

Places for Struggling Teens™



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"It is more important to get it right, than to get it first."

August 2008 - Issue #168

SOCIETY'S CANARY

By Lon Woodbury



It has been reported that the canary was used by early miners as an early warning system for when the air was becoming toxic. When the canary started showing distress, the miners knew that even though the air seemed fine to them, the canary showed there was something seriously wrong and the miners had to take immediate action to escape.

In a sense, the existence of the rapidly expanding network of private residential parent-choice schools and programs for struggling teens is a canary for how our society raises children. The very existence of this private network is a reflection of the distress from which many young people and their families suffer. Those parents lucky or dedicated enough to pay the tuitions for schools and programs in this network are escaping from an environment that is the equivalent of the early miners' toxic air.

Consider this! Virtually all students enrolled by their parents in this private network have had multiple failures. Many were failing school for a variety of reasons, while others have undergone extensive therapy or placements in mainstream residential treatment facilities without success. Some are troubled and angry by disintegrating families. Most placements in these private facilities are done by the parents specifically to remove their child from negative self-destructive decisions and a negative environment in order to see the return of their happy optimistic child from earlier times. The fact that parents will pay the high tuitions required to try to save their child's future shows how desperate these parents are.

Placements in the schools and programs in this network are just the tip of the iceberg. Most parents with seriously struggling teens either cannot afford the tuition or cannot bring themselves to make this desperate decision. For every child enrolled in this network, there are probably dozens who are suffering with little relief or with inadequate interventions.

If families were healthy, if mainstream schools were able to meet children's needs and if treatment facilities and juvenile justice facilities were effective, the network of private parent-choice residential schools and programs would

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NEWSWEEK SEEKING PARENTS/ ALUMNI

(June 26, 2008) Jennie Yabroff, writing for Newsweek, is researching for an in-depth and fair story on wilderness programs and therapeutic boarding schools. She wants to focus on the experience of girls and their families. Jennie would like to talk to parents who are anywhere in the process and want to share their story. Nobody will be quoted without his or her express permission. Jennie can be contacted at Jennie.Yabroff@newsweek.com or 212-445-5788.

[Essays and articles appearing in this publication are the opinions of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the policy of Woodbury Reports, Inc.,™ or StrugglingTeens.com.™ We urge our readers to conduct their own investigation of the products and services identified herein.]

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Woodbury Reports™ is an information source to help parents find the right school or program when their child has behavioral/ emotional problems. We are specifically concerned with children needing more intensive intervention than local resources or day programs can provide.

Our focus is on high quality and effective Emotional Growth and/ or Therapeutic schools and programs, which can include short- and long-term outdoor programs, family style living arrangements, highly structured boarding schools, therapeutic boarding schools, RTCs or psychiatric hospitals.

An important goal of these schools and programs is to teach self-discipline through consequences, so the child will learn to be more responsible for his/ her actions. How attitudes are changed and who is successful is at the focus of each issue of Reports.

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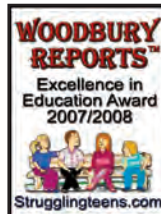
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“Some Children just need to be heard, not cured.”

Lon Woodbury, IECA, MA, CEP, is an educational consultant who has worked in schools and programs for emotional growth, character education, and consulting for parents of struggling teens since 1984. Prior to that, he taught in public schools and was involved in public policy while working for the US Senate and the Executive Office of the President. Lon received his BS and MA degrees from the University of Idaho. His practice includes a referral service for parents and professionals, and the publication of this Newsletter and the **PARENT EMPOWERMENT HANDBOOK™**, a resource of **Places for Struggling Teens™**.

SOCIETY: Continued from 1

not exist. There would be no need for this network, and there would be no demand for it.

That this network does exist, and is rapidly growing, is a strong sign that our society is not successful at meeting the needs of many of our young people. We are the canary pointing to a society that seems to be failing at meeting the needs of many of our children.

Since this network of schools and programs was created by parents fleeing failing institutions of society, what might that tell us the parents are looking for? They are looking for:

- A place where the adults are in charge, rather than huge public institutions where the children live primarily in their own independent culture
- A place where the best aspects of character such as self-discipline, accountability and responsibility are taught, rather than stand by while their child learns some perverted and self-destructive idea that anything goes, or “if it feels good, do it”
- A place where their child can receive the individually tailored and caring help he/she needs, rather than institutions that see children as basically the same and interchangeable, or that treat a diagnosis rather than the child, or just punish behavior that is socially disapproved
- Adults that can be respected and trusted as positive role models
- A place that values mature adult virtues rather than enduring their child getting sucked into some self-indulgent adolescent pop culture

That thousands of parents make a considerable emotional and financial sacrifice for the chance of exposing their children to a positive environment is a very strong case that our society is failing too many children.

With all its strengths, weaknesses and human failings, this network of private parent-choice residential schools and programs is the canary telling us that something is wrong in our society, and that we need to do something different in how we as a society raise our children.

How many legs does a dog
have if you call the tail a leg?

Four.

Calling a tail a leg
doesn't make it a leg.

~ Abraham Lincoln

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY PROGRAMS IN UTAH?!

By: Larry Stednitz

This question comes up in conversations with many of my families. Utah seems to be the Silicon Valley of the Parent Choice schools and programs, which is likely to continue into the foreseeable future. There are easy answers to the question and other explanations that are more subtle. Forty-five Utah programs are listed and described in the Woodbury Reports' Parent Empowerment Handbook. No other state comes close to that number of programs. This fact is even more remarkable given that the programs in this handbook are documented as being quality programs by independent educational consultants across the country who work in this network.

The first reason for the large number of programs in Utah begins with Provo Canyon School. Provo was founded in 1971 with its humble beginnings as a group home. Provo grew into one of the largest and best-known residential treatment programs in the country. Known for working with difficult teenagers, the refrain from parents and professionals across the country was “If you don't shape up, you are going to Provo Canyon!” Over the years, Provo Canyon has trained and influenced hundreds, if not thousands, of childcare staff, medical staff, teachers, clinicians and other support staff. Many moved on to begin their own versions of Provo. In doing so, they took knowledge and experience from Provo, adding their own bells and whistles to create their own programs.

One example will illustrate this: Jerry Spanos, CEO of the Heritage Center, worked at Provo, eventually leaving because he had the belief that the most important treatment entity was directly related to the quality of relationships with clients. He felt this approach would be a great improvement to the strict methods of control practiced at Provo in the 1980's. Jerry started Heritage Center in 1984. Today the two programs treat over 500 young people every day. Heritage is but one of many programs that “grew” out of Provo over the years.

The second major impact was the development of wilderness programs. Doug Nelson, Larry Olsen and Ezekiel Sanchez were early pioneers of wilderness programming. All three men were involved with Brigham Young University in Provo, UT. There they developed wilderness programming for BYU students who were not achieving at levels of which they were

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capable. This program had great success, and out of this experience, Doug Nelson developed what is now called Aspen Achievement Academy (AAA). Over the years, AAA also trained and influenced many therapists, medical staff, logistics personnel, field instructors and others who had learned how to operate a wilderness program. It is very difficult to find a wilderness program in the State of Utah that has not been influenced by these three men and, specifically, Aspen Achievement Academy. From these modest beginnings, wilderness programs in Utah have developed more than 10 fold since 1989 when AAA was founded.

The culture of Utah is also unique and lends itself to the development of programs that are intended to help others. Utah citizens as a whole place value upon the family and community, perhaps more than any state in the Union. This sets the stage for supporting parents in getting help for their children and developing laws and regulations that effectively manage the huge number of programs in Utah.

Another major cultural characteristic of Utah is all said on their license plates: "UTAH! The Beehive State." Its citizens have a deeply ingrained practice of doing things well, whether it be a smoothly run Olympics, an efficiently operated airport, a

downtown that is clean and easy to navigate or their numerous and respected universities and colleges, which also fuel programs with talent. Utah values achievement and entrepreneurial initiatives as well as hard work. It is no wonder that Utah leads the country in the development of programs for troubled children and families. From where I sit, the citizens of Utah and their culture have set the stage for their success in our industry.

I believe that an overwhelming number of elementary school boys diagnosed with conduct disorders or with what is often called attention deficit disorder, or ADD, are misbehaving not because they have a biological imbalance or deficit, but because they are seeking attention to replace the void left by their mothers and fathers.

~ William Pollack

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THE IMPORTANCE OF PRE-ENROLLMENT VISITS

By: Laura Morton

Once parents make that difficult decision to get some help for their child and begin researching the different options, they need to consider what's next.

An Educational Consultant that specializes in helping parents with children making poor decisions can help with the research and offer assistance, guidance and much discussion to help can develop a plan of attack. However, it is important to set aside time to tour each campus being considered.

Visiting a program is usually done without the child for many reasons. For one, he or she will undoubtedly refuse to go and will threaten to do "whatever" is needed to do to ensure parents don't go either. Secondly, parents need to be able to talk freely and openly with the staff at the school about presenting issues and the family history. Lastly, parents need to process thoughts and feelings concerning a possible enrollment for the child after the tour.

Upon arrival, parents are typically greeted by an admissions counselor, as well as a couple of students

for the tour. These students have often been at the school or program awhile and tend to be more positive about the program. They have shown responsibility at the school and have been set up beforehand on how to tour parents.

During the tour, parents will be guided from one building to the next, from classrooms to main gathering areas. This is the time to really be observant and take in the feeling of the school. Parents should gather the following information about the school.

