

HUDSON COMMUNITY FIRST NEWSLETTER


 UPCOMING
EVENTS

**Enjoy Your
Summer With
Family &
Friends!!**

DR. LISA DAMOUR TALKS TO HUDSON PARENTS ABOUT SOCIAL TECHNOLOGIES



Hudson Community First had the privilege of hosting renowned psychologist and New York Times bestselling author Dr. Lisa Damour on April 3 at Hudson High School. She shared a pragmatic approach to guiding our kids through the world of social technologies, and for those who couldn't attend—or just want a refresher—here's a rundown of her insightful advice.

Dr. Damour kicked things off by addressing a big question: How worried should we be about social media?

Despite the headlines claiming social media is “destroying childhood,” she explained that the research is far less dramatic. Studies show mixed results—about half of kids have positive experiences, half face challenges, and some get a bit of both. The key takeaway? Social media isn't inherently evil, but it's not a free-for-all either. It's about setting reasonable boundaries and building a solid relationship with your kid as the ultimate guardrail.

One of her core points was the difference between giving kids a phone and letting them loose on social media—they're not the same thing. Phones can be great for texting to stay connected or listening to music to manage stress. (Studies have shown that listening to music is the #1 way that kids deal with stress.) But social media? That's a bigger step. Dr. Damour suggested waiting until at least age 14, when kids' brains start getting more skeptical and better at questioning what they see online. She also emphasized starting small by letting kids prove they can handle texting responsibly before even considering apps like Instagram or TikTok.

Dr. Damour was crystal clear on rules: make them reasonable, explain the “why” so kids get it, and stick to them. For example, phones should never go in the bedroom, and kids shouldn't use devices for anything they wouldn't do in front of you. She stressed the importance of sleep hygiene and pointed to new research indicating that the lack of sleep due to kids being on their phones all night could actually be the culprit for the rise in mental health issues in young adults, not necessarily social media exposure. Dr. Damour also warned about the “displacement problem,” meaning social media shouldn't replace real-life interactions, physical activity, or schoolwork. And those algorithms? They're designed to hook kids with shocking content, which can mess with their sense of what's normal. Parents should check in regularly, asking, “What's showing up in your feed? How's it making you feel?”

Her practical tips were gold: delay social media as long as possible, but don't isolate kids socially as connection is vital to development. If your kid needs a phone for texting, start there, and maybe opt for a “dumbed-down” smartphone over a flip phone (because, the device matters to them).

Dr. Damour's talk was a refreshing blend of realism and optimism. She reminded us that while social media is new territory, the same parenting principles apply: build a relationship where your kid feels safe coming to you when things get messy. Thanks to Dr. Damour, we're all a little wiser about helping our kids navigate the digital world with confidence.

A DAY IN THE PRINCIPAL'S SHOES: HAYLEY LONDON'S EXPERIENCE



At Hudson Community First's (HCF) annual "Toast to Hudson" fundraiser, Hayley London won a unique prize: the chance to be Principal for a Day. The funds raised at this annual event, including the auction, fuel HCF's ongoing programs that support Hudson's youth, like Hayley. Her whirlwind day as principal of East Woods Intermediate School offered a front-row seat to the action-packed world of school leadership—and left her with plenty to share.

Hayley's favorite part? Lunchtime. "I got to talk to the principals and an author, learning about their jobs one-on-one with no distractions," she said. That personal connection stood out, especially when Mrs. Winger revealed what Hayley found most interesting: the toughest part of a principal's job is making unpopular decisions. "She said it might not make her the most popular, but it's important to do the right thing—and it feels good at the end of the day," Hayley noted.

What surprised her most was the sheer pace. "I thought it'd be more chill, but I was running around all day," she admitted. "Principals have so much to do with everything going on!" Yet, she discovered an easy part, too: morning announcements. "They're ad-libbed, off-script, and still sound so prepared," she marveled.

