



create a passion for lifelong learning.

CELC was founded in 2009 by educators Melinda Alcosser and Maria Mortali to serve families and students that want small classes and a structured

and challenging curriculum within a safe and nurturing learning community. Through years of teaching in a small middle school setting, these educators witnessed how powerful this model of school can be.

CELC provides full-time instruction in a range of subject areas that include science, writing, grammar, history, literature, math, Spanish, culinary arts, outdoor education, music and field studies. In addition to the core curriculum, CELC also offers a variety of workshops and special events for homeschoolers in the area.

Middle school is a time of life when students contend with social pressures, bullying, low self-esteem and raging hormones. To avoid negativity, students at CELC develop real relationships with their teachers and peers. There is no hiding; the issues that come up are processed and worked through immediately and social skills are built on an ongoing basis. The staff works directly with students and attempts to use social interactions as the learning experiences that they are.

From cooking class to outdoor education, a typical day or week in the life of CELC includes a wide variety of experiences, both in and outside the classroom, so that students enter their young adulthood as capable and confident learners and citizens. This rich learning environment combines rigorous academics with hands-on, real-world experiences to develop capable and self-reliant students that are prepared for high school and today's changing world.

The Connecticut Experiential Learning Center is located at 28 School St., in Branford, CT. For more information, call 203-433-4658, email mandm@CTExperiential.org or visit CTExperiential.org. See ad on page 33.

Melinda Alcosser and Maria Mortali are co-founders and primary educators at the Connecticut Experiential Learning Center.



Sensitively Preparing Youth for the REAL WORLD

by Melinda Alcosser and Maria Mortali

The Connecticut Experiential Learning Center (CELC) provides a middle school education for students from 10 to 14 years old in grades five to eight, blending strong academics with hands-on and field experiences for a rich educational setting that allows young adolescents to thrive.

The intention of CELC is to challenge students and nurture their highest potential. By providing a learning community based on the guiding principles of respect, integrity, responsibility and individual learning, the innate desire of all children to learn, grow, communicate and create is honored. Small class sizes, personalized curriculum, cutting-edge teaching, social skill building, adventures, fun and laughter all help

