

# Healthy Futures

# News Views

An Educational Newsletter Covering Eating Disorder Treatment and Other Mental Health Issues ~September 2012~ Vol. 1, Issue 3

## Back-to-school edition

# Sound sleep vital to student success

Students returning to school after summer break often can be seen with their new class schedule in hand. After all, knowing math is second period and science is after lunch is important.

According to Healthy Futures team member Sheri Robenstine, MA, another schedule is just as vital for students – their sleep schedule.

“The American Pediatric Association recommends nine hours of sleep for adolescents, which means that if you’re not getting nine hours of sleep you’re not able to focus in school and your emotional stability is not at its maximum,” Robenstine says.



Sheri Robenstine, MA

The consequences of sleep deprivation, especially in young people, are real and seri-

ous. There are physical health issues to consider, as well as cognitive ones. A lack of sleep impairs a student’s concentration and problem-solving abilities.

Further, the brain consolidates and stores memories during deep sleep, so a student who isn’t sleeping enough, literally cannot remember lessons from school as well.

Robenstine says one of the best ways to ensure students get adequate sleep is to establish

a steady schedule.

“Nine hours of sleep is really what’s needed for you to be at your very, very best, so make sure you have a stable routine for getting into bed and getting out of bed early in the morning,” she says.

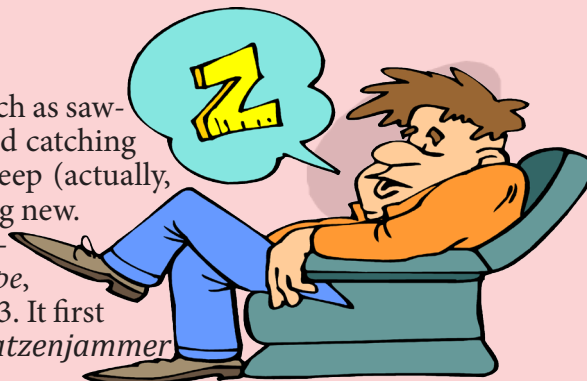
### **Other tips**

• Many kids include TV watching as part of their wind-down routine at the end of the day, and although vegging out on the sofa might seem like a good idea, it’s actually counter productive. The light from TVs and computer screens (yes, smart phones and tablets, too) can delay melatonin production. Melatonin is hormone that regulates other hormones and maintains the body’s circadian rhythm.

• Keeping bedrooms cool can promote better sleep. Our circadian rhythm system is light sensitive and temperature sensitive, so a dark, cool room means we fall asleep faster and stay in REM sleep longer.

## WHY Z?

Sleep has several nicknames, such as sawing logs, getting some shut-eye and catching some Zs. The representation of sleep (actually, snoring) by a series of Zs is nothing new. Cecil Adams, author of the newspaper column *The Straight Dope*, traced the origin of Zs back to 1903. It first appeared in a comic strip called *Katzenjammer Kids* by Rudolph Dirks.



# Intern program another way HF supports education

Healthy Futures supports education!

That message is clear not only in the way Healthy Futures consistently sponsors youth activities, educational events and organizations, but also by inviting mental health students to join the team and gain knowledge and experience in the field.

Healthy Futures Director, Mia S. Elwood, said she began inviting post-graduate interns to Healthy Futures in 2005 and the experience is always rewarding for both parties.

What's more, the internship program allows Healthy Futures to offer reduced-fee counseling services.

In this program, clients attend helpful sessions with an intern. Meanwhile, the counseling students are supervised several hours weekly by



Counseling students, Samantha Kurkjian, left, and Victoria Del Vecchio, are this year's interns at Healthy Futures.

an experienced Licensed Clinical Social Worker or a licensed psychologist.

The interns, who are completing post-graduate degrees, work and learn with the Healthy Futures team for a year. Once the internship is complete, the student receives course credits, but also invaluable insight and experience in the career

of counseling and mental health.

## Sam and Tori

This year's new interns are Samantha "Sam" Kurkjian and Victoria "Tori" Del Vecchio.

Sam is training in the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program, as well as a specialty in Sport and Exercise Psychology, at

the Arizona School of Professional Psychology, at Argosy University in Phoenix.

She moved to Phoenix from Chicago two years ago to attend graduate school after completing her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology at Northern Illinois University. Sam's previous experience includes a 12-month practicum placement in a substance abuse recovery facility.

Her goal in psychology is to work with elite athletes in both college and professional settings. In the future, Sam aspires to treat the psychological problems that often occur within the athletic population, as well as to assist professional athletes with a variety of transition issues.

Tori moved to Arizona from New York when she was seven. She graduated from The State University of New York at Buffalo with a B.A. in psychology.

She is in her final year of two programs: one at Argosy University for a master's degree in mental health counseling, and the other at Paradise Valley Community College for her Dietetic Technician, Registered (DTR) credentials.

With both degrees, she hopes to specialize in treatment for individuals with eating disorders.

*For more information about the reduced-fee counseling, please call (480) 451-8500.*

## Victims of bullying encouraged to seek help

Not long ago, bullying was shrugged off as nothing more than a childhood rite of passage. Thankfully, those attitudes are changing and the issue is being treated more seriously.

And with just cause.

The effects of both physical and psychological bullying can be serious and long lasting. They can include insomnia, anxiety, depression, and even symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Whether a bully is

physically hurting someone, or degrading a target with taunts and name calling, victims often can feel helpless against their attacker, which can lead to low self worth.

Dr. J.R. Evans, a licensed psychologist and Healthy Futures team member, says victims of bullying should seek help immediately.

"For all those kids who may be struggling with bullying, one of the things I encourage you to do is talk to somebody.



Dr. J.R. Evans

Find somebody – whether it's at home, among your friends, or at school – that feels safe and tell them what is happening. Please do not hold onto that shame inside. Bullying is not OK," he said.