

October [2021]

The Handout

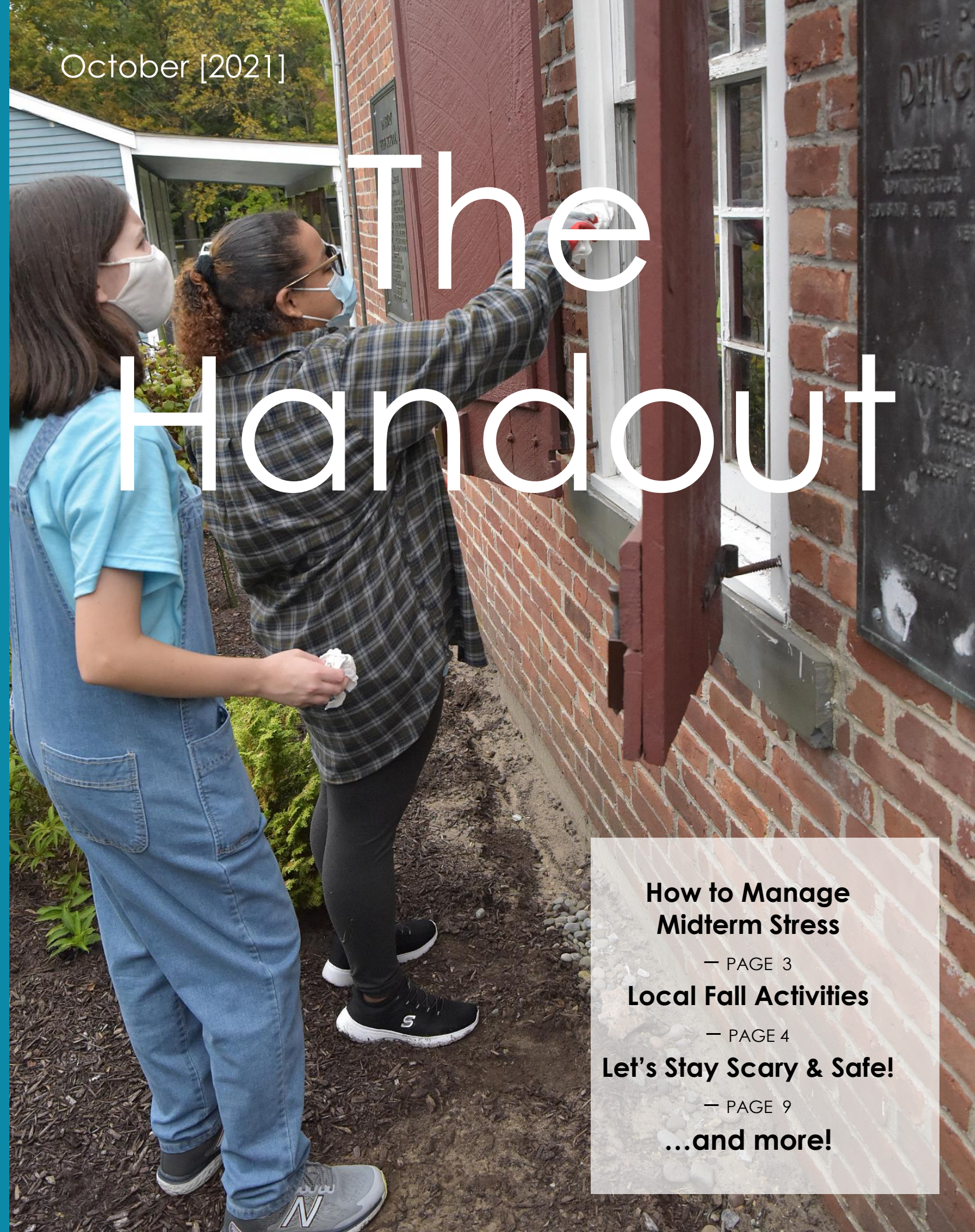


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Danbury Museum – One-room Schoolhouse team

**How to Manage
Midterm Stress**

— PAGE 3

Local Fall Activities

— PAGE 4

Let's Stay Scary & Safe!

— PAGE 9

...and more!



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How to Manage Midterm Stress

Local Fall Activities

Breast Cancer Awareness

**Down Syndrome
Awareness Month**

**Relieving Stress After Midterms:
How & Why You should Do It!**

Let's Stay Scary & Safe!

