Visit Reports...

Legacy Outdoor Adventures

Loa, Utah
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Visit by: Nancy P. Masland, Ed.S., on June 2, 2012

As the first Independent Educational Consultant to visit the Legacy Outdoor Adventures since their opening in January, I offered to write a visit report to share my perspective of this program.

Legacy Outdoor Adventures is a "state of the art" wilderness program, for young men ages 18-30 years old. The program lasts eight to nine weeks and utilizes many of the facilities formerly owned by Aspen Education Group in Loa, BLM and National Forest Service lands.

When the three Loa programs closed in the spring of 2011, Gil Hallows gathered experienced and seasoned staff, both therapists and field instructors who had previously worked with him, and designed an innovative program. The team work is evident in the people involved and Independent Educational Consultants have referred appropriate students on the basis of their reputation.

Criteria for admission into Legacy Outdoor Adventures include but are not limited to dual diagnosis, substance abusers, spectrum disorders, and young men with "failure to launch" issues who are willing to change. Those unsuitable for enrollment are those with suicidal ideation, psychosis, eating disorders, diabetes and/ or violence.

There are several examples that highlight the quality of Legacy and its success. First is the exceptional hand-picked staff. If not certified as LSACS, they are working towards it and senior guides all have WFR certification. The 8:4 ratios in the field blend seamlessly therapy with both adventure and traditional wilderness skill building. Weekly in-service trainings are held in the field for all staff, both on and off duty, during which time students learn culinary skills with the chef.

The philosophy at Legacy is based on Don Miguel Luis' The Four Agreements: Speak impeccably, don't make assumptions, take nothing personally and do your best at all times. Terence Gorsky's - Life Success Plan, is also used to help identify the attributes and obstacles in the way of each participant becoming the man he wants to be. Each participant writes a letter to the aftercare placement stating why he is coming and giving them permission to 'call him out' if needed.

The process for a young man at Legacy begins when he is picked up in Salt Lake for the three hour drive. He is taken for a physical examination en route, and then outfitted with gear in Loa where the program explained to him. High quality gear is chosen and all wear bright blue shirts for identification.

Adventure activities include rappelling into slow canyon pools, fishing, searching for wild buffalo and wild horses and climbing 11,000 foot peaks. Local medical facilities and personnel, as well as Medivac from Page, AZ are readily available.

As Gil Hallows states "When we do well, we can afford to do good."

About two-thirds of the way through a young man's journey at Legacy, his family will visit the program for workshops in Loa. These workshops include families rotating among three activities: therapy, adventure and wilderness skill building.

During our visit, we met a new participant, several of the therapists and field instructors and spent time with Gill. We are truly impressed and plan to apply with our first appropriate client.

About the Author: *Nancy P. Masland, Ed.S., is an Independent Educational Consultant located in Tucson, AZ. Founder of Nancy P Masland and Associates, she has more than 45 years of experience in counseling, administration and teaching, is a Certified Educational Planner and holds professional memberships in the IECA, NATSAP, NAIS, SSATB, LDA, NACAC, NAMI and NAMISA.*

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Extended Insights...

Keeping Your Teen Busy During Summer Vacation

By: Charles Elias

Summer is here, and your teen is getting ready to get out of school or already is. This is a time filled with excitement for kids and unease for parents. Most parents have to work all day, with the exception of a vacation in the middle of summer, which means most kids are left to their own devices while parents are away.

This is a time when a lot of kids get into trouble because they are "bored," or they plop themselves in front of the computer or TV and the only activity they partake in is changing the channel or playing games. Education.com states, "More teens try marijuana for the first time during the summer months than any other time of year."

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