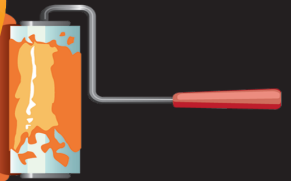


FREE TEENS

Making A Change



FreeTeensUSA.org

Winter 2012 Newsletter

Jersey City teen says 'No' to sex and 'Yes' to a full *Free Teen* life

November 10, 2011

Barbara Milton, Ph.D., LCSW

Brittnee Marsh is a 16 year old honor student from McNair High School in Jersey City. She already shows the promise of a legal scholar and plans to go to college to become a forensic scientist. She is a praise dancer and choir member. She is bilingual and engages in a wide range of community service activity with the Spanish Club.



Brittnee Marsh

Brittnee has a very full teen life that she will say has been created by saying NO to all the negativity in a hypersexualized teen culture. "Many teens haven't been trained to deal with all the peer pressure that exists."

She continued, "Teens are impressionable, vulnerable and fragile. We have poor brain development." Neuroscience confirms that all teen brains are not fully developed and it matters greatly who and what is influencing the growth of the brain because it is our thoughts that lead to our behaviors.

"Sometimes teens need help to make good decisions. Too often we conform to what others decide or just take our cues from images and made-up stories from TV," Brittnee said.

"My parents (Sandra & Conrad Marsh) have taught me values and morals. I know that it is ok to not indulge in what everyone else is doing." Another major influence on Brittnee's development is the organization- Free Teens, USA, which is a project of the Institute of Relationship Intelligence. Her pledge of chastity is nurtured and sustained in this national abstinence organization. (Continues on page 5)

Willpower: It's in Your Head

Researchers at Stanford University have found that willpower can be quite limited – but only if you believe it is. When people believe that willpower is fixed and limited, their willpower is easily depleted. But when people believe that willpower is self-renewing — that when you work hard, you're energized to work more; that when you've resisted one temptation, you can better resist the next one — then people successfully exert more willpower. It turns out that willpower is based on what you think.

And it's not just people who already have strong willpower who show this. When the researchers read statements that reminded students of the power of willpower like, "Sometimes, working on a strenuous mental task can make you feel energized for further challenging activities," they kept on working and performing well with no sign of depletion. They made half as many mistakes on a difficult mental task as people who read statements about limited willpower. In another study, they scored 15 percent better on I.Q. problems. (Continues on page 5)

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Imani: A Daughter's Story Musical

Fans of the Imani: a daughter's story will be glad to know that this entertaining and moving musical will be performed in 3 cities in the coming year (2012): Jersey City, Newark and Paterson. Named after Hudson County's own Imani Hightower, who plays the lead role of 14 year-old Imani, who is entering high school and interested to see an older boy at a college frat party. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/ImaniStoryMusical. (Continues on page 2)

Imani: A Daughter's Story Musical

(Continued from Page 1)

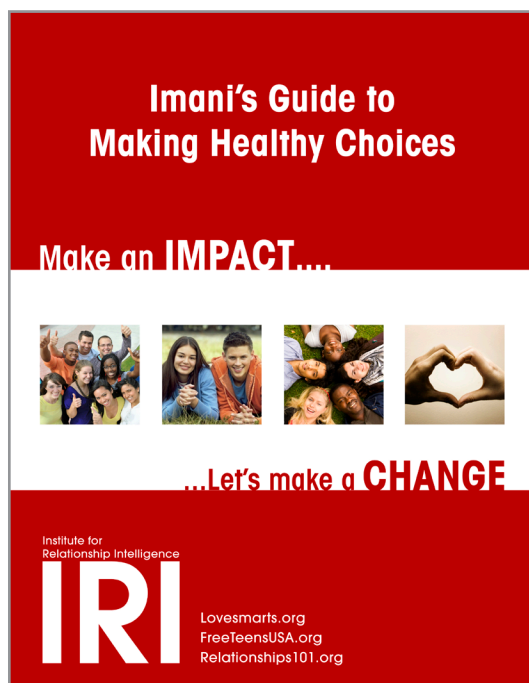
Catch one of many performances of *Imani: A Daughter's Story* in 2012! The Imani Musical is being performed in school assemblies and at evening performances for the whole community in several locations in Hudson, Essex and Passaic counties in 2012. To catch the latest updates and hear music clips, visit www.youtube.com/user/ImaniStoryMusical or www.facebook.com/ImaniStoryMusical Make sure to Like Us on Facebook!

