



# Places for Struggling Teens™

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

March 2010 - Issue #187

## WHAT THE YEAR MIGHT HOLD FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

by Lon Woodbury



Last January was the time for resolutions and predictions for the upcoming year. So, I gave it a try, but instead of peering into a crystal ball, I worked from some intriguing scientific research as it relates to young people.

Mark J. Penn wrote a book published in 2007 titled: "micro trends: the small forces behind tomorrow's big changes." Using polling data, Penn looks for micro trends that are bubbling in our society which might become very influential in the near future. He looked at 82 groups that are starting to exert an influence on our society, basically groups with at least one percent of the population that might be increasing to become more influential. I picked out those surprising trends he discussed that relate to young people. This might indicate some characteristics we might be seeing more in the future.

**Old New Dads:** Fathers are becoming increasingly older at the birth of their children, with "the proportion of dads over 40 skyrocketing." This will mean that any gathering of parents will become more multi-generational and any generational gap between children and their parents will be even more extreme, at least so far as the difference in age between father and child.

**Pampering Parents:** Parents have come to believe that while they are strict with their children, most other parents are too permissive. The author concludes that on a strict/permissive scale the whole society has moved drastically to the permissive side and is more "child-centered." Unless there is a reversal of this trend, this suggests children's rights will only increase, with parents blaming "other" parents for not being strict enough.

**The Mildly Disordered:** The percentage of children with diagnosed disorders is skyrocketing, the author seeing this as partly being driven by affluent parents wanting proof as to why their child is under-performing. A child who 25 years ago might have been seen and treated as "irritable" is now likely to be diagnosed with Sensory Integration Dysfunction. One result will be an increasing number of children who feel they need outside, and perhaps professional and medication, help in order to be "normal." If this trend expands, we will see in the future a decreasing sense of personal independence and responsibility, and an increasing sense of group dependence and responsibility.

**High School Moguls:** We have talked of the tendency to extend childhood during the last century. During the twentieth century, a child's opportunities to work and make money had been limited to paper routes, baby sitting, lawn care and other low paying, low responsibility jobs. However, largely through the Internet, this is all changing with many teens and even pre-teens creating very successful businesses online. The author estimates about 8 percent of all teens, about 1.6 million young people in the US, were making money on the internet. Contrary to mainstream trends of children remaining dependent for long years, there is this contrary trend of young entrepreneurs coming onto the scene that could change childhood back to where children again have the opportunity to realize their potential as did young people before the 20th century.

**Aspiring Snipers:** Starting in 2006, polls indicated a small but increasing number of young people with career

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There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure.

~ Colin Powell

[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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## YEAR

aspirations to be a sniper/sharpshooter. The author speculates that this might be a beginning trend of respect for the military and law enforcement. It also could be an indication of the desirability to achieve the kind of self control, discipline and patience that is required of a sniper, as opposed to simple bravery in the face of the enemy. He also speculates that it might be a result of interest in shooter video games. If the impulse is to take out the bad guys and develop considerable self-control, then this well might be a good thing if it continues to build.

**Vegan Children:** The author has data indicating that about 1.5 million children ages 8-18 are vegetarians, something almost unheard of 50 years earlier. He sees this as a beginning trend of children taking on more responsibility for what they eat, with an emphasis on eating more vegetables and less meat. This could well be a trend consistent with greater environmental concerns, and if this trend continues to grow, the changes in our society, and eating habits, and food production could be profound and far reaching.

**Social Geeks:** As of 2007, technology was changing from something for introverts to something for extroverts. Where technology used to appeal to the brilliant social losers, it is now appealing more to those socially oriented. The computer savvy nerd seems to be disappearing. The Social Media of today is the obvious result of this trend becoming mainstream even since this book was written. All indications are that this will just continue to become even more mainstream.

**Video Game Grown-ups:** The image of video game players being teens is firmly locked in our consciousness. However, every year the average age of video gamers is increasing—much faster than just the count of years would indicate. The author points out that the average age of gamers was 24 in 2002, but the average age had become 33 by 2006. In just four years, the average age had increased by 9 years. Video gaming will not be just a passing phase for teens, but something they will grow with through the years. It already is being adapted by businesses and the military for training purposes and it seems likely all of us will have to learn at least some basic facility with video gaming.

**America's Home Schooled:** In just 30 years, home-schooling has gone from illegal in most US jurisdictions to where it is very common and rapidly growing for many different reasons. Home schooling is not only growing in numbers of students, but it is also expanding to include online courses or degrees, as well as college courses and degrees. It seems to have the potential to totally revise the foundations of our education system as school districts and colleges learn how to adapt to the ability of parents and students to create their own approach to education.

So where does this leave us? Many of the trends are counter to each other, and while some are expanding, others might just be passing fads. However, looking at poll research for the answers gives us more grounded food for thought than just pure speculation.



# HYBRID-COED: A THIRD TREATMENT OPTION

By Scott Petersen

As an industry professional of more than 20 years now, I've learned one of the greatest fears parents express when selecting a therapeutic program for their teen is what may happen if their child is sexually promiscuous while attending that program. I can tell you first hand, program owners have that same concern. For many programs, this very real worry played a large role in the movement toward single gender programming.

Most of us are well aware of research that claims single gender *education* results in a more focused and productive academic environment. We've certainly seen that play out in some of our programs. However, to my knowledge there is no quantitative research that indicates *therapy* is more effective in a single gender environment. There are only claims from various programs that a single gender environment is more therapeutically appropriate.

With a lack of research and an abundance of claims, parents and industry professionals should be asking this important question: "How important is appropriate social interaction between male and female students in providing an optimal therapeutic environment?"

Let's consider what a true single gender and a true co-ed program look like. A single gender program simply means no interaction with the opposite sex regarding residential living, education, recreation or any other program function.

Philosophically, there's a natural gravitational lean toward single gender programming because it eliminates the difficulties that come with housing, educating and treating boys and girls in co-educational approaches. A true co-ed program usually offers separate housing, but almost every other program function is combined. Residential, educational and recreational activities involve both genders to some degree throughout the day.

The strengths of a single gender program include fewer hormonal distractions, allowing a higher degree of focus in therapeutic, residential and academic situations. Students just aren't as concerned about keeping up appearances to charm or repel the opposite sex. This program's greatest weakness is that it is not a normal environment. That "real world" environment is a co-ed program's greatest strength. However, it's also its greatest weakness. Many parents and consultants understandably fear working through the sometimes chaotic distractions involving the opposite sex.

