

# Madison Messenger



Published jointly by Madison Junior High School  
and Madison Home & School Association

Visit our website at [www.ncusd203.org/madison](http://www.ncusd203.org/madison)

Nov/Dec 2002

## Home & School President Report

Dear Parents, Staff, and Students,

Have you checked out Madison's website lately? ([www.ncusd203.org/madison](http://www.ncusd203.org/madison)) The **Madison Messenger** is now online! Now you can send articles to grandparents or just print out the pages you need, saving paper and postage. Sherry Shipley has worked very hard to get the first issue published and online and it looks great! Thank you Sherry for all your hard work.

The school directories should be in your hands by the time this newsletter reaches you. Thank you to Eileen Ivers for compiling this useful document.

At our last H&S meeting, some changes were made to the way funds are disperse. We voted, as a board, to provide the teachers with a \$50 stipend for classroom start-up costs. This money will be used on items that directly

impact our students. We know it will not subsidize all of the money teachers spend out of their own pockets, but hopefully it will help.

The other change was to allow funds, which have historically been distributed in May, to be disbursed throughout the school year as needed by the teachers. This way the

children/parents who helped raise the money will benefit from their efforts, not the class after. If you have any questions regarding these two changes, please feel free to give me a call.

It's hard to believe the first trimester is behind us and the holidays are rapidly approaching. This time of year always seems to be a good time to express gratitude to those who helped make 2002 such a success.

To our administrators who bring the 'work hard-play hard' attitude to their jobs each day; to the teachers here at Madison who put in countless hours, especially during conference time, and the dedication they have to our children in helping them not only to learn but also to grow as individuals. To our support staff and aides who allow the teachers to concentrate on what is important; to our H&S board members who put in untold (and unpaid!) hours keeping the programs here running smoothly; to our parents who have been there to help whenever they are called upon; and to our students, who show up each day striving to be "the best they can be". Without all of you, Madison would be just another junior high! Thank you all!

*Enjoy your holidays,*

*Gretchen Zelinski, MJHS H&S President*

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*6th Graders Enjoy Egyptian Day*

## Message From Our Principal

### NOTEWORTHY THOUGHTS . . . From Madison Junior High

By Erin K. Anderson

"Life at Madison really isn't that hard at all . . . you just have to work at it . . ."

*anonymous sixth grade Warhawk*

What do they say? Out of the mouth of babes! Well, we all continue to learn and grow from one another and that is true for all of us here at Madison. Earlier this fall, I had the opportunity to have lunch with 24 sixth grade students. The purpose of our discussion was to learn more about how we can ease transitions from fifth to sixth grade. As I had the opportunity to meet with enthusiastic students with a positive attitude, it allowed me the chance to see Madison through a new set of eyes.

So, if success at Madison can be chalked up to good old fashioned hard work, what would it look like? As the end of the trimester comes to a close, all of the students have been working diligently on exploring new skills, concepts, and ideas. The fall athletic teams (volleyball, football and cross country) worked hard to achieve tremendous success as they learned the power of teamwork and the satisfaction of success. Our musical department has recently had the opportunity to "show off" their efforts and talents in the recent Autumn Concert series.

As one Warhawk achieves success, it enables all of us to soar and fly just a little higher. This fall our staff has

been working hard as well. We had the opportunity to have two staff members highlighted for their efforts that extend beyond the Madison community. In mid October the USA Today newspaper highlighted the nation's top twenty influential educators. Madison was proud to have Mr. Phil Lawler represent our physical education department and our school as a teacher of high quality and a role model/advocate for physical fitness for



the youth of America. Also, the Illinois State Librarian and Media Specialist Association acknowledged our very own Ms. Jackie Plourde as the *Polestar Award* winner for 2002. As the "Librarian of the Year", Ms. Plourde was recognized for many contributions not only at Madison and across District 203, but her leadership at the state level as well.

Together we are all proud of their efforts, and personally I am touched by the dedication and commitment of our staff members every day.

The energy and enthusiasm of students, staff, and parents charge the hallways of Madison with a positive attitude and encouragement everyday. Through the hard work of the autumn to the serenity of the winter, may we never shy away from a challenge, but unite in the effort. Teamwork and collaboration, teaching and learning are the postholes of success for everyone at Madison. May we all continue to remember that with a little hard work and a positive outlook, success is around the corner for everyone.

***" . . . if success at Madison  
can be chalked up to good  
old-fashioned hard work,  
what would it look like . . . "***



*More Egyptians!*

### LOOKING FOR A HOLIDAY GIFT FOR THAT SPECIAL SOMEONE

Naperville Central can help with our Spirit Wear.