Imani, a 14 year-old entering High School, is tempted to lie to her parents so that she can go to the party of a college student she likes. Imani's captivating music will move the hearts of young and old and break down barriers between generations, as the family grows closer through overcoming the challenges of life together.

New in 2012:

Imani's Guide to Making Healthy Choices

Imani's Guide to Making Healthy Choices is a new workbook that will be used by many students as part of the IRI curriculum. This workbook has articles and fun activities that discuss how teenagers can get on the right path to making healthy choices. Being a teenager is not easy, but this workbook can be a great tool for students to follow so they can be successful and live life to the fullest!



Visit FreeTeensYouth.org

Real Love Character Test

This Real Love Character Test will help you look more objectively at the character of someone you feel romantically attracted to. Circle a number from 1 to 5 for each question, where 1 means "no, never", 2 means "seldom", 3 means "sometimes", 4 means "usually" and 5 means "yes, a lot, always."

1. Does this person treat me with kindness and Courtesy?
1 2 3 4 5
2. Does this person ever shove, shake, hit or in other ways bully me?
1 2 3 4 5
3. Is this person self-centered, always expecting to get their own way?
1 2 3 4 5
4. Does this person bring out the best in me? Do I feel happy after spending time together?
1 2 3 4 5
5. Does this person respect my values, and never pressure me to do something I think is wrong? Share my values and respect my limits concerning sex?
1 2 3 4 5
6. Is this person overly jealous and possessive? Keep me from spending time with my family and friends?
1 2 3 4 5
7. Does this person tell the truth to me and others?
1 2 3 4 5
8. Does this person have good judgment? How much do I trust him/her?
1 2 3 4 5
9. Use drugs or alcohol?
1 2 3 4 5
10. Look at pornography?
1 2 3 4 5
11. Does this person treat and talk about his/her parents with respect?
1 2 3 4 5
12. Does this person treat, talk about my parents/family with respect?
1 2 3 4 5
13. Does this person treat his/her friends in a positive way?
1 2 3 4 5
14. Does this person treat my friends in a positive way?
1 2 3 4 5
15. Spread stories and rumors about other people?
1 2 3 4 5
16. Is this person a hard worker?
1 2 3 4 5
17. Patient & forgiving—able to make up quickly after an argument?
1 2 3 4 5
18. If faith is important in my life, is it important in theirs?
1 2 3 4 5
19. Would I be proud to call this person my husband or wife?
1 2 3 4 5
20. Would this person be a good role model for my children—an example of good character? Would I want my kids to grow up to be like him/her?
1 2 3 4 5

Now, add up the scores of questions 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19 & 20!

Subtract the scores of questions 2, 3, 6, 9, 10 and 15.

Scores 55-64: This person exhibits many good qualities! Scores 40 - 54: This person has potential, but needs to improve in several areas, or you need to learn more about him/her. Scores 25 - 39: Be careful, this person's character is very questionable. Scores less than 25: Warning: You are at HIGH RISK to be hurt in this relationship!

Based on Dr. Tom Lickona's "Character Test: An Essential Aid to Finding Real Love," Center for the 4th & 5th Rs (Respect and Responsibility), www.cortland.edu/character

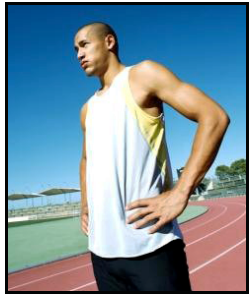
What Defines Manhood?

What defines manhood? What do you think are the key things that define a man as being “masculine”? A 2008 survey conducted with 28,000 men ages 20-75 from the North and South America, and several countries in Europe asked men about their attitudes regarding life and sex. Researchers found that men’s perceptions of masculinity differed substantially from stereotypes in movies and literature. Men reported that being perceived as honorable, self-reliant, and respected by friends were important determinants of self-perceived masculinity.

