

stand out. Adding graphics, backgrounds, audio clips, buttons, banners, counters, and guest books will enhance the site's appeal and help to expand the audience. .

Once the website has been created it must be promoted so that people will want to visit it. The site can be registered with a search engine so that it will be listed when people search for a topic that is included in the website. It is also possible to buy space to advertise a website on high-traffic sites such as Lycos, yahoo, AltaVista, google and others.

The final step in the web development process is updating the site. The webpage needs to be checked regularly for broken links, as other websites may move or be taken down. The date of the last update should be placed on the top of the page so users can know that the site has current information. When something is changed on the site or added, it should be labeled as "new."

2.3 John December – Web Development Process

The Web Development Process, created by John December (December 2002), is a methodology for creating a website that is based on meeting the needs of the users. This six step process is composed of Planning, Analysis, Design, Implementation, Promotion, and Innovation. December has gathered his material from various different sources on different aspects of web development and design. His methodology has been used as a model for many other website development guidelines.

2.3.1 Planning

The first step in the Web Development Process is planning. One must determine the websites' audience; who will be using the webpage. A purpose statement should be written so that the reason for creating the webpage is clear. Be sure that the purpose is concise and not too broad. The objectives of the website should also be determined. Be sure to know what goals the site is supposed to accomplish and what the audience will gain from this website. It is helpful to brainstorm a list of skills and resources that will be needed in the development, construction, and operation of the site (December 2002).

2.3.2 Analysis

The second step of the process is analysis. There are three basic ways to analyze the site. It should be checked rhetorically to see if the objectives are being met, technically to see if the site is operational and up with current specifications and HTML practices, and semantically to make sure the information displayed is accurate and complete. A usability analysis should also be done by observing a sample audience use the site. An analysis checklist can be used to see if the website; A) attempts to reach an audience that will use the web, B) has new information, C) is self-consistent and meets its objectives, D) has correct and up to date information, E) has a balance between its own information and outside links, and F) accomplishes its goals (December 2002).

2.3.3 Design

In the design stage decisions are made about how the page will be set up in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the website. The purpose and audience must be

taken into account when designing the website. The pages must be consistent as it is distracting to have backgrounds change from one page to the next and often confuses users. Information should be separated into manageable chunks and divided up into multiple pages to make it easy for the users to follow. The links used to connect the pages should be displayed in a logical manner (December 2002).

2.3.4 Implementation

The implementation stage is when the actual building of the site, based on the design, takes place. A directory will need to be created to hold all of the files and software components, such as CGI or Java Programs, for the website. Once the site has been created it should be tested using different browsers (December 2002).

2.3.5 Promotion

The promotion stage is when public relations issues are handled. Different marketing strategies and advertising means can be used to let people know that the web page is out there. Depending on where the website is located, different advertising options are available. Promotion should target web audiences, potential users, and current users (December 2002).

2.3.6 Innovation

The final stage of the process is innovation. It is important to continually improve the site to keep users happy. Focus groups can be conducted and user testing can be done to assure that the webpage is meeting the needs of the users. Links should be tested

frequently to make sure they function. Information and technologies used should be kept current, so that it does not become outdated. Creating a website is a continuous process that does not end once the page has been published (December 2002).

2.4 Pervasive Usability Process

The Pervasive Usability Process, developed by Tom Brinck, Darren Gergle, and Scott D. Wood, is a development process that addresses usability issues of websites. This process integrates usability into all of its five steps. The first stage is the requirements analysis. During this stage goals are determined, as well as technical requirements, the target audience, and the target platform. The second stage is conceptual design, during which the functionality of the site is worked on. Mockups and Prototypes comprise the third stage. Visual and interactive representations are created and refined. This stage allows for evaluation and editing before the final website is produced. Stage four is the production stage when the website is actually created. The website is launched in the fifth stage and made available to the public. The process is designed to minimize making major changes towards the end of the process and maximize usability of the intended audience (Brink, Gergle, Wood 2002).

2.4.1 Requirements Analysis

The requirements analysis step can be divided into two parts; target audience and target planning, and user needs analysis. Target audience and target planning focus on

understanding the audience. User needs analysis focuses on determining the needs of the audience.

To determine the target audience scenarios can be performed. Scenarios provide user interface ideas that may otherwise not be considered. A scenario is made up of a user profile, a schedule and interaction episode, and a photo of the user that is taken in the setting where the website is used. The user profile describes the person and the schedule and interaction episode describes what type of work the person does and how this work will influence the use of the website. Scenarios are very useful when the person's work influences their use of the website.

Target planning takes into account differences in user preference settings as well as international differences. Users have the ability to change font settings and link colors. They can also choose whether or not to load images or download plugins. These are factors that need to be considered as they become an issue in the development stage. International differences should also be addressed. It may be beneficial to support multiple languages on the website. Units, currencies, symbols, date and time need to be consistent. Hardware and software differences must also be taken into account as not all users have access to the latest versions. Monitor size, different operating systems and different browsers should be considered when developing the website.

The objectives of the user needs analysis are to define the audience, identify user goals, define business goals, set usability objectives, identify design constraints, and define functional specifications. When identifying user goals efforts should be made to determine why users will come to this website. The goals are the reasons for creating the

websites and how it will be determined if the site is successful. Usability objectives answer the question of how well the site needs to work for the users.

Methods for uncovering the user's needs include surveys, competitive analysis, interviews, and focus groups. Surveys are often the first step in the background research because they allow for a large sampling and gather lots of information. Questions should be asked in the areas of demographics, so that the general age, gender, profession, education, computer skills, and nationality are known. One should also ask about user needs and preferences, and design impact. The survey can be set up in free response form, checkboxes and checklists, and multiple choice. When conducting a survey it is important to give out many more surveys than will actually be needed as people may choose not to respond.

A competitive analysis can be done to see what else is being done in the same field. It is important not to copy ideas from existing websites because they are protected by copyright laws. A competitive analysis is most useful when a product is being designed from scratch and a source of good ideas is needed. A list of good and bad qualities of existing websites serves as a guide in the design process.

Interviews and focus groups provide a means for understanding work practices of the users and for obtaining subjective reactions to the website. Interviews are good because the individual is not biased by other people when responding to the questions. Focus groups are beneficial because people can brainstorm and develop ideas together. Including a survey as part of the interview or focus group is a good means of gathering additional information. All of the questions and materials should be prepared before the

interview or focus groups and the interviewer should be prepared to take notes or record the session if possible (Brink, Gergle, Wood 2002).

2.4.2 Conceptual Design

The conceptual design phase of the process is comprised of a task analysis and information architecture. A task analysis is done to determine how the information found in the requirements analysis will be used. Information architecture is how the website will be organized and how different pages will relate to each other.

There are three distinct levels of a task analysis. The first step is to assess the big picture of who the users are and how they interact with each other. The second step is to consider the pages that a user will view to accomplish his or her goals. Finally, the procedures the user will go through while using each page must be analyzed.

Two types of task analyses are commonly used. The use cases, developed by Ivar Jacobson, describe the activities the user will engage in while using the website. A set of steps that the user must accomplish to achieve a certain goal is written out. Alternative methods are also included in the use case. The main downfall of the use case is that it won't tell us if the method for accomplishing the task is ineffective.

The second type of task analysis is the hierarchical task analysis. The first step in creating a hierarchical task analysis is to identify the primary user goals. Next the steps that the user must perform to accomplish the goal are listed. Finally, the procedure is optimized. By completing a task analysis, a clearer understanding of the steps the users will take when utilizing the website will be developed. This understanding will facilitate a site design that will more effectively meet the user needs.

Once the task analysis has been completed, the architecture can be developed. The first step in this process is to review the results of the requirements and task analyses. Next the content should be evaluated. Determine what information the users need and evaluate the quality and completeness of the content. The third step is to create and evaluate the core structure. Organize the content and decide what pieces should be on the same page and determine the logical order for the pages. Next shortcuts, redundant links, and supporting pages, such as help, site maps, and search can be added. The fifth step is to develop and evaluate the navbar and orientation cues. Headers and page titles are important in a page's design. Step six is to create a final site outline, final content specs, design rationale, and maintenance specs. Once this is complete the website can be built and tested it to make sure it conforms to the specifications. The final step is to train the people who will be maintaining the site to interpret and apply maintenance specs so that the standards for updating the site and testing it are known (Brink, Gergle, Wood 2002).

2.4.3 Mockups and Prototypes

In the Mockups and Prototypes stage the page layout is determined as well as design aspects of the website. Page layout addresses the immediate look and feel of the site. The design process involves using a series of mockups and prototypes to allow for the correct design the first time through, thus eliminating time consuming changes later in the process.

When planning the page layout simplicity, consistency, and focus are important to create a highly usable web page. The site needs to contain relevant information and should be easy for the user to navigate. Balance should be used to give the site a feeling

of consistency and contrast is important to draw the user's attention to particular items and ease the reader's eye. The page layout should be given time and consideration because if the site is cluttered, contains too many graphics, or is hard to read, users will be dissatisfied and will not return to the site.

Once the page layout has been determined, mockup and prototypes can be done. Mockups are usually single-page static representations of the design. They allow for testing the user's ability to understand the page structure and find out if the icons and buttons used are appealing. Mockups can be done in the form of paper sketches or digital representations.

Prototypes examine the tasks and processes involved in the actual use of the website. Prototypes can be in the form of storyboards and wire frames. Storyboards focus on possible actions a user might make while using the site. They are usually used to aid in design decisions and page orders. Storyboards consist of a series of static pages. Wire frames allow for examination of user behavior throughout a given task. Wire frames usually focus on navigation and can be used to test naming, labeling and categorization schemes, aesthetic issues, user interface capabilities, use patterns, and functionality. They are most commonly in the form of simple HTML pages. Prototypes can be used throughout the design process until it is determined that the layout of the website meets the goals (Brink, Gergle, Wood 2002).

2.4.4 Production

The production stage can be broken into three parts: writing for the web, design elements, and usability in software development. The writing process should focus on

delivering complete and accurate information, presenting the information in a format that is useful to the reader, achieving a consistent style, and avoiding any typos or writing errors. Design elements include establishing design parameters, including visual elements, style, color, typography, and page elements such as icons, forms, navigation tools, animation, and multimedia. Usability in software development covers issues in the production process, website engineering techniques, engineering website components, and usability of web technologies.