► Our Staff

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How To Manage Midterm Stress



by
Finan Deakin
Pinney ARM

Midterms are right around the corner! This time of year can be very stressful for students, new or returning. It is important to take a deep breath and focus on what needs to get done. Below are tips and tricks to help you stay focused and reduce stress during this time.

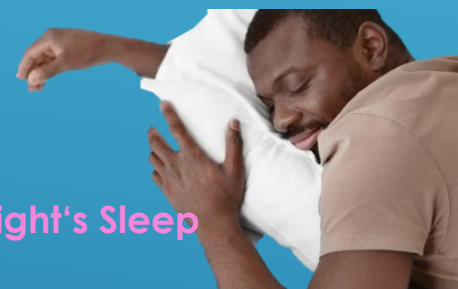
Time Management

Time management is extremely important when it comes to midterms. Having to study for multiple

exams occurring in the same week can cause a lot of stress for students. Before beginning to study, look at your schedule and come up with a plan to manage your time correctly. You should create a schedule that puts aside time every day to study for each test. By doing this, you will be less stressed the night before and you will be reviewing the information already learned.

Eat Right

The next tip is to eat right. Studies show that a healthy diet can reduce the amount of stress on the body. Fueling your body correctly will increase energy and make you feel ready for your exams. Some foods that help reduce stress and increase mental alertness are: dark chocolate, yogurt, eggs, and comfort foods. Lastly, make sure you stay hydrated. Drinking water helps regulate cortisol levels; therefore it helps the body reduce stress. This tip will also help your body stay healthy, which is important when you have so much on your plate and do not have time to be sick.



Get a Good Night's Sleep

During such a stressful, busy week, students often stay up all night studying for exams. Although you might think that you are studying for longer, your body will not remember the information unless it is properly rested. Sleep helps store the information into your memory for longer. When the midterm week arrives, make sure to get between 7 to 8 hours of sleep. This will allow your body and mind to feel awake and alert when it is time

for each test. Being properly rested will also help you stay focused. So, when the time comes to study, your attention will be on that which will allow you to take in more information at once.

Speak to Someone



If you find yourself stressing about the arrival of midterms, reach out to someone. Whether it be a classmate, teacher, or the ARMs in your building, asking questions will help reduce stress. You might think you are the only one struggling and feeling this way but you're not! Stress during midterms is a common thing. Classmates and teachers might be able to provide you more information about the tests that will lower your stress levels and help settle your mind. The ARMs in your building can help provide tips and direct you to others that can also provide support. For example, the writing center, math clinic, and tutoring center are all resources they can direct you to for help. Take advantage of these resources and never be afraid to ask for help, that is what people are here for!



Domestic Violence Awareness Month

IT'S STILL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

They don't have to hit you, choke you, or slam your head into a wall in order for it to be domestic violence.

They can degrade you, humiliate you, blame you, scream at you, lie to you, cheat on you, and withhold finances, or even just try to control you +
It is still domestic violence.

Simple.

Local Fall Activities

by **Gracie Johnson**, Centennial ARM

Do you find yourself bored on these long fall weekends? Are you looking for something fun to do with friends? Look no further! This article includes a handful of local and fun activities to do during this spectacular fall season. From apple picking to hiking along the water, whether you are by yourself or with a group of friends, there is something here for everyone!

Blue Jay Orchards

Blue Jay Orchards is a great place to spend a beautiful fall day at and is located only 15 minutes away in Bethel, CT! Between apple picking, a pumpkin patch, a farmer's market, and a bakery – you won't get bored! Blue Jay Orchards is also home to their famous (and delicious) apple cider donuts - go try one today!



Nightmare Circus

Looking for something to do on Halloween night? If you are in the mood for a good scare, go check out the FREE Nightmare Circus haunted house located in Mahopac, NY - just a 30 minute drive from Danbury. The haunted clown themed "circus" will be open for group walkthroughs on Halloween Eve and Halloween night. Beware of the optical illusions and maniac clowns!

Paproski Castle Hill Farm

Located in Newtown CT, Paproski Castle Hill Farm features a corn maze, a pumpkin patch, and a 20-acre Christmas tree farm that can be used for hiking. The farm also offers fun activities such as hayrides and a sunflower stroll, as well as hosting birthday parties, field trips, weddings, and other various special events. The farm is open on Saturdays and Sundays, 10-5, through November 7th.

