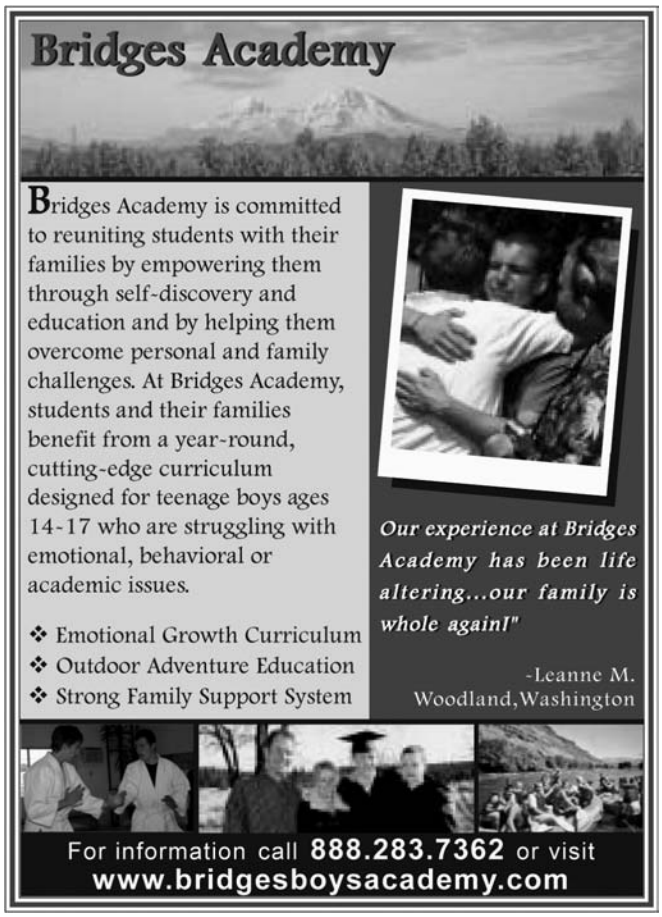
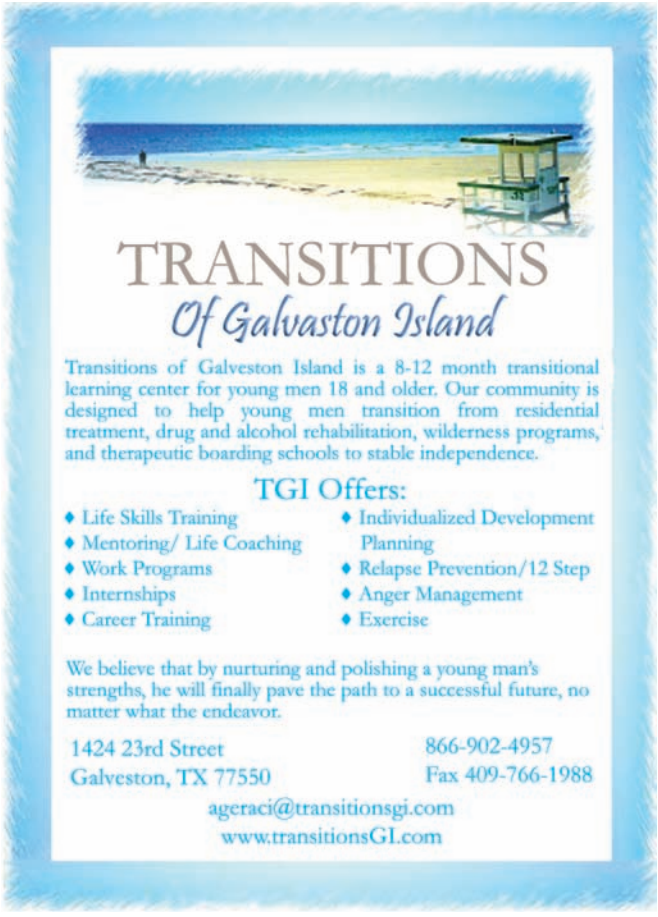




## OVERACHIEVERS: Continued from page 5

Parents and educators have failed to recognize that we have robbed our children of the joy of learning and the fun that should accompany these years. High school is also supposed to be a journey of exploration for adolescents to learn about themselves, experience failure, learn from it and move on. If we as parents always step in to fix everything and make it right, our children are not equipped to handle failure in the future.

Today's adolescents also find themselves giving up the activities and interests they may genuinely develop on their own, in pursuit of the activities that look best on their Resume and the brass ring their parents are looking for to validate themselves as parents. (In this case, the brand name college.) Suffice it to say, many of us would have collapsed under the pressure in which our children find themselves today.

While most readers focus on the high achieving students, I have chosen to view this book from a different vantage point. The current trend of parents to demand more than a student can produce has left kids at all levels of achievement wondering when and how they can get off the treadmill. When the expectations of parents exceed what their child can realistically achieve, it is easy to fall off the edge. The parents have set up a situation where the sense of failure is so extreme; the child may end up in a therapeutic setting.

I have a student currently in my practice, where the parent initially described her son as "a little ADD". After meeting with this student only twice and finding holes while reading through the school records, (he had attended four schools, "none were quite right"), I asked if any educational or neuropsychological testing had been done? "Well, yes, in 10th grade." This student was a rising senior at the time. A 37 page report arrived on my desk documenting significant learning disabilities, as well as ADHD. The student is in a small private school receiving one hour/week of tutoring from the LD tutor.

A tidal wave of information is flowing over this student everyday, and he is unequipped to handle it. He has been taught few strategies for learning and integrating information, unable to tap into the wonderful capabilities he has. Despite his high average FSIQ, he will in all likelihood fail in college, because the parent refuses to acknowledge any learning differences and insists on sending him to a "regular" college, rather than following the recommendations of four qualified professionals. This is a student who is ripe for a future therapeutic