The writing process can be divided into six steps. First, the content needed for the site and its source must be determined. Setting deadlines is also helpful at this stage. The second step is to define a style guide. Decide what writing style will be used and what content elements are necessary. Collecting Information is the third step. After all of the information is collected the writing can be started. The written text should be coordinated with graphics to reinforce the messages. The fifth step is to review, test, and rewrite. The text must be check for accuracy and proofread for errors. The final step is to code the text into HTML.

After the text is written, the focus shifts to the design elements. A style must be selected or developed for the page. Choice of colors that will appeal to users is important while considering that colorblindness is common and some people are limited to grayscale only by their computer or printer. Select a typeface that is easy to read, and keep this consistent throughout the website. Icons for the site must be chosen or designed, and a particular form of navigation must be determined. Multimedia components will also be added in this stage.

The Usability in software development phase deals with usability problems. Issues to be aware of include poor response time, web page code inconsistency, platform incompatibilities, and poor product documentation. Be sure to test the site for problems in these areas. There are many technologies available for use in creating websites. When choosing what components will be included make sure the technology is going to provide value to the user. It is important that whatever components are used are cross-platform, in use on most computers, not too time consuming, easy to use, and beneficial (Brink, Gergle, Wood 2002).

2.4.5 Launch

The launch stage is critical to the success of the website. Prior to the launch site quality must be assured. During the launch certain critical items must be tested. After the launch, promotion of the site and maintenance are necessary.

In the pre-launch stage a website domain name must be chosen and resigtered. Quality assurance testing includes task-based testing and code testing. Task-based testing involves walking through the processes users will be most likely to use to ensure that there are no flaws. A list of processes and tasks users may take should be made, and each of these tasks tested. Code testing checks for major errors in the site. A code review should be done by another programmer to make sure there are no programming errors. Automated testing can be used to check for broken links or error messages that may occur when using the site. Load testing should be done to make sure the site can support a large number of simultaneous users. After all tests are complete and any errors have been fixed the site can be uploaded.

Immediately after the site is up it should be promoted. Register the website with different search engines. Determine what keywords users will most likely use when searching for this type of website and use these when registering with the search engines. A maintenance schedule should be developed to make sure the website stays functional. "Page view" tracking to monitor how many hits the site is getting will help determine if the promotion goals have been met. Other means of identifying how many sub-pages have been served can help determine if users needs are being met. Monitor email to see if users have comments, suggestions, or complaints. In order to make the website a success it will need to be continually reviewed and changes made as necessary (Brink, Gergle, Wood 2002).

2.5 Web Pages for School and Classroom

Developed by Susan Hixson and Kathleen Schrock, *Web Pages for School and Classroom* (1998) is a step-by-step method for using a template and writing a web document for a school or classroom. The first step of their method is to determine the reasons for having a web page. Step two outlines questions that should be answered before beginning the webpage. Planning the pages is step three. Step four is to collect and organize the information that will be displayed on the website. Creating the actual page is step five. Step six is HTML codes and tips, and step seven explains showing the webpage to the world.

2.5.1 Reasons for Having a Web Page

The first step of the web creation process is determining the reasons for having the web page. Determine if the website is for the students or the teachers. Will the site focus on helping users learn how to publish on the web, or will they be using it to gather information? The website may be used for interpersonal exchange, such as global classrooms or writing emails to students in another part of the country or world. Perhaps the website will be used to inform parents of what is going on in the classroom. Whatever the reason may be, it should be clear why the webpage is being created before beginning the process (Hixon & Schrock 1998).

2.5.2 Questions to Answer Before Beginning

After the goals of the website have been determined there are many questions that need to be addressed. Decisions must be made about what type of image is going to be portrayed to the community by the website and what benefits the school will gain from having the site. It should also be determined how the presence of the website will enhance student achievement, if the website is targeting at the students. Make sure the website will help integrate new resources into the curriculum so that the site will be useful. Other issues that need to be addressed are the content and subject matter of the website. The website will need to be age appropriate for the students viewing it, and the content should be high quality. Student and staff safeguards may need to be taken into account because the site is connected with the school. It should be determined who has the overall responsibility for making sure guidelines and policies are followed in regards to use and additions to the website (Hixson & Schrock 2002).

2.5.3 Planning Pages

In the Planning stage the layout and structure of the webpage will be determined. Using a template is often helpful to keep each page organized and consistent. Each page should be named with simple but descriptive titles. A separate template should be used for every page linked off the front page. Templates should include any graphics being used, links to other pages, included text, and page format. If the website is for classroom use consider including an overview of the class mission statement, student projects, units of study, information about the teacher, homework assignments, dates of field trips with permission forms, lists of materials for upcoming projects, conference schedules, and the teacher's email address (Hixson & Schrock 2002).

2.5.4 Collecting and Organizing Information

After the planning is done the information for the webpage needs to be collected and organized. Digital Cameras and Scanners can be used to put photographs on the website. Original student artwork and teacher created graphics can be used to add visuals to the pages. Clipart can also be used to liven up the website. Many websites allow free downloading of clipart, buttons, icons and such. Be sure to name the graphics accordingly so that they will be easy to find when the site is being built. Any text that will appear on the website should be written at this time. If links to other sites will be included, make a list of the addresses and divide them into topic categories. In this stage of the process, organization is extremely important (Hixson & Schrock 2002).

2.5.5 Creating a Web Page

Using templates to create a website is an easy approach those who are new to web design. Web pages are written in HTML, however if the designer is not familiar with this code and does not have time to learn it, programs such as Microsoft Front Page will allow webpage creation without using HTML. Be sure to align the text with the graphics and coordinate the text colors with the background colors. It will be necessary to test all of the graphics and links to make sure they work. One small error in the code could result in an empty field on the webpage. Webpage editors are available if help is needed in writing the webpage (Hixson & Schrock 2002).

2.5.6 HTML Codes and Tips

HTML tags can be divided into three categories, basic tags, presentation tags to create the look of the page, and command tags to allow travel throughout pages. Tags are used to set the background color, text color, and link color. Presentation tags can be used to change the look of the text, whether it is bold, italicized, blinking, center and so on. Command tags are used to link to another page on the site or to link to other websites. There are many sources available for learning HTML both online and in books. Using HTML to create a website allows for many more possibilities than are available when using a web building program (Hixson & Schrock 2002).

2.5.7 Showing The (Your) Web Page to the World

The final step is to post the webpage on an internet server. An account is necessary, although most schools or towns have web space available. The FTP program

can be used to create a new directory where all the files for the website will be stored.

The files need to be placed in a folder name which will be added to the end of the internet address. After the webpage has been uploaded it should be tested to make sure all of the graphics are visible and all the links work (Hixson & Schrock 2002).

2.6 Conclusion

The processes described above demonstrate several methods that one can follow when constructing a webpage. Obviously these are not the only methodologies that can be used, and most often one will need to tailor the steps to fit the needs of their specific project. The overall success of a website is dependent on organization and the process used in developing the site.

For this project, many of the concepts explained above are of key importance. Developing a purpose and goals for the website are an important first step. Interviewing the health coordinator and teachers and surveying the students provided information on what content should be included in the website. Planning the page layout to include class information, homework assignments, teacher contact information, and project descriptions is an important part of school webpage development. Finally, testing out the website for usability is crucial to making the website a success.

3.0 Website Development Process

3.1 Introduction

The methodology used to develop the website for this project consisted of five steps; planning, research, design, implementation, and usability testing. In the planning stage interviews were conducted to gather information necessary to develop the project goals. Student surveys were then done to determine which health topics and features would be on the website. Research was done and information was gathered for the website in the research stage of the process. For each health topic addressed on the website, background information was written. Books were chosen for suggested reading materials, hotlines were found, and additional websites were selected to provide students with further information on each topic. A sketch of what the actual website would look like was created in the design phase, and the site itself was created in the implementation stage. The final stage consisted of usability testing. Evaluation forms were used by students and teachers to critique the website and changes were made to the site accordingly.

3.2 Planning

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first step in the web development process is to determine the content for the website. In this project, interviews and surveys were conducted to obtain a clear idea of what the students and teachers felt should be included in the website. The project goals were developed after interviewing the health coordinator and health teachers. Surveying the ninth grade students provided

additional information which was then used to determine exactly what the website would contain.

3.2.1 Interviews

Martha Schoenfeld, the Ashland Health Coordinator, and two of the ninth grade health teachers were interviewed during the first week of the project. The following questions were asked during the interviews.

- Web site goals (What are the primary reasons for and the goal of this project?)
- When and why will the students be using the website?
- Who else will be using the website besides students?
- What topics should be included on the website?
- What types of resources would you like available for the students on this website? (links to other websites, suggested books, suggested videos, message boards, counter, chat capabilities, homework assignments, course syllabus, calendar of assignments and due dates, ability to email teacher for help, project descriptions, homework to download, study guides for tests, timeframe for posting certain information)

Martha Schoenfeld, health coordinator, felt the main goal of the website is to provide a good source of information for students that is age appropriate and accurate. Teachers should be using the website to for their health classes because students need to be familiar with using the web as part of their courses, as it is the norm in college today. The students should be able to use the website whenever they want and should feel comfortable using it. The website should provide local resources for students and places to go to for help if necessary. Martha envisioned the website as a place for students to go if friends or family are dealing with certain issues so that they know how best to deal with what is going on. Topics of most importance to be included on the website are depression and suicide. Martha would like to see links to other websites, suggested reading material, homework assignments, a course syllabus, a calendar of assignments

and due dates, the ability to email the teacher, project descriptions, and homework to download on the website.

Karen Barboza, a ninth grade health teacher, said the main goals of the website should be to provide valuable and valid information regarding fitness, health, and wellness issues. She felt students should be able to use the website anytime because the students should be encouraged to understand that being healthy is a valuable asset. The students should have many questions and should be able to seek answers regularly. Karen suggested that parents may possibly be using the website as well. As a physical education teacher, Karen would like to see fitness and cardiovascular health on the website. She is interesting in having strength training, flexibility training, stress reduction, and nutritional guidelines on the website as well. Karen would like to have the website include a course description with expectations. She would like the website to explain what is going on in class, but not necessarily include a structured syllabus.

