Book Review
by Linda Jessup

The Creative Force: How Children Create Their Personalities
by Betty Lou Bettner
$12 plus $2.50 postage (US). For more information or purchase, email bbettner@verizon.net

Dr. Betty Lou Bettner has a bright little jewel to add to her growing string of publications. The Creative Force: How Children Create Their Personalities is yet another slim volume which clearly explains in words and with the use of Marcella Ryan Adams’ delightful illustrations, the Adlerian view of personality formation.

The Creative Force begins, appropriately enough, with Adler’s statement that “The individual is the picture and the artist. He is

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Constructive Criticism
Dear Addy...

Guest author is FAMILY! editor Bryna Gamson, from Highland Park, Illinois, semi-retired veteran leader of numerous parent education groups, and parent of three, grandparent of two.

Dear Addy,

My husband, Steve, and I disagree on the virtues of pointing out mistakes to kids. He thinks it’s part of being a good parent, so they’ll do better next time. I have heard that “there is no such thing as constructive criticism.” Can you please comment about the validity of criticism and pointing out kids’ mistakes so they’ll learn to be better, more competent adults?--Wondering Mom

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Teen Driving, Part II:
Major issues covered in PEP’s Course, “Planning For Safe Teen Driving”
by Cheryl Wieker, PEP Executive Director

Why teen driving isn’t “Your Father’s Oldsmobile”
What’s changed since parents of teens learned to drive? They were likely trained in school by teachers who understood pedagogical theory and were there with little profit motive. Now in most states, commercial operations that focus on meeting minimum state requirements are the licensed driver education teachers. When parents got their driver’s licenses the roads were significantly less crowded and there were fewer high-speed multi-lane highways, no cell phones to answer, even Californians hadn’t yet heard the term “road rage” and rollover-prone SUVs were just a twinkle in Detroit’s eye. The amount to be learned is more today – this highly complex task requires training, experience, maturity and judgment.

Understanding Developmental Issues that Lead to Higher Risk
New drivers regardless of age have a higher rate of accidents because of their inexperience. But why do teen drivers have such an alarmingly higher rate? According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control (NCIPC-CDC) teens are: more likely than older drivers to underestimate the dangers in hazardous situations; have less experience coping with the dangers; are more likely to speed, run red lights, make illegal turns, ride with an intoxicated driver; and drive after using alcohol or drugs.

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Meet us for the height of Adlerian camaraderie
Dear Family Education Section Members,

Winter greetings to our membership from your leadership team. It is a pleasure to write for our Family Education Section newsletter for the first time as a co-chair. I have felt welcomed from the moment the vote was taken in our section meeting at the Chicago conference, and I’d like to share some reflections from the October COR meeting in Hershey, PA.

As a first time section representative, I was nervous, curious, and excited to travel to Hershey, PA for the COR meeting of Board members, Section representatives, and Affiliate representatives. I believed that the main purpose of the meeting was to work out details for the upcoming conference in Vancouver, BC on May 24-27. We did have time to meet as Section representatives to go over all of the proposals that were submitted for the conference, and to mark our favorites for consideration by the conference chair person, Joyce McKay. This was an exciting prospect as our Section was blessed with a large number of proposals from which to decide. (See details in this newsletter! page 7)

But, it didn’t take me long to see that there was a great deal more to be discussed and considered at this meeting. This is a group that is very concerned with effective leadership. In the meeting, people discussed ways for the Board to be more inclusive of all of the groups that make up the membership of NASAP. Participative leadership based on cooperation and inclusion, all of the basic Adlerian beliefs, is not necessarily easy. I can practically hear the voices of any of you who have tried to lead a family by sharing power through family meetings, rise in agreement with this statement!

There was also time for social interaction outside the work of the group. Meal times were great for meeting new people and relaxing. The weather was cool and crisp while we were there, and the trees were all decked out in their fall colors. It is true that you can literally smell the chocolate when you take a walk outside in Hershey! And, there was chocolate to nibble at all times during our meetings. We took a trip to Hershey’s Chocolate World, where many of us stocked up for Christmas! We dined together at a wonderful little Italian restaurant on our last night, and it was fun to celebrate all that we’d accomplished.

