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P.O.K.I.S.

A Newsletter for Parents of Kids in Samoa

September 20, 1996

Vol. 1, No. 5

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This is a monthly newsletter published and written by parents, for parents of kids in Samoa. Though program staff review P.O.K.I.S. prior to printing and distribution, as well as provide information for several columns, the content and format was designed by Linda F. and Sheryl J., the parents of two boys in Samoa. Both of our sons have returned home.

Unless a column is written by Paradise Cove staff, the information doesn't necessarily reflect the opinion of program staff. We appreciate individuals at Paradise Cove, Brightway, and Teen Help for their invaluable assistance and for the printing and distribution of this newsletter. If you have any suggestions, comments, or questions, please contact Teen Help at 1-800-355-8336.

Sheryl J	Editor in Chief
John J	Support
Linda F	Associate Editor
Elizabeth D.	Assistant Editor

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please let us know whether or not you find it valuable to have P.O.K.I.S. available on the Internet.

We will no longer include the Dear Ms. Problems column in P.O.K.I.S. With the addition of Glenda C., the new parent coordinator, we feel problems are more appropriately handled in the following format: 1) In all circumstances except billing questions or seminar registration, the first step to take is to call your son's case manager in Samoa or your stateside coordinator - Sonja or Joe. 2) If the case managers or stateside coordinators are unable to answer your questions, or if you feel that the concern is an urgent one requiring the director's attention, contact Brian, Duane, or Ed through the office in Samoa. 3) Trudi at Cross Creek Manor mails out new

parent manuals. 4) Ren (801) 635-0918 or E-mail at renmc.com takes care of seminar information and registration for seminars. 5) Glenda's role is to work with the new parents to familiarize them with the program, review the parent manual, and to educate them about how their involvement in the seminars is critical to their son's optimal success. She will also assist in problem resolution ONLY for those parents who have taken the above steps, and still feel they need some assistance. 6) Finally, after all these steps are taken, if you require any additional help, contact Brent Facer through Brightway.

We would like to welcome Deborah J. the new editor of P.O.K.I.S. Deborah's son completed the program, and was recommended home three months ago. They have both been busy staffing Parent Discovery Seminars. When Ben returned home, Deborah quit her job as an executive sales associate to be with her son. She now finds herself with time on her hands and is eager to take on the newsletter. As a member of the Association of Executive Saleswomen, Deborah was heavily involved with their newsletter. We expect P.O.K.I.S. to continue to grow and improve under her capable direction. We would like to extend our appreciation to Deborah for volunteering a considerable amount of her time to continue serving the program and the parents in this capacity.

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WHAT'S NEW IN SAMOA

by Brian, Director-Paradise Cove

Talofa Lava!

We have expanded our Staff Team over here in Western Samoa, and wanted to share with you the newest staff members here at Paradise Cove.

We are very excited to have more qualified people from the United States to help us continue to have the best program available for your sons. I would like to introduce to you the four new couples we have brought aboard.

Peter and Enid are from Kaysville, Utah. They have 3 children ages 7, 5, and 2. Peter has been brought aboard as our new Personnel Director. He does our recruiting and staff training. Peter was actually born in Western Samoa, and moved with his family to the United States when he was 14 years old. He is very excited to return after all these years to see all the exciting changes. His wife Enid is our other Office Manager and will be working closely with our Case Managers.

Christian and Carolyn are from Orem, Utah. They also have 3 children, ages 4, 2, and 6 months. Christian is our Administrative Assistant in charge of quality assurance, detailing facilities and improvements. I'm sure you have heard a lot of good comments from your sons as we are constantly improving on our facilities to make things better! His wife Carolyn, assists him with the facility conditions at Le Tiara cottages, daily inspections of cottage facilities, health, nutrition, and oversees the menu.

Ed and Mary are from St. George, Utah. Ed worked at Brightway for the past 5 1/2 years. He took a risk in moving he and his wife to Samoa to oversee our beach facility. As our new Beach Facility Manager, he spends time trying to improve on living conditions and enjoys spending quality time with the boys as well. Many good changes have occurred since Ed and Mary have been on the Beach.

