



**Dover-Sherborn  
Challenge Success Newsletter  
Volume VI, December 2017  
Theme: Stress & Anxiety**

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**Message from Andrew Keough, DS Superintendent**

*Dear Parents and Guardians,*

*This morning, as I traveled roads that I know will soon be slick with ice and pondered how I would possibly get through my day's agenda, I was reminded of a powerful learning experience that I have shared with staff and students in the past when they report feeling overwhelmed. I would like to share this with you as well as we head into the home stretch of the holiday season.*

*As a young man, I learned to ski in New England. I am sure it was not pretty watching my 6'4" frame barreling down hills, wildly out of control! To make matters worse, in the northeast we have ice to contend with as well as steep hills and extreme weather. I remember my friends telling me, not to try turning on ice because it almost always results in a fall. Sadly though, I had to learn the hard way and often found myself heading down these treacherous patches on my behind. It was always embarrassing, painful, and incredibly frustrating because all the other skiers seemed to go right over the stretches without incident and I always seemed to fall. Finally, after countless spills, my friend (whom I now consider a savior!) explained that I should just steer straight on ice, even if I picked up speed, until I got to the other side where there would invariably be soft, fluffy snow to turn on and regain control. I remember saying, "But I am afraid I will lose control, because I pick up so much speed." He said, "Don't worry, you will feel out of control for a stretch, but you'll regain it at the end, and most importantly you won't be sliding down the mountain on your butt (or something to that effect!)" I took his advice and he was absolutely right. Skiing on the treacherous New England ice was never an issue for me again and skiing became a favorite sport.*

*This same analogy holds true for our lives when things are particularly difficult or hectic. Rather than take drastic action, we would be wise to "stay the course" even though the challenges of our lives seem to be picking up speed and getting out of control. We should seek to steer straight and wait patiently for the arrival of "fluff" at the other side, when we can finally slow down and regain command. At this time of year many of us, including our children, find ourselves careening down a nasty stretch of ice. But we know it will not go on forever. If we can just hang in there, the soft, fluffy snow of easier times will soon arrive!*

*I hope your ice patches are small and soft snow abounds in your life as we head into 2018.  
Best wishes for a happy and peaceful holiday season!*

*Sincerely,  
Andrew*

## Message from Challenge Success National

At Challenge Success, we sometimes get the question "Can't some forms of stress be okay, or even helpful for students?" Absolutely. Stress - like most things - operates on a continuum, and can take both positive and negative forms. At Challenge Success, we work to decrease the unhealthy forms of stress, so that students can thrive as learners and contribute to their schools and communities.

Read more here: <http://www.challengesuccess.org/blog/stress-not-distress/>

## Upcoming Challenge Success Events

### Parent Education Series

#### National Parenting Expert Lynn Lyons, LICSW "Raising Courageous and Independent Children: How to Break the Worry Cycle"

WHEN: Wednesday, February 7th, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

WHERE: Mudge Auditorium, DSHS

*Everyone worries and feels anxious at times. It's a normal part of growing, changing and learning. While some anxiety is appropriate and typical, too much can feel unmanageable and overwhelming. These feelings can compromise a child's ability to learn and to function optimally. Left unaddressed, this anxiety often leads to depression in young adulthood. Anxiety is now the most common mental health challenge that young people face, and it's the top reason that students seek mental health services at college today.*



This workshop teaches the seven concrete strategies that normalize worry and help families to respond and react to stress and anxiety in a more productive way. Lynn will talk with parents about the positive role they can play in problem solving, embracing discomfort and fostering emotional management as we seek to raise resilient children.

Lynn Lyons, LICSW is a psychotherapist based in Concord, NH who specializes in the treatment of anxious children and their families. She is the co-author of "Anxious Kids, Anxious Parents: 7 Ways to Stop the Worry Cycle and Raise Courageous and Independent Children". A charismatic and practical presenter, Lynn Lyons is regularly featured in the media. Recently Lynn has been tapped as a national expert on student anxiety in Time Magazine, Psychology Today, The New York Times Magazine, and OnPoint with Tom Ashbrook (NPR).

More information can be found at [www.lynnlyonsnh.com](http://www.lynnlyonsnh.com).

**For Elementary School Parents:**  
**Rick Irving to Offer Workshop on "Giving Your Child the Gift of Confidence, Resilience and Competence"**

WHEN: Thursday, January 18, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

WHERE: Chickering School Library

Chickering elementary school is pleased to welcome back the very popular Rick Irving, LICSW, for this informative, practical, hands on workshop which will cover theory and practice relating to the development of confidence and resilience in our young children. Rick will focus on specific approaches, techniques and language you can use as you teach and work with your child on how to be more resilient when dealing with life's difficulties, whether on the playground, in the classroom, on the ball field or at home. Please bring questions and scenarios to discuss. ***All Dover and Sherborn elementary parents are welcome to attend!***

Rick Irving, LICSW, is a clinical social worker with almost 40 years experience working with children, families and schools. In addition to his private practice in Winchester, MA, where he works directly with children and families, Rick is a popular workshop presenter for parenting groups throughout New England. More information can be found at [www.rickirvingmsw.com](http://www.rickirvingmsw.com).