And, I do want to let this group know that it was very clear to me, the New Kid on the Block, that the Family Education Section is very well respected by the COR membership. We have the efforts of Alyson Schäfer, Mary Hughes, and Bryna Gamson to thank for that! We are clearly viewed as a group that gets things done!

I sure hope you are planning to join us in Vancouver. We are having a Sections Breakfast for the first time. There will be much to enjoy and learn about in Vancouver!

Stay in touch. We’re only a phone call or email away!

Warm wishes from your Co-Chair,
Dina Emser, along with Alyson Schäfer

Adlerian Wisdom

- Take time for training and teaching the child essential skills and habits. Don’t attempt to train in a moment of conflict or in company.

- Never do for a child what he can do for himself. A dependent child is a demanding child.

-- from ABCs of Guiding the Child by Rudolf Dreikurs, MD and Margaret Goldman

Available from the Adler School of Professional Psychology, Chicago

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Family Education Section of the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology/NASAP
Adventures in Publishing!

Alyson Schäfer shares her experience writing Breaking the Good Mom Myth (see review page 5)

It’s been two years, two deadline extensions, six full re-writes of draft versions, and a few grey hairs, but I can finally say it: I wrote a book! I learned so much about writing, marketing and publishing in these last 24 months that I wanted to share a few of the key points I learned along the way in case any of you are inspired to go this route and I really think more of us should be!

So here are a few things I learned that I think you might find helpful:

1) I really had no idea how important it was to be an author for the advancement of my career until I had this book deal. Here I spent 5 years working on getting my MA in counselling, I even had my own cable TV show, but it seems that what makes you fully “bona fide” is being an “author.” If you want a speaking career or national exposure - you MUST write a book!

2) Publishers are in the business of selling books to make a profit. Period. That means they scrutinize a book for its ability to sell, not the merit of the content per se. The book has to be able to capture the attention of the media who are the ones who really get the BUZZ going. Your book title and premise has to be able to generate a one page press release that sounds intriguing enough to the TV, radio, newspapers that they want to interview you. I have been told that generic topics like “discipline” is over done so you have to find your unique edge / angle / story so your stuff stands out from the rest.

3) It takes a LONG time to write. I

Teen Driving...continued from page 1

They have the lowest rate of seat belt usage, and the more passengers they carry, the more likely the accident.

Inexperience and developmental theories provide the explanation for these negative driving behaviors and statistics. Inexperience can be overcome only two ways – training and practice. Parents who understand the risks commit themselves to extra time spent in driving training in addition to carpooling, homework help, and all the other requirements for raising healthy adolescents.

Teens “misperception of risk” has been demonstrated in studies where adults and teens watch the same (non-driving) video and assess the risks. Teens always identify less risk than actually exists. They also are more optimistic, most believing that their driving skills are above average, and that they are therefore less likely to crash. They don’t believe that crashes can happen to them, and therefore they are less likely to wear seat belts, follow speed limits, and stop at yellow stoplights. In an IIHS sponsored study in 12 New England high schools last year, an almost unbelievable 46 percent of teens being dropped off at school weren’t wearing seat belts.

“Distractibility” might not be a word that Webster’s knows, but all parents do. Teens have not yet fully developed their powers of concentration, especially when it comes to the important skill of ignoring some stimuli while concentrating on multiple others. A Johns Hopkins School of Public Health study conducted in 2001 found that a teen’s risk of dying in a car accident increased sharply when the teen carried other teen passengers. A 16-year old carrying one teen passenger was 39 percent more likely to die than a teen driving without a teen passenger. Two teen passengers increased the risk by 86 percent. Three or more teen passengers nearly doubled the risk of death. The risk was even higher among 17 year olds. For parents of teens with an ADHD diagnosis, a smooth and safe transition to driving is likely to be more gradual and more complex. See the resources below for suggestions.

The adolescent years are well known for the important developmental phase during which teens accelerate their differentiation from the family unit. Their peer group becomes their reference point. The need for positive regard by their peers becomes a major force. This continues through the teen driving years. Peer pressure can be a positive or negative motivator and helping adolescents build and maintain a strong sense of individual self to inoculate against negative peer driving pressure is a critical parental task.