Dace and Laurie are from Hurricane, Utah. Dace has been brought aboard as our Academic Coordinator. He was previously teaching at Pine Valley High School in St. George, Utah. He and his wife Laurie have their hands full with the many school demands of our program. We are very grateful to have them and their experience to handle our academic load!!!

We are also very thrilled to have a returning student of Paradise Cove come back to live in Western Samoa to work for the program. Tyler is from Southern California and returned home to California a year ago. He loved Samoa and had a strong desire to come back and work for Paradise Cove. I supported this decision and he has been a great help to our Shift Leaders and Family Fathers. He loves helping out wherever he is needed. He has been an great addition to our staff. We are grateful to our new employees for leaving many things behind to

come be part of our Paradise Cove Family. We hope you are as excited as we are and that you continue to hear good things from your sons of the good changes being made here on their behalf!!!

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WHAT'S NEW IN THE PROGRAM?

by Sheryl J., Editor

Transition Home News! In the last issue of P.O.K.I.S. this column described the newest phase of the program, the Transition Home. My son, Craig was one of the first five boys to enter the Transition Home following the Parent Child Seminar September 5-7. I have to admit that although I was very committed to this phase, which is meant to assist the boys as they adjust to life back in the United States and to their family life, I was worried. I worried about Craig being a guinea pig. Would there be enough structure after Paradise Cove? Were the families they would be living with "good families?" Did the boys really need to complete this phase? Would school work out, as my son has completed his requirements for graduation, and would there be adequate recreation and physical activity?

After two weeks in Transition, I have to tell you that all my worries are alleviated. Craig loves Transition Home, and we do too! Let me tell you a little more about our experiences.

At PC1 it became apparent to all of us that we still had some work to do, with our family contract and with family dynamics, before we were ready to live together again as a family. It has been much easier to work on both of those issues with Craig in the Transition Home. It was also evident that the boys felt overwhelmed at being back in the States and with their families, and that the Transition Phase would offer them an opportunity to adjust at a little slower pace. One of the boys who went home several months ago said, "At first there were times when I just wanted to check out TV again. I felt like I couldn't do that, because I should be interacting with my family." When we entered PC 1, I really just wanted Craig home. When we left, in spite of finding an incredibly wonderful young man, I was glad that we were going to have breathing and working space.

Currently there are two private homes housing five boys. Both families have worked with the program in some capacity before, and meet guidelines set. They were interviewed and signed a contract, including that the boys will have adult supervision at all times. The boys have truly become "part of the family." They join the families in hiking, basketball, football, going to the gym, shopping, chores, and playing. Craig tells me that Rob and Trudi, the parents of the family he's with, are "great." He really enjoys the other children in the home, and is included at all times. Trudi tells me that he's great at convincing their kids that they should do as their parents ask and that he loves teasing and playing with the kids. Also, the two Paradise Cove boys in Craig's home join the boys in the other home for sports and other activities.

Now parents, don't faint! The parents in both homes have commented on what polite lovely young men our sons are. One of the moms says she found herself wondering, "What did these boys need to be in the program for?"

While the boys are in the Transition Homes, parent visits and phone calls and home passes are encouraged. Increased family contact is one of the main purposes of the Transition Home. The program feels it is very important that the families interact and get re-established and re-acquainted. With prior approval from parents, the boys may have also have visits from grandparents and siblings.

The boys go to school in one of the transition homes with a teacher from Browning Academy. Families they stay with are responsible for their transportation. If they have already graduated, they will be working on increasing their SAT scores, via pre-testing to see where their weak areas are, and work on those with tutoring.

Bob Litchfield wanted us parents to be aware that the Transition Home, though supervised, is not a "lock-down facility." If a boy is still a run-risk, and decides to run, he will probably be successful. Our experience is that Craig and the other boys enjoy the Transition Home so much that running would never even enter their minds. Thank you Teen Help and Paradise Cove for this wonderful addition to the program.