Debbie DelDotto, another one of the ninth grade health teachers, said that the goal of the website should be to promote wellness so that parents and faculty can be informed of what is going on and the students can stay updated on topic areas and assignments. She would like the students to use the website the first day of school so that they know what they will be covering and what resources are available to them. Debbie would like to see all topics in the wellness/health curriculum on the website. She is interesting in having links to other websites, message boards, homework assignments, a course syllabus, a calendar of assignments and due dates, project descriptions, examples of past assignments, and the ability to email the teacher for help on the website.

3.2.2 Project Goals

The information obtained from the interviews was used to develop a purpose statement for the website. Interviews were conducted prior to developing the project goals to ensure that the needs of the health coordinator and health teachers were met by the website. The following purpose statement was used as a guideline throughout the web development process.

The main goal of this project is to create a website for high school students that will provide accurate, appropriate, reliable information on health issues, as well as resources for the students to obtain additional information. The website will contain background information on different health topics, which will coincide with the health curriculum for ninth grade. The website will also include suggested books to read, websites to visit for a more in-depth coverage of certain topics, and local resources for students to contact. Topics will be chosen based on responses from student surveys and teacher input. Linked websites will be chosen based on a set criterion to determine that the information is accurate, age appropriate, current, and reliable. The idea behind the website is to provide a resource for the students to find information that they may not learn in school, and answer questions they may not feel comfortable asking.

In addition to health information, the website will provide course information for 9th grade health students. Depending on individual teacher preferences, students will be able to access a course syllabus, class homework and project information, and test dates and topics. The website may also allow the students to email teachers about any questions regarding the health class.

3.2.3 Surveys

The ninth-grade student body was surveyed to determine what the students felt would be useful in a health website. Because one of the main goals of the project is to provide health information for the students, it is important to make sure students' needs are being met and that the students will actually use the website. The following survey was given to seventy-six ninth-grade students.

1. How often do you use the internet?
 One hour a week
 Five hours a week
 One hour a day
 More than one hour a day
2. What type of computer do you use?
 Apple PC
3. Which browsers do you use (please circle)
 Internet Explorer Netscape Navigator Other _____
4. Do you think a health website would be valuable?
5. What topics would you like to see on a health website?
 (Please rate the importance of the following)

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Depression			
Smoking			
Alcohol			
Drug Use			
Sexually Transmitted Diseases			
Nutrition			
Stress			
Eating Disorders			
Date Rape			
Pregnancy			
Domestic Violence			
AIDS/HIV			
Harassment			
Bereavement (Grief)			
Other: _____			

6. Please indicate the importance of the following characteristics of web pages.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Easy to use			
Attractive			
Useful			
Efficient			
Well Organized			
Entertaining			
Valuable Information			

7. What features would you like to see in a health website?

- (place a check mark next to all that apply)
- Links to other health information websites
- Suggested reading material on health issues
- Suggested videos to watch
- Ability to post messages
- Chat capabilities
- Course syllabus
- Calendar of assignments and due dates
- Ability to email teacher for help
- Project descriptions
- Homework to download
- Study Questions for tests
- Other:

8. Do you use a website for any other classes? (yes or no)

If you answered yes to question 8, what do you like about the website, and what do you dislike about the website.

The results of the surveys were as follows. Of the seventy-six ninth graders surveyed, forty three thought a health website might be of value. The majority of the students, seventy-three, use PCs. Internet Explorer is the browser used by most of the students, fifty-six, followed by AOL and Netscape Navigator respectively. Results show that the students use the internet regularly, with over half the students being online one hour a day or more.

Only twenty-four students use a website for another class. These students commented that they liked their course websites because they are easy to use, accurate,

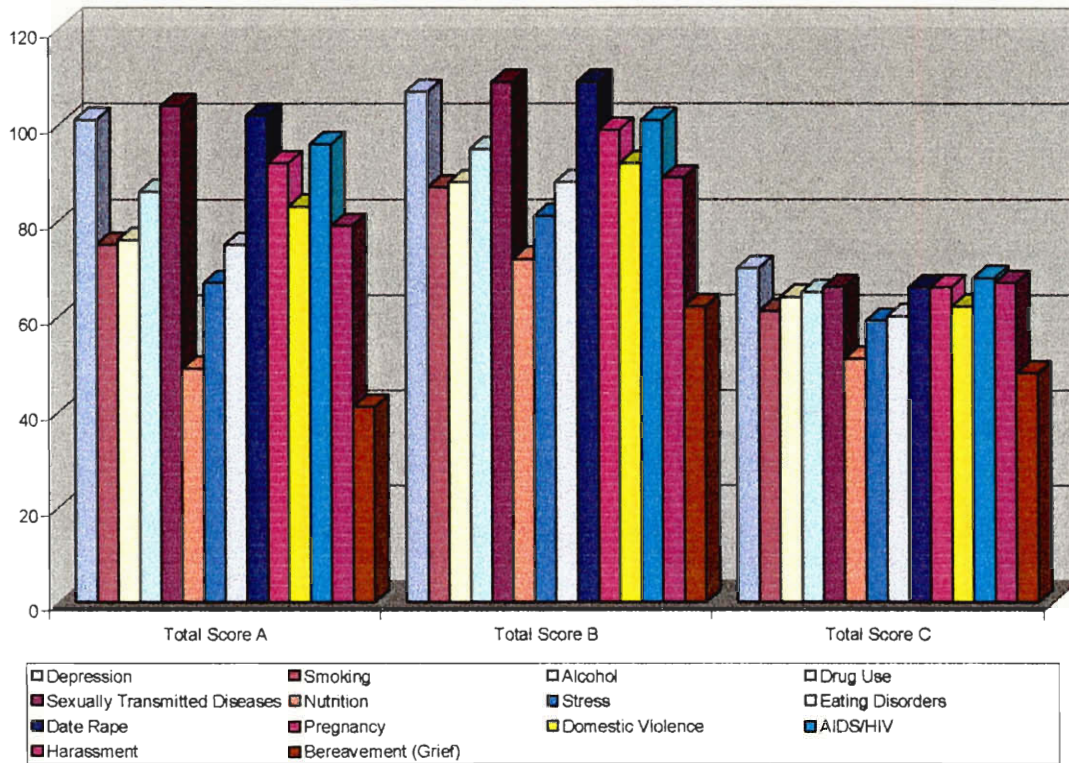
interesting, and updated regularly. Students like the ability to email their teachers from the website, be able to get their homework off the web, have study questions for tests posted, view their course schedule and assignment due dates, and have practice quizzes on the web. The main complaints about course websites were lack of links, outdated information.

Students showed great interest in having study questions for tests, homework to download, a calendar of assignments and due dates, and the ability to post messages on the health website. According to the surveys, they would also like links to other health information websites, the ability to email the teacher for help, and project descriptions. Only one-fourth of the students said they would like to have suggested videos or reading material or a course syllabus on the website. The students rated usefulness and easy use as the two most important aspects of a website, followed by valuable information and efficiency. Having the website be attractive and entertaining were least important to the students.

To determine the order of importance of different health topics, the results were analyzed three different ways. The first, Total Score A, gave a Very Important response two points, a Somewhat Important response one point, and a Not Important response minus one points. The second analysis, Total Score B, gave a Very Important response two points, a Somewhat Important response one point, and a Not Important response zero points. Total Score C gave a Very Important response one point, a Somewhat Important response one point, and a Not Important response zero points. As can be seen in the chart and graph, the top five topics were Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Date-Rape, Depression, AIDS/HIV, and Pregnancy. The middle four topics were Harassment,

Domestic Violence, Alcohol, and Drug Use. Bereavement, Nutrition, Stress, Smoking, and Eating Disorders were of least importance according to the students.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Total Score A	Total Score B	Total Score C
Depression	37	33	6	101	107	70
Smoking	26	35	12	75	87	61
Alcohol	24	40	12	76	88	64
Drug Use	30	35	9	86	95	65
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	43	23	5	104	109	66
Nutrition	21	30	23	49	72	51
Stress	22	37	14	67	81	59
Eating Disorders	28	32	13	75	88	60
Date Rape	43	23	7	102	109	66
Pregnancy	33	33	7	92	99	66
Domestic Violence	30	32	9	83	92	62
AIDS/HIV	33	35	5	96	101	68
Harassment	22	45	10	79	89	67
Bereavement (Grief)	14	34	21	41	62	48



3.2.4 Content Analysis

The information gathered from the interviews and surveys was used to determine what would go on the website. The following outline was developed to use as a guide when gathering information for the website.

Topics Covered

- Fitness/Nutrition
- Depression/Suicide
- AIDS/HIV
- Date Rape/Violence
- Pregnancy
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Sexual Orientation

Website Features

- Links to other websites
- Suggested reading material
- Ability to email teacher
- Homework to download
- Calendar of assignments and due dates

- Course syllabus
- Project Descriptions
- Study Questions for tests
- Ability to post messages
- Local resources (phone numbers)

3.3 Web Page Content

The second phase of the web development process was the research phase.

Research was done on each of the health topics listed in the outline above to determine what information is of importance to ninth graders. All of the research was done on the internet. Important facts, information, tips, and advice were gathered on each topic and one to three pages were written for each topic.

3.3.1 Topics of the Webpage

AIDS/HIV

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Acquired means that you can catch it, immune deficiency means it weakens the body's ability to fight diseases, and syndrome means that the disease is made up of more than one problem. AIDS is the fourth leading cause of death worldwide. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS has estimated that more than thirty-four million people are living with HIV or AIDS today and many are unaware that they have the virus. About half of the forty thousand Americans infected with HIV each year are under twenty-five.

AIDS is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). When you get HIV your body makes antibodies to try to fight off the virus. It is by these antibodies that infection can be detected. Having HIV is not the same as having AIDS. One can be

infected by HIV for many years before it develops into the AIDS virus. There is no cure for AIDS but there are drugs to slow down the effects of HIV.