Sensation seeking is a powerful and risky motivator for many young drivers according to DOT-NHTSA. Male teens are especially susceptible. In 2004 the motor vehicle death rate for male occupants ages 16-19 was nearly twice that of their female counterparts.

Most adults remember one or two examples of acquaintances lost in teen years during drag races, drunk driving, and losing control of the automobile while showing off fast starts, fast stops and severe turns. Sadly, every few months we read about area teen drivers and passengers killed in sensation seeking driving accidents. In 2004, 26 percent of drivers ages 15-20 who died in motor vehicle crashes nationwide had been drinking alcohol and according to CDC, teens who drink and drive are more likely...
Teen Driving, continued from page 3
to hurt themselves and others than are adults who engage in the same risky behaviors.

Mistakes of Inexperienced Drivers
Driving errors account for many teen fatalities. DOT statistics show that crashes involving young drivers typically are single vehicle, primarily run-off-the-road crashes. The major problem areas are

• Speeding
• Over-correction
• Getting the vehicle stopped in time
• Merging onto multi-lane highways
• Switching lanes
• Recovering from driving errors
• Anticipating and responding to hazardous situations

Getting Families to Plan for Safe Teen Driving
Parents can successfully work with their teens to lower the risks associated with teen driving. According to Dr. Duane Alexander, director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at NIH, recent studies show that “by restricting driving to less risky driving conditions, parents can reduce the extremely high likelihood of a crash by their teenagers during their first year of driving.”

Avoiding unhealthy power struggles with teens by working together on a Family Driving Agreement, rather than by autocratically setting down limits. Compliance with the plan will be greatly increased if the adolescent isn’t surprised by the parents concerns, and participates in the plan’s development. This means that the teen is involved in the discussion, helps research, write and/or modify the plan. S/he proposes limits that s/he thinks are reasonable (with the appropriate rationale) and consequences for not following the limits, as well as reacts responsibly to your suggestions. The role of the parents is also described in the agreement. A good agreement is respectful of all parties, done in advance, written, and uses indicators that are specifically described. Importantly, consequences for not following the agreement are known in advance and related to the misbehavior.

Some of the critical areas to be covered by family agreements are:
• Indicators of readiness and sustained maturity
• Specific skills that must be learned before the learner’s permit can be applied for (car maintenance, map reading, emergency procedures)
• Issues related to additional costs of insurance, maintenance and upkeep
• Safety (seat belts, communicating when arriving at destination)
• Procedures for advance approval of destinations, schedules, as well as changes to plans
• Obligations to use car for family work (picking up siblings, dry cleaning, etc.)
• Use of distracting items like cell phones, radios and CD players, and eating.
• Graduated limits on: passengers, time of day, destinations, distance from home, road types, weather conditions, length of practice driving sessions.
• Consequences for not following the agreement: without listing every situation, be specific about a range of consequences – from mild (losing driving privileges for a few days after forgetting to call) to dire (a couple of months for a ticket, or multiple months for a second ticket or preventable crash).

Resources to help parents develop a Family Driving Agreement are available through the state motor vehicle departments, US DOT and online. See the resources listing at the conclusion of this article. With a good Family Driving Agreement in place, teens will have a much better chance of avoiding accidents and parents will have additional peace of mind, and the positive relationship between the parent and child will continue.

Progressive Steps to developing a Safe Teen Driving Plan – by age

preteen
• parents research, get organized, make a plan, talk to other parents
• parents modify own negative driving behaviors
• seat belt usage and requirement is non-negotiable
• parents begin driver education by pointing out positive ways and negative ways other drivers act
• map reading skills are strengthened

Age 13
• talk about expectations - directly if child brings up, indirectly otherwise
• when you next replace your car– choose a mid-sized non-performance car with safety features

Age 14
• establish limits on your child as a passenger in a new driver’s auto -specific skill build up (map reading, directions, car maintenance)
• start discussing with teens topics that will be covered in the driving agreement – either casually or in a planned discussion
• attend a parent-child discussion on preparing for teen driving
• discuss the child’s possible contribution to insurance and other car related expenses

Age 15
• solicit teen’s concerns and questions about the Teen Driving Agreement
• parents review the information you have about your child’s development – will s/he be ready to get a Learner’s Permit in 6 or 9 months? If not, maintain a good relationship by talking to them about your concerns so they won’t... continues on page 6
Member Mailbag/More Publications!