From reading to a well-behaved third-grade class, to wishing she could've granted extra recess (sadly, a no-go), Hayley soaked it all in. "I'm so grateful for this opportunity," she reflected. "It's a day I'll always look back on." She also loved seeing how Hudson Community First lets students explore career paths, calling it "pretty rad."

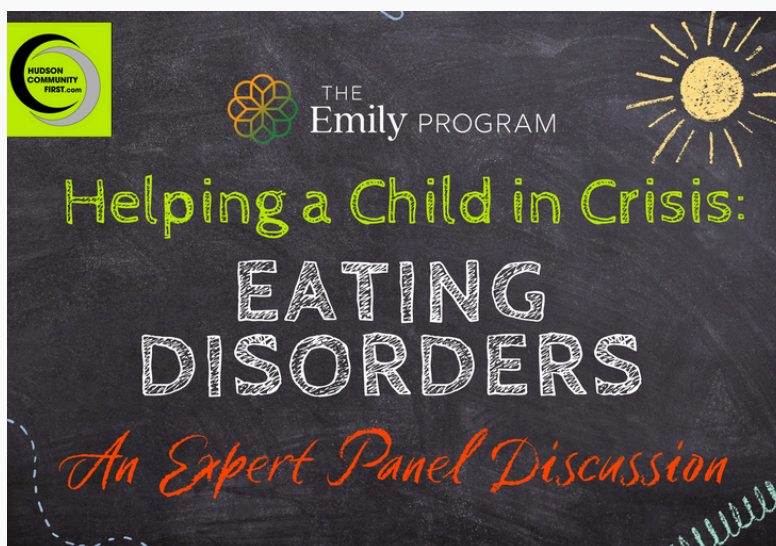
Now, Hayley's got her eye on another role: Teacher for a Day. "I'd love to see the behind-the-scenes, how they handle different learning styles and challenges," she said. With HCF's support, who knows? Another unforgettable day might be in her future.



UNLOCK EXPERT INSIGHTS ON ADOLESCENT EATING DISORDERS: WATCH OUR WEBINAR

Navigating adolescence is tough, and when eating disorders come into play, it can feel overwhelming for both teens and their families. That's why Hudson Community First is excited to invite you to watch our free webinar, An Expert Panel Discussion on Eating Disorders in Adolescence, available now on our [website](https://www.hudsoncommunityfirst.com).

Join our panel of seasoned professionals - Brittany Davis, MEd, LPCC-S, Senior Regional Director, The Emily Project; Valerie Nicholson, MS, RD, LD, Registered Dietitian; and Kelsey Carpenter, PA, Lead Medical Provider, The Emily Project - as they share their extensive experience treating eating disorders in teens and adults. With years of expertise across intensive treatment settings, they offer practical, compassionate insights to help you understand and address these complex challenges.



The webinar tackles key questions, including: What are eating disorders, and what complications can arise? How can you spot warning signs in your child? When does "healthy" behavior, like sports or dieting, ...*(continued next page)*



(continued previous page) become concerning? You'll also learn how to approach conversations with your teen, why professional *treatment is critical*, and what to expect when you reach out for help. Plus, hear the panel's vision for a world free from eating disorder stigma.

For more context, check out resources on our website, like *Specialized Eating Disorder Care for Athletes*, which outlines a three-phase recovery journey for athletes, and *CARE IOP*, a virtual intensive program for binge eating disorders. The *Back-to-School* guides emphasize the importance of continuous treatment to prevent relapse and support academic success, while *Protect Your Health and Performance* highlights the risks of delaying care for athletes.



THE
Emily PROGRAM

Watch the recorded webinar now, or anytime on demand by visiting www.hudsoncommunityfirst.com/resources.

Since 2018, eating disorder-related health visits among youth under 17 have more than doubled in the U.S., with a 107.4% increase by 2022, driven by factors like social media and pandemic-related stress.



