



# Places for Struggling Teens™

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

June 2010 - Issue #190

## THE HEALING OUTDOORS

By: Lon Woodbury



The therapeutic value of wilderness is well documented. The popularity of wilderness therapy programs has been reported in my newsletter at [www.strugglingteens.com](http://www.strugglingteens.com) for years. For example, Dr. Keith Russell has done extensive research that shows the positive impact of wilderness therapy.

Recently I ran across a couple of additional studies showing how wilderness therapy reduces the risk of homelessness among the young and is key in helping disordered eating problems. The studies showing the positive impacts of wilderness just keep piling up. Many wilderness professionals have told me that although the therapy is important, the most important healing element continues to be the wilderness, which of course includes a lot of physical exercise and fresh air found only in the outdoors.

However, it seems deeper than that. A recent poll of public elementary school principals conducted by Gallup and reported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation had, as one of its findings, that “the most unexpected opportunity to boost learning lies outside the classroom: on the playground at recess.” The “principals overwhelmingly believe recess has a positive impact not only on the development of students’ social skills, but also on achievement and learning in the classroom.”

It seems research is confirming the intuitive sense that just being outdoors is uplifting and helpful in many ways. Visits to national and state parks remain high, and activities that take people outdoors remain popular, such as camping, hiking, biking, skiing, fishing and many other sports. The outdoors, especially the wilderness, obviously fills a deep need in people. Otherwise, these activities would not be so popular.

With all this intuitive and research evidence showing that people need contact with the outdoors, it is a tragedy that when it comes to our children, we are allowing two fears to cut our children off from the outdoors, let alone the wilderness.

The first, from fear of predators, we are tending to restrict our children to indoor activities (like computers and video games) or closely supervised activities in the yard or on play dates. Pretty much gone, especially in urban areas, are children playing around the neighborhood or exploring surrounding outdoor areas on their own.

The other fear is that of lower achievement in school. With the push for greater academic achievement, recess and playgrounds are rapidly being eliminated, to allow for more time on academic work.

The irony is the research indicates that eliminating play time, and especially outdoor play time, reduces potential academic achievement. And, by over protecting our children from predators and keeping them indoors, something important and probably vital is missing from their lives.

How can we maintain a civilized society if we teach our children to automatically fear strangers, and teach them to ignore their internal need for regular consistent contact with the outdoors?

Richard Louv, in his book “Last Child in the Woods” coined a term that seems to describe this: Nature Deficit Disorder. He claims that many of the problems we have in our society, and especially among the young, can be traced to an increasingly unfulfilled need for experiencing the outdoors. Not only do these fears negatively impact emotional health, but they impact physical health as well, which includes the buzz topic of childhood obesity.

I think he is on to something.

The man who will use his skill and constructive imagination to see how much he can give for a dollar, instead of how little he can give for a dollar, is bound to succeed.

~Henry Ford

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# WHEN AN EATING DISORDER STRIKES

By Nicole Pray, PhD

When an eating disorder develops in a child or teenager, parents and family members are shocked and mystified about what is really going on. The binging and purging behaviors of an anorexic or bulimic teen can seem bizarre and frightening to those who have not seen it before. What seems most shocking perhaps is that otherwise "normally-functioning teens" can be hiding such powerful and destructive impulses that control their lives from the inside out. The universal element in an eating disorder is not just a problem with food or with weight. It is the use of food intake and weight control to solve unseen emotional conflicts that is the defining principal of an eating disorder. As noted by several experts in the field, eating disorders represent an attempt by individuals to use an *external* solution to solve an *internal* problem.

Sara is a 15 year-old sophomore distance runner, who recently earned first place at the regional track event. Her daily running regimen serves to counteract unrealistic fears about becoming fat. Having felt insecure and marginalized in her peer group since her parents divorced and she moved to a new school in the third grade, Sara has been prone to anxiety and self-doubts that undermine her sense of worth. Her daily workouts involve two hours of intense aerobic exercise, and she knows she must perform these repeatedly until she feels exhausted and barely enough energy left to do her chores or interact with family before going to bed at night. Her workouts have become the single most important aspect of her daily routine. Without them, she fears she would gain weight or become visibly unattractive. Throughout her day, she is plagued by thoughts about her body appearance. In class, her thoughts drift to how her clothes feel too tight, maybe pinching her at the waistline. "Ten extra laps," she tells herself, reassuring herself that she can make up for her breakfast calories by the end of this afternoon's practice. By the end of her workout, she'll feel some relief. However, exhausted and depleted of her body's needs for sufficient rest and calories, she may be setting herself up for strain injuries or even malnutrition.

Lying just beneath the surface, many teens suffer from painful thoughts about their physical appearance and body image. When the thoughts become so prominent and destructive that they dominate the teen's entire daily schedule, an eating disorder may be on the rise. An anorexic teen may begin to restrict calories as a response to panic feelings that develop during the onset of normal weight gain associated with the hormonal changes of adolescence. She might initially feel relief or a sense of control over her body after skipping a meal, so she starts to experiment with skipping more meals and restricting more calories. Soon, her whole daily regimen starts to revolve around this drive to feel a sense of mastery over

her outer appearance, through carefully constructed plans to minimize her intake of food. Food becomes the enemy, and she finds herself planning her day around how to avoid eating. The starvation she feels as her malnourished body craves needed calories is ignored. She continues a deadly cycle of skipping meals or eating maybe an apple or a few leaves of lettuce with carrots at lunch. Her ability to concentrate and learn is impeded, and she has dizzy spells and faintness at times. Friends' and parents' comments that she looks "too thin" are discounted or seen as potential threats to her goal of weight loss. No matter what the appearance, she feels constantly aware of extra weight or loose skin on her arms. This young woman may be dehydrated or possibly close to a chemical imbalance that could be deadly. On the surface, her moodiness and irritability are signs that her body's health is out of balance and needs desperately to be fed. Any efforts others make at changing her behaviors however, will be seen as threats and quickly thwarted.

