

Places for Struggling Teens™



Published by

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April 2010 - Issue #188

DO WE HAVE MORE STRUGGLING TEENS TODAY?

by Lon Woodbury



CHALLENGES IN PARENT CHOICE SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

By Larry Stednitz

This seems to be a perennial question going back to early history. Even in ancient Greece, Plato claimed the younger generation was lazy, disrespectful, etc. That seems to be saying the younger generation, when he was talking as an adult, was not up to standards his generation met when they were young. There have been similar comments from just about every generation since. One problem with this is observations like these are always subjective. Thus the question always remains, and is often debated by childcare workers and other adults even today. That is, are children of each generation usually pretty much the same, or is there a higher percentage of struggling teens today? One possible conclusion is the older generation will always be critical of the younger generation, as if adults have forgotten what it was like to be young, and we shouldn't take such observations very seriously.

However, in the past few decades, scientific research has been applied to this question, with the hope that a little bit of scientific objectivity can answer the question if young people today are really different from previous generations.

I blogged last January about a study that indicated struggling teens are more common now than they were just a generation or two ago in the blog post [Are Struggling Teens More Common Now Than In Past Generations?](#) This study seems to confirm there is a higher percentage of young people having emotional problems now than in previous generations. This conclusion is also supported by examples like the educator concluding from personal experience that Generation Y children are 'harder to teach'. Of course this is a subjective conclusion, but the study I mentioned in January indicates there is some research evidence to back it up.

However, the jury is still out on this question. Although not a straight comparison, this study, based on the behaviors, attitudes and values of nearly a half-million American students over the last 30 years, goes the opposite direction. It concludes modern students are not that much different from students over the last 30 years.

So where does that leave us? It seems to say that human behavior, and especially that of young people, is not that simple. It could be that both these apparently contradictory studies are right if we could just figure out what this apparently contradictory research is telling us. Until someone can get a handle on the full implications of this research that appears contradictory, I guess we are free to speculate. And, the debate continues.

The downturn in the economy has impacted nearly all of us who work with families needing help with their children. Many of the conversations we have center upon the current strength of the Parent Choice Schools and Programs and the changes that are occurring as a result. The economy is demanding changes, and these changes are not all bad! We see the adjustments in services like consulting, psychological testing, costs of programs and the development of new services.

Consultants at Woodbury Reports teleconference every two weeks, keeping up with the changes in our work and to get everyone's thoughts on complex consultations. Today, we had some good news. We, like most consultants have feared that our consultations might have fallen off by 20 percent or so. Knowing how the reductions across the board might impact us, we were pleasantly surprised to learn that after all the numbers were in, 2009 was a better year than 2008. We were grateful for that information. We think that parents need even more assistance in making difficult decisions due to the impact of the economy.

One of our consultants received a notice today that one of the many fine psychologists in the industry has reduced his fee for a full battery of psychological assessments. I think it is safe to say that the downturn of the economy has impacted this valuable service. Most consultants value these evaluations and it would be a great loss to lose the information the psychological testing provides. Our group agrees that full psychological evaluations are worth the money and not to have one when needed would be a great loss to our families. Many have refined their practice to provide timely and useful information that is invaluable in determining an appropriate program for our clients.

Similarly, programs show signs of the troubled economy. Of late, it is no mystery as to why it was easier to place an adolescent this past year than at any other time over the last several years. Many programs now have been willing to

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CHALLENGES

modify (lower) their monthly rate to bring in residents. A couple of years ago, few programs would consider reducing their monthly rates.

Programs and schools in our network have steadily increased their rates each year for some time now. We don't doubt that they have needed to do so in order to maintain a quality service for our families. It is not uncommon to quote a monthly cost for a program, and to get a response from parents that \$6,000 a month is "outrageous." Others may complain that programs and schools make "a ton of money." Not true. Consider this example: We have worked with programs and schools that charged \$6,000 a month. One such program would require at least a census of 60 to meet their basic costs with no profit until there was a census of 61 and upwards. Sounds good, but a large graduation might reduce their census overnight to 50 enrollees, creating a loss of over \$60,000 a month until they are able to build back up to profitability. A prudent school or program would reduce costs by cutting the least harmful losses in staff and other expenses. We find the most painful cut is to layoff staff. Layoffs cause rumors about the stability of programs, making placements more complicated. The solid programs are able to make the adjustment at a lower census without damaging the quality of care. We pay a lot of attention to those programs that are able to manage fluctuations in an uncertain economy.

