



FAMILY!

A Publication of the NASAP Family Education Section

Spring 2007

New Research Confirms “Why NOT Praise” Validity

by Bryna Gamson

NEWS FLASH: Academia and The Press have discovered that praise can be overdone, sometimes stunting achievement and intellectual growth. A generation of kids brought up on lavish praise to foster “self-esteem” have been floundering in college.

Articles like “How Not to Talk to Your Kids: The Inverse Power of Praise” by Po Bronson in *New York Magazine* published in February, 2007 and another referring to it in the *Chicago Tribune* (March 18, 2007), entitled “Wield praise like a loaded shotgun” by

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Internet Porn

Dear Addy...

Guest author is **Emory Luce Baldwin**, M.S., LCMFT, from Takoma Park, Maryland. Emory is a parent educator with PEP, and a family therapist in private practice working with families with children and adolescents. For more information, www.emorylucebaldwin.com.

Dear Addy,

I just arrived at home unexpectedly, and saw that my 16 year-old son was online looking at pornography! What do I do now? He is almost a legal adult, and he maintains that I am over-reacting and he can deal with it. Do I respect his curiosity about sexually explicit materials, or should I set up limits? I don't want to get into a power struggle over it—and realistically, I can't control every-

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Congratulations PEP: 25!

Milestone Celebrated in Maryland

by Robbye Fox, PEP Marketing Coordinator

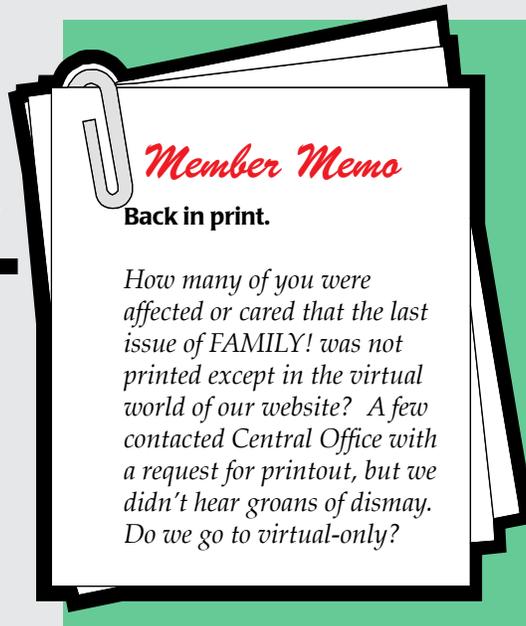
It was 1982 when **Linda Jessup** first introduced Adlerian theory to parents of Montgomery County, Maryland gathered in the basement of her Silver Spring home, thus “giving birth” to the Parent Encouragement Program (PEP). While her basement served as a classroom to PEP's first eight students, her bedroom operated as PEP's office.

Twenty-five years later, PEP is celebrating its first quarter century. The organization now introduces Adlerian parenting concepts to approximately 1,500 parents annually in locations throughout Montgomery County, Northern Virginia, and Washington, DC. PEP's “home” is now rented space in nearby Kensington, MD and its 29 certified Parent Educators, who work diligently to bring to life the concepts presented in each class curriculum, are supported by PEP's two full-time and seven part-time staff members.

Much has changed in the area of parenting over that time and fortunately, PEP has been able to adapt in turn. Our leaders take personal responsibility to stay on top of current research regarding child development and parenting techniques, to share this information and to use it to incorporate into class curriculums and to identify trends and needs for additional workshops.

PEP's Class Schedule grows

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Member Memo

Back in print.

How many of you were affected or cared that the last issue of FAMILY! was not printed except in the virtual world of our website? A few contacted Central Office with a request for printout, but we didn't hear groans of dismay. Do we go to virtual-only?

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Meet us for the height of Adlerian camaraderie

FE Section Co-Chairs Report...

Dear Family Education Section Members,

Are you ready for Vancouver? I have attended every NASAP conference in the last 10 years and I have never been as excited as I am about THIS one! Seems that at the Fall meeting in Hershey, the entire governance of NASAP was just on fire to make this a warm and connecting conference. Here are some new initiatives:

Mentoring Program:

Roger Ballou has taken the initiative to create a mentoring program so that new attendees will feel especially welcomed and not lost in the crowd; a handful of current members will be watching out for them and helping them feel at home with us. We in Family Ed know how important connection and belonging are.

