

LEADing the Way

LEAD • Linking Efforts Against Drugs • Fall 2004

Emotional intelligence should be a priority

EQ may be more important than IQ!

This free presentation is part of an overall program to build awareness of the emotional needs of teens.

It has been suggested that emotional intelligence (EQ) may be more important in determining success in life than IQ! Don't miss this opportunity to hear how adults can help young people be healthy and smart in ways that really count.

Dr. Maurice Elias, noted professor and author, will address parents with a presentation titled **The Key to Raising Emotionally Intelligent Teens** on Monday, November 8th at 7:30 p.m. in the Lake Forest High School auditorium. Dr. Elias is a psychology professor at Rutgers University, and is the author of several books, the most notably *Emotionally*

Intelligent Parenting and *Raising Emotionally Intelligent Teenagers*. Dr. Elias will also speak with students and staff at Lake Forest High School on November 9th.

This presentation, sponsored by Lake Forest High School, LEAD (thanks to a grant from the Buchanan Foundation), and Network for Youth, is part of an overall program to build awareness of the emotional needs of teens. Concerns about teen suicide, drug overdoses, and increasing depression and emotional problems among our students prompted formation of a community group called Network for Youth. Included



Dr. Maurice Elias, psychologist and author, November 8, 7:30 p.m. at LFHS.

in the network are youth ministers from the local churches, CROYA, LEAD, Lake Forest Police, Lake Forest Hospital, and the local high school and middle schools. Each of these groups will sponsor activities that promote healthy behavior by young people and help educate adults on the issues that trouble our teens.

Admission is free. For more information, call LEAD at 847-295-9075.

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Risks in the medicine cabinet

The fastest category of drug abuse by youth 15-24 is not heroin, marijuana, or cocaine—it is the abuse of medications, both prescription and over-the-counter. Young people are taking medicines such as Ritalin, OxyContin, Vicadin, or cough suppressants for the purposes of getting high, and exposing themselves and others to significant risk.

"Prescription drugs, which are widely available and easy to obtain, provide young people with an easily accessible, inexpensive means of altering their mental and physical state. Abusers may experience a heightened sense of pleasure, euphoria, drowsiness, increased energy, or various other effects depending upon the drugs they abuse. Young people who abuse prescription drugs put themselves at risk of experiencing dangerous

side effects. Prescription drugs—when taken as prescribed by a physician—successfully treat a variety of mental or physical conditions.

However, when abused, these drugs can alter the brain's activity and lead to debilitating or life-threatening health problems and result in physical or psychological dependence," reports the National Center for Drug Control.

Advice to parents? Control or discard unused prescription medicines, monitor internet use for online prescription purchasing, be watchful for unexplained vials or pills, stay alert how youth spend their money, and get educated on the signs and symptoms of drug use! See page 3 for upcoming seminars.



www.LEADweb.org

LFHS teachers trained on signs & symptoms

While students had a vacation day on October 8th, the faculty at LFHS received a primer in signs and symptoms of emotional and substance abuse problems.

The training was a joint venture with LEAD, the LFHS Wellness Department, The Student Resource Officer, The Counseling Department, Social Worker staff, and the Dean's Office. The seminar covered a wide range of symptoms that teachers could recognize that might signal possible drug and alcohol use or emotional problems.

"We hoped to provide the faculty with the tools to increase

awareness of the situations that face our students," said Wellness Director Chris Eiserman. Prior to the training session, teachers had filled out a questionnaire identifying those kinds of problems they had seen in their students, and what kinds of situations prove most challenging to them.

The session was intended as a way to increase the responsiveness to students who might be in trouble, and to help staff understand the recommended approach if signs or symptoms are seen in a student. LFHS has a core team system that provides support for students who might be experiencing some difficulty, as well social workers who can provide support to the student and parents. Additional education in these areas is planned for the rest of the school year and at other schools in the community.

FIND MORE AT
www.LEADweb.org



Special thanks to Sanford Bernstein and Bob Westropp for underwriting the printing of flyers for LEAD events.