## Highlights of Recent Challenge Success Activity at DS

### **Giving Our Students A Voice: Challenge Success Student Advisory Group Interviews DS Students and Creates an Instagram Account**

*The DSHS Challenge Success Student Advisory Group has created an Instagram account to increase student voices in the school. The account is run by members of the group and posts videos and pictures about what **success** means to students in the community. Students are encouraged to submit any picture or video that they think would help create a less stressful environment at DS. To find the account, search @ds\_challengesuccess on Instagram - more video posts to come after the winter break!*

Jeb Shue, Challenge Success Student Representative

### **New to H Block at DSMS: Music Therapy!**

*The Middle School **Music Lab 203** is a place to explore music. All DSMS students during their Quarter General Music Classes take Piano and Guitar in 6th Grade, the Blues in 7th and Pop Bands in 8th. But this year, a new Challenge Success initiative is offered to students every H-Block - allowing them to come and explore what the room has to offer. Students come to the room to try out all instruments, including the electronic drum sets, keyboards, and guitars - or choose to sit in a circle and sing, play and decompress. They also use the opportunity to practice their instrument, compose music or rehearse with members of their band. We are thrilled to be able to offer this time and space for our middle school students to play and explore music - how exciting it is to see 10-25 students in **Music Lab 203** during H-Block daily, buzzing with end of the day energy!*

Tom Duprey, DSMS Music Teacher

### **John O'Sullivan of Changing the Game Project**

On November 16th, the Dover-Sherborn community hosted John O'Sullivan, Founder and CEO of Changing the Game Project. John spoke to 400+ student-athletes at Dover-Sherborn High School after school, followed by a presentation to the DS High School and Youth coaches. He then addressed over 125 parents and guardians in an evening presentation entitled "Creating an Athlete-Centered Environment in Youth Sports".

Click [HERE](#) to read the online Dover-Sherborn Press article covering this event.

If you missed John's presentations, there will be videotapes available - stay tuned for details. As a followup to this event, the **Challenge Success Discussion Group** met on December 7th to discuss George Mumford's book [The Mindful Athlete](#). Click [HERE](#) for a handout on 3 Basic Steps for Meditation, as well as useful links to other Mindfulness Resources, including apps, articles and books.

### **DSMS and DSHS Teacher/Parent Forums**

In early November, CS held Teacher/Parent Forums in private homes for both middle school and high school. New this year was the addition of student voices in the middle school forum, which was very well received. Many thanks to the hosts, facilitators, teachers and high school students - as well as all the parents who participated. We will hold these forums again in March of 2018, so stay tuned for dates in future correspondence from Challenge Success.

## **Good Reads, Podcast & Tips**

### **Articles**

["All Stress Is Not Distress"](#), from the Challenge Success National Blog, October 11, 2017

["Why are More American Teenagers Than Ever Suffering from Severe Anxiety?"](#), New York Times Magazine Cover Story from October 10th, 2017.

*Note: This is a very real and moving piece about how anxiety is infiltrating the lives of so many teens. The encouraging news is that Challenge Success National is referenced in the article, and its message underscores the importance of the work we are doing at Dover-Sherborn.*

[A Stanford Psychologist Has a Simple Mental Exercise for Tackling Student Stress](#)

Quartz, September 7th, 2017.

### **Podcasts**

[On Point: Teen Anxiety on the Rise - On Point WBUR](#), October 18th 2017

### **Tips**

[What Parents Say Matters](#), From Denise Pope, Co-Founder of Challenge Success

*Try to remember to ask how your child is feeling about the grade, test, game, or college admissions experience. Honor his/her emotions and opinions and to try to keep the big picture in mind when having these conversations. Our kids look to us for perspective and to give meaning to experiences. We need to choose our words wisely because our children are listening.*

## Mission of Challenge Success

*The Challenge Success program is based out of Stanford University's School of Education and has worked with more than 100 schools nationwide over the past decade. Dover-Sherborn schools (K-12) launched the Challenge Success initiative in 2014. The primary goal of Challenge Success is to help students and the larger DS community create better balance in their lives by:*



- (1) reducing unhealthy pressures and demands*
- (2) promoting a broader definition of "success"*
- (3) building resilience among our students*

*The program accomplishes these outcomes by implementing proven strategies for effective change, drawing from research data as well as best practices from other schools.*

Challenge Success.... Graciously funded by DSEF and a private donation.

STAY CONNECTED to Challenge Success National ([www.challengesuccess.org](http://www.challengesuccess.org)):



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