In contrast, factors stereotypically associated with masculinity (being physically attractive, sexually active, and successful with women) were deemed to be less important. Men said that their quality of life was determined by their good health, harmonious family life, and a good relationship with their wife/partner. These factors were significantly more important to their enjoyment of life than concerns such as having a good job, having a nice home, living life to the full, or even a satisfying sex life. (Just two per cent put a satisfying sex life as their top priority.)

Sand, M., Fisher, W., Rosen, R., Heiman, J. & Eardley, I., “Erectile Dysfunction and Constructs of Masculinity and Quality of Life in the Multinational Men’s Attitudes to Life Events and Sexuality (MALES) Study,” International Journal of Sexual Medicine, 2008; 5:583–594.

What do Women Seek for in a Man?



What qualities do you look for in someone you’d like to spend your life with? A study in the Journal of Marriage and the Family found that college women rated 1) good character, 2) emotional stability and maturity, 3) positive outlook/optimism as the most important qualities they looked for in choosing a mate (education and intelligence also rated highly), more important than a large income or good looks.¹

Why do you think good character, emotional stability, maturity and positive outlook are important to women? What would the opposites be? Moodiness, lying, inflexibility, lack of empathy, anger, pessimism. Why would these qualities be a relationship-killer?

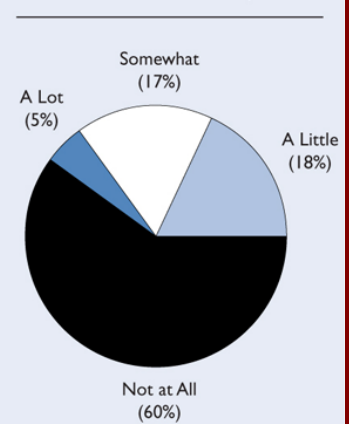
Buss, Shackelford, Kirkpatrick, and Larsen. (2001) Journal of Marriage and Family 63 (May 2001): 491-503.

Mature Enough?

Are male teens mature enough to take the responsibility of creating and taking care of a child? Do they realize that they are not mature enough? Most do, but unfortunately a sizeable minority do not.

Four out of 10 boys (ages 15-19) agree (at least a little) that “getting a girl pregnant will make you feel like a real man.” Half of males ages 12-19 agreed that teen boys often receive the message that “sex and pregnancy are not a big deal.”

FIGURE 5: Percentage of 15- to 19-Year-Old Males Believing “Getting a Girl Pregnant Will Make You Feel Like a Real Man, 1995



What would you say to a male teen who was thinking this way? Half of boys and 4 out of 10 girls say they “have never really thought about what my life would be like if I got pregnant/got someone pregnant as a teen.” Have you ever thought about that? Is it responsible to have sex if you haven’t even thought about how that would affect you, the other person and the child?

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy 2003

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CHANGE MINDS & TRANSFORM LIVES!**

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☐ Yes! I am enclosing _____, (\$10 for student, \$15 for adult or \$30 family annual membership) in Free Teens USA which includes subscription to Free Teens newsletter and other benefits).

☐ I would like to support the work of Free Teens to promote a risk-free lifestyle. Enclosed is my donation for _____. Free Teens USA, inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, educational organization (EIN 22-3301766). All donations are tax-deductible.

Please send to:
Institute for Relationship Intelligence
P.O. Box 97
Westwood, N.J. 07675

The Impact of Relationship Intelligence Training

During the last decade *Relationship Intelligence Training* has been offered to more than 100,000 students ages 12 to 18 in New York and New Jersey with funding from the NJ Department of Health and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Independent analysis of surveys by the New Jersey Department of Health before and after students received Relationship Intelligence education revealed significant ($p < .001$), dramatic increases in attitudes and intentions to delay sexual involvement.¹

2000 & 2002 evaluations of Relationship Intelligence Training by NJ Dept. of Health

Statement	Increase
Not having sex is a normal part of dating.	128%
My friends think it's okay for people my age to not have sex.	66%
I plan to not have sex when I date.	72%

2003 & 2007 evaluations of Relationship Intelligence Training by NJ Dept. of Health

