

CELEBRATING POSITIVE CHOICES

listen

DECEMBER 2007

Up in Smoke

GENERATION

Rx

Beverley
Mitchell

Contents



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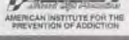
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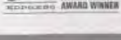
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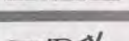
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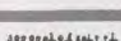
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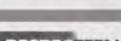
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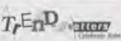
RESPECTEEN



YOUTH TO YOUTH
my choice
drug free!



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Member of the
Partnership
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There are a lot of things I like about Christmas. I like spending time with my family. I like to decorate my house. I like having friends over for a big formal dinner. I like it when my friends have me over for a big formal dinner so I don't have to cook. And OK, OK, you got me. I admit it. I like the presents, too. After all, what's not to like?

So you gotta love Casio, Inc. The nice people over there offered us two brand-new fx-9860G Slim Graphing Calculators to pass along to YOU! And what goes best with a new calculator? A Skinit™ cover so you can personalize your calculator and make it into a fashion accessory. Can you say Ho-Ho-Ho?

Now I know you're dying to find out how to get one of these babies for your very own so I'm not going to waste any time. No sir. I'm just going to

tell you right out.

I'm not going to string you along, even though I could, and bore you with a lot of chatter. No, I'm just going to tell it like it is. And here's how it is:

First, you go to our Web site

(www.listenmagazine.org) and you click on the cutie picture of the calculators. That will bring you to a page where you can tell us your favorite comeback line for the times when someone offers you drugs/alcohol or tobacco. On January 30 we'll choose our two favorites and the winners will be shipped their new calculator and Skinit™ cover. All comeback line submissions become the property of Listen and if we like your line we'll add it to the collection on our site.

Good luck and (say it with me) THANK YOU, CASIO! Merry Christmas!

Until next time, have fun, be cool, and make good choices,



Céleste Perrino-Walker
Editor



**"Who's
that?"**

I asked.

"Remember her?" my teammate said. "She went here our freshman year. She was a sophomore. She moved away. I guess she's back now."

A vague recollection of the girl came to mind. I didn't remember her being that tall before. After two years she stood a head taller than the other girls on the varsity basketball squad.

The team had formed a circle around her. They were peppering her with questions. The coaches stood to the side whispering quietly to each other. The head coach looked my way for an instant. That's when I knew something bad was going to happen.

For the Game

And it was going to happen to me.

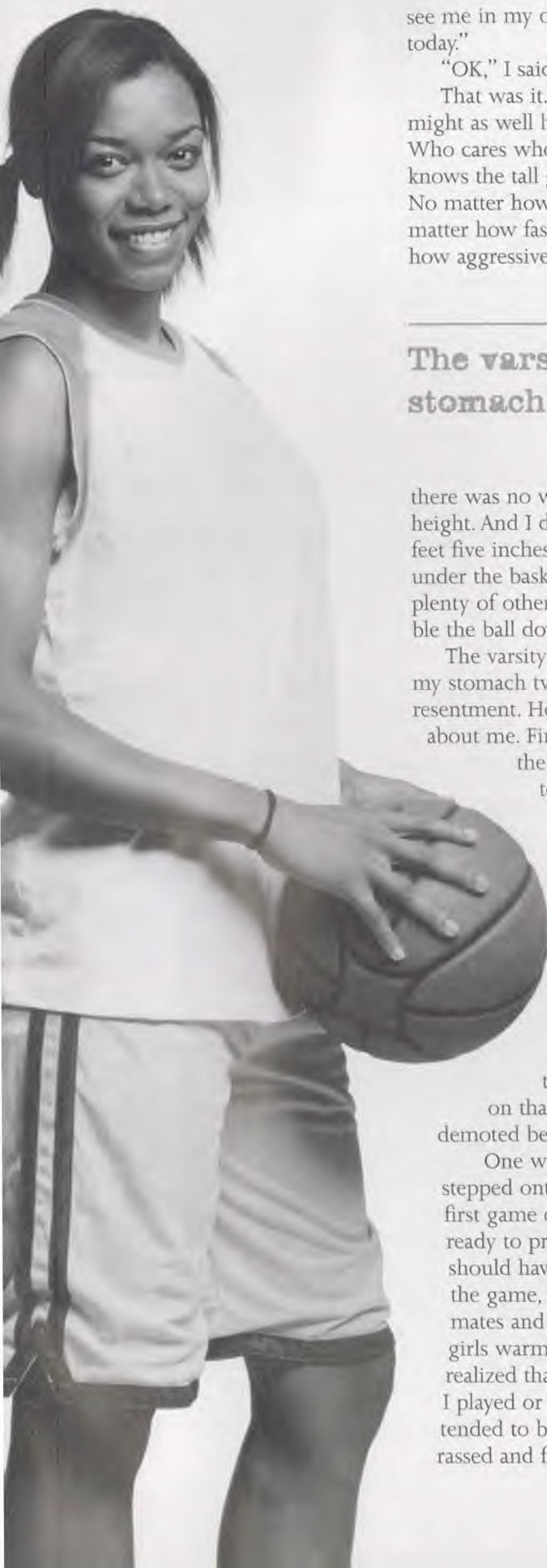
The ominous feeling quickly changed to anger. Who did she think she was? Why would she come back now at the end of varsity tryouts? Just when I—in my junior year—had made the varsity team.

The head coach walked over to where I sat on the bleachers. "Come



By Tamra Wear





see me in my office before you leave today.”

“OK,” I said.

That was it. The kiss of death. She might as well have told me now. Who cares who hears? Everyone knows the tall girl will get my spot. No matter how hard I worked, no matter how fast I ran, no matter how aggressive I was on the court,

With a brave face I played with intensity and drive every game. About midseason, the JV team was cheering on the varsity squad as usual when I looked at the girls on the bench, the ones not playing. It dawned on me that most of the girls on the bench were my classmates, juniors like me. They went in for a few minutes each half but mostly

The varsity team was excited, but my stomach twisted with envy and resentment.

there was no way to compete with height. And I didn't have it. At five feet five inches I wasn't a force under the basket and there were plenty of other girls that could dribble the ball down the court.

The varsity team was excited, but my stomach twisted with envy and resentment. How easily they forgot about me. Fine then, I'd go back to the junior varsity (JV) team and play my heart out for them.

The next day I showed up at JV practice as if nothing had happened. It was easy since I'd played on JV my sophomore year and was friends with the players. Nobody let on that they knew I'd been demoted because of the new girl.

One week later when I stepped onto the court to start the first game of the season, I was ready to prove to everyone that I should have been on varsity. After the game, I sat with my teammates and watched the varsity girls warm up. Sitting there I realized that no matter how hard I played or how enthusiastic I pretended to be, I was still embarrassed and frustrated.

they sat, rooting for their own team from the bench.

The season flashed through my mind. The JV team had taken me back without a thought. I had started the first game and every game since. The only times I came out were for a quick rest, or if my fouls were an issue. Looking down the bench again, it hit me: I'd have been sitting there with those girls all season. I would barely have played.

At that moment the gym seemed brighter, my teammates' laughs seemed louder, and the varsity coach's decision seemed smarter. My feelings had been hurt when I'd been sent back to JV like my skills were expendable. But they weren't; I wasn't, not to the JV team. When I got to the heart of my reasons for playing sports it was my love for the game that had me out here. I loved basketball, ever since I walked into the gym in the fifth grade. If I had stayed on varsity my court time would have been limited, and hadn't I joined the team to play?

I wanted to go back in time and thank that girl for moving back. She had done me a favor. I wouldn't have thought being moved down to JV was a good thing, but in the end it was the best for me, only I couldn't see it until it was happening. Now that I was here it felt like the right place to be.