Case Managers' Schedule, Revised 7/96 Samoa			
Manager	Days	Location	Hours
Seneritha	Th,F Sa Tu,W	Office Office With Boys	8-4:30PM 10-5:00PM
Ofeira	M,Tu,F W,Th	Office With Boys	8-4:30PM
Joann	M,Tu,F, W,Th	Office With Boys	8-4:30PM
All lunches are taken from 12-12:30 PM.			

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TEACHERS' CORNER

by Dace & Laurie

We have finally found a few minutes to write a few words for P.O.K.I.S. The first three weeks have been very hectic, because of the changes and improvements which we are trying to implement. The improvements will include a comprehensive proficiency exam after all courses are completed, an educational portfolio, a monthly update to each parent on the student's progress, and better communication between all parties involved. We will enjoy this challenge and look forward to helping the students and the parents in our endeavors.

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TRAINERS' CORNER - by David G. President & Trainer, Resource Realizations

Structure vs. Control

As individuals, we like to know what is going to happen in our lives. This gives us a great deal of comfort. It eliminates or reduces risk, errors, and fear in our life. One of the tools we can use in our life is to create structure. Sadly, we often use structure as a "controlling" mechanism rather than to create a structure.

Structure is about framing the game we are playing. It is a means to knowing the rules, what is expected, and ultimately how to win within the game. Without structure life would be chaos. Imagine a family, community, or workplace without some type of structure. Relationships would not last long or be very fulfilling in such an environment. Structure comes in two forms. First is the form of structure that is developed from having a purpose. It is the large framework in which I participate with my universe. A purpose cannot be touched, measured, or quantified. It is very nebulous. However, it is the most powerful rock upon which to form structure. With a purpose I can determine which of the many choices I have fit within the framework of my life. This gives me a structure in which I can fulfill my life.

The second element of structure consists of ground rules and agreements. These are the specific details upon which I make my purpose real in the universe. This form of structure is often misused. It becomes a game of enforcing my desires upon another person - this is controlling behavior. Within the framework of my agreements and ground rules are the means to enforce and monitor the system.

Structure is not open to continual interpolations. If we are redefining the structure it is a good possibility we are merely wanting to "get our way." In any redefinition of the structure, we should be looking at whether this serves the purpose or merely "my wants." Too often as parents, we are upset and frightened so we start throwing new rules and interpolations in the current structure. This will work against creating what we want in our family. It sends a message to our child about integrity. We want our child to operate with integrity. We must teach this

through our actions. Using structure to try and control the situation eventually will cause a breakdown. Set the structure up so that both the purpose and agreements are clearly understood. Once this is done, hold all accountable for their actions. Review the structure for areas of concern and create agreement to change the structure.

The fine line for parents to walk is between the parent role and a coach. At times, we must be the parent and lay down the necessary framework, particularly in those areas where we can not get agreement. Yet at the same time we want to build our influence with our children by acting as a coach and guide. This means at times we have to allow more leeway than we as parents may like. This is very tricky to say the least. Do I have an answer - NO. You must determine the bounds for you and your family. Work with your child concerning the purpose and the supporting rules. They do not always like the structure, but they do know how important it is for their success. Hold them accountable for their success.

UPCOMING TRAINING DATES

The following gives the training dates for upcoming Parent Seminars and Parent Child trainings. Remember, your child must be scheduled into a Parent Child I, and then into transition. Parents must be graduates of the Parent Discovery Seminar to attend the Parent Child Sequence.

Parent Seminars

TEXAS DISCOVERY	November 22-24
TEXAS FOCUS	October 10-13
LA DISCOVERY	October 18-20
LA FOCUS	November 14-17
SEATTLE DISCOVERY	November 15-17
SEATTLE FOCUS	October 24-27

Parent-Child Seminars

PC I	St. George, UT December 27-29
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Call the TASKS Coordinator at (801) 635-0918 or E-mail at renmc.com to register and obtain exact locations. To assist in planning and to avoid possible cancellation for the Focus seminars, fees for Focus must be submitted at the time of registration. Focus seminars are subject to cancellation unless a minimum number of registrations are received by 30 days prior to the seminar.

