

PsycHealth, Ltd. Provider NEWSLETTER



Volume 7, Issue 4

Winter, 2011

A Deeper Look at the ADHD and Stimulant Epidemic by Laurie A. Couture

Imagine the following scenario: A child presents at his pediatrician's office due to parental concerns that he is lethargic and listless. The doctor's examination reveals that the child is emaciated, his blood sugar levels are dangerously low and vital signs are compromised. Upon questioning, the child's parents state that the child has been lethargic for a couple of weeks, but other than the fact that he has not ingested any food for 14 days, there have been no other obvious injuries, stressors or family problems. The pediatrician prescribes an anti-depressant and suggests a behavior chart with rewards for upbeat behavior and withdrawal of privileges for sullenness. She also refers the family for mental health counseling to help the boy express his feelings and learn better ways to regulate his lethargic behavior. She also suggests testing to help the family put an IEP in place at school to address the child's disability. The doctor schedules for a follow up appointment in three months and sends them home with a book to read: *Pushing on the Accelerator Pedal: A Young Person's Guide to Understanding Elation Deficit Lethargy Disorder*.



world. Is this a signal of an unprecedented pandemic of brain dysfunction mysteriously occurring only in American children? Since the 1990's, there has been a 700% increase in the prescription of stimulant drugs to children, mostly boys. This increase occurred when homework became standard or mandatory, when play and hands-on learning and recess were reduced or cut, when boyishness became increasingly criminalized and when standardized testing became federally mandated.

As a profession, we appear to be missing the obvious "starvation" our clients are enduring; we are pathologizing and medicating children for developmentally appropriate behavior and for being male or active children. Dr. Madeleine Y. Gomez reminds us, "As professionals, we must be ethically accountable for our care recommendations and treatment interventions. We must work to provide the most supportive and least impinging intervention to support health, growth and normal development."

How can professionals support their youth clients and their families? There are many holistic interventions that support children's natural development and physical and mental health. Professionals can:

- Support close, nurturing and affectionate parent-child attachments for children of all ages, from toddlers to older adolescents,
- Model non-punitive, nonviolent discipline based on the Nonviolent Communication model (NVC) to parents and schools,
- Advocate individually and politically for child-led and play-based learning environments for youth of all ages, from preschool to high school, (continued on p. 2)

Readers may find this scenario preposterous and absurd- Of course the pediatrician would realize that the obvious issue was *starvation* and immediately and urgently provide the child with *food* either by mouth or via IV! Readers know that if this case were real, a competent physician would not recommend superfluous diagnoses and interventions that did not address the child's urgent needs.

School children are a politically helpless, captive cohort that when labeled as mentally ill can represent financial incentives for the system. The United States consumes 90% of the stimulants drugs produced in the

Special Points of Interest:

Stimulant Use in Kids

Protest and Peace

Electronic Claims

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Brain and Neurobiological Concepts in Psychotherapy. (cont. from p. 1....)

- Educate parents about democratic schools, child-centered private schools, online virtual schools, homeschooling and unschooling,
- Raise awareness to schools, your colleagues, politicians and to the community of how child abuse and trauma prevention efforts must address children's natural developmental and holistic needs at all ages.
- Refer parents to nutritionists who support unprocessed, organic diets,
- Strategize with families how to greatly reduce TV, video games, texting and social media usage and replace these habitual time-drainers with active, playful family activities,
- Recommend naturopathic, energetic and holistic treatments for distress and trauma such as EFT and yoga,
- Practice or become trained to practice EMDR, a brain-based treatment for child trauma,
- Empower boys to feel good about themselves and their energetic, kinetic way of experiencing and contributing to the world,
- Celebrate children's natural behavior and raise awareness with clients, parents, schools and colleagues that it is *developmentally appropriate* for chil-

dren of all ages, from babies to adolescents, to play and be physically active in order to learn and develop,

- Rally politically and in your community for a total overhaul of the way society views education and parenting to support a holistic, empathic and humane way of guiding youth.

Childhood should be a wondrous time in a human's lifespan filled with love, nurturing, creation, play and exploration. The wild, exuberant and passionate creative energy of childhood and of boys should be revered and held sacred, not viewed as a disorder or suffocated into adult compliance for policy or profit. It is critical that as professionals we advocate for the true needs of children and for adult expectations of children to be brought back into alignment with nature's intent.

Laurie A. Couture is the author of Instead of Medicating and Punishing. She is a parenting and alternative education coach and a licensed mental health counselor with a specialty in child trauma and attachment. She appeared in the film documentary, The War On Kids (2009) and hosts a blog and podcast at LaurieA-Couture.com. Laurie is the proud mom of her high energy 17 year old son, Brycen who unschools and lives life as a vocalist, songwriter, performer, game inventor, chainmaille artisan and climber. She also serves on the Board of Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education (PTAVE) with Dr. Gomez.

URAC Awards PscHealth, Ltd. the Silver

URAC Announces Winners of the 2011 Best Practices in Health Care Consumer Protection and Empowerment Awards

Awards Recognize Innovative Health Programs That Benefit Consumers

Washington, DC – October 6, 2011 – URAC, a leading health care accreditation organization, announced the winners of its Best Practices in Health Care Consumer Protection and Empowerment Awards. The honorees were announced as part of URAC's 2011 Quality Summit and Award Program held October 4-6 in Chicago, Illinois. The awards recognize health care management programs that demonstrate quality improvements in the health care delivered to consumers.