Selling Dates for Central are:

Fridays, 10:30-1:30: Dec 13, Jan 10, Feb 14

Saturday, 9:30-4:00: Dec 14

Monday, 7:30: Jan 27 8th Grade Orientation

Tuesday, 7:30: Jan 28 8th Grade Orientation

ALL SALES ARE IN THE COMMONS; enter door 19

For More information at Central  
Contact Bonnie Keiner 369-1783

## MJHS Counseling Department

### 6th GRADE

students will be participating in a bully and harassment prevention program. Bullying is another name for harassment and can be physical, verbal, emotional, and/or sexual. It consists of ongoing intentional abuse by one or more students and can include the following: teasing, threats, assault, theft, sexual harassment, and social isolation (exclusion). The staff and administration at Madison know that bullying can be a serious problem and we do not tolerate it. Bullying undermines our efforts to create a positive school climate. We believe it is important to equip students with the skills they need to change the overall climate of the school. Madison has taken an active role in helping students to understand that bullying can be stopped and must be reported. It is telling not tattling!

### 7th GRADE

7th graders recently had the opportunity to participate in a three day assault prevention workshop presented by the Glen Ellyn YWCA. Students spent one class period each day and focused on the following topics: Healthy Relationships and Internet Safety, Education about Abuse, and Sexual Harassment. Students were informed of their rights and provided with insights on how to get help for a friend or oneself.

### 8th GRADE

8th grade students are taking part in discovering information about their interests, values, and work-related abilities. Students are using the **DISCOVER** computer program to help in the career planning process. Their results will be helpful in selecting high school courses at the beginning of 2003. Students will complete the inventories again as a sophomore at Central and will use this year's results as a comparison and knowledge base in helping to make decisions regarding high school classes, programs of study after high school, and possible occupations.

If you need more information regarding the above programs or have a question don't hesitate to call your child's counselor.

6th grade counselor: Pat Olinger . . . . . 420-6401

7th grade counselor: Debbie Olson . . . . . 420-6403

8th grade counselor: Lyn Walsh . . . . . 420-6542

8th grade counselor: Patti Mathewson . . . 420-6542

## Music Department

### "EXPLORING THE EXPLORATORIES"

*Music Department Musings . . .*

*by Jerry Zitko, MJHS Orchestra Director*

The Madison Music Department is in full swing with preparations for the Autumn Concerts. All of the MJHS Bands performed on November 14, 2002. The MJHS Orchestras and 7th & 8th Grade Choruses performed on November 20, 2002. The MJHS 6th Grade Chorus will give a program along with the Jazz Band and Bluegrass Strings on Tuesday, December 10, 2002 in the MJHS Cafetorium at 7:30 p.m.

On November 6th, Orchestra Viola, Cello, and Bass players participated in a workshop led by Matt Turner, one of the country's leading improvisational cellists. Mr. Turner leads the jazz studies program at Lawrence University in Appleton, WI and performs nationally. He also has several

recordings. The orchestra students worked on improvisational techniques during a morning workshop held at NCHS and in the evening five MJHS orchestra members participated in a concert given by Mr. Turner in the NNHS Auditorium. Some MJHS Orchestra mem-

bers will also be participating in a demonstration of the improvisation techniques at the Naperville Country Club for the NEF Breakfast on Dec 5th. This entire event was made possible due to a generous grant from the Naperville Education Foundation.

The Naperville Education Foundation has also funded two other special projects involving the Madison Music Department. On Tuesday, January 28, 2003 8th grade and high school choral students from MJHS, LJHS, and NCHS will participate in a Choral Festival that will be held at NCHS. A choral piece composed by Lee Kesselman, who will be the guest conductor, was commissioned for this event and will be performed as part of the festival.

The third project funded by the NEF is "Warhawks on Parade". This project is part of Madison's 25th Anniversary Celebration and encompasses the entire exploratory team. The music department has commissioned a piece to be composed by Mr. Pat Castor, former Madison parent, to be performed in the spring by band, orchestra, and chorus students.

We look forward to seeing many people in attendance at all of these upcoming events to help support our very talented music students!!!



Once again . . . Congratulations to the PE Department and the Explorers for having 100% participation on turning in their \$10.00 to the Social Committee.

Thank you      *Amber Pauli*

**ASK ERIN!** This is our second issue featuring the all **NEW!** "Ask Erin" column! **Do you have a question?**

Leave your questions at the front office. Check the next issue of Madison Messenger to see if it was answered!