Where are they now?

Let's check in with some past Hudson Community First Youth Board Leaders and see where they are now and how being a part of Hudson Community First has impacted them!

My name is **Lauren Niewolak** and I graduated from Hudson High School in 2019. I attended Michigan State University, and I now live in Chicago, IL and work as an Associate Product Manager. I was co-President of Hudson Community First alongside a good friend of mine, Maggie Lehman, during the 2018-2019 academic year. Being a part of Hudson Community First was a great way to not only enhance my leadership skills, but also a great way to work as a team toward a common goal and recognize the importance of community. As I navigated my time in college and now post-grad, many of those skills that I learned through HCF have been utilized. Hudson Community First was a great way to get involved in the high school, make new friends, and engage with community leaders.

My name is **Maggie Lehman** and I had the honor of being co-presidents with my good friend and even better leader Lauren Niewolak in the 2018-2019 academic year. I have since graduated from Miami University and now work in financial consulting at FTI. Going from HCF member to co-president gave me so many invaluable lessons that I've carried with me from Hudson, to Oxford, and now NYC. It laid the foundation of the importance of community in any capacity you can contribute. Whether that was participating in events like building a gagaball pit, planning volunteer events, or attending local fundraisers it taught me there's a place for everyone. One of the best lessons HCF taught me was to empower youth to better our community and I have taken that with me through organizations like Big Brother Big Sister to this day. I'm grateful for the values HCF instilled in me and the leadership opportunities it gave me to help tie together people in my community.

HUDSON COMMUNITY FIRST CELEBRATES ALAINA WALKER AS THE PRIMROSE LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

Hudson Community First is proud to congratulate Alaina Walker, the 2025 recipient of the Primrose Leadership Award. As President of the Hudson Community First HHS Youth Board, Alaina has demonstrated exceptional leadership and dedication, fostering a more caring and connected Hudson community. Her volunteerism and commitment have been a shining example for her peers, inspiring positive change throughout her high school years.

As Alaina prepares to attend Fordham University this fall, we celebrate her contributions and wish her the very best in her next chapter. Her legacy will continue to inspire Hudson's youth.



C.A.R.E. AWARDS PRESENTED TO ZUSTIN, AMIET & HCF



Marc Zustin, Brittany Amiet, Alisa Wright (HCF Executive Board President), and Marietta Marquart (HCF Executive Board Vice President) accept Six District C.A.R.E. Awards

HHS faculty members Marc Zustin and Brittany Amiet were honored along side Hudson Community First with Six District Educational Compact C.A.R.E. Awards at the Annual C.A.R.E. Appreciation Dinner on April 3, 2025.

The awards, presented by Hudson High School and the Six District CARE Committee, honored Marc, Brittany, and Hudson Community First for leadership in the Hudson Community First Youth Advisory Board as well as innovative programming focused on preventing alcohol and drug use that has greatly strengthened our community's commitment to student well-being.

The Six District Educational Compact Chemical Abuse Reduced by Education (C.A.R.E.) program was established in 1981 to provide early intervention and referral services for students experiencing problems with mood-altering chemicals, as well as prevention/education resources to Compact school districts.

C.A.R.E. also provides support services not only for students recovering from chemical dependency but also for teachers and staff who work with students dealing with these issues.

Hudson Community First congratulates Marc and Brittany for their dedication to Hudson Youth.

HUDSON YOUTH RAISE \$13,500 FOR ORKEESWA SCHOOL

Hudson's East Woods Intermediate School (EWIS) and Hudson High School's Hudson Community First Youth Board joined forces to support the Orkeeswa School in Africa, raising an impressive combined total of \$15,467.75 through creative and heartfelt fundraising efforts. Their initiatives not only fostered community spirit but also made a tangible impact on education for students halfway across the globe.

