Excellence in Action

“Once when I was working on the fifth floor, the nurses were talking about a baby that had make-up on. The mom had used eye pencil to create eyebrows for the baby! That made everyone smile.”
- Eseohe Imhansi-Jacob

“An elderly patient came in with his wife and I took them to the Heart and Vascular Institute to have tests done. Afterwards, the wife thanked me because her husband had been really uneasy and I was able to make them feel better by interacting with him like he was more than just a patient.”
- Milandri Kriel

“Assisting in the safe return of a patient involved in a Code Green Casper Alert.”
- Paul Dunnand and Jobin Babu

“Talking to a doctor in NICU, I learned a lot of important information about medical school that really opened my eyes.”
- Ruben Valayil

“When I was in the ER and a nurse taught me how to set up an EKG. Also, running with a stretcher to the cath lab to help a patient who was having a heart attack. That patient is doing great now!”
- Marissa Harrison

“One day in the newborn nursery, I was helping a nurse out and I got to hold a baby!”
- Chama Tekrouri

~ Marissa Harrison, MHSWH Jr. Board Treasurer
Most people don’t know that the largest organ of the body is the skin. The skin serves many important functions, including maintaining a stable body temperature and acting as a natural barrier against pathogens and germs. Unfortunately, the most common form of cancer is skin cancer. According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, more people have suffered from skin cancer over the past 31 years, than all other forms of cancer combined.

Ultraviolet radiation, also known as UV rays, is the main cause of skin cancer. UV rays are emitted by the sun and also by sun lamps and tanning beds. The two most common types of skin cancer are basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma. Though basal cell carcinoma is the most prevalent, it is also the least serious. Squamous cell carcinoma can eventually spread to other parts of the body. However, when caught early, both types can be treated successfully.

Melanoma is the most rare and dangerous form of skin cancer, but in its early stages, it too can be treated and even cured. Melanoma is known to spread to other parts of the body quickly by means of the blood and the lymphatic system.

Symptoms of skin cancer include any change in the appearance of the skin. Moles that are flesh colored, darker, raised, or those that have undefined edges can all be causes for concern and you should see your doctor right away if you detect possible abnormalities such as these. With skin cancer, prevention is key. Though genetics and family history of the disease do play a role, avoiding the sun for prolonged periods of time and using a generous amount of sunscreen can be extremely helpful. Hats, sunglasses, and protective clothing are also great preventative measures.

In the summer, beach-goers need to be especially wary. Sunscreen should be applied about thirty minutes prior to sun exposure. Sunscreen must be reapplied after strenuous activity since sweat causes it to lose its effectiveness. You should reapply sunscreen after every two hours of sun exposure, and immediately after swimming. Waterproof formulas are available and are worth considering. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest using sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher for daily skin protection. A lot of people don’t use enough sunscreen and forget to reapply. Don’t let that happen to you! This summer, have fun and as they say Down Under in Australia:

**Junior Board Officers Wanted!**

If you are currently a 10th or 11th grade high school student and would be interested in potentially serving as an officer on the 2011-2012 Junior Board, please speak with Debbie Varner in the Volunteer Office about completing an application. The planned slate of officers will include the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian. New officers will be selected by the end of the summer.
While volunteering at MHSWH, have you ever stopped to think about the meaning of some of the codes that you may hear over the public address system or wondered what actions you should take while a code is in progress? In case it’s been a while since you attended the new volunteer orientation, here is a refresher course on some of the most common codes:

**Code Blue** – A cardiac or respiratory-related emergency is in progress. If the floor on which you have been assigned is the one where the code is in progress, do your best to stay out of the way, and do not block the hallway with wheelchairs or volunteer carts. This will help the emergency action team to maneuver themselves and their equipment quickly and safely to the location where they are needed.

**Code Red** – When a fire alarm has been pulled, a message will automatically sound over the P.A. system announcing, “Code Red” and “the location” of a reported fire. The word “fire” is generally not broadcast over the P.A. system because we do not want our patients or visitors to panic unnecessarily. During a Code Red, never use the elevators unless specifically instructed to do so by a Fire Marshall, but do report immediately to the nursing station of the floor on which you have been assigned. Be prepared to assist the Charge Nurse, as instructed, with the following elements that you can remember by the acronym RACE:

- R – Rescue any persons in the room where the fire is located and close the doors of that room.
- A – Alarm – Pull the nearest fire alarm if you have not already heard a P.A. announcement.
- C – Contain smoke by closing all doors.
- E – Extinguish the fire if it is reasonably safe to do so, staying between the fire and a door so you can easily escape.