I believe there's a third option. It's what I refer to as a hybrid co-ed program. The hybrid model isn't a new approach. Some programs have been using it for years. Many people mistakenly label the hybrid approach as simply co-ed. That label doesn't do the hybrid model justice.

I realized this recently as I listened to the rhetoric between two programs competing for the same child. That conversation forced me to look much more closely at the language being used by consultants and even program personnel. The hybrid co-ed model has a very simple definition but is much more complex to operate than either the single gender and or pure coed programs.

The dictionary defines a hybrid as "a combination of two or more different things, aimed at achieving a particular

objective or goal." In a hybrid co-ed program, male and female students are housed in entirely separate buildings. The boys and girls programs run completely independent of each other residentially, therapeutically, academically and recreationally – with one important exception. That exception is when the clinical team determines that co-ed interaction is appropriate for specific students who are therapeutically ready to step toward normalcy, or appropriate social interaction. Co-ed interaction occurs *only* when it is therapeutically recommended – not when it is administratively convenient.

Understandably, these programs are much more difficult to administer. That may be one reason why there are so few of them. However, the benefit to the student is tremendous. Families have the opportunity to take advantage of whichever environment best suits their child's needs and then alter that environment as clinically necessary.

As our industry has matured and specialized, we have managed to label many different program models. But a true hybrid co-ed approach has never been defined or included in the conversations about what treatment milieu may or may not be in a child's best interest. The hybrid model offers another choice to parents. However, they will never truly understand the benefits unless they are properly explained. That's a conversation I believe needs to take place, both inside the industry and out.

**About the Author:** *Scott Peterson is one of the Co-Founders of the RedCliff Ascent Family of Programs. He can be reached through the website at [www.redcliffascent.com](http://www.redcliffascent.com) or by calling Redcliff Ascent at 800-898-1244.*



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# THE LIFE OF A TRANSPORT AGENT

By Eddie Curry

This past August I celebrated 17 years of assisting families and escorting teens, escorting well over 2,000 kids from all over the world. In that time I have seen and done so much, picking up kids from every state in this great country, as well as Canada, Mexico, Australia and the United Kingdom. I have been the director and trainer of one the largest escort company in the country. Over the years I have met some great kids. I have seen a child I escorted three times go on to Duke and then go back to the school to which I escorted her to teach. I have seen so many go on to great things and now have families of their own.

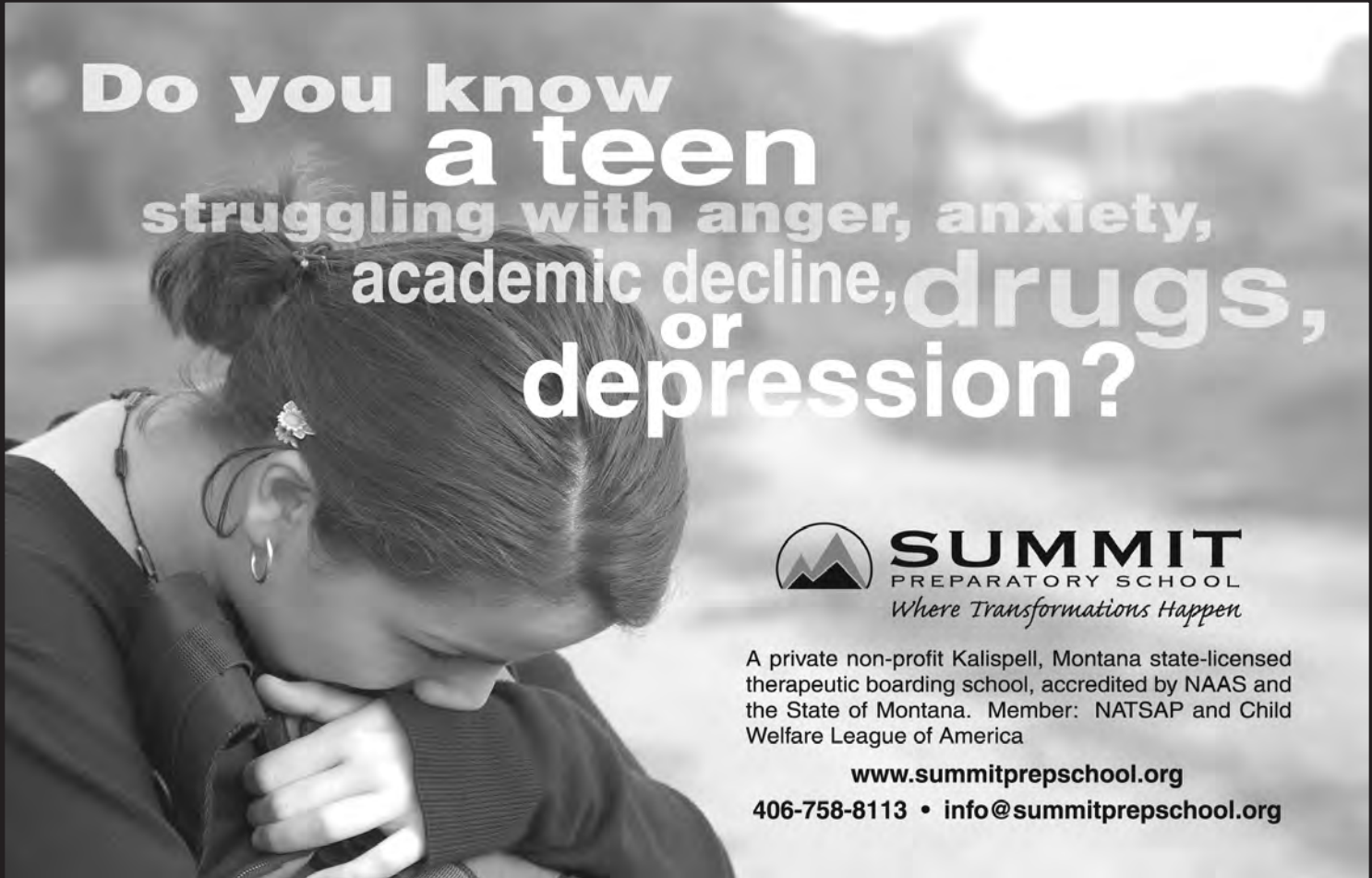
But not all the kids I have picked up smelled like roses. I have been punched, kicked, bitten and had knives and a gun pulled on me. I have been hit with more things then I would care to count and been called things that would make a sailor run out of the room. I have posed as a "John" to get a 16 year old runaway who was prostituting and I have lost count on how many times I have gone into a crack house to get the kid I'm looking for. For years I have picked up the kids that other companies would not. I did the things that others said could not be done and I have never lost or had a child get away.