Those programs that have the greatest demand operate with the best margin possible. They often are the ones who have solid reputations and have ample room for error or census flexibility. They also have directors who have mastered downturns in their business and know how to manage their revenue and expenses on a daily basis. The competition is fierce and perhaps only the strong will

remain standing.

Our consultants pay attention to the programs throughout the country, looking for facts and trends. In 2009, at least 40 programs/schools closed. Most of these closures were due to the economic down-turn. Some closed due to pressure from licensing or accreditation violations, but most closed due to the inability to compete in the changing market place. Some simply disappeared with no word of why.

There have also been twelve new programs that were developed in 2009. A few brave souls started new wilderness programs, increasing the competition in the field. The new programs and services were mostly substance abuse programs or transition substance abuse services. We welcome the substance abuse programs. With nearly all special purpose programs and schools enrolling youth who have substance abuse issues, there is a need for more sophisticated substance abuse treatments and services.

Transition programs have the potential to help those families who are choosing to work with their child at home and in the community. A trend is for these programs to provide services that may help keep the child at home, before or after, out-of-home treatment. The private sector is working very hard to be successful in these endeavors. We applaud them and look forward to seeing how the private sector can achieve success.

The Parent Choice Schools and Programs are making painful decisions. Consultants are working harder to be more accurate in their recommendations, psychologists are paying attention to their cost, our programs and schools of today are exploring adjustments in costs, and all have to make adjustments to the down-turn in the economy. However, the best, most creative and well funded will survive and thrive.

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Non-Continental US postal orders or International orders add \$5 USD.

Places for Struggling Teens™ is published by Woodbury Reports, Inc.™

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ISSN: 1540-3718

VISIT REPORTS...

BOYS TOWN

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Visit by Larry Stednitz on September 2009

Forty two years ago, I had the good fortune of working at Boys Town, Nebraska—my first experience working in a residential program. At Boys Town, I was a high school counselor and a volunteer football coach. Last September, I was asked to visit Boys Town's campus as an Independent Educational Consultant, providing my impressions of the organization's services.

Founded in 1917 as a private, not-for-profit home for boys, Boys Town helps children (boys and girls) and families through its Integrated Continuum of Care, which provides the right treatment, at the right time, in the right way. The Continuum offers Intensive Residential Treatment Center Services, Specialized Treatment Group Home Services, Intervention and Assessment Services, Treatment Family Services, Foster Family Services, In-Home Family Services and Child and Family Support Services.

Boys Town is located 15 miles west of downtown Omaha, Nebraska, on 900 well-groomed acres. The boys and girls live in one of 70 Family Homes located throughout their campus. Boys Town currently has an enrollment of more than 450 boys and girls, grades three through twelve. These Family Homes are large and would fit right into some of the

nearby Omaha neighborhoods. The residences are staffed by trained married couples called Family-Teachers who serve as surrogate parents, role models, teachers and counselors. This residential model of treatment is called the Treatment Family Home Program.

Boys Town works with many students who are several years behind in school. Some have been identified as being seriously emotionally disturbed, with relatively low academic achievement due to deprivation, learning disabilities or academic performance that has been negatively impacted by emotional overlay. Some students at Boys Town, while not developmentally disabled, are on the lower end of intellectual capabilities, while others are average to high average intellectually. Roughly 25% of the population has been identified as having learning disabilities and/or attention deficits. A wide variety of Axis I psychiatric disorders are represented, as well as personality and attachment disorders of varying degrees. Typical youth who come to Boys Town may have serious behavioral problems, experienced school failure, a history of runaway behaviors or drug and alcohol abuse, or are victims of physical or sexual abuse. Boys Town rules out acutely suicidal, actively psychotic or seriously aggressive youth.

Boys Town's residential treatment model, the Treatment Family Home Program, is a very well-researched approach. Family-Teachers apply behavioral principles to teach life skills, build appropriate relationships and help youth develop self-esteem. The program utilizes a low tolerance for inappropriate behaviors, coupled with warmth and praise for appropriate behaviors. Boys Town is clearly not a control-oriented program but rather a youth-empowerment model. Education is incorporated into each resident's life. Most are behind in academic achievement, and the school

CONTINUED: BOYS TOWN/ 4



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BOYS TOWN

program operates with an average of one teacher to ten students. The school has adopted a reading curriculum that enables students to gain, on average, two years of improvement for every year they are in the reading program. Although Boys Town implements a psychosocial model, boys and girls may receive individual, group and family therapy as well as psychiatric services as an adjunct to the Treatment Family Home program if clinically indicated.

