

# Taking Her Time with Teens

## Therapist is now making plans for bereavement camp

By John Riordan

When Laraine Gordon talks about her project, the Southampton therapist is upbeat but serious. She is clearly emotionally invested in Time for Teens Inc., a four-day bereavement retreat she will run this summer at St. Gabriel's Spiritual Center on Shelter Island.



While East End Hospice has run a bereavement camp for children for several years, Ms. Gordon's innovation has been to create an environment geared toward grieving adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17.

"I want the camp activities to be fun for teens, while also helping them to work through some of their issues and deal with them in productive way," Ms. Gordon said. "I used to be an actress, so I'll be drawing on my theatrical background for a lot of the things we'll be doing. In addition to group therapy, there will be psychodramas and other types of plays that will be acted out by the campers. There will also be the usual summer activities, like sailing and swimming, for instance."

Ms. Gordon added that the camp will be staffed by a mix of licensed professionals and local volunteers. Officially a non-profit corporation, the

Time for Teens Program will rely on donations to meet its expenses, so that children attending the camp will be able to do so free of charge. Most of these donations will likely come from local sources, and Ms. Gordon hopes that Time for Teens will eventually offer a free, year-round program for grieving teenagers.

The organization will hold a fund-raiser on Friday, April 20, at John Duck's restaurant in Southampton.

Ms. Gordon has been a therapist and social worker in Southampton for the last 10 years. She practiced in New York City before that.

She said she suffered a very painful loss when she was a teenager, and believes that the experience helped her to empathize with the children and adolescents whom she has helped over the years.

Time for Teens' press release states that the organization hopes to give "young adults an outlet for their pain and ultimately [lead] them into healthy adult lifestyles following a traumatic loss."

Ms. Gordon thinks that the delicate psychological condition of teenagers, particularly those in the process of grieving, requires that special outlets be created to address their needs.

"Having a private practice working primarily with teens, it has become apparent there is a strong need for this service



Laraine Gordon

on the East End of Long Island," she said. "It would have been great if I'd had a Time for Teens when I was younger."

Next week's fund-raiser at John Duck's starts at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$75 in advance and \$100 at the door. Call Ms. Gordon at 631-338-7258 to reserve tickets or volunteer.