Statement	Increase
Using drugs or alcohol increases your chance of becoming sexually active.	86%
I plan to abstain from sex until I get married.	63%
A teen who has had sex is able to stop being sexually active.	87%

Since 1998 when the Institute for Relationship Intelligence began to offer educational and after-school youth development programs in Jersey City and Paterson, birth rates among unmarried 10-19 year-olds in Jersey City dropped by 36% and in Paterson by 28% (1998 level compared with 2001 to 2007). In demographically similar Elizabeth, Plainfield and Passaic City, which had no risk-avoidance classroom education, the reductions were only 8%. Overall, births to unmarried girls ages 10-19 in New Jersey dropped 17%.²

1. Report for NJ Department of Health prepared by Dr. Joseph Donnelly, Montclair State University.

2. <http://njshad.doh.state.nj.us/birmunage1220.html> for 2001-2005.

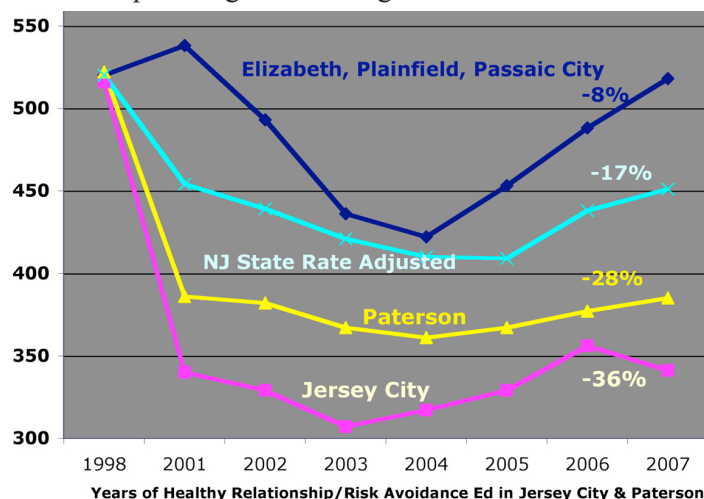
For 2006 & 2007 data, <http://www4.state.nj.us/dhss-shad/query/builder/birth/BirthBirthCnty/Count.html>.

3. <http://teenpregnancy.org/costs/tables.asp>

Relationship Intelligence Training Education Saves Taxpayers MILLIONS

Teen Births in NJ Cities w&w /o

Relationship Intelligence Training Risk Avoidance Education



The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has estimated that teen child-bearing costs in New Jersey cost NJ taxpayers \$3.3 billion over a 14 year period, or \$27,341 per birth.³ The average 15% extra reduction in teen births in Jersey City and Paterson (above the statewide average reduction of 17%) contributed to by intensive RIT healthy relationship/risk-avoidance education (1,161 of 2322 less births from 2001- 2007) has resulted in a projected savings of \$ 31,742,901 in federal, state and local expenditures for public health care, child welfare, incarceration and lost tax revenue over a 14 year period.

Devastated Teen Grows Into A Strong Man



Benjamin Hoffman, "Strong Man," Parade magazine, November 21, 2010

At the age of 17, Tyler Carron lost both of his legs in a car accident in 2007. He had so much pain, he wanted to jump out of his hospital bed. He felt so much fear because he felt trapped, a 17 year-old with no legs. Slowly, with the support of his family and friends, he realized "how lucky I am to be alive." Now he enters bodybuilding competitions and runs a business. He says, "I like being an inspiration for others. It's all mental toughness. I don't have legs, but whatever. I still do the same things I did."

Willpower: It's in Your Head

(Continued from Page 1)

The Stanford scientists also studied this phenomenon in the real world. In one study, they followed 153 college students over five weeks. During stressful times, like final-exam week, students who believed that willpower was not limited reported eating less junk food and procrastinating less than students who did not share that belief. They also showed more academic growth, earning better grades than their “pessimistic” counterparts.

When they taught college students that willpower was not so limited, they showed similar increases in willpower. They reported procrastinating only once or twice a week instead of the two to three times a week reported by students in a control condition, and they cut down on excess spending, going beyond their budgets less than once a week instead of once or twice a week.