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ON THE INSIDE - by current Level 4 boys

Letter #1: from Oliver

I arrived here in Western Samoa about ten months ago to attend a program called Paradise Cove. At Paradise Cove, I was set with the challenge of dealing with issues in my life which I chose the wrong direction in the past. A few of those issues were school, gangs, communications with my parents and family, and fighting with my brother who is 18, a year older than I am. I knew dealing with my issues was not going to be an easy task, and when I first arrived here, I still looked for ways for the easy way out.

To begin with, one thing I did realize was that this is going to take a lot of time and effort and that patience is the one thing that both my parents and I would have to work with. Well, time went by real slow for me as I went through both seminars, Focus and Discovery, over here, until I finally moved up to level 2 after three months. I knew I was not going to stop til I have completed my goals, which were to graduate high school and go home with a positive outlook on my future.

A month and a half went by and I then moved up to level 3. On level 3 I was able to work with my leadership traits as I moved up to family leader a month later. At about this time, around June 3rd, my father came to visit

me here in Western Samoa. My relationship with my father was pretty rocky when I was home 10 months ago. Now we are able to share our honest feelings towards things without putting up a front, to sort of say. While my dad was here we discussed many things. I'm very happy with the way things went over here, as that was the first time my father and I did not have an upsetting argument between each of us. And the feeling as my Dad said that he is proud of me was unexplainable. I was on level 3 for 3 months and family leader for 2.

I then moved up to level 4 and two weeks later graduated high school. I now work at Le Tiara, a village where level 1s start off. I work here 7 days a week every other week. Here I am an example and a junior staff where I assist level 1s and newcomers adjust to the program. I have been on level 4 for about two and a half months now.

I arrived here in Samoa as a drop-out at school, where I did not attend my 11th grade in high school, also with a negative attitude and a downward outlook in life.

Now I am graduated from high school with plans to take my SAT testing in December, and then following up with college in the Fall or Spring semester of 1997. I now have a positive outlook of life and the future. I have the greatest relationship with my parents which is way more than anyone could ask for. And last but definitely not least, I have a new best friend, which is my brother Michael. I'm a fun, loving, smart young man.

Letter #2 a poem by Ben

COLD MORNING DAY

My mom is so loving,
she is so kind,
My mom brings happiness
to this life of mine.

My mom saved my life
that cold morning day
from all of the things
that were killing me away.
From the drugs,
from the gangs,
my mom saved my life
that cold morning day.

I put her through so much,
I kept running from her with all of my pain.
She was always there with her open arms,
but I kept running with my closed heart.

My mom finally got tired of all that hurt,
and she sent me away that cold morning day.
the tears rolled from her eyes,
she was so sad to see her son leave,
but she knew there was nothing else
that she could do.

That cold morning in despair
finally came her worst nightmare.
It tore her apart to see her son leave,
but it was the only way to see him achieve.
She was so scared, she was so frightened,
she didn't know what was happening.

I love my mom for what she did for me
that cold morning day in despair.

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INSIDE OUT by Sonja, counselor @ Paradise Cove

I am pleased to have the opportunity to share with everyone about the Parent/Child I that was held in Utah on September 5-7. Although this was not our first PCI, it was the first that was held where boys came out of Samoa and went to the next stage - Transition. We have five boys who are in the initial group. Most of the parents had not had any physical contact; e.g., a visit, with their sons for a year plus. The parents were very anxious, excited, fearful, joyful, etc. to be back with their boys again. I know for all the parents who made a commitment to have their sons complete the program via transition, this took another act of courage, sacrifice, and faith. The first day of the training all the parents wanted to believe that their son was "finished" and he couldn't be more perfect, so why not just take him home - the honeymoon phase. As the training progressed, the parents and child were able to identify what more needed to be worked on and through. Issues such as the boundaries of the home contract, unresolved hurts/pains, the changes that all parties had made and the struggle to accept the "new" parent or child, the unspoken words, etc. The training gave all parties the opportunity to identify and create a plan for everyone to work on for at least the next two months. Thus, while in transition with more frequent communication via phone calls, visits home, and family visits, all families agreed this was the perfect next step for everyone.