"Our Best Practices awards program is a unique celebration of innovative health care management programs. These organizations have implemented leading programs have made a difference in the lives of the consumers they serve with demonstrable results that matter," said Alan P. Spielman, president and CEO of

URAC. "This year's winners are recognized for their leadership in delivering on the promise of a quality health care system that puts consumers first."

Entries were judged by a distinguished 20-member panel of prestigious, independent judges including recognized experts in program evaluation, care coordination, health information technology, employer and purchaser decision making and patient safety. Entries were reviewed and scored by the judges based on objective criteria including whether the program was measurable, if it was reproducible and delivered through a collaborative approach. Honors were awarded in the categories of Consumer Decision-Making and Consumer Health Improvement.

In an initiative focusing on care coordination with primary care physicians, PscHealth, Ltd. in collaboration with Family Health Network (FHN) and Unified Physicians Network (UPN) was awarded the Silver Trophy for "Medical Follow-Up After Psychiatric Discharge."

(continued on p. 3)

URAC Awards PsychHealth, Ltd. the Silver. (cont. from p. 2....)



From left to right: Karen Osuch, RN, VP (FHN), Dr. Gomez, Barbara Hay, VP, COO (FHN) and Ashleigh Bennett, Communications (FHN)

Dr. Gomez Comments: "We are honored and thrilled to receive this recognition from URAC for our efforts in expanding and integrating the concept of post-psychiatric admission discharge planning to include a medical appointment. Our data and the research support that medical comorbidities are high in these members. To best treat the whole person, this initiative sets post-psychiatric admission primary care medicine appointments in addition to the



From left to right: Olga Padilla, RN, COO (UPN), Dr. Shah-Mirany, President, (UPN), Bruce Gomez, LCSW, (Psychealth), Dr. Nora Mariduena (Psychealth), Dr. Johns

mental health follow-up appointments which are standard in the industry. Truly, this should become a new standard in the field to best support our members in order to provide the integrated and coordinated care which is essential to total health."

*Dr. Gomez' Award winning paper is available upon request and is currently in press for future publication.

Occupy Oakland--A Failed Opportunity for Community Peace Building: An Open Letter by Mitch Hall to Mayor Jean Quan

Dr. Gomez Comments: The following commentary is written by my associate, fellow human rights advocate and dear friend, Professor Mitch Hall. It is worth reading and more so, it is worth living.

The Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung defined peace in these terms: "By peace we mean the capacity to transform conflicts with empathy, without violence, and creatively — a never-ending process." As an Oakland resident who voted for you to become mayor, I am disheartened that you did not respond to the Occupy Oakland movement as an opportunity to build peace in the community. Instead you authorized the police to use brute force to remove the nonviolent Occupy Oakland encampment, to confiscate and destroy their property, to arrest people exercising their rights of freedom of speech and assembly, and to fire tear gas and rubber bullets on the peaceful demonstrators who were marching the next night. Why did you not respond more humanely and intelligently? Why could you not have practiced empathy by holding public forums in which you and your staff listened to learn and acknowledged understanding of the real issues that motivated the movement. You could have practiced nonviolence by negotiating for the protection of public health and safety at the encampment, if those were indeed your genuine concerns. You could have practiced creativity in learning from and collaborating democratically with the protestors. Instead, you joined the ranks of so many politicians who ally themselves with the



Occupy Oakland poster by Rich Black

wealthy, powerful elites and show no real respect or care for the common people who just want decent jobs, housing, food, health care, education, and safety in this land that is being despoiled by the Wall Street speculators, corporate robber barons, and politicians who serve them.

The Occupy Oakland protestors were giving witness to the suffering of more and more people, to egregious, documented abuses of power, to the disenfranchisement and impoverishment of the "99%" while the "1%" enrich themselves selfishly and indecently in contravention to humanity's most precious ethical and spiritual norms, and to the virtual prostitution of the politicians to their insanely wealthy corporate patrons. Yes, Mayor, you have demonstrated that you and the police at your beck and call have the power to enforce your will, violently if you choose. That took no imagination or creativity and showed no empathy. You have only added one more dismal episode to the chronicles of injustice that these courageous Occupy Oakland protestors were trying to call to the attention of the public, the media, and people, such as you, in positions of power. If your conscience ever awakens about this failed opportunity for truly meaningful leadership, if you ever feel remorse for the suffering you have ignored and also augmented through police action, I wonder if you will ever apologize and try to build peace by practicing empathy, nonviolence, and creativity and addressing the legitimate concerns that have brought people out onto the streets all over this country and world in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street.

PsychHealth, Ltd.



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HEALTH UTILIZATION
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Note from PsychHealth, Ltd.

Reminder: Are you on our portal for electronic billing? Please contact Courtney Roberts, Director of Information Technology, to get started and begin using. (croberts@psychealthltd.com or [847-864-4961 extension 320](tel:847-864-4961))

Please use this opportunity to get on the portal before a processing fee for paper claims will be assessed. The processing fee for paper claims is planned after 3/31/2011.

Daily Dose of Humor

Q: What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

A: Frostbite.

Heart Inspiration and Brain Contemplation (formerly Food for thought)

When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover you cannot eat money.

~ Cree Prophecy

On behalf of all of wonderful people at PsychHealth, Ltd., we wish you very **Happy Holidays**. May your coming year be full of health, happiness, productivity, positivity, support and peace! Thank you for making a difference in the lives of our members.

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