Teens fall into many different forms of eating disorders. They may restrict food intake throughout the day, until overtaken by hunger and binging on large amounts of food (often junk food or "empty calories") at night. They then feel panicked and driven to rid themselves of the calories through either exercise or purging and restricting again the next day. This cycle seems endless and exhausting. They may feel intensely shameful about their behaviors and a sense of lost control. Restrictors may briefly achieve a sense of mastery or control when their empty stomach signals thinness has been achieved. However, this is only short-lived and must be followed by compulsive restricting in order to be maintained. Bulimic teens purge after eating, through either excessive exercise or through vomiting or use of laxatives or diuretics. Yellowing teeth are a sign of eroded enamel that occurs when repeated vomiting damages the teeth's outer coating. Bulimic teens may maintain a normal weight despite their efforts, while anorexic teens continue to be underweight, missing their normal menstrual cycles, struggling to concentrate and developing heart irregularities and possibly kidney failure. Their behaviors bring them dangerously close to death, and many will eventually die from the disease. More recent attention has been given to a destructive cycle of binge eating, where the individual gains excessive weight due to recurrent binge eating episodes that are not followed by attempts to purge or restrict calories. These individuals feel a similar loss of control and shameful sense of isolation in their daily battle with food.

What can parents do when their teens develop these dangerous behaviors? The first step is to call a spade a spade. Kids in these destructive patterns will inevitably deny that there is a problem, but parents know this is not true. There must be intervention to stop the destructive cycle and restore needed balance and nutrition before it's too late. The cycle of denial can permeate family systems and keep problems from being addressed (the proverbial "Elephant in the Living Room" effect). This only serves to further the isolation and despair that a teen experiences. Do not be timid and do not be dissuaded. The disease of anorexia kills many teens, and

CONTINUED: EATING DISORDERS/ 4



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## EATING DISORDERS

their bodies will begin to quickly shut down once they reach an irreversible state in the disease. Become educated by a local specialist in eating disorders, such as a local psychologist (American Psychological Association, [apa.org](http://apa.org), click on "find a psychologist"), or an eating disorders program at a Children's Hospital. Reliable information can be obtained through websites such as [nimh.gov](http://nimh.gov) and [medline.gov](http://medline.gov). Organizations like the National Eating Disorders Organization (NEDO) and the American Anorexia/Bulimia Association, Inc. (AABA) can be helpful resources. Dr. Christopher Fairburn is the leading expert on a type of treatment that has proven success in treating eating disorders. His Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Bulimia, Anorexia or Binge Eating Disorder is practiced by many psychologists and psychotherapists who specialize in eating disorders in their private practices or clinics around the country. Teens can attend individual therapy to reverse their behavior patterns, but family therapy is often most helpful to reverse harmful communication patterns that cause problems to develop. Parents need help responding to their teen's destructive patterns, and teens need education about the consequences of their behaviors and learning to control destructive patterns. Some teens may be willing but many need help developing motivation to change their ways. Specific residential and in-patient programs are designed to help teens and adults struggling with more severe forms of eating disorders. Many other programs exist and can be helpful. Consulting with a therapist or psychologist locally may help parents to find appropriate

resources and become educated about the next step.

In summary, eating disorders represent the individual's attempt to solve an internal conflict or problem by controlling their external bodily appearance. An obsession with their body and weight may lead to destructive cycles of restricting food intake, then either bingeing and/or purging afterwards. Problems with self-worth and self-acceptance are central to eating disorders. The binges and purging are a source of shame and isolation for the individual, and there may be a strong tendency to deny or hide their problem. Parents can interrupt the cycle by refusing to go along with the denial and by accessing help and education through therapy and specialized resources.

***About the Author:** Nicole Pray, PhD, is a licensed clinical psychologist who works with individuals with eating disorders in her private practice in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. She began seeing teens with eating disorders during her work in wilderness and residential treatment of adolescents in the early 1990's. She led eating disorder groups at The University of Montana Counseling Center and at The Seattle VA Medical Center. She has lectured on eating disorders at local schools and has helped mentor teens in developing prevention efforts targeting their peers with eating and body image issues.*

What lies behind us and what lies before us are  
tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson



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.

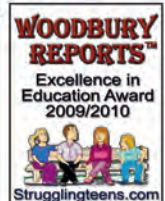


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# VIRTUAL LIFE

By Rosemary McKinnon

A couple of years ago I read a bizarre story in the August 14, 2008, edition of the London Review of Books and it stuck with me. Jonathan Raban, an Englishman living and writing for some years now in the United States, wrote about the "Virtual life of Neil Entwistle".

Neil Entwistle emerged as a public figure in January 2006. At that time he was a 27 year old Englishman from York, educated at York University where he earned a degree in electronic engineering and met a young American woman, Rachel, whom he married and with whom he eventually moved to the States, attempting to earn a living as a digital entrepreneur. The couple had a baby and lived in the US for barely 4 months, posting frequent internet updates of the happy family, until Neil shot his wife and baby at point blank range with a Colt .22 revolver which he borrowed from his father-in-law's collection (driving 45 minutes to collect the weapon and then to return it again before and after the shooting). Neil then boarded a plane for England and returned home where he was arrested. In his pockets were a one-page eulogy to Rachel, a draft of a scripted phone call to the editors of London tabloids regarding his side of the story and an advertisement for the services of prostitutes and escort agencies.



