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kind of oversight. (This doesn't include those who conscientiously follow US standards even when they are not forced to by foreign governments.) There are others I am aware of who take kids as a type of group home and claim their business license or permit (or some equivalent) is all that is necessary. But in my experience, these are the exceptions, the bad apples that any industry is plagued with. Apparently the critics believe that these rogue operations are the norm, thus the terms "unlicensed and unregulated." In their view, since the industry is "unlicensed and unregulated," federal legislation creating federal oversight is a vital necessity.

To answer the accusation that this industry is "unlicensed and unregulated," I went to the list of the top hundred schools and programs as viewed by the leading Independent Educational Consultants. These are the schools and programs found in my Parent Empowerment Handbook™, and are based on an annual survey among the leading Independent Educational Consultants. The last edition was published in early summer last year. These schools and programs are the ones with the best reputations. They are presumably the most often used for placement by professional Independent Educational Consultants and are leaders in our network. These schools and programs are at the heart of the industry that is being accused of being "unlicensed and unregulated."

Below is a list of those schools and programs that are licensed and regulated. I didn't include those only under the umbrella of a state's Children's Protective Service, or equivalent, with a mandate to intervene if any child in their jurisdiction is abused, which is a form of regulation. I also didn't include those who are just accredited for their academics, but that is also a form of regulation which includes a legal mandate in at least most states to report abuse if ever observed. In addition, I didn't include those that only have active parent activities, since a steady stream of parents and Educational Consultants through a facility is in itself an informal form of oversight. Finally, I did not include those who just have credentialed staff who have a legal responsibility to report unacceptable behavior, and also those who are members of professional organizations which also would have an interest in stopping abusive behavior they might become aware of. I did include those who are accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), because this is a designation that is difficult to obtain, and in many ways is the gold standard for competency, effectiveness and professionalism in healthcare organizations. As a result, I took a fairly narrow view of the question of how many of the programs were regulated with state oversight. The list of 100 schools and programs includes many wilderness programs and therapeutic boarding schools, as well as many residential treatment centers and mainstream type schools who take students transitioning from more highly structured schools and programs. The following are the schools and programs, as reported to us for the Handbook, from the 100 leaders in the private industry of residential parent-choice schools and programs, that have either some kind of state licensure or JCAHO accreditation, or both.

Adirondack Leadership Expeditions
Permit from New York Department of Health

Anasazi Foundation
JCAHO accredited, licensed by Arizona Department of Economic Security and Department of Human Services as a Behavioral Healthcare Provider.

Aspen Achievement Academy
JCAHO accredited, licensed as an Outdoor Treatment Program by the Utah Department of Human Services

Aspen Ranch
Licensed as a Residential Treatment Center in Utah

Boulder Creek Academy
Licensed by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

Catherine Freer
JCAHO accredited, licensed as a Mental Health Program and an Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program by the State of Oregon

Center for Change
JCAHO accredited

Chapel Haven
Licensed by Connecticut

Copper Canyon Academy
Arizona Behavioral Health Services licensed.

Explorations Home Base
Licensed by Montana as a group home

Forest Heights Lodge
JCAHO Accredited

Glenholme School
Licensed by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families

Gray Wolf Ranch
Licensed through Washington State Department of Health

Greenwood School
Licensed by the State of Vermont

Hazelden Center For Youth & Families
Licensed and accredited by JCAHO, and Minnesota Department of Health

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