Boys Town has a very extensive therapeutic co-curricular program. School staff members, athletic personnel and the Family-Teachers support each other through continual communication in order to maximize the influence of each others' roles. Included in this array of offerings are boys and girls cross country, baseball, JROTC, boys and girls track, marching band, girls volleyball, boys football, girls and boys basketball, student counsel, sports summer camps, wrestling, flag corps, girls and boys soccer and cheerleading.


Boys Town takes athletics seriously as a very important teaching tool. The program utilizes an established curriculum called *Competing with Character*. Boys Town's use of this approach, promoting sportsmanship and good character, has earned its students an award for best sportsmanship at the Nebraska State Boys Basketball Tournament two years in a row. Boys Town has a long history of exemplary athletics. Athletic facilities surpass those of the majority of colleges and universities I have visited. These facilities include several athletic fields for a wide range of outdoor sports and an indoor field house that can accommodate a full range of athletic activities and provide the necessary equipment. The field house is large enough for an indoor football practice.

Boys Town's well-experienced leadership team consists of individuals with extensive educational backgrounds and experience at Boys Town, as well as other residential treatment centers. Their experience surpasses that of staff at the vast majority of programs around the country. The direct-care staff ratio and longevity is also excellent. For example, the Treatment Family Homes on campus have two Family-Teachers and an Assistant Family-Teacher for every eight youth, at least a 1:4 caregiver-to-youth ratio at all times. Additionally, Boys Town has a full staff of teachers, special education teachers, recreation/athletics staff and other direct-care and support staff. Many direct-care staff members have been at Boys Town for several years. It is not unusual for some to have been in the Treatment Family Home Program for more than ten years. This is an impressive strength.

An important topic in the Parent Choice Industry is "What research has been done to demonstrate outcomes?" Boys Town has been performing important, extensive research on its child- and family-care programs for more than 30 years. In 2004, the Boys Town National Research Institute for Child and Family Studies (NRI) was developed to further expand these research efforts. In 2005, the NRI began working with the Center for At-Risk Children's Services at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Researchers are engaged in two federally funded research projects. Boys Town has conducted or been a partner in more than 100 research-based studies dating back to 1980.

I had the opportunity to have dinner with the boys and Family-Teachers in one of the Family Homes. At the front door, a staff member and a boy welcomed us into the home and we were greeted by all of the boys, each nicely dressed, well groomed and courteous. Each looked me squarely in the eye, shaking my hand while welcoming me to their home. All residents were present except one boy who was at football practice. The boys, as is their custom, planned and made dinner along with staff.

The boys asked me many questions without prompting from staff members. Communication skills are important for all of us, and the boys were socially accomplished in carrying on conversation at dinner. I later learned that the boys were taught to ask interesting questions, which enables them to develop this important skill. It was obvious that some struggled more than others, but they all were able to make me feel comfortable at dinner! The boys gave me a tour, during which they were coached and prompted by the Family-Teachers. I also attended part of the junior varsity football game that evening. The game was well attended, and enthusiasm was obvious. It looked and sounded like any football game across the state of Nebraska, with




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cheerleaders, parents, local fans, a band and well-conditioned athletes. I recently saw a news clip that applauded Boys Town's undefeated 2009 regular season.

It is interesting to walk through the Village of Boys Town, an incorporated Nebraska municipality. The campus is busy most of the day. Boys and girls walk to lunch, school or sports activities. All are well dressed and appear as youth do in any other village or town around the country. In the early evening, the boys and girls were playing outside their homes or walking to and from various activities. As night came, the campus was quiet, except for a few isolated boys and girls laughing and playing in their yard.

While Boys Town is nonsectarian, they encourage residents to explore their spiritual life. Boys Town youth come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, and the referral sources include private pays and a wide variety of public agency pays.