THINK THAT STREET DRUGS ARE THE ONLY DRUGS THAT CAN HURT YOU? Think again. Prescription drugs are quickly becoming the norm in many teens' lives and there has been a substantial spike in prescription drug abuse across the United States. "I tried OxyContin when I was 16 or 17 and I was addicted for over five years," says Andrew from Utah. "My friends were doing it and I didn't know the risks. I had a lack of information and I thought I had nothing to be afraid of. It wasn't something you smoke or something you inject, so I thought it was harmless. It's something you eat. It's a pill, so it can't be that bad." Andrew's environment at school played a large role in his road to addiction.

"Everyone at school was doing it," Andrew says. "So, I thought, why not? It made me feel good and soon it was too late to stop and I was hooked." Andrew is one of the thousands of teens who are addicted to prescription drugs.

Andrew tried several times to get help, but it took many tries for him to beat his addiction. He was finally able to stop after he realized how much he was hurting himself and his family. "There's no fear factor with prescription drugs," says Andrew. "Teens need to find out exactly what they're getting into and know the risks." Andrew regrets that he was pressured into trying prescription drugs by his friends. He wishes he had known the side effects and dangers associated with prescription drug abuse.

Dangerous doses of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and doctor-prescribed drugs can become a fatal concoction. "The most commonly abused prescription drugs today are Lortab (hydrocodone/acetaminophen) and benzodiazepines (Xanax, Ativan)," says John C. Fleming, M.D., author of *Preventing Addiction: What Parents Must Know to Immunize Their Kids Against Drug and Alcohol Addiction*. "Vicodin and OxyContin, which are stronger versions of Lortab, are even more addicting and their abuse is on the rise, too." The ease and lure of the Internet has aided in making it all too easy to begin abusing prescription drugs.

By Jessica Burkhart

GENERATION OXYCONTIN



The Partnership for a Drug-Free America offers startling statistics about teen prescription-drug abuse, including:

- * 1 in 5 teens have abused a prescription pain medication.
- * 1 in 10 teens have abused cough medicine.

The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign offers teens four reasons not to abuse prescription drugs.

1. More teens are abusing prescription drugs than street drugs. Marijuana and other illegal drug use is down and prescription drug abuse is up. Teens mistakenly believe that the stigma of drug use disappears when the drug is a prescription, instead of a street drug.
2. Abuse of these drugs is dangerous and potentially fatal. Prescription drugs are not safer than street drugs. If you buy the drugs online or from a dealer there are no guarantees that you are getting the doses or substances you think you're getting. You can be mixing higher doses of drugs than you realize.
3. Drug possession without a prescription is illegal. If you're pilfering drugs from a neighbor's cabinet or are using your dad's painkillers, you can be arrested. Being caught with drugs that are not prescribed to you is a serious and punishable offense.
4. Drugs won't help you reach your full potential. Addiction will slowly erode your personality. You may lose friends, your health may suffer, your grades may decline and you could become depressed.

Dr. Fleming offers words of warning for any teen considering abusing prescription painkillers. "First, most pain medicines like Vicodin and Lortab contain acetaminophen (Tylenol)," says Dr. Fleming. "When these pills are taken beyond what is prescribed, you run a terrible risk of liver damage. The most common cause of death from drug overdose among kids and teens today is from acetaminophen. Second, all abusable drugs do not mix with each other or alcohol. Therefore, when they are mixed, the risk of overdose and death goes way up and fast! Third, these drugs are very addicting. Within a few uses of these drugs, you can become hooked for life."

If you are hooked on prescription drugs, Dr. Fleming advises to seek help from a responsible adult. "Treatment is painless and you will be glad you did it," says Dr. Fleming. "Addiction is too powerful for a single person to fight or control." Dr. Fleming adds that switching from prescription to street drugs is not a solution, just a substitution.

Dr. Fleming offers a final question for consideration. "Is this brief period of 'fun' worth a life of struggle against addiction?"

For more information on prescription drug abuse and how to get help visit www.drugfree.org and search for "prescription medicine abuse."

"I'm really excited about my future, because the possibilities are endless."

From 7TH HEAVEN

Cloud 9

Lucy Camden
on the CW's
7th Heaven

By Elisabeth Deffner



to

Beverley Mitchell

Beverley Mitchell—perhaps best known for portraying middle daughter Lucy Camden on the CW's *7th Heaven*—may have gotten her start because of a temper tantrum; but she owes her success to her positive attitude toward work and the positive choices she has made in her personal life.

"You don't need drugs and alcohol to have fun," says the Southern California resident. "Going bowling is a great time; going to the movies

is a great time; going home and playing video games is a great time. There are so many other things to do."

Keeping Busy

That may be especially true for Beverley, 26. The series finale of *7th Heaven* aired earlier this year, but Beverley herself is as busy as ever. A lifetime movie she starred in, *Post Mortem*, recently aired. She's busy auditioning for more new projects.

She's planning her wedding to her longtime boyfriend. Her first album, *Beverley Mitchell*, was released in January, and she's at work on the songs for her second. And when she has time, she loves to do volunteer work, especially for organizations such as the Make-a-Wish Foundation, Children's Hospital of Orange County (California), and Habitat for Humanity. Things are hectic—and that's the way she likes it.

Does she ever sleep? "No!"

Beverley exclaims with a chuckle.

But a full schedule is a good schedule for this only child, who's been in show business since she was about four years old and someone in the biz spotted her having a tantrum in the mall.

"I was four and I was hungry," Beverley says. "You just don't mess around with me when I'm hungry!"

She doesn't remember much about the incident, actually—just

her; she sang when she competed in beauty pageants and talent competitions. Now she is surprised when people compliment her powerful voice, which bears little resemblance to the speaking voice fans have come to expect from the actress who portrayed Lucy Camden for 11 years.

Even while she was on 7th Heaven, Beverley attended a traditional school—an experience that she says helped keep her grounded. Her

friends never cut her slack because of her TV-star status.

Those same friends respected her decisions when she turned down opportunities to try drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. "I never had anyone push me into anything, or make me feel stupid for not doing it," Beverley says. "I just said, 'I'm not here to judge you, but I'm not really into that.'"

That was it, and that was fine with them."

In fact, she describes herself as a mother hen who always looks after her friends—the kind of pal that other people call when they're in trouble. "Other parents felt secure if their kids were with me; they knew I never got in trouble," she says.

Her own mother must have felt pretty secure about her too. Beverley prides herself on her honest relationship with her mom, and admits that sometimes she went places her mother would prefer she didn't go—but she never lied about her destination.

She had a good reason for making sure her mom knew exactly where she was. When she was about 15 years old, Beverley lost one of her best friends in a car accident. It's an event that helped shape her into the sensitive, caring young woman she is—and it's impacted her work, too.

The second season of 7th Heaven, the episode "Nothing Endures but

Change" basically retold the story of Beverley's experience—with Lucy losing a friend in a car accident.

"That was probably the scariest thing ever. We brought my real life right into the show," says Beverley. "That was one of the biggest things that has ever happened to me in my life. We turned it into a storyline, and I had to experience it all over again."

"I think it was obvious in the episode that it wasn't acting. That was real emotion."

And the fans responded, writing Beverley letters to tell her they had believed they were all alone in their pain at losing a loved one, and that watching her character experience that kind of loss had helped them deal with their pain.

The car accident also inspired the first song Beverley wrote, "Angel," which is featured on her debut album.

"When you deal with death at a young age, it can't help making a tremendous impact on your life," she says.

Looking Ahead

What's next for the former Lucy Camden? That's anybody's guess—and that's totally exciting, she says.

Beverley is looking forward to further acting challenges, perhaps including stage-work. She plans to continue with her music, and will be initiating a fashion-related project in the near future as well.

What she wants to do is entertain people—to make them laugh or make them cry, to distract them from their troubles or make them think about things in a different way. How she will do that next remains to be seen.