Raban argues that there is no persuasive evidence for a motive in this murder and suggests strongly that close

examination of Neil's on line history and the contents of his pocket at the time of his arrest "were like his on-line life, as he switched from screen persona to screen persona, switching identities and avatars on his internet journeys." In the end Raban suggests that Entwistle lived his life in virtual space and that, although outwardly conforming and conventional, he "conspicuously lacked an authentic self."

What does this strange and extreme story have to teach us about the inner lives of those young people who are referred to us for help around their addiction to computers, computer games and who treat their lives online with more seriousness than their flesh and blood relationships? We are all familiar with the parental lament. A son, or daughter, has retreated into the online world, has begun to inhabit the twilight zone of the screen, has turned their nights into days and become hooked on the computer as a source of emotional sustenance rather than the everyday world. We are also aware of how cruel others can often be to needy young people. The Internet has been a source of comfort for some shy and awkward teenagers, but at the same time it has deprived them of the necessity of going outside of their comfort zone to make real relationships. Many of our students have found comfort in this ether zone. They have become hypertrophied creatures of the night, masters of intricate war games and ersatz relationships. MySpace does not present the person as they really are but in the various guises in which they choose to present themselves. Neil Entwistle lost himself in these guises. He did not know who he was, had little

CONTINUED: VIRTUAL LIFE/ 6

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## VIRTUAL LIFE

sense of reality in his life and, probably wanted to escape it when it failed to measure up to his fantasies of what it should be. He appears to have committed a murder without the slightest idea of what the obvious consequence was likely to be. Just as, for example, one gets rid of an evil avatar in a game. Some of our teenagers, like younger children, are also at risk of mistaking pretend for reality.

Modern technology has confused this normal developmental step by providing even very young children with a virtual existence that is distinctly separate from those of the adults in their lives. Cell phones have morphed into mini hand-held computers, social networking devices, cameras and tiny movie-screens. Some teenagers use them to stay connected with the adults and other important relationships in their lives; others to go underground and elude the watchful eyes of adults. Some get lost in the underworld of pretend. The outward trappings of connectivity are sometimes the opposite of what they appear to be. They can readily aid and abet the secret lives of teenagers. When adults try to regain control of their children's technological tools, they can provoke rage and sometimes violence.

One of our students recently told me that he was dismayed to think that his whole generation was awash in a world of drugs, pornography and on-line media and that underneath all this they were struggling with enormous anxiety about how to find themselves in this hall of mirrors. He said that for every student whose parents were able to send them to a therapeutic school to find themselves there were, of course, thousands who did not

and could not go and that he felt that this "privilege" put a lot of responsibility for the future of a generation on the shoulders of those who had the opportunity to free themselves from this dangerous world.

I have to resist my own inclination to be a latter day Luddite. My daughters helped me to sign up for Facebook on my 60th birthday. Like many in my generation I was a bit non-plussed about how, or whether, I was going to use this new piece of technology. I wasn't entirely sure that I saw the point. After all I was already equipped with an address book and email which comfortably divided various groups of people in my life. Once up and running I contacted a few people who were likely to be sympathetic about my foray into this new medium and began to worry about how much to reveal and to whom. After all we all know that all friends are not, in fact, equal. As it turned out I needn't have worried. Although I now have a sizeable group of "friends" many of these simply constitute people I have met (several MA alumni) and act as a certain kind of archive. Unlike my daughters who spend a good deal of time maintaining their Facebook pages and keeping in touch with this method I find that it has only limited usefulness for me although I have had a few pleasant encounters with "lost" friends via this route. I am at this late date in my life unlikely to use Facebook as a primary mode of communication.

Many adults are addicted to the tools of this technological age. Some are almost as hard to wean from their Blackberries as their children are from computers. One father told me about visiting an old friend in a



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European city after a 5 year absence and being confronted by him over his surreptitious use of his Blackberry during dinner. He was embarrassed and made the decision never to turn it on during dinner again. Another father sent me a copy of a letter that he had received from the Dean of his distinguished law school. This Dean expressed his concern over students who paid more attention to their on-line lives in the classroom than to the lectures and justified his decision to disable wireless connections in the classrooms in the interest of maintaining a competitive law school environment. None of us is immune to the siren call of this world. As adults we expect to be better equipped to deal with these temptations and to check them when they begin to interfere with our day to day relationships.

Our children lack this ability. In these young lives technology is now recognized as psyche-changing and identity shaping. Young people exist in a world of on-line chatter and it is hard for them to find the quiet space to discover who they are and what they think. The bombardment of media and social networking has diminished the uniqueness of the individual voice. We need to monitor those who are not able to monitor themselves and to protect them until they are better able to distinguish fantasy from reality and to develop that "authentic sense of self" to which Raban refers, and the skills to handle real relationships. When they have done so, technology will resume its proper place as a tool in their lives, rather than a source of life itself.

We cannot run a school like Montana Academy without access to computers and email, but we are also in a

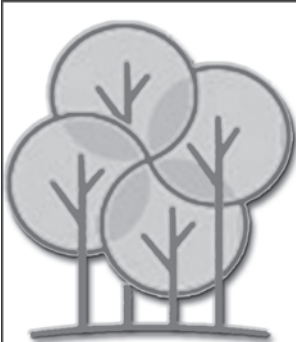
position to control the amount of outside information that our students receive and to turn down the volume of chatter in their lives. We watch with pleasure as they focus on getting to know themselves better and to developing close relationships with each other. And we look forward to meeting with our parents face to face for three days at our upcoming parent workshop and to getting to know you better also.

