

EDITORIAL

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THANK YOU FOR READING THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Another School Shooter – Another Psychiatric Drug

T. J. Solomon, the most recent school shooter from Georgia, was yet another case of a teenager who became violent while on psychiatric drugs, in this case, the amphetamine-like drug Ritalin. Just a month earlier, Eric Harris, the ringleader of the Columbine school massacre, was on the psychiatric drug Luvox (an antidepressant.) Kip Kinkel, who killed his own parents and then went on a shooting rampage at his school in Springfield Oregon, was on Prozac (an antidepressant) and Ritalin. All of these teenagers have a common factor which is not being addressed in the media, they were all on mind-altering psychiatric drugs. Consider the following.

• In the US, alone, there are now approximately 4 million children on the psychiatric drug Ritalin, a drug which the Drug Enforcement

Agency (DEA) places in the same category (a schedule II narcotic) as opium, morphine and cocaine. Psychotic episodes and violent behavior are associated with chronic Ritalin abuse. Ritalin is the amphetamine-like drug widely prescribed to children for the contrived mental disease, "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder" (ADHD).

• Even Ritalin's manufacturer warns that "frank psychotic episodes can occur" with abusive use. While the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders states that the major complication of Ritalin withdrawal is suicide.

• If this were not bad enough, over 909,000 children and adolescents between the ages six and eighteen are on psychiatric antidepressant drugs. A psychiatrist and drug expert

stated, "According to the manufacturer, Solvay [of Luvox, the antidepressant Eric Harris was taking] 4% of children and youth taking Luvox developed mania during short-term clinical trials. Mania is a psychosis which can produce bizarre, grandiose, highly elaborated destructive plans, including mass murder..."

• And in this regard, it is important to note that between 1988 and 1992, in just four years, there were reports of over 90 children and adolescents who had suffered suicidal or violent self-destructive behavior while on the newer antidepressant, Prozac, an SSRI (Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor).

• Candace B. Pert, Research Professor at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington D.C., stated in a 1997 letter to Time Magazine, "I am alarmed at the monster that John Hopkins' neuroscientist

Solomon Snyder and I created when we discovered the simple binding assay for drug receptors 25 years ago... the public is being misinformed about the precision of these Selective Serotonin-uptake inhibitors when the medical profession oversimplifies their action in the brain..."

• The Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) has issued a special report, which cites numerous studies correlating psychiatric drugs to acts of violence. Many of these studies are from psychiatrists own research records. The report also lists numerous examples of children and adults who became violent and/or murderous after they have been prescribed mind-altering psychiatric drugs.

For more information on this topic ask for Maria, or to obtain a free copy of the Violence Report, please call 800-869-2247

Oregon First in Nation

By SCOTT LAY

After I explain the program to people I sometimes hear them say, "What the catch? This sounds too good!"

This is the Response after I've told them how they can go to work, a goal they've had for years.

Allow me to explain. For decades, many people with disabilities have been economically discouraged from working. As surprising as it sounds, if they got even a low-paying job they would often lose needed federal disability benefits.

These include health and personal-care attendant benefits, without which these people couldn't survive.

So although vocational rehabilitation programs have done an excellent job of preparing people with disabilities to work, because they couldn't afford to. I know. I use a wheelchair as a result of a swimming accident in the 1960s. Some people were born with their disability; others have developed a disabling disease such as multiple sclerosis; other like me, were disabled in accidents.

For various reasons about 70 percent of people with disabilities are unemployed. Yet a 1998 Harris Poll says the majority want to work. Oregon's new program aims to remove the loss of health insur-

ance as a major barrier.

People with disabilities often receive a modest federal disability benefit, Income. But those on SSDI know that if they regularly earn income, they may no longer be considered "disabled" – and that spells a loss of health benefits.

We have changed this system in Oregon. People with disabilities can now share in working's self-esteem, income and ability to pay taxes. With federal approval, Oregon for the first time is signing up people with disabilities who want to work without losing their medical benefits. Of the first 60-plus people, the average monthly income is nearly \$1,000 or about double what some of them could safely earn before. These people have a variety of disabilities, range in age from 21 to 77, and hold jobs such as short – order cook, software engineer and nursing home

employee.

In Washington, Congress is debating federal legislation called the work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 to give this right to people with disabilities nationwide. President Clinton endorsed the bill saying, "No one should have to choose between keeping health care and taking a job."

Oregon is so far ahead in this area that state was asked to testify on the bill at a recent congressional hearing.

As Oregon has crafted its plan, employed people with disabilities may be expected to pay a "premium" to retain their medical benefits (in addition to paying normal income taxes)

Oregon was in an especially good position to begin this initiative. The state's economy is the best in quarter-century, opening up more jobs than ever before.

Assertive technologies such as voice-activated computers are helping people with disabilities join the workforce in unprecedented numbers. And, more than most states, Oregon is helping people with disabilities to live independently (rather than in nursing homes.) If this seems like common sense, people with disabilities will agree with you. I know scores of these folks. They are not lazy. Nor do they like being pitied. They want to work and pay taxes, and their counterparts nationally are watching Oregon's example of letting them do just that.

Scott Lay is employment initiative coordinator for Oregon Department of Human Resources, the state's health and human services agency. Lay can be reached at (503) 945-6453 or toll free at (800) 282-8096.

1999

TRI-MET NEWS

Tri-Met Offers Youth Summertime Bargain

Youth can again enjoy unlimited travel at a bargain price this summertime on Tri-Met. "The Pass," which goes on sale Thursday, May 20, also offers discounts at local merchants.

With "The Pass," youth 18 and under can ride Tri-Met's buses and MAX light rail trains all June, July and August for just \$43. That's half the regular price of three monthly youth passes. The special pass is available at participating schools, and Tri-Met sales outlets including Fred Meyer, Safeway and most Albertson's stores in the Portland metropolitan area.

Pass holders qualify for these special discounts:
McDonald's: Free dessert with purchase of an Extra Value Meal. Offer excludes McFlurry dessert.
Ice Chalet at Lloyd Center & Clackamas Town Center: \$1 off general admission.

OMSI: \$1 off general admission.
North Clackamas Aquatic Park: \$1 off general admission.

"We're really pleased to bring back this affordable way of helping youth meet their summertime travel needs," said Fred Hansen, Tri-Met General Manager. "We expect The Pass to continue to be a big hit."

More information about The Pass and Tri-Met is available by calling 238-RIDE.



How we get there matters.

TTY 238-5811 • www.tri-met.org

Inter-Faith Evening Out

S.E.I. Auditorium

3920 N. Kerby

Sat., June 19, 1999



With The Name of God, The Beneficent

Come join us for an evening of Fashion, Faith and Fun. Enjoy socializing in an atmosphere of InterFaith Elegance We'll have a Fashion workshop, music, poetry and we will be presenting community service awards.

Time: 7-10pm
Donation: \$10.00

Proceeds will benefit the Masjid Al-Hijrah School, daycare and apartment complex. This event is sponsored by the Muslim Comm. Center and other Faith groups. Tickets may be purchased at: Reflections Coffee & Books

446 N.E. Killingsworth
(503) 288-6942

For further information, Please call 281-7691 or 284-9783 Reserve Your Seats Now!!