Section Breakfast:

The Sections are hosting the Saturday morning coffee and danish party together! We all get a chance to connect with our peers before the day's events and get our meetings done without conflicting with the conference presentations. If you are a member of two Sections—no trouble—we are all meeting in a large ballroom, so look for breakfast tables for our Section, but drop in on other Sections and find out what they are about, too. It's amazing that many members of NASAP are not associated with any Section! Hopefully our "bagel bait" will lure some folks to come find out which Section might be their home. We'd like every NASAP member to have a home in one Section.

Dr. Daniel Siegel:

Noteworthy this year is a full day program offered by a well known leader outside our immediate fold. Dr. Siegel's presentation should be fantastic, and also draw the attention of many who will potentially stay on for our conference and hear Adlerian ideas, too.

Here we grow again!

Vancouver:

Come on—it doesn't get more beautiful does it?

Check out the NASAP website or your copy of the conference program and look at page 7 in *FAMILY!* to look over the offerings from the Family Education Section. Hard to pick!

American members, bring your passport!

See you in Vancouver!

Warm wishes from your Co-Chair,
Alyson Schäfer, along with *Dina Emser*

Adlerian Wisdom

- *Children are good observers but poor interpreters.*
- *Understand the child's goal. Every action has a purpose. His basic aim is to have his place in the group.*
- *Children know what's right and wrong, but the knowledge doesn't prevent them from doing what is wrong.*

-- from **ABCs of Guiding the Child**

by Rudolf Dreikurs, MD
and Margaret Goldman

Published by the Adler School of Professional Psychology, Chicago

How to reach us

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Proud to Publish

Reaching Out . . . When Teens Are Out-Of-Control: A Facilitator's Guide to Working With Their Parents by **Terry Lowe** is now available for sale.

Do you work with parents whose teens have gone beyond the limits or are getting dangerously close to crossing the line?

Would you like more ideas and resources on how to turn things around in these families?

If so, this 111 page manual is full of ideas on how to deal with difficult issues whether in a group or clinical setting. It comes complete with 30 handouts for parents and 10 lesson plans for facilitators.

Some of the topics covered are:

- When Teens Go Beyond the Limits/Defining Out-Of-Control
- Developing a Safety Plan
- Redefining Authority/Helping Parents Build A Firm Foundation
- Encouragement the Glue that Bonds
- Goals of Behavior/with Emphasis on Behavior of Out-Of-Control Teens
- Discipline Charts the Course . . . How to Get Back on Track and What to do When Nothing Seems to Work
- The System is on Overload/Dealing With Stress
- Communication
- Moving Forward as a Team/Helping the Teen Move from the Socially Useless Side to the Socially Useful Side of Life
- When Teens Are Using Drugs

Cost: \$50.00 CAN/\$45 US each plus shipping (\$40.00 CAN each plus shipping, for orders of 10 or more). To order contact Terry Lowe at hlowe@sasktel.net The manuals will also be available at the NASAP conference in Vancouver May '07. ■

Dear Addy...continued from page 1
thing he sees or does.

Signed, Perplexed

Dear Perplexed:

You can reassure yourself that you are far from alone in dealing with this issue in your home. Cable television and the world wide web are bringing all kinds of explicit sexual content into our homes that we could not have even imagined when we were your son's age. You are also correct that you cannot control what a 16 year old is looking at all the time. Yet, your son lives in your home, and as the parent it is your privilege and responsibility to establish reasonable limits.

Once you have calmed down (!) it is time for a frank and honest conversation with your son about these limits. You can invite your son, as a young adult, to begin the discussion by asking questions like these:

- What kind of limits do you impose on yourself about what is ok to look at and not ok to look at?
- What makes some types of porn unattractive to you? (I am assuming that no 16 year old boy wants to discuss with his mother what he LIKES about porn, so don't even ask that question.)
- How do you think viewing porn is shaping your ideas about yourself as a man, about your impressions of women, and about your future intimate relationships with women? If you have more experience with porn than with real women, are you honestly and realistically learning about sexuality?

• Do you consider most pornography to be an honest and realistic depiction of human sexual behavior? (Of course it isn't—that would be as boring as a medical textbook. Therefore, porn is typi-

cally shocking, absurd, and distorted to engage people's curiosity and interest.)

It is my hope that a respectful dialogue like this helps you understand your son's point of view, and you can then provide your own point of view.