"I'm really excited about my future," she says, "because the possibilities are endless. I'm super happy I chose this path in life."



that her "spunk" caught someone's attention, and that someone suggested she use her energy (and her powerful vocals) to get a start in show business. She did just that, landing an AT&T commercial. She loved the experience—except for the cut she got on her leg in a minor accident that happened during taping.

"My mom didn't let me look at my leg till after the commercial," she recalls. She also remembers that, although the cut wasn't too deep, she cried anyway—but "not until after I finished," she says.

A Total Professional

Once she was in show business, Beverley knew she wanted to stay there. "In my mind, there was no other thing to do," she says. "When kids started talking about what they wanted to do when they grew up, I knew I was already doing what I wanted to do."

Beverley started out as an actress, but singing was always important to

Good for

BURIED TREASURE



You probably don't realize it, but hidden under the fertile soil of your neighbor's garden lies a buried treasure. Now before you break out the metal detector and go digging holes in your neighbor's pumpkin patch I need to let you in on a secret. This treasure can also be easily found packed in five- or ten-pound bags at any grocery store. It's the potato, that staple of the American diet. But what most people don't know is that this lowly spud is a gold mine of nutrition. Dig these neat facts about this unassuming vegetable:



A member of the nightshade family of plants, the potato is related to peppers, eggplants, and tomatoes.



The potato comes in about 100 varieties, including the russet, white rose, and Yukon gold. There is even one with purple-grey skin and deep purple flesh.



In the 1530s the Spanish Conquistadors sailed to South America in search of gold and silver. Instead they discovered the potato, which had been a staple of the Inca's diet for thousands of years.



High in vitamin C, the potato was used on Spanish ships to prevent scurvy.



It took Europeans about 200 years to accept the potato as an important part of their diet. They were suspicious of them because they weren't mentioned in the Bible. Some people even thought that eating them would cause leprosy.



Even today potatoes have a reputation of being unhealthy, but it's what we do to them that makes them unhealthy. We fry them, salt them, and smother them in sour cream and cheese. And even worse we throw away the potato's skin, which is where most of the important nutrients are found.



Loaded with vitamin C, vitamin B6, fiber, iron, copper, potassium, and cancer-fighting phytonutrients, a baked potato (minus the sour cream and cheese) makes a healthy, low-calorie food.



Potatoes are high in carbohydrates. "Carbs" are essential for energy production and play an important part in an athlete's diet.



The colored varieties of potatoes, such as the yellow, purple, and red varieties, have more phytonutrients than the white varieties. Even better is a close relative, the sweet potato or yam. Recent studies show that sweet potatoes may help stabilize blood sugar, making them a "sweet" alternative for diabetics.



The vitamin B6 found in the lowly potato may actually improve how well your brain works, fight depression, reduce stress, and help you sleep better.



Potatoes are even good for the outside of your body. Grated raw potato mixed with olive oil can soothe dry, chapped skin. Sliced raw potatoes help heal burns, and mashed potatoes have been used as poultices for joint pain.

To some people the potato may seem like a pretty boring food, but, as you can see, it is actually incredibly good for you. Packed with nutrition, a great energy food, and good tasting to boot, the potato is definitely one buried treasure worth digging for.



By Richard G. Edison,
PA-C (Physician Assistant-
Nationally Certified)

Give to others

By Jane Murray Alexander

Who? Me?

Yes! You. What are you doing with your spare time? Do you have times when you're bored? Are you having trouble finding a part-time job?

Either boredom or frustration can spell T-R-O-U-B-L-E. It's easier to be led into drugs or alcohol when you're hard put to find something to do. But drinking or drugging is definitely a dangerous, downward spiral. And it does not create pride or self-esteem.

So what does? Consider becoming a volunteer. "A what?" you say. "Volunteer, as in not getting paid?" That's right!

The first reason is that volunteer-

ing enables you to learn new skills, skills that may be important to you later on a job or elsewhere.

Secondly, volunteering can allow you to "try out" your chosen occupation or profession. For example, if you think you want to be a lawyer, volunteer in a legal firm. What you might learn could prove to be very valuable. Thirdly, volunteer work enhances a college application. It shows that you have initiative and are a well-rounded individual.

Then there are those of us who simply enjoy helping others, which brings personal rewards. A smile. A touch of a hand. A simple thank-you.

Whatever we do for another person, whatever talents and abilities we have and give to others, come back to us tenfold.



have. That was lesson number one," she says. "Now I'm more open to people and want to care about them. Lesson number two," she adds, "is that it made me count my blessings."

Then there's Ryan, a senior at Northeast High School, also in St. Petersburg, Florida. He signed up for a nine-week service credit course last year but has now been a volunteer for a year and a half. He says, "I wanted to volunteer because I wanted to help the community." He teaches at the Red Cross for kids ages two through twelve.

"I never thought I

Shalan plans on becoming a neonatal nurse and then a pediatrician, so this volunteer experience is a natural for her. She adds, "You have to have manners, respect, and a good personality to succeed as a volunteer."

Be prepared to do whatever is asked of you. Find out beforehand what will be required of you to see if you think that the position will be a good "fit."

Treat volunteer work like a job. Show up and don't cut your time short. Call if there is an emergency and you can't make it. Treat others as you would like to be treated. A little kindness goes a long way to cement relationships.

Most volunteer positions are service positions meant to help others. If you need to boost your ego, you can forget about volunteering.

If, after a few weeks, you sense that the position is a mismatch, politely end your association. Don't give up on volunteering, however. Try another agency or organization. Chances are you'll succeed the second time.

Most often we think about hospitals, libraries, and businesses when we

think about volunteer work. But don't stop there. Do you like sports? How about helping to coach a Little League baseball team? Do you like to write? How about helping with the local newspaper? You're good at carpentry? How about helping a Little Theater build the sets for their plays? Your choices are limited only by your imagination.

Volunteering enables us to give something back to the community in which we live for all the privileges we enjoy. Think about it. Say yes. Be a volunteer!

could get up in front of a group," he says, "but the Red Cross gave us ten hours of training. After that I learned to be brave. I discovered that I *did* have leadership quality." His reward? "The kids I teach safety to," he says, "won't be hit by a school bus."

Shalan, age 17, goes to Lakewood High School in St. Petersburg, Florida, and volunteers at a local hospital. She gets college credits for completing 75 hours of community service.

"The work is easy," she says. "I make up and tear down charts and pass out ice and water to the patients. But it prepares you for a job because it teaches you responsibility."



These are gifts that are priceless. Whatever we do for another person, whatever talents and abilities we have and give to others, come back to us tenfold. And with this comes a sense of pride and self-esteem.

Take Brittany, a 16-year-old at St. Petersburg High School in St. Petersburg, Florida. She volunteered at a soup kitchen. She did it to earn service credits for high school last summer, but the experience taught her two valuable lessons.

"The hardest part," she says, "was getting up to be there at 8:00 a.m. Also, I was a little afraid of what the homeless might be like." But once there, she changed her mind. The work certainly wasn't glamorous. Brittany and the other volunteers prepared a meal for two hours every morning and then served it to whomever showed up.

"But I learned," she says, "that the homeless have a lot of love and are very generous with the little they

time



Dear Dallas,

Lately my so-called friends have been bringing me down. I find myself hiding my accomplishments and goals from them—like, I love playing the piano and have been invited to play in a big regional concert, but I haven't told them because I know they would make fun of me. My mom says they are jealous, but that doesn't make it hurt any less. Friends are supposed to be people you can talk to. I would be proud and happy for them if they shared good news with me. Do you have any advice?