If you are reasonably confident in your ability to operate a fire extinguisher without threat to your safety, remember the acronym PASS:

- P – Pull the pin.
- A – Aim the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
- S – Squeeze the handle of the extinguisher.
- S – Sweep the spray at the base of the fire.

**Code Pink** – During a possible infant abduction or situation in which an infant’s location is temporarily unaccounted for, stay in place and be prepared to assist your Charge Nurse with the following actions that are signified by the acronym STORK:

- S – Secure the hallways, search the area and stay in place.
- T – Telephone security (Ext. 5350) or the page operator (Ext. 5555) with findings if a Charge Nurse or supervisor instructs you to.
- O – Obtain information.
- R – Record information.
- K – Keep all persons in place and keep all hallways clear.

Often, the Code Pink is not nearly as ominous as it may first seem. Sometimes it simply relates to the mistaken removal of an infant’s electronic monitoring bracelet before a nurse has been able to deactivate the sensor.

**Code Grey** – A potentially serious weather-related event is imminent. During a Code Grey, stay back from the windows and whenever possible, avoid the use of elevators in case a power outage occurs. Assist your Charge Nurse as instructed.

**Code Green Armstrong** – This code is sometimes used when a patient or visitor poses a serious, immediate threat to our hospital and/or another person’s safety. This code is used to summon help discretely if you believe you are being threatened by another individual and it is impractical to give full details to the operator or security dispatcher who takes the call for help.

**Code Green Casper** – This code is most commonly used when a patient’s location is unaccounted for. This might be used in cases where a groggy or disoriented patient has lost their way back to their room or they have wandered off. Typically, such a patient does not pose a danger to others, but might pose one to himself or herself if they are not found quickly. When you hear such a code, stay alert and be on the lookout for any person matching the description of the patient if one is given. If you think you have spotted the individual, contact security immediately and/or notify the page operator. Thanks to the combined efforts of some of our quick-thinking volunteers, a Code Casper patient was recently located and safely returned to their appropriate destination. Great job Paul, Jobin, Ruben, Milandri and Marissa!

During all codes affecting your volunteer area or work station, it is always best to report immediately to the Charge Nurse or supervisor of the floor on which you have been assigned and be prepared to assist the staff as instructed. Ensuring our patients’ safety and security is our key objective. Always stay particularly alert during a code and be sure to listen carefully for the “all clear” confirmation over the P.A. system when the code has been resolved. Above all, remain calm and reassure those who may ask you about what is happening that everything is well under control. Thanks to our exceptional staff members and volunteers, it always is. ~ Debbie Varner, Volunteer Supervisor
Prom: A Girl’s Perspective

Prom is just around the corner for high school upperclassmen and it’s time to start preparing for what most students hope will be one of the best nights of their lives.

Step 1: Find a date or a group of friends to go with. Personally, I believe going with a date would be more fun and less awkward, especially when slow songs come on…you will have someone to slow dance with! However, do not ask someone you are not very comfortable or close with. You don’t want to spend the whole night worrying about how to make conversation with someone you barely know to break the awkward silences. As a boy, it is imperative to ask a girl to prom in a cute and sweet way. Ideas include bringing her flowers, setting up a scavenger hunt that leads her to your message (Prom?), or filling her room up with balloons that have your message inside. A simple Google search will help you find unique and creative ways to ask.

Step 2: Finding the perfect dress or tux. If you’re going with a date, try to match or at least blend in with the girl’s dress. Also, tuxes are rented out fast so place your order early to be sure to have one. Al’s Formal Wear and Men’s Warehouse are both great places to go. For girls, department stores in your local mall such as Macy’s and Dillard’s usually have lots of budget-friendly options. However, for more variety and uniqueness, there are many boutiques and stores in and around Houston that sell formal dresses.