EATING DISORDERS

Healthy attitudes about self and eating

Eating disorders are a serious concern among our youth. Parents can do a lot to discourage unhealthy eating behaviors and encourage positive body images among their children. Try these approaches:

- ✂ Explain that it is healthy and normal to gain some weight and experience other physical changes during adolescence.
- ✂ Don't criticize child's weight.
- ✂ Talk about the idealized physical images of men and women portrayed by the media and how they are unrealistic for most people.
- ✂ Explain why a growing body needs a balanced diet.
- ✂ Model healthy attitudes about your own body.

Submitted by Jean Odwazny, Youth Advocate, from *When Your Child Has an Eating Disorder: A Step by Step Workbook*, A. Natenshon.

Signs & Symptoms

Drinking, Drug Use or Emotional Problems

Here is a watch list for parents and other adults for possible signs that a youth may be using drugs or alcohol, or is having an emotional problem.

- Changes in friends
- Negative changes in schoolwork, school attendance, declining grades
- Increased secrecy about possessions or activities
- Use of incense, room deodorant or perfume to hide smoke or chemical odors
- Subtle changes in conversations with friends (more secret, phrases in code)
- Increased emotional outburst, anger, sensitivity, reaction to things
- Seeming depressed, frequently sad, or talking about suicide
- Change in clothing choices; clothes that highlight drug use
- Increase in borrowing money or use of money
- Difficulty sleeping, or sleeping in class or at inappropriate times
- Ritual acts, panic attacks, avoidance of situations
- Changes in eating patterns, loss or gain in weight
- Evidence of drug paraphernalia (pipes, rolling papers, etc.)
- Bottles of eye drops, which may be used to mask bloodshot or dilated eyes
- New use of mouthwash or mints to cover up smell of alcohol or smoking
- Missing prescription drugs
- Evidence of inhalant use (red nose, sniffing, possession of inhalant items)

Normal angst?

How can the normal trials and tribulations of growing up today be differentiated from a more serious emotional problem? How can parents differentiate typical teen angst from depression or other serious problems?

“Most kids go into a “funk” every once in a while,” says LFHS social worker John Maher. “The keys are how long the symptoms last and how many symptoms there are.”

Professionals like Maher advise parents to keep an eye out for multiple signs of a potential problem and to act before the situation reaches a crisis point. If a student starts having

trouble sleeping, changes eating patterns, friends or activities, has unexplained emotional outbursts, or other physical or emotional signs (See **Signs & Symptoms** on page 2), then parents should take note and immediately seek assistance.

The local schools have social workers who are available to meet with parents and students if a problem is suspected. Our community also has a new resource, Jean Odwazny, who is a youth advocate and counselor from Family Service of Lake County. United Way has funded this free service for youth and their families and Jean can be contacted at 847-363-3665 or visited at CROYA at 400 E. Hastings Road in Lake Forest. Pediatricians and private psychologists and social workers can also be contacted in order to get advice and support.

LEAD Parenting Programs 2004-2005

These are some of the educational programs for parents that LEAD and its partners are sponsoring over the next few months.

Raising Emotionally Intelligent Teens

Dr. Maurice Elias
Monday, Nov. 8 7:30 p.m.
Lake Forest High School Auditorium

Noted author, psychologist, and professor Maurice Elias will address parents and students on **The Key to Raising Emotionally Intelligent Teens** on November 8th at 7:30 p.m. at Lake Forest High School Auditorium.
Free admission.

Building Strong Foundations for Our Children

Peggy Kubert
Monday, Jan. 10 9:45 a.m.
Gorton Community Center

Clinical social worker and professor Peggy Kubert will provide tips for parents to help build strength and resilience in our youth. She will also discuss issues surrounding why our middle school aged children are being pushed to grow up too fast and how we can seek age appropriate growth opportunities for our kids.
Free admission.

Bullying and Teasing—How We Can Address The Issue

Monday, Feb. 7 9:45 a.m.
Gorton Community Center

Panel Discussion for parents with students from Woodlands Academy H.O.P.E. team, counselor Jamie Gallo, CROYA's Todd Nahigian, and DPM Assistant Principal Charlie Driscoll on how to help address issues of harmful teasing and bullying behavior.
Free admission. For parents of children in grades K-8.