—Friendship is a Two-way Street

Dear Friendship,

I am sorry your friends are

behaving this way. You're right, friends are supposed to be people you can talk to and share your life with—both good things and bad. True friends are happy for you and raise you up; they don't pull you down. To be honest, it doesn't sound like these people are being true friends to you. Have you tried talking to them about how you feel? Your mom is probably right that they are a bit envious of your accomplishments and successes, but maybe they don't realize how much their jealousy is tainting their actions. It's possible that a little wake-up call from you could open their eyes and change their ways. However, if they still remain unsupportive—especially if they continue to make fun of you—you need to find new friends who are supportive. You deserve people who encourage you and inspire you to strive to be even better. True friends brighten your life.

Dear Dallas,

I think my older sister might be bipolar or manic-depressive. She is really hyper and happy some days, then depressed and reclusive the next. It's gotten to the point where I feel nervous around her, because her moods are so unstable that I can never predict how she will react to anything I say or do. I've tried talking to her about it, but she just says

she is just going through a stressful time at school. I think she needs counseling. What should I do?

—Sharing a Bedroom with Jekyll-and-Hyde

Dear Sharing a Bedroom,

Your sister is lucky to have you in her life. I think your instincts are right that she may need professional help—she might not necessarily be bipolar, but her erratic mood swings are definitely not healthy. At the very least, she will drive away her friends and isolate herself by being so emotionally unstable. If she is going through a stressful time at school, she needs to find a healthier way to deal with her stress. Talk to your parents about your concerns and ask them to make an appointment with a counselor or psychologist for your sister. She might be upset with you now, but later she will thank you.

Dear Dallas,

I want to get a tattoo, but my mom doesn't want me to because she says I will one day regret it. I have thought about it for a while, and it is something I really want. It would only be a small tattoo on my ankle. I turn eighteen in two weeks, so I wouldn't need my mom's consent. But I'd still feel bad about going against her wishes. What should I do?

—To Tattoo or Not?

**It's
Your
Turn**

Make your opinion heard at www.listenmagazine.org/imlistening and see how your advice stacks up against that of other *Listen* readers. You can see results from past polls here too.



READERS, NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO GIVE ADVICE. SHOULD "TATTOO OR NOT":

- Discuss the issue again with her mom to see what exactly her mom objects to and if they can reach an agreement?
- Not get a tattoo after all?
- Go against her mom's wishes and get a tattoo on her birthday? (Hey, it's her body!)

ARE YOU AN ACCESSORY TO THE CRIME?

BY APRIL ARAGAM

You've probably heard it said that watching a fight is as bad as throwing a punch yourself. It's true. Allowing bad things to happen in front of your eyes and not saying anything makes you a part of what's happening.

Take this quiz to find out if you're an accessory to the crime:

1. YOUR TEACHER LEAVES THE CLASSROOM TO RUN AN ERRAND IN THE OFFICE. WHILE SHE IS GONE TWO BOYS START PICKING ON A QUIET STUDIOUS BOY. WHAT ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO DO?

A) NOTHING. IT IS NONE OF MY BUSINESS.

B) I WOULD DEFINITELY TELL THE TEACHER AFTER CLASS. IN PRIVATE. ABOUT WHAT WENT ON WHILE SHE WAS GONE.

2. YOU ARE WALKING THROUGH THE MALL WHEN RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU A WOMAN AT THE ENTRANCE OF A STORE STUFFS A SHIRT INTO HER BAG AND WALKS AWAY QUICKLY. YOU:

A) LOOK AWAY FAST AND HOPE SHE DIDN'T SEE YOU CATCH HER IN THE ACT.

B) GO RIGHT TO THE STORE. TELL THEM WHAT YOU SAW AND GIVE A CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON.

3. YOUR FRIEND CONFIDES IN YOU THAT SHE STOLE ANOTHER FRIEND'S WALLET SIMPLY BECAUSE IT WAS SO EASY TO DO. WHAT ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO ADVISE HER?

A) WHERE TO SPEND THE MONEY.

B) THAT SHE SHOULD RETURN THE WALLET. FRIENDSHIP IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MONEY.

4. EVERYONE IS GOING TO A LOCAL PARK AFTER SCHOOL TO WATCH A FIGHT BETWEEN TWO GIRLS WHO GO TO YOUR SCHOOL. DO YOU PLAN TO GO?

A) ABSOLUTELY. I KNOW WHO I'M CHEERING FOR.

B) NO WAY. WHAT A RIDICULOUS WAY TO FIND ENTERTAINMENT.

5. YOUR PARENTS HAVE A STRICT RULE ABOUT NO OPPOSITE GENDER FRIENDS IN YOUR BEDROOMS. ONE AFTERNOON YOUR BROTHER SNEAKS HIS FRIEND JENNY UPSTAIRS AND ASKS YOU NOT TO SAY ANYTHING. YOU:

A) KEEP QUIET ABOUT WHAT YOU KNOW. IT'S NOT HURTING ANYONE.

B) TELL HIM HE KNOWS THE RULE AND YOU WON'T LIE FOR HIM.

6. YOU ARE IN THE LIBRARY WHEN YOU HEAR A COUPLE OF STUDENTS BRAGGING ABOUT HOW THEY STEAL FOOD FROM THE CAFETERIA EVERY DAY. WHAT DO YOU DO?

A) LISTEN CLOSER TO SEE HOW THEY DO IT. CAFETERIA FOOD IS EXPENSIVE.

B) SET UP A MEETING WITH THE PRINCIPAL SO THAT YOU CAN TELL HIM WHAT'S GOING ON.



doing something illegal. when someone else is being hurt and/or all, it's especially important to speak out on, doesn't mean you aren't involved at involved in something bad that is going just because you are not directly help someone who is being hurt. ate about doing what's right if you can thing about it. You're especially passion- let it continue when you can do some- involve yourself in bad activity and don't If you answered mostly B's you don't to let things go.

doesn't directly affect you. You're happy stand up for what's right, especially if it If you answered mostly A's you don't

SCORING:

Eban & Ani-Mai

By Dallas Woodburn

(Illustration by Jason Cole)

Hey, guys. Wanna carpool to The Party on Sunday?

What party?

At Teresa's. She invited...like, everybody!

I didn't get an invitation.

That's weird. I'm sure it's just a mistake.

I'm really excited about your party this weekend!

THANKS!
Me too.

Ari and I are going together to buy some soda and chips to bring.

ARI?
Um, he's not invited.

What?
How come?

She said Ari isn't invited because it's a "jock party" just for athletes, and he's not on any sports teams.

WHAT?
That's not fair!

I know, cliques are totally NOT cool!

The next day at school...

Hey, Teresa,
can we talk to
you? We have
an idea.

We were
thinking of
having a party
on Sunday, too.
How about if we
combine our
parties?

That way
people won't have
to choose to come to
one party or the other,
and everyone can
be included.

I don't
know...

Teresa, I know what it's
like to be excluded. When my
family first moved to the United
States from China, I didn't speak
English very well. People made fun
of me all the time. It was horrible.
I felt so hurt and alone.

Me too. People think that
because I celebrate Hanukkah I
would feel uncomfortable at a Christmas
party. Actually, it just makes me
feel left out.

Yeah, it's
twice the fun!

Great
party!

That was so nice
of you guys to do
this for me.

You don't have
to thank us.

It isn't a
party without
you, Ari!

I'm sorry.
I didn't mean to
be cliquey. Yes, let's
combine our parties on
Sunday. I don't want
anyone to feel hurt
or excluded.