I have seen a lot of things change over the years. In the 90's and early 2000's, none of the kids I picked up had ever heard of wilderness programs. Now they all have! Either they have had a brother, friend or classmate who has gone

or they have read about it on a blog, twitter, Facebook, Myspace or one of the thousands of websites out there. I find myself spending more time defending these programs to kids and parents than explaining them. One other big change I have seen are the amount of medication these kids are prescribed. It used to be that about 1 in 10 would be on one kind of medication. But now it seems like every kid I pick up is on some kind of medication and most are on 2 to 3. What is this all about? Are we not just raising a generation of druggies?

There are a few things that I am not willing to change. First, I will never wear a uniform. I feel this promotes fear and can be very embarrassing for the child when we are in public. I know some say that it promotes respect. But I know for a fact that sitting down and talking to the child, explaining what is going on, showing some compassion and caring about how they are feeling and listening to what they have to say, gets a lot more respect then what I'm wearing.

I always take as much time as is needed to get the child to walk out of the room on their own, instead of saying "get up and let's go" after 15 to 30 minute. I don't care if it takes me two hours and I miss my flight. We are not walking out until I feel he or she is ready. I have spent two to four hours at a time on the phone calming jittery nerves of parents. I have taken calls at 2 am from parents that just can't sleep and spent two hours talking to them about nothing. I have talked to the scared siblings to let them know that everything is going to be ok. And I will always treat every child as if they were my own and every parent and family the way I would want to be treated.



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Over the years I have seen escort companies come and go. I have seen claims made like it is something new when it's something I've been doing for years. There are claims of 20 years experience, but only if you add up all ten people working. If they want to do that, my wife and I have 32 years. There are some who claim that on every escort the lead agent has at least two years of training. But there have been a few times I have met other escorts while waiting for our kids to come out of wilderness where neither has more than five escorts under their belt.

Since when has it become common practice to send one agent to pick up a child or only have one fly with them? Who watches the child when they have to check in the rental car or the airlines or when you have to go through security? What if the agent has to go to the bathroom and if you have to change plane, and what if the agent that is going on the plane is the one agent the child does not like? How good of a trip is it going to be for the child? I know they say it saves money, but their fee is still the same if they sent one or two agents. So tell me, is it worth a plane ticket to insure the child's safety and the safety on the public?

Over the past 17 years I have seen the world and a lot of things change—some for the best and some for the worst. I have met a lot of great kids and families who still send me updates and I get cards from time to time from the parents and kids. I hope to God that I may be able to keep doing what I do for another 17 years.

**About the Author:** Eddie Curry is President and Director of First Step Adolescent Services, Inc Las Vegas, NV. For more information, contact him at 888-633-6074 or [www.assistingfamilies.org](http://www.assistingfamilies.org)

## VISIT REPORTS...

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Visit by: Lon Woodbury, MA, IECA, CEP, October 2009

Though the outside of the building was rather nondescript, when we went inside, we found it colorful, bright and very cheery. There were pictures of nursery verses with drawings on many of the walls, artwork elsewhere (some by the girls), with flowers and colored rugs placed appropriately to create a cheery home-like atmosphere. The whole impact was one of a friendly, clean and uplifting space. It was obviously created for babies and their young mothers.

Florence Crittenton is a very unique place. Its residents are troubled teen mothers or mothers-to-be. But for their mother-hood or mother-to-be status, these troubled girls would be prime candidates for a wilderness program, residential treatment center or emotional growth/therapeutic boarding school. However, since their pregnancy precludes their participation in any of these more traditional interventions, Florence Crittenton has

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## FLORENCE CRITTENTON

developed a total program to fulfill all their physical and emotional needs through the pregnancy and the critical months following delivery.

Florence Crittenton was one of many centers established throughout the country about 110 years ago. At that time they were known collectively as homes for “wayward” girls. Most of the centers have maintained a focus on girls with problems, while keeping up with the times. Each Center is independently owned and operated, but most have maintained the mission of helping girls in trouble. However, the center in Helena has developed a unique intensive approach focused on working with troubled girls with the dual problem of pregnancy as well as emotional problems and out-of-control behaviors.

They have room for up to 16 girls to live there, supported by about 50 staff. Normal pregnancy needs are met at the program as well as treatment for a multitude of emotional problems such as drug abuse, attachment disorders or any problem any other residential treatment center would deal with. However, their emphasis is on developing attachment and bonding, both with their baby and with others. They feel that this is probably the most important lesson a young mother can learn.

Attachment is very important at the Center since they feel that one of the most important things a new mother can learn is to develop a lasting positive attachment with her baby. Most of the young mothers come there without a clue on how to develop positive relationships with anybody, let alone with a baby. From a girl’s first day there, everything is focused on helping her learn how to do

right by her baby and in the process help her learn how to appreciate and love her baby.

While we were on our tour, we saw several young mothers playing with, bathing and spending time with their babies, with staff there to help, encourage and provide needed support. There were smiles all around with young mothers and staff simply enjoying the babies. The nursery was well equipped, and there was even a playground outside. Each girl had her own private bedroom, each with tasteful personal decorations of her own choosing, and a crib so each girl could sleep in the room with her baby or prepare her personal space for the anticipated baby.

The facility provides a very secure environment to protect the safety of the young women and their children as they go through the program. Some of the girls work part time jobs or take educational courses in the community as well while there.

Spending time there was emotionally uplifting, and the girls residing there are extremely lucky to have found this place. If you are ever in Helena and want to have an emotional uplift by seeing a better future in the making, Florence Crittenton could provide that experience.

Giving money and power to government is like giving whisky and car keys to teenage boys.

~ PJ O'Rourke



Photo by Skyler Jenson

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Visit by Lon Woodbury, November 10, 2009

Nestled in a secluded valley in North Carolina on 33 rural acres, this wilderness therapy program at first glance presents a very pastoral picture. Even the old buildings look rustic rather than run down (It used to be a summer camp). I understand the stream running through their property contains trout, and I was surprised that it ran clear and you could see the bottom, contrary to most rivers and streams I've seen in the South. Their horses were friendly, gentle and well fed, and like just about every North Carolina rural property I have ever seen, it has a pond, which is just below the main Lodge.