Tarrywile Park and Mansion

Located right here in Danbury, CT, Tarrywile Park and Mansion contains 722 acres of stunning hiking trails, gardens, ponds, and picnic areas. The majestic mansion on site is used for special events such as weddings and political functions. It is a great place to go for a walk, go for a hike, or just relax and have a picnic with friends. There is much to be explored in this hidden gem of Danbury!

(Local Fall Activities Cont. from pg. 4)

Ferris Acres Creamery

This local, sweet treat destination is right around the corner in Newtown, CT! Located on a family-owned farm, this creamery holds a lot of history and agriculture. The creamery offers an abundance of yummy flavors to choose from, such as coconut chocolate chunk and blueberry cheesecake. Get your delicious ice cream soon, as they close for the season on October 30th!

Danbury Railway Museum

In the heart of Danbury lies the railway museum that contains a fully restored train station, along with historical artifacts and a research library. Special exhibits also include a pumpkin patch, an Uncle Sam statue, and various stations. The museum and rail yard is open every weekend April through December. The Danbury Railway Museum also hosts special train events for holidays such as Easter and Christmas! If you are inclined to check out this wonderful exhibit, or are just fascinated with trains, tickets are available to purchase at danburyrail.org!



BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

by Gabriella DeMaro,
Grasso ARM

1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and during this time people rally support for those who are fighting the disease or have in the past. Spreading awareness about the signs of breast cancer and the disease itself can help those who have the disease discover it early. Those who are diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer have a five-year survival rate of 90%, whereas those in stage 4 only have a five-year survival rate of 20%. The earlier we catch the signs, the more treatable the disease.

My hometown in particular made Breast Cancer Awareness Month incredibly significant. Each year we put banners up to remember those in the area who have passed away due to breast cancer. We have a 5k race that raises thousands of dollars for families in need. We have a whole store dedicated to selling breast cancer awareness merch with the slogan "Seymour pink" written across it. So far, my small hometown has raised over 3 million dollars for research, support for families, and for spreading awareness.

Myths debunked

1. Only women can get breast cancer. This is false. While it's more common for

women to get the disease, around 2,000 men each year are diagnosed. Unfortunately, men have high mortality rates for breast cancer, mostly because there isn't enough awareness for men in particular.

2. If you find a lump in your breast, you have breast cancer. Also false. We've all been there, googling symptoms on WebMD to see if we have a chronic disease. A small percentage of lumps turn out to be cancerous. However, if you notice the lump has gotten bigger or has changed significantly, you should get a breast exam done.

3. If you have certain genes (such as BRCA) or have had family members with breast cancer, you will get breast cancer. False. While those who have the dangerous BRCA gene are five times more likely to develop cancer, not all people who have breast cancer have this gene and not all who have this gene develop breast cancer. Going to the doctor to find out how likely you are to get it will help you take proactive measures. Those with high likelihoods will often get hormonal treatments or mastectomies to prevent it.

Continued on next page

WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR BREAST CANCER RISK



Measures you should take

Breast Exams: Adults of all ages are encouraged to check their breasts at least once a month. It's easiest to do while in the shower or in front of a mirror. You should use light, medium, and firm pressure to feel around for any lumps, knots, or other changes to your breasts.

Mammograms: Mammograms are X-rays that can detect lumps before they form on the surface. Women under 40 typically don't need a mammogram unless they are genetically predisposed or have symptoms. However, it's a good idea to schedule yourself for one if you're worried you may have risk factors.

Know the signs

- Nipple tenderness
- Lump
- Change in skin texture or enlargement of pores near breasts

- Dimpling of breast
- Inverted nipple
- Unexplained swelling
- Nipple Discharge

Ways to get involved

1. Attend a community sponsored event to raise money (such as a 5k race or bake sale).
2. Wear pink! The pink ribbon is the symbol for breast cancer and wearing pink in general could help you show your support for those struggling with the disease.
3. Share facts and statistics on your social media accounts! You could get a lot of valuable information from a lot of people. Use

your platform.

4. Donate to research. While it's getting easier to treat most cancers it doesn't mean the fight to find a cure is done.

Local Danbury Breast cancer events

Ann's Place is hosting its first annual "Boob camp" to fundraise for breast cancer on October 16th from 11am-1pm. It's a free event that includes a fitness class and raffles. Proceeds will go to families in need.