This year, the EWIS Schoolwide Initiatives Committee, inspired by other Hudson schools' support for Orkeeswa, launched its first-ever fundraiser for the school. "We wanted to contribute to this amazing cause and decided to tie the fundraiser into the academic piece of the Orkeeswa School," said Maureen Schreiner, Assistant Principal at EWIS.

The committee organized a read-a-thon, setting a goal of 7,500 reading minutes per class during the week-long event. The response was overwhelming. "We were hoping for about \$2,000, and we were incredibly surprised by the \$11,467.75 we actually raised!" Schreiner shared.

The students' dedication to reading and fundraising showcased their commitment to both learning and global citizenship. "We are so proud of the amount of reading our students completed and by the amount they raised!" she added. *(continued next page)*

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Meanwhile, the HHS Hudson Community First Youth Board brought their own flair to the cause with a Valentine's Day carnation sale. From January 29 to February 11, board members sold carnations to students, and distributed them to classmates as tokens of friendship and appreciation during the Valentine's Day season. The initiative resonated deeply with the student body, raising an impressive \$4,000 for Orkeeswa School.

The combined efforts of EWIS and the HHS Youth Board highlight Hudson's commitment to supporting Orkeeswa School, which provides education and opportunities to underserved students in Tanzania. The funds raised will help sustain Orkeeswa's mission to empower youth through academic and community development programs.

Together, EWIS and HHS, have demonstrated the power of collective action and the impact of small gestures—like reading a book or buying a carnation—when united for a greater cause.



HUDSON COMMUNITY FIRST PRESENTS “UNCHARTED WATERS” PROGRAM FOR GRADUATING SENIORS

Hudson Community First held its annual “Uncharted Waters: What Seniors Need to Know” program on April 29, 2025, at Hudson High School. This program aims to equip graduating seniors with vital skills for adulthood. The event, designed to prepare students for the transition into the wider world, featured a series of impactful sessions led by experts and community leaders.

The day consisted of a range of workshops. Officer Lauri Natko from the Akron Police Department and Community Relations led discussions on personal safety and campus security, helping students understand how to stay safe in new environments. Meanwhile, Nikki Crawford, Education & Outreach Manager from Hope & Healing Survivor Resource Center/Battered Women's Shelter & Rape Crisis Center, addressed relationships, sexual assault, and date rape, empowering students with awareness and resources for navigating adult relationships.

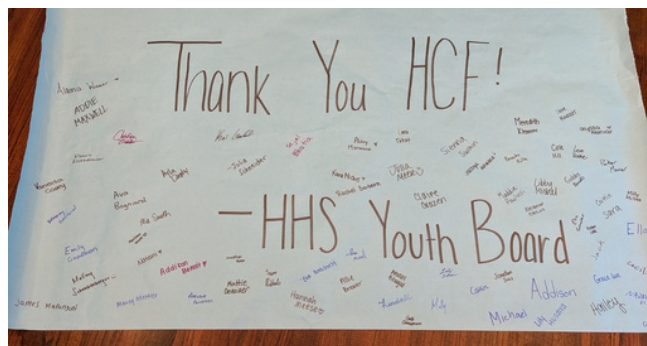
Judge Lisa Coates provided practical insights into legal responsibilities, explaining what it means to be 18 and the obligations that come with it. In the afternoon, Lt. Kevin Nelson from the Hudson Fire Department covered general fire safety, ensuring students were prepared for emergencies. Lisa Kress, Clinical Counselor, followed with a session on supporting mental wellness, offering strategies for emotional health as students step into new chapters.

A communal lunch, provided by Hudson Community First, brought all seniors together with several stations in the Main Gym, fostering connection among the class. The event concluded with a senior meeting as well as prizes and giveaways from Hudson Community First, celebrating the class with meaningful takeaways.

“Uncharted Waters” underscored Hudson Community First's dedication to preparing seniors for independence, addressing critical topics like safety, legal awareness, relationships, and mental health in a supportive setting.

