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Help Save Troubled Teens: Teens in America are still being abused and denied constitutional rights every day at 'behavior modification' programs



Lyndsay's Story - 1999

Cross Creek Manor & Tranquility Bay

1) I spent **14 months** at **Cross Creek Manor** (WWASP) in Utah, and an additional **18 months** in **Tranquility Bay**, in Jamaica. I was at Cross Creek when there was a violent incident between two girls... a girl, level 5, 15, named April, stabbed another girl, Karen, a level 6, 16... with a 6 - inch steak knife. Karen suffered a punctured lung and was hospitalized. There was widespread fear throughout the facility that copycats would follow. Also during my stay there, self-mutilation was a very popular trend. Every day there were girls in Isolation for cutting themselves or attempting suicide. During my entire 14 months there, this trend was ignored and treated as if it were nothing. Once I was in class and a girl began crying, and broke her pen and started to dig the broken plastic into her arm. Another girl reported this to the teacher to which she replied, "Get on task". No measures were taken to ensure the girls safety and nothing was done until she dripped blood on the floor and smeared it on the desk. She was taken to isolation, but only after she cleaned up her mess upon the insistence of the staff. The Nurse told the girl that since she had done this to herself she would be denied medical attention. No bandages, and there nothing was used to clean the gauges in her skin.

2) I came to **Tranquility Bay** on July 17th 2000. Before that I had been at **Cross Creek Manor** in Utah for 14 months. When I saw the blatant disrespect the staff showed the students and me, I was shocked. It literally took me several days to understand it. They lacked entirely a sense of compassion and shouted orders at the students and I. I observed that a failure to comply was treated with brutal restraint. After a weeks stay there I was sent to staff watch and restrained several times for such things as not asking permission to talk, taking too long in the restroom, and making religious statements contrary to the staff's personal beliefs. One of the staff, upon my questioning, admitted that she loved to restrain students. Also a staff told me that she beat her children when the misbehaved, and that physically hurting a child was the "best way to teach them".

3) In August of 2000, I was in staff watch with several other students, and we were having breakfast in the study hall room. I remember having a conversation about what we would do if we were "free"… at this point a male staff walked in. he got behind me, grabbed both of my wrists and slammed me into the floor. Then he sat on top of me and ground his knee into my back. When he got off of me, he got up and said that we were not to talk. I remember showing an indifferent nurse the bruises the following day. She told me "Don't come to me with any restraint injuries, if you were restrained, you deserve it."

4) I was at **Tranquility Bay** on August 10th 2001 when Valerie Herron committed suicide by jumping off of the third story of the female facility building. She had recently arrived at the program. At exactly 6:00pm, I heard a series of horrifying sounds. First, a sound that sounded like a crack of thunder, a crunch, and an earthquake. Then the screams came. I rushed out onto the second story balcony with Carol and Cindy. There in the courtyard lay Valerie in a pool of blood. Immediately after the incident our staff informed us that if any of the girls discussed this we would be sent straight to staff watch. This order was made by supervisors and carried out by the family staff. This particular incident was only one of many in which supervisors made rules before asking Mr. Kay. About a month after the incident, I was working in transitions with Karen and Sherry, cleaning out the supply closet (this closet held hygiene supplies for students as well as uniforms for new students) and I found 4 of Valerie's uniforms, folded neatly, ready for a new girl to adopt. Only 1 was missing, the one she died in. It shocked me and reminded me of books I have read about concentration camps, where the dead peoples uniforms are reused and passed on. We talked to the staff in charge of supplies, and he said there was nothing wrong with the uniforms, they had only been used once, and that we needed to "chill now man".

5) A few girls in my family had severe yeast infections from the climate and lack of air conditioning and malnourishment. She told my case manager several times in-group that she needed to see a doctor, and the response was "Please, keep your nasty girl problems to yourself." In turn, nothing was done. The rules by which students at Tranquility Bay are to abide by are for the most part unnecessary and irrelevant to their recovery and or growth. Literally, the program at Tranquility bay has nothing to do with recovery, only compliance and total structure. When I arrived at TB, I had Alcoholics Anonymous Step-work from my previous program, and I was told to keep it in storage because I wouldn't need it nor would I ever have time to use it. This was step-work my therapist recommended that and that my parents bought and sent to me d not write one word in the step-work handbooks. This is something that surprised me and still does. WWASP is a sick t claims to help and love. It sucks parent's bank accounts dry with no regard to the families it may be affecting. As it

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draws you in with lies of your child's salvation, it financially rapes you.

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Sources:
http://www.helpyourteens.com/news/august_2002_newsletter.html

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