Extended Insights...

Blue Lights, Sleepless Nights

By: Jeanette Spires

Those of us who are of a "certain age" can remember a time when we patiently wrote a letter and waited at least a week for an answer, even if we considered the matter urgent. What a contrast with the life we live now, where information careens through our heads, way too much of it at one time, and we find our attention drawn in several directions simultaneously. Can anyone name a time in human history when so much has happened to a culture in such a short time (other than the Black Plague, of course.)

Counseling with families when an educational change is needed has also brought new clients. There is a population of students who used to be cared for within families and taken to the homes of adult friends and relatives because of a lack of peer social life. Video games have replaced Aunt Mary, and a new kind of social isolation masquerading as social interaction has replaced an outing with Papa. This student is brought in because he or she is no longer going to school on Wednesdays, or indeed not doing work at all, choosing instead to check in with comrades in a war game, or building a website with shockingly lush photos of a lonely girl.

One of the first concerns from a parent frequently begins with, "He is not sleeping enough, and I can't get him up in the morning for school." Sleep research on teens has been available for several years, and some wise schools have pushed back their morning start to enable those final sleep hours to do their restorative and growth work on the teenage brain. On the other hand, what if the student is staying up way too late for any kind of healthy lifestyle? Enter the researchers at the Lighting Innovations Institute at John Carroll University to help with this dilemma. The solution is so simple that one may be surprised that academic research was needed at all. Think about Benjamin Franklin's "early to bed..." adage. Humankind evolved in a world of biochronicity that involved daylight and dark. And what color dominates daylight? BLUE! The blue sky is all around us—keeps us nicely awake, and stimulates our thinking. And what color is often dominant in electronic backgrounds, TVs, computer screens? BLUE! The researchers at John Carroll proved that blue light prevents the timely arrival of melatonin, and doesn't that make all kinds of sense? When we're up and outside under the blue sky, as our ancestors were, we are not supposed to be sleeping!

The solution is shockingly simple: Blue blocker glasses. Putting on glasses that block blue light in the evening will enable to body to adjust its circadian rhythms to a more natural timeline. It is even suggested that there will be an improvement in ADHD symptoms and sleep disorders. Blue blockers can be found in a wide price range, starting at Wal-Mart and ending up with your fancier kiosks in the mall. Kudos to John Carroll for telling us something that we could have figured out ourselves if we'd just made a few logical connections.

About the Author: Jeanette B Spires is an Independent Educational Consultant, and founder of Jeanette B Spires & Associates located in Lake Forest, IL. For more information, contact her at 847-22-34-7211 or Jebspi@aol.com, or visit her website at http://jeanettespires.com/.

Seen N heard...

CALO Begins Facility Expansion: CALO is expanding their facility adding a building that will house more students and a NBA size gym to include basketball and volleyball courts, classrooms and a canine facility. During the groundbreaking ceremony, students spoke of the impact that CALO has had on their lives. "They come here to put their lives in order," Huey said. 866-459-1362

Treadaway Joins BCA: Boulder Creek Academy welcomes Reid Treadaway as the Director of Admissions and Business Development. Treadaway is taking over the admissions role from Brandi Elliott who was acting as the interim admissions director for Boulder Creek Academy. Elliott will continue to serve in her role as the director of admissions and business development for Northwest Academy. 208-267-7522

Benchmark Transitions Celebrates 19 Years: Benchmark, a residential transitional living program for young adult men and women, providing clinical treatment, recovery, aftercare, education, and life skills, is proud to announce its 19-year anniversary. 800-474-4848



Parlett Visits Woodbury Reports: Mark Parlett recently stopped by the Woodbury Office and had his picture taken by the sign. The reason for his visit was to discuss his new position with Great Lakes Educational Consulting, and to catch up on industry news. 847-441-8911

Compass Rose Endorsed By Townsend: Compass Rose Academy announced its endorsement by Dr. John Townsend, a nationally known organizational consultant, psychologist and author of 26 books on relationships, growth and parenting. A national thought leader in counseling and therapeutic care best practices, Townsend cited Compass Rose's balanced approach to treating clinical issues and nurturing character growth as one of the most compelling qualities of the residential treatment center for troubled teens. 317-509-5968

FFS Students Complete Summer Wilderness Expeditions: This summer, students from The Family Foundation School got to return to wilderness through a summer-long program designed and facilitated by therapist and Dean of Admissions Jeff Brain. The expedition enabled the students to re-experience wilderness and re-connect to what they learned there by performing many of the traditional activities, including cooking their own food, doing solos, building shelters, calling standing groups (or the like), hiking (up to 11 miles a day), journaling, playing pelt and of course, busting fire! 845-887-5213

Pacific Quest Partners With Murphy: Pacific Quest is pleased to partner with one of the best family therapists in the nation. Jen Murphy, MEd, LPC will offer Parent Coaching Services for families in need of individualized parent support, coaching and counseling services. 808-937-5806

Center For Discovery Opens In Edmonds and Bellevue: Center for Discovery is proud to announce the opening of its newest residential eating disorder treatment homes in