

The

HiTOPS Guardian

Helping adolescents make responsible decisions for brighter futures

Winter 2009

A Gift That Keeps on Giving

Gifts are funny things. When I graduated from high school, my mother gave me a membership to the automobile club. I must say, I was less than enthusiastic at age 17—in fact, I think I was downright miffed! Over time, however, I did come to realize that the gift represented many valuable things—my mother's desire for me to be an independent woman, her need to protect me without seeming over-protective and her interest in my developing an appreciation for the wise and practical, rather than the flashy or sexy.

HiTOPS has recently received such a wise and practical gift and I am so happy to share the news with our extended HiTOPS family. HiTOPS is the proud and honored recipient of a \$500K gift from the J. Seward Johnson, Sr. 1963 Charitable Trust. This gift represents many things to HiTOPS and we are over-the-moon excited (and nothing even resembling miffed about it)!!

For the staff of HiTOPS, many of whom have been with the organization for more than 15 years and all of whom are incredibly passionate and dedicated to our mission, this gift offers acknowledgement of their hard work and the importance of that work in our community. It is a wise and practical gift because the funds are to be invested and used to generate income, which we

will be able to use to support our mission to promote adolescent health through education and clinical services. It is not a quick fix, or a Band-Aid during hard economic times—but a thoughtful approach to assure that HiTOPS will be here to serve the community now and into the future.

Because the gift is to be invested and protected for our future, we must honor the Trust by ensuring that HiTOPS will be here to provide much-needed services—especially as families lose health insurance and income during this financially challenging climate. Please make your 2009 donation now. The continued day-to-day support from our community is critical in order for us to serve each and every client who walks through our doors, and every school and parent group that needs our educational outreach.

We thank the J. Seward Johnson, Sr. 1963 Charitable Trust for their wealth of wisdom and support. These are really gifts that keep on giving. Please join us in celebrating the naming of our Health Center, *The J. Seward Johnson, Sr., Center for Adolescent Health*, on April 23rd.

Elizabeth M. Casparian, PhD
Executive Director

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HiTOPS, Inc., Teen Health and Education Center

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See a copy of our annual report on our website, www.hitops.org, or call HiTOPS for a printed copy.

Parent Place

Health Care During the Teenage Years

Q: My daughter is 17 and doesn't want to go to the pediatrician anymore. She says her friends go to HiTOPS, but I'm not sure that's the right place for her either. Should I take her to my gynecologist?

A: Many teens feel that they have outgrown their pediatrician's office but they also resist going to their mother's doctor. Many of our clients utilize the services of the Health Center during those 'awkward years' of transition from pediatrics to internal medicine or gynecology. Both our female and male clients report that they like the nurse practitioner model that focuses on wellness and education.

For over 20 years, the HiTOPS Health Center has provided confi-

dential health care to female and male youth, ages 13 to 26. The Health Center is staffed by nurse mid-wives, family and pediatric nurse practitioners, and a registered nurse. Our clients receive expert care from these very seasoned and knowledgeable clinicians. We focus on the standard health concerns of our clients and we have a process in place for consultation with our affiliated physicians for atypical problems, the Delaware Valley Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Infertility Group, P.C. and Princeton Urology Group.

Teens come to the Health Center for camp, work or sports physicals, for well-woman gynecology, testing and treatment of infections, birth control methods and smoking cessation. We provide screening and

referral for eating disorders, depression, and alcohol and drug treatment. Of utmost importance is the time we spend with our clients. Our time spent on education and prevention strategies is one of the number one reasons clients return to the Center. In addition, our clients report that we meet their needs because of our accessible location, flexible hours, teen friendly environment, and our expertise.

The Health Center is open for appointments Monday through Friday and two Saturday afternoons per month. In addition to our regular fees, we offer a sliding scale fee structure based on whether a client is in high school, out of high school or employed. ❁

Teen Spot

Answered by HiTOPS Education Staff

Q: I have a rash and I am worried I have some kind of disease. Does a rash mean I could have a sexually transmitted infection? Is it contagious?