We had a chance to talk with some of the students, and they looked alert, were friendly and obviously getting a lot out of their experience there. One of the boys did a demonstration in handling a horse, explaining every step of how he could control the horse without touching it but simply with body and hand signals. He was the one who, when he arrived, was afraid of horses and the most he could see ever accomplishing would be to someday pet a horse. When asked, all the boys agreed that their horse had become one of their best friends.

The girls were equally impressive. They were open and outgoing. One girl had been there 104 days (close to a record)

and had what is sometimes called a "wilderness glow." She had considerable and serious personal problems before arriving, and it seemed to me that she felt so much better about herself from her experience that she couldn't help but sport a bright smile that seemed quite genuine.

The program is a minimum of 28 days, but most students take longer before they are ready to move on to either a boarding school or home. The property I described above operates as a base, but the students spend most of their time in the field, hiking and camping in the surrounding national forest lands. Part of the curriculum is basic wilderness skills such as starting a fire with a bow drill (which teaches persistence) and other wilderness skills that teach self reliance and team-work. But this is just the surface.

The whole program draws on multiple elements, each of which can be drawn on to match the individual needs of the students. In addition to the wilderness therapy experience, which itself is a powerful change element, the students have regular sessions with the therapists, equine therapy and a generic positive peer culture, as opposed to the text book Positive Peer Culture (PPC). In addition the program adds a sophisticated approach to experiential academics which supplements their wilderness and outdoor experience in a way to relate academic topics such as biology, history, etc., to what the students are doing in their day to day program. I had a chance to visit with the Academic Dean and his creative ability to "think outside the box" is impressive. The program is registered as a non-public school by the state of North Carolina, and students can earn up five credits during their time there. In addition to being a non-public

CONTINUED: TRAILS CAROLINA/ 8

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## TRAILS CAROLINA

school, the program is licensed by the state of North Carolina.

All groups are single sex, and the optimum size is fairly small, consisting of 6 to 8 students. This enhances their ability to develop an individualized program to meet the varying needs of each student. They have a girls group, a boys group and a young boys group. Since it is individualized, the groups can be equally effective when the groups are smaller than the optimum when enrollments dictate smaller groups.

A lot of emphasis is made to carrying out a parallel program for parents. This includes weekly parent conference calls which include all the parents associated with a specific student group, and at least two on-campus parent seminars during a child's stay. The staff reported that a frequent remark by graduating students is how much their parents had changed while the student had been in the program. This success was explained by two things: One, the parents develop a peer group of their own for support at the same time the students are developing their peer group, and two the focus of the parent on-campus seminars and weekly phone conferences are to look at the parents' patterns and how to make them more supportive of what their children need. From comments by graduating students and their parents, it seems to be working.

The program is about ready to celebrate their first anniversary and has obviously come a long way in a short year. By the way, the name "TRAILS" stands for Trust, Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Leadership and Service. The name itself is a good description of what this wilderness therapy program is trying to teach their students.

## 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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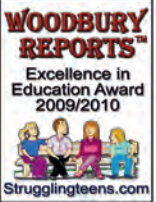




For many young men and women, leaving home and transitioning to college or the work world is a daunting and overwhelming challenge. Thrust into the real world alone, with few advocates, they often are overwhelmed by isolation and lack of structure and support. Robert Fischer, M.D., psychiatrist, co-founded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



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families. Katie Asmus, MA, LPC, Clinical Supervisor, is a faculty member of the Wilderness Therapy program at Naropa University. Jody Radtke, MA, LPC, Clinical Director, has directed the programs of the Women's Wilderness Institute in Boulder, CO, for five years. Amy Winchester, MA, LPC-I, Grief and Loss Specialist, is a counselor with HospiceCare of Boulder & Broomfield Counties. Andrew Rose, MA, LPC-I, Program Director, Trauma Specialist, is a certificated EMDR practitioner with a private practice in Boulder, and leads Ski and Wilderness EMDR intensives.

The year-round Ski Therapy program includes mindfulness practice, breakfast, family therapy, skiing and ski therapy, down time, dinner, and a second therapy session. During the program the family learns about emotional regulation, nonviolent communication, and dynamics of family systems. The family also practices healthy 'family time'.

*[This information came from HealingQuest.]*

Zero means none or nothing.

Tolerance gestures toward  
understanding, generosity, kindness,  
benevolence, justice, forgiveness.

~ William Ayers



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- ◆ Substance Abuse
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- ◆ Pregnant Teens
- ◆ acceptable

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[www.youthcare.com](http://www.youthcare.com)

# PEGASUS EXPERIENTIAL COUNSELING

Costa Mesa, CA  
Mickey Kay Troxell, MS, CATC, CEAT-II  
714-620-4353  
[Mickeykt@cox.net](mailto:Mickeykt@cox.net)  
[www.pegasusect.com](http://www.pegasusect.com)

Pegasus Experiential Counseling Techniques uses equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP) to help people with their issues. EAP is conducted at the Orange County Fair Grounds - for 1 to 1.5 hours of Equine Therapy. Sessions are client-based therapy and provide hands-on opportunities to experience new solutions and tools for effectively managing an individual's internal happiness, Chemical Dependency, and their long-term sobriety.

EAP is considered "Brief Therapy." It is an intensive, short-term therapeutic approach due to its effectiveness and addresses a variety of mental health and human development needs including behavioral issues, attention deficit disorder, substance abuse, eating disorders, abuse issues, depression, anxiety, relational problems and communication.

Mickey Troxell, MS, CATC, CEAT-II, is the Executive Director and founder of Pegasus, National Association of Certified Professionals of Equine Therapy (NACPET), Certified Therapy Horse Association (CTHA) and Centaur University. Mickey has worked in the field of addictions

CONTINUED: TRAILS CAROLINA/ 10



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## PEGASUS

for 20 years now and has a Masters Degree in Psychology. She is also an Addictions Therapist specializing in Women's issues. She use Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Energy Tapping Psychology (ETP), Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) and Talk Therapy as primary forms of practice.