## Ask Erin!

**Q:** *I want to help my daughter find success in her schoolwork, but I don't know how much I should help her each night and with projects. How do I know how much is enough, but is not too much?*

Just as students grow physically at different pace, their independence and confidence evolves at varying rates as well. Often times, it is assumed that by the middle school years children are expected to be independent and responsible. These aspects of their identity are in development just as many other areas of their personality and intellectual abilities are as well.

Parenting an adolescent is often compared to dancing. It is a give and take, sometimes fast and sometimes slow process. A suggestion, regardless of your child's independence, is to establish a foundation of interest in both short and long term learning experiences. Reviewing with your child the short term assignments each night, not only helps your child organize mentally what needs to be done, but physically what materials are needed to complete the tasks. While you may not necessarily be in tune with the specific expectations of the task or the connection to a specific classroom activity, your child will greatly benefit from the accountability of having to explain what needs to be completed.

Effective ways to support your child's success in short term assignments may be to remind your child to review the work once it has been completed. Asking your child to review the directions to see if they were attended to may help derail missed steps or incomplete work. Emphasizing the need to proof work for accuracy and thoroughness (such as whether words are spelled correctly or whether complete sentences were used) will support the need for attention to detail. And finally, simply asking your child to explain how the work that has been completed connects to the lesson in the class can ultimately allow the child to appreciate the big picture of learning as a process rather than just a final product.

Sharing long term goals and assignments can often be a daunting task. As long term projects are assigned, it can be helpful to set periodic check points or "mini due dates". Be sure to include your child in the process by asking, "If the end product is due on \_\_\_ date, what would be reasonable to have done three days before that? A week before that?" and so forth. Students often find success in setting smaller, short term goals that build toward the final project.

Our children are never immune to assistance. If a deadline isn't met or a goal not achieved, this can serve as a tremendous learning experience for the next time. Celebrating successes and learning from failures turns every experience into a winner.

## Madison Junior High To Hold Hoops For Heart Event



MJHS students are taking shots at heart disease and stroke – our nation's No. 1 and No. 3 killers. On Friday, Dec. 20th, Madison will hold its 2nd annual *Hoops for Heart*, participating in basketball activities to raise funds for the American Heart Association. These funds help support cardiovascular research and educational programs. *Hoops for Heart* is co-sponsored by the American Heart Association and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. *Hoops for Heart* is a great way to get the Madison community involved in this lifesaving effort and make them aware of the importance of exercise for maintaining good health.

*Hoops for Heart* empowers students as they provide vital community service and discover they can make a difference. At the same time, students enjoy group dynamics while participating in a fun-filled basketball event.

Please help our Madison students help others. Your son or daughter will be coming home with more information on the event when they begin their basketball unit in phys. ed. Students will be asking for flat donations for their involvement in this event. If you want to do more, call your local American Heart Association office at 933-9852 or John Scherrman at Madison 420-6408.

## Keyboarding Proficiency Testing

Recognizing that students enter high school with varying computer skills and to insure that students are placed in the correct courses, students have the opportunity to proficiency out of keyboarding. This option offers no credit for the course; it merely allows the proficient student the opportunity to bypass Keyboarding and directly enter the next computer course. *To be proficient, a student must use correct touch-typing technique and be able to key at least 40 words per minute, with 90% accuracy while the backspace key is turned off.*

This year's test dates are Wednesday, January 8th; Thursday January 9th; Thursday, January 30th; Monday, February 3rd; Wednesday, February 5th; Thursday, February 6th; and Monday, February 10th.

These dates have been selected to insure students the flexibility to add the proper courses to their schedules. After this date, many electives are closed. The tests will be given after school only on these dates. Please call 420-6458 between 8 a.m. and noon for an appointment.

# Middle Years

Working together for school success

## Short Stops



### Dealing with bullies

Is your child having trouble with a bully? Tell him to ignore the insult and walk away. Sometimes a bully will stop when he doesn't get a reaction. If the treatment continues, have your middle grader inform a teacher immediately.

### Testing hint

Pass along this test-taking tip to your child. Have her circle the numbers on the test questions she has trouble answering. That way, at the end, she can easily return to the unanswered questions without rereading the entire test.

### DID YOU KNOW?

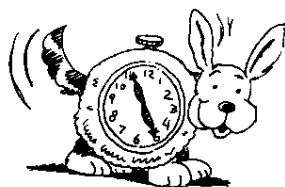
Middle graders are six times more likely to try cigarettes if they have a friend who smokes. And a child's risk doubles if a family member smokes. Talk to your child about the serious health risks of smoking, including cancer, stroke, and diseases of the heart, eyes, and gums.