HCF YOUTH BOARD SAYS FAREWELL TO SENIORS

The Hudson High School HCF Youth Board held its final meeting with their seniors and gave them a celebratory send off. Hudson Community First appreciates everything that our seniors have contributed to the organization and wishes them well on their future endeavors. We know that they are all going to do great things! Congratulations to: Sam Robledo, Mallory Schenkenberger, Emily Goodman, Abby Hannum, Anna Unke, Grace Swartzendruber, Jordyn Mawaka, Macey Mettler, Meredith Klemens, Julia Schneider, Delaney Halstead, Eva Hatchett, Kyla Dunphey, Brooke Pulte, Madelyn Forst, Lily Larsen, Adeline Pelletier, Dakota Kwasney, Sara Sarkisian, Sam Rosenberg, Julia Meese, Evie Marquart, Abby Mormino, Alaina Walker, Lana Tahat, Henrique Sa, Gavin McKenna, Gabi Censoprano, Annabel Lindley, Cole Hill, Mia South, Parker Maniar, Lauren Seymour, Katie Huber, and Sienna Pinson.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2025 MICHAEL-WALY AWARD RECIPIENT: FREDERICK LI

Hudson Community First is proud to announce Frederick Li as the 2025 recipient of the Michael-Waly Award, an honor bestowed annually upon a Hudson High School senior who demonstrates exceptional character and creates a profound positive impact on another's life. Frederick, a Hudson resident, embodies the award's criteria through his selfless actions, which transformed the life of a peer struggling with social anxiety and isolation.

Frederick's nominator, a fellow student, described how Frederick's kindness and patience reshaped his life. As a newcomer to Hudson with a history of frequent moves, the nominator faced significant challenges, including social anxiety and a lack of deep connections. Frederick, recognizing the nominator's struggle, extended a simple yet pivotal gesture: offering a ride home after tennis practice.

This act sparked a friendship that became a lifeline, helping the nominator overcome their anxiety and build confidence. Through consistent support—whether mentoring them in tennis, spending hours fishing together, or providing academic guidance – Frederick tailored his actions to his new friend's unique needs, fostering a sense of belonging and self-worth.

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The nominator's story highlights Frederick's ability to address critical risk factors, such as isolation and depression, with targeted, meaningful interventions. His efforts directly altered the nominator's life trajectory, enabling him to form new friendships and embrace social settings with newfound ease.

Frederick's commitment, even amidst his own demanding schedule and personal introversion, underscores his exceptional character and dedication to uplifting others.

Hudson Community First celebrates Frederick Li for his transformative impact, which exemplifies the spirit of the Michael-Waly Award. His actions serve as an inspiring reminder of the power of compassion and connection in our community.

"You have to do the right thing...You may never know what results come of your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result." –Mohandas K Gandhi

HCF SPONSORS READING NIGHT UNDER THE LIGHTS WITH HUDSON CITY SCHOOLS

On Tuesday, May 13, Hudson Community First and Hudson City Schools launched the inaugural "Reading Night Under the Lights," a magical evening celebrating the joy of reading for PreK–5th graders. The event brought young readers together for a night filled with stories, sweets, and creativity.

Attendees enjoyed ice cream and fruit pops while receiving tote bags and free books. Guest readers Dana Addis and James Madio captivated the audience with lively read-aloud sessions. The evening also featured a bookmark-coloring activity, allowing students to express their artistic flair.



Want More Info? Join our List! →

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The Hudson Garden Club has been providing the beautiful centerpieces for Hudson Community First's annual Toast to Hudson Fundraiser for years.

Please support the Hudson Garden Club at the Hudson Home and Garden Tour!

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FOR TICKETS**



77th Annual
Hudson Home and Garden Tour
Friday, June 13
Saturday, June 14

Visit Homes, Gardens, Tea Room, and Garden Shop

Ticketing and details
hudsonhomeandgardentour.org