Warm regards.

**About the Author:** Rosemary McKinnon is the Admissions Director at Montana Academy in Kalispell, MT. For more information visit [www.montanaacademy.com](http://www.montanaacademy.com) or contact Rosemary at [rosemarym@montanaacademy.com](mailto:rosemarym@montanaacademy.com).

When an American says that he loves his country, he means not only that he loves the New England hills, the prairies glistening in the sun, the wide and rising plains, the great mountains, and the sea. He means that he loves an inner air, an inner light in which freedom lives and in which a man can draw the breath of self-respect.

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## VISIT REPORTS...

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Visit by: Stephen Migden, February 2010

Auldern Academy is a therapeutic boarding school designed for teenage girls who need a structured, clinically attuned educational and social environment. Located about a one-hour drive from Raleigh, NC, Auldern offers a college prep curriculum, small classes, and group and individual counseling by licensed mental health professionals to approximately 50 girls. The school serves students with a range of problems, including anxiety disorders, depressive disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, trauma, and body image issues. Girls with a history of oppositional defiant disorder, substance abuse, cutting or an eating disorder may also be appropriate candidates for admission, although only if such problems are not severe or if the problem has previously been addressed in another residential setting, such as a therapeutic wilderness program.

Auldern is located in a rural area of central North Carolina. The pleasant looking campus basically consists of three groups of buildings arrayed around a small pond with a water fountain in the middle. The first set of buildings, closest to the entrance, houses administrative offices, clinical offices, the cafeteria, the library, a small computer lab (the "cyber lounge") and the school. Scattered throughout this set of buildings is some very lovely artwork - mainly paintings and ceramics - all of which, I was told, had been created by Auldern students.

Just a short walk from the first set of buildings, along a paved walkway, is the dormitory building, where all the girls reside. This two-story structure has two wings, one on each side, with a comfortable living room type of area in the middle of the first floor, by the entrance lobby. Each dorm room sleeps four girls and the occupants of the room share a shower, sink and toilet. Make-up and jewelry, in moderation, are allowed and the dress code is casual and modest: no low-cut tops, no ripped jeans and so forth. There are also a number of staff apartments in the dormitory. Night-time coverage is provided by awake staff and on-call clinicians and supervisors.

Nearby the dormitory building is the activities building. In here, there is an art studio, a couple of classrooms, a small gymnasium (large enough for half a basketball court) and, on the second floor, a spacious recreation room with a variety of furniture and equipment, including large screen TV, pool table and exercise equipment. It looked like a busy, well-appointed room, a place where the girls could relax and have fun. Outside, there is a tennis court and soccer field, as well as a path through the woods to a nearby river. I was told that, during the warmer months, the school makes good use of the fields and woods. Off-campus recreational activities include frequent trips to a nearby Y,



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US News & World Report

**ASPEN ACHIEVEMENT  
ACADEMY HAS BEEN HELPING  
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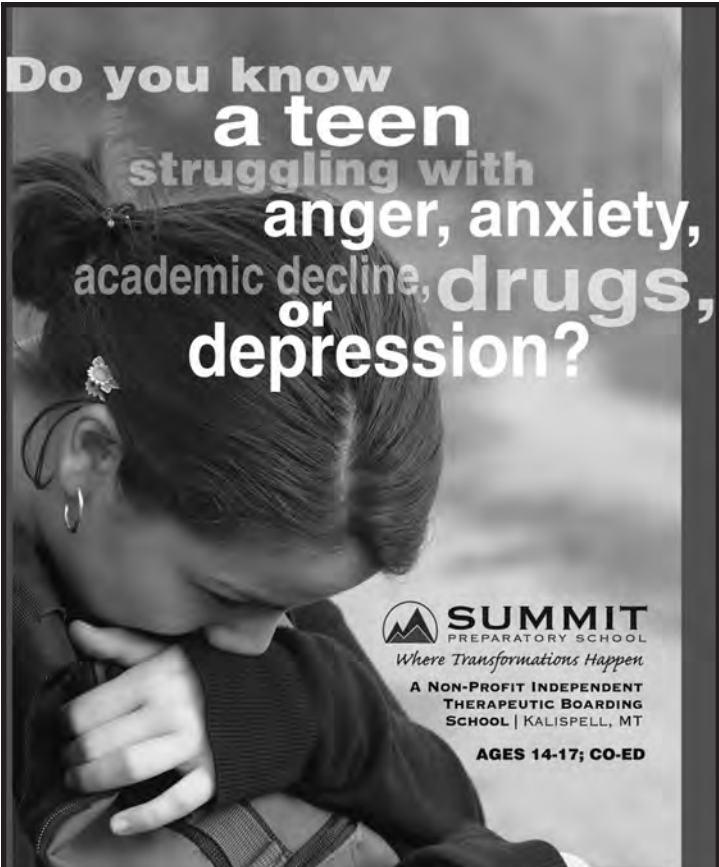
as well as other outings on the weekends.

The school area is simply but intelligently laid out, with five classrooms surrounding a central study area. In this study area, the girls attend two daily study halls, one during the school day and one in the evening. During my visit, which took place on a weekday afternoon, I saw four girls sitting in this area while classes were in session in the surrounding classrooms. Three of the girls were doing school work. The fourth, an older student in Auldern's post graduate Rites of Passage program, was sitting quietly, apparently enjoying some leisure time. The girls in the surrounding classrooms seemed actively engaged in class projects or discussions.