A: This is one of the most common questions that young men ask at the Health Center. Though we cannot diagnose a rash without seeing it, the rash that you speak of may be in the crease of the groin, bright red and very itchy. It occurs commonly in the summer after sweating or in the winter after wearing layers of clothing. Sometimes the skin becomes scaly around the edges and sometimes there are small bumps. This is typically a fungal infection, called Tinea Cruris (commonly called "Jock Itch"), which is treated with a prescription anti-fungal cream (such as Lotrimin) applied twice daily for 10-14 days. In addition, absorbent powders, not necessarily medicated (Zeasorb), help to control moisture and prevent re-infection. A fungal infection of this nature is not contagious.

So no, a rash is typically not indicative of a sexually transmitted infection. If, however, you are worried about an STI, you need to ask yourself if your sexual behavior has put you at risk for a sexually transmitted infection. If you have had sexual activity without a condom, had inconsistent condom use, have signs or symptoms of burning with urination, discharge, unusual bumps or sores, or contact with a partner who tells you they have an STI or multiple partners, you should make an appointment. We can answer all of your questions confidentially. Also, we will educate you about all of the STIs and discuss risk reduction strategies. This would be an opportunity to learn and to begin to incorporate prevention as part of developing healthy life-long habits. ❁

HiTOPS Happenings

iQuit and HiTOPS at the Movies

We are excited to encourage all of our supporters to go to the movies between now and the end of January to see the iQuit advertisement that is running prior to the movie on all screens at Hamilton AMC-24 and the Princeton Market Fair theaters. Whether you like vampires or dogs, Australia or Madagascar, 007 or Santa, we are sure that you will like the advertise-

ment for the iQuit smoking cessation program at HiTOPS.

The ad highlights aspects of smoking that young people find unappealing—yellow teeth, bad breath, smelling bad. According to websites like www.thescooponsmoking.org, 86% of teens would rather not date someone who smokes—who wants to kiss an ashtray? Most importantly, the ad

highlights our iQuit website, www.iquitathitops.com, which gives people total access to the iQuit program of podcasts and on-line support.

We hope you will cheer for HiTOPS at the movies this season but if you don't make it by January, don't worry. The ad will run again in May and June of 2009, just in time for the summer blockbusters! 🌟

Sex Education in the Obama Administration

Elizabeth Casparian reported that at the November 18 meeting of the National Coalition to Support Sexuality Education, national leaders in the fields of health policy, adolescent health, and sexuality education discussed how our youth in public schools nationwide will learn about sexual health in the Obama Administration.

Recent research findings suggest that abstinence-only pregnancy prevention and STI risk reduction programs do not work to help youth make better decisions about their health. At the time of the meeting, 25 states had rejected abstinence-only-until-marriage funding. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) appears to be the approach that will be favored. Evidence-based

interventions that teach about abstinence, healthy relationships, contraception, decision-making, communication, self-respect, and condom use and include components to help parents talk with their teens will most likely be promoted in future public health policies.

HiTOPS' model for adolescent health care and Teen PEP (run in collaboration with the Princeton Center for Leadership Training and the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services) are positioned to assist school districts and states adapt programs that can help youth access services and develop the skills they need to make healthy decisions, stay in school and have bright futures. 🌟

TEEN HEALTH CENTER

Hours for appointments:

Mon: 10-Noon & 1-6pm
Tues/Fri: 9-Noon & 1-5pm
Wed: 1-6pm
Thurs: 10-Noon & 1-7pm
Two Sats/month: 1-5pm

Tel: 609-683-5155 ext. 211

CENTRO DE SALUD

Horarios para las citas:

Lunes: 10am-12pm y 1pm- 6pm
Martes/Viernes: 9am-5pm cerrado
12-1pm
Miercoles: 1pm-6pm
Jueves: 10am-7pm cerrado 12-1pm
Sabado- Dos por mes 1-5pm

Tel: 609-683-5155 ext. 211

Hablamos Español

A Call to Former Teen Council Members!

If you are a former Teen Council member or know someone who is, please contact HiTOPS at 609-683-5155 ext. 216 to give us current contact information.