HIV can be transmitted by having sex with an infected person, sharing a needle with someone who's infected, being born when your mother is infected, or drinking the breast milk of an infected woman. It is commonly said that you can get HIV by sharing any body fluid. There are no known cases of transmission from sweat, saliva, or tears. It is possible to get HIV from kissing if both people have any type of open cut or sore in their mouth. To reduce your risk of getting HIV use condoms during any sexual activity and do not share drug injection equipment. Keep cuts, open sores, eyes, and mouth protected from contact with blood.

Symptoms of HIV include fever, headache, sore muscles and joints, stomach ache, swollen lymph glands and skin rash. You can be infected, however, and show no symptoms. You may have HIV for many years before developing AIDS. Once infected with HIV you will eventually have full-blown AIDS and could die shortly thereafter or live for many years before becoming severely ill.

Depression

Depression is one of the most common mental disorders and also one of the most treatable mental illnesses. It is common to feel sad or gloomy every once and awhile, but when these feelings last for weeks, months, or years it is known as clinical depression. One in five Americans get depressed in their lifetime and women are twice as likely to become depressed than men. The most common type of depression is Major Depression when a person experiences characteristics of depression in either single or reoccurring episodes. People suffering from dysthymia suffer from chronic mild depression

symptoms. Bipolar Disorder is characterized by cyclical periods of severe depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder is depression that occurs during a certain season of the year.

Symptoms of depression include feeling sad or empty most of the day, lack of interest in fun activities, and significant weight loss or loss of appetite. Depression is also characterized by insomnia, hypersomnia, loss of energy, feelings of worthlessness, lack of concentration, and suicide attempts or plans. Depression can be genetic, meaning it runs in the family, or it can be caused by a medical illness such as a stroke, heart attack, cancer, or hormonal disorders. People with low self-esteem are prone to depression. Treatment is usually a combination of psychotherapy and medication. A therapist helps depressed people resolve problems, learn to be more satisfied with their actions, or learn how to change negative styles of thinking. For mild depression self help books are available, as are local support groups.

If you are suffering from depression you can help yourself by setting realistic goals. Break things down into small tasks so that you have a sense of accomplishment when you complete the task. Try to be with people instead of being alone. Don't expect to feel better right away and allow your family and friends to help you. Avoid alcohol and drugs as well as things you aren't likely to be successful with. Set realistic goals for yourself. Make a schedule each day and cross things out as you complete them. Schedule activities that used to give you pleasure such as listening to music, playing an instrument, reading a book, shopping, watching a movie, playing with a pet, going for a walk, or going for a drive. Spend at least thirty minutes a day in the sun. Eat healthy, don't skip meals, and sleep when you are tired. Most important, talk to people.

If a friend or family member is depressed it is important to get them appropriate treatment. You may need to make the appointment for them and encourage them to go. Emotional support is very important. Be kind and understand. Encourage them to participate in activities they once found enjoyable.

Date Rape

Forced, unwanted sexual intercourse between two people who know each other or are acquaintances is known as "date" or "acquaintance" rape. It's a serious act of violence and it's illegal. Teen girls and women are most often the victims of rape but it can happen to guys, too.

To protect yourself if you are women, talk about sex as you become involved in the relationship. Make your feelings about sexual matters clear. Don't let drugs or alcohol decrease your ability to make decisions and take care of yourself. Trust your gut feelings about guys. On a first date take your own car or a phone and make sure the date is in a public place. For men, accept it when a woman says no, do not take it as a challenge. Avoid letting drugs or alcohol cloud your judgment. Don't be drawn into a gang rape. If you need help dealing with feelings of violence or aggression against women seek professional advice.

The date rape drug, known as rohypnol or "roffies", is prescribed to help people sleep. When mixed with alcohol, date rape drugs cause one to feel paralyzed, have blurred vision, temporary memory impairment, and blackouts giving guys the change to take advantage of a girl. To protect yourself against date rape drugs never drink out of a punch bowl. Do not take a drink from someone you don't know and never leave your drink unattended.

If you are raped get help right away. Do not feel guilty or try to ignore what happened. Get medical attention as soon as possible and don't shower, wash, or change before you go. Counseling is important to help deal with what happened to you. Remind yourself that it is not your fault.

Fitness

Being fit means you have the flexibility, strength, and endurance necessary to perform your daily activities. If you are inactive your body will become weak and more vulnerable to disease. Exercise makes you feel better. It gives you energy, helps deal with stress, helps relaxation and improves your ability to sleep. Exercise makes you look better by toning your muscles, burning fat, helping you maintain a healthy weight and control your appetite.

There are different components of fitness. Aerobic Endurance is the body's ability to use whole muscle groups together over an extended period of time. Oxygen is used to break down carbohydrates and convert them into energy. To build aerobic endurance maintain your workout for fifteen to thirty minutes three to four times a week. Increase your aerobic activities gradually and alternate days of intense workouts. Muscular endurance is how well your muscles can repeatedly generate force and how long they can maintain the activity. Muscular endurance combines aerobic and anaerobic energy. To build muscular endurance gradually increase the weight load and be sure to rest between workouts. Flexibility is the ability to stretch muscles, tendons, and ligaments. Flexibility decreases one's risk of injury while exercising. It is important to stretch before a workout, but after the warm-up. Also stretch after workouts to relax

muscles and prevent cramping. To increase flexibility stretch regularly and several times a day.

Nutrition

Healthy lifestyles help promote wellness and prevent heart disease, cancer, and stroke. It is important to develop healthy habits while young. To keep healthy do not go on diets because they slow down your metabolism and make it harder to lose weight. Do not skip meals, especially breakfast which is the most important meal of the day. Bring healthy foods with you so you don't have to eat fast food. Eat at least five fruits and vegetables a day. Eat when you're hungry, stop when you're full and sleep when you're tired.

There are six types of nutrients, all of which are important for your body to function. They are: protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water. Vitamins and minerals are necessary for your body to convert food into energy. Protein makes up all the cells in your body. All chemical reactions in the body are dependent on proteins. They help build new cells and repair damaged ones. Meats, fish, lentils, nuts, and dairy products are high in protein. Carbohydrates provide the body with calories that can be converted into energy. Sugars are simple carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates, or starches, provide longer, sustained energy. Complex carbohydrates include potatoes, pasta, bread, rice, cereals, fruits, and vegetables. Fats are necessary in small amounts for survival. Saturated fats, found in animal products like butter, cheese, milk, and meats, raise cholesterol levels and can cause heart disease. Water makes up two thirds of the body. You need eight glasses of water a day to hydrate organs so they function properly.

Water also helps flush toxins and impurities from the body and is important for respiration, digestion, metabolism, body temperature regulation, and excretion.

Pregnancy

In the U.S. four out of ten girls become pregnant at least once before the age of twenty. Abstinence is the only way to be certain not to get pregnant or cause pregnancy. If you are going to be sexually active, many forms of contraceptives are available to help reduce the risk of becoming pregnant.

The Pill is an oral contraceptive. It contains either progestin and estrogen (combined oral contraceptive) or progestin only. Combined pills work by suppressing ovulation. If no egg is released you can't get pregnant. The pill can also prevent against pelvic inflammatory disease, ovarian cancer, and endometrial cancer. Side effects include nausea, headache, breast tenderness, weight gain, irregular bleeding and depression. Progestin only pills reduce and thicken the cervical mucus to prevent sperm from reaching the egg, and keep the uterine lining thick to prevent implantation of a fertilized egg. Progestin only pills are good if you can't take estrogen because of headaches or high blood pressure problems. Injectable Progestin is also available from your health care provider. One injection is good for three months.

The Sponge provides protection when inserted into the vagina several hours before intercourse. It releases spermicidal gel over the vaginal mucus and forms a barrier to kill sperm before they reach the cervix and enter the uterus. The sponge can be left in place up to twelve hours after sex and is good for multiple intercoursures during this time.

Vaginal Spermicides are available over the counter. They come in the form of cream, jelly, foam, film, or tablets and contain a chemical which kills sperm. It is

important to follow the directions exactly in order for spermicides to be affective. Allow the spermicide to remain in the vagina for six to eight hours after intercourse to make sure all sperm are killed.

Condoms should always be used in addition to any other form of birth control. Do not use oil-based lubricants with latex condoms because the lubricant will break down or weaken the condom. Female condoms are also available but should not be used in combination with male condoms.

Sexual Orientation

Sexuality can be broken down into four components: biological sex, gender identity (what makes us feel male or female), social sex role (the way we dress or act that is socially acceptable in society), and sexual orientation. There are three types of sexual orientation. Homosexuals are attracted to people of the opposite sex. Heterosexuals are attracted to people of the same sex. Bisexuals are attracted to people of the opposite sex and people of the same sex.

It is not well understood why people have a certain sexual orientation. It is thought that sexual orientation is the result of a combination of biological, psychological, and social factors. Sexual orientation is not a choice. Many people try very hard to change their sexual identity with no success. Homosexuality is not a mental illness or an emotional problem. Gay men and lesbian women can be good parents and important contributors to society.

“Coming out” or telling people about one’s sexual orientation if one is gay or lesbian is often hard because of stereotypes and prejudices that exist. Homosexuals and bisexuals often feel alone and different and are afraid of rejection. If you know someone

who is gay or lesbian it is important that you are supportive and have a positive attitude towards their sexuality. If you are struggling with sexual orientation issues, it might be helpful to get help from a trained counselor or a gay, lesbian or bisexual support group to help you understand and deal with your emotions.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Sexually Transmitted Diseases are infections that are transferred from person to person through sexual contact. Most are treatable, but many have no cure. STDs can be uncomfortable, lead to pregnancy complications or even death. Two thirds of all STDs occur in people under the age of twenty-five. Condoms can prevent some, but not all STDs. The only way to ensure prevention of STDs is abstinence. Even kissing can result in the transmission of some STDs such as syphilis and herpes. Many times a person who has been infected has no symptoms. If you are sexually active you should be tested regularly for STDs, and should consistently use a condom during sexual activity.

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection transmitted by vaginal and anal sex. 75% of infected women and 25% of infected men are asymptomatic. If Chlamydia is diagnosed it can be treated with antibiotics. Symptoms include lower abdominal pain and burning during urination. Condoms only reduce the risk of transmission. The only way to prevent infection is not to have intercourse with an infected person.