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enough so that you won't have
to look up to people;
and then more education
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Visit By: Loi Eberle, MA, IECA, October 29, 2009

I was favorably impressed by the growth and changes that have occurred at the thriving community of Penrith Farms since my last visit a few years ago. Defining itself as a "Specialized Therapeutic Community" of young adults ages 18 to 26, Penrith Farms is located on 320 acres of timber and farmland in Eastern Washington. Many of their numerous buildings have been built by past residents and employees, and the residents' houses had been remodeled since I was last there. Quite comfortable and attractive, they are consistent with the rustic feeling of the area, with wood stoves, stone and wood interiors.

The owner/directors, Jim and Sherry Brewster initially developed this homestead, farmland and creek as a self-sustaining environment for their family. They became a therapeutic program for the State of Washington in 1983. Over the years Penrith Farms evolved into a therapeutic community devoted to personal commitment, communication and self-discovery, with a focus on teaching the value of honesty, trust, and respect. I noticed during my visit that the family feeling remains, now including staff and residents.

My conversations with their Clinical Director, Michael Hoffman, MSW, and his staff revealed that they will

CONTINUED: PENRITH FARMS/ 6

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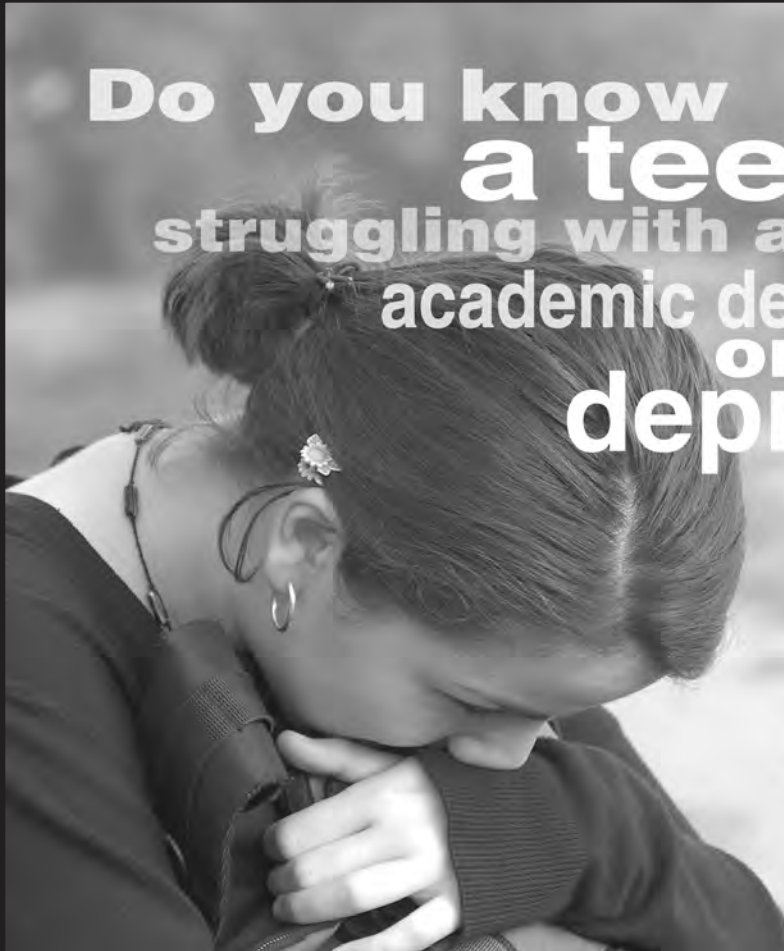
consider a wide profile of potential applicants, including depression with psychotic features, and schizophrenia. They will not accept applicants with a history of violence or extreme oppositionality. Applicants with a history of drug and alcohol abuse and/or addiction must have a commitment to sobriety. Since they are of age, applicants must be there willingly, although in many cases that decision is made as a result of their parents' limitation of other choices. They have a nurse on staff who is on-call 24/hrs, and a consulting psychiatrist in Spokane, less than an hour away.

During our conversations, staff spoke about the advantage of the Penrith Farms therapeutic community for connecting with each resident from a realistic, spontaneous, and honest perspective. Their therapeutic approach involves creating a personal relationship based on trust, using the learning opportunities throughout the week to highlight therapeutic goals. Based on the mutual decision of the resident and therapist, individual therapy sessions and/or specialty groups are attended each week, in addition to the weekly community meeting. They strive to create daily opportunities for the residents to learn to understand the outcomes of their behavior, helping them change any inappropriate and non-productive behaviors. This is done in part by employing a positive peer culture: each person is responsible for encouraging others to succeed and hold each other accountable for their words and actions. This creates the basis for learning about personal responsibility and developing essential leadership skills through appropriate role modeling. Devoid of a "level system", residents instead move toward their mutually defined treatment goals based on their interaction with the staff and other residents.

