



EDUCATION

Family Communication is focus of free workshop

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WESTFIELD – A workshop on Family Communication, part of the planned series Keeping Our Kids Connected, will take place Jan. 29 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Westfield Intermediate School, 350 Southampton Road.

The workshop is open to all parents and guardians of children in grades K to 12. Childcare will be provided.

Presenters are Westfield Public Schools Physical Education teachers Karen Gomez from Westfield Technical Academy, Liz Bolivar from Highland and Paper Mill Elementary schools and Michele Tarbox from WIS.

The workshop will cover how misunderstandings happen; what communication skills can prevent misunderstandings; how to set goals for improving family communication, and how healthy family skills can help make family members comfortable talking to one another about difficult topics.

Tarbox said the workshops are part of the Botvin Life Skills curriculum they have been using in their health classes, and also grew out of a November workshop on communication by a speaker from the Coalition on Recovery and Education (CORE).

“In our world, so many things take away from communicating face to face with each other,” Tarbox said. She said on Wednesday they will talk about taking time for the family, to strengthen family relationships and help parents to help their children make the right choices in their lives.

Families who attend will also be asked what topics they would like to cover in upcoming workshops. Tarbox said they plan to hold two more workshops this school year, one in March and one in April or May, depending on the interest and the need.

WPS Director of Curriculum Susan Dargie said this workshop for parents is part of a larger communication series that the schools are offering together with CORE.

“We encourage all families to take advantage of this opportunity to learn from our health teachers some of the lessons their children are learning, as well as strategies for communication at home,” Dargie said.