staff successfully navigated complex wilderness regulations and group home standards in Montana. AYA was one the first programs to complete extensive outcome studies and did so for seven full years.

My last example of a unique program is less well known except for one of the founders of Galena Ridge and 20 Peaks. That person is Paul Clark, a former Montana legislator. Paul could have easily taken the road to "grow" these programs and achieve national prominence, but has chosen to stay intimately involved in a small manageable wilderness experience combined with a small ten bed program for boys. Paul has been credited for bringing the Outward Bound model to the state of Montana. He has also been singled out as the developer and key architect of Ascent Wilderness program located in Idaho. This past year, I have had three boys with the program and I have been highly satisfied with the gains these boys and families have made. These boys were selected because although they all struggled at home, they presented no serious psychiatric issues or serious behavioral problems.

This list and discussion of top notch programs in the state of Montana could be expanded to include many others, like Mission Mountain, Intermountain, Elk Creek Academy and others. However, the point is made. Parents across the country and abroad look to Montana for the best treatment they can find. Unfortunately, only those who are in the upper socio-economic range can afford these private pay programs. But then, it is a clear message that some of the brightest and most capable parents in the country choose Montana for their children. That says a lot. Montana is in the national spotlight and what happens in Montana may affect all states in some ways. However, don't feel sorry for Montana programs. They have an impressive start at providing some of the best care in the world. The PAARP board, in their efforts to improve programs through licensing mandates, should take on the physician's oath; "Do no Harm". As one program director said, "For God's sake, regulate us, but also for God's sake, don't turn the bull loose in the China closet."

There is only one honest impulse at the bottom of Puritanism, and that is the impulse to punish the man with a superior capacity for happiness.

~ HL Mencken

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