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is a viral infection transmitted by vaginal, anal, and oral sex. The virus causes cauliflower like warts on and inside of the genitals, anus, and throat. There is no cure for HPV, although freezing, laser therapy, and surgery can suppress the warts. HPV can cause cervical cancer in women. Condoms provide almost no protection against HPV. Abstinence is the only way to prevent infection.

Syphilis is a bacterial infection transmitted by vaginal sex, anal sex, oral sex, and contact between broken skin and syphilis rashes. Symptoms include painless sores on the genitals, fever, sore throat, hair loss, and swollen glands. Syphilis can be cured by penicillin, but any damage done prior to treatment is irreversible. Damage to the heart, brain, eyes, nervous system, bones, and joints can be the result of syphilis. Abstinence is the only way to prevent transmission.

Trichomoniasis is a bacterial infection spread by vaginal, anal, and oral sex. Symptoms include foamy, yellow-green vaginal discharge, and difficulty or pain during urination or intercourse. Men usually have no symptoms, but sometimes have inflammation of the urethra, glands, and foreskin. Trichomoniasis can be cured by antibacterial medication. To prevent transmission, avoid sharing towels and washcloths and abstain from sexual activities.

Gonorrhea is a bacterial infection transmitted by vaginal, anal, and oral sex. Symptoms will appear two to ten days after exposure, and include discharge or burning and itching during urination. If treated, gonorrhea can be cured with antibiotics. Gonorrhea can cause men to become sterile and women to develop pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, and chronic pelvic pain. Abstinence is the best way to prevent transmission.

Hepatitis B is a viral infection transmitted by vaginal, anal and oral sex, sharing of needles, or receiving contaminated blood or blood products. One third of people infected have no symptoms. Fever, headache, muscle aches, fatigue, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, dark urine, abdominal pain, and yellowing of skin are all symptoms of Hepatitis B. No cure is known, but most people recover on their own within four to

eight weeks. Hepatitis B can lead to liver cancer and immune system disorders. A vaccine is available for Hepatitis B and is the best way to avoid transmission.

Genital Herpes is a viral infection spread by direct skin to skin contact. HSV-2 is spread through sexual contact and HSV-1 is spread by nonsexual contact such as lip sores. HSV-1 can also cause genital infections if transmitted through oral sex. Symptoms include itching or burning sores and blisters in the genital areas. Genital Herpes has no cure. Anti-viral drugs exist, but only help reduce outbreaks.

Suicide

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide is the third leading cause of death for those ages 15 to 24. Suicidal behavior includes statements of suicidal ideas, having a plan for killing oneself, self-inflicted injuries such as cuts or burns, and reckless behavior. Suicidal people may also give away favorite possessions or inappropriately say goodbye. When a teen commits suicide, everyone is affected. Family members, friends, teammates, neighbors, and sometimes even those who didn't know the person well are united by feelings of grief, confusion, guilt - and the sense that if only they had done something differently, the suicide could have been prevented.

If someone you know is suicidal take them seriously. Most people indicate to others that they are going to do something. Remember that suicidal behavior is a cry for help. The fact that the person is still alive means that part of them still wants to be alive. He or she is looking for a way to end the pain, not their life. Be willing to give and get help for the person sooner, not later. Listen to the person. Advice or answers are not

necessary; all you have to do is listen. Most important, do not leave them alone and get them professional help.

If you are feeling suicidal call 1-800-SUICIDE or talk to a friend, family member, or someone you are close to that can get you professional help.

Relationship Violence

Relationship Violence is defined as a situation when one person in a relationship uses abusive behavior to gain power and control over the other person. The abusive behavior is usually a combination of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and economic abuse. Warning signs include extreme jealousy and possessiveness, a controlling attitude, mood swings, forced sex, and dominating personality. You may feel isolated from your friends or like you are being controlled. The abuser may be sad or depressed, then suddenly apologetic or romantic. He or she may tell you who to talk to, what to wear, or where you can go.

If you are in a violent relationship it is important to remind yourself that it is not your fault, and to trust your feelings about your partner. Reach out to friends and family for help. It is suggested to keep a dated record of physical abuse, threats, and stalking behavior. Avoid being alone with your partner and vary your daily routines. Let someone know where you are going and when you plan on coming back. Most important, do not fool yourself into thinking your partner will change.

3.3.2 Student Resources

In addition to the basic information on each of the health topics described above, the website also provides resources for students. Books, local hotlines and other websites

to visit for further information are included with each topic. The books and hotlines were found by searching the internet and reading book reviews to find reading material that is age appropriate and something students would actually read. The following is a list of books and hotlines chosen for each health topic to be included in the website.

AIDS/HIV

- AIDS Hotline 1-800-FORAIDS
- Center for Disease Control National AIDS/HIV Hotline 1-800-342-AIDS (Mon. – Fri. 10am – 10pm)
- Teen AIDS Line 1-800-234-TEEN (weekdays) 1-800-440-TEEN (weekends)

Christie-Dever, Barbara & Marcie Ramsey, **AIDS: What Teens Need to Know**. Learning Works, 1996.

Silverstein, Alvin, Virginia B. Silverstein, Laura Silverstein Nunn, **AIDS: An All About Guide for Young Adults**. Enslow Publishers, 1999.

Depression/Suicide

- 1-800-SUICIDE (24 hour hotline)
- American Suicide Foundation 1-800-531-4477
- Depression Awareness Recognition & Treatment Helpline 1-800-421-4211
- National Institute of Mental Health Information Line 1-800-647-2642

Samaritans Suburban West
235 Walnut St.
Framingham, MA 01702
www.samaritanofframingham.f2s.com
1-877-SOS-TEEN (24 hour hotline)

Carlson, Richard PhD., **Don't Sweat the Small Stuff for Teens**. Hyperion, 2000.

Cobian, Bev R.N.C., **When Nothing Matters Anymore: A Survival Guide for Depressed Teens**. Free Spirit Publishing, 1998.

Copeland, Mary Ellen, MA, MS & Stuart Copans, M.D., **The Adolescent Depression Workbook**. Peach Press, 1998.

Garland, Jane, **Depression Is the Pits, but I'm Getting Better: A Guide for Adolescents**. Magination, 1998.

McCoy, Kathy, *Life Happens: A Teenager's Guide*. Perigee, 1996.

McGraw, Jay, **Life Strategies For Teens**. Fireside, 2000.

Murphy, James M. M.D., **Coping with Teen Suicide**, Rosen Publishing Group, September 1999.

Nelson, Richard E. PhD., *The Power to Prevent Suicide: A Guide for Teens Helping Teens*. Free Spirit Publishing, 1994.

Sexual Orientation

- Gay & Lesbian National Hotline 1-888-843-4564 (Mon. – Fri. 6pm-10pm)
- Trevor Project Youth Support 1-800-850-8078

Borhek, Mary V., *Coming Out to Parents: A Two Way Survival Guide for Lesbians and Gay Men and Their Parents*. Pilgrim Press, 1993.

Clark, Donald H., **Loving Someone Gay**. Celestial Arts, 1997.

Isay, Richard A. M.D., *Becoming Gay: The Journey to Self-Acceptance*. Henry Holt. 1997.

McNaught, Brian, **Now That I'm Out, What Do I Do?** St. Martins Press, 1998.

Pregnancy

- Teen Pregnancy Hotline 1-800-522-5006
- Pregnancy Hotline 1-800-848-5683
- Planned Parenthood 1-800-829-7732 (Mon. – Fri. 8:30am – 5pm)
- Crisis Pregnancy Counseling 1-800-441-2670
- Crisis Pregnancy Center 1-800-560-0717

All About Birth Control. Random House Value Publishing, Incorporated, 1998.

Colburg, Janet Ollila & Joel Nakamura, **Red Light Green Light: Preventing Teen Pregnancy**. Summer Kitchen Press, 1997.

Dudley, William Ed. **Pregnancy: Teen Decisions**. Greenhaven Press, 2001.

Pogancy, Susan Browning, **Sex Smart: 501 Reasons to Hold Off on Sex.** Fairview Press, 1998.

Date Rape/Relationship Violence

- Rape & Abuse & Incest National Network 1-800-656-HOPE
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE
- The Rape Crisis Center of Central Massachusetts 1-800-870-5905
- Massachusetts Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline 1-877-785-2020

Ledray, Linda E., **Recovering From Rape.** Owllet, 1994.

Levy, Barrie, **In Love and In Danger: A Teen's Guide to Breaking Free of Abusive Relationships.** Seal Pr Feminist Pub, 1998.

Lindquist, Scott, **The Date Rape Prevention Book: The Essential Guide for Girls & Women.** Sourcebooks, Incorporated, 2000.

Rue, Nancy N. & Rudolf Steiner, **Everything You Need to Know About Abusive Relationships.** Rosen Publishing Group, 1996.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- Center for Disease Control National STD Hotline 1-877-HPV-5868
- National Sexually Transmitted Diseases Hotline 1-800-227-8922

McIlhane, Marion, **SEX: What You Don't Know Can Kill You.** Baker Book House 1997.

Vitkus, Jessica, Marjorie Ingall, & Jessica Weeks, **Smart Sex.** Pocket Books, 1998.

Yancey, Dianne, **STDs: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You.** Twenty First Century Books, 2002.

Fitness/Nutrition

Bijlefeld, Marjolijn, & Sharon K. Zoumbaris, **Food And You: A Guide to Healthy Habits for Teens.** Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001.

Gaede, Katrina, **Fitness Training for Girls: A Teen Girl's Guide to Resistance Training, Cardiovascular Conditioning and Nutrition,** Tracks Pub., November 2001.

Goldstein, Mark A. & Myrna Chandler Goldstein, **Boys into Men: Staying Healthy through the Teen Years**, Greenwood Publishing Group, August 30, 2000.

Turk, Mary, **Healthy Eating for Weight Management (Nutrition and Fitness for Teens)**. Lifematters Press, 2001.

The following process was used to choose links to other websites where students can find additional information on health topics discussed in the website. The websites chosen are listed below the Evaluation Criteria.

