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teens to truly grasp the pain they have caused their victims. This type of confrontation is what opponents of the teen help industry believe is abusive. The Giddings program shows how powerful and effective it can be.

What struck me were the many similarities to the treatment techniques used in the teen help programs such as emotional growth boarding schools, wilderness programs and substance abuse treatment centers. Some of the main components appear to be firmly rooted in well-accepted principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy; other techniques are considered unproven by mainstream psychologists. It has been difficult to isolate its many components in a way that would allow rigorous therapeutic research. Giddings, just like many teen help programs, relies on a connection among every aspect of the program. Every behavior, whether in the classroom, the lunchroom or the athletic field, is checked and evaluated. If two students scuffle, they are separated, everyone grabs a chair, forms a circle and tries to figure out what happened and why. In the group sessions, tough, hardened kids will be sitting with arms around each other or stroking another person's hair. They have learned to give and receive affection in a way that they were unable to do growing up.

I would recommend this book as a "must read" for any parent with a struggling teen. It allows great insight into the pain of the most extreme young criminals. There is horror, but there is also joy and progress. There are results that are not always explainable and techniques used that may appear extreme and painful to the participants. "Last Chance" defines the feelings many parents have as they make the difficult decision to send their child to a residential program. Hubner's book shows that there is ALWAYS hope.

Karen Austin practiced law in Texas for 25 years. She learned of the Giddings program during a seminar on Forgiveness and its role in the criminal justice system and the litigation of torts. She is the parent of a son who attended two emotional growth programs from 2003-2004 and who is now a freshman in college and a daughter who is a senior in college. She recently moved to Nashville, TN.

"What's done to children,
they will do to society."
~ Karl Menninger



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