Auldern offers a college prep curriculum, with one foreign language (Spanish) and two to three AP classes available. Mild learning differences can be accommodated and, for an additional fee, individual tutoring by a special education teacher can be arranged. To attend Auldern, students should have at least average intelligence. Art is a popular special class. Colleges offering admission to recent Auldern graduates include Fordham, Temple, Northeastern, University of Denver, Rhode Island School of Design and Fashion Institute of Technology.

Auldern Academy offers a number of clinical services to its students. There are five full-time Master's level therapists on staff, and one half-time consultant who is a doctoral level psychologist. This psychologist, Dr. Vito Guarnaccia, serves as the director of the clinical team, which also includes, on a part-time basis, his wife Liz, a psychiatric social worker who has an interest in the treatment of trauma and specialized training in a type of therapy called Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR). I met with Dr. Vito and Liz, both transplanted New Yorkers, for about half an hour. Dr. Vito told me that he has been affiliated with Auldern for about three years. He and his wife described the clinical treatment program as consisting of individual and group therapy, family meetings (usually via telephone), and group substance abuse counseling for those girls who have a history of drug or alcohol use. Individual therapy is once a week, and group is twice a week. The substance abuse counseling is based on the 12-Step model and, in addition to the campus groups, selected students may attend an AA meeting in the local community. Dr. Vito described the therapeutic approach as largely cognitive behavioral, though he also stressed the importance of other factors, especially the client-therapist relationship, when working with adolescents. There are six parent weekends each year.

Auldern Academy was established in 2001. For the past 3-1/2 years its executive director has been Jane Samuel. The director of admission, who has been with the school about 3 years, is Joyce Latimer. The school is owned by Sequel Youth and Family Services, which also owns programs in Iowa, Florida and Arizona. Auldern is a member of the National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, and it is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It is licensed as a non-public school by the State of North Carolina. It is also SEVIS approved for international students.

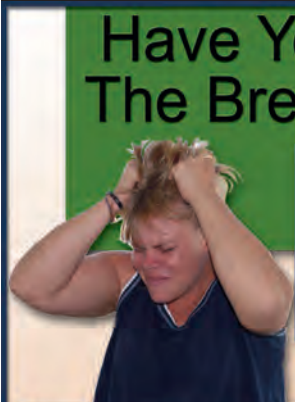


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or  
depression?**

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**Have You Reached  
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**Don't Know  
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**The Parent Empowerment Handbook™ Can Help.**

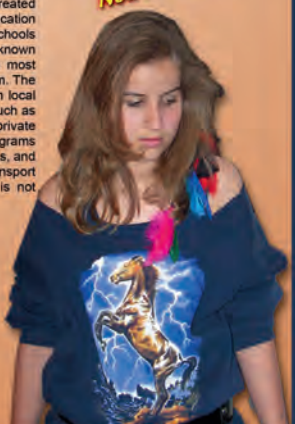
The Parent Empowerment Handbook™ is designed to empower parents seeking positive solutions for teen behavior problems.

The Parent Empowerment Handbook™ is prescreened by independent educational consultants nationwide for reputation, and specifically created for parents and professionals working with struggling teens. This publication offers parents a significant opportunity to find the best residential schools and programs available. We conduct annual surveys with the best-known independent educational consultants in the country to compile the most complete and current information available on each school or program. The Handbook is a valuable resource for parents and their children when local interventions fail, and the children continue to make poor decisions such as skipping school, drugs, rebellion, etc. With over 100 of the best private therapeutic, emotional growth, LD, wilderness schools and programs nationwide, the Handbook also includes numerous essays, visit reports, and current information on experienced educational consultants and transport agents. In order to maintain an objective publication, advertising is not allowed in the Parent Empowerment Handbook.

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## NEW PERSPECTIVES...

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

### THE JOURNEY

Mount Pleasant, UT  
Chris Allen, Program Director  
801-709-2670

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

The Journey, which was founded in 2003 by Madolyn M. Liebing Ph.D. Psychologist, and a co-founder of Aspen Achievement Academy and Marina Starling Ph.D. Psychologist, is a small residential treatment center for young men ages 13-18 who are struggling with mental health issues that may include ADHD/ADD, depression, ODD; addiction issues concerning substance abuse, the internet or pornography; negative family relationships due to divorce, attachment problems, PTSD, bereavement or sexual/physical abuse and negative behavior problems that include anger, entitlement, irresponsibility and laziness or school and legal issues.

Chris Allen is the Program Director of the boys program at The Journey and has prior experience as a wilderness instructor. Jake Smith is the Assistant Director and has a current certificate as a first responder. The Journey, a sister organization of Cairn Academy, is licensed by the State of Utah Department of Human Services Division of Licensing as a residential treatment center and is accredited by the Northwest Accreditation Association.

Each student participates in individual, family and daily group therapy, with groups discussing topics such as: anger

management, communication skills, problem solving and substance abuse prevention. With The Journey situated on a 55 acre working ranch, the boys are actively involved in the care and training of the ranch animals that include horses, llamas, goats, cows, pigs, chickens and dogs, learning responsibility, care and work ethic. Community service dovetails these lessons, with daily projects and students learn how rewarding it is to give back.

Outdoor activities and experientials include backpacking trips, mountain biking treks and mountain climbing and pack trips that include utilizing some of the ranch animals (llamas, horses or pack goats.)

[This info came from The Journey website and the NATSAP Directory.]

### NEWPORT ACADEMY

Orange, CA  
Jamison Monroe, Jr., Admissions  
877-628-3367

[jmonroe@newport-academy.com](mailto:jmonroe@newport-academy.com)  
[www.newport-academy.com](http://www.newport-academy.com)

Newport Academy is a residential treatment center for young women ages 12-17 struggling with alcohol and substance abuse in addition to co-occurring disorders. Length of stay for treatment is a minimum duration time of 45 days and an average of 60-90 days. Newport Academy is licensed as a group home by the State of California and is a member of NATSAP, NAATP, SAMHSA and NIDA associations. This small RTC that opened in 2009 accepts only 12 adolescents at any one time.