1. Use goggle, yahoo, altavista, and lycos
2. Use topic title as keyword for search
3. Make a list of any sites that come up in more than one of the search results (sites that are cross listed)
4. Choose three to five sites (for each topic) from the list that meet the criteria below
5. Have sites approved by Martha Schoenfeld

Evaluation Criteria

- Website was written by a reliable resource
- Website is current (recently updated)
- Website is age appropriate for high school students
- Website contains relevant information (different from what has already been included on the website)

The following web pages were chosen to be linked to the Wellness Website.

AIDS/HIV

<http://www.avert.org/>

<http://www2.powercom.net/~aidsnet/hitsquad/>

<http://www.thebody.com/>

Date Rape

http://www.coolnurse.com/date_rape.htm

<http://www.healthnet.com/adap/stoptheabuse/daterape.asp>

Depression

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/depression.cfm>
<http://www.safeyouth.org/teens/topics/depression.htm>

Fitness

<http://www.fitteen.com/>

Nutrition

<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/pubs/winteen/index.htm>
http://www.fda.gov/fdac/reprints/ots_nutr.html

Pregnancy

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/teens/index.html>
<http://www.avert.org/cpills.htm>

Sexual Orientation

<http://www.outproud.org>
<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Health/TeenHealth/SexOrien/gay.html>

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

<http://www.iwannaknow.org/basics2/index.html>
<http://www.epigee.org/guide/stds.html>
http://kidshealth.org/teen/sexual_health/stds/std.html

Suicide

<http://suicidal.com>
<http://www.save.org/>
<http://www.mentalhealth.org/suicideprevention/default.asp>
<http://www.mentalhealth.org/highlights/suicide/default.asp>

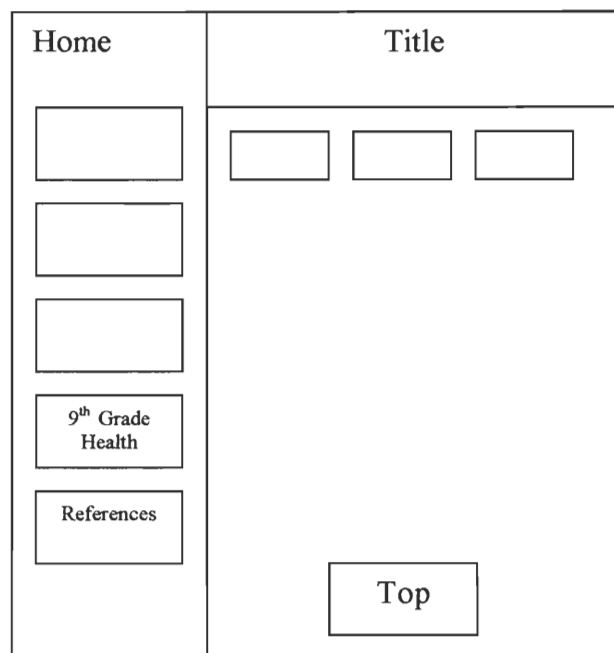
Relationship Violence

http://www.safeyouth.org/teens/topics/teen_dating.htm
<http://www.loveisnotabuse.com/home.asp>

3.4 Design

The third phase of the web development process was the design phase. The layout for the website was determined. A sketch was drawn of the homepage. The page consists of a navigation bar on the left side, a title on the top right, and content on the right side of the page. A title, Wellness on the Web, was chosen for the website. The top button on the navigation bar is the home button. The next ten buttons are for the

health topics. A button for ninth grade health, and one for references are at the bottom of the navigation bar. Each of the topic buttons links to a topic page which will have the title of the topic on the top right of the page. Underneath the title there will be buttons to move down to the bottom of the page where the books, hotlines, and links are located. The bottom of the page has a button to bring you back up to the top of the page. The ninth grade health page has a list of the health teachers at the bottom. These names will serve as links to the teacher's individual home page. Mrs. DelDotto's page will have sections for homework, projects, article reviews, and a course syllabus. At the bottom of her page there are links to view the course calendar and to send her an email. The following is a picture of the website design which was used as a guide for the implementation process.



3.5 Implementation

Microsoft Front Page was used to create the website. The Citrus Punch theme was used for the background, banners (titles at the top of each topic page), bullets, and buttons. Tables were used to organize the information visually on the page. The borders were hidden so that they are not visible on the actual webpage. The left hand cell is sub-frame so that the information does not have to be loaded each time the user switches to another topic page. Hover bars were placed underneath the title on each page to bring the user down to the sections on hotlines, books and other websites. This sub-frame contains the navigation bar, which is made up of buttons, so that users can easily switch from one page of the website to another. IIS extensions (Microsoft proprietary features) were removed from all of the buttons, banners, backgrounds, and bullets so that they can be seen no matter what server is being used to host the website. The information for each health topic was copied from Microsoft Word into Microsoft Front Page. The lists of hotlines, books, and links were also copied in from Microsoft Word and the book titles were made into hyperlinks so that when the user clicks on the title a page opens where the book can be purchased. All of the pages of the website and the pictures, buttons, bullets, banners, and background used were put in a folder titled wellness so that the website could be uploaded to the internet.

3.6 Usability Testing

In order to make sure there are no errors with the website and that it is easy to use and understand, usability testing was performed. A number of high school students and

teachers were asked to view the website and evaluate it on certain criteria. The following form was used to evaluate the website.

Web Site Evaluation

Circle the appropriate number and please comment on points that do not receive a rating of 3.

(1 = needs improvement, 2 = good, 3 = very good)

- 1 2 3 Opening page captures attention
- 1 2 3 Homepage has useful information
- 1 2 3 Homepage looks good and has a clean, uncluttered look
- 1 2 3 Layout is clear and easy to follow
- 1 2 3 Details are logical and effective
- 1 2 3 Easy to navigate the pages
- 1 2 3 Layout is consistent from page to page
- 1 2 3 Each web-page has a proper title
- 1 2 3 The title shows why users should look at this page
- 1 2 3 Titles are consistent with the words used to link to it
- 1 2 3 Information is accurate and current
- 1 2 3 All information is relevant to purpose of web site
- 1 2 3 Information is easy to find
- 1 2 3 Text is easy to read with background colors
- 1 2 3 Links are appropriate
- 1 2 3 Links work properly
- 1 2 3 Works in all browsers
- 1 2 3 Spelling is correct
- 1 2 3 Punctuation is accurate
- 1 2 3 Graphics download quickly
- 1 2 3 Graphics relevant to web site
- 1 2 3 Information about when the web site was last updated is available
- 1 2 3 References available

The results of fifteen evaluations are as follows.

	Average Score
Opening page captures attention	2.5
Homepage has useful information	2.8
Homepage looks good and has a clean uncluttered look	3
Layout is clear and easy to follow	3
Details are logical and effective	3
Easy to navigate the pages	3
Layout is consistent from page to page	3
Each web-page has a proper title	3
The title shows why users should look at	3

this page	
Titles are consistent with the words used to link to it	3
Information is accurate and current	3
All information is relevant to purpose of website	3
Information is easy to find	3
Text is easy to read with background colors	2
Links are appropriate	3
Links work properly	3
Works in all browsers	3
Spelling is correct	3
Punctuation is accurate	3
Graphics download quickly	3
Graphics relevant to website	3
Information about when the website was last updated is available	2
References available	3

Comments were made about the color of the text not being dark enough and information about when the website was last updated not being present. Users also noted that the homepage was simple and more could be done to capture the user's attention. As a result of user feedback, the text color was changed from green to black. A date was added to the homepage so that users would know when the website was last updated.

4.0 Conclusions

In conclusion, the process used in this project to develop a health website consisted of five steps; planning, research, design, implementation, and usability testing. This process has proven effective because it allowed an organized and structured approach to the web development process. The website was created based on student and teacher needs and ideas, which were determined by surveys and interviews. The final step of usability testing allowed for assurance that the website is easy to use.

The decision to interview the teachers and survey the students at the very beginning of the project turned out to be of value to the success of the project. The initial reasoning for these steps to be the first was the availability of the students and teachers. The project started towards the end of the school year, so there was only a short window of time that the students and teachers were available to fill out surveys and be interviewed. It is now known that these should be the first steps no matter when the project is taking place because they allowed for project goals and user needs to be determined early on in the project. The feedback from students and teachers was used to shape the entire project. One major improvement to this project would be to have conducted it during the school year so that the same students who were surveyed could evaluate the website during the usability testing stage. This way more evaluations could be done. The students would also be able to evaluate the website based on how they responded in the survey and it would be known if the needs they expressed in their survey responses were met by the website. The students could also be watched when looking at the website to see if they had any problems in navigating through the pages.

The other major improvement that could be made to this project is to find a program other than Microsoft Front Page to use to create the website. Microsoft Front Page was chosen because it is easily accessible and does not require knowledge of HTML to build a website. The problem with using Front Page is that any colors, backgrounds, buttons, icons, bullets or banners used from the program's themes will not be displayed unless the server hosting the website is a Microsoft server. This problem was corrected, but it took a lot of time and slowed down the implementation process. It is recommended that future website builders find another program that allows websites to be created, without using HTML, for future web development. The program should have features that are compatible with any server so that problems do not occur when the website is put on the web.

Overall this project was a success. The website contains accurate, age appropriate information on health issues that the students feel are important. There are many books for students to purchase if they want additional information, as well as links to other websites and hotlines to call. The ninth-grade health page has course information, homework assignments, projects and a link to email the teacher so that students will learn how to use the web for course work. If more time was available to work on this project, information on additional health topics would be added so that the website would provide a more complete resource for students.

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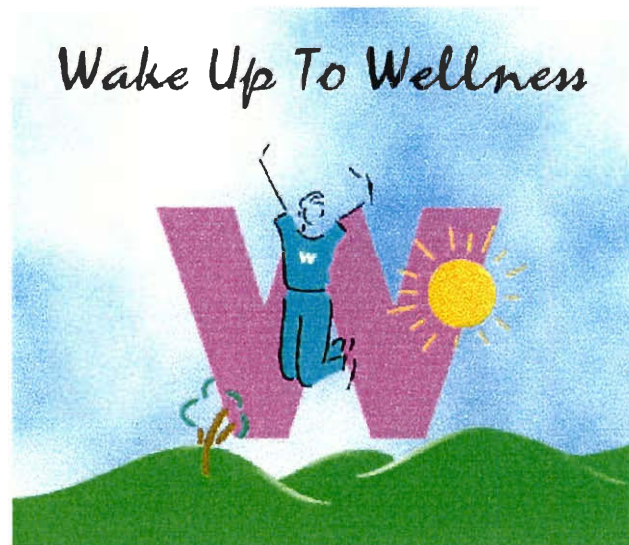
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Welcome to Ashland High School's Wellness Website.