What does the facility look like? Is it well maintained and are things organized? In order for children to deal with the chaos inside of them, their surroundings need to be neat and uncluttered. Are the beds made and are personal touches adorning their bulletin boards and footlockers? Look and see what kinds of photos are hanging up. Do you see family and friends displayed? This is a good indicator of how the students are dealing with being away from home and if they have built relationships with peers at the school and with their families. Check out the bathroom area, does the tidiness extend to these areas also? If so, this shows there is active staff and faculty presence in the student dorms, making sure

Continued: VISITS/ pg 6


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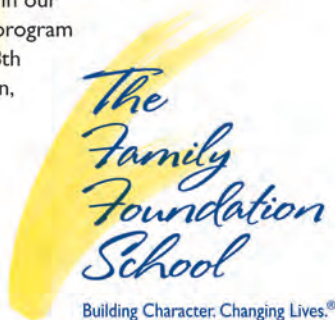
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all areas of the campus are tight. The dorm is one of the most important areas on campus concerning your child. In a sense; this will be their “home” for however long.

How is staff interaction? Do staff and faculty take the time out to greet you and introduce themselves? Are they engaged with the students? How do the students respond to staff? Do they come across as consistent with the school model? What is the staff to student ratio? Are the staff and faculty members hanging out with students or are they congregating in the staff offices? Do the staff and faculty eat meals intermingled with the students or do they sit at a head table?

What is the student’s body language saying? Do they make direct eye contact with you? Do they avoid looking at you when you are introduced? When students meet you and look directly at you, they feel at ease and trust the staff at the program would not bring in strangers who pose a threat to their safety. Do they hover in the corner or peer at you from behind an obstruction as if they want to see if you will notice them? Are they playing, busily studying or otherwise participating in the program?

What is the overall feeling or mood of the school? Is it quiet and tense? Are students engaged in conversations? Do you hear laughter or fun? Are students behaving appropriately? If not, are those behaviors being addressed?

If you get the opportunity to sit and talk with students, don’t be afraid to ask questions. Ask why they are at the school. Ask how they adjusted the first few weeks being there and what it is like for them now. Ask about the pros and cons of the school. (The students are always willing to tell the “good, the bad and the ugly,” but remember; these students are also struggling with their own issues and are dealing with being “sent away,” so be prepared to hear some negativity.)

Finally, make sure to take advantage of your time on campus and gather as much information as possible. Then ask yourself, “Is this the place my child will learn to grow and trust again? Will he/ she be safe here? Will we, as a family, be able to re-build our relationship?” Most importantly, you know your child better than any professional in the world; trust your gut instincts.

About the Author:

Laura Morton has worked in the parent-choice private education network for over 20 years, as a counselor and team leader. She currently works for Woodbury Reports, Inc in Bonners Ferry, ID, 208-267-5550, lmorton@woodbury.com.

TEN STEPS TO EMPOWERING AND LAUNCHING YOUNG ADULTS – Part VI

By: Randy and Colleen Russell

In this issue, we look at the sixth step of the series for parents on how to empower and launch your child into adulthood. The key point from our introduction was that **the underlying goal of healthy parenting is to prepare sons and daughters to be self-reliant, independent individuals who are at home on this planet and in the culture in which they plan to live.**

6. Hold the vision of your child becoming a healthy adult.

Those who live extraordinary lives have gone through a rite of passage or initiation into “authentic adulthood”. They have discovered a vision or purpose for their lives. They have an inner compass or mission which directs and feeds them. New initiates need to have mentors – Elders and parents – who have made the journey and can support them. Otherwise, the young person may abort the passage and remain in a type of unsatisfied adolescence.

Deep transitions, ones that move a person from one developmental phase to the next, include a dis-integration and re-integration process (caterpillar to butterfly or nymph to dragonfly). It can feel scary. All of the transitional emotions (sometimes considered negative emotions) like anger, fear, and self-doubt seem to bubble to the surface.

People in transition, whether young or old, can feel like they are going crazy. (This can also drive unsuspecting parents crazy). It is easier to act out or turn to addictions rather than face the tension of this “transforming fire”. It is made even more difficult because of the cultural drive for “relief” and quick fixes.


True developmental phases are neither easy, nor quick, and are filled with real danger. They are also not linear in their progression. It is an inward process with much spiraling, and backwards and forward motions. It is out of this chaos that the new energy needed to become the next phase of “human being” is released into the psyche.

It can be challenging not to get lost in your child’s struggle in becoming who they are. This struggle is

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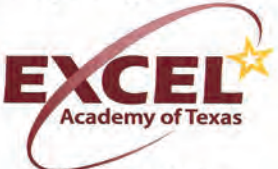
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a primary role of adolescence. Even as we write this, we realize how difficult this parental suggestion might be. Why? Because you are also in transition.

So what does it mean to hold the vision for someone else? Believe your child's life has purpose and this messy transition is their path to discovering it. You do not need to know their vision in order to hold a space for them to discover and incorporate it. You are not leading this journey; it is theirs. You are providing moral support, suggestions and some protection in ways that do not disempower or rescue from meaningful lessons. If you were not successfully mentored into adulthood, this will be difficult.

You, as the parent, hold the expectations of past generations and sometimes the current culture. Your own example of success, or lack of it, is also influential in the child's beliefs of what they are capable of becoming. Many times, your role is to release them from spoken and unspoken expectations so that they can find their own voice and their own vision, apart from yours.

As we mentioned in past articles, your greatest gift is your love for them as a person, just as they are and in what they are going through. This is especially felt and appreciated by them when you give them your

full attention and time. It will be helpful to them if you are working on your own individuation process; you become a model to emulate.

Criticism, skepticism and negativity kill vision. When all your energy is focused on their limitations, it makes it hard for them to believe in themselves. Try not to see them as a diagnosis or illness, or believe that they are the problem and need to be fixed. Realize that if your child is actively using drugs and alcohol they are avoiding the transition. They have moved from one dependency to another. In this case, you want to seek intervention before moving forward.

The livelihood and regeneration of our culture depends upon people successfully moving through these transitions. This is how a culture is regenerated. Our children hold the seeds of what our civilization is to become and they need our support to flourish.

As mentors, Elders and parents, we are the tenders of the seed. If we have found our own "vision", a life that inspires and replenishes our soul, we will know how to hold the space for this flower to come to seed, this human to discover their own vision for living.

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— Former Patient

Part of the problem is that your child did not come in a seed package with a picture of the mature plant on the cover. There weren't instructions on the back for what environment would best meet their needs.

The journey to self is difficult. It is even harder for those whose natural genius and gifts have not been supported in this culture. Be interested without taking over. Teach them to think, feel, explore, create and solve their own problems. Guide them in taking over their own life by seeking what inspires them instead of choosing methods of escape.

About the Authors:

Randy and Colleen Russell direct Parent Workshops for Empowering Young Adults and lead workshops and coaching for families and individuals. For more information call 208-255-2290 or visit www.empoweringyoungadults.com.

All big things in this world are done by people who are naive and have an idea that is obviously impossible.
~ Frank Richards

COACH'S CORNER...

The Coach's Corner is a section of the newsletter devoted to family coaching, and the use of coaching skills in working with parents of struggling teens and young adults in their homes, or while they have a child in program. Coaching in this case can be either an alternative to residential placement when appropriate, a resource for program staff or as an aid in supporting families of young people transitioning home from wilderness or residential programs. The COACH'S CORNER welcomes submissions regarding Coaching (such as essays, research, articles, news, etc.) from anyone.

The Coach's Corner was started by Woodbury Reports, Bill Valentine, Founder of Next Step For Success, and the accredited coaches of Next Step Coach Training, with "real life" condensed snapshots of what Coaching is about.

COACHING IS ABOUT CHANGE

By Bill Valentine PsyD, CC


Coaching is about change. Coaching is forward-facing, strength-based and action-oriented. This is the mantra of the professional coach. However, for many of our clients – parents of struggling teens and young adults – the prospect of making major changes in how they parent creates anxiety, confusion and paralysis. This is when the coach can help break down a seemingly insurmountable obstacle into achievable components. The following is a paraphrasing of a recent conversation one of our

Continued: **Coach/** pg 10

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COACH: Continued from 9

coaches had with a parent whose child was soon to transition home from a wilderness program.

Coach: *How are you feeling about Jackie coming home?*

Client: *Frankly, I'm terrified.*

Coach: *What scares you the most?*

Client: *I'm afraid she is going to come home and nothing will have changed.*

Coach: *Has anything changed?*

Client: *Well, her counselor says she has learned more about herself and has a lot of new tools for controlling her behavior.*

Coach: *And what have you changed?*

Client: *What do you mean? I'm not the one who needed to go to a wilderness program.*

Coach: *Maybe not, but what do you suppose will happen if Jackie comes home with all these new tools and nothing has changed at home; or more to the point, with you.*

Client: *Yes, yes, I know. But, she was completely out of control; her own and mine. What happens if she comes home the same way she left?*

Coach: *What is the thing you want most for you and your daughter?*

Client: *That we have the warm, open relationship we had when she was a little girl.*

Coach: *And since we can only change our part of any relationship, what can you do to bring back your part of that warm, open relationship?*

Client: *Oh my, that was so long ago, and there has been an awful lot of water under our bridge. We both have said hurtful things and she seems so distant now. I just don't know what I can do to change things.*

Coach: *Well let's start with four questions for you to consider. When Jackie comes home:*

- *What would you like to avoid?*
- *What do you want to keep and enhance?*
- *What would you have to let go of?*
- *What would you have to change?*

Use these questions as homework before our next session. Focus your thinking around how things used to be, how they were just before Jackie went to wilderness and how you would like them to be when she comes home. And remember, you can only change yourself, you can't change other people.