Co-founder and Executive Director of Newport Academy is Scott Sowle who previously was VP of Business and VP of Operations of a healthcare services management company. Scott has an undergraduate degree in Psychology from the University of California, Los

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- Build a positive value system
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- Develop & implement services to help the resident meet goals.
- Provide each resident with living skills
- Assist residents to work with their families
- Develop a discharge/aftercare plan

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[high.frontier@sleschools.org](mailto:high.frontier@sleschools.org)

Angeles (UCLA) and holds a Master's in Business Administration (MBA). Jamison Monroe, Jr., is also a co-founder and the CEO of Newport Academy. Barbara Nosal, PhD, MFT is the Clinical Director and holds a Doctorate in Transpersonal Psychology, a Masters Degree in Counseling Psychology and a Masters Degree in Community Psychology with a specialization in Alcohol and Drug Studies. Dr. Nosal serves on the faculty of National University and Southwestern Community College and is a member of the California Association of Marriage Family Therapists.

Because Newport Academy is a gender specific treatment program, residents have the safety to explore their issues, learn healthy boundaries and create strong peer relationships in daily group therapy that covers areas such as sexual issues, healthy body images and nutrition. Residents also participate in individual and family counseling, 12 step meetings and equine therapy.

Residents attend a minimum of three hours of classroom instruction a day allowing them to stay on track with their home school curriculum. Additional courses offered include music and art, Tai Chi, yoga and conditioning. Field trips and outings include cultural and community events, beach trips, hiking and kayaking.

*[This information came from the Newport Academy website.]*

## ADVENT HOME LEARNING CENTER, INC

Calhoun, TN  
 Dr. Blondel E, Senior, Director  
 423-336-5052  
[info@adventhome.org](mailto:info@adventhome.org)  
[www.adventhome.org](http://www.adventhome.org)

Originally founded in 1989 as Advent Home Youth Services, Inc., Advent Home Learning Center, Inc. is a

Christian-based, residential learning center for struggling young men ages 12-18, who are struggling with academic, emotional and behavioral issues such as ADHD, ODD, mild autism, Tourettes syndrome, Asperger's disorder and bipolar diagnosis. Advent Home Learning Center is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt corporation and is an Adventist Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) supported ministry.

Dr. Blondel Senior is the director who previously worked as a management consultant for Honeywell and holds a PhD. Advent Home Learning Center is accredited by the State of Tennessee Department of Education, through the E.A. Sutherland Education Association (EASEA) and provides its students with individualized Christian schooling.

Students receive individual and group counseling in addition to Family Forums, which take place four times a year. These weekend events allow the parents to participate in counseling and training with their child. The basis for Advent's program is the use of The Maturation Therapy® Curriculum, which focuses on three areas of personal progress: Foundations of Growth, Foundations of Self Regard and Foundations of Interpersonal Skills. Advent Home also utilizes a work education program for the boys in which they learn vocational and work skills in gardening, building and equipment maintenance, food preparation and community outreach projects, mission trips and spiritual programs.

Recreational activities teach teamwork and social skills and provide fresh air and sunshine for the boys on the 225 acre farm land along the Hiwassee River. These activities include hiking, soccer, tennis and basketball.

*[This info came from the Advent Home Learning Center, Inc. website.]*

Be great in act, as you have been in thought.

~ William Shakespeare



Photo by Skyler Jensen

THE GATE OF HISTORY SWINGS ON SMALL HINGES, AND SO DO PEOPLE'S LIVES.

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# EXTENDED INSIGHT...

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR KID STRUGGLES

By Rose Mulligan

As we move deeper into the busy school year and your child is feeling the effects of class work, homework, activities, regular exams, and social shifts, there is one important thing to remember: Mixed within their excitement and successes, they will inevitably experience struggles and trials.

What should a parent do? And what should a parent not do?

“Every child has learning curves – and that’s a good thing,” says Malcolm Gauld, parenting expert and president of Hyde Schools who, along with his wife Laura, authored the book *The Biggest Job We’ll Ever Have*. “Children sometimes need to learn through a series of challenges, trials and errors. But it can be difficult for a parent to both help their kids and still allow them to challenge their minds.”

“Parents have to find a balance,” says Laura Gauld. “They have to discern when it is appropriate to take hold of a child’s difficulty – and when to let go, to step back and allow their child to struggle.”

Today’s parents have a hard time letting their children work hard on a taxing or difficult subject and allowing

their child to even fail occasionally. The emphasis on success, aptitude and test scores is simply enormous and parents – as well as students – feel pressured that their kids make the grade.

“The focus on success is deeply ingrained in our culture,” says Laura Gauld. “As a result, parents tend to want to protect their children from failure, pain and challenge.”

“Success is important,” adds Malcolm. “But failure can teach powerful lifelong lessons that lead to success as well as profound personal growth.”

While failure may not be an intended goal for anyone, it ought to be a fairly regular outcome for everyone, especially for kids. While most of us give lip service to the notion that we learn more from our failures than we do from our successes, few of our homes and even fewer of our schools are actually structured to emulate this truth. Far too many kids are encouraged to avoid any circumstances where failure might result – leading, for example, to the cheating epidemic in our schools.

What are some simple things parents can do to avoid stepping in and trying to fix or solve everything for their children – thus robbing them of the opportunity to learn for themselves?