Saskatoon Adlerian Society announces a new publication


is now available for sale from The Saskatoon Adlerian Society. Editors are Beth Johnson and Janice Solem. This revised and expanded edition is an excellent tool for training Parent Education Facilitators, and it is a valuable resource for those already leading groups. Over 100 pages of reproducible handouts are included.

The expanded section of Session Plans now includes a wide variety of material on the following topics: • Getting Started • Family Relationships • Family Constellation • Encouragement • Communication • Goals of Behavior • Discipline • Problem Solving and Family Meetings • Dealing with Feelings, Anger, and Stress • Children’s Fights and Other Parenting Challenges

Cost: $75 US, $85 Cdn with a 10% discount for orders of 10 or more. Contact: Saskatoon Adlerian Society at 306-975-0885 or sask.adlerian@sasktel.net

Alyson Schäfer’s new book gets accolades from published review excerpted below with permission

Calgary's News & Entertainment Weekly® Vol. 12 #1 Th Dec 14, 2006
BOOKS (review) • by CHRISTY MACKINTOSH


“I want to encourage parents. I wanted to make (this book) funny. Humour is a huge part of therapy and mental health.”

......Behind all the humour is a sound practice set firmly in theory. Schäfer’s work is based on the teachings of the famous Austrian physician and psychiatrist, Alfred Adler (1870-1937), and his principles of individual psychology.

......After easing us into the book with a gentle pep talk on self-care, Schäfer hits us with the critical tenets of Adlerian theory in chapter two, Myth: My Children are a Reflection of Me. She introduces, in simple terms, Adler’s “slow” model of democratic parenting, explaining the important differences between this and the “fast-fix,” autocratic approach of “Father (or mother) knows best.” ...but Schäfer doesn’t overwhelm us with the usual psychobabble found in clinical psychology texts..... Instead, Schäfer helps us enjoy this theoretical journey through the use of humour and her particular brand of “motivational speaker” diction. She incorporates a few (but not too many) comparison charts, peppers the text with thought-provoking sayings, and uses upbeat headings like Good-Bye Perfection, Hello Mastery! and Changes in Family Size: Hey, Where Did All the Kids Go? More importantly, she includes practical examples of parenting dilemmas and their autocratic versus democratic solutions, provides the how-to’s of running a family meeting and lists age-appropriate responsibilities to help kids gain independence and contribute positively to the family.

“The point I want to drive home is that parenting is a skill that we need to get educated about,” she says. “It should be normative. It should be part of every parent’s experience.”

Reading Breaking the Good Mom Myth is as good a place as any to start.

For the full text, click here or go to www.ffwdweekly.com/Issues/2006/1214/book1.htm

Book Review...continued from page 1

The artist of his own personality.” The reader then meets “Susie,” a left-handed baby endowed with a cap of curly red hair and a birthmark on her left upper thigh, who actually becomes our guide.

We follow the development of Susie’s personal “lifestyle,” by literally “looking through her eyes” – thanks to a scattering of strategically placed sketches of little eyes. Traveling from infancy through her formative years, Susie works to make sense of her family, especially as it expands to include three siblings. She intuitively takes the temperature of her family atmosphere, drawing conclusions about what is “male” and what is “female,” sizes up her parent’s day-to-day relationship, and determines both the values and opportunities her family offers. In the process of establishing these outlines and filling in the details, Susie is discovering who she is, in relation to others and to life’s challenges.

Though the parts that heredity and environment play receive minimal attention in this little book, not surprisingly the Crucial C’s which the author (and colleague Dr. Amy Lew) formulated and have developed artfully in earlier works, play an important part in shaping what directions Susie’s conclusions will go. Interestingly the book adds “Our Hopes for Susie,” to grow in courageous and socially interested directions rather than basing her conclusions on discouraged perceptions of herself, others and the world around her.