It might concern topics such as these:

- Most internet porn is about women and children who are being abused and exploited because of their poverty and powerlessness. Viewing such pornography—even for free—is tacitly supporting such exploitation and degradation.
- An adolescent is working on developing his or her own sexual identity as preparation for future loving intimacy with the partner of their choice. A great deal of exposure to pornography is bound to influence a person's sexual identity—and probably not in a way that most people would consider normal and healthy.

Together, you and your son can discuss a new agreement about internet access and pornography viewing that is respectful of both of your concerns and needs. Parents have the responsibility, now more than ever, to draw a boundary around their home where family values of dignity and respect for human beings everywhere will be upheld—no matter what is going on outside. Your son may complain, but he is sure to admire your principled commitment to these values. In the end, it isn't the naked people he will remember, but what he learned from this discussion about sexuality, human dignity, and mutual respect.

Love,
Addy ■

PEP is 25...continued from page 1

and changes each year to meet these emerging trends and needs of local parents. In addition to PEP's "core" courses—PEP I, II and III, offered each session, we look to serve the "niche" needs of parents by offering specified workshops such as *Parenting Extra-Challenging Children*, *Planning for Safe Teen Driving* or *Handling Morning Mayhem*.

This Spring, PEP is partnering with a local technology instructor to coach parents through the tangled web of Internet use by their children. *Web 2.0* will familiarize parents with the language and dangers of the Web, as well as with the filters and other resources available to parents to help their children use the Internet in a safe and age-appropriate way.

At the same time, we're helping parents negotiate safe Internet use by their kids, PEP is working hard to use the Internet to further its mission of providing education and support to parents. In celebration of our 25th Anniversary, PEP will launch a new, expanded website, which will include on-line registration and further its reach to area parents. The new website will include a page linking parents to other Adlerian resources both locally and nationally. We invite you to visit our new site, which we hope will become "live" by early summer.

Much has changed since 1982, but one thing hasn't – the quality of programs offered by the Parent Encouragement Program. States one PEP class attendee: "This class has changed my perspective and made a huge difference in how I communicate and interact with my children and with others. I wish every parent could take this class." ■

<http://www.parentencouragement.org>

Family and Class Meetings: Powerful Leadership Training

by Dina Emser, MA
Family Education Section Co-Chair

I recently attended a presentation on leadership by John Alexander, President of the Center for Creative Leadership. He told us that we are experiencing a leadership void in our country right now—in all areas. He told us a changing world requires different leadership skills. Considering the political, educational, economic and societal problems that exist in today's world, this did not come as a surprise to any of us in the audience.

I was interested to hear the top three qualities of leaders according to the research from this powerful organization. They are:

- understanding self
- understanding others as well as the culture of an organization
- collaborating and partnering with others to come up with new ways of doing things and solving problems.

Alexander said one of the reasons we are experiencing a leadership void is that we are not training people with these skills. It's not happening in schools, in universities, in organizations. Mr. Alexander suggested that we must look in different places for new leaders including arts organizations where creative collaboration is encouraged.

That's when it hit me. We are training children to be leaders by participating in family and classroom meetings. Young children are trained and encouraged to contribute their thoughts, their feelings, and their ideas about how to solve the problems of their community, and to plan the events of the family or classroom.

Think of it: compliments begin each meeting. What better way to begin to understand yourself and others, and what a wonderful place to learn how to share encouraging feedback. This further develops as families and classmates explore the items on the agenda. Role plays and brainstorming take place—more opportunities for children to understand their feelings and other perspectives. Children grow their abilities to come up with creative solutions in family and classroom meetings.

We must get busy. It is critically important for more parents and teachers to facilitate meetings with children. Family and classroom meetings provide consistent training in the 3 most important skills of leadership—understanding of self, others, and collaboration with others. ■

*FAMILY! congratulates its past Co-Chair **Linda Jessup** and all her many associates over the years at PEP who have survived and thrived—and brought the benefits of Adlerian parenting to so many!--ed*

Membership News

Preliminary Financial Report

Patricia Cancellier <pcancellier@verizon.net>

Section Secretary/Treasurer

It looks like we took in more from dues this year than the past two years (\$906 in '05-'05 and \$965 in '04-'05). As of the April 30 dates below, Central Office reports that dues are still coming in.