Penrith Farms' educational and vocation components focus on challenging and inspiring their residents on a daily basis to make a commitment to change their behaviors and thinking process. Part of this involves teaching the benefit of a positive work ethic and taking responsibility. They emphasize effective communication, cooperation and completion, teaching skills that will help residents to become proactive rather than reactive, regarding the outcome of their decision and thinking process. The residents' schedule includes chores, gym, group meetings/therapy and a variety of classes in which they can choose to participate. Residents have options for completing high school or their GED and can earn college credit through a combination of correspondence courses and classes in the nearby town. They have a number of horses and are offer Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) along with horsemanship classes.

Although it was unseasonably cold and snowy during my visit, I walked over to their 50' X 25' state-of-the-art, hand-built greenhouse that operates on a year-round basis. Gratefully I entered the warm and inviting interior, heated by a large wood stove and 1000-watt high-pressure sodium lights for illumination and additional heat generation. Alicia, the Organic Gardening Supervisor, with a background in Botanical Studies, introduced me to one of the residents working in the greenhouse. He told me how much he enjoyed learning to grow food, and described the 10+ acre garden area next to the green house where additional organic food is grown during the spring and summer months. They bragged about how some of the best restaurants in Spokane, WA, and Sandpoint, ID, feature their organic produce.

Other staff explained to me that in addition to daily maintenance of the garden, which involves the physical



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tasks of planting, cultivation, harvesting, composting and fence building, the farm is also home to several types of animals. Caring for the rabbits, honey bees, cattle, poultry, horses, dogs and cats all provide opportunities for learning responsibility, teamwork and commitment.

There is a fully equipped woodworking facility, where the residents learn the basic carpentry skills involved with designing and creating projects for individual and communal use. Although not open at the time of my visit, I was told about their journeyman carpenter and cabinetmaker with 30 years of experience who supervises the woodshop. Another class available to residents is basic vehicle maintenance and small engine repair. All the work is performed in the auto shop and supervised by an experienced mechanic. Other classes include drawing, baking, photography, chess, plumbing, poetry, yoga, culture cooking and budgeting. Students participate in cooking their meals.

When an appropriate level of trust is earned, Penrith staff provides its residents transportation within a 10 mile radius, to various internships, classes and job opportunities. Some of the residents work at Small Planet Tofu, their food production business, which produces up to 7000 pounds weekly and distributes tofu products to sixteen states.

I was impressed by the number of opportunities to learn valuable life skills that are available to residents in this attractive, rustic setting. The young people I spoke with were fairly open about their challenges, favorable about what they were learning and seemed engaged in the process. Penrith staff was friendly, their computerized scheduling and communication process was well organized and the houses felt cozy. This felt like a good place to mature and acquire the communication and life skills needed for independence.

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]

FAMILY LIFE CENTER

Petaluma, CA

Jon Foye, Director of Admissions

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Founded in 1978, Family Life Center is licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, Accredited by the California Alliance of Child and Family Services and a member of NATSAP. In addition, Family Life Center's school, Larry M. Simmons High School, is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and certified by the California State Department of Education. Director of Development is

CONTINUED: FAMILY LIFE CENTER/ 8

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FAMILY LIFE CENTER

Christine Paul and Director of Admissions is Jon Foye.

Family Life Center has single gender campuses. As students progress through a five-phase program, they focus and advance by conquering individual goals and challenges. The phases include participation in expressive arts, individual, group and family therapies; educational achievements and vocational/life skills education and training. All students participate in a healthy living program which promotes nutritional and healthy eating, sports and fitness classes, weight training, yoga, aerobics and counseling for those struggling with substance abuse and eating disorders.

For students who have advanced through the five phases of the program, Family Life Center offers off campus homes. Each home is single gender with phase parents.

[This information came from the Family Life Center website.]