The major issue the boys kept talking about was how overwhelming it was to be back in the United States where everything moves faster, everything is bigger than life, there are more temptations, and their sense of safety is challenged. The boys identified the value gained by having the safety and structure of the program. I see that the transition stage is a vital component for the boys coming back from Samoa to enable them to regroup with their families and our culture.

Overall, it was a GREAT training and I always feel honored to play a role in the lives of the boys and their families, and to see the transformations that take place with everyone.

I'll leave you this time with a quote:

The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.
- Dolly Parton

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ON THE OUTSIDE by Charles M., a young man who's gone home

Hello. My name is Charles, and I was in Samoa for thirteen months. My purpose in writing this letter is to seriously assist you and your son in your success.

It would have been a weak situation to come home and for me to have changed my life if my parents or family continued to stay the same.

I hear many parents saying, "Do what I say and not what I do." Why is that: Because parents don't want to face their own problems. I see many parents that don't know who they are. I see many parents that aren't willing to take a deep look at themselves. If you aren't, then how do you expect your son to take a serious look at his life? I believe that your son is an exact mirror of you. This program affects the whole family, not just your son.

I am a completely different person. before Samoa I didn't have a clue of what I was doing or who I was. I was destroying my life. To say it simply - I was a BIG TIME FOLLOWER. Things have really changed. I am proud of my accomplishments in the program. I brought my grade point average from a dropout to a 3.0. I successfully completed the program and was recommended home.

Relatively few boys are recommended out of the program for the simple fact that after four or five months, parents see so much more change in their son than they ever expected, so for some reason they must think he is

complete and built as a leader. So they pull their son out. I bet they're seriously regretting that decision. How can a kid change from a follower to a real leader, and how can a person truly know who they are in that short period of time? I believe it will take at least one full year of working with the program to have a son that has a foundation built strong and unmovable, but there are no time limits or predictions on when a person is really ready. All I know is that it takes major commitments and major time for this type of miracle to happen. It is exactly like having a baby. How can anybody expect a baby to come out in six months? Sometimes babies survive if they're born early, but often they don't.

Lots of parents think that a program will fix their kid and then everything will be all right. I believe that no program can change anyone. I believe that a person can not change another person. So how do programs work? They have processes that challenge the individual habits and beliefs. They also have major wake up calls. First the program gave me a major wake up call through feedback specific for me. Then I had two choices. I could either change my life, or I could stay living miserably, hating myself. I improved my own life with assistance. Nobody else fixed me.

What more could you ask for than to have a son that is a powerful leader and a son that believes in himself? That's what my parents have, because they stuck it out. I feel like I have been saved for some special purpose on earth, because my parents could have so easily pulled me out earlier, and if they had I would probably be lost right now. Since I have been home I have built a real relationship with my family. I am able to express my emotions for the first time in my life. I have changed my image and reputation completely. I have more respect and love in my life and I'm not scared of the future anymore.

I will be very honest. If you think your son will have a solid foundation in six months, then you are fooling yourself big time. Level four had prepared me for life. In the last seven months I have built a real relationship with my family, earned my Eagle Scout, changed my image 100%, and I own my own business. I can truly say that without the processes that go on through level four, all this would be wiped away. I'm only starting out with my new life. I will never stop growing into a better person.

I will feel real sorry for you if things get tough and you give up the fight for greatness. QUITTERS NEVER WIN. What will you be teaching your son if you give up, and what will you be teaching your son if you stick it out and succeed at what you set out to do? It's all in your hands and never ignore your gut feeling. It always tells the truth.

I seriously challenge you to find out all the phone numbers of the kids have been recommended out of the program. Talk to us and see how different we are when compared to the kids that leave before they're recommended home. There's a big difference. Listen to the power and direction we have. We are truly different than the ordinary person.

A note from the editor: A parent wrote and asked us to include more information from kids who'd gone home, about how the program prepared them for success in the working world. Following is a letter from a girl who graduated from Cross Creek Manor (the girls' program).