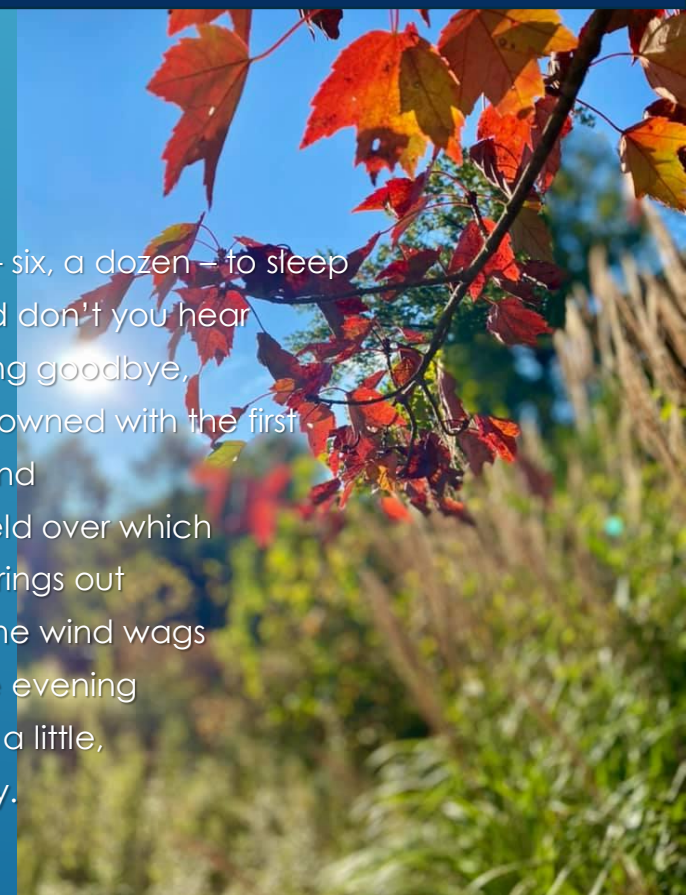
A virtual walk hosted by Susan G Komen is happening on October 23rd. You could register with a team, or as an individual. The best part is you get to pick where you go.

Song for Autumn

by Mary Oliver

Don't you imagine the leaves dream now
how comfortable it will be to touch
the earth instead of the
nothingness of the air and the endless
freshets of wind? And don't you think
the trees, especially those with
mossy hollows, are beginning to look for

the fires that will come – six, a dozen – to sleep
inside their bodies? And don't you hear
the goldenrod whispering goodbye,
the everlasting being crowned with the first
tuffets of snow? The pond
stiffens and the white field over which
the fox runs so quickly brings out
its long blue shadows. The wind wags
its many tails. And in the evening
the piled firewood shifts a little,
Longing to be on its way.



DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH

by **Lindsay Larisa**, Pinney ARM

Welcome to October! October is a month that is celebrated for many different reasons. Some of the more common ones are breast cancer awareness month and domestic violence awareness month. I wanted to touch base on an awareness month that isn't always a major topic. Down Syndrome Awareness Month takes place in October.

Down syndrome is when the genetic makeup of an individual is changed, adding an extra chromosome because of abnormal cell division. Approximately 6,000 babies are born each year with down syndrome. In high school I worked alongside the down syndrome unit within our school. I had the pleasure of working with 5 down syndrome kids. They all had their own personalities and outlook on life.

I want to talk about one of them specifically, His name was Anthony, he

was 16 and had a part time job at our local grocery store, played on the special Olympics basketball team, and was involved in a few clubs on campus, including managing our football team. Anthony was born with a disability, but he didn't let that get in the way of obtaining the things he wanted in life. He was driven, and constantly brought smiles to everyone he surrounded himself with.

A few things about down syndrome. Individuals with down syndrome do not like to be referred to by these names: "Downs Child", "Down syndrome person", or "Retarded," but would rather be referred to as recognizing that they are a person before their disability. Referring to the individual as a "person with down syndrome" is much better and what is preferred.