Pegasus uses Experiential Counseling Techniques to challenge clients in a non-threatening and innovative manner, rapidly breaks down defense mechanisms that interfere with growth and development, provide immediate cause and effect situations which stimulate long-term change, captivate and embrace attention, promote the process of change from unhealthy behavioral and communication patterns to successful ones. Certified staff and therapy horses assist clients in achieving their therapeutic goals.

Services offered by Pegasus include National Accreditation for Programs and Facilities that qualify (NACPET and CTHA only); Corporate Team Building Workshops; Equine Programs for all types of Mental Health Facilities; Workshops for Continuing Education (CE's) for Professionals in the Mental Health Field; Private Individual, Family, and Group Sessions; In-Services on a variety of topics with CE's available on-site at your facility.

For more information visit [www.pegasusect.com](http://www.pegasusect.com).

*[This information came from the Pegasus website.]*

## LAKESIDE ACADEMY

Clearfield, UT  
Brian Garlock  
801-941-9138  
[brian@yhautah.com](mailto:brian@yhautah.com)  
[www.yhautah.com](http://www.yhautah.com)

Lakeside Academy is a year-round program for boys, ages 13-17, with a history of sexual issues, emotional and behavioral challenges, low self-esteem, academic underachievement, substance abuse, and family conflict.

Lakeside uses a holistic approach in the therapy process including Cognitive Behavioral, Experiential, and Recreational therapy. The treatment is tailored to the specific needs of each individual student. Some of the specialized therapy groups focus on arts and craft therapy, Zen garden experience, physical exercise and sex specific interventions. The therapists are highly experienced through years of national conference trainings and the latest treatment modalities.

The program provides clinical treatment, academic and behavioral services with an ethical approach. Staff promotes social, emotional, and physical development which impacts lifelong learning. The recreational services and personal training offered at Lakeside Academy promote physical health. Students receive personal coaching, team oriented opportunities, individual sporting events, resistance training, core strength classes, yoga, meditation, and weight training programming. The focus



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is success and personal achievement through an individualized program for all abilities.

Lakeside Academy is housed in a spacious home-like setting to assist boys through issues causing emotional problems for them and their families. Family participation and involvement are essential parts of helping the struggling boys.

[This information came from the Lakeside Academy e-newsletter.]

October is one of the singularly most dangerous months to speculate in stocks.

Others are  
November, December,  
January, February,  
March, April,  
May, June,  
July, August and September.

~ Mark Twain

## EXTENDED INSIGHTS...

# AND IT ALL MAKES SENSE.... THIS ED. CONSULTING GIG!

By: Paula L. Rudy

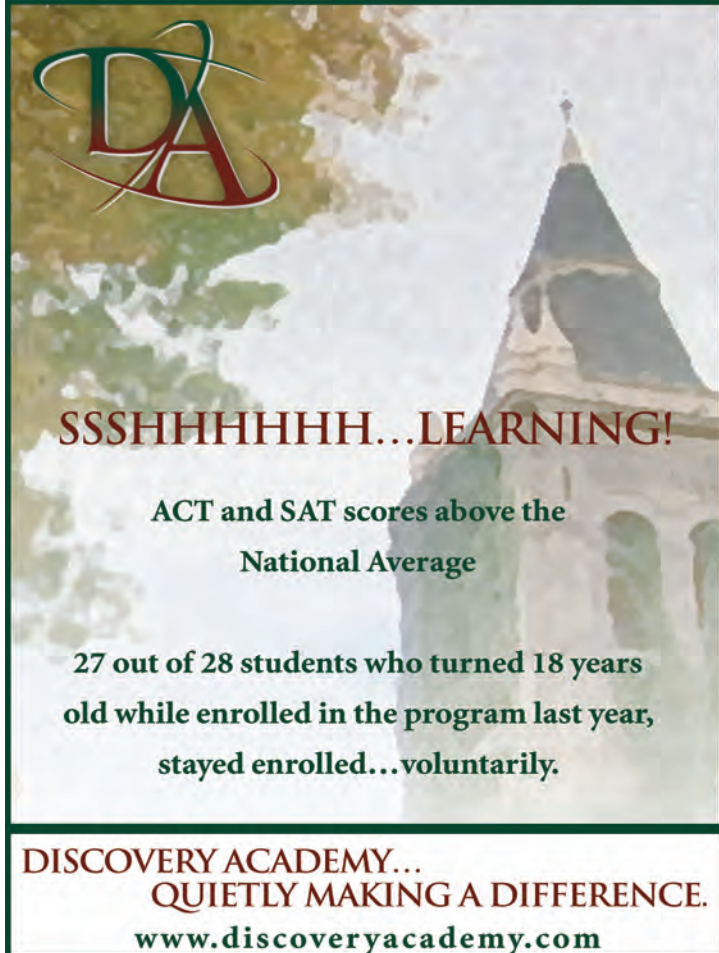
Everyone I know has been stretched recently beyond his or her typical stressors of everyday life. I certainly have. I have been mired at times in dealing with the challenging kids and parents we assist. I find it especially difficult when things go south with a placement. No matter the reason, its flat-out stressful for everyone!

Recently I had a moment of vision and I feel it's important to share my recent experiences. It is abundantly clear why I do this work and why I feel blessed by the fact that I am doing my "right work".

I've got two boys out in the woods (a wilderness program). The work with both of these boys has gone far beyond my expectations. I would call it truly brilliant and inspired. It is such an example of the "magic" of wilderness therapy and the power of this experience. The boys are very different in IQ, background, academic achievement and behavior. Yet these boys arrived at this program with a common lack of insight into themselves, their lives and their self destructive behaviors.

I follow up each week on their progress and I am hearing of experiences I know will positively affect the rest of their lives. They are growing and maturing at lightning speed! I knew the people at this program were good but quite honestly I didn't know they were *this* good.

CONTINUED: MAKES SENSE/ 12



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## MAKES SENSE

I've got kids at a school in Arizona. One of my boys there has never in his life had this kind of academic success. School has always been miserable for him and a constant source of shame. Now he is turned on to school and learning and knows he can do it. I am so grateful to the excellent staff that has been patient and wise in their approach. Their patience was needed in order to allow this young man to have this experience.

One of my boys is at a therapeutic boarding school in the west. He has never known the presence of mature and balanced adults. Though young, he was already picking up lots of bad habits and a very unhealthy way of seeing the world. It has been touch and go with him. I went to see him and for once he looked calm and centered. He said he felt like the people at this school really care about him. I knew this would be critical. My last few reports tell me it looks like he's turned a corner. I don't know how long it will last. What I do know is this young man, for the

first time in his life is experiencing a healthy self and lifestyle. I am finding their approach with this student demonstrative of brilliance. The dedication and attention to this one kid and his life inspires me.