1. Wait for your child to ask for help; OR
2. When you see your child is struggling with something (whether it is something they tell you about or something you witness) acknowledge the struggle with the child in a non-judgmental way. For example, say, “I can tell you’re really struggling with this. Let me know if I can help.” And then walk away.

## Send us your toughest case. We’ll make it your biggest success.

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# SEEN N' HEARD

3. If your child asks for help, don't provide the answers; try not to do the thinking, drawing, calculating or interpreting for them. Instead, ask more questions, provide examples; keep them focused; keep it simple.
4. Encourage your child, especially teens, to seek help, advice, and guidance from a respected family member or friend. Adults outside the family can offer objective perspective and support that teens often would not accept from a parent.
5. If your child's situation seems to be getting worse or is beyond what you feel anyone in the home can manage alone, seek help from a professional. There are many resources for kids today, including counseling – both educational and psychological – which can offer your child options of which you may be unaware, such as learning creative strategies for coping with stress or other school choices available.

In order for parents to understand their own preoccupation with success, including avoidance of failure, it is beneficial for them to go back to their own families of origin to identify how those things were perceived and/or handled while growing up. Chances are, the way they handle situations with their own children is connected in one of two ways:

They either approach success and failure in contrary reaction to how their own parents approached them; or they adopt the same approach their own parents took, sometimes even when the approach is not effective.

Parents who can be honest with themselves about their experiences with success and failure in their childhoods can often learn the skill of how to overcome the impulse to step in and prevent struggle for their children, while also maintaining a supportive and guiding presence in their child's life.

Parents can ask themselves the following:

- What were some of the important successes in my childhood?
- How were success and failure handled in my childhood?
- How do I feel about these experiences today?
- How do I feel about my child's successes?
- How do I really handle my child's struggles/failures?
- Have I ever tried to manipulate the outcome of my child's potential failures?
- Do I allow my children to see me fail at anything? If so, how do I handle that failure in front of them?
- Most important, how do I step back and allow my child to struggle through challenges?

**About this Article:** For more information about *Malcolm and Laura Gauld, their work and Hyde Schools*, contact *Rose Mulligan* at 207-837-9441, by email at [rmulligan@hyde.edu](mailto:rmulligan@hyde.edu) or visit [www.hyde.edu](http://www.hyde.edu).

The following updates were sent to Woodbury Reports during the month of May.

## OPENING:

**Aspen Education Group** announced the **Talisman School** is scheduled to open at the New Leaf campus in August.

**Len Buccellato** announced that **Hidden Lake Academy** has changed its name to **Ridge Creek Academy**. Ridge Creek Academy is a separate entity from **Ridge Creek Wilderness**.

**Trails Carolina** will offer a Therapeutic Wilderness Experience specifically for female adolescents ages 12-14.

## CLOSING:

**New Leaf Academy** in Hendersonville, NC will close June 11 after their June 10 graduation. Current students who are not graduating already have a transition plan in effect.

## NEWS:

**AIM House** alumnus **Josh Biddle** received the **UC Berkeley University** Top Graduating Senior Medal. **Linda Shaffer**, Educational Consultant recently attended the **Boulder Creek** graduation ceremony for seven students. **Elan** presented **Red Cross** Director, **Laurie Levine**, with a check for \$2,054, raised by Elan students, to go toward the relief efforts for the people of **Haiti**. **Teen Challenge Columbus Girls Academy** is hosting "Prepare for Impact", a Teacher Training Conference for staff members from Teen Challenge Campuses and similar programs. **Echo Springs** was invited to speak at the **North Idaho College** Board of Trustees meeting. They also announced many of their alumni have reported long-standing, independent success. Four boys at **West Ridge Academy** received their **Eagle Scout** Awards at a court of honor. The boys earned the highest rank in scouting by serving the community. **Trails Carolina** completed the first comprehensive annual review as a licensed mental health facility in North Carolina. **Douglas Bodin**, Educational Consultant was featured in the Jobs, Careers & Education section of the **Mercury News**.

## PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS:

The **Family Foundation School** has approved a student-led effort to permit skateboarding on campus. **Willy Williamson**, FFS Athletic Director, is overseeing the activity, ensuring that the students conduct themselves responsibly and follow strict safety regulations. Williamson has also formalized Frisbee activities on campus, matching up teams in preparation for the summer's intramural Ultimate Frisbee tournament. The Family Foundation School is also awaiting a Certificate of Occupancy for the now-completed 9,100-sq.ft. girls' dormitory. The new facility, which was under construction for more than a year, will house the

CONTINUED: SEEN N HEARD/ 14

We have no right to ask when sorrow comes, "Why did this happen to me?" unless we ask the same question for every moment of happiness that comes our way.

~Author Unknown

## SEEN N HEARD:

school's 50+ female students, and can accommodate up to 90 girls. **Next Step For Success®** announced Associate Coach, **Vicki Jones**, completed a 24-hour training over 4 months that resulted in a Mentor Coach Certification through **InviteChange®**. **Passages to Recovery** Outdoor Addiction Treatment Program achieved **Joint Commission Accreditation**.

## **PARTNERSHIPS:**

The **Emerge College Success Program** and **Simple Projects** announce a new collaboration offering the components of a young adult transitional program and college based support services for students who have experienced emotional, behavioral and/or learning challenges.