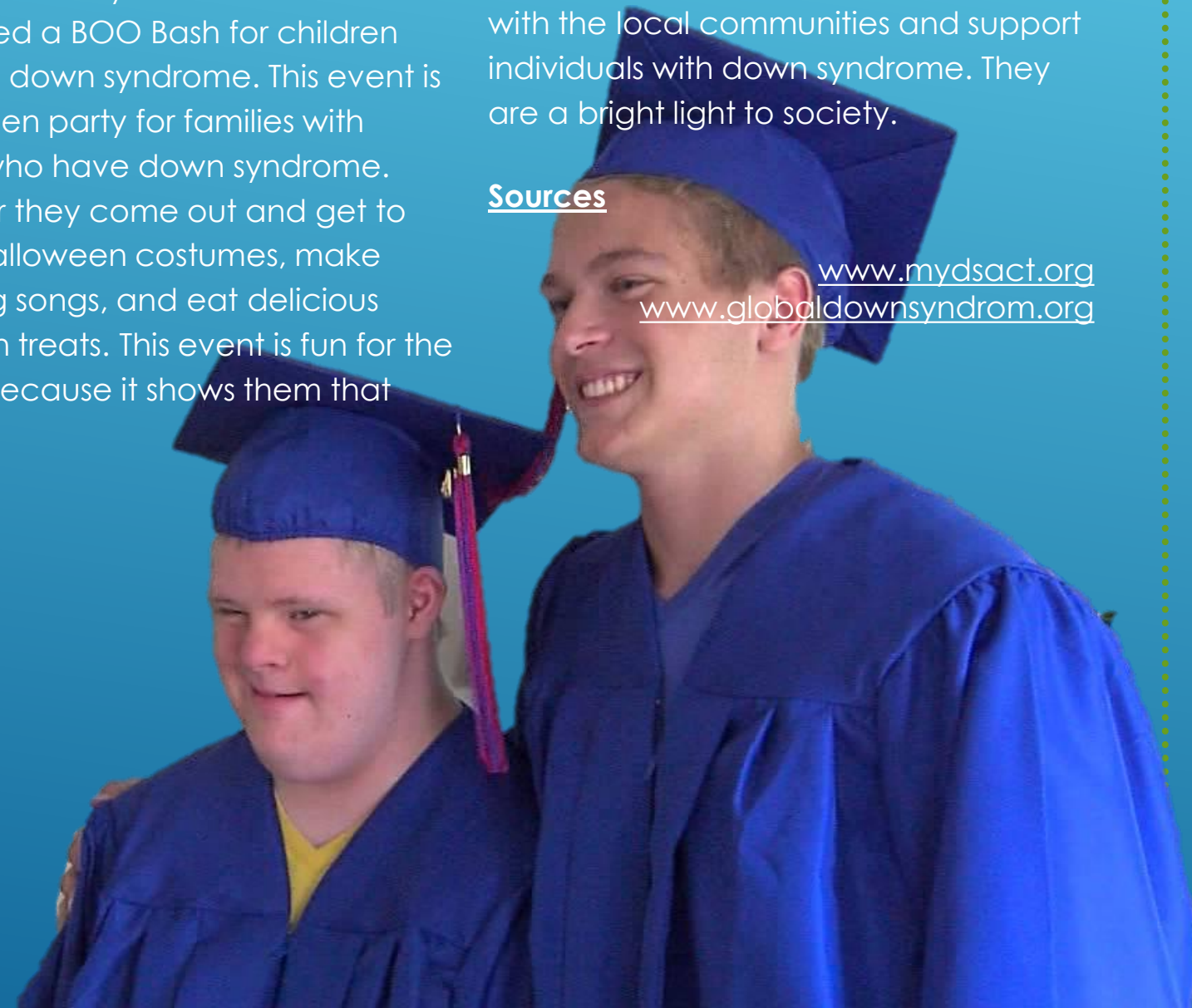
In 2018 a young girl from Danbury High school named Olivia Alessandro started a hot line for the siblings of the children who had been diagnosed with down syndrome. The hotline is called "Siblings First Call" and is designed for any sibling who has questions. This is a nationwide hotline, but it was originated right here in Danbury. It offers support to anyone who has a family member with down syndrome. The hotline's number is (888)-486-8573.

Annually, Danbury has a Halloween party called a BOO Bash for children who have down syndrome. This event is a Halloween party for families with children who have down syndrome. Every year they come out and get to dress in Halloween costumes, make crafts, sing songs, and eat delicious Halloween treats. This event is fun for the children because it shows them that

there are other people in this world living with the same condition as they, while also offering a support group for the parents, giving them a chance to mingle and offer support for each other. If you are interested in a support group or volunteering with children with down syndrome, Fairfield county has a support group based right out of Danbury. The email is 21strong@mydsact.com and their website is www.21strong.org. With it being Down Syndrome Awareness Month, I encourage you to get involved with the local communities and support individuals with down syndrome. They are a bright light to society.