Source: *Journal of School Health*, May 2002, [www.cpirc.org/tips/toughissues.htm](http://www.cpirc.org/tips/toughissues.htm)

### Worth quoting

"Minds are like parachutes—they only function when open."  
Thomas Dewar

### Just for fun



**Q:** What kind of dog tells time?

**A:** A watchdog.

## Time management tips

### For your middle grader

While adults sometimes use cell phones and laptops to manage their time, there are ways your middle grader can do the same thing.

Why is time management important for middle graders? Children will do better in school and be more organized and productive. And they'll feel less overwhelmed while juggling studying, friends, and home life. Share these suggestions with your middle grader.

### What he does

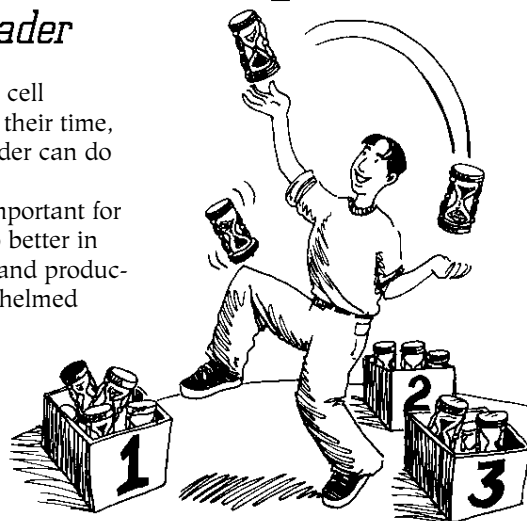
Tell your middle grader to keep a daily list of his activities before and after school for one week. He should write down all activities (homework, riding his bike) and how much time he spends doing each one. This will give him an accurate picture of how he spends his day.

### What he should do

Have your child separate activities into categories, such as "helpful" and "fun" and "time wasters". Helpful activities accomplish tasks (studying, cleaning her room). Fun activities relax her (reading, drawing). Time-wasters take up the most time with little benefit (TV, chatting on the phone). Labeling each action will show your child where she needs to improve.

### What to do about it

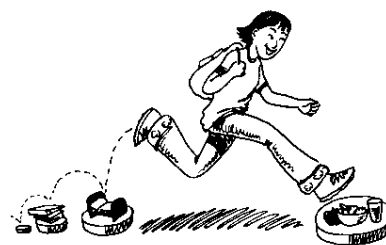
With his new focus, have your middle grader keep a daily "to do" list and a monthly calendar. Break down the list into days (Monday, Tuesday, etc.) with tasks for each. He can use the calendar to record upcoming events such as tests and reports. Suggest he cross off tasks as they are completed.



## Getting to class

The more often your middle grader is in class, the more he can learn. Here's how you can help.

**Tell her** it's important to go to class every day. By skipping, she not only risks getting into trouble, she may fall behind in her studies.



**Remind him** that skipping classes can lead to dropping out. And the consequences, such as lower pay and fewer opportunities, can last a lifetime.

**Provide her** with a good role model. If you skip work, what are you saying to your middle grader about school?

# The right kind of peer pressure

Yesterday your child thought you were a “star”. Today your middle grader is growing up, making parents “old news”. That’s because to young children, parents are their most important peers. When they grow up, their focus shifts to friends.

Don’t retire just yet! With a little effort, you can steer your middle grader to positive influences as she steps out on her own.

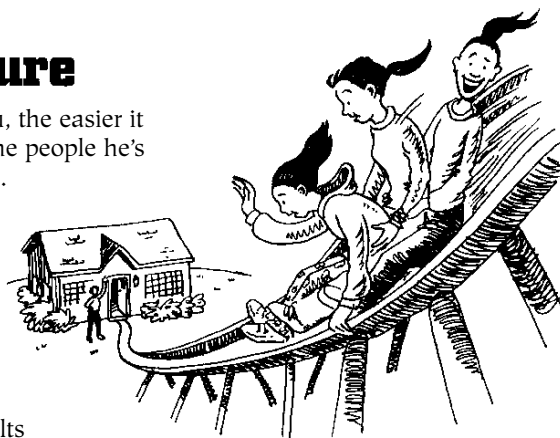
**Get to know his friends.** Encourage your middle grader to invite his friends home. If you have time, volunteer to drive them to an event. The more your

middle grader is with you, the easier it will be to keep track of the people he’s with and what he’s doing.

**Make good groups possible.** Give your child access to healthy peer groups where she can meet new friends. Encourage her to join adult-supervised clubs like Scouts — caring adults make great role models.