This website contains general information on a variety of teen health issues. The topics covered on this page are AIDS & HIV, Date Rape, Depression, Fitness, Nutrition, Pregnancy, Relationship Violence, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Suicide and Sexual Orientation. The information on this site is intended to provide an overview. Additional information can be found on the links at the bottom of each page. There are also suggested books to read on each page as well as hotlines to call for help or advice. Course information for students taking freshman health can be found on the "9th Grade Health" page.



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AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Acquired means that you can catch it, immune deficiency means it weakens the body's ability to fight diseases, and syndrome means that the disease is made up of more than one problem. AIDS is the fourth leading cause of death worldwide. The Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS has estimated that more than thirty-four million people are living with HIV or AIDS today and many are unaware that they have the virus. About half of the forty thousand Americans infected with HIV each year are under the age of twenty-five.

AIDS is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). When you get HIV your body makes antibodies to try to fight off the virus. It is by these antibodies that infection can be detected.

Having HIV is not the same as having AIDS.

One can be infected by HIV for many years before it develops into the AIDS virus.

There is no cure for AIDS but there are drugs to slow down the effects of HIV.

HIV can be transmitted by having sex with an infected person, sharing a needle with someone who is infected, being born when your mother is infected, or drinking the breast milk of an infected woman. It is commonly said that you can get HIV by sharing any body fluid. There are no known cases of transmission from sweat, saliva, or tears. It is possible to get HIV from kissing if both people have any type of open cut or sore in their mouth. To reduce your risk of getting HIV use condoms during any sexual activity and do not share drug injection equipment. Keep cuts, open sores, eyes, and mouth protected from contact with blood.

Symptoms of HIV include fever, headache, sore muscles and joints, stomach ache, swollen lymph glands and skin rash. You can

be infected, however, and show no symptoms. You may have HIV for many years before developing AIDS. Once infected with HIV you will eventually have full-blown AIDS and could die shortly thereafter or live for many years before becoming severely ill.

Hotline

- AIDS Hotline 1-800-FORAIDS
- Center for Disease Control National AIDS/HIV Hotline 1-800-342-AIDS
- Teen AIDS Line 1-800-234-TEEN (weekdays) 1-800-440-TEEN (weekends)

Books to Read

- Christie-Dever, Barbara & Marcie Ramsey, AIDS: What Teens Need to Know. Learning Works, 1996.
- Silverstein, Alvin, Virginia B. Silverstein, Laura Silverstein Nunn, AIDS: An All About Guide for Young Adults. Enslow Publishers, 1999.

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■ [AIDS Education and Research Trust](#)

■ [HIV Intervention for Teens](#)

■ [The Body: An AIDS and HIV Information Resource](#)

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Forced, unwanted sexual intercourse between two people who know each other or are acquaintances is known as "date" or "acquaintance" rape. It's a serious act of violence and it's illegal. Teen girls and women are most often the victims of rape but it can happen to guys, too.

To protect yourself if you are a woman, talk about sex as you become involved in the relationship. Make your feelings about sexual matters clear. Don't let drugs or alcohol decrease your ability to make decisions and take care of yourself. Trust your gut feelings about guys. On a first date take your own car or a phone and make sure the date is in a public place. For men, accept it when a woman says no, do not take it as a challenge. Avoid letting drugs or alcohol cloud your judgment. Don't be drawn into a gang rape. If you need help dealing with feelings of violence or aggression against women seek professional advice.

The date rape drug, known as rohypnol or "roffies", is prescribed to help people sleep. When mixed with alcohol, date

rape drugs cause one to feel paralyzed, have blurred vision, temporary memory impairment, and blackouts giving guys the change to take advantage of a girl. To protect yourself against date rape drugs never drink out of a punch bowl. Do not accept a drink from someone you don't know and never leave your drink unattended.

If you are raped get help right away. Do not feel guilty or try to ignore what happened. Get medical attention as soon as possible and don't shower, wash, or change before you go. Counseling is important to help you deal with what happened to you. Remind yourself that it is not your fault.

Hotline

- Rape & Abuse & Incest National Network 1-800-656-HOPE
- The Rape Crisis Center of Central Massachusetts 1-800-870-5905

Books to Read

- Ledray, Linda E., Recovering From Rape. Owllet, 1994.
- Lindquist, Scott, The Date Rape Prevention Book: The Essential Guide for Girls & Women. Sourcebooks, Incorporated, 2000.

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Depression is one of the most common mental disorders and also one of the most treatable mental illnesses. It is common to feel sad or gloomy every once in awhile, but when these feelings last for weeks, months, or years it is known as clinical depression. One in five Americans gets depressed in their lifetime and women are twice as likely to become depressed as men. The most common type of depression is Major Depression when a person experiences characteristics of depression in either a single episode or reoccurring episodes. People suffering from dysthymia suffer from chronic mild depression symptoms. Bipolar Disorder is characterized by cyclical periods of severe depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder is depression that occurs during a certain season of the year.

Symptoms of depression include feeling sad or empty most of the day, lack of interest in fun activities, and significant weight loss or loss of appetite. Depression is also characterized by insomnia, hypersomnia, loss of energy, feelings of worthlessness, lack of concentration, and suicide attempts or plans. Depression can be genetic, meaning it runs in the family, or it can be caused by a medical illness such as a stroke, heart attack, cancer, or hormonal disorders. People with low self-esteem are prone to depression. Treatment is usually a combination of psychotherapy and medication. A therapist helps depressed people resolve problems, learn to be more satisfied with their actions, or learn how to change negative styles of thinking. For mild depression self-help books are available, as are local support groups.

If you are suffering from depression you can help yourself by setting realistic goals. Break things down into small tasks so

that you have a sense of accomplishment when you complete the task. Try to be with people instead of being alone. Don't expect to feel better right away and allow your family and friends to help you. Avoid alcohol and drugs as well as things you aren't likely to be successful with. Set realistic goals for yourself. Make a schedule each day and cross things out as you complete them. Schedule activities that used to give you pleasure such as listening to music, playing an instrument, reading a book, shopping, watching a movie, playing with a pet, going for a walk, or going for a drive. Spend at least thirty minutes a day in the sun. Eat healthy, don't skip meals, and sleep when you are tired. Most important, talk to people.

If a friend or family member is depressed it is important to get them appropriate treatment. You may need to make the appointment for them and encourage them to go. Emotional support is very important. Be kind and understanding. Encourage them to

participate in activities they once found enjoyable.

Hotline

- Depression Awareness Recognition & Treatment Helpline 1-800-421-4211
- National Institute of Mental Health Information Line 1-800-647-2642

Books to Read

- Carlson, Richard PhD., Don't Sweat the Small Stuff for Teens. Hyperion, 2000.
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Being fit means you have the flexibility, strength, and endurance necessary to perform your daily activities. If you are inactive your body will become weak and more vulnerable to disease. Exercise makes you feel better. It gives you energy, helps deal with stress, helps relaxation and improves your ability to sleep. Exercise makes you look better by toning your muscles, burning fat, helping you maintain a healthy weight, and controlling your appetite.

There are several different components of fitness. Aerobic Endurance is the body's ability to use whole muscle groups together over an extended period of time. Oxygen is used to break down carbohydrates and convert them into energy. To build aerobic endurance maintain your workout for fifteen to thirty

minutes three to four times a week. Increase your aerobic activities gradually and alternate days of intense workouts. Muscular Endurance is how well your muscles can repeatedly generate force and how long they can maintain the activity. Muscular Endurance combines aerobic and anaerobic energy. To build Muscular Endurance gradually increase the weight load and be sure to rest between workouts. Flexibility is the ability to stretch muscles, tendons, and ligaments. Flexibility decreases one's risk of injury while exercising. It is important to stretch not only before a workout, but after the warm-up as well. Also stretch after workouts to relax muscles and prevent cramping. To increase flexibility stretch regularly and several times a day.

Books to Read

■ Goldstein, Mark A. & Myrna Chandler

Goldstein, Boys into Men: Staying Healthy through the Teen Years, Greenwood

Publishing Group, August 30, 2000.

■ Gaede, Katrina, [Fitness Training for Girls: A Teen Girl's Guide to Resistance Training, Cardiovascular Conditioning and Nutrition](#), Tracks Pub., November 2001.

Other Websites

■ [Fitteen](#)

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Healthy lifestyles help promote wellness and prevent heart disease, cancer and stroke. It is important to develop healthy habits while young. To keep healthy do not go on diets because they slow down your metabolism and make it harder to lose weight. Do not skip meals, especially breakfast which is the most important meal of the day. Bring healthy foods with you so you don't have to eat fast food. Eat at least five fruits and vegetables a day. Eat when you're hungry, stop when you're full and sleep when you're tired.

There are six types of nutrients, all of which are important for your body to function. They are: protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water. Vitamins and minerals are necessary for your body to convert food into energy. Protein makes up

all the cells in your body. All chemical reactions in the body are dependent on proteins. They help build new cells and repair damaged ones. Meats, fish, lentils, nuts, and dairy products are high in protein. Carbohydrates provide the body with calories that can be converted into energy. Sugars are simple carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates, or starches, provide longer, sustained energy. Complex carbohydrates include potatoes, pasta, bread, rice, cereals, fruits, and vegetables. Fats are necessary in small amounts for survival. Saturated fats, found in animal products like butter, cheese, milk, and meats, raise cholesterol levels and can cause heart disease. Water makes up two thirds of the body. You need eight glasses of water a day to hydrate organs so they function properly. Water also helps flush toxins and impurities from the body and is important for respiration, digestion, metabolism, body temperature regulation and excretion.

Books to Read

- Bijlefeld, Marjolijn, & Sharon K. Zoumbaris, [Food And You: A Guide to Healthy Habits for Teens.](#) Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001.
- Turk, Mary, [Healthy Eating for Weight Management \(Nutrition and Fitness for Teens\).](#) Lifematters Press, 2001.