Up In Smoke

*Lighting up can kill you.
That is a fact.*



WE ALL KNOW THERE ARE BAD THINGS IN THE WORLD. STUFF YOU SHOULD BEWARE OF. STUFF YOU SHOULD STEP BACK FROM. STUFF THAT IF YOU SEE YOUR BEST BUD WITH, YOU SAY—BECAUSE HE/SHE IS YOUR BEST BUD—WHAT ARE YOU DOING? I'M TALKING ABOUT SERIOUS DRUGS. THE STUFF THAT CAN MESS YOU UP FOR LIFE. ● NO SURPRISE THERE. WHAT IS SURPRISING IS THAT CIGARETTES ARE NOW CONSIDERED IN THAT HIGH RISK GROUP. THE RESULTS ARE IN, AND THE BRITISH HAVE DECLARED CIGARETTES TO BE AMONG THE TOP 10 WORST DRUGS. TOP 10. RIGHT THERE BESIDE "HEROIN, COCAINE, ECSTASY, AMPHETAMINES, AND LSD." ● **WHAT DO TEENS SAY? MY INFORMAL SURVEY OF 30 HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SHOWED THAT ONLY 83 PERCENT CONSIDER CIGARETTES A DRUG. U.S. HEALTH OFFICIALS AREN'T QUIBBLING OVER WHAT TO CALL IT. LIGHTING UP CAN KILL YOU. THAT IS A FACT.** ● SO WHY DOES ANYONE CARRY AROUND A PACK OF CIGS? ● ONE SENIOR EXPLAINED, "SOME TEENAGERS THINK THAT IT IS COOL, OR THAT THEY HAVE TO DO IT BECAUSE THEY FEEL SOME PEER PRESSURE THAT IS PLACED UPON THEM. OTHERS DO IT AS A STRESS RELIEVER OR JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE TRYING TO REBEL." ● **"I THINK IT'S MOSTLY THE MEDIA, HOW THEY THINK, THAT IS SO GLAMORIZED,"** ANOTHER TEEN EXPLAINED. **"ALSO PEER PRESSURE, AND OF COURSE THE ADDICTION. I DON'T SEE WHY. IT'S REALLY GROSS AND VERY UNATTRACTIVE."** ● PEOPLE DO KIND OF LOOK FUNNY IF YOU EVER SIT THERE AND JUST WATCH THEM SMOKE. THERE'S ALL THIS SMOKE COMING OUT OF THEM LIKE THEY'RE A CHIMNEY OR SOMETHING. THEN THERE'S THIS ASH FALLING ON THE GROUND. IT'S KIND OF BIZARRE REALLY. EVEN IF YOU DID TRY IT ONCE, WHY WOULD YOU DO IT TWICE? "I BELIEVE MANY TEENAGERS CONTINUE TO SMOKE BECAUSE THEY CAN'T STOP. THEY ARE SO USED TO SMOKING ALL THE TIME THAT IT IS A HABIT THAT THEY CAN'T BREAK." ● **DUDE, I DO KNOW ALL ABOUT HABITS. WE ALL HAVE THEM. BUT NOT ALL HABITS WILL KILL YOU. THIS ONE WILL. THAT'S WHY THEY PUT THAT LITTLE WARNING ON THE SIDE OF THE PACKAGE. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU ACTUALLY READ IT? YOU KNOW THE ONE—IT'S FROM THE SURGEON GENERAL TO YOU.** ● SO PICK A DAY TO QUIT. DON'T WAIT TOO LONG THOUGH, WHILE YOU'RE MAKING UP YOUR MIND A FEW THINGS ARE GOING UP IN SMOKE. LIKE YOUR FINANCES. A PACK OF CIGS IS RUNNING AROUND \$3.50 IN MOST PLACES. WHEN I ASKED MY SURVEY GROUP HOW MUCH THEY'D BE WILLING TO PAY, ONLY ONE PERSON OUT OF 30 WAS WILLING TO SPEND \$4.00 A PACK. ONE POOR GUY ADMITTED TO NEEDING THAT NICOTINE BUZZ BADLY ENOUGH TO GO TO \$5.00. DUDE, QUIT TODAY. YOU'LL BE RICH BEFORE YOU'RE 20. NOT TO MENTION HEALTHIER. ● **UNFORTUNATELY, QUITTING CAN BE PRETTY HARD, WHICH IS WHY MOST SMOKERS PUT IT OFF. WEBMD.COM REPORTS THAT IT'S HARDER FOR TEENAGE FEMALES TO QUIT THAN GUYS. IT'S ALSO HARDER TO QUIT THE LONGER YOU'VE BEEN AT IT—NO SURPRISE THERE. IN MY SMALL GROUP STARTING AGES RANGED FROM 14 TO 18. MISS 14 IS GOING TO HAVE A TOUGH TIME, BUT IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE. YEAH, THERE WILL BE PAIN, BUT LOOK AT THE GAIN.** ● THE SAME DAY YOU QUIT, THOSE DANGEROUS CARBON MONOXIDE LEVELS IN YOUR BLOOD WILL RETURN TO NORMAL. ● **TWO TO 12 WEEKS LATER, YOUR HEART AND LUNGS WILL BEGIN TO WORK BETTER.** ● WITHIN NINE MONTHS THAT SMOKER'S COUGH THAT MAKES YOU SOUND LIKE THE OLD GUY AT THE BUS STOP WILL GO AWAY. ● **KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE MAIN GOAL. WITHIN ONE YEAR OF QUITTING, YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASE GOES DOWN. THAT'S RIGHT. PUT YOUR HAND ON YOUR HEART, FEEL THE BEAT, AND REMEMBER WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT. IT'S ABOUT LIFE.** ● YOU'VE GOT A GOOD HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS. YOU'LL THINK ABOUT IT. MAYBE YOU'LL EVEN LEAVE THIS ARTICLE IN THE BACK SEAT OF YOUR FRIEND'S CAR. SPEAKING OF CARS, WHAT IS THAT SMELL? CIGARETTE SMELL WAS THE NUMBER ONE COMPLAINT FROM FRIENDS OF SMOKERS. OF COURSE IT WASN'T FAR BEHIND BAD BREATH AND YELLOW TEETH. BEAUTY IS MORE THAN SKIN DEEP, BUT GOOD HYGIENE NEVER HURT ANYONE. IT'S JUST ONE MORE REASON TO DITCH THE SMOKES AND START FRESH TODAY. ● **AT LEAST ONE TEEN AGREES. "DO YOU THINK IF SMOKING DID TO THEIR OUTSIDES WHAT IT DID TO THEIR INSIDES PEOPLE WOULD STILL SMOKE? I DOUBT IT. THEY WOULD HAVE BURNED SKIN AND TAR-LIKE MUCUS ALL OVER THEM, FRIZZY BURNED HAIR . . . IT'S JUST NASTY. I'LL BE HONEST. IT HAS GOTTEN TO ME IN THE PAST, BUT I LEARNED TO THINK ON MY OWN FROM NOW ON."** ● THERE'S THE KEY. THINK ON YOUR OWN. WATCH THE HABIT GO UP IN SMOKE AND START TOMORROW DRAWING A GOOD DEEP FRESH BREATH OF AIR.

GAMBLING ISN'T A GAME

By Elisabeth Deffner

Phil started pitching pennies when he was 12.

Then he moved on to pitching nickels. After that, he played with dimes, and soon he was playing with quarters.

He also played with baseball cards—not trading them, but betting on them. Would a card land heads up or heads down? Which one of the kids playing would land his card closest to a line drawn on the pavement?

Then he got into a pool hall, and started betting on who would win the game. At the bowling alley, it was the same thing. Soon he was betting on races at the track and playing poker.

Over the course of 40 years, Phil—now aged 77—gambled away as much as \$600,000.

But it wasn't the loss of cold hard cash that hurt him the most.

"It took 40 years of my life," he says.

Phil was a problem gambler. His compulsion to gamble disrupted his life emotionally, socially—in every possible way. Studies show that underage

gamblers are three times as likely as adults to become compulsive gamblers. According to one survey of adolescents, more than 80 percent of people aged 12 to 17 have gambled in the last 12 months. More than a third gamble once a week.

What Is Gambling?