It is important to note that the coach didn't get swept up in the drama, the fears and, to some extent, the denial of the client. Keeping the client focused on an area of primary importance helps to remove the negative chatter in her mind while giving her positive, forward-facing direction. At the next session, the coach and client will reexamine and reinforce the client's strong desire for a warm, open relationship with her daughter and, with that goal in mind, engage in specific action planning.

VISITS...

PINE RIVER INSTITUTE

Toronto, Ontario Canada
Amanda Rodgers, Admissions Director
519-925-9225 x102
amanda.r@pineriverinstitute.com
www.pineriverinstitute.com

Visit by: Lon Woodbury, June 5, 2008

Pine River Institute is a program that you almost have to see and experience to understand the work they do. I had read their material and thought I had a general understanding of their program, but it took a couple hours of seeing it and listening to get a real feel for the depth of their program.

Arriving at the 200 acre campus, it looked like a typical idyllic program with students who looked and acted much like typical teens, which considering their past indicates an impressive accomplishment. The initial impression is very similar to what I see at other quality therapeutic boarding schools. Part of that impression is an outdoor oriented environment, clean buildings and living quarters, and students busy and engaged in going about their daily activities. There was a healthy buzz about the place.



As the staff explained the program to me, it became apparent that there is much more to it than just what is apparent on the surface. For example, I saw one student involved in a brief discussion with a staff member. It was apparent he was still very fearful and closed off. His eye contact was minimal and he obviously had a lot of healing to do. At first glance, this observation might indicate that his progress in the wilderness was minimal.

Upon further explanation, I understood he had initially been very resistant in the Wilderness, the first phase of the program, exhibiting violent outbursts. It took about three weeks for him to stabilize and reduce his outbreaks to where he completed the wilderness phase successfully. However, when he was transferred to the second phase, the Residential phase, he displayed that change came hard for him, and he began reverting to his initial patterns of angry outbreaks and disrupting the school. He needed to return to the wilderness to stabilize and work specifically to prepare for the change to the residential portion.

When I saw him at the residential program, he had been back for a few days and seemed to be successful at making the transition this time. Although he still had a long way to go, it was obvious that the progress he had already made was almost a miracle considering

Continued: PINE RIVER/ pg 12

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PINE RIVER: Continued from 11

how troubled his initial behavior indicated he was.

The staff also advised me that recently they had done an analysis of their population, finding that 60 percent of their student body had been abused, some of them sexually, while a third had been cutting on themselves, and many had had suicide ideations. In other words, this program works with a very troubled population whose typical alternative would have been some secure and highly clinical treatment center that was closed off for their own protection. Some students do require intensive stabilization for a short period in a hospital before admission to the program, and some return to the hospital for a brief period of stabilization during the program, so that they are then able to be safely treated in a less restrictive environment. To me, Pine River's option of a healthy, open and natural environment for treatment is a much better alternative.

The campus was initially built as a residential Outdoor Education Centre for Toronto students. Due to a



change in governmental policy, the facility was shut down and stood vacant for a couple of years until the school found and leased it. It was ideal for this kind of program since the infrastructure was already there and just required moving in and modifying it for its own needs. Open only two years, they are still building it to their needs. For example, the students are involved in converting

one of the outbuildings to a gymnasium, and one of the old cabins had just been moved up next to the main building to serve as a chicken coop—feeding the chickens being one of the chores the students take on.

This coed program serves students ages 13-19 with a primary emphasis on substance abuse. But they don't stop there. They are very strong in working with a multitude of other serious disorders also, to the extent that they often will accept a child who has been rejected by other treatment facilities. When I asked if they would accept a child with violent tendencies, which is a very common reason for other treatment facilities to

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reject a child, the staff said that they would consider it on a case-by-case basis. While a history of violent aggressive behavior would be an exclusion criterion, this kind of behavior associated with substance use is common, and several children with a short-term history of violent tendencies have enrolled and been successful. Instead of being automatically screened out, each applicant is assessed and considered.



The Residential phase normally lasts for five months and operates very much like a therapeutic boarding school. The residential facility has a high staff to student ratio, which according to staff, is necessary to keep the students safe while still maintaining an open facility that is unfenced and unlocked. Initially, there is very strong on-site supervision for the newly

arrived students, that lessens as the students progress in taking responsibility for their own actions. The staff consists of highly trained individuals with a multitude of different and helpful credentials and experiences. The staff members were friendly and willingly answered my questions, while at the same time keeping a close eye on the students.

Each child goes through four phases. The first phase is the Wilderness (Outdoor Leadership Experience) which usually lasts from 4-6 weeks. It is designed so they can handle those children going through detoxification. Their wilderness program is heavily expedition based and the goal is to stabilize the child so he/she can make a successful transition to the second phase, which is the residential facility I visited. The usual result for the students is to come out of the wilderness phase physically fit and, to at least some extent, emotionally connected.

Once a student has progressed to being able to take on more responsibility and act appropriately the student will move into the third, Transition. In Transition, students continue their school and emotional work at

Continued: PINE RIVER/ pg 14

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PINE RIVER: Continued from 13

the facility, but start emphasizing visits home and working on their plans for the future. The two students who gave me a tour were set to graduate shortly. They knew the day they were going to graduate and had arranged how they were going to transition back into their homes and go on for further education.



Once students formally graduate, they go home and on to school or work. The students are shifted into what they call Aftercare, the fourth phase, in which the program maintains contact with the students, always available any time the graduates need help or support. In all, there is a concept of a continuing flow of progress starting with the impact of the initial wilderness and gradually, step by step, helping the students progress toward living successfully on their own.

Family involvement is a very important element. From the very first, the program works at developing a sense of community among all the parents, starting with a parent/family retreat very early in the program, and continuing on throughout the students' stay and even long into Aftercare. In addition, every six weeks there is a comprehensive team review of the student's progress, the team consisting of the student's mentor, teachers, therapist(s), parents, the student and any others involved in his/her life at the school.

CEO and Founder Karen Minden was inspired to develop this two-year-old program by her experience a number of years ago of placing her child in a program in the States. She gives full credit to how much that program helped her child, who is now an adult and one of the co-founders of the Institute. They went on to learn from the best practices in a number of other US programs, and Pine River Institute was specifically designed to incorporate the best aspects of existing programs and the evidence base available in studies of adolescent development, mental health and addiction treatment. From a brief tour, it appears that they have been very successful at that and it seems that Pine River is getting great results.

EXCEL ACADEMY OF TEXAS

Conroe, Texas
 Barbara L. Potignano, Admissions Director
 800-260-9176
bpotignano@EXCELacademytx.com
www.EXCELacademytx.com

Visit By: Brian Proctor, IECA, March 11, 2008

This really is 'The New EXCEL!' EXCEL bills itself as a "Sober Academy" and it is – in every way. EXCEL Academy of Texas no longer is the 'last chance academy.' The orange jumpsuits and flip-flops that were so noticeable during my first visit in April 2002 are long gone.

Don Vardell, Executive Director, has become the driving force behind the 'new' EXCEL. He arrived on the EXCEL scene in August 2007. At that time, EXCEL Academy had 110 students. From August 2007 to January 2008, through attrition, redirection to more appropriate programs, and a large graduation in December 2007, the enrollment shrank to 15 students. The restructuring of EXCEL Academy began in earnest in January 2008.

We arrived at EXCEL a little after 9:00 am. At 9:30, we were given a very thorough presentation of the Academy by Don Vardell, Barbara Potignano, Director of Admissions, Scott Spaw, Director of Program and Services, Duncan McGinnis, Academic Director, and Michael Charnley, Manager of Program and Services, who spoke on Student Life. Following the presentation, we had a one-hour campus tour followed by lunch at a local restaurant.



EXCEL Academy is located about one hour north of Houston, Texas, on a beautiful 35-acre campus in a

Continued: **EXCEL/** pg 16



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EXCEL: Continued from 15

retreat-like setting. The current mission statement – hammered out in January 2008 – is “to offer a college preparatory academic curriculum while providing support to develop skills for making right choices, maintaining and renewing healthy relationships, and living a life in recovery from drugs and alcohol.” EXCEL is a co-ed sober academy and can be classified as a specialty therapeutic boarding school with integrated evidence-based clinical services. The students follow the traditional 12-Step philosophy and attend Alcoholic Anonymous meetings both on and off campus. A great deal of emphasis is placed on transparency and communication, not only on campus but also with the entire family of each student. The length of stay is flexible, with a typical student attending between six and twelve months, though average length of stay currently is six months.

When we visited, there were 20 students registered at the Academy. The plan of the ‘new’ EXCEL is to



increase enrollment to 35, and plans for the future have a maximum enrollment of 56 students. Since our visit corresponded with Spring Break at the Academy, several of the students were on pre-graduation home visits, while others were on a field trip in Houston. There were no academic classes being conducted.

The typical student must be compliant and demonstrate that he or she needs the EXCEL program. His/ Her primary issue is substance abuse and the student needs a year of sobriety in a structured environment to regain their academic potential. EXCEL Academy does not accept escorted students. The threshold IQ for academic acceptance is approximately 90, but this can be flexible based on the possibility the student might have been ‘under the influence’ at the time the testing took place. Other traits a typical EXCEL student manifests are: an unmotivated academic achiever, needs high school grades 9 through 12, has family relationship



Photo by Skyler Jensen

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problems, has had previous short-term intervention and/or is college bound. A majority of the EXCEL students come from wilderness or previous interventions such as 28- to 45-day drug and alcohol treatment programs, or more traditional schools that do not specialize in substance abuse. EXCEL is also able to work with students who come directly from home.