Letter #2: by Danielle

Hi, my name is Danielle . I was at Cross Creek Manor and am now working at Brightway and Teen Help. When I left, I wanted to get a job. For a few months I didn't, because I was in college with 20 credits. Also I had limited transportation. Then Jay K. said I could work at Brightway. I am so grateful to him for this.

The seminars helped me to become motivated and to care about my future. Also I learned how to be responsible after so many days of room jobs. Small things like essays, silence, having so many roommates, and getting through the day even when I felt like giving up, have helped me. These things all help teach how to handle stressful situations and how to stay in control.

I intend to finish college and get a higher paying job someday. Some kids leave and don't want to work unless they are making a ton of money. The job I have now gives me experience and money. Although I am somewhat

financially dependent on my parents, I feel it's only fair that I work to support myself as much as possible after all they invested in me while I was in the program.

Letter #3: by Deborah J., future editor

Well, it's been 3 months since our son (Ben) returned from Paradise Cove, and we are happy to report he continues to do exceedingly well. We owe a debt of gratitude and thanks to all who were involved with the program. It has taught him to get in touch with his true feelings and to realize he can enjoy life without the influence of drugs or alcohol. The most crucial part of this learning phase is the return home where your child will use the skill sets that he has learned, with the help of a secure, loving and disciplined environment.

The Home Contract is a vital part of this transition and I cannot emphasize strongly enough how important it is to make sure you have one in place. Without this structure it would be too easy for your child to fall back into the old ways. It took us 3 days to put one together that we all felt comfortable with; we wanted to make sure that not only did we make it fair for our son, but also that it did not give him any back doors. We decided to make the contract a living document - meaning it would be in existence while he resided in our home.

We solicited our son's feedback and suggestions throughout the process. In order for him to abide by the terms he needed to feel that he had ownership and that we were not just dictating the terms. We were both surprised and amazed at the ideas and suggestions he came up with, and he readily pointed out anything that could have potentially resulted in a back door for him.

Needless to say, the final document is twelve pages long and covers anything from dating to income, savings and allowance. We even included a glossary of terms so there would be no room for misunderstanding.

Each contract is different for every family. What works for one may not necessarily work for another. His three month evaluation ends on Sept. 7th, and I can honestly say some, if not all, of the rules will be modified in his favor.

My son is back in school this week, and that's where the real challenge begins. He is going to face many temptations, but I feel confident that he will rise to meet them. He has learned so much while being at Paradise Cove that I realize I am now learning from him.

Remember not to lose sight of your magical children, for they will always be with you. God Bless and all the very best to you all!

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THE EBB AND FLOW OF PARADISE COVE

by Glenda C., Parent Coordinator

Son Graduated From Program Sept. 2, 1996

Communication Concerns

I often hear comments regarding the difficulty getting a phone call through to Samoa. Frustrations rise, patience runs short, and assumptions replace logic. So, perhaps shedding some light on the subject will ease the aggravation.

One of the endearing aspects of the Samoan culture is their seemingly stress free way of life. One of the reasons for this is the lack of emphasis for the need for an abundance of technology. If you were to visit Samoa, you would notice the absence of phone booths on street corners or in businesses such as we are accustomed to here. Few families have telephones in their homes, let alone dual lines, fax lines or cellular phones.

As a result, securing a phone number is very difficult. Simply put, we are waiting for numbers to become available. Several times each week the staff check the current status. We are on 'the list,' however phone number requests currently outnumber the availability. This rates very high priority.

I am asked about the possibility of scheduling calls. We recognize the value in doing so. However, until each Case Manager has her own phone line, there is no way to effectively manage that system. Believe me when I say that the staff look forward to this as much as you do. I also receive inquiries regarding the possibility of e-mail. We are still in the process of getting a system in place to effectively handle this for you. While we recognize many of the advantages, until we are able to have a system in place that will allow us to handle the flood of communications that will result, we do not want to further complicate things for you. Any of you that work in an environment with the e-mail system can relate to how quickly bogged down you can get with e-mails needing to be either responded to, and/or printed off. Please be patient. While e-mail is a very quick way to send and to receive information, getting the system and staff in place to accommodate this takes time.

