

Let's Talk Shop

“Let’s Talk Shop” is a facilitated evening event that brings volunteer parents of teens from one community together with volunteer teens from another community in a confidential, respectful, and safe environment. Through guided exercises and workshops, parents and teens are prepared for the event which seeks to: provide parent education; empower teenagers; and strengthen connections between the teen and adult populations. During the event, parents will be together in a circle amongst the teenagers listening to them describe what it is like in *their* world – what pressures and issues North Shore teenagers struggle with. The teens share their insights on topics such as relationships with parents and peers, stress, school, drugs and alcohol, internet influences, mental health, and other difficult but important issues. There is no glamorization of risky behavior nor is there opportunity to scare or mislead parents. Parents also have the opportunity, if they choose, to answer youth questions on what it’s like to be a parent today. Parents walk away from the event with a renewed sense of empathy and respect for young people, an understanding of their challenges, and greater confidence to be more effective agents in their own teen’s life. Teenagers walk away with the knowledge that they have made a valuable contribution to the adult community and a greater appreciation for their parents’ experiences. Through this event, staff and community partners provide a rare and empowering opportunity to build capacity in and connection between North Shore teenagers and parents.