Families are invited to visit once per month on campus after the student reaches Level Two. Off-campus and home visits are earned as the student progresses through the level system. Much of this family interaction is individualized.

EXCEL Academy is accredited by SACS – Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and

CASI – Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation. This special purpose school academic credential allows students to transfer credits received at EXCEL to other secondary and post-secondary institutions.

EXCEL Academy provides daily on-campus 12-Step meetings as well as off-campus meetings for students that have earned the privilege via their performance based level system. The treatment teams address co-occurring issues using cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), behavioral therapy and reality therapy. Students are assigned to their primary therapist upon arrival and they meet one-on-one once a week. There are counseling facilitated group sessions and skill-building workshops where issues are addressed. The family program includes parent seminars, phone conferences (weekly) and a parent check-in website.

Average class size is 10 students but in the 9th and 10th grades the classes are smaller than 10. The Academy does accept students with mild to moderate learning differences but provides for only minor accommodations. The academic calendar is divided into three 17-week trimesters.

Continued: EXCEL/ pg 18



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EXCEL: Continued from 17

Student life at EXCEL Academy is a balance of work, play (sober fun) and recovery related skill building. Choices are constantly provided, as EXCEL does not want to “program” their students too much. A flexible dress code stresses ‘clean casuals’. Males are allowed to have some facial hair provided it is neatly trimmed.

The sports facilities are quite extensive. There is a fully equipped weight room, a small swimming pool for pleasure dips, a full football and baseball facility (batting practice was taking place when we toured), an athletics program, an outdoor basketball court and a large pond where the kids can fish from the shore. A mountain bike trail is currently under construction.

The residences that we toured were very clean and neat, and all had extensive and well-appointed common room areas.

I met two students while we were on tour. They were neatly dressed and very ‘clean cut’. Both were enthusiastic and effervescent about how the EXCEL program had helped with their recovery. They were very proud of their sobriety. I asked them what, in their opinion, was the best part of the program. One said he really liked finally getting his academics on track, and now, he has the possibility of going to a

college of his choice. The other student told me that leading an on campus AA meeting was one of his best experiences. He went on to say that he was turning 18 in a couple of weeks and would be staying at EXCEL until he had completed all his credits for his Senior High School graduation.

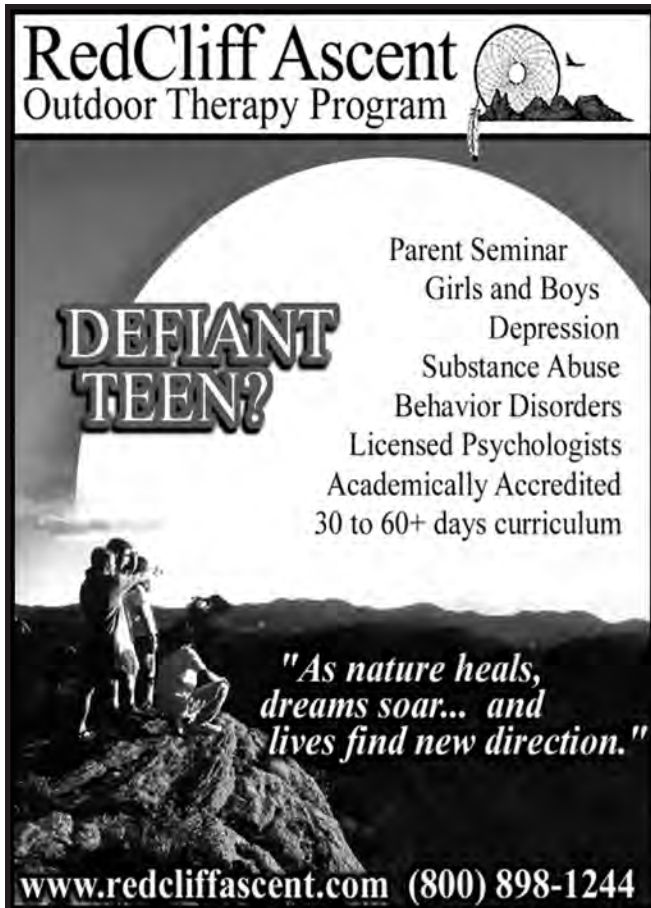
EXCEL Academy has very strong leadership, a dedicated faculty and a very strong clinical team and program. I highly recommend it for a teenager with substance abuse that has come to a position in their life that they want to go down the road to recovery.

About the Author:

Brian Proctor is an Educational Consultant from Coburg, Ontario, Canada. He is a member of the IECA, President of an association of United States Admissions Officers and Educational Consultants called Round Table which is made up of over 80 NAIS schools and consultants. Contact Brian at www.educationlinks.ca, brian@educationlinks.ca, or call 905-372-7743 for more information.

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~ Derek Bok




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NEW PERSPECTIVES...

[New Perspectives schools and programs are those new to Woodbury Reports, Inc., and are presented to expand your knowledge, with the disclaimer that we know little more about them at this time than what appears here. Inclusion in Places for Struggling Teens™, of course, does not imply any endorsement by Woodbury Reports, Inc. -Lon]

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Schrom Therapeutic Home Care for Boys – also known as “Hawks Landing” – is a new family-style, therapeutic home for young men ages 13-18 years old that have emotional and behavioral struggles. Typical issues include low self-esteem, learning difficulties, school truancy, school failure, drug and alcohol abuse, impulse control, anger management, oppositional defiance, poor social skills and issues with adoption and family conflicts.

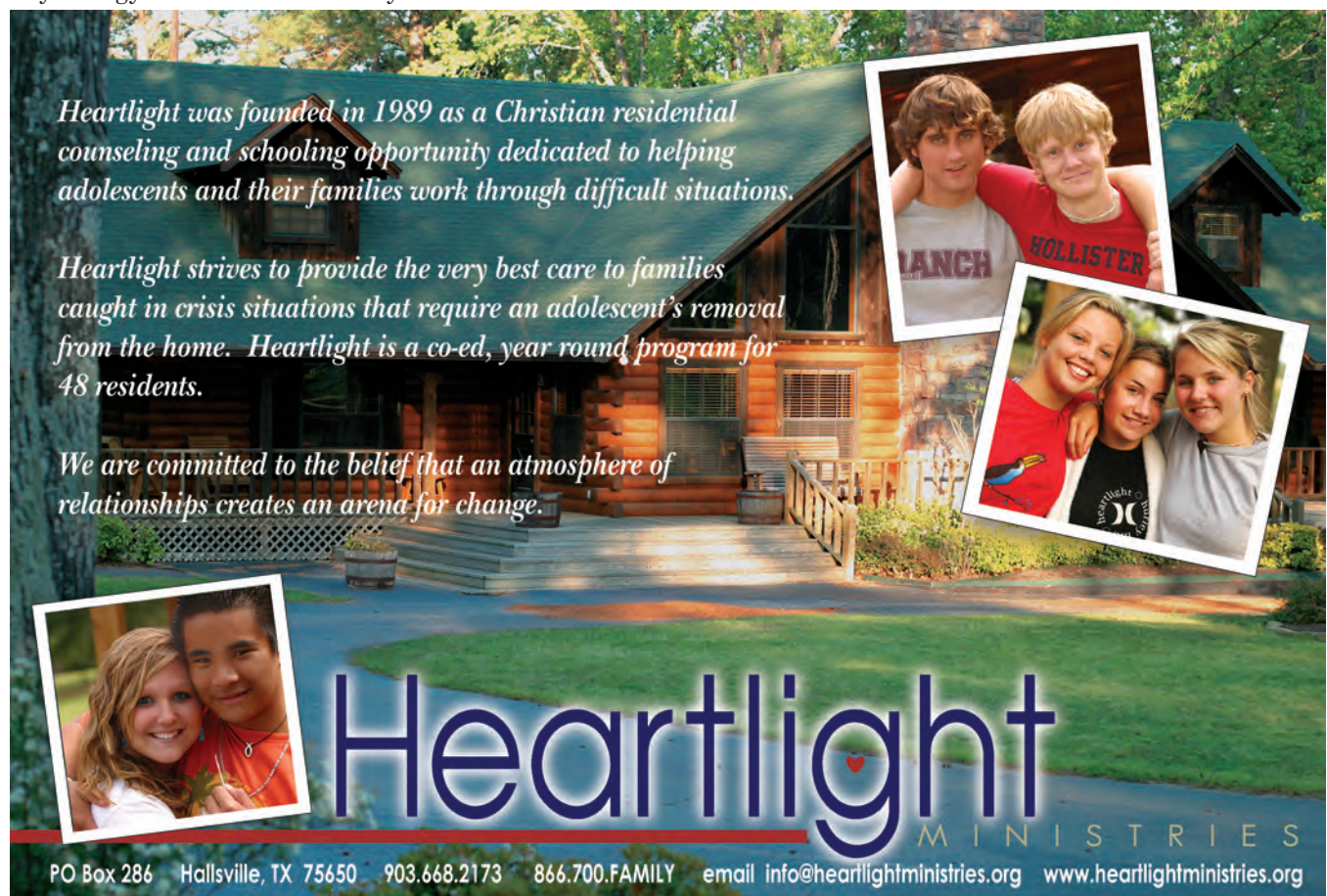
Founded in 2008, John Schrom has over 25 years as a licensed Psychotherapist, Clinical Director and Executive School Director. John received his BA in Psychology from the University of Notre Dame and

an MS in Educational Psychology and Counseling from California State University Northridge. He is licensed in Idaho as a Licensed Professional Counselor and in California as a Marriage and Family Therapist. Julia Schrom was a former Family Service Coordinator, Hospice Volunteer, Certified Nursing Assistant, Home Health Aide and Post Partum Doula.