Until the additional phone numbers become available, perhaps these tips will be helpful.

When possible, fax a memo to your Case Manager or Stateside Coordinator a few days prior to your call, with your specific concerns or questions you would like to address. Be specific. Don't ask, "How is he doing this week?" or "How is his school work?" Ask questions such as, "Was he recommended for a level move." If not, "How is he holding himself back?" Getting manipulative letters? Ask his Case Manager or Stateside Coordinator to confront him, and that he be given the appropriate consequence. Find out how his interaction is with his Paradise Cove family. Is he displaying any leadership traits? If so, how is that displayed? If not, why not. What is their recommendation for you to assist in his progress? In other words, the more specific your questions, the more information you will receive.

Be mindful of your length of time on a call. Of course, your son is the most important boy in Paradise Cove, to you. However, the parent in line behind you, hearing the busy signal as you talk, feels exactly the same way you do. Be mindful also of the length of the letters you fax. Not only is it costly for you, but again it ties up the fax line for someone else.

Please be considerate of the staff. It is tempting to take out frustrations on a faceless voice. Yet, if you had the privilege of spending time with any of them, you would come to know them as the kind, caring, dedicated people they are. Also, take a moment to remember what life was like when your son was home. Probably not always lovable. Multiply that many times over, adding agitated parents to the formula. This is their work environment. Yet, they see the possibilities in your sons, and they rise to the occasion with infinite patience and love for them. Acknowledge their dedication to your son.

Finally, stop and remember why you sent your son to Paradise Cove. The staff needs the time to work with your sons. Special requests take time away from the boys. It also undermines the program, and can create problems for another student, possibly hindering their progress.

Be patient. Practice trust. Support the program. It works! And trust in yourself. Trust for the decision you made on your son's behalf. Stay focused on your goal....your son's success, your family's healing.

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Parent Coordinator's Corner

Glenda C.

My office hours are listed below. However, please note that I attend the parent seminars and will be out of the office during those times. I do have Voice Messaging, so you may leave a message.

I will return your calls, in the order they are received, with the exception of calls that are urgent. If your call is of an urgent nature, please note that when leaving a message. When possible, please limit call time to 15 minutes, being mindful of the call behind you.

Question of the Month: What creative financing methods have you found to be successful? One parent wants to know whether anyone knows of tax shelters for the money used to pay for the boys' program. Please mail or fax your suggestion.

You may reach me at:
1-801-467-3768 - Voice & Fax
Monday-Friday 9am-5pm - Mountain Std. Time
P.O. Box 540048
No. Salt Lake, UT 84054-0048

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FAMILY SUPPORT

Jean F. wrote with information on a policy she and her husband took out for their grandson in Paradise Cove. The plan provides hospital to hospital air medical transportation anywhere in the world, 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week, at no cost to the member. There obviously is a cost for the policy, but far below what emergency medical transportation would be. It has been the experience of Paradise Cove that no boy as yet has ever required such transportation home, but if you are interested in this protection, contact me and I will forward the information sent to me by the Jean. Sheryl J., Ed.

Parents Interested in Forming Support Groups

Chico, Ca Area
Atlanta, Ga Area

Existing Support Groups - Contact Person

Huntsville-Conroe-Houston, Tx.
Dallas-Fort Worth, Tx.
Salt Lake City, Ut.
Miami, Fl.
Bay Area, Ca.
Los Angeles, Ca.
San Diego, Ca.
Seattle, Wa.
Maryland-Virginia

Please call Teen Help if you're from any of these areas and would like more information.

Letter From Terry, a Mom who Survived 12 Months

Be Careful What You Wish For - Letters and Calls Home

Everyone's experience is different when their son is sent to Samoa. Yet, we all share some of the same anxieties, pain, and yes - eventually joy. I share this story not to criticize, but in the hopes that my observations of myself and a friend might help someone.