Gambling is playing games for money.

When you bet someone that the home team will win, that's gambling.

When you play cards for money, that's gambling.

When you buy a lottery ticket, that's gambling.

Unfortunately, gambling is a massive industry in the United States. Since New Hampshire introduced the first state lottery in 1963, many states have followed its example. In the 1980s, casinos were legalized on Native American reservations. Reality shows feature celebrity poker. And the Internet has made gambling more accessible than ever before; now people can bet on the outcome of a poker game without even leaving their homes.

"This addiction is spreading," Phil says. "Teens are gambling away tuition. They're going to col-

It's an Addiction

lege, applying for educational aid checks, and they're gambling away—and their parents don't know that they're not going to school."

How does he know? He's heard these teens share their stories at Gamblers Anonymous meetings.

Hooked on the High

Gamblers get an emotional buzz from feeling the risk of gambling. They feel a high if they win money, and they immediately want to gamble again so they can feel that thrill again. If they lose, their spirits drop—and they want to gamble again to make themselves feel better.

According to Keith Whyte, executive director of the National Council on Problem Gambling, one of the most significant factors in the development of a gambling problem is an early—and unexpected—big win. "Some people will then spend a lifetime trying to recreate that surge," he says.

Brain scans have shown that the excitement problem gamblers feel activates the same area of the brain activated by cocaine use. "If you look at the brain of a pathological gambler gambling and a cocaine addict using, they're the same," says Whyte. "One's a substance, one's a behavior—but the brain responds in the same way."

Phil knows that problem gambling has little to do with money—and everything to do

with the way the gambler feels.

"Gambling is what I did any time I had a feeling, good, bad, or indifferent, that I couldn't deal with," he explains. "When I gambled, I'd sit at the table and say, 'This is my relaxation; I'm oblivious to everything else.'"

But, he says now, "That's not relaxation."

In fact, gambling often leads to other problems. A recent study in Oregon showed that eighth-graders who gambled were twice as likely to have sex as peers who didn't gamble; they were three times as likely to carry a handgun, and twice as likely to have consumed alcohol. Pathological gamblers also have one of the highest rates of suicidal behavior of any group with a mental health disorder, Whyte says.

But the good news is that gambling addiction is very treatable.

The first step is admitting that gambling is a problem.

Check out the signs of gambling addiction and take an honest look at yourself—and the people you love. If you or someone you know has a gambling addiction, approach an adult you trust for help, or contact an organization like Gamblers Anonymous (www.GamblersAnonymous.org; 888-GA-HELPS) or the National Council on Problem Gambling (800-522-4700) for help.

"There's hope," says Whyte, "and help is available."

SIGNS OF GAMBLING ADDICTION

- Excessive school absences
- Involvement in crime
- Disrupted family relationships
- Falling grades
- Dropping out of extracurricular activities to gamble
- Impulsive, excitable, anxious behaviors
- Inability to maintain self-discipline
- Borrowing—or stealing—money
- Attempting to hide gambling
- Lying about gambling

For more information on quitting check out www.stopgambling.com/

FOR ALL DEBTS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
of the United States.

By Marie Lyn Bernard

<http://www.>

A Helping Hand

PHILANTHROPY: active effort to promote human welfare.

PHILANTHROPIST: someone who works to help others and make the world a better place.

You have only to glance at your morning paper or turn on the news—or simply exist—to hear the stories related to today's sobering statistics: 1.2 billion people in the developing world surviving on less than \$1 a day, 114 million primary-aged children worldwide not enrolled in school, nearly 11 million children under the age of five dying every year from treatable conditions, 1.2 billion people without access to safe drinking water. And that's only the tip of the iceberg. Things that we take for granted—literacy, food, water, education, health care, religious and social freedom, gender equality—are hard to come by for many of the world's peoples (and many disadvantaged U.S. citizens as



well), particularly when the richest 2 percent of adults own more than half of global household wealth, and much of that's concentrated in the United States.

Helping You Help

Organizations all over the country are actively involved in recruiting youth to philanthropic causes. One of the largest is New Global Citizens, a San Francisco-based non-

profit focused specifically on engaging Generation Y (born 1980-1995) through the formation of Global Action Clubs. With the assistance and training of NGC, motivated teenagers lead year-long service projects in their schools. Recent projects include "Art with a Heart," a project designed by San Jose, California, high school students in response to the genocide in Sudan: Students created a compilation CD of their own music to raise funds for refugee support work in Darfur. Sixteen Venice High (California) students sold brownies to help save the Ark School—Tanzania's only free high school in a country plagued by extreme poverty and the constant threat of HIV/AIDS—when they received the New Global

Citizens urgent-action-alert that a water shortage would close the school. Operation Brownie Project raised several hundred dollars in just a few days and outfitted the school with new water tanks.

For Leaders

There are a multitude of resources available for youth and teenagers who have ideas for their own philanthropic initiatives. To start a Global Action Club in your high school, send an e-mail to clubs@newglobalcitizens.org and they'll help you put together your

Walk" to raise funds: "When I saw the season finales of *The Apprentice*, I thought, what is taking them so long? What are they doing that hasn't already been prepared? Well, I know now! I've gone to over 40 stores to ask for donations—each store is like another miniproject, and you've gotta follow up again and again. I've stapled 800 papers together, gone door to door asking for donations—I've done two neighborhoods and walked 3-4 miles a week distributing flyers to runners and walkers we pass. I'm walking about 20 miles before the



plan to start a club and plot your first project to initiate global change. The star-studded nonprofit DoSomething.org is another meeting point for kids looking to—well—do SOMETHING about many national and global issues, including Katrina relief, drug abuse and arts education. Do Something sponsors the BR!CK awards, dubbed by CNN as "the Oscars for young people in service."

Michael Kaufman, 13, of Pennsylvania, philanthropist for the Alyn Pediatric Hospital and Rehabilitation Center for Physically Handicapped Children in Israel, found he could do amazing things completely on his own, putting together a "Soccer Challenge and

event and going door-to-door in five different neighborhoods asking people to sponsor me—whatever amount they want."

Because There Is No "I" in "Team"

Nonprofits are always looking for volunteers; no matter where you live there's someone in your community who can benefit from your assistance. If you have trouble finding resources, check out "where to start" (right), but keep in mind that schools, churches, nursing homes, and hospitals are always in need of extra help, especially around the holiday season.



NEW GLOBAL CITIZENS

www.newglobalcitizens.org

The New Global Citizens Web site serves as a launching-point for the Global Action Clubs and provides information about activism in general.

YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA

www.ysa.org

YSA partners young people between the ages of 5-25 with thousands of nonprofits in need of youth assistance.

IDEALIST

www.idealists.org

This is an incredible multi-faceted resource offering a strong online network of socially-aware organizations all over the world, bringing together volunteers and job-seekers in the nonprofit communities.

NETWORK FOR GOOD

www.networkforgood.org/KidsGuideToGiving/

The "Kids Guide to Giving" link offers specific information on how you can get involved and is based on the excellent book, *A Kid's Guide to Giving*, written by young philanthropist Freddy Zeiler (at the age of 14!).

GOOD SEARCH

www.goodsearch.com

This innovative site utilizes Internet marketing tools to raise money for charity—and you don't have to do a thing besides search the Internet like you normally do!

CHARITY NAVIGATOR

www.charitynavigator.org

This is an excellent first stop if you're looking to both "double-check" the health and honesty of a charity you want to donate to or to find the right organization for your interests.



The New

411

By Mark N. Lardas

Textile competition
Bicycle repair
Art therapy
Raising turkeys
Clothing design
Farming
Selling rabbits
Public speaking
Activity program
Building houses
Ranching
Livestock shows
Community



4-H is not just about farming anymore. It is not your grandparents' 4-H—or even your parents' 4-H. Not that 4-H has given up on agriculture. It has always been about agriculture, but 4-H has also always been about service and well . . . having fun. It still has a lot to offer teens interested in farming and ranching. It's just that it has added a lot more.