Students learn the process of problem solving, conflict resolution, anger management and positive coping skills and communication, with a focus on accountability and responsibility. They participate in counseling, equine therapy and 12-Step meetings, in addition to daily independent living skills

Academics for each student are based on specific needs, with options for attending classes at the local high school and special education services and tutoring. Students may also participate in extracurricular activities and part-time employment, in addition to attending North Idaho College. Recreational activities include music lessons, community service, field trips, sports and outdoor adventures including biking, canoeing, swimming and skiing.

[This information came from the Schrom Therapeutic Home Care for Boys website.]



Heartlight was founded in 1989 as a Christian residential counseling and schooling opportunity dedicated to helping adolescents and their families work through difficult situations.

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AUSTIN SENDERO

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Austin Sendero is a new residential treatment facility founded in June 2008. Owned by CRC Health Group, it is designed for young men and women ages 17 and older, who struggle with bulimia, anorexia and binge eating disorders that require residential care.

Brad Kennington, MA, LMFT, LPC, is the Executive Director at Austin Sendero and has been with the CRC Health Group since 2007. Brad received his Masters in Professional Counseling from Texas State University and serves as the chair of governmental affairs for the Texas Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. He is a founding member of Austin Eating Disorder Specialists and a clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Clinical Director Dana Bevill, MS, LPC, received her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Southwest Texas State University and her Masters degree in Counseling Psychology with a specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy from Our Lady of the Lake University.

Austin Sendero offers Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), individual and group therapy, gender specific group therapy, nutrition therapy and family therapy. Expressive art therapy and spirituality groups help to create positive change through reflection, poetry, visual arts, music, dance and drama.

The Austin Sendero community of support provides fitness education and structured techniques in combination with a proper nutrition plan based on the unique needs of the individual. The dietitian and the chef work together to create a balanced and nutritional menu for the residents. Quality of food and nutrition are analyzed and emphasized as substances that are nourishing to the body and mind. There are ample opportunities for residents to participate in grocery shopping, restaurant outings and food preparation.

Residents who complete their stay at Austin Sendero have access to CRC Health's on-line Eating Disorder support group, which meets weekly with a counselor to address issues and fears and provide therapeutic support for long term recovery.

[This information came from the Austin Sendero website.]

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Wediko's Summer Program – started in 1934 by Dr. Robert A. Young – is a 45-day residential treatment program for boys and girls ages 6-18 who struggle with ADD/ADHD, learning disabilities, social and behavioral issues, depression, anxiety, Asperger's Disorder, adoption/attachment disorder and long term foster care.

Harry W. Parad, PhD, Executive Director, began working at Wediko in 1965 at the New Hampshire Summer Program, and earned his PhD in Clinical Psychology at Chapel Hill. Financial Director Patricia Fries, MSM, has worked Wediko's Summer Program since 1974; Assistant Financial Director Terri D. Hamer has been at Wediko since 1994; Development Manager Patrick Ryan, LICSW, MBA, began his work at Wediko in 1997 and Special Projects Coordinator, Judith A. King, PhD, began working at Wediko in 1981.

Students reside in cabins with staff members, simulating a family-like atmosphere. Each group is managed by a clinical team that works to identify areas of change, encouraging students to practice and develop skills for positive change in their relationships with family and peers. Daily group therapy and Wediko's summer academic program "Think City" addresses school-related behavior issues and learning disabilities. Through experiential classrooms and activities, students experience academic, social and emotional success.

Summer activities include swimming, kayaking, music and theatre, biking, fishing, canoeing, dance, art and athletics.

[This information came from the Wediko website and brochure.]

If you don't get angry at people who deserve your anger, you will get angry at those who don't deserve your anger.

~ Michael Levine



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- Limited 64 bed capacity
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Website: www.newhavenrtc.com

NEW HOPE WILDERNESS CAMP

Ava, Missouri
Paul Griffis, Director
417-683-9793
Paul_yaja@yahoo.com
www.thegriffisfamily.com

New Hope Wilderness Camp is a 21-day, Christian-based wilderness program for young men and women ages 11-20 years old who struggle with behavioral issues such as defiance and hostility towards family, truancy, substance abuse, violence and depression, eating disorders and lack of respect. This is not a co-ed program; males and females are divided into separate programs.

Paul and Velma Griffis are the Directors at New Hope Wilderness and have both worked extensively with the Yanomamo Indians of Venezuela and Brazil. Paul has a degree in Intercultural Studies and is EAGALA certified as an Equine specialist, both in Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Equine Assisted Growth and Learning. He has been a Youth Pastor and served as a Missionary in Venezuela and Brazil. Velma, also a Missionary, has a degree in Intercultural Studies.

Horses are utilized as the main activity and therapy with the students, with the first two weeks devoted to learning about the care and safety in working with the horses, eventually working toward group trail rides.

Students and staff live primitively, sharing one room cabin tents that are insulated and set up with wood heaters in the winter months. All primary cooking is done over a campfire and part of the daily chores involves gathering firewood for cooking. Physical activities include hiking, jogging and cleaning the horse trails. Evenings are reserved for sitting around the campfire and discussing a nightly "World View Devotional" before going to sleep.

[This information came from the New Hope Wilderness Camp website.]

Schools need not preach political doctrine to defend democracy. If they shape men capable of critical thought and trained in social attitudes, that is all that is necessary.

~ Albert Einstein

EXTENDED INSIGHTS...

TIPS TO HELP TEENS SURVIVE ECONOMY

By: Allen Cardoza

As the US economy comes to grips with an economic downturn felt in nearly every household, the effects on teenagers are often overlooked.

As the nation's jobless numbers continue to rise we tend to forget the teenager who counted on a summer job to help pay for his first new car. As gasoline and food prices rise, the effect on the teenager's spending money can seem devastating and appear to be the end of the world from his perspective. It is important for parents to share economic conditions with their teenagers from both a national and personal level.

Sometimes a teenager runs away, believing the family situation is hopeless due to a change in the economic status of the head of household. The teenagers may believe that they are part of the problem and have nothing to offer as part of the solution. Let me emphasize West Shield's experience in location and mediation services for runaway teenagers.

Here are four significant ways parents can help teens survive and thrive in an economic downturn.

- Speak immediately and honestly about the family financial and employment situation. Be sure to relate the personal situation to the economy. Provide security for your teenagers in the form of assurance that the economic situation is not their fault. You cannot predict when it will end, only that as a family you will get through it.
- Be firm about spending changes that will need to be made. Allow reductions across the board. Prioritize what is needed most by whom. Explain your decisions but make them firm, based on need and not personal reactions.
- Assist your teenager with income producing ideas such as a dog walking service, grocery delivery, mowing lawns, etc. Allow your teenagers to contribute a percentage to the household budget and keep a portion for their own "extras."
- Budget a fun family activity at regular intervals to keep everyone motivated.

The main goal is to keep teenagers knowledgeable as to the affects of the economic downturn without imposing guilt or blame. Many parents are frustrated by the painful effect the lack of financial resources has on their teenagers. No parents want to see their child unhappy. Communication is the key.

About the Author:

Allen Cardoza is the President and Founder of West Shield Adolescent Services, an international transport and mediation service for teenagers and families in crisis. He hosts the new Internet radio show, Answers for the Family on LATalkradio.com, Monday's at 11:00AM (PST). Allen is a licensed private investigator, an instructor of Non-Violent Crisis Intervention and certified by the National Crisis Prevention Institute, Newport Beach, CA, 800-899-8585, contactus@transportingteens.com transportingteens.com.

The ultimate measure of an individual is not where they stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where they stand in times of challenge and controversy.

~ Martin Luther King

BOOK REVIEWS...

TWELVE + TWO STEPS: TEENS IN RECOVERY

By: Michael Yeager, BA, LCDC, CHt, RMT, CTC

© 2007 by Michael Yeager

ISBN: 1-4196-5804-2

ISBN-13: 978-1419658044

By Brian Brekke, LAC, President Sober College University.

Mr. Yeager's book on addiction and recovery is a very important part of the courses we teach at the Sober College School of Addiction Studies at Andrew Jackson University. Our courses are designed to help educate anyone on addiction and recovery. Michael's book provides relevant and accurate information, used as supplemental reading for a number of our courses. In addition, Sober College's young adult residential program in Woodland Hills, CA, uses Michael's book to help educate not only our residents but their family members on addiction and recovery as well.

This workbook captures the essence of the 12-Steps and adds a new dimension to help young people challenge and change their negative core beliefs and

Continued: **RECOVERY/** pg 24

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say goodbye to pain or lost relationships in their lives. It offers relevant questions that someone in recovery needs to ask in order to become and stay addiction free. I know of no other book that helps addicts of any type so directly find their patterns and beliefs that have been their roadblocks to recovery.

The ways the steps are written in this workbook act as a guide to the reader in making meaning for him/her as to what the step means to each reader. As the steps in AA are reports of action taken to produce the result of initial and long-term recovery, this interpretation of the steps help produce the same result, i.e., long-term abstinence or an addiction free lifestyle.

The Spiritual aspect of 12-Step approach is discussed in a non-threatening way to offer readers easy access to their own understandings of a Higher Power. As this workbook is constructed to allow readers the freedom of exploring their own concepts of a Higher Power there is no pressure to engage in recovery in a forced upon self manner.