Drugs and Alcohol 101 for Parents

LEAD and Officer Darren Baker
February Date TBD
Gorton Community Center

This three hour training will be a crash course in drugs and alcohol. Learn the names and characteristics of the drugs that are students are exposed to, and learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of their use. Protect your teens by being informed! *Those interested should call LEAD at 295-9075 to put your name on the mailing list for this program. There will be a small fee for this seminar.*

Roots and Wings—Raising Resilient Children a six part series

Jan. and Feb. Dates TBD
Peggy Kubert and Paula Hall will teach this six part parenting series.

The **Roots and Wings** program provides parents with effective parenting and family management skills geared to the middle school years. It offers information and strategies to help young people make good decisions. It is offered in six sessions: (1) Risk Factors and Protectors, (2) Setting Standards, (3) Teachable Moments, (4) Setting Boundaries, Building Bridges, (5) Feelings, and (6) Rituals and Traditions.
Note: There will be a fee for this series. For more information call 295-9075.

Parent University 2005 A Morning for All Parents

Saturday, Feb. 26 9 a.m.
Gorton Community Center
Keynote Speaker: Barbara Coloroso, noted author and parenting advisor
Keynote: Kids Are Worth It! Parenting with Wit and Wisdom
Breakout Session: The Bully, The Bullied and the Bystander
Breakout Session: Michael Maniacci—Top 10 Parenting Mistakes Good Parents Make
Registration packets will be mailed in January 2005.

You're Fired—A Workshop For Teens and Parents

M. J. Murray Vachon
Wednesday, March 9 7-9 pm
Lake Forest Hospital

All good parenting leads to a day when eventually the child “fires” the parent. To become an independent, compassionate and productive adult, teens must go through an “apprenticeship” we call adolescence. This humorous, interactive workshop will focus on how to help teens and parents get what they want: more freedom, more responsibility and good relationships with family and friends.
Free admission, offered in conjunction with Lake Forest Hospital.

Love and Logic for Parents of Teens

March/April Dates TBD
Gorton Community Center

Want to know how to address problems with teen behavior without getting angry? Want to feel more effective in determining and enforcing consequences? This well known approach to parenting with love and logic will be applied to the specific challenges of teenage children. Two to three sessions.
There will be a fee for this series. Those interested should call 295-9075.



LEAD

400 E. Illinois
Lake Forest, IL 60045
847-295-9075
www.LEADweb.org

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LEAD's Mission

LEAD is a community organization dedicated to parents and other adults and their role in the promotion of healthy family relationships and the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and risky behavior by youth.

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Reasons to be concerned about underage drinking

- ◆ Alcohol is the number one drug of choice among children and adolescents.
- ◆ In 2002, about two million youth ages 12 through 20 drank five or more drinks on an occasion, five or more times a month.
- ◆ Alcohol use by persons under age 21 poses both acute and long-term risks.
- ◆ Research indicates that adolescents who abuse alcohol may remember 10% less of what they have learned in school than those who don't drink.
- ◆ Alcohol is a primary factor in the leading causes of death each year nationally for young people under age 21, contributing to automobile fatalities, homicides, and suicides.
- ◆ Exposure of the still-developing brain (up to age 24) to alcohol may have long-lasting effects on intellectual capabilities and social development, and has been shown to increase the likelihood of alcohol addiction.
- ◆ Underage drinking results in other serious side effects including traffic accidents, risky sexual activity, date-rape and other injuries.
- ◆ High school students who use alcohol or other drugs frequently are up to five times more likely than other students to drop out of school.
- ◆ Among 12- to 17-year-old current drinkers, 31% had extreme levels of psychological distress, and 39% exhibited serious behavioral problems.

*Compiled by Elizabeth Nelson,
Lake County InTouch.*

Source: NIAAA

**Test your drug IQ!
Go to LEADweb.org and
take the quiz. See how
knowledgeable
you are!**