

## **From the Counselor's Desk**

Childhood should be a journey - not a race. The forces and pressures of today's commercialism and societal expectations work against this concept. Too much too quickly is thrown at our children forcing them to experience more than they are psychologically ready to process. Let children be children. Trust in your inner voice telling you what is best for your child; don't let the media make decisions for you. Don't let your child's plea, "But everybody's doing it or everybody's going," make the decision for you. And don't let them convince you that you are out of touch or you just don't understand the way things are done these days. Let me give you an example of how this might play out. Your Middle School student wants to go to the mall or to the movie and she doesn't want you or any other adult to accompany her/him and her/his friends. She might defend her position by saying something like this, "I'm old enough to go by myself." and "You don't trust me and that's why you want to go with me." Socialization is a driving force for the Middle School student and it's a valid need for them but parents still need to manage and set boundaries for the environment in which this need is exercised.