

## Wellness Department adds more programs to curriculum

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FAIRHAVEN—Wellness became more important throughout the district, with many new programs in the district schools.

The **Peacebuilders** program, a research-validated violence prevention youth program, started last year at the elementary school level in Rogers and East Fairhaven Schools, and it began at Wood Elementary School this year. This program is grant funded and approved for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act.

"It is a comprehensive program launched in organizations that shifts the entire climate to a peaceful, productive and safe place for children, parents, staff and faculty," said Jen Polochick, head of the Wellness Department in Fairhaven.

Also at the elementary level, students participated in the Jump Rope for Heart Program in their Physical Education classes. This program was a fund-raiser sponsored by the American Heart Association and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD), through which students jumped rope while raising money for research on heart and stroke. Students got donations from friends and family, and, in return, they received thank-you gifts based on the amount of money they raised.

"This educational program teaches physical fitness and promotes the value of community service to students and their families," said Polochick.

In the middle school level, students participated in the Second Step Violence Prevention Program, which taught essential life skills, such as empathy, emotion management, problem solving, and cooperation. The program integrated social and emotional learning with academics. It taught prevention of substance abuse, bullying, and violence; and communication, problem solving, decision making, and goal setting.

At the high school level, freshmen in Core Health participated in the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens program, based on a national bestseller by Sean Covey. This applies the issues and life-changing decisions faced by teens.

"This ultimate teenage success book provides a step-by-step guide to help teens improve their self-image, build friendships, resist peer pressure, achieve goals, get along with parents and more," said Polochick.

Polochick felt that one quote in particular from Sean Covey's website sums up what the Wellness Department at Fairhaven High School believes.

"What does education mean? Is it simply the development of skills, such as language reading or math?

Or is it something more? Successful educators today recognize that knowledge and skills are not enough, the true education transcends the traditional '3R's'. While a baseline of knowledge and skills is critical, it is the balancing effect of character and values that gives students the right context for applying those skills effectively in the 21st century."