CLEANLIFE CAROLINA

Asheville, NC

Sally Jenkins, MS, LCAS, Co-Founder

828-230-2269

cleanlifecarolina@bellsouth.net

www.cleanlifecarolina.com

Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains, CleanLife Carolina is a rather new transitional living program for young women needing assistance transitioning into adulthood and gaining independence. This small home environment assists the young women in learning necessary life skills to help them succeed. By providing an initial assessment at enrollment, goals in the following areas are set for each resident while living in this sober and healthy home: clinical, life skills and academic. Residents and

their families participate in family therapy and parent seminars.

Residents participate in a four level program that enables them to gain privileges and opportunities to get a job or work on individual academic advancement or complete their high school education. Life skills tools learned at CleanLife include: money management, by establishing a personal checking/ and or savings account; maintaining a budget or establishing personal credit. Job preparation includes: resume writing and interviewing skills; Health and wellness skills teach residents CPR and first aid, daily exercise and yoga, healthy nutrition and food preparation and planning. Outdoor adventures and weekend activities provide confidence, growth and positive decision making skills, support and positive peer relationships through activities that include white water rafting, backpacking, art and music festivals.

CleanLife Carolina was founded by Sally Jenkins, MS, LCAS and Erin Robinson, who have a combined 33 years experience working with young adults in therapeutic wilderness programs, therapeutic boarding schools and hospital settings.

[This information came from the CleanLife Carolina brochures.]

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Photo by Skyler Jenson

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nsurance and businesses.

Prior to founding Danielson Investigative Services, Donald Danielson was a Security Specialist and Investigator in the U.S. Air Force for twenty years. Upon his retirement, Donald worked as a private investigator in New Jersey with an associate for several years before branching out on his own. Donald now has his services headquartered in Hopewell and Richmond, VA.

Danielson Investigative Services has been transporting youth for over twenty years. As a fully licensed and insured service, at risk youth are transported by car, commercial airlines or private plane if necessary. The transporters firmly believe they are the fresh start the youth come in contact with, and use the time during the transport to prepare them for their new environment. In addition to transporting youth to their designated program, school, wilderness treatment or hospital, Danielson Investigative Services are trained in recovering runaways.

Danielson Investigative Services, Inc. transports and chaperones at risk youths throughout the United States, Europe and Asia. Members of the transport team are comprised of former military intelligence, federal and state investigators.

[This information came from the Danielson Investigative Services, Inc. website.]

SEEN N' HEARD

The end of February and all of March were busy news months at Woodbury Reports. The following news was posted on Strugglingteens.com and can be read in their entirety in the Breaking News Archives.

We were notified in January that Timpview, RTC closed and in February, Social Learning Environments closed Cramer Creek due to consolidation and moved the students to the High Frontier.

Here is a brief synopsis of the news since the last Seen N Heard:

NAWA held their annual Rescue Spring Training.

Teen Challenge Columbus Girls Academy hosted Base Camp 2010.

Cherokee Creek Boys School teacher Nick Linscott took his Math and Science students to the state finals in the SC State LEGO League competition, where they were awarded State Championship in Teamwork.

Elan School received National Independent Private Schools Association (NIPSA) Accreditation

CBI Insurance Agency, Inc. was selected by NATSAP (National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs) to be the exclusively endorsed insurance broker for its membership.

Rose Mulligan of the **Hyde School** submitted an article titled "What Olympic Athletes Have in Common with Your Kids" discussing trends written by Hyde Schools Malcolm and Laura Gauld.

Bridges Academy announced the end of a successful first year of our working with Oregon State University (OSU), Bend

CONTINUED: SNH/ 10

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~ Thomas Jefferson

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SNH

campus and their master's level interns in the counseling department.

Schrom Boy's Home at Hawk's Landing (SBH) is now just beginning its third year in providing specialized clinical treatment services to students and families! They wanted to thank all of those who have supported us over the past two years.

Eckerd Academy at Deer Lodge will offer a seven-week Therapeutic Summer Camp emphasizing academic credit recovery and personal growth through outdoor adventures.

Trinity Teen Solutions has expanded their Christian agendas to include life skills programs that help young women bridge the gap and successfully transition to adult living.

Momentum by Aspiro began its third year of operation and continues to impress with its 28-day high adventure summer program for students 13-17.

Junior Achievement and **Deloitte** opened the sixth annual college scholarship contest for students to compete for \$5,000 in college tuition by applying knowledge of ethical decision-making.

