

June
2007

F.O.C.U.S. Newsletter

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Summer Reading Programme

July 9-Aug 10
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
1.00-3.00pm.
At F.O.C.U.S.
Centre

Focus on Children's Understanding in School

Highlights from June members' Meeting

Admission representatives, Mr. Gayden Mitchell from Landmark East School and Mr. David Tutte from Devereux Glenholme School joined us for this month's meeting which was held on June 12, 2007. Landmark East School in Canada provides a university prep education for students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Attentional Disorders. Devereux Glenholme School supports those students who also need additional social and

communication skill support. A good number of members and new members turned out to gain more detailed information about these two fine schools and particularly to learn more specific information about boarding school life for teens who learn best through a more structured and small class academic environment. With individual advisors, mentors and teachers who understand specific learning disabilities and attentional disorders, students at these schools are

better able to concentrate on their studies and feel supported. These and other schools like them also offer a wider variety of athletic and sporting activities such as, mountain-biking, skiing/snowboarding, ultimate frisbee, and fencing, aware that many students have interests that go beyond the conventional football, lacrosse and rugby offered by more traditional schools. F.O.C.U.S. extends our warmest thanks to Graydon and David for their

F.O.C.U.S. Annual General Meeting

At our Annual General Meeting held June 12, 2007, F.O.C.U.S. elected the following officers for the 2007-2008 year:

Cheryl Raper	Chairman
Desiree Jebesen	Co-Chairman
CP NG	Vice Chairman
Joyce So	Hon Treasurer
Kathy Nichols	HonChairman

Copies of the Chairman's Report and the Treasurer's report as well as the minutes of the AGM 2006 are available for members in the F.O.C.U.S.

There will be no monthly meeting in July and August

Monthly meeting will resume on September 11, 2007

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New AD/HD Research: An excerpts from the Hallowell Connections Newsletter

We are pleased to include for your information items from the June issue of the Hallowell Connections Newsletter:

In the News

How Exercise Helps Academics: The link below goes to a video clip from NBC News about an ongoing experiment in the Naperville Public schools in Naperville, IL. It provides an interesting overview of how exercise helps build the brain and improve academics there.

Binge Drinkers Have Lowered Decision Making Skills- A study published recently in Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research suggests that binge drinking is associated with a decrease in decision making abilities-possibly a reflection of more serious problems with executive functioning centered in the frontal lobe portion of the brain.

The study was done with "healthy" college students who are not alcoholic but who did not participate in binge drinking. One of the study's authors, Jenny Larkin, said that 'based on these results and those from several other studies, adolescence appears to be a time of exquisite sensitivity to the effects of alcohol on the brain.'

Those with ADHD are more prone to risky behavior than their non-ADD counterparts, and national surveys show that many high schoolers and college students binge drink regardless of whether or not they have ADD. This study reinforces the notion that all parents should make sure that their teens understand that binge drinking affects their still-developing brains in ways that may have long-lasting effects. As a point of reference, the frontal lobes, associated with executive functions like those studies in this research, continue to develop in people with ADHD well into their mid to late 20s.

Link to NBC News Clip -
<http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?t=8nbcsacab.0.t9smebcab.ks5xjrbab.11461&ts=S0253&p=http%3A%2F%2Fvideo.nbc5.com%2Fplayer%2F%3Fid%3D103075>

Question and Answer Regarding SLD and /or ADHD spouse. (taken from the Hallowell Connections Newsletter)

Q: How do I get my non-ADD partner to truly understand what it is like to have ADHD?

A: Unfortunately, there is no way to do this as well as we might like. Several respondents to our survey were interested in the question, though, and one had this suggestion that she picked up from an episode of The Nanny....Put on a pair of headphones with some pretty loud heavy music and wear them for a couple of hours. Then simultaneously try to read a book. While you are doing this, ask your children or a friend to interrupt you frequently with questions and requests. At the end of an hour or so, answer these questions: How much did you read? How do you feel? What do you remember?

Dr. Hallowell describes the feeling of ADHD as "having a race car brain". Your mind goes very, very fast and much comes at it all at once. He also describes the ADHD brain as one that does not have very good brakes. By this we means that people with ADHD do not easily create strong hierarchies in a consistent way. Most things that come into your brain come in "at the same volume" and at a very fast speed. For those without ADHD, who take their brain's ability to organize and create an ongoing hierarchy of what's most important at a given time for granted, it takes some imagination to get a feel for what that must be like. But once you start to think about it, you realize just how different it is from the non-ADD experience. Not worst, just different. Worth understandingand respecting.

Next Members' Meeting

Tuesday, **September 11** 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
F.O.C.U.S. Centre
2909 Pacific Plaza, 418 Des Voeux Road West