These are just a few of my most recent successes I wanted to share with everyone in hopes that I can remind us all, like I've been reminded, why this work is so significant, impactful and valuable.


As I think back, I recall having excellent examples of Educational Consultants who paved the way for this incredible work. These admired individuals are: Ann Carol Price, Miriam Bodin and Diane Albrecht. Beyond the basics; having a true grasp of the background of the student, followed by making excellent placements and advocating for their kids.

There was never a question of their high ethical standards and a deep care for their students.


When I became an Educational Consultant my goal was to model my practice after theirs and to strive to achieve that same level of excellence.

I wish to publicly acknowledge each of these women and thank them for setting such a wonderful example.

***About the Author:** Paula Rudy is an Educational Consultant in Redding, CA, who works with families throughout the US and internationally, focusing on special needs placement for students ages 12-24. She can be reached via phone at 866-886-8336 or email at [paula@paularudy.com](mailto:paula@paularudy.com). For more information, visit Paula's website at [www.paularudy.com](http://www.paularudy.com).*



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## A STORY ABOUT A BOY

AS TOLD BY A LUCKY HORSE  
Interpreted by Sonja Rhodes, ES

The wind was nipping my nose on the frosty afternoon that the lady came around to my pasture. At first I avoided her because I didn't see the purpose of what she was doing. I turned left, then right, looking away to avoid eye contact. I thought maybe she would give up and leave me alone.

I knew her plan was to take me to the mesa with the boy, but the boy wasn't there yet—he was busy with other things and just returning in the white van from some group outing. Maybe he didn't really want to be with me anyway. I wasn't sure.

The lady wouldn't give up; she approached me, talked to me and waited for me to acknowledge her. It seemed easier to meet her half way than to keep on avoiding it. She seemed harmless and hopeful.

She proved to have good intentions as I followed her and waited at the standing rail. I was thankful she didn't make the rope knotted, knowing that takes away my options. If I needed to flee I would be stuck. This lady looped the rope so I had something to hold onto without being captive. She knew I could pull away and leave, but if I did, she would go with me until I was ready to go back. She left the impression that she trusted me to stay. I was thankful the choice was mine; the rope was secure but not confining.

The boy showed up and the lady asked him to brush Skipper and me while she broke the ice in the water tanks. The boy smiled while brushing us. Noticing this, I became less annoyed at being removed from my home and comfort zone. I realized I'd been standing there, cold-focus inward, not noticing the company of the others around me. It wasn't so bad being there with that boy, being cared for. I saw that he was ok while grooming me, so I relaxed.

The boy conversed with the lady as she saddled us and they climbed up on our backs. The boy took hold of my reins and with



that connection I couldn't help but size him up. I decided who I thought he was. Maybe I didn't know him well, but I had to ask myself right then—who he was going to be to me.

Holding my reins, he had my most vulnerable part in the palm of his hands—the leather that connected to that metal bit in my mouth.

I thought about my past—I wasn't always dependable, knowing how to buck or spook off, leaving a rider in a heap of dust. I know the power of my weight and muscle and felt lucky the lady took the time to teach me I can be confident in myself—safe and kind toward others while staying true to myself. I've learned to be patient, gentle and playful—not too judgmental of those who hold my reins a bit harshly. I know they're just learning, doing the best they know how while trying to communicate with me.

Somehow I've learned to relax, helping them through those clumsy times without blame or defensiveness. There was a time when I'd thought about bucking a rider off for not knowing what I needed from them. It never left me feeling good about myself, seeming like everybody lost while blaming everybody else.

For a year, I've been carrying the weight of boys of many shapes, sizes and temperaments. It goes against my instinct of self-preservation, but the more I do this, the more I see how good it is to be strong for others, helping them be faster, stronger and braver than they were before meeting me. I am proving that I can be trusted and reliable, even though once I wasn't.

The boy took my reins, holding the bit comfortably in my mouth. He rubbed my shoulder, smiling as we began our trip up the hill. The lady and Skipper went ahead, moving quickly, making it look easy, although I noticed an unsteady rhythm in his gait.

The boy and I moved more slowly, stopping sometimes while the boy looked far away, studying the desert and horizon. I sensed his thoughts as he considered the vast stillness while the wind whipped against our faces. Many times along that climb he seemed to go someplace else in his mind, but his hands remained steady, connecting us so I went with him to those places deep within himself and far away to other places — out there somewhere. I wondered if he knew I was there with him.

Sometimes the climb tired me. The rocks were hard under my feet and the frost on the grass made the footing uncertain. When I'd begin to slip, he'd catch me with the reins, steadying my steps, keeping me from falling.

As we neared the big rocks I grew tired. The way was steep and reaching the top seemed far away, maybe impossible. I stopped more often, resting longer. The boy expressed concern that I wouldn't make it further. He didn't know if I could.

I knew that the lady knows my strength and ability. I knew she was gauging the circumstance, environment, time and future events, considering how far to push, how fast to progress—and whether it was about this particular hill we were climbing—reaching that one specific goal, or if the day's conditions required a change of direction. She might have known that sometimes unexpected destinations prove better than our own plans.

The lady spoke to the boy about this briefly, and, just as she had wrapped my rope at the standing rail earlier, gave this boy options, asking if he wanted to continue our climb to the top of the mesa. This meant slowly picking our path through the rocks under the shadow of the tall hill as the sun quickly sank behind its back. Or, did he want to go where the sun still shone brightly over a smoother, more gradual trail, away from the sharp rocks and scrub brush.

The boy chose where the sun shone on a path with fewer obstacles to bruise my heels. I wondered if he knew how much I thanked him for choosing that way and considering me. Did he know how much easier it was on both of us? Did he realize how cold and long and difficult the other path might have been had he chosen only to reach the highest place that day?

We still had to work as we walked on the path the boy had chosen. The wind still beat against us, making our skin feel cold, but the sun was there, softening the frozen ground and warming the air. We could have run, playing with ease, had we decided to. It wouldn't have caused us any harm.

We saw herds of deer with the ranch dog trailing them. We stopped after some miles at the top of the furthest peak from our original goal. .

