



April 28, 2010

Dear Colleagues and Friends of Carlbrook:

Following distribution of our white paper summary several weeks ago we received several requests for further information regarding substance abuse programming at Carlbrook School. Some of the inquiries specifically asked for a more comprehensive understanding of what we are currently doing to address substance abuse issues that co-occur with other behavioral problems. I decided a review of our current on-campus recovery maintenance offerings would best address these requests.

Although our Alumni and Transition Services (ATS) department is certainly an important determinant in program efficacy, for the sake of clarity I will not address those services in this letter. More information on this and related elements of the School's curriculum will be forthcoming in a separate mailer.

Regarding our substance abuse programming please consider the following:

1. Carlbrook is a competitive non-traditional boarding school that employs a holistic approach to prepare bright, at-risk youth for college by fostering significant academic advancement and addressing systemic and clinical issues. Among the School's many offerings is an innovative and robust recovery maintenance program.
2. Carlbrook now has direct links to the medical centers at both Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and has utilized nationally recognized experts in the field of substance abuse treatment to train our counseling faculty. Specialty services from these institutions have been integrated into the school's substance abuse programming, including information about the developing adolescent brain presented by one of the country's leading scientists in this area, Dr. Aaron White.
3. Carlbrook understands that substance abuse and particularly substance dependency (addiction) are complex phenomena defined by the interplay of biological vulnerability, psychological liability, social context and spiritual bankruptcy. While not all Carlbrook students have a history of substance use, those students who do are provided interventions individually tailored to address their needs and the needs of their family.
4. Carlbrook takes the history of substance use/abuse in its student population very seriously and has instituted the following substance-abuse specific interventions in addition to our Alumni & Transition (aftercare) Services:
 - a. Routine drug and alcohol screening for the entire school.
 - b. Brain 101 - a one-term academic course offered to all students focusing on the science of brain development and health, particularly with regards to the impact of substance use. Through the study of applicable topics in biology, neurology and biochemistry, students are given the ability to evaluate their level of risk and begin to examine the impact that potential drug use has on their brain and future. So as to provide a better understanding of some of the content covered in this course, please

find enclosed a simple supplement to the course text that was recently developed for our specific purposes.

- c. Individual clinical offerings for students identified as being at risk for substance abuse following graduation using the best practice guidelines of Motivational Enhancement Therapy.
 - d. Substance abuse lectures, materials and guidance offered to parents during all parent conferences.
 - e. The Family Brain Defense Weekend: an intensive three-day conference for parents and their child utilizing a family systems and developmental model to engage them in supporting their student's recovery while examining the necessary changes that must be made at home - including examination of parental drug and alcohol use.
 - f. Recovery Maintenance Groups: time-limited multi-session groups for all students focusing on the prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use during the transition process, with the goal of supporting abstinence for a minimum of six months to one year following graduation. 12-step facilitation takes place during this group and includes the opportunity for students to interact with college students in recovery and actively involved in AA.
5. It should be noted that while Carlbrook is supportive of students who utilize a 12-step model, the School is sensitive to the understanding that this approach is not for everyone; as such, other treatment interventions are available when needed. These include Motivational Enhancement Therapy, Rational Behavior Training, Gestalt therapy, family therapy and insight-oriented therapy among others.
 6. Carlbrook also utilizes the trans-theoretical model of change (Stages of Change) to help both family and students understand their experience and prepare themselves for the probable "bumps in the road" that are inherent in the change process.
 7. Lastly, Carlbrook worked with professionals from Duke University Medical Center in 2006 to sponsor a comprehensive academic survey of its past and present student population and faculty, thus creating a baseline for future comparison. The School then engaged in an exhaustive follow-up survey in 2009 that documented improvement in services provided, student and parent satisfaction with Alumni & Transition Services and a significant reduction in substance abuse following graduation.

Consistent with the School's commitment to on-going improvement in program efficacy in all curricular areas, our efforts to combat recidivism fueled by substance abuse are substantial. Such initiative and attention to detail are clearly making a difference in the lives of not only our students but their families as well, and we are excited to continue the School's tradition of constantly seeking to develop and enhance our programming in ways that directly benefit our clientele.

Please do not hesitate to call with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your time and attention and we look forward to working with appropriate students as they present in your office.

Respectfully,

Gillan Smith, Ph.D.
Dean of Advising