The Creative Force has a deceptively simple way of making “lifestyle,” in an Adlerian sense, extremely understandable and accessible. The point is well made that, “What will actually happen in Susie’s childhood is not as important as what she decides

For the full text, click here or go to www.ffwdweekly.com/Issues/2006/1214/book1.htm

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NASAP...International Adlerian Leadership Since 1952

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Teen Driving...continued from page 4
be “blindsided” and when possible can choose to adjust their behaviors
• ask other parents and teachers to recommend good driver’s ed companies
• check your state motor vehicle department for advice on how to pick a good driver’s education program
• continue to talk about risky situations, ask teens how they would handle them, give your opinion
• promote concentration and skill: Quiz: Who is around you now? Where are we now, how would we get home now? Where is that siren coming from?
• just before Learner’s Permit is obtained, revise your written agreement covering all of your and your child’s responsibilities for navigating the first 18 months of driving

Age 16
• after provisional license is obtained, continue planned and spontaneous driving sessions with new driver, giving respectful feedback
• work on trouble spots, inclement weather
• review the status of your agreement, update as appropriate
• ease safety limits gradually, especially number of passengers, types of highways, weather conditions

Ages 17 & 18
• practice driving in other cars, and with a manual transmission
• teach long distance driving skills
• as teens go off to college, make family agreements clear
• modify the limits as the teen becomes more competent
• continue to review the agreement and the consequences, adjusting if necessary
• consider taking a defensive driving course together

Teen Driving Helpful Web Sites
AAA Foundation www.aaafoundation.org
Driver Zed training CD, information

National Safety Council TeenDriverSafetyDesk@nsc.org guidebook “Teen Driver: A Family Guide to Teen Driver Safety”

Berardelli, Phil, expert & author
www.safeyoungdrivers.com
Teaching Your Teens to Drive Package
book Safe Young Drivers

Centers for Disease Control National Injury Prevention Center www.cdc.gov updated info about teen drivers

GEICO Insurance Company www.geico.com
video on safe teen driving

Good Driver www.gooddriver.com
driver training DVD

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety www.ihs.org
crash safety tests, video on teen driving, news releases

US Department of Transportation www.nhtsa.dot.gov
search for “teen” or “new driver”, also car ratings

4) Your publisher can only really market a few titles as their workhorses, so you want to be the “hot” book for the publisher or you won’t get much help from them. However, don’t just put your tail between your legs either and sulk away. You can continue to get interviews, especially in radio, or anyplace where they are looking for daily content. Keep marketing yourself and putting your marketing kit under everyone’s noses - repeatedly.

5) Often the publisher has the idea for the “hot buzz book” and they need some one to write it. That seems to be the way the business works. Writing a full manuscript and shopping it around is not really a good idea apparently. You are better to write a book proposal and get that approved before you waste precious work time for nothing. They want to help sculpt the book from the beginning.

6) That said - it’s all up to you.... I didn’t really understand what the editor did. In the end my book was 99.9% my words. I thought their expertise and my novice writing abilities would mean that they would re-write chunks in order to make it more exciting or concise. NOPE - they write you a margin note saying: “be more concise.” Now let me just say that my editor was my saviour and I can’t fully conclude on page 8.
Dear Addy...continued from page 1

Dear Wondering,
A useful chapter in Dreikurs’ Children: The Challenge is the one called Eliminate Criticism and Minimize Mistakes. Sounds like a good time to take another look at it.

Adlerians believe that people learn best when encouraged. To point out errors rather than to suggest how one might build upon success undermines a child’s confidence. In the short run, children can learn from correction, but the longest lasting positive results, the chance for real mastery to occur, comes with learning from one’s own mistakes. That requires courage – and the courage to be imperfect.

All any adult has to do is think back to how they’d reacted to being critiqued at any point in their childhood or even adult work lives. Every human being’s ears are open far wider to hear compliments, even when those are tempered by some request for alteration.

So many basic principles are part of this whole topic: to effectively allow children to learn from mistakes, the parent’s correction must separate the doer from the deed; surely, over time, the child being criticized hears that he is failing, not that the project alone doesn’t measure up.