10/1/06 Balance Forward = \$ 408.00

10/1/06 to 4/30/07 income from dues = \$1132.56

10/1/06 to 4/30/07 expenses

\$202.06 for Fall newsletter

\$200 for scholarship = \$ 402.06*

4/30/07 Balance = \$1138.50

[* We did not print hard copies or mail the Winter issue of *FAMILY!* It was only available online unless specifically requested by members unable to access the website.]

There are outlays yet to be made: deduct \$225 each for our two Co-Chairs' travel reimbursements to the Hershey COR meeting, which would increase the expenses by \$450; deduct the cost of this newsletter, approximately \$200; some expenses for the convention social gatherings; and thereby reduce our total to approximately under \$500, with unknown dues receipts yet to be finalized.

See you in Vancouver, where all will be revealed...or at least updated. ■

Vancouver Convention Family Education Section Meeting Agenda

Alyson Schafer, Dina Emser

Section Co-Chairs

Rewarded for showing up at 7:30AM on Saturday, May 26 for a lively breakfast meeting, members of the Family Ed Section will hold our annual "business/planning" meeting. After the usual round of introductions, approval of the Minutes of our last meeting and Treasurer's report, we hope to cover at least some of these topics at the Vancouver convention:

- ideas for next year's conference topics
- should we go "electronic" to save *FAMILY!* postage, printing costs?
- feedback on the listserv
- how can the Section serve members better?
- evaluate the Breakfast Meeting timeslot
- your ideas!

From the ListServ

Tips for large families

Query: Has anyone had experience teaching parents of large families? How have you adapted some of the encouragement tools for use with 6 to 10 kids? ... For example, we teach parents to start their family council meeting or encouragement council meeting with appreciations/compliments. If both parents of 10 kids gave detailed appreciations for each child, they would run out of time before they finished that part of the meeting.--Patti Cancellier

Reply: Jody McVittie

Here are a couple of ideas.

A large family can do compliments like a classroom. Everyone gives one to someone - and maybe add one for themselves. They can be creative about how to solve that.

*But encouragement is so much more than these tools, that I don't find the concept an obstacle. One of my favorite activities from the Manual that Lynn Lott and Jane Nelsen wrote (**Teaching Parenting the Positive Discipline Way**) is called the "language of Love." I modify it a little bit and it is very simple.*

Start with a blank flip chart.

Ask participants to think back to when they were a child and think of one person who they knew really cared about them (loved them). Ask them to picture that person and what it was that they SAID or DID that conveyed that message of caring/love. Then either have them share with a partner (first) or start right out with people calling out some of the things that the person said or did. Leave a space at the top of the flip chart (to fill in later) - and write down their ideas. They will include things like: hugs, smiles, excited to see me, did things with me, listened to me, accepted me for who I was, included me, trusted me...etc. If they give broad statements like "encouragement" or "I knew they liked me" I ask "what did that look or sound like specifically. Rarely are "things" on the list.

After the group has paused I write ENCOURAGEMENT across the top of the page. Then under that "language of love." Then I explain that the word encouragement comes from the root 'courage' which is also from the Latin

concludes on back page, 8

Why Not Praise...cont. from page 1

Heidi Stevens, cite the work of respected psychology researcher Carol Dweck and associates on this subject. Adlerian parent (and teacher) training methods are affirmed by the results of Dweck's study. Dweck is a Stanford professor, whose research was conducted over a ten year period in a dozen New York schools while she was teaching at Columbia University.

Bronson wrote "Her seminal work—a series of experiments on 400 fifth-graders—paints the picture most clearly....Randomly divided into groups, some were praised for their *intelligence*. They were told 'You must be smart at this.' Other students were praised for their *effort*: 'You must have worked really hard.'..."

"In follow-up tests, 90 percent of the kids praised for their effort chose to take on more difficult challenges and continued to improve their original scores, while the majority of students praised simply for being 'smart' opted for less challenging tests and actually experienced a dip in their test scores," wrote Stevens.

"The smart kids took the cop-out...." Dweck discovered that those who think... 'I am smart' feel that they don't have to put out effort. And, this "held true for students of every socioeconomic class....hit both boys and girls...." Bronson noted.

In addition, "students turn to cheating because they haven't developed a strategy for handling failure.... A child deprived of the opportunity to discuss mistakes can't learn from them" Bronson wrote, based upon an interview with Michigan scholar Jennifer Crocker.