My son left for Samoa September of 95. The pain in my heart was almost unbearable, but the small voice inside told me, "If you love him unselfishly, let him go!": For our son, the choice was between life or certain death. I received two letters from Brightway and one phone call, all of which were angry, but ended in sweet manipulations. Those manipulations tugged at my heart and started to peel away the layers of confidence surrounding our decision.

Next, letters from Samoa. It took a month for his letters to arrive. In the meantime, I talked to Ofeira, who told me Dino was ill with a social disease, but the doctor was treating him and he would be cured soon. Of course I was sick thinking about my son's health, the quality of doctors, and was the counselor just telling me he was OK just so I wouldn't bring him home?

Luckily, my little voice kept talking, "Trust others; remember the chaos and danger he was in before!" Then I talked to Sonja. She explained about the mail - it's not like home; it requires a lot of patience.

By this time I started to remember what it's like to sleep through the night without worrying about the phone ringing with horrible news, or getting up to check and see if he had crawled out the window. Also, I wasn't used to the quiet. My husband and I had nothing to argue or fight about. Laundry was minimal, groceries were too. We could come home and not worry about who was there, or was it still intact!

Still, I couldn't relax totally. My son was in another country, another person's hands, and that was my job, and the guilt kept creeping in. When I did receive letters I would cry with joy, but then when I read them the worry would intensify. "Minimal food, horrible disciplines, bugs, sleeping on the ground!" Then I would cry tears of sorrow. My little voice would eventually calm me down. "He was eating nothing when he left home. At least he is eating three times a day. He always loved bugs and he could always sleep anywhere. When he ran away from home he slept in awful places, places that were dangerous. " He was still safer in Samoa than at home. I learned to calm down and take events day by day.

About three months later my close friend decided to send her daughter to Cross Creek. To my surprise, rules were different for the girls. She got much more frequent communication with her daughter, which I became jealous of. I was angry. Why did my son have to earn the right to call if this girl didn't? It had been two months since I had any letters arrive. This was not fair!

Thank goodness we attended the January Discovery Seminar. We learned so much about the program and ourselves. I realized how much I had lost myself and my sole focus had been my family, and especially my son. Still, at the banquet the girls were allowed to visit and have dinner with their parents. I was happy for my new friends to be able to see their daughters, but as a Samoan parent I felt sad.

David brought pictures of each of our sons and a videotape. This was the best moment in 5 months, physical proof! My son had put on 20 pounds on his minimal food rations! This was a turning point for me. When I went home I saw what the constant letters and occasional phone calls were doing to my friend.

[Her daughter's manipulations eventually resulted in the mother bringing her home after six months. Eventually the daughter ran away again and is now living on the streets once more].

To be truthful with myself, had I had constant letters, like I wished for, and occasional phone calls, my heart would have been torn to shreds, and I might have "saved my son." [by bringing him home]. If my son could tell good enough stories to fool the police, what chance would I have had?!

When we send our children away we are beat up, mentally battered and war torn. We are too weak, a lot of us, to deal with the guilt and manipulations. My hat is off to those parents of daughters who stay strong. I am so glad I didn't get what I wished for. It took 8 months to get our first phone call. I treasure that moment. Only love was shared, not stories of bad treatment, anger, or guilt. We all valued the moment. So please, please listen to your inner voice, place your faith in someone else's hands, and don't wish for something you are not strong enough yet to handle.

P.S. To set the record straight, the 2 month stretch of no letters was due to a lost, then found, shipment with the UPS. I then received letters once a month and progress reports every week. Talk to your case worker when you feel desperate to reach out to your son.

Note From Linda F., Associate Editor

Dear Parents, We have entered the address labels on computer in order to save manual labor and time. We realize there are many mistakes, and we would appreciate your help in making the address list as correct as possible.

Please send any corrections in names and addresses to Linda Fielding. You may either telephone, fax, or send a postcard to my address (on front page). Please include your son's first and last names when corresponding with

me.

Because our mailing list is enormous, we are no longer able to mail newsletters to the families of boys who have gone home. However, the newsletter is available on the Internet, at <http://www.vpp.com/teenhelp/pokis5.html>. (See pg. 1).

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