We'd love to hear from you!

Meet Our Staff

A Conversation with Elizabeth M. Casparian

What brought you to seek employment at HiTOPS? Why did you want to work at HiTOPS?

When I was serving as the HiTOPS Board president in 2004, I was helping the staff interview candidates for the Education Director position. The search was taking a long time, and we were not seeing qualified candidates. One of the Ed staff members called me and suggested that I apply for the job. I realized, after that call, that I was qualified and was ready to move from volunteer to employee. I resigned from the Board, applied for the position, was interviewed, received an offer and accepted it—all in less than a week!

How do you spend your time at HiTOPS? What does your typical day look like?

For four years as Education Director,

I spent much of my time in the community representing HiTOPS at schools and organizations and teaching parent programs as well as managing the Education Department. As Executive Director, I am out in the community more, teaching less, working with the Board of Directors and helping to manage more aspects



*Elizabeth M. Casparian, PhD
Executive Director*

of the organization. I still have lunch with the staff as often as possible—it feeds my soul.

What do you like doing most at HiTOPS?

I love going out into the community, both locally and nationally, to talk about the work HiTOPS does. I also love meeting with HiTOPS' friends and donors, giving parent programs, and accompanying the Teen Council on workshops.

What has been different about working at HiTOPS than at other places where you have been employed?

The staff at HiTOPS are some of the most dedicated, passionate, smart, and funny people with whom I have ever worked. I think it is a rare and special work environment, and I am so honored to be a part of it. 🌟

In My Own Words

The HiTOPS Health Center helped me to improve my life. There was a big part of me that I was not so aware of...my health. The idea of taking care of my body and staying healthy was a part of my life that I was not that aware of. I was worried that I had a disease, but I kept my worry inside and did not speak to anyone about it. I thought that everyone knew to use protection with sex, so I thought people would view me as dumb because I had not used protection. I was worried all of the time, but I pushed these worries to the back of my mind.

I decided to go to the Health Center for testing. After I learned that my test results were negative, I felt relief and a big sense of accomplishment. Growing up, being responsible, being a man requires that you protect yourself and your partner. You must use a condom every time. Now, I

am more in control of my health.

The HiTOPS Health Center made me feel very secure and "at home." I knew that my care was confidential and that made me feel comfortable. I felt nurtured and I knew that I could rely on the staff for accurate information and good care.

Since coming to the Health Center, I began to share my experiences with my friends. Some listen and some do not pay any attention to my advice. The most important thing for me is the recognition that I am spreading the word about a safe and wonderful Health Center for teens, and that maybe someday, my friends will feel comfortable to get tested and remember my words.

— Nelzo Guerrero,
Health Center Client, Age 25

Support Youth Through HiTOPS

HiTOPS Wishlist

Though the holiday season is over, HiTOPS is still wishing for the following items and services and hope you can help make our wishes come true.

- A sturdy rolling suitcase to help transport needed materials to health fairs, community events, and educational programs.
- A white noise machine to help our health center maintain confidentiality while talking with clients.
- Art supplies for Gay-Straight Alliance projects in schools.
- A radio/CD player for our health center to provide music for our clients in the waiting room.
- A gift card to Staples, which will allow us to buy office supplies.
- Six 12 x 16 plain black picture frames with glass covers which allow us to display a snapshot project on the experience of LGBTQ youth in schools.
- Veggie and cheese platters for our “HiTOPS at the Library,” and other programs.
- An original Wii, the Wii Fit system, and a Wii Fit Balance Board to promote fitness at our “HiTOPS

at the Library” program.

- A gift card to Target, which allows us to buy food and supplies for our SASS and LGBTQ support groups.
- Amazon and Barnes and Noble gift cards to purchase professional development books for staff and our library.
- A membership to the Princeton Chamber of Commerce and/or Mercer Chamber of Commerce to help HiTOPS network with the community.
- A subscription to NJBiz to educate HiTOPS on New Jersey businesses and the state of our economy for our fundraising efforts.
- A renewal of our subscription to the Princeton Packet and a new subscription to the Times of Trenton, to help keep HiTOPS staff and volunteers informed about local community events and concerns.
- HiTOPS branded t-shirts or golf shirts for staff and volunteers to wear during events.
- Gift certificates and prizes for the silent auction at the 2009 Guardian Award Gala.

