

Overview of Teen Challenge of Chattanooga, Tennessee Research Project 1994

Chattanooga, TN (Dec. 14, 1994)--Teen Challenge of Chattanooga, Inc. has conducted an alumni survey which indicates a 67% success rate in living a drug and alcohol free lifestyle. Teen Challenge receives no funding from the government, which means no tax dollars are being spent to sequester the drug and alcohol problem.

Teen Challenge of Chattanooga is a non-profit, Christian, residential organization which helps men ages 16 and up who struggle with alcohol and drug problems. On a national level Teen Challenge has 130 centers offering help to men and women, both adolescents and adults.

The survey, conducted by Dr. Roger Thompson, Head of the Criminal Justice Department at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, represents men whose lives have been influenced by Teen Challenge. Once the person has completed the program, a dramatic lifestyle is apparent and long lasting.

Interest was expressed by the Teen Challenge of Chattanooga, Inc. leadership and Board of Directors to conduct a survey of alumni so as to determine their success in recovering from alcohol and drugs. The survey was conducted beginning in the summer of '92 and concluding in the fall of '94. Among the many issues examined in the survey, the major ones included the individuals' status in the following areas: drug-free life style, employment, legal, educational and church attendance.

Research herein focused on those successfully completing the induction program of Teen Challenge of Chattanooga, Inc. These men spend four-six months in the Chattanooga program and then transfer to a Teen Challenge training center in Cape Girardeau, MO; or Rehrersburg, PA; for an additional 8-10 months of training. Alumni from a 13-year time period (1979-1991) were included, totaling 213 individuals. A random sample of 50 alumni was selected for this research project with a 50% response. This adequate response allowed us to analyze the success of the Teen Challenge program in the following areas:

- * It is noteworthy that 72% of the respondents had drug treatment prior to entering Teen Challenge of Chattanooga, Inc. Survey indicated that there have been no additional drug treatment program(s) in the lives of 88% of the respondents since Teen Challenge. In terms of program recommendation, Teen Challenge was named by 88% of the respondents as the treatment program most beneficial.
- * 60% of the respondents continued their education upon completion of Teen Challenge. The areas include getting their G.E.D., or pursuing college level education.
- * 72% of the respondents indicated their current status as employed. Further analysis of the 28% not employed yields 8% are students and 20% are unemployed. 50% of those who are employed have been at the same job for over one year. 60% of the

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respondents stated that exercising truthfulness and honesty about the past has helped rather than hurt employment prospects.

- * 60% of the respondents were either under the jurisdiction of the court and subject to community supervision or had charges pending when entering Teen Challenge. As of their current legal status 76% are free of legal interference.
- * One of the major areas that was researched to determine the success rate of Teen Challenge was the drug free status of the respondents. The survey indicated from the respondents that 67% are abstaining from illegal drugs and alcohol.
- * 76% of the respondents attend church regularly. 60% have become members of a local church.
- * Over 60% of the respondents indicated that their relationship with family was categorized as being good in comparison to fair or poor or no change.
- * 92% of the respondents claim that Teen Challenge has had a great impact upon their life.
- * The main focus of Teen Challenge of Chattanooga, Inc. is that of being a spiritual growth center where biblical principles are taught. 80% of the respondents credited developing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as a major influence in helping them to stay off drugs.

As a result of this survey, indicators of success include: stabilized life-style due to their personal commitment to Jesus Christ, employment with some level of stability, financial independence, an absence of trouble with the police, an ability to enjoy freedom without condition or supervision and little need for additional drug treatment once completing the Teen Challenge program.

We express our thanks and appreciation to Dr. Roger Thompson for conducting this independent survey for Teen Challenge of Chattanooga, Inc.

To receive a more detailed copy of this research project, go to www.iTeenChallenge.org and go to the "Resources" section, then "TC Research", #R1201.02