

Health and wellness are top priority in eastern Dutchess

By **ARVOLYN HILL**
Staff Reporter

MILLBROOK — The Council on Addiction Prevention and Education of Dutchess County Inc. (CAPE) hosted a health and wellness event to help attendees de-stress before the holidays on Dec. 15 at Charlotte's restaurant.

"Thursday's event grew out of the Eastern Dutchess Coalition, which is a multi-sector community group whose focus is aimed at decreasing youth risk factors along the Route 22 corridor," said Elaine Trumpetto, executive director of CAPE. "This coalition is funded by the Foundation for Community Health and has been working to achieve these goals for the last three years."

The planning process for the event began in September. The purpose of the event was to build awareness of the area's youth and family needs while showcasing local resources to address those needs. There were a variety of vendors at the event providing such information, including Hudson River Community Health, Narcotics Anonymous and Women's Support Services.

CAPE was formed in 1987 to address the prevention needs of youth and families. The New York State Office on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (NYSOASAS) licensed CAPE as a prevention education and counseling service. CAPE works with Dutchess County schools providing those services; it has worked with Dover, Webutuck and Pine Plains school districts in the Harlem Valley region.

NYSOASAS, the Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene and the Foundation for Community Health help provide the funding for the program.

Rachael Bisceglie, a student assistance counselor for the middle and high schools in both the Webutuck and Pine Plains school districts, planned the health and wellness event. Bisceglie is also a student assistance counselor for CAPE.

"I love my job as a student assistance counselor as it allows me

to work with students and families who are experiencing difficult life situations," Bisceglie said. "Even though I am still relatively new to this position, I can say that it has been one of the most fulfilling opportunities that I have ever been given. Being given the chance to coordinate our recent health and wellness forum meant a lot to me, as the need for these types of events is great in our area."

Kristen Henn, a student assistance counselor in Dover, worked along side Bisceglie to coordinate the event. Both women hold master's degrees in counseling. Their review of the event was positive.

"The event at Charlotte's exceeded expectations," Trumpetto said. "It was well attended and provided participants with an informal evening devoted to health and wellness resources for youth and families in Eastern Dutchess. Future events will be planned by the coalition and driven by community input."

The Eastern Dutchess Coalition is working to expand its outreach and is now looking for community members to join prevention efforts in the Millbrook area. For more information about the coalition, visit www.capedc.org.

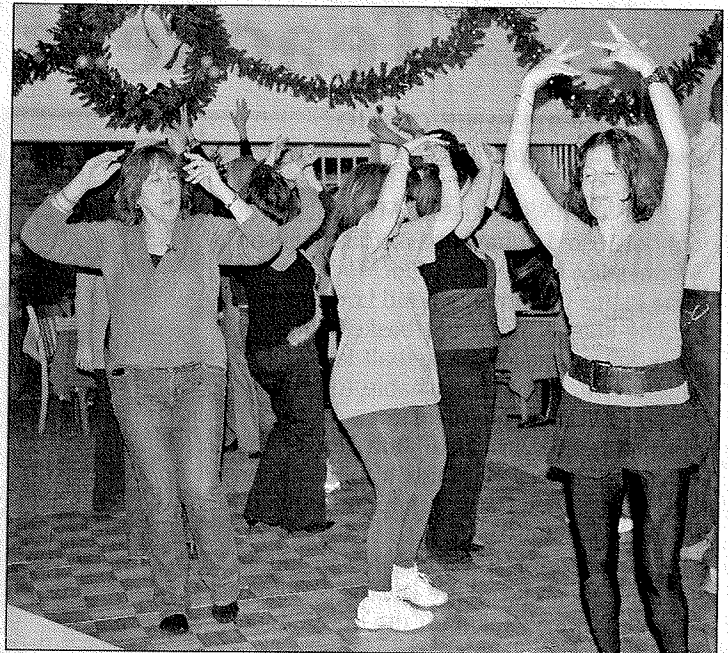


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Zumba instructor Abby Ross, right, gave a demonstration at the health and wellness event at Charlotte's restaurant in Millbrook on Dec. 15.