- Painting the exterior of our main building or the supplies needed to do so ourselves.
- A heavy-duty, crosscut shredder for our Operations Department to enable us to properly dispose of confidential documents.

In addition, we are always grateful for cash donations, gifts of stock, gifts to HiTOPS in honor or memory of loved ones, endowment campaign support, and legacy gifts.

And of course, we wish for volunteers to assist us on an ongoing basis. For more information, please contact Anita at 609-683-5155 ext. 241.

Thanks in advance for everything you do for HiTOPS, and for helping make our wishes come true.

HiTOPS Annual Report now available online!

The 2007-2008 annual report is now available online at www.hitops.org. If you would prefer a hardcopy or an electronic version, please email anita@hitops.org.



HiTOPS is pleased to welcome new staff member Catharine M. Vaucher as our Grant Writer. We are thrilled to have her onboard!

HiTOPS Staff

Elizabeth M. Casparian, PhD
Executive Director
Lindsey C. Fraser
Leonardo Galeano
Anita Gooding
Julie Davidson Meyers, MA
Diana Miranda
Corrine O'Hara, RN
Ivy Pearlstein, RN, MS, APNC
Steve Pitts
Connie Poor, RN
Carolyn Santoro, CHES
Catharine M. Vaucher
Elizabeth Walters, CNM, MS
Sandra Zordan-Friedman, CNM, MSN

HiTOPS Board

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Maria Sophocles, MD
Molly Vernon

Many thanks to Diana Quick for designing the newsletter. Thank you to Church & Dwight for their support of the newsletter.

Calendar

January 2009

- 1 New Year's Day; HiTOPS Closed
- 14 Parent Workshop on Internet Social Networking 7-9pm at HiTOPS
- 15 Jackson Katz follow-up film and discussion for Men and Boys, 7-8:30pm at Princeton High School
- 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; HiTOPS Closed
- 27 Princeton High Teen PEP Family Night at Princeton High School
- 30 HiTOPS at the Library 3:15-4:45pm

February

- 16 President's Day; HiTOPS Closed
- 23 Mother-Daughter Puberty Workshop at Princeton YWCA (call to register) 6:45-8:45pm
- 25 Teen Council Family Night from 7-9pm at the Arts Council of Princeton

March

- 6 HiTOPS at the Library 3:15-4:45pm
- 9 "The Education of Shelby Knox" film viewing and discussion Princeton Public Library community room 7-9pm

April

- 22 Parent Program "It Ain't Easy Being a Teen: Teens and Stress" 7-9pm at HiTOPS
- 23 Naming of HiTOPS Health Center, 5pm at HiTOPS

May

- 8 2009 Guardian Award Gala at Trenton Country Club
- 18 Teen PEP Day of Learning at Hyatt in New Brunswick
- 25 Memorial Day; HiTOPS Closed

For more information on these and other HiTOPS programs, please call 609-683-5155 ext. 218 or email elizabeth@hitops.org

HiTOPS, Inc.
Teen Health and Education Center
21 Wiggins Street
Princeton, NJ 08540

HiTOPS Gala 2009

HiTOPS' 2009 Guardian Award Gala "Nurture the Future" is taking place on May 8, 2009 at the Trenton Country Club. Thanks to an anonymous donor and the HiTOPS Board of Directors **100% of proceeds will go directly to HiTOPS services and NOT to event expenses!**

The gala will honor: Carolyn McQuade, Guardian Lifetime Achievement Award; Cherie Campbell, Guardian Community Award; Shelby Knox, Guardian Youth Award; and Delaware Valley OBGYN and Infertility Group P.C. and Princeton Midwifery Care, Guardian Corporate Award.

For sponsorship opportunities, tickets to the Gala or to learn more about HiTOPS, please contact HiTOPS 609-683-5155 ext. 241 or anita@hitops.org.

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