Other Websites

- [Nutrition.gov](#)
- [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#)

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In the U.S. four out of ten girls become pregnant at least once before the age of twenty. Abstinence is the only way to be certain not to get pregnant or cause pregnancy. If you are going to be sexually active, many forms of contraceptives are available to help reduce the risk of becoming pregnant.

Condoms should always be used in addition to any other form of birth control. Do not use oil-based lubricants with latex condoms because the lubricant will break down or weaken the condom. Female condoms are also available but should not be used in combination with male condoms.

The Pill is an oral contraceptive. It contains either progestin and estrogen (combined oral contraceptive) or progestin

only. Combined pills work by suppressing ovulation. If no egg is released you can't get pregnant. The pill can also prevent against pelvic inflammatory disease, ovarian cancer, and endometrial cancer. Side effects include nausea, headache, breast tenderness, weight gain, irregular bleeding and depression. Progestin-only pills reduce and thicken the cervical mucous to prevent sperm from reaching the egg, and keep the uterine lining thick to prevent implantation of a fertilized egg. Progestin- only pills are good if you can't take estrogen because of headaches or high blood pressure problems. Injectable Progestin is also available from your health care provider. One injection is good for three months.

The Sponge provides protection when inserted into the vaginal cavity several hours before intercourse. It releases spermicidal gel over the vaginal mucus and forms a barrier to kill sperm before they reach the cervix and enter the uterus. The

sponge can be left in place up to twelve hours after sex and is effective for multiple intercoursures during this time.

Vaginal Spermicides are available over the counter. They come in the form of cream, jelly, foam, film, or tablets and contain a chemical which kills sperm. It is important to follow the directions exactly in order for spermicides to be effective. Allow the spermicide to remain in the vagina for six to eight hours after intercourse to make sure all sperm are killed.

Hotline

- Teen Pregnancy Hotline 1-800-522-5006
- Pregnancy Hotline 1-800-848-5683
- Planned Parenthood 1-800-829-7732 (Mon. - Fri. 8:30am - 5pm)
- Crisis Pregnancy Counseling 1-800-441-2670
- Crisis Pregnancy Center 1-800-560-0717

Books to Read

- All About Birth Control. Random House Value

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Sexually Transmitted Diseases are infections that are transferred from person to person through sexual contact. Most are treatable, but many have no cure. STDs can be uncomfortable, lead to pregnancy complications or even death. Two thirds of all STDs occur in people under the age of twenty-five. Condoms can prevent some, but not all STDs. The only way to ensure prevention of STDs is abstinence. Even kissing can result in the transmission of some STDs such as syphilis and herpes. Many times a person who has been infected has no symptoms. If you are sexually active you should be tested regularly for STDs, and should consistently use a condom during sexual activity.

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection transmitted by vaginal and anal sex. 75% of

infected women and 25% of infected men are asymptomatic. If Chlamydia is diagnosed it can be treated with antibiotics. Symptoms include lower abdominal pain and burning during urination. Condoms only reduce the risk of transmission. The only way to prevent infection is not to have intercourse with an infected person.

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is a viral infection transmitted by vaginal, anal, and oral sex. The virus causes cauliflower-like warts on and inside of the genitals, anus, and throat. There is no cure for HPV, although freezing, laser therapy, and surgery can suppress the warts. HPV can cause cervical cancer in women. Condoms provide almost no protection against HPV. Abstinence is the only way to prevent infection.

Syphilis is a bacterial infection transmitted by vaginal sex, anal sex, oral sex, and contact between broken skin and syphilis rashes. Symptoms include painless sores on the genitals, fever, sore throat,

hair loss, and swollen glands. Syphilis can be cured by penicillin, but any damage done prior to treatment is irreversible. Damage to the heart, brain, eyes, nervous system, bones, and joints can be the result of syphilis. Abstinence is the only way to prevent transmission.

Trichomoniasis is a bacterial infection spread by vaginal, anal, and oral sex. Symptoms include foamy, yellow-green vaginal discharge, and difficulty or pain during urination or intercourse. Men usually have no symptoms, but sometimes have inflammation of the urethra, glands, and foreskin. Trichomoniasis can be cured by antibacterial medication. To prevent transmission, avoid sharing towels and washcloths and abstain from sexual activities.

Gonorrhea is a bacterial infection transmitted by vaginal, anal, and oral sex. Symptoms will appear two to ten days after exposure, and include discharge or burning and itching during urination. If treated,

gonorrhoea can be cured with antibiotics.

Gonorrhoea can cause men to become sterile and women to develop pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, and chronic pelvic pain.

Abstinence is the best way to prevent transmission.

Hepatitis B is a viral infection transmitted by vaginal, anal and oral sex, sharing of needles, or receiving contaminated blood or blood products. One third of people infected have no symptoms. Fever, headache, muscle aches, fatigue, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea, dark urine, abdominal pain, and yellowing of skin are all symptoms of Hepatitis B. No cure is known, but most people recover on their own within four to eight weeks. Hepatitis B can lead to liver cancer and immune system disorders. A vaccine is available for Hepatitis B and is the best way to avoid transmission.

Genital Herpes is a viral infection spread by direct skin to skin contact. HSV-2 is spread through sexual contact and HSV-1 is

spread by nonsexual contact such as lip sores. HSV-1 can also cause genital infections if transmitted through oral sex. Symptoms include itching or burning sores and blisters in the genital areas. Genital Herpes has no cure. Anti-viral drugs exist, but only help reduce outbreaks.

Hotline

- Center for Disease Control National STD Hotline 1-877-HPV-5868
- National Sexually Transmitted Diseases Hotline 1-800-227-8922

Books to Read

- McIlhaney, Marion, SEX: What You Don't Know Can Kill You. Baker Book House 1997.
- Vitkus, Jessica, Marjorie Ingall, & Jessica Weeks, Smart Sex. Pocket Books, 1998.
- Yancey, Dianne, Stds: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You. Twenty First Century Books, 2002.

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According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide is the third leading cause of death for those ages 15 to 24. Suicidal behavior includes statements of suicidal ideas, having a plan for killing oneself, self-inflicted injuries such as cuts or burns, and reckless behavior. Suicidal people may also give away favorite possessions or inappropriately say goodbye. When a teen commits suicide, everyone is affected. Family members, friends, teammates, neighbors, and sometimes even those who didn't know the person well are united by feelings of grief, confusion, guilt - and the sense that if only they had done something differently, the suicide could have been prevented.

If someone you know is suicidal take

them seriously. Most people indicate to others that they are going to do something. Remember that suicidal behavior is a cry for help. The fact that the person is still alive means that part of them still wants to be alive. He or she is looking for a way to end the pain, not their life. Be willing to give and get help for the person sooner, not later. Listen to the person. Advice or answers are not necessary; all you have to do is listen. Most important, do not leave them alone and get them professional help.

If you are feeling suicidal call 1-800-SUICIDE or talk to a friend, family member, or someone you are close to that can get you professional help.

Hotline

- 1-800-SUICIDE (24 hour hotline)
- American Suicide Foundation 1-800-531-4477
- 1-877-SOS-TEEN (Samaritans Suburban West)
235 Walnut St. Framingham

www.samaritanofframingham.f2s.com

Books to Read

- Nelson, Richard E. Ph.D., [The Power to Prevent Suicide: A Guide for Teens Helping Teens](#). Free Spirit Publishing, 1994.
- Murphy, James M. M.D., [Coping with Teen Suicide](#), Rosen Publishing Group, September 1999.

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Relationship Violence is defined as a situation when one person in a relationship uses abusive behavior to gain power and control over the other person. The abusive behavior is usually a combination of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and economic abuse. Warning signs include extreme jealousy and possessiveness, a controlling attitude, mood swings, forced sex, and dominating personality. You may feel isolated from your friends or feel as if you are being controlled. The abuser may be sad or depressed then suddenly apologetic or romantic. He or she may tell you who to talk to, what to wear, or where you can go.

If you are in a violent relationship it is important to remind yourself that it is not your fault, and to trust your feelings

about your partner. Reach out to friends and family for help. It is suggested to keep a dated record of physical abuse, threats, and stalking behavior. Avoid being alone with your partner and vary your daily routines. Let someone know where you are going and when you plan on coming back. Most important, do not fool yourself into thinking your partner will change.

Hotline

- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE
- Massachusetts Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline 1-877-785-2020

Books to Read

- Levy, Barrie, [In Love and In Danger: A Teen's Guide to Breaking Free of Abusive Relationships](#). Seal Pr Feminist Pub, 1998.
- Rue, Nancy N. & Rudolf Steiner, [Everything You Need to Know About Abusive Relationships](#). Rosen Publishing Group,

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The goal of the 9th grade health course is to explore and learn about current health topics. The knowledge learned should be used to make informed lifestyle decisions and to understand that choices made today could and will affect future health. Risk reduction and skills to make choices are stressed in this course.

Course Outline

Unit I Introduction to the course

- Health - What does it mean to have health?

Choices we make and how this affects our health

Unit II Mental Health

- Stress Management/Time Management

- Body Image/Eating Disorders

- Depression

- Suicide

Unit III Toxic Substances/Drugs

- Medicine/Herbs
- Tobacco Products
- Alcohol
- Inhalants
- Steroids
- Stimulants and Depressants
- Illegal/Legal
- Short term/long term effects
- Strategies

Unit IV Human Sexuality/Reproductive Health

- Reproductive System
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- HIV/AIDS

- Contraception

- Sexual Orientation/Gender Respect

- Abstinence/Postponement

- Strategies

Unit V Violence Prevention/Conflict

Resolution

- Self-respect/Identity

- Anger/Anger Management

- Harassment

- Violence

- Abuse

- Dating Violence

- Strategies

- Communication

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Mrs. Brandt

Mrs. DelDotto

Mr. Ruggles

Mr. Shilalie

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- Herek, Gregory M. Ph.D., Sexual Orientation: Science, Education, & Policy,
<http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/> (May 19, 2002)
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- Project One Ideas
- Project One Evaluation Form
- Project Two
- Project Two Evaluation Form

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