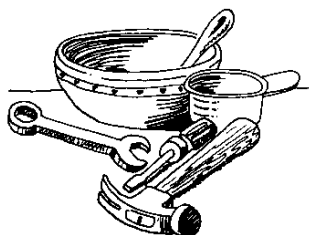
**Remember:** The spiked hair or unconventional clothing of your middle grader’s friends may be part of a phase.

Underneath that emerging independence, you’re likely to find another good middle grader like your child.



## Skills for independence

An education will help middle graders succeed in life. In addition to academic knowledge, there are some basic skills they should learn to help them prepare for adulthood:



- Teach your kids to operate a vacuum cleaner, including changing the bag. Then, provide practice time by assigning a room to clean.
- Kitchen skills are important, too. Show them how to bake, shop for groceries and use a microwave.
- Can you fix a car or build a bookshelf? If so, demonstrate for your children. Knowing how to change a car’s oil and make basic home repairs are useful skills to have.

**OUR PURPOSE**

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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## Parent to Parent

### Motivating a middle grader

One evening while I was trying to balance my checkbook (something I don’t do well), the phone rang. Our neighbor wanted to know if my daughter Jamie could stay for dinner with her daughter. I asked how the girls’ studying was going. “They spent a couple of minutes on their homework, then went outside to ride skateboards,” she told me.

When Jamie got home, I asked her why she was skateboarding when she should have been studying. “Dad, I only had math homework — it’s just a bunch of numbers.”

I explained the importance of learning math. For example, I told her that math helps engineers design more efficient cars. And it helps us with everyday tasks — like balancing a checkbook.

Together we came up with a plan. Jamie agreed to study math at least 30 minutes each afternoon. While she does her homework, I read a book on handling personal finances. We’re both learning!



## Q & A Handling mood swings

**Q** Sometimes I can’t do anything right for my middle grader. I ask how his day was, and he explodes. Ten minutes later, he acts as if nothing is wrong. What’s going on?

**A** Everyone has ups and downs. Middle graders just have more of them. Sad or happy, your son thinks he’s the only person in the world who feels that way. It’s hard to go from

child to adult, so he feels out of control.

Next time, try ignoring his outburst. Walk calmly out of the room and act as if it never happened. Bugging your child about his moods only makes them worse.

Some privacy may help — give him space to work things out. Let him know you love him. Then, back off. When he’s ready to talk, he will seek you out.



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# Parent Involvement News

A column for parents sponsored by the Madison Parent Involvement Team



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The mission of the Parent Involvement Team is to recognize and strengthen the partnership among parents, District 203 staff and the community. This partnership will enhance student learning and development. We build family and community support for student success.

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**At the October meeting**, the parents in attendance discussed the focus and direction of the Parent Involvement Team at Madison Junior High. We came to a general consensus that we are choosing to devote our time and attention to improving certain key activities, continuing to sponsor spirit wear sales and team parents, and scaling back some of our participation in the programs that fall outside the scope of our committee. Our guest speaker for the evening was Mrs. Martha Carney, who brought us information about forming a new partnership with the American Red Cross. Members of that organization have offered to present a variety of workshops at our school ranging from babysitting clinics to sports safety to disaster preparedness and more! Watch for details regarding an upcoming event!! Our other guests included Matt Jeffrey, Assistant Principal, and Gretchen Zelinski, Home & School President, both of whom gave us updates from the school community.

The fall spirit wear sale was again very popular with our Madison families. All of the items were priced at, or below cost, and should arrive in your homes before the winter break. Lisa Lucchini has done a fantastic job of selecting merchandise and tallying the sales.

Mark your calendars for the Dad's Celebration on Sat., February 15th! This year's committee is already exploring new ideas and making plans for an even better event. All fathers/father figures are again invited to spend the morning with their 6th, 7th and 8th graders enjoying the breakfast, speakers and activities. Again, watch for more information during the next several weeks.

Our Honors Breakfast chair is busily planning the first round of breakfasts scheduled for some time in early December. Students will be invited to attend the event by letter once their grades have been calculated. Last but certainly not least, the Handbook for Success committee is taking a look at last year's book and making some minor adjustments. Perhaps one of our talented young artists will be designing the new cover!

**In November**, we hope to solidify our plans with the American Red Cross. As a reminder, all parents are invited to attend the Parent Involvement meetings. We offer a forum for parents to network with others and voice their opinions without pressure to volunteer for an activity. Our meetings are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, November 21st  
No meeting for December  
Thursday, January 23rd  
No meeting for February  
Thursday, March 27th  
Thursday, April 24th  
Thursday, May 29th

All meetings are held in the LRC at 7:00 p.m. Come and join us.

For more information contact Jamie Shahidehpour, 778-7094.