## **PEOPLE:**

**Cat Jennings**, founder of **Stone Mountain School** and Executive Director of **New Leaf Academy** in North Carolina, is leaving Aspen with the closure of **New Leaf** to pursue other endeavors. **Rosemary Tippett** retired from the Board of **NATSAP** after almost 11 years. A couple changes have occurred in staffing at **West Ridge Academy**. **Jared Hamner**, formerly Admissions Director, transitioned into the Director of **Midwestern Operations** and **Guy Hardcastle** accepted the position of **Director of Admissions**. **Lauren Clark** is a new Admissions Counselor at **Oakley School**. **Venture Academy** announced **Sean Elliott** will oversee the **Ontario campus** as the **Agency Director**. **Rebecca Bowen** and **Joanne Bertrand** have joined the academic faculty of the **King George School**. **John Marquis** is the new Executive Director of **Academy at Swift River**. **Hope Renews** board elected **Tracey O'Connell Sperry** to be its new president and chairman of the board. **Bertram Educational Consultants** welcomed **Patrick Finn** to their consulting team. **Bromley Brook School** announced the return of Art Director **Robin Wimbiscus**. The **Spire School at Greenwich Education and Prep** named **Frank Bartolomeo, PhD**, as Executive Director. **Outback Therapeutic Expedition's** new Admissions Director is **Arwynn Harris Jensen**. **Shepherd's Hill Academy** announced the new Principal is **Steve Schyck**.



**Kathy Kimmel** resigned in May after 15 years as Admissions Director of the **Grove School**. **Lauren Seltzer**, who was a Marriage and Family Therapist for five years, will step into the Director of Admissions position, with help from **Kelly Webster**, Associate Director/ Community Relations and **Alice Durmmond-Hay**, Residential Administrator. Also in May, **Chelsea Dickinson** said goodbye to **Clark Financing** as she left to pursue other opportunities. There have been several staff developments at **Silverado Academy** as well. **Eric Fawson** recently moved back into his original role of Program Director. **Silverado** also hired **Duane Bailey** to work as a team coach and to facilitate Chemical Dependency/Addiction groups. **AJ Neilson** was promoted to the position of Activities Coordinator. **Brad Porter** moved into a new position of Program Parent Liaison. Brad will oversee the reception area, assist with new admissions, and facilitate student transports to and from the airport. **Dr. Crist**, one of **Silverado's** founders, retired and **Ryan Williams, MD**, stepped in as the consulting psychiatrist at **Silverado** and finally, **Tricia Lenzendorf** was promoted to Medical Coordinator and will work with Dr. Williams during his initial student evaluations and Medication Clinic.



## UPCOMING AT A GLANCE:

- Regional NATSAP Northern Utah Conference, June 10, Lehi, UT
- Academy for Eating Disorders International Conference June 10 - 12, Salzburg, Austria
- Western Conference on Behavioral Health and Addiction Medicine, June 17 - 19, Newport Beach, CA
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Convention, June 30 - July 3, Washington, DC
- Annual Conference American School Counselor Association, July 3-6, Boston, MA

For information on conferences, visit the [StrugglingTeens.com](http://StrugglingTeens.com) Conference Calendar under the Social Media tab.

## VISITORS:

**Norm Ostrum**, Director of Admissions for the **Montcalm Schools**, stopped by the Woodbury office for a visit during the regional NATSAP conference.

**Barbara Cunningham**, Admissions and College Counseling for **Summit Preparatory School** in Kalispell, MT stopped by the Woodbury office for a visit.

**Irene Kotter**, Admissions at **New Haven RTC** stopped by the Woodbury Reports office for a visit after attending the fifth annual Northwest Get Together.

**Bill Lane**, President of **Bill Lane and Associates** stopped by Woodbury Reports for a visit after attending the fifth annual Northwest Get Together.

**Shawnale Wilson**, Admissions Director at **Boulder Creek Academy** stopped by the Woodbury office for a visit after attending the fifth annual Northwest Get Together.

**Ron Mendenhall**, President of **Monarch School** stopped by Woodbury Reports for a visit on his way through his home town of Bonners Ferry.

**LJ Mitchell** and **Dennis Thompson**, of **Greenbrier Academy** and **Spokane Mtn**, stopped by the Woodbury office for a visit after presenting at the fifth annual Northwest Get Together.

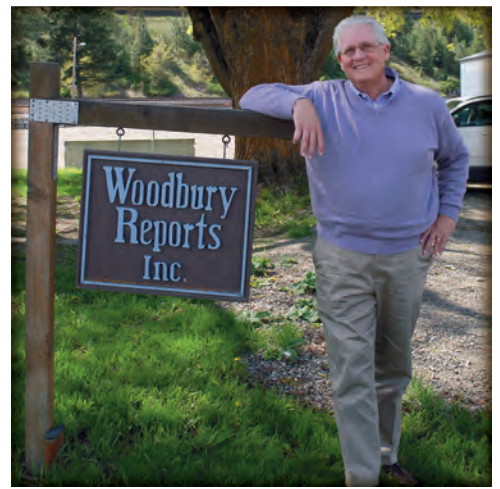
**Dana Dean Doering** of **Dean Doering & Associates** stopped by the Woodbury office for a visit after attending the fifth annual Northwest Get Together.

**Bobbie Jensen**, Marketing and Admissions for **CARE Schools (Falcon Ridge Ranch and Red Rock Canyon School)** stopped by the Woodbury Reports office for a visit after attending the fifth annual Northwest Get Together.

To view these articles in their entirety, visit [www.strugglingteens.com](http://www.strugglingteens.com).

Some luck lies in not getting what you thought you wanted but getting what you have, which once you have got it you may be smart enough to see it is what you would have wanted had you known.

~ Garrison Keillor





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  - Substance abuse
  - 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



Mark P. Vogel, Ph.D.

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

For more information about how we integrate nonstop counseling with rigorous academics and the principles of 12-Step living, visit us online or contact FFS therapist and Director of Admissions, Jeff Brain, MA, CTS, CEP.

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