Based on Greg Walton and Carol Dweck's November 26, 2011 article “Willpower: It's in Your Head,” New York Times, (http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/27/opinion/sunday/willpower-its-in-your-head.html?_r=1)

Greg Walton is an assistant professor of psychology at Stanford. Carol Dweck, a professor of psychology at Stanford, is the author of “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success.”

2012 Events

Free Teens Media Summit: March 23,24,25

Free Teens 2012 Annual Banquet: June 2, 2012

For more information, visit www.FreeTeensYouth.org.



**Free Teens
Dance-on!**



**Crowning of Princess
Evangela Dux Faulkner as
Miss Free Teens Princess
2011**



**Dance
Performance**

‘Yes’ to a full *Free Teen* life

(Continued from Page 1)

“The organization promotes sexual abstinence until marriage and abstaining from alcohol and drugs and any other negative influence in the lives of teens. We learn refusal skills through skits, develop leadership and learn about building healthy and happy relationships,” she reports.

Free Teens USA also works to change the media culture that tends to “glamorize negative teen behaviors.” Brittnee supports efforts by the organization and parents that promote positive images and lifestyles of teens. “We have the power to protest about what kids are being exposed to in the media,” she exclaims.

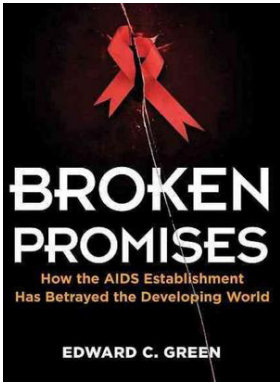
“For kids who struggle, even if they don’t have a support system, go find help anywhere! Don’t bottle things up! Find an escape route that doesn’t hurt you. Find something that helps you because there is always help, even if it isn’t in your family,” implores Brittnee.

“When one teen is successful then that ought to be celebrated, not envied. We have to be happy for one another. Unfortunately, there are some people who are put off by me, the organization and maybe even by my personal choices of abstinence and chastity, and that makes me sad because I may be a little different but all I want to do is to help others.”

Julie Edwards-Pinnock, the Jersey City Coordinator of Free Teens, USA says, “Brittnee is equipped with the information and leadership skills to make a difference in the lives of her peers.” No greater truth has ever been spoken.

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BROKEN PROMISES:
How the AIDS Establishment has Betrayed the Developing World



This book presents a brutally honest discussion not just about AIDS prevention, but also about the corruption of science and the triumph of ideology over evidence and common sense. It is heartbreaking because it shows how political correctness, arrogance among Western “experts” and a herd mentality have contributed to the needless deaths of millions, but it is also hopeful in that it shows how the commitment of a few can begin to open people’s eyes...

While I was a fan of his earlier work, Rethinking AIDS Prevention, this book is much more readable and accessible to a larger audience. It was published this year by PoliPoint Press in Sausalito, CA. Well worth your time!

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***Relationship Intelligence* Education Found to be “Strong, Substantive and Compelling”**

The 2010 evaluation of the *Relationship Intelligence* education, conducted by the Institute for Research and Evaluation in Salt Lake, Utah, found that the program was effective in impacting students’ pro-abstinence values, future orientation, self-efficacy to delay sexual involvement, independence from peer pressure, and intentions to delay sex, which, the Institute points out, is particularly important since this is the “strongest predictor of teens’ actual sexual behavior.”

When compared with a comparison group, youth exposed to *Relationship Intelligence* education “improved at a significantly greater rate than students at the comparison school,” whose scores on the six factors studied all declined.

“*Relationship Intelligence* education had a stronger influence with High Risk and Moderate Risk youth than with Low Risk youth. Nevertheless, the positive movement with Low Risk youth (pushing all six mediators above critical threshold) suggests their message is reaching youth from a variety of sexual health perspectives. The program had a strong influence with all grades across the board revealing the highest change score in the 11th and 12th grades.”

The evaluation concluded that the *Relationship Intelligence* program data is “is strong and substantive and has demonstrated impressive and significant behavioral change based on their movement across all mediators. The rate of change is compelling.”

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