Looking over the valley and water, the boy enjoyed some trail mix the lady had brought, talking about the hopes and dreams he has for his future. He thanked the lady for the time he'd had with me. I knew then I was a very lucky horse. As my stride quickened as we headed home, the boy noticed I was actually much stronger than he'd first thought.

I knew the way home, remembering the path he'd chosen for us. Remembering our journey, I reflected on how difficult the path had been sometimes, and how it made me question myself and the boy, wondering whether he really cared about me or if I was just a way to pass the time. I knew he had doubted my abilities for a while—but then he chose the way he thought would be best for me.

I remembered my first thought back at the pasture that I'd rather not even go, that it was a waste of my time and energy and I'd be missing out not being where I'd always been. Being there with that boy, I realized that I was so glad we had experienced the journey together.

Spending time with the boy—knowing he really cared about the path I took and how it affected me—made me thankful. I knew I was in good hands. The time it took and the choices we made together reminded me I was stronger than others knew and more capable than I gave myself credit for. I was also more willing than my nature would have chosen on its own without the determination of others who were choosing to wait it out with me and go alongside to places more peaceful and rewarding than I'd imagined they could ever be.

**About Cherry Gulch:** Cherry Gulch is a ranch-style, therapeutic boarding school designed specifically for 10 -14 year old boys. Their supportive, encouraging and respect-based approach is designed to build students up—rather than tear them down. Cherry Gulch is passionate about providing early intervention and prevention to help boys reach their full potential and become well-rounded, pro-social young men. They are dedicated to providing outstanding therapeutic and academic services to students and their families in the context of a safe environment working toward “Building Brighter Tomorrows for the Boys of Today.” For more information, contact: Andy Sapp, PhD, Founder and CEO, 208-365-3437 ext. 502, [DrSapp@CherryGulch.org](mailto:DrSapp@CherryGulch.org), [www.CherryGulch.org](http://www.CherryGulch.org).

Speaking of Japanese college students... I have a feeling young people's writing skills are affected by writing email. They are good at dragging on and on about whatever pops into their mind, but they are not so good at saying what they want to say in a logical, organized way.

~ Naoki Kamisaka

# CARLBROOK SCHOOL THREE YEAR LONGITUDINAL STUDY

## COMBATING SUBSTANCE ABUSE

By: R. Grant Price

Carlbroom School strives to help adolescents develop the skills and personal traits needed to succeed in the world while providing them with a rigorous curriculum designed to foster intellectual growth. This requires addressing the core issues underlying maladaptive behavior patterns, like substance abuse, that can pull them away from optimal adolescent brain and psychological development and then helping them identify healthy alternatives for meeting needs and satisfying typical adolescent urges.

In 2006 Carlbroom School contracted with a team from Duke University (Jeff Georgi, MDiv, MAH, LCAS; Becky Georgi, MS, LCAS; and Aaron White, PhD) to assess the substance abuse education, treatment and prevention needs of its students and their families. Results of the assessment revealed high levels of substance use by students in the year prior to enrollment at the School and elevated rates of return to substance use following graduation.

Following the 2006 assessment Carlbroom implemented a host of clinical enhancements to tackle substance use and better prepare students to live substance free lives after graduation. These changes included but were not limited to the following:

- Introduction of Brain 101 - a semester course on adolescent brain development that teaches all Carlbroom School students about their brains, how they develop and how to keep the mind healthy. Taught directly by Aaron White, PhD of Duke University Medical Center this course has been exceptionally well-received by our students.
- Development of a comprehensive Recovery Maintenance Program that ensures students have the skills and resources they need to remain substance free post graduation. This can be adjusted to fit a range of pre-existing substance abuse patterns and entails concentrated group work as well as individual counseling for those students/families exhibiting moderate to more severe risk profiles.
- Creation of Alumni and Transition Services to help students and their families' transition home or the next academic destination without losing the positive momentum gained while at Carlbroom. Currently, Carlbroom School employs 5 full-time therapists in their Alumni and Transition Services Department that begins approximately six months prior to commencement and extends for a full year following graduation.
- Implementation of Family Brain Defense Weekend - an intensive therapeutic/experiential conference for higher risk students and families that helps them identify and cope with issues that could impede continued improvements in well-being after students graduate Carlbroom School. There is particular emphasis on how students and their families can work together to continue their family transition planning process.

In 2009 a follow-up study was performed to assess our progress toward addressing substance abuse and helping our students learn to live substance free lives after graduation. The findings are summarized below.

### Summary of findings from the 2009 follow-up study

#### *Fewer students use substances after graduating from Carlbroom School*

- Students who graduated Carlbroom School after implementation of new strategies for addressing substance abuse were significantly less likely to abuse alcohol, tobacco and other drugs after graduation.
- When comparing students who graduated between 2004-2006 (before curriculum changes) and between 2007-2009 (after curriculum changes) weekly post-graduate use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana were all reduced by roughly half.
  - 41% reduction in weekly Alcohol use
  - 47% reduction in weekly Tobacco use
  - 47% reduction in weekly Marijuana use
- Importantly, this decrease in post Carlbroom School drug use occurred during the same period when pre-Carlbroom School drug use rose significantly. In other words, these strides were

made swimming against the current.

#### *Families have confidence in Carlbroom School*

- Most parents of recent (2007-2009) graduates agreed or strongly agreed:
  - They are glad their child attended Carlbroom School (94%)
  - Their child left Carlbroom School with optimism for the future (87%)
  - Their child changed for the better as a result of Carlbroom School (87%)
  - Their relationship with their child improved as a result of Carlbroom School (87%)
  - They felt confident Carlbroom School was taking good care of their child (95%)
- Twice as many parents of 2007-2009 alumni than parents of pre-2006 alumni reported their child left Carlbroom School with a clear plan to keep them on track after graduation (81% vs 39%).
- Compared to data from parents of pre-2006 alumni, parents of 2007-2009 alumni reported lower levels of problems with alcohol (27% vs 14%) or other drugs (23% vs 18%) and lower rates of smoking (43% vs. 36%) by their students since graduation.

#### *Students thrive at Carlbroom School*

- In 2009 most current students reported:
  - Finding at least one member of the faculty/staff in whom they confide (95%)
  - Feeling safe at the School (94%)
  - Their relationship with their parents/guardians has improved as a result of Carlbroom School (92%)
- Nearly twice as many current students in 2009 (63%) than 2006 (36) agreed or strongly agreed that Carlbroom School is doing a good job of preparing them to live sober lives after graduation if they want to do so.
- Approximately 9/10 recent (2007-2009) graduates agreed or strongly agreed they were glad they attended Carlbroom School (88%), have fond memories of the experience (95%) and that their life improved as a result of Carlbroom School (78%).