Catherine Freer Wilderness Therapy Programs teamed with **Humboldt State University's** Social Work Department to offer a graduate-level certificate program in wilderness therapy, and they announced they are running an all-female wilderness therapy expedition this summer.

Odyssey Wilderness Programs concluded its first winter of operating Odyssey Southwest, its second location based out of Joshua Tree, California.

Dr. Bodek-Falik, Executive Director Emeritus of **Camp Huntington**, was honored the American Camp Association's (ACA) coveted "Legends of Camping Award."

Empowering Education Inc., by former **Second Nature** parent, Andy Wilfong, recently entered into an educational partnership with Second Nature.

Markle Solutions opened a Community-Based Mentoring And Coaching Program in Bend, Oregon.

Second Nature introduced **Treeline**, their summer adventure program.

Next Step For Success® announced the publication of their book "It wasn't supposed to be this way!"

Breakthrough Interventions shared that **Amanda Thomas** was elected to the board of **Idaho Association of Marriage and Family Therapy** as the Associate Representative.

Students at **Bromley Brook** held a play, bake sale and clothing sale in their community to raise money for Hope for Haiti.

Optimum Performance Institute recently almost doubled its office space.

Colleen Russell of **SouLore** became a bestselling author with her chapter in *Overcomers Inc.*

Randy Russell of **Innerpathworks** had planned to take a group on a week-long journey of self-discovery in Baja Mexico.

Canada's **Venture Academy** for troubled teens expanded into Ontario where it opened a second residential treatment program for teens.

The staff and students of the **Discovery School for Girls** dedicated their new school building to Joyce Klement.

The girls at **Shepherd's Hill Farm** have a new Homestead Project and are learning to be self-sustaining while farming in their rural Georgia home. Also, Shepherd's Hill Farm students learned a great deal about music appreciation.

Claude Bisson was honored with the award of Human Rights Educator of 2009 at the sixth annual Change Your World Celebration.

Lorri Hanna, MA, of Soltreks, Inc. accepted her appointment



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.

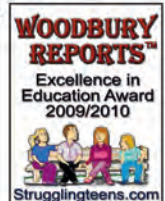


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as a board member for the National Association of Therapeutic Wilderness Camps.

Family Foundation School parents have formed a new information and advocacy group called "Parents in Partnership Society" (PIPS). The group's mission includes supporting other parents of at-risk teens, and raising the public's awareness and understanding of the educational and therapeutic needs of these students. Also, the students performed Moliere's "The Imaginary Invalid" to the community of Hancock.

Conferences included:

2010 Regional Conference on Learning Differences was led by Educational Specialists at **Landmark College's** Institute for Research and Training.

Intermountain presented the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study
The Association for Experiential Education (AEE) and Project Adventure Inc. presented the 2010 Research and Evaluation in Adventure Programming (REAP) Symposium in Washington, DC.

Staff changes included:

Discovery Ranch welcomed Jeanette Brown, LCSW, LSAC to the therapy team

Northwest Academy welcomed Ramon Palacios, ICADC

Cherokee Creek Boys School welcomed a third full-time therapist, Robin Hagy.



The **Pinnacle Schools** and **Elk River Treatment Programs** welcomed Selina Mason as the new Director of Admissions and Marketing.

Liz and Jim Gordon joined the team at **Greenbrier Academy**.

Eckerd Academy of the Blue Ridge welcomed Matt Losch as the Education Coordinator.

After 22 years of outstanding service to the **Catherine Freer Program**, Paul Smith has resigned as Program Director in order to pursue new endeavors.

Matt Schoch and Alyssa Szepi have returned to **Dragonfly** and Judith Cockerham, a professional chef, started working with Dragonfly mid March.

There are also three new staff members at **Optimum Performance Institute**: Jessica Breton, MA, is the new Administrative Program Director, Alisa M. Shapiro, MA, is the new Director of Outpatient Services and Staff Education and Jennifer Bell Martin, MS, is OPT's new Director of Volunteer and Career Services. She replaced Altesa Baker.

Miranda Williams MHC-A, LPC, ESA joined the **Odyssey Northwest** clinical team as a Field Therapist.

Finally, **King George School** welcomed Willie Baracchi as the new fine arts instructor.

Visitors included:

Randy Russell of Souloire was the sole visitor this month.

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 - 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.

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Mark P. Vogel, Ph.D.

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

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