Bill Holcomb, county extension agent, 4-H and youth development for Galveston County, Texas, explains: "You think of 4-H in rural areas—counties with 3,000 to 10,000 people. Today 4-H operates in urban and suburban areas, too. Our programs match the needs of the community we are in."

When 4-H started, most Americans lived on farms. Today, they live in cities. Agriculture has changed. Community needs have changed. So 4-H has moved into the twenty-first century, changing along with the nation.

Showing and raising livestock and other agricultural products is still a big part of 4-H, even in their more urban locales, like Galveston County, Texas. In 2005 it had a population in excess of 275,000. That is more people than those in a dozen of the United States' most populous counties at the start of the twentieth century, when 4-H was starting.

Stock-raising absorbs the efforts of many of that county's 4-H members, however. Take the Turner family. The oldest son, John, joined 4-H shortly after the family moved to Santa Fe, Texas, in a rural corner of Galveston County. Eight at the time—the minimum age for the mainstream 4-H programs—he

began raising turkeys and rabbits.

It was a good experience. John is now 14 and still in 4-H. All of his brothers and sisters are now in 4-H. His youngest brother, too young for 4-H, is a Clover Kid until he turns 8 and can join.

Raising the animals developed responsibility and self-discipline. You cannot sit around when your animals need care. Cleaning the rabbit hutch and turkey house are the least fun aspect of the job. That gets balanced by the friends you make in 4-H, and the money you make by selling your turkeys and rabbits. John Turner's college nest egg is produced by turkeys.

What if raising animals is not for you? Tarina Frank has been in 4-H for eight years. Active in Galveston County, she is a 4-H scholarship finalist because of her leadership and participation in 4-H. She states, "I haven't done anything with animals."

For Tarina, 4-H is about fashion. A serious artist at 18, she already has a studio at home. She regularly wins 4-H clothing and textile competitions—making clothing and jewelry. She also enjoys 4-H's consumer decision-making program.

4-H is as much about growing tomorrow's leaders as it is about growing food. Bill Holcomb

The New



community. 4-H teens across America spent five years raising funds to build a Habitat for Humanity house in Atlanta, Georgia. Fund-raising started at the Centennial 4-H Congress in 2002. They raised an additional \$56,000 to pay for materials.

Then, Atlanta 4-H'ers partnered with employees of Hyatt Regency Atlanta to build the house. Construction started in October, 2006, and the house was completed, with the ribbon-cutting ceremony on November 27, 2006. Jennifer Berry, Miss America 2006, cut the ribbon.

Since this was a national project, each state sent their representatives from the 4-H Congress to the ceremony. Each representative brought the new homeowner a

Activities Program) in each community. They serve as mentors and tutors.

It helps both the children that the teens are mentoring and the teens themselves. Elementary students who attend daily have seen their grades rise a full point. As for the mentors? By developing self-discipline and learning leadership through working with younger children, they do better in school themselves. It is just one example of the type of community activities available through 4-H.

In Galveston County, Tarina Frank talked about the fun she had with community service. "I really had fun doing art therapy. For my community service project last year I brought autistic and inclusion children to my

art studio to do artwork."

Tarina does a lot of work at the Kemah (Texas) Autism Center.

Her 13-year-old brother, Kelvin, is also in 4-H. His thing is bicycle repair—both for himself and for community service.

4-H programs allow teens to earn scholarship

money for college. Sometimes the money is earned competitively, like the livestock shows. There are public speaking competitions, and opportunities to participate in the national 4-H Congress for teens.

It is a great deal. Help your community, learn some useful skills, and make friends—while having fun, too.

Want to Join?

You are sold. 4-H is for you. At least, you want to look into it. Where do you go to find out about the 4-H program near you? Call your county's cooperative extension service. Even big city counties have one. Or go to the 4-H Web site: www.4husa.org/ and click on the "Find a 4-H club" link.



explains: "We have a public speaking program. It is a great way to develop the confidence you need to address crowds." That skill is worth developing anywhere you go.

Raising enthusiasm for a cause can be as important to the nation as raising grain.

Holcomb added, "Our teens are also involved in our community activity programs." Community activity programs are a great way to give back to the place you live. And, you can pick up valuable skills while having fun in the process.

It does not matter whether you live in Corn County, Iowa, or Cook County, Illinois. 4-H has an activity tailored to fit the needs of every

housewarming gift. Each region of the country was designated a room in the house, and brought gifts appropriate for that room.

Sounds good, but what about something a little closer to home?

That is not the only community activity program coordinated by 4-H. There are thousands of local ones. In Kansas City, Missouri, 4-H members are helping children ages 5-11 in public housing developments. Teams of seven high-school teens lead 4-H ASAP (After School



Rachel
Bishop

Curt
VanderWaal

What's up with that?

My brother is obsessed with Grand Theft Auto. He seems to be more on edge after he plays the game. Why is that?

—Linda, age 13

Your brother's reactions are pretty common, Linda. Researchers have found that when teenagers and young adults play M-rated violent video games like Grand Theft Auto, the parts of their brain that usually help them concentrate and control their actions aren't as active as normal. Instead, a quick rush of brain chemicals floods the "flight or fight" part of the brain, which is what can trigger angry or violent responses in a person. Other studies have found similar types of responses from video games with a Teen rating that includes violent content, strong language, or sexually suggestive themes. While no one is saying that your brother is going to start stealing cars after playing the game, it is clear that the video games are having a negative effect on him and the rest of the family. Some families have dealt with this issue by banning or limiting the amount of time that kids spend playing these types of games.

Some of my friends are encouraging me to have sex with my boyfriend and drink at parties. I'm not sure how to handle it and my parents aren't really there for me. I need to talk to somebody—what do you think I should do?

—Jenna, age 15

It's really important for you to have someone to talk to when you're facing such tough decisions, Jenna. We'd strongly suggest that you find a trusted adult who can stand in for your parents. That could be an aunt or uncle, teacher, school guidance counselor, pastor, or

neighbor. Several recent studies have found that teens and young adults who have what is called an influential "natural mentor" in their lives have a much better life and are more likely to have a stronger sense of self-worth than those without such a trusted adult. These teens were also more likely to take positive chances in their lives to help themselves. It's really important to form this relationship with someone you look up to and trust. Bouncing your problems off such a person can really help you deal with the kinds of tough decisions you're facing now and in the future.

The college I'm planning to attend next year just banned smoking anywhere on the campus. I'll soon be old enough to vote and fight in the military; why are they taking away my right to put what I want in my body?

—Jacob, age 17

Well, Jacob, you could still choose to light up like the other 31 percent of college students who are smoking on a regular basis—you just can't do it on campus. Cigarettes are so addictive and dangerous that a growing number of college campuses are following the lead of towns, cities, and counties around the nation to ban smoking in buildings, on sidewalks, and around other public places. When cigarettes are harder to find, people tend to smoke less. The health dangers of second-hand smoke are also reduced. So while you may feel that your freedoms are being cut, these colleges believe that the improvements in health and long-term safety of students are more than worth the trade-off.

WAITING TO EXHALE

By Diane E. Robertson

Amber waved her pack of cigarettes at me after our first day of high school. "Care for a smoke, Callie?"

I shook my head no as we walked toward the library. "That trip to visit your cousin this summer must've been something. Is she the one who introduced you to smoking?"

"Oh, come on," Amber said. "It's not like drugs or alcohol. Don't you even want to try it?"

"No." I watched as she inhaled like a pro. "Smoking is one habit I'll never inherit."

"But everybody does it."