"...[T]he current crop of college students is more narcissistic and
continues on page 7

An Adlerian Approach: Encouragement vs Evaluative Praise

reprinted with permission from (and thanks to!) Betty Lou Bettner and Amy Lew from A Parent's Guide to Understanding and Motivating Children

Encouragement means to instill courage by helping people see their strengths and develop belief in themselves. High self-esteem is related to the belief that if we work hard and keep trying we will develop the skills we need to feel successful. Although experts often extol the value of using praise to raise children's self-esteem, praise frequently has the opposite effect. Commenting on improvement and effort is more encouraging than only noticing when a job is successfully completed. When we praise, we are usually pointing out what we think someone already does well. There are several problems with this kind of praise.

1. By our focusing primarily on what our children already do well, they may get the idea that success is the most important value. They may decide to avoid working in any area where success is not already guaranteed. Success, however, is usually dependent upon the willingness to put forth the effort needed to improve.
2. When we focus on what we think rather than encouraging self-evaluation, we may actually be teaching our children to become dependent on others' opinions. While we may like the idea that young children try to please us, we usually worry when we see teenagers overly concerned with gaining the approval of their friends.
3. The child may interpret the absence of praise as proof of not being good enough.

Encouragement helps people accept imperfection and remain "try-ers." ■

Encouragement	Evaluative Praise
an attitude	a verbal reward
task/situation-centered	person-centered
emphasizes effort and improvement	earned by being superior
may be given during task	job must be well done/completed
shows acceptance	is judgmental
fosters independence	fosters dependence
emphasizes self-evaluation	emphasizes others' opinions
develops self-esteem	develops self-consciousness

FOR PARENTS:

Lew, Amy and Bettner, Betty Lou, *A Parent's Guide to Understanding and Motivating Children*. Newton Centre, MA: Connexions Press, 2000, 1996

Bettner, Betty Lou and Lew, Amy, *Raising Kids Who Can: Become Responsible, Self-Reliant, Resilient, Contributing Adults and How to Use Family Meetings to Make it Happen*. Boston: Connexions Press, 2005 (revised), 1996, 1992, 1989

FOR TEACHERS:

Lew, Amy and Bettner, Betty Lou, *Responsibility in the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide to Understanding and Motivating Students*. Newton Centre, MA: Connexions Press, 1998, 1995

Why Not Praise...cont from col 1, p 6
ego-driven than previous generations—partly because they were raised singing ‘I am special!’ and playing on sports teams where everyone gets a trophy...and you’re left with some confused parents,” says Stevens in *Parent to Parent*. She goes on to interview psychologists who discuss differing types of ‘praise:’ “Experts caution that praise itself isn’t detrimental, but parents should take note of everything from their timing to their choice of words.”

What was missing from both of these commentaries was the input of Adlerian authors and practitioners. And not because Adlerian ideas aren’t right on target, and out there in abundance.

As early as Dreikurs’ advent on the scene in Chicago in the late 1930s—from his 1964 **Children: The Challenge**, through others’ **STEP**, **Active Parenting**, **Positive Discipline**, **Raising Kids Who Can** and more, to 2007’s **Breaking the Good Mom Myth**—Adlerian authors and practitioners have made the fundamental distinction between praise and encouragement as a positive technique in raising responsible, resilient children. Adlerians urge parents to allow children to learn from consequences, and thus gain the experience and resiliency from meeting failure.

Section member **Jody McVittie** commented to *FAMILY!* that “the work...by Carol Dweck...and her studies are fascinating. It makes total Adlerian sense.”

Amy Lew told *FAMILY!* that “I have been very excited about Carol Dweck’s work. ...[I]t confirms what we have been teaching for a very long time. (I feel particularly good about it because my friends, Mary Bandura and Elaine Elliot were instrumental in the research.)

“One thing Dweck adds to the mix is the construct of a fixed

NASAP...International Adlerian Leadership Since 1952

Convention Vancouver May 24-27'07

If you are a relatively new member of NASAP, with a background in family education, you might want to take advantage of sessions dealing with the general Adlerian framework.

Be sure to attend a session like *Open Forum Family Counseling Demonstration*. **Betty Lou Bettner** will be conducting one in the 8:30-10:00 AM slot on Saturday, May 26, and **Frank Walton** will be discussing the techniques of *Teaching Family Counseling Through Demonstration* in the Friday, May 25 2:45-4:45 PM slot.