The chapter on challenging and changing core beliefs is a wonderful addition as most young people in recovery seem to have a fairly low opinion of themselves. This workbook gives the reader a chance


to discover and then challenge these beliefs in a practical manner that effectively takes them to a new dimension of self-understanding and personal freedom. If they can challenge authority – for example, the authority within themselves – they become free to make better, more accurate decisions about how they relate to self and others, thereby letting the victim mentality go.

The final chapter on grief/loss is a wonderful and totally missing chapter from almost all treatment books I've ever seen. Now readers have the opportunity to directly and specifically notice what they have not said, why they did not say it and finally say it to be able to say goodbye to the pain of the past.

This is a great workbook, that's easy to read and understand! It's perfect for treatment centers to make available to their clients and individuals doing their own recovery. We have been very pleased with the results we have seen in our clients since we began using it at Sober College.



Concentrated political power is
the most dangerous thing on earth.

~ Rudolph Rummel



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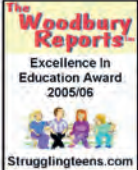




For many young men and women, leaving home and transitioning to college or the work world is a daunting and overwhelming challenge. Thrust into the real world alone, with few advocates, they often are overwhelmed by isolation and lack of structure and support. Robert Fischer, M.D., psychiatrist, co-founded **Optimum Performance Institute** in 2004 to meet the needs of these young adults, ages 17-25.



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NEWS & VIEWS...

AUTISTIC BOY SUFFOCATES

(June 20, 2008) The National Post, a Canadian news source reports a nine-year-old boy with Autism, who was attending a special-needs school in Quebec, suffocated under a heavy therapeutic blanket used as a punishment when he became disruptive. He was then left unsupervised in a corner for 20 minutes

SEATTLE'S TEEN PROSTITUTION

(June 26, 2008) The Seattle Post Intelligencer reports a new study: "Who Pays the Price? Assessment of Youth Involvement in Prostitution in Seattle," is Seattle's first attempt in decades to quantify a notoriously elusive population, with findings that hundreds of girls are prostituting with little or no substantive help from authorities.

POSITIVE VIEW OF ORPHANAGES

(July 6, 2008) The Ohio Masonic Home, an orphanage in Springfield, OH, holds a bi-annual reunion for children who grew up at the home from 1897-1956 who claim, "we never called it an orphanage, it was our home..." and they love coming back every Fourth of July weekend.

PRISON DISCIPLINE MODEL FAILS (July 6, 2008) A Providence Journal columnist states prison discipline is no model for youths (or adults), that "punishment doesn't change their life situation. If anything, it concentrates their badness. We're just telling them, 'You've got to be better.'"

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SEEN N' HEARD

OPI FOCUSES ON COMPUTER ADDICTION

(May 19, 2008) Optimum Performance Institute is initiating specialized programming to deal with issues related to on-line gaming and computer addictions. They hosted Dr. Jack Kuo, MD, who heads a computer addiction program at Promises in Malibu, CA, and will present an in-service presentation to staff and therapists. For more information, contact Anne LaRiviere, the Director of Admissions for OPI at 888-558-0617.

FOUNDATIONS PRESENTS CONFERENCE

(May 28, 2008) Foundations Associates in Brentwood, TN, will present "The Moment of Change" Intervention Conference on September 29 through October 1, 2008, at the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, Santa Monica, CA. Participants will learn in-depth information about the process of Intervention for Addiction and Mental Illness. For more information see the website, or call 877-345-3274.

CLEARVIEW HORIZONS CELEBRATES 11

(June 2008) Clearview will celebrate eleven years of helping families restore healthy family relationships in July. "We have helped hundreds of students to move out of their "lower self" into their "higher self" and let go of their past suffering." For information on Clearview, contact Tami Gebhardt, Assistant Director of Clearview Horizon, Heron, MT, at 406-847-5850.

PAINT ROCK UPDATES SERVICES

(June 10, 2008) Three Springs Paint Rock Valley in Trenton, AL, are excited about the new improvements in their services at Paint Rock Valley. For more information on these changes, contact Kathy DeMeillier, Admissions Director at 256-776-2503.

ALLDREDGE JCAHO ACCREDITED

(June 23, 2008) On June 11, 2008, Solacium's Alldredge Wilderness Journey in Davis, WV, became one of the first wilderness programs in the country to receive a comprehensive accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). For more information, contact Ashley Auchterlonie at 888-468-1828.

NEW HORIZONS MINISTRIES RAD SEMINAR

(June 23, 2008) New Horizons Youth Ministries in Marion, IN, presented a seminar January 2008, in Colorado Springs to the community on Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD). Approximately 25 families attended. For additional information, call 800-333-4009.

Continued: **Seen N Heard/** pg 26

SEEN N HEARD: Continued from 26

NEW IECA WEB SITE

(June 23, 2008) After more than a year of work and much planning IECA has launched its new website, making it easier to navigate and an online calendar that is continually updated. To view, their website visit www.IECAonline.com

EAGALA/TRF HORSE ADOPTION

(June 24, 2008) Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF) in Saratoga Springs, NY, will allow certified EAGALA practitioners to adopt and foster TRF horses for use in therapy. For additional information, contact Diana Pikulski, Executive Director of TRF, at 518-226-0028.

NATSAP SE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

(June 25, 2008) The National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs has announced this year's 2008 Southeast Regional Conference will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Atlanta, GA on Friday, October 24, 2008, with a welcome reception the evening of October 23, 2008. Conference registration materials will arrive in September. For more info, contact Sandy Schmiedeknecht, Eckerd Division of Private Academies and Conference Co-Chair.

CONG MILLER/ WHITE HOUSE DISAGREE

(June 25, 2008) The House of Representatives recently approved a bill for national standards in juvenile boot camps and other public and private programs intended to help troubled youth. The legislation, which passed 318-103, would bar excessive "tough love" practices yet The White House said in a statement it opposed the bill because it expands federal oversight and could make states less inclined to meet their responsibilities in preventing and investigating abuse. The Senate has yet to consider the measure.

FIRST MIDWEST NATSAP REGIONAL

(June 26, 2008) Nicole Fuglsang with Change Academy of the Ozarks (CALO), Lake Ozark, MO, 866-459-1362, and Norm Ostrum, with Montcalm Schools, Albion MI, 866-244-4321, Conference Co-Chairs, announced the First NATSAP 2008 Midwest Regional Conference will be Friday, October 17th at Oakbrook, Illinois.

NEXT STEP EMBRACES CONTINUING ED.

(June 26, 2008) Next Step For Success in Redmond, OR, has undertaken a company-wide plan in which all of its Associate Coaches will add continuing education credits and certifications to their professional portfolios, in which the focus of study has direct application to work with parents and

programs. For more information, contact Bill Valentine, PsyD, CC, Founder of Next Step For Success, 541-504-4748.

BARRASSO WILDERNESS DIRECTOR

(June 26, 2008) Anthony Barrasso, MPA, MLS, is the new Wilderness Director for In Balance Ranch Academy in Tucson, AZ. Anthony has a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and Master's in Public Administration and Policy from the University of Arizona. In addition, Anthony has a Master's in Legal Studies from the Sandra Day O'Connor Law School at Arizona State University. Anthony has previously worked as a wilderness staff for Aspen Achievement Academy and as an intern for the Department of Defense in the Office of Force Transformation. For admissions information, contact Betsy Barrasso, Admissions Director and Owner of In Balance Ranch Academy, 520-722-9631.

GESTALT EQUINE-ASSISTED TRAINING

(June 27, 2008) The Gestalt Equine Institute of the Rockies in Golden, CO, will offer a Gestalt Equine Assisted Therapy Training Program starting August 13-16, 2008. This is a two-year training program to teach equine-assisted psychotherapy from a Gestalt perspective. The training is for mental health therapists or other allied professionals in the human development field. For more information, contact DUEY FREEMAN, MA, LPC at 303-426-8211 or JOAN RIEGER, MA, LPC, 303-548-6901.

OAKLEY GRADUATES 28

(June 27, 2008) Twenty-eight young men and women graduated from Oakley School in Oakley, UT, in June 2008. Oakley School would like to thank all the families, consultants, therapists and staff who assisted these graduates with reaching their goals. For additional information on Oakley, call Carrie Thompson, Director of Admissions 435-783-5001.

IN BALANCE RANCH GRADUATION

(June 27, 2008) Betsy Barrasso, Admissions Director and Owner of In Balance Ranch Academy in Tucson, AZ, congratulates the recent graduates at In Balance Ranch Academy on their acceptance into a multitude of various universities. For more information on In Balance, call Betsy at 520-722-9631.

BLM TIGHTENS RESTRICTIONS FOR WILDERNESS THERAPY PROGRAMS

(June 28, 2008) The Federal Bureau of Land Management in Washington, DC, has issued an Instruction Memorandum (No. 2008-141) to all Field Officials of the special requirements that pertain to permit the operation on public lands by wilderness therapy/residential treatment programs.

NEW SUMMIT GRADUATES SIX

(June 30, 2008) New Summit Academy in Costa Rica graduated six students in June. Two students successfully graduated the New Summit program and will return to high school in California. Four additional students graduated both the New Summit program and high school, and will transition to four-year colleges in the fall. For information on New Summit, call Heather Tracy at 414-921-1388.

PARENTS THANK OLIVERIAN

(June 30, 2008) Parents of a recent graduate from The Oliverian School in Haverhill, NH, wrote a letter to the staff and teachers at the school, thanking them for the dedication and care their son received while in attendance. Learn more about Oliverian by calling 603-989-5105.