Sources

www.mydsact.org
www.globaldownsyndrom.org



RELIEVING STRESS AFTER MIDTERMS:

HOW AND WHY YOU SHOULD DO IT

by **Lizzie Hinds,**
Litchfield/Newbury ARM

In only a few weeks, midterm grades will be due to the Registrar's Office here at WCSU. For all of the university's students, this will mean that the first exam season of the academic year will be over! After studying, preparing, and completing various exams, there are many ways the academic mind can respond to the end of exams. First, there may be a large release that brings satisfaction and the calm after the storm. If that is your response, great! But, there may also be difficulty in releasing the stress that students carry around for weeks as midterms are underway. Once an understanding is gained about how either of these responses are formed, students will collectively be able to reduce their stress and feel the real pride of completing their first, or another, round of college exams.

Why am I Still Stressed?

Feeling continued stress after exams isn't uncommon. The body carries that stress around for weeks, and can't simply release it immediately. For first-year students, this stress can be carried longer because fall midterms mark the beginning of GPA calculations. For others, it may be anticipation of what is next in each course. Regardless of the source of continued stress, it is important to recognize that it isn't anything a student or peer did wrong. The body can be naturally inclined to cling on to stress, but it can always be reduced!

How Do I Begin Relieving Stress?

Don't Focus on Grades

First and foremost, don't obsess over your grades. As professors share grades, or they become visible on BannerWeb, it is natural to feel anxious about the outcome. For first year students this can be overwhelming, but it is essential to remember that there is still another half of a semester to boost whichever grades might not meet expectations. To help alleviate the pressure after grades are viewable, take a break from BlackBoard and BannerWeb. Don't be checking every hour unless it is for a new assignment. Stay focused on work, yes, but not grades. Scores can be somewhat indicative of current academic standing, but are not the ultimate representation of academic performance. They can always be brought up, they can always be maintained.

Get Some Sleep

College exams have become prime time for stereotypical all-nighters. Whether students fall into that habit or not, exams take a toll on energy levels in both mental and physical ways. After that last exam is completed, get a good night of sleep. With rest comes clear thinking, and students will be more likely to be proud of completing the midterm season than nervous about what's next. If all-nighters had become a habit, the body will be in more genuine need of serious sleep. Treat your body

to adequate rest and it will naturally assist in reducing stress.

Enjoy a Pastime

TikTok and Netflix don't quite count, although they can absolutely be great for calming down later on. However, board games, books, crafts, and sports are all great activities for relieving stress. Immersing oneself in an enjoyable hobby boosts mood, calms the mind, and maintains the release of stress some feel after exams end. This may also be a great time to endeavor to try something new! Try learning a new instrument, a different sport, or a new art like photography. Do something that's not academic, and directly you. Save the TikTok scrolling and Netflix binging for a little later.

Embrace the Pride

Whether midterms went swimmingly or felt more like drowning, they're over! Embrace and encourage the pride of simply making it through! The mind is the most powerful tool, so feeding it with positive emotions is both essential and beneficial. No one will ever say exams are entirely easy, but they were conquered nonetheless. Help will come, concerns will be addressed, and grades will change. Celebrate the fact that it's over and know that people are proud of you!



Let's Stay Scary and Safe!

by Vivian Pereira, Centennial ARM



October 31st is a day where people dress up in costumes. They will participate in activities such as trick-or-treating, Halloween parties, watching or telling stories with horror, and going to areas that are decorated for this holiday.

Overall, it is a holiday some are excited to enjoy with their friends and family. But most of the time the activities for this holiday are occurring late at night and outdoors, so it is important for students and anyone celebrating this holiday to keep in mind to be safe.

Tips to keep in mind:

During the whole month of October (but especially around Halloween), while driving, keep all attention on the road. More kids are likely to be on the road later than usual. With dimmed lights on the roads and a lot of distractions for decorations, it is key to pay attention to everything while driving. Make sure while entering or leaving a driveway to be careful, especially looking for children walking in dark clothing. During Halloween, children are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car and killed. So, keep in mind to stay focused on the road and

your surroundings.

