were quickly found and brought to justice. Big Brother is alive and well here and yet this has not produced a responsible society. Something is missing.

The latest issue of The Family Therapy Networker features a cover article titled "Are Parents obsolete?" Adults are going to have to wrest back control of the culture from teenagers who should not be left in charge. How can they be expected to manage themselves without good role models and clear guidelines for responsible behavior? Montana Academy monitors and controls the environment. We do not allow free access to media. We search students on and off campus and know what is going on in their lives. We provide structure and containment for teenagers who do not have the wisdom to manage themselves. The adults are firmly in charge but they are also willing to engage with students on all levels. They eat lunch with them. They play with them. They attend daily groups to talk about all aspects of their lives. They act as role models and create close relationships. Within the context of such relationships there are few aspects of life which cannot be discussed. The adults provide perspective along with affection and discipline. We have good reason to think that this model works. Our graduates are proof that with appropriate close adult attention teenagers can grow into responsible and thoughtful young adults.

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Visit Report...

Island View Residential Treatment Center

Syracuse, UT
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Visit By: Judith E. Bessette, EdD, October 2011

Island View RTC opened in 1994. Its founders, both experienced mental health professionals, envisioned a program that would help troubled teens build on their strengths, abandon self-defeating behaviors, understand their unique gifts and accept help. The building blocks for positive change at Island View included therapy, milieu programming, academics, recreation and psychiatry.

Today's Island View describes itself as building healthy futures on a solid foundation and uses the very same building blocks…continuing to help boys and girls 13 to 17 build on their strengths, abandon self-defeating behaviors, understand the their unique gifts and accept help.

Have there been changes at Island View since 1994? Of course! Its ownership has changed, clinical leadership has changed and, recently, there have been several changes in the position of Executive Director. While the school at one time worked with 110 students, they've downsized – another change – with a current capacity of 76.

In my recent visit, I found that while all of those things had changed…there was much more that remained the same. I was struck by the longevity of the staff, not only the leadership and therapy teams, but also the academic team and the milieu staff itself.

When I asked about this legacy of longevity, staff members at every level talked about camaraderie, teamwork, and the sense of family at Island View. I even talked with a student who, after telling me that Island View had saved his life, went on to say that while he knew the program was "owned by some big corporation" it felt to him like one big family…and a mostly happy family!

There was a sense of cohesion on clinical team. Jason Drake, Clinical Director, explained that several therapists have specialty areas…trauma, adoption, ADHD and executive functioning, sexual abuse, grief and loss to name a few… backed by on-going specialized training in several modern therapies.

Staff talked about the advantages to them (and to the students) of having their psychiatrists on site four days each week. All of this underscores Island View's ability to serve clinically complex cases.

Milieu staff talked about the ongoing training they get from the clinical team on a monthly basis. They talked about their sense of "really being heard" as an integral part of the treatment process and I could sense their pride in knowing that what they do, day in and day out, is critical to each teen's success.

David Hans, PsyD, Executive Director of both Island View and the Aspen Institute, is a clinical psychologist with over 25 years of experience in therapeutic programming and corporate management. Prior to joining Aspen Education Group in 2009, he worked with youth and families in a variety of settings including therapeutic boarding schools, residential treatment centers and in private practice.

David reinforced what I had learned from other staff members…that much of Island View's success with complicated teens is a result of a truly integrated program…a therapeutic setting where psychiatry, academics, milieu programming and recreation all have an equal role in treatment.

Continued: **Island View/ 6**