NEW ECHO SPRINGS CONTACT INFO

(June 30, 2008) Echo Springs in Bonners Ferry, ID has a new toll free phone number, 888-688-3246 and an updated website, along with a new mailing address: 3210 Kootenai Trail Rd, Bonners Ferry, ID 83805. For more information, refer to their website.

WEST RIDGE HOSTS PARENTING SEMINARS

(June 30, 2008) West Ridge Academy in West Jordan, UT, will provide free regional seminars to groups of parents anxious to learn more about “Youth in Crisis.” Topics include drugs and alcohol, peer influence, communication, setting boundaries and natural and logical consequences, to name a few. For information call 801-282-1099.

CONGRATS—2008 ECKERD GRADUATES!

(June 30, 2008) Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. would like to congratulate all the 2008 Eckerd Academy High School graduates.

SPRING GALA AT WEST RIDGE

(June 30, 2008) West Ridge Academy in West Jordan, UT, held its annual fundraising spring gala, with both the boys and girls from the school serving dinner to more than 230 guests. Entertainment for the evening included the guitar ensemble and the girls' choir. Honorary guests, Bishop Burton and Delpha Baird, were presented the “Legacy of Hope Award” for years of support and service to the Academy.

AUSTIN SENDERO NOW OPEN

(June 30, 2008) Austin Sendero in Austin, TX, a residential treatment center and member of CRC Health Group, is now open. Austin Sendero treats anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorders in males and females, ages 17 and above. For more information, contact Lorena Hampton, Intake Coordinator at 512-213-9762.

EIA CONFERENCE IN SAN DIEGO

(July 2008) EIA's 18th Annual EDVentures Conference for owners and senior managers of private schools, charter schools, special and alternative education programs, and tutoring and learning centers held their conference at the Westin Hotel in San Diego, CA, in July 2008.

OPI SEES TURKEY AND GREECE

(July 2008) Optimum Performance Institutes Program Director, Katie Mikolyski, and several OPI participants recently returned from a two-week tour of Turkey and Greece, aboard a 65-foot traditional Turkish boat where they toured ancient ruins and local villages.

JACOB SCHOOL COMPLETES FIRST YEAR

(July 1, 2008) The Jacob School, Winter Springs, FL, completed its first year of operation as a non-traditional private school for teens. The school is for students who think “outside the box” of traditional schools, and emphasizes higher-order thinking skills, interactive lessons and hands-on-learning. For more information, call Carrie Straub, School Director at 407-461-2800.

NWA GRADUATES EIGHT

(July 1, 2008) Eight graduates completed the Personal Growth program, from Northwest Academy in Naples, ID, with several earning college credits through the North Idaho College Dual Enrollment Program. Congratulations from Devorah McIntosh, Academic Director for Northwest Academy, 877-882-0980.

NEW HAVEN RECOGNIZED BY USLBA

(July 1, 2008) New Haven Residential Treatment Center in Provo, UT, has been selected for the 2008 Best of Saratoga Springs Award in the Residential Treatment Programs category by the US Local Business Association (USLBA). USLBA is a Washington, DC based organization funded by local businesses operating in towns – large and small – across America, with the purpose of promoting local business through public relations, marketing and advertising.

SANTIAM ENHANCES PARENT PROGRAM

(July 1, 2008) Santiam Crossing, Scio, OR, recently enhanced the family therapy program, offering a more detailed program that includes monthly parent weekends. David Scully, LCSW, CADAC, is now spearheading this program.

CALO JCAHO ACCREDITED; JULIANO ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

(July 2, 2008) Change Academy at Lake of the Ozarks (CALO) in Lake Ozark, MO, has received a full
Continued: **Seen N Heard/ pg 28**

SEEN N HEARD: Continued from 27

accreditation from JCAHO (the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Association). The CALO leadership team consists of Dr. Ken Huey, CEO, Nicole Fuglsang, MA, LPC, Admissions Director and Landon Kirk, LCSW, Clinical Director. In addition, Wayne Juliano, MA, EdS has joined CALO as the new Academic Director. Wayne graduated from Central Missouri State University and has been both a teacher and principle in the public school system for the last 16 years.

NATSAP ALUMNI ADVISORY COUNCIL ATTENDS 2008 NATSAP CONFERENCE

(July 2, 2008) The NATSAP Regional Conference was held in June at Thanksgiving Point in Lehi, UT, titled "Strengthening Families in Crisis," was attended by NATSAP Alumni Advisory Council members Beth McGrotha, Trevor Heaton and Donelyn Gamble. They presented a panel entitled "The Vision of Healing Families."

WELLSPRING CAMP NC IN THE NEWS

(July 2, 2008) News 14 – a news source from North Carolina –printed an article featuring Wellspring Family Camp in Pinehurst, NC, which is designed to help families make healthier lifestyle choices through three points of emphasis during the camp: a low fat diet, plenty of exercise and self monitoring. Getting the entire family involved makes it more likely campers will keep the healthy habits after camp is over.

BELLEFAIRE FORMS PEER LEADERSHIP

(July 3, 2008) The first Peer Leadership Council (PLC) was formed at Bellefaire JCB in Shaker Heights, OH, comprised of ten residents that were nominated by staff who felt they possessed leadership qualities. PLC assembles every other Friday for lunch with various staff members to address any issues or concerns on the part of the clients. This also strengthens the lines of communication between residents and staff. Each member proudly wears a PLC t-shirt to recognize their membership and help promote the council among their peers. For more information, contact Devon Racz at 216-320-8317.

BENCHMARK APPLIES FOR NPSAG

(July 3, 2008) Benchmark Young Adult School in Redlands, CA, submitted a Petition for Candidacy via the National Private Schools Accreditation Program for Private Schools (NPSAG) and the application was approved. The educational program is classified as "Accreditation in Progress." A full accreditation with completion is estimated to be June 2009. For additional details, call Richard Brimhall in admissions at 800-474-4848.

TGI CLOSES

(July 3, 2008) In a letter from Matthew Estey, Executive Director at Transitions of Galveston Island in Texas, he states, "After careful and thorough consideration, we've decided to close TGI," with a wrap up of current operations at the end of July, after the scheduled graduation of the current residents. CEO of TIG, David Michel, would welcome your suggestions and feedback. To view this letter in its entirety, visit StrugglingTeens.com.

HOPE RANCH APPROVED FOR SEVIS

(July 3, 2008) Hope Ranch/Star Meadows Academy in Whitefish, MT, was approved to accept students from Canada and other countries through the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and has been approved for certification and enrollment in SEVIS, a program of the Department of Homeland Security to maintain information on international, non-immigrant students and exchange visitors to the US. For more information, contact Jim Carpenter, Admissions Director at 406-862-7871.

FUCH JOINS SOBER COLLEGE

(July 3, 2008) Sober College, Woodland Hills, CA, proudly announces new addition James Fuchs to the Creative Arts Program. James has worked in recovery for the past five years.

NATSAP REGIONALS CALL FOR PAPERS

(July 7, 2008) The National Association of Schools and Programs will be hosting several regional conferences this summer and fall. The conferences will be in St. George, UT; Kennebunkport, ME; Oak Brook IL; Atlanta, GA; and Sunriver, OR. The deadline for Call for Papers for the last three has past. For more detailed information, visit NATSAP's website at www.natsap.org.

CHOTEAU YOUTH RANCH CLOSES

(July 7, 2008) Woodbury Reports Inc was notified Choteau Youth Ranch – a private, non-profit organization providing a group home environment for at risk teens in Choteau, MT – closed July 2, 2008.

COBB-AIKIN JOINS POWELL & ELLIOTT

(July 8, 2008) Powell & Elliott Collaborative, LLC, Lake Arrowhead, CA, welcomes Tauni Cobb-Aikin to their professional staff. Tauni will take the lead in further developing an extensive Risk Management Division. Tauni brings with her 10+ years of experience working with private youth-at-risk schools and programs and holds a variety of certifications, including California Community Care Licensing Administrator for Group Homes and Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly, Authorized OSHA Outreach Trainer, HIPAA

Security Specialist, and HIPAA Professional. Tauni can be reached at, 909-435-5916.

GREENBRIER'S HORSEMANSHIP SCHOOL

(July 9, 2008) Greenbrier Academy in Pence Springs, WV, is excited to announce a new addition to its program; the School of Horsemanship will be part of the curriculum. Stables have been completed and seven horses have arrived, with students learning competitive hunting, jumping, dressage and driving. For more information, please contact the school at 304-445-7790.

HATTON JOINS SILVERADO

(July 10, 2008) Randy Hatton is the newest Admissions Counselor at Silverado Boys Ranch in Panguitch, UT. Randy has 18 years of business management and customer service experience. He will be working alongside Denise Westman the Director of Admissions and Marketing. For more information, call 435-676-8482.

KEY EDUCATION RESOURCES TRIM LOANS

(July 10, 2008) Key Education Resources, a leader in K-12 financing, sent letters to non-traditional K-12 schools notifying them that the Key Achiever Loan would no longer be offered to their schools. Clark Education Loans has secured additional sources of financing to replace those that would have been picked by Key Education Resources. For more information contact Chelsea Dickinson, Director of Marketing and Program Relations for Clark Behavioral Health Financing, 888-755-3079.

WELLSPRING ACADEMY IN THE NEWS

(July 10, 2008) The Baltimore Sun featured an article about a young man from Baltimore, who lost 180 pounds while attending Wellspring Academy in California for 11 months. To view this article in its entirety visit the Struggling Teen's website.