A perennial favorite is *Introduction to Adlerian Psychology*, this year presented by our President, **Mel Markowski**, on Friday morning, May 25 in the 9:50 AM hour slot. Unfortunately, this conflicts with a great panel led by our own Co-Chair, **Alyson Schäfer**: *Yes! You Can Make A Living As A Parent Educator!*, discussed by three leading Adlerian parent educator / authors / company founders, **Linda Jessup** (PEP), **Jane Nelsen** (Positive Discipline) and **Michael Popkin** (Active Parenting). Wow!

And that’s the way the whole convention is likely to go for you: tempting offerings everywhere. And even more over lunch!

If you can get there, get there! If you had to take a pass for some reason this year, make it a point to come next year, to Hershey / Harrisburg, PA. And take advantage of the opportunity to purchase convention session audiotapes. Contact the NASAP Central Office to do so.



Have any Adlerian books or materials you’d like to sell at the conference? For just 20% of the proceeds donated to NASAP, you can! Just check in at the bookstore location for the conference, remembering to make arrangements to pick up merchandise at the close. NASAP cautions that you may be asked to claim merchandise for sale on your customs forms when crossing borders. For details, look up page 9 of the Jan / Feb 2007 NASAP newsletter (Vol. 40, No. 1) online in the Members Only section of www.alfredadler.org. ■

versus a growth mindset. The *fixed mindset* is a result of evaluative praise and the *growth mindset* is the likely response to encouragement or effective praise.

“One problem is the way that the media looks for sound bites and uses words without defining them. If you say self esteem means an inflated self image then it is not a good thing.

“In fact there is also a lot of buzz now about the new crop of college students and graduates who arrive at college or in the workforce feeling entitled and expecting constant

praise. As Adlerians, we would not call this self esteem.

“In our book *Raising Kids Who Can* [with co-author **Betty Lou Bettner**], we say ‘The difference between this self-ideal and self-concept is only one part of the equation that affects people’s level of self-esteem. The confidence children have about their ability to bridge the gap between the self-ideal and the self-concept is the determining factor.’ That is the *growth mindset*.”

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Why Not Praise... cont from page 7

All of this conversation about Dweck's research should be grist for the Adlerian mill: initiate a conversation with your local media; step up and make the news. The time is absolutely right, and we are "right on." ■

Sources

Wield praise like a loaded shotgun by Heidi Stevens, Chicago Tribune "Parent to Parent", March 18, 2007; URL <http://www.chicagotribune.com/parent2parent>

How Not to Talk to Your Kids: The Inverse Power of Praise by Po Bronson, New York Magazine, February 7, 2007; URL <http://nymag.com/news/features/27840>

Dweck, Carol S. Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. New York: Random House, 2006

Also: Dweck interview on YouTube. Do a Goodsearch or Google Search for Carol Dweck for details.

ListServ tips....continued from page 5

"cor" meaning heart. I talk a little about "courage." People who do courageous things don't feel like they could have done anything differently. Ask these heroes how they do it and what do they say? "Anyone in my position would have done the same thing." I share with them my definition of courage: the motion we take in the direction of becoming our best selves. And if courage is motion toward becoming our best self, ENCOURAGEMENT is the space we make for another human being to take that step into their best self. This takes about 7 - 10 minutes and leaves a very lovely energy in the room. At the end, you have a list of things that these parents DO already.... Things that they know from their own experience work.

There was much more to this online discussion. Join up and get into it! (Contact Central Office.) ■

FYI, the text cited is being updated but should be available at the conference book store!

Resiliency:

Are We Doing Enough to Prevent Self-Destructive Behavior in College Kids?

This topic has been buzzing around discussion groups whose members are parents of pre-teens and high schoolers. Why the waves of college drop-outs, suicides, and even students taking 6 years to finish? Is there a connection between these behaviors and the parenting styles or milieu the students have been brought up in?

More importantly, can Adlerian parenting techniques be used to prevent another class of college-bound kids from dropping out, one way or the other?

Should Resiliency be emphasized?

Submit an article to *FAMILY!* ■

The mission of the **North American Society of Adlerian Psychology** is to promote growth and understanding of Adlerian (Individual) Psychology, the work of Alfred Adler, and effective approaches to living based on his philosophy. NASAP membership includes educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, parents, business people, community organizations and other interested people. The **Family Education Section** applies Adlerian principles to the home. Members are professionals and nonprofessionals dedicated to understanding and improving family relationships between children and adults, with couples, and among individuals.

**See you in
Vancouver...
May 24-27**

Be there!

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