



December 2009

Happy Holidays to All!

Although we've been rather quiet lately, much is happening behind the scenes. We've structured the PFN into several action areas, each headed up by a member of the PFN Steering Committee: STAR Program, NEDA Navigators (information coming in January 2010!), Newsletter, Conference and NEDAwareness Week School Outreach. We hope if you find an area in which you have an interest, you will join us in making a difference in the lives of parents, families and friends touched by an eating disorder.



**Susan Maccia,
PFN Chair**

Inside this issue you will find:

- **Experience of a mom who attended her first NEDA Conference in Minneapolis**
- **“Michelle’s Law” –Insurance coverage for post-high school students**
- **New research – video links**
- **NEDA Network Feature Organization: Eating Disorder Information Network (EDIN)**
- **NEDAwareness Week call to action and registration link**
- **NEDA Walk update**

2009 NEDA Conference: A Mom’s First-Time Conference Experience



Minneapolis was my first NEDA conference. As the parent of a daughter struggling with an eating disorder, I embarked on a journey five years ago to understand what my daughter was going through, and along the way I have learned a tremendous amount. NEDA was

instrumental in that journey. The more I learn about these illnesses, the more I realize what I still have to learn, which is why I decided this year to travel from Connecticut to the conference. It's exciting to hear about the advances in the science of the diseases, to meet other families with a loved one struggling, and to hear stories of hope. Originally I set out to learn about eating disorders to support my daughter, and I truly feel that I have been better able to support her as a result. But as it turns out, it has also become my fight to help others affected by this disease. I will definitely attend this conference every year.

Mary Curran

Join us for the next NEDA Conference in New York City, October 8-10, 2010!!

Eating Disorders and Michelle's Law

By Michael B. Snyder, J.D.

Michelle Morse was a full-time college student from New Hampshire who suffered from cancer yet continued her course load, against the advice of doctors, in order to fulfill the requirement for health care coverage as a dependent. Eating disorder patients are faced with the same dilemma, but treatment or consequences of the illness often simply prevents continued full-time studies.

Michelle's Mother, AnnMarie first pushed the New Hampshire legislature successfully, then the U.S. Congress, to pass "Michelle's Law," which is effective for most healthcare plans (including self-insured plans) beginning January 1, 2010. Michelle's law requires group health plans to provide coverage for dependents who do not meet the requirements of full-time student status because of a "medically necessary" leave of absence. The rules are simple: a dependent's treating physician must certify to the plan that the dependent has a serious illness or injury and that the leave of absence is medically necessary, and the dependent child must have been enrolled in the group health coverage on the basis of his or her full-time student status on the date immediately preceding the leave of absence.

Work with your treatment team and insurance company to ensure that even though your child's treatment may interfere with her or his full-time post-high-school education, it will not prevent continued healthcare coverage.

New Research Videos

Contributed by Jane Cawley

Jane is the newest member of the PFN Steering Committee and a co-chair of Maudsley Parents. She has embarked on a unique mission to provide up-to-date

information to families in video format. The videos below have been posted to the NEDA website and are worth viewing!

“Understanding Eating Disorders” Thomas Insel, MD, Director of the National Institute of Mental Health provides a brief overview of eating disorder research. [Click here to view.](#)

“Anorexia Nervosa in Teens: What Parents Should Know” Katharine Loeb, PhD gives advice to parents, emphasizing the importance of early intervention and family support. [Click here to view.](#)

“Cognitive Styles in Eating Disorders” James Lock, MD, PhD talks about cognitive styles as a risk factor for eating disorders and discusses cognitive remediation therapy as a potential treatment. [Click here to view.](#)



NEDA Network Featured Member

Each issue, we will feature a NEDA Network member-look for one in your region to connect with! Eating Disorders Information Network (EDIN) is the largest, first-ever nonprofit in the Southeast dedicated to the prevention and reduction of eating disorders through education, outreach and action. Innovative programs such as the M.O.D. (Mothers of Daughters) Squad, Love Your Life Always (LULA), and Love Your Body Week are programs that empower young adults and parents to practice healthy eating behaviors by teaching positive coping skills, assertiveness and body image appreciation.

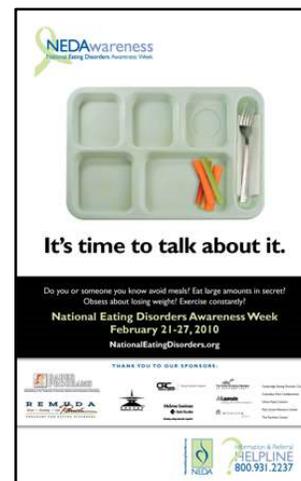


EDIN hosts two free ANAD support group meetings and provides numerous volunteer opportunities for those in recovery to meet and connect with each other every month. EDIN also conducts several speaking engagements each month on topics such as: promoting healthy body image, the dangers of diet talk, how to help a friend or loved one, warning signs of eating disorders and increasing media literacy.

EDIN is a proud member of the NEDA Network and committed to working with other member organizations to prevent and provide support for eating disorder sufferers and their families. To learn more please visit our website at: www.myedin.org or call us at: (404) 816-3346....Together we CAN make a difference!

NEDAwareness Week 2010 “It’s Time to Talk About It”

NEDA invites everyone to commit to doing *just one thing* during NEDAwareness Week. Getting involved is easy: Invite one of the Volunteer Speakers to your next PTA meeting; watch a film with your family; put out pamphlets in your workplace; or host an awareness activity. If every PFN member does *just one thing*, we will reach 6 times more communities than last year! [Click here](#) to learn more about how you can make a difference. [Register now!](#)



NEDA Walk: Support NEDA and Have Fun!

NEDA is proud to announce that in our kick-off year there were 18 NEDA Walks in 15 different states! Approximately 2,000 people across the United States participated in a NEDA Walk as a coordinator, walker, or volunteer. Coordinating a NEDA Walk in your community is fun! [Click here](#) for details.



Walk held this October in NYC

Judy Avrin, one of the moms who spoke at the event, shared in a very moving way that her teenaged daughter, Melissa lost her 5-year battle with this disease. She has created a wonderful video tribute to her daughter that features the New York walk. Watch it here... www.somedaymelissa.com Judy’s hope and desire for this video project is that she can help parents understand the early signs of eating disorders so they are able to get help for their children. *Thank you, Judy.*

Sharing this newsletter is just a forward away! Please feel free to pass it on to anyone you think might be interested.