Something else to think about is costume safety. When choosing a costume, a lot of people don't check for the label that states "flame-resistant." This is something to look into, especially with the number of jack-o-lanterns, candles, and decorations that can start a fire. Also, approximately 800 house fires per year are caused by Halloween decorations. Getting hurt by a flame can be prevented by checking the label on your costume and also knowing where the fire extinguisher is.

- For a fun and safe night, carry a light with you at all times to ensure your safety in the dark.
- Charge your phone to make sure that in case of emergency there is a way to contact others and that the volume is turned up so that any calls can be heard.
- Make sure when going out that there is a buddy system. There will be a lot of people with similar costumes and many areas of distractions where people can be separated. If going to a party, make sure to have a plan to arrive and leave together. Also, throughout the night make sure to check up on the

friend you came with.

- Test all makeup before using it to make sure it's safe and doesn't irritate the face.
- Opt out of masks and go with nontoxic makeup because masks can obscure vision, especially at night.

When the night is over, here are some tips for safe consumption of the treats you received:

- Don't eat candy until it's been carefully searched through.
- Eat a snack before starting the festivities so it limits the temptation of wanting to consume the un-inspected treats.
- In case of a food allergy, always check the label of the food.
- Also don't forget to wear a Covid mask this year, as there will be many people you might not know around you!

P.S. Have a spooky night and be safe!

WHEN WALKING

CROSS THE STREET AT CORNERS

USE TRAFFIC SIGNALS AND CROSSWALKS

LOOK LEFT, RIGHT, AND THEN LEFT AGAIN BEFORE YOU CROSS

PUT YOUR PHONE DOWN AND HEAD UP WHEN CROSSING

HAVE CHILDREN LEARN TO MAKE EYE CONTACT WITH DRIVERS BEFORE CROSSING IN FRONT OF THEM

WALK ON SIDEWALKS, NOT THE STREET

KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR CARS THAT ARE TURNING OR BACKING UP

WHEN DRIVING

DRIVE SLOWLY AND STAY ALERT

TAKE TIME TO LOOK FOR CHILDREN AT INTERSECTIONS, MEDIANS AND CURBS

BACK YOUR VEHICLE UP SLOWLY AND TRIPLE CHECK TO MAKE SURE NO ONE IS AROUND

ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

AROUND THE HOURS OF 5:30 TO 9:30 THERE WILL BE A LOT OF CHILDREN OUT. DRIVE EXTRA CAREFUL AT THESE HOURS

STOP FOR ALL CHILDREN AND ALLOW THEM TO CROSS IN FRONT OF YOU TO ELIMINATE THE RISK OF THEM DARTING OUT



Thanksgiving Break is coming right up. Applications to stay on campus for the break will be online after November 1.

Spring Room Assignments:

Are you planning to change rooms for the spring?
If you're staying in your same room, there's nothing more you need to do.

- If you ARE planning to switch rooms/buildings, you will need to complete a **Fall to Spring Room Change** form on the Housing Portal. These will be available on the Portal beginning Monday, October 18th in the late afternoon. When you complete this form, you are relinquishing your assignment to this room, and it will be available to others to select when that process begins.
- If you are changing rooms and completed the form, you'll receive an **email** on October 22nd, giving you a specific time frame to participate and select your spring room. (Please remember – if you're changing rooms, you'll need to completely move-out of your current room at the semester break, and move into your new room in January when school begins again.
- If you are not planning to return to WCSU, you must complete the appropriate paperwork for withdrawal at the Registrar's office, as well as completing and submitting a **Housing Contract Cancellation Request** form (<https://www.wcsu.edu/housing/forms/contract-cancellation/>) Please remember that your housing contract is an academic year-long contract, and there are no guarantees that you will be released from your obligations.

Just a reminder that the

Housing & Residence Life Offices

are in Pinney Hall, suites C21 and C24.

Please give us a call to schedule an appointment to see us!



Want to know more about campus resources and other advice to improve your academic life? You can check it all out on Gab & GROW, a podcast you can find here: www.wcsu.edu/houaing/gab-grow/



About *The Handout*

The Handout is a product of the Department of Housing & Residence Life at Western Connecticut State University. There are 6 editions each year, 3 in the fall semester and 3 in the spring semester.

The ideas for and execution of the articles are the work of the Academic Resource Mentors, or ARMs, who provide academic coaching and resource referral to all members of the WCSU residence community.