Step 3: Pre-prom. To plan the last hours before the actual prom dance, your group needs to decide where to eat, where to take pictures, and what type of transportation is best. Prom is expensive because they provide tons of food at the event, so there’s really no need to spend loads on dinner. Go and have some appetizers and just hang out before going to the dance. Take pictures where there is beautiful scenery, whether it be at a lake, a fountain with surrounding trees and flowers, or at someone’s home with a colorful yard. Most people travel in limos to prom because it can be a hassle to drive and find parking on a night that should be stress free. Also, it is very dangerous to drive home late at night, because you will be tired and most proms end at midnight. A good option is to rent a limo by the hour and split it with the people in your group.

Step 4: The after party. After prom, groups of friends usually hang out some more either at someone’s house or at the beach. Ideas vary from watching movies and talking with friends, to lighting bonfires and going swimming on the beach. The most important thing is to BE SAFE! Don’t engage in underage drinking or other risky behavior, and always think before acting.

Step 5: Have fun. At all cost… AVOID “PROM-A” (a.k.a. prom drama). This always happens. Example: “OMG, that girl is wearing the SAME dress as I am!” Chill out! Whatever the reason may be, do not act irrationally. Don’t let the situation get to you and try to have fun with your other friends. For most people, prom happens only once in a lifetime and shouldn’t be wasted thinking about nonsense. Definitely remember that prom doesn’t have to be a budget buster. Most importantly, try to enjoy the night, and you are sure to make memories you will cherish forever! ~ Meghan Tang MHSWH Junior Board Vice President
We all know that prom night is a major event for a high school senior, or maybe even a junior at some schools. There is lots of preparation involved, including clothing, transportation, dinner/food, getting a date, and possibly an after party. One of the most important things that you have to keep in mind on a night like this is safety. Dangerous things and life-threatening situations are definitely a possibility during prom, especially if you don’t stay vigilant and do all you can to avoid them.

Getting a date is first on the list of safety concerns. Avoid asking someone you barely know to prom, as your parents will be more comfortable knowing you’ll be with someone familiar for the night. Try not to have any proma (prom drama), focus on your date and have a good time with each other. Don’t do anything you will regret in the future.

Transportation is also another important aspect of prom safety. Make sure you know how to get to your date’s house, if you are driving, and the destination of the event. Make sure that at no part of the night do you or your date drink or take any drugs. This is especially important if you are going to be the designated driver. Crashing while drunk during prom night is one of the worst ways to end your senior year, and possibly your life. Just decline any offer of drugs and avoid alcohol.

Overall, don’t do anything dangerous or risky on prom night. It just isn’t worth it. Be sure to use good judgment with transportation issues and be especially careful while driving! Prom night is the one night we don’t want to see our volunteers at the hospital. With these tips, you’ll have a great, safe time with your date. Make smart decisions, and prom night will be a cherished memory. ~ Vinh Ho, MHSWH Junior Board Social Director
Summer Time, Fun Time Tips

Think you’re going to be bored over the summer? Try some of these things to keep you occupied:

* Want to cool off and get a tan? Try the beach or go swimming.
* Want to exercise? Try biking.
* Bored at home? Take a road trip.
* Want to do something with the family? Go on a vacation.
* Want to hang out with friends? Go to the movies.
* Want to do something educational? Go to the museum.
* Want to do something helpful? VOLUNTEER!!!

~ Anam Sherali, MHSWH Junior Board Publicity Liaison

College Survival Strategies

1. ORGANIZATION:
Get organized and keep a daily planner.

2. FAMILIARITY:
Get familiar with the campus. Go visit the Library, Bookstore, Recreation or Student Center, etc.

3. ATTENDANCE:
Attend class. Be on time - or a little early.

4. PREPARATION:
Keep up-to-date on your studies and read ahead of the lecture.

5. THE LIBRARY:
Use the library to study, read, and relax.

6. STUDY:
Study every day - give yourself some rest, though. Work with tutors if needed.

7. QUALITY:
Set a high standard for yourself. Avoid laziness, and do not procrastinate.

8. SOCIALIZE:
Join clubs and be active in your community. Volunteer if you can!

9. PROFESSORS:
Get to know your professors and visit them during their office hours.

10. HELP:
Ask for help if and when you need it. Colleges offer tutors and many other resources which can help students succeed.

11. HEALTH:
Don’t forget to take care of your health. Eat well, relax, and get plenty of sleep.

12. STRESS:
Don’t stress yourself out. Try to keep a good sense of humor!

~ Aala Al Hasan, MHSWH Junior Board Secretary