### Conclusions

The changes implemented by Carlbroom School in response to the 2006 survey reduced the likelihood that students will return to substance use after graduation and increased satisfaction with the program. While this is indeed encouraging there remains much work to be done. We are exceptionally proud of the extreme clinical and statistical significance the data above suggests; however, it underscores that maintaining vigilance and being open to change is simply good practice. I am grateful to have an opportunity to stand beside such talent and even more appreciative we have been able to construct lasting, systemic solutions for those students and families suffering the negative effects of substance abuse.

Best wishes for 2010 and may this year bring better times to everyone.

**About the Author:** R. Grant Price is the Director of Development at Carlbroom School in Halifax, VA. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of South Carolina, Mr. Price earned his Master of Arts degree from California State University, focusing on the study and analysis of various educational models. Prior to co-founding Carlbroom School, Mr. Price worked as both a secondary school counselor as well as a Certified Educational Consultant at the Price Group in Columbia, SC, where he visited and evaluated hundreds of unique and innovative educational programs, conducted individual student evaluations and assessments, and identified appropriate educational environments for students nationwide. He is a former member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association. For more information, please contact Carlbroom School at 434-476-2406, or visit the website at [www.carlbroom.org](http://www.carlbroom.org).



# SEEN N' HEARD

Congratulations go to **Jason** and **Serena Hull**, from **Nawa Academy** on the arrival of your son, **Caeden Travis Hull**. He was born on September 21, 2009 and is already curious about the outdoors.

During the last month, the following news was posted on [Strugglingteens.com](http://Strugglingteens.com).

**Timpview RTC** was closed, and we were notified January 19, 2010.

On January 21, **Deck House School** evolved into a year round school.

January 25, **Sage Star Center** launched a new student-centered development course at **Cherry Gulch, Vista Counseling Services** partnered with **Utley Family Farms, Turnabout/ Stillwater** offered financing options to families and **Newport Academy** opened a boys program.

On January 28, **Aspen** announced **Susan Cambria** would be the vice president of eastern division and would be responsible for overseeing operations at Aspen's 10 eastern facilities including Academy at **Swift River, Adirondack Leadership Expeditions, Bromley Brook School, Camp Huntington, Four Circles Recovery Center, New Leaf Academy of North Carolina, Phoenix Outdoor, Stone Mountain School, SUWS of the Carolinas** and **Talisman Programs**.

January 30 **Benchmark's Richard Brimhall** retired as the Dean of Admissions.

Many press releases came in on February 1. **Sheila Tart-Zelvin** joined the business development team at **Memorial Hermann Prevention and Recovery Center (PaRC)**, **Discovery Academy** welcomed **Phil Scoville, LMFT, Dr. David Smith**, Chair of Addiction Medicine at **Newport Academy** will be presented the ASAM annual award in April, **BestNotes** announced the integration of its treatment program information management system with **Family Bridge**, an online tool for families of troubled teens created by the aftercare experts at **Homeward Bound** and **Pasadena Villa** welcomed **Dr. Myrtho Branch**. Also, **Elan** received NIPSA accreditation.

On February 5, **Elk Mountain Academy** celebrated their 16th year in operation. **Bridges Academy** launched a music appreciation class, **Vista at Dimple Dell Canyon** began offering enhanced programming involving DBT (dialectical behavioral therapy) and **Russ Pryor, LCSW, MBA**, accepted the position of Admissions Director at the **Aspen Institute**, with **Randi Nelson** stepping into the role of admissions coordinator. Also on February 5, we were introduced to an **EAGALA** program called **Fresh Steps, EAP**, owned by **Darcie Kelly, LCSW**.

On February 9, **Marla Simon**, educational consultant, opened an office in San Diego, CA, and **College Living Experience** addressed the 30 percent college dropout rate with an article announcing their summer



opportunities.

February 11, **Recovery Plus** opened a substance abuse and addiction treatment center near Salt Lake City, UT, **Ironwood** submitted a Press Release explaining therapeutic boarding schools in their view and **Parth Gandhi** told us about **Peter Isquith's** presentation on Executive Functioning. Also, **Tiffany Wynn** of **Camp Mary Orton**, announced the 6th Annual Research and Evaluation

of Adventure Programming (REAP) Symposium would be held March 17-19, 2010.

On February 16, **Teen Challenge Columbus Girls Academy** sent a press release stating they had the privilege of hosting Base Camp 2010 earlier in February where seventy staff members and presenters were in attendance representing 17 Teen Challenge facilities from the Southeast region, and **Discovery Ranch** welcomed **Jeanette Brown, LCSW, LSAC** to the therapy team.

**Tree Andrews** announced February 18 that she had left **Robert Meltzer's** Educational Consultant practice to start her own. We also learned that **Cherokee Creek Boys School's** LEGO League team was headed to state finals.

Other news that was shared with **Woodbury Reports** included **Father Ralph Groskoph**, Episcopalian chaplain at the **Family Foundation School** retired and the annual NAWA Rescue Spring Training course was announced and will be held March 29 through April 3, 2010. Ten students from the **Grove School** received "high honors" and were awarded breakfast with **Peter Chorney**, Executive Director and **Robert Ruggiero**, Principal.

Visitors included **Julia Andrick** of **Catherine Freer** and **Dan Doyle** of **Santiam Crossing**.







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- Peer group counseling
- Family therapy
- College counseling
- Spiritual and pastoral guidance
- Special support groups for students struggling with
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  - Eating disorders
  - Anger management
  - Grief and loss
  - Social phobia
  - Sexual abuse/trauma
  - Adoption

Our new Director of Counseling, clinical psychologist Mark Vogel, Ph.D., leads a staff of four master's level therapists and five substance abuse counselors who provide daily therapeutic counseling to students. Our consulting psychiatrist spends several hours on-site each month meeting with students being treated with psychotherapeutic medications. And with a staff-student

ratio of almost one to one, students can always find a teacher, sponsor, family leader or coach available for a heart-to-heart conversation.

Students also benefit from a broad range of extracurricular activities and internships that



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provide the experiential therapy that builds self-confidence and independence.

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