"Fine. They can stink up their clothes and hair. But I know the consequences. Mom used to brag about it, like she was a veteran. 'Thirty years now,' she'd say as she inhaled her daily pack. But then she

got emphysema. 'Say hello to your nonsmoking mother,' she tells me now. And you know my dad's story," I continued. "How he puffed his way to a triple-bypass."

Amber blew out smoke, and acted bored. "Yeah, I know."

I wished that Amber would get a wake-up call. I had hoped we could ease into the big new world of high school together, but already she was changing. It seemed that we didn't have as much to talk about on our walks anymore. As the warm weather turned into autumn, the thought of being left behind terrified me.

One day Amber said, "I'm going over to Jenny's after school. I'll see you tomorrow."

"OK." I felt awful, so I hurried home where I could be alone with my tears. My parents wouldn't return from work for hours. Maybe



I could bury my feelings in food. As I hunted around the refrigerator for something delicious to eat, I spotted the carton of cigarettes that Mom now referred to as her "security blanket." "I promise not to smoke again," she told me. "I just feel better knowing they're there."

Right now I felt a little insecure myself. Something made me reach in and take a pack of Mom's smokes. I felt ashamed, but more than anything, I wanted to fit in with my friends.

I went to my room and locked the door. Then I sat at my dressing table, opened the pack and pulled out a cigarette. Now I could add petty theft to my list of growing problems. I lit up, took a deep drag and silently counted to 10 while I fought not to cough. Then I exhaled, mesmerized by the grey cloud of smoke that floated out of my mouth. "Who are you?" I asked the image in the mirror. "Someone who sold herself out," I answered. I practiced for a while, then aired out

my room, shampooed my hair, and washed my smelly clothes.

The next day while Amber and I walked to the library, I mustered the courage to light up. Would this moment change my life?

"Hey," she said. "You're looking pretty cool, Callie."

I smiled but said nothing. When we reached the library, we stood outside and finished our cancer sticks. I felt phony, like I was an actress.

"Hi, Callie," said Dan as he walked by. He was in my algebra class and very cute. He seemed to look at me in a puzzled way, and then entered the library.

Minutes later Amber and I also went in for some serious homework time. We found a table near Dan, and I settled down and pulled out my books. Minutes later, as I wrestled with an equation, I felt a tap on my shoulder. I looked up and my heart raced for a few beats. "Hi, Dan. What's happening?"

"I just wanted to tell you that you look like a totally different person when you smoke."

My stomach flipped. But I sensed that he hadn't intended it as a compliment. "What do you mean?"

"I mean it changes your whole personality." He looked straight into my eyes, as if he really cared and was trying to help me.

I bit my lip and felt my face redden. "Thanks for sharing."

Dan walked away and we never brought it up again. His remark haunted me though because I felt like he saw right through me. For a while I continued to imitate my friends, but over time I realized that smoking was not for me, and I found the strength to quit. Slowly I gravitated toward new friends with more common interests. It wasn't easy, but I finally became comfortable with myself. I realized that being uncool was really pretty cool after all.



Illustration: Ralph Butler

Greg Woodburn



Spotlight

By Mary Rahn



realize how much I truly love running and all that it has given me, such as self-esteem, confidence, and friendships. I knew I would eventually get healthy and be able to run again, but I started thinking about kids who couldn't enjoy this great sport—not because of injury, but simply because they couldn't afford running shoes. So I decided to collect some shoes and donate them to needy kids. My initial goal last Christmas was 100 pairs.

Listen: What lessons have you learned through your experiences?

Greg: I've learned that there are so many wonderful and generous people who want to help others, but sometimes they don't know how. If you show them a way, they will follow. I mean, one lady offered to buy me a washing machine to use to clean the shoes!

Greg Woodburn is a 17-year-old high school junior in Ventura, California. A runner who competed in numerous national events as a kid, Greg's high school track and cross-country career was tripped up by a series of injuries. However, instead of feeling sorry for himself, this remarkable young man turned the negative into a positive by creating S.O.S. ("Share Our Soles"), an organization that donates used running shoes to underprivileged youth. To date (April 2007) Greg has personally collected, washed by hand, and donated 520 pairs to kids in Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya in Africa, as well as Mexico and inner-city Los Angeles. For more information or to make a donation, e-mail Greg at Livestrong122289@aol.com.

Listen: Where do you see S.O.S. in five years?

Greg: I love the grassroots aspect of S.O.S., but at the same time I want to see it grow, grow, grow! Ideally, I'd love to inspire other kids to start their own S.O.S. drives in their towns. In fact, it doesn't even have to be running shoes. I'd love to see kids who are passionate about music try to collect used guitars to donate and kids who love reading to collect and donate books to kids in need. Also, I'd love to be able to get Nike and Adidas and other footwear companies to donate new shoes to S.O.S.

Listen: Do you have any advice for other young people reaching for their dreams—especially for those who want to get involved in community service?

Greg: It sounds like a cliché, but I think it's really true—when you volunteer to help others, the person who gets the most out of the experience is yourself. As legendary Coach John Wooden says, and this is S.O.S.'s motto: "There is great joy in doing something for somebody else."

Listen: How did you get the idea for S.O.S.?

Greg: I have been a competitive runner since grade school, but my freshman year in high school I suffered a stress fracture in my hip and couldn't run for a long time. Then I missed most of my sophomore year with knee troubles, and it really made me

Listen: What is your favorite part about volunteering? Any memorable S.O.S. moments you'd like to share?

Greg: People assume scrubbing the dirty, smelly shoes would be a gross chore, but when I'm doing it I actually find myself smiling because I imagine the smile of the kid in Africa or Mexico when he receives the shoes and laces them up and goes out for a run. You know what my dream is? To one day be in a race with one of those kids who got interested in running, thanks to a pair of S.O.S. shoes I collected, cleaned, and sent his or her way. That would be so cool. I get goose bumps imagining it.

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Your LIFE Blueprints

If you were building your dream house, would you start by cutting up random pieces of wood and nailing them together? Of course not! If you did, you'd probably end up with an unsightly pile of wood that looked more like a lame sculpture than a house.

If you really wanted to end up with a house that you were proud of, you would have to start by developing a plan—or what architects refer to as “blueprints.”

Our life is much the same. We can't expect to have our dream life turn out the way we want if we don't take the time to design it first. We need to be our own “life architect” and we can start doing this the moment we take the time to set some goals.

To create the future we want, we must know the future we want. Goals help us direct our attention and concentrate our efforts so we can spend more of our time and energy creating a life we're proud of—a life that we really want.

The point of setting goals is not just to get a specific thing or result. The true purpose of setting goals is what they will

make of us as individuals while we're pursuing them. Simply put, our “blueprints” will improve the quality of our life.

Much of our future depends on the goals we set—or don't set—for ourselves. They give us a target to shoot for. Look at it this way: In sports the goal is where the players score. Without a goal, there is nowhere to score . . . no way to win the game.

Life is a game too—the most important one you'll ever play. Don't you want to win? Well, with no specific direction, you're a bystander or a spectator watching your own life fly by. How can you possibly “win”? You could have the greatest attitude, the strongest passion, and all the enthusiasm in the world, but if you don't direct that energy, all of your effort is wasted.

Everything we do contributes to who and where we are today. Where we stand now is the sum of all our decisions and actions we took yesterday, last week, and even years ago.

Here's the problem: many people just do things in the moment without thinking how it will affect them later. Why? Well, because they don't know where they want to end up and the consequences of each decision seem insignificant. As a result, the years fly by and sure enough they find themselves somewhere they don't want to be.

Remember: The difference between winners and losers is their habits, goals, and efforts to reach them.



The Next Step

If you want to get the most out of yourself, you'll need some “life blueprints” and a plan of action. We thought this process could help you stay focused like it did for us. Go to www.listenmagazine.org and click on our picture for your next assignment.

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