The child worried about personally failing to meet a parent’s expectations is distracted from putting his full attention onto the task at hand, and thus is ultimately less likely to do his best. In pursuit of perfection, some even give up.

Correction by a parent that denies the child the ability to learn from his own mistakes slows down the process of mastery. One learns best by doing, unhampered by fear of failure. A parent who needs to correct might want to examine his own need to demonstrate superiority. To what end? For whose benefit?

Convention Vancouver May 24-27’07

You are going to be so glad you’re a Family Education Section Member when you see the wonderful sessions that are slated for the 2007 NASAP Conference in beautiful Vancouver, B.C. in May! Your Family Ed Co-Chairs, Alyson Schäfer and Dina Emser, met with the NASAP COR members in Hershey, PA last October where we had the difficult but gratifying task of choosing the presentations for the upcoming conference.

On the schedule are presentations on how to effectively parent today’s teens, using laughter to help relieve family stress, information about the mistaken goals, the 7 parenting pitfalls, how to tame the spirited child, relationship coaching, Active Parenting for Stepfamilies, a process called Parents Helping Parents Problem Solving Steps, and a forum of experienced parenting experts encouraging us that we can make a living as parent educators.

This year all of the Sections have decided to work together to host a breakfast on one of the conference days so that we can introduce our Sections and conduct our meetings prior to the day’s sessions. This is something you’ve been asking for - a meeting time that will not conflict with presentations! We are all very excited about this and hope it will be an annual event. More information about this to come!

Dates for this year’s conference are May 24-27. The host hotel is the Marriott Vancouver Pinnacle Downtown. This year there will be mentors for people who are attending the NASAP Conference for the first time. And, Dr. Daniel Siegel, author of Parenting from the Inside Out and The Developing Mind, will be making a full day presentation on the opening day of the conference. That evening, Dr. Henry Stein, Director of the Alfred Adler Institutes at San Francisco and Northwestern Washington, will be making the keynote address.

It’s time to register. By now, you’ve received your printed copy of the convention brochure or can access it online. Visit our website, www.alfredadler.org. Mark your calendars now- this conference promises to be a great one! We look forward to seeing all there!

Dear Addy... conclusion

I’m sure Steve is concerned about being a good parent in terms of being a good teacher to your children. But assure him that good teachers follow the steps Adlerians recommend. He would not be abdicating his role; he would actually become more effective as a leader, standing by as your children try and fail, readjust and try again—just as you both no doubt did naturally as the children attempted their first steps in walking.

Allowing a child to learn from his mistakes, participating by asking leading questions in the role of guide, and helping him build on the small steps of success, enhances learning—and the relationship between parent and child. Yes, it’s best to learn the “right” answer, but one needs courage in the face of failure to have the will to succeed on one’s own.

In general, I’d agree that there is less value in so-called constructive criticism than in supportive, helpful directive guidance. Good luck!
Book Review...continued from page 5

about what happens.” Reading and looking, with its playful red cover, a bit like a primer, the book treats a profound phenomenon as an intriguing process anyone can comprehend.

My advanced Parent Education students in PEP often ask for a reference when exploring some of their lifestyle themes in our Level III classes. Thanks to Betty Lou, I think their prayers have just been answered by this little gem.

Publishing...continued from page 6

explain here how important it is that you love working with your editor. My first one got nowhere with me. After a change in personnel, things started to happen and it was exciting!

7) Just do it. I had so many reasons to want to throw in the towel but I stuck it out (no - I was not having the courage to be imperfect, I had spent the advance and feared being sued!). If I had had an out, I would have taken it. I am so so glad I didn’t because now that it’s behind me, I have learned so much, and I must be a sadist, because I am working on plans to start another one! I think it’s like the amnesia of childbirth pains or something.

So there you go – 7 tips on getting a book written that I hope people found helpful. And hey – if you felt this was helpful, just wait until the conference! I will be moderating a panel discussion with Michael Popkin of Active Parenting, Jane Nelsen of Positive Discipline and Linda Jessup of PEP about their businesses, and what they have each learned that has contributed to their successes.

All audience members will also be invited to share their wisdom and ask questions as we as a group cross-mentor each other’s success!