

**Teen-age Re-entry:
Invisible Anguish**

We never suspected that our daughter was having re-entry problems until our family attended the Overseas Briefing Center's Re-entry Seminar at the Foreign Service Institute.

What was even more surprising was that our 15-year-old daughter, before then, had not allowed herself to admit her feelings of isolation nor had she been able to find anything outside of herself on which to blame them. She thought it was her fault that no one in that enormous, impersonal suburban high school wanted to talk to her.

As a family, we considered our son (who was openly complaining about rejection at his junior high school and the different value systems he was encountering) to be our family's candidate for re-entry problems.

His sister, who related so well to adults, never complained. She was pretty and a talented dancer who pulled down a 4 point grade point average as well. She had every outward sign of success.

The seminar for families helped us understand what our children were going through. We could see that our son, by talking about his feelings while also staying open toward others, had managed to avoid some of his sister's re-entry pain. Our daughter was able to identify her unhappiness, give it a name and, more importantly, talk about it with us.

The seminar started a chain of events that culminated in a far greater closeness than our family had known previously. All of us profited from our shared experience.

We are delighted to read about Around the World in a Lifetime (AWAL), the network for re-entering teen-agers. The consequences of teen-age alienation are too serious to ignore these days.

We urge all parents to "drag" (that's what they will call it) their re-entering teen-agers to a seminar at OBC or to a meeting of AWAL. If any of them identify with the feelings described there, the AWAL network sounds like a marvelous new way for working through them and having fun too.

A Foreign Service Mother



AWAL (Around the World in a Lifetime) is a free club for young people (ages 12-18) from all U.S. foreign affairs agencies. It is being formed to help with their adjustments returning to the Washington metropolitan area and to offer a foreign service community support network. Activities will include sports, parties, picnics, sightseeing, etc. Don't forget to tell your friends about AWAL! Sign up today!

Association of American Foreign Service Women

Family Liaison Office
Phyllis Habib
Phone: (202) 632-3178
Hours: 8:15-5:00

Overseas Briefing Center
Ruth Abramson
Phone: (703) 235-8784/5
Hours: 8:15-5:00

Department of State

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Your Name _____ Male _____ Female _____

Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Parent's Name _____ Phone: () _____

Suggestions for AWAL Activities: _____

Please tear off the bottom portion and mail to: Phyllis Habib

M/FLO Room 1216A
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

The next Re-entry Seminars for Families will be held at the Foreign Service Institute on October 15 and November 5, 1983.