FORMAN SCHOOL HIRES NEW STAFF

(July 10, 2008) Adam Man, MA with certification in Special Ed is the new Head of School at the Forman School, Litchfield, CT. In addition, Whitney "Trip" Sanders is the new Associate Director of Admissions. Sanders previously worked at Worcester Academy where he taught, coached and worked with students through the Center for Learning Facility. For information about Forman School, contact Beth Rainey, Director of Admissions, 860-567-1802.

ALTC STUDENTS 'GIVE BACK'

(July 10, 2008) In the July issue of the Becket Newsletter, Julie Gaffey explained students from Androscoggin Learning and Transition Center (ALTC), in Lewiston, ME, recently travelled to

Norway Maine to assist in a service project for the Progress Center in Norway – a facility for children, families and adults with various disabilities. Students cleared brush, planted an herb garden and helped beautify the park.

NATSAP/ HERITAGE HOST "RIDE FOR TEENS"

(July 11, 2008) NATSAP programs and Heritage Schools are hosting "Ride for Teens" August 23, 2008, where participants will ride their bikes up Provo Canyon. Proceeds of this event will be used to cover the expense of the event, with the remaining funds being donated to Heritage Center Stage. After the cycling event, Ron Williams will present a behind the scenes look at his documentary "Happy Valley" which unveils the drug culture in Utah Valley. For questions, contact Jesse Ellis at 801-376-3599.

MONARCH SCHOOL CELEBRATES SEVEN

(July 13, 2008) Monarch School celebrated their seventh year of operation in July. The school has undergone numerous enhancements since the beginning, transforming from a small in-house program to a full-blown campus complete with staff housing among other improvements.

WEST SHIELD INTERNET RADIO SHOW

(July 14, 2008) Allen Cardoza, Founder and Owner of West Shield Adolescent Services launched a new Internet radio show that airs every Monday at 11:00am (PST). The talk show, titled Answers for the Family, addresses challenges families face with their teen. For more information contact Allen.

TIMBER RIDGE GRADUATES THREE

(July 15, 2008) Three girls will graduate Timber Ridge in Clark Fork, ID, at the end of July. The staff at Timber Ridge would like to say congratulations to the girls for their continued success. For information on Timber Ridge, contact Virginia Short, Admissions Director at 208-777-1615.

WELLSPRING IN BRITISH NEWS

(July 15, 2008) A British news source featured an article about Wellspring Camp, which took place at the University of Cumbria's Newton Rigg campus in the UK, with campers from the UK, Ireland, United States, Russia, Romania, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

BETTON HOUSE TO CLOSE

(July 15, 2008) Woodbury Reports received notification from Betton House, a transitional living dormitory for young adults 18-24 in Scranton, PA, that they will be closing effective August 31, 2008.

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AIM HOUSE WELCOMES ELMAN

(June 16, 2008) The new Program Director for AIM House's Young Men's Program in Boulder, CO, is Sherri Elman, who has a Master's Degree in social work from Colorado State University and holds a state license in Colorado as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. For the last two years, Sherri worked as the Senior Primary Mentor at AIM House. The previous Program Director was Tracy Markle, who resigned from AIM House to pursue new opportunities. For more information, contact Jude Rudolph, Admissions Director for AIM House at 303-554-0011.

TISDELL JOINS SAFE PASSAGE

(July 16, 2008) Karen Tisdell, a former counselor with Three Springs Paint Rock Valley Girls Program joined SafePassage as a transport agent. Tisdell is also joining the parent company, Hunter Investigations, LLC, as a private investigator. In addition, SafePassage Adolescent Services announced the opening of new offices in Tampa, FL, and Huntsville, AL. For more information, contact Holly D. Hunter, Owner of SafePassage at 770-667-7467.

TIMBER RIDGE JOINS CLARK

(July 17, 2008) Virginia Short, Director of Admissions at Timber Ridge Preparatory School for Girls in Clark Fork, ID, 208-777-1615, announced Timber Ridge has joined with Clark Behavioral Health Financing to help parents find the financial assistance they need for their daughters. Clark Behavioral Health Financing, 888-755-3080, is a subsidiary of Clark Custom Educational Loans, Inc.

GRAY WOLF CELEBRATES 10TH

(July 17, 2008) Gray Wolf Ranch, Inc, Port Townsend, WA, gathered over Memorial Day Weekend to celebrate Gray Wolf Ranch's 10-year anniversary. Over 300 alumni, families, staff and friends participated in the celebration. In addition, the statistics gathered from 2007 alumni, by Lanstat, Inc., showed results in the high 80% -96% for the overall program effectiveness and structure. For information, contact Woody Bernas, MDiv, Program Director at 800-571-5505.

CHEZIK ON URTA BOARD

(July 18, 2008) New Haven congratulates Jill Chezik, CTRS, on her confirmation as an Education Committee member on the Utah Recreation Therapy Association (URTA) Board. Jill is Nationally Certified as a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and has been with New Haven since 2006.

DRYDEN JOINS ASPEN INSTITUTE

(July 18, 2008) Denise Dryden joined the team as the new Director of Admission for Aspen Institute for

Behavioral Assessment in Syracuse, UT. Denise most recently worked in the admission department of the Oakley School. For information about the Aspen Institute, call 801-825-5222.

WILDERNESS THERAPY SYMPOSIUM 2008

(July 18, 2008) The Wilderness Therapy Symposium 2008 will be held at the Naropa University, September 12-14, 2008. For more information – or to register – contact Rob Meltzer at Naropa University Extended Studies at 303-245-4800.

FOX JOINS LIVING WELL TRANSITIONS

(July 18, 2008) Dan Fox, MA, LPC, joined its team at Living Well Transitions, Boulder, CO, as Clinical Supervisor. Dan is currently the principal at September High School, a private school in Boulder, CO. For additional information, contact Britton Turkett, MA, Program Manager at 303-245-1020.

SALLIE MAE ANNOUNCES LOAN CUTS

(July 21, 2008) Therapeutic programs throughout the United States are receiving letters this week from Sallie Mae notifying them of their decision to discontinue funding loans to their programs. This announcement marks the third educational lender to cease offering private k-12 loans since April. For more information, contact Chelsea Dickinson of Clark Custom Education Loans/ Clark Behavioral Health Financing at 888-755-3079.

NEW FACES AT SWIFT RIVER

(July 21, 2008) Academy at Swift River, Cummington, MA, has several announcements to make. Dan DuBois, former Humanities Department Chair and teacher of art and language arts was promoted to Academic Director. Jackie MacNeish joined ASR and will create and develop a comprehensive physical education program for the students and two former ASR students – Chessie Bloom and Ben Warner – were hired as residential mentors. Chessie graduated from ASR in 2005. She will attend college in the area to complete her degree. Ben – who graduated in 2003 – obtained his degree in psychology from Quinnipiac University in Connecticut.

GLENHOLME VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL

(July 21, 2008) Glenholme School (A Devereux School) in Washington, CT, is partnering with Virtual High School (VHS) to provide its students with greater opportunity and flexibility through adding on-line courses in conjunction with traditional classes. For more information, contact Marketing Director David Tuttle as 860-868-7377.

SHORTRIDGE WELCOMES NEW STAFF

(July 21, 2008) Shortridge Academy in Milton, NH,

hired three new staff: Neil Binette, BA, MA, was hired as a new counselor; Jessica Remacle, BS, MSW, LICSW, was hired as a new counselor and Kim Kleckner-Miller, BS, MEd, was also hired as a new counselor. For more information, contact Hannah Mariotti, Director of Admissions and Marketing, 603-755-3096 x100.

MEMORIAL HERMANN OPENS PROGRAM

(July 21, 2008) The Memorial Hermann Prevention and Recovery Center announced the opening of the new Adolescent Residential Chemical Dependence Program, located in Houston, TX. This program is for adolescents age 13-17 with co-occurring substance abuse and psychiatric disorders. For more information, contact Jim Williams, Program Director at 713-329-7343.

LEVIN RETIRING AT SPRUCE MOUNTAIN

(June 24, 2008) Ed Levin, LICSW, Assistant Director of Spruce Mountain in Plainfield, VT, has decided to retire after 25+ years service and will limit his involvement with the school to referral development and professional outreach. Candace Beardsley, LICSW, Director of Spruce Mountain announced they are looking for someone to fill this key position. For more information, contact Candace or Ed at 802-454-8353.

NEWS AT THE FAMILY SCHOOL

(July 21, 2008) Ann Janauer was named Vice President, Human Resources at Family Foundation School in Hancock, NY. Janauer, who holds a PhD in chemistry from SUNY Binghamton, was previously assistant professor of chemistry at Siena College and SUNY Delhi. She joined the faculty of The Family Foundation School in 2007 and currently teaches honors chemistry. Family Foundation is also nearing completion of the annual recertification of all of its 100+ faculty and staff in Therapeutic Crises Intervention (TCI). For more information on these items or more info about Family Foundation, contact Ann Kozak 845-887-5213.

NY BOARDING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION TOUR

(July 21, 2008) Steve Lifrak, PhD, President, New York Boarding Schools Association, Cornwall, NY, 800-225-9144, announced that the association will host a tour for educational consultants of NYBSA member schools in the southern region of New York the week of December 8-12, 2008. The tour will culminate in an opportunity to attend the renowned Radio City Music Hall's Christmas Spectacular Show in New York City. Schools on the tour list include The Family Foundation School, Storm King School, Stony Brook School, The Knox School, Darrow School, Hoosac School, The Masters School, and Trinity-Pawling School.

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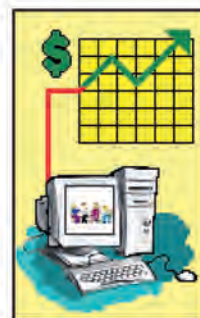
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