

Following-up with graduates of Minnesota Teen Challenge

*Results of telephone surveys with persons
completing treatment in 2001 through 2005*

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Summary

This report provides outcomes of graduates from Minnesota Teen Challenge's 12-month *Life Care* residential treatment program. Between 2001 and 2005, 512 men, women, and youth graduated from the 12-month program. The number of graduates increased significantly from 70 in 2001 to 154 graduates in 2005. Nearly two-thirds of program participants (65%) were men, 20 percent were women, and 15 percent were teenagers at treatment entry.

Between October 2006 and January 2007, 174 graduates, 55 percent of the sample selected for follow-up, were interviewed by Wilder Research staff. These former participants in the adult and youth Teen Challenge program were interviewed between one and five years after completing the 12-month *Life Care* program. For those who graduated prior to 2005, the response rate, as expected, is somewhat low and results should be viewed with some caution. However, 85 percent of the 2005 graduates selected for follow-up completed the interview. Most of their results are similar to the overall sample. Details are found in this report.

- Almost two-thirds (62%) were men, and three-fourths were adults at the time of treatment. Prior to admission, they used a wide range of substances, with alcohol (29%) and methamphetamine (23%) named as the biggest problems.
- At time of follow-up contact, an average of 2.7 years after graduation, 45 percent stated they had not had a single relapse.
- When asked about use in the immediate six months prior to the follow-up contact, an indicator of current problems, 66 percent reported no use. This six-month abstinence rate was higher for adults with 73 percent reporting no use compared to youth with 37 percent reporting no use during the past six months.
- For the 2005 graduates, 57 percent reported no relapses, and 73 percent reported no use in the past six months.
- The main relapse substances were alcohol and marijuana.
- Almost all (92%) said their drug use was “a lot less” than before Teen Challenge and 83 percent said their alcohol use was “a lot less.”
- The top two factors contributed to relapse were “hanging out with the wrong crowd” (36% of participants) and simply having the desire to use (25%). Negative emotions, such as stress or anger were also frequently mentioned.

- The top two factors helping to maintain sobriety were staying connected to God (58%) and family (34%).
- Other outcome indicators are largely positive: at the time of follow-up 78 percent were working for pay, 31 percent were currently in school; 50 percent were living in their own house or apartment, and most (82-94%) said their relationships had improved.
- A small proportion reported legal problems after graduation: 17 percent were arrested since graduating, 10 percent were charged with a new crime, and 13 percent incarcerated.
- Almost all (97%) said they made a personal commitment to Christ at the beginning of their Teen Challenge stay. Most rated the quality of Teen Challenge as outstanding (47%) or very good (36%).

Background

Minnesota Teen Challenge is one of the largest residential drug and alcohol programs in the state of Minnesota. They have a 60-day drug treatment program, as well as a year long program. The program serves both teens and adults.

The mission of Minnesota Teen Challenge is to assist teens and adults in gaining freedom from chemical addiction by applying Biblical principles in establishing a chemical-free lifestyle, enhancing social skills, improving work habits, building supportive relationships, and growing in personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Minnesota Teen Challenge was interested in implementing a project to measure long-term outcomes for graduates of Minnesota Teen Challenge interventions. Their goal was to better understand the long-term successes and challenges faced by Minnesota Teen Challenge graduates, and to use information gathered to make program improvements.

Method

After a series of discussions and proposals, Minnesota Teen Challenge staff contracted with Wilder Research to sample and conduct follow-up surveys with graduates of Teen Challenge's Life Care program. Teen Challenge staff and board members were interested in understanding more about the long-term impact of program services, outcomes for participants, and sobriety rates.

The following are the primary research questions that guided the study:

Research questions

1. Do the lives of graduates improve following program participation (measures include: family functioning and cohesion, education, housing stability, connections to faith communities, and employment)?
2. What types of outcomes related to sobriety and substance use are achieved over time by graduates?
3. How many clients relapse? What are some of the challenges and difficulties that graduates have faced? How many graduates are involved with the criminal justice system?
4. What aspects of Minnesota Teen Challenge activities are perceived by graduates as most effective? What aspects are seen as least effective?
5. How satisfied are Minnesota Teen Challenge graduates with the program?
6. What suggestions do graduates have for improving the program?
7. What is the best method for following-up with Minnesota Teen Challenge graduates in the future?

Sampling

Wilder Research staff worked with Minnesota Teen Challenge staff to select a sample based on the population of graduates of the Life Care program (12-month program) from 2001 to 2005. Efforts were made to select a random sample stratified by year and by gender for the adult programs. Because of the smaller size of the teen program, boys and girls were grouped together by year.

All information for the sample was obtained from the Minnesota Teen Challenge alumni database in May 2006. A staff member and intern from the program assisted researchers in ensuring that the database information was updated.

Number of graduates of the Life Care 12-month program

The 12-month Life Care program graduated 512 persons between 2001 and 2005. Gradually larger numbers of persons graduated from 2002 to 2005.

Total per year:	2001	70
	2002	66
	2003	103
	2004	119
	2005	154
Total over last 5 years =		512

Sample selection criteria

Wilder Research selected the sample size based on the following assumptions and decisions. Considerations of both cost and accuracy guided the sample selection.

- The overall percentage estimates for men are accurate within plus or minus 5.5 percent (95% confidence level). The total number of men graduating between 2001 and 2005 was 334. The sample size was 162 (see below for specific sampling of each year).
- The overall percentage estimates for women are accurate within plus or minus 5.5 percent (95% confidence level). The total number of women graduating between 2001 and 2005 was 103. The sample size was 77 (see below for specific sampling of each year).
- Estimates within years or for sub-groupings of the population have wider margins of (approximately +/- 12% by year).
- For adolescents, the entire population of 75 youth was selected (100%). Therefore, no estimate of sampling error is calculated.

1. Sample selection, by year and program

		Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total sample size
2001	Population	37	13	8	12	
	Sample	24	11	ALL	ALL	55
2002	Population	48	10	7	1	
	Sample	28	9	ALL	ALL	45
2003	Population	66	23	10	4	
	Sample	33	17	ALL	ALL	64
2004	Population	76	31	3	9	
	Sample	36	21	ALL	ALL	69
2005	Population	107	26	13	8	
	Sample	41	19	ALL	ALL	81
Totals by program	Population	334	103	41	34	
	Sample	162	77	ALL	ALL	314
Percent of total population		65%	20%	8%	7%	
Sampling percent within sub-group		49%	75%	100%	100%	
Sampling percent of total population		32%	15%	8%	7%	61%

Response rates

The total sample size was 315. Of these 174 (55%) completed the interview. Response rates are somewhat low, as expected, for those who graduated prior to 2005, but high for those who graduated in 2005. In general, treatment outcome research has found that people who are difficult to reach, or who are not found at all, are more likely than those contacted to have relapsed.¹

¹ Stinchfield, R. & Owen, P. (1998). Hazelden's model of treatment and its outcome. *Addictive Behaviors*, 23, 669-683.

The following figure describes the reasons for not completing an interview.

2. Overall response rates

N=315	Number	Percent
Completes	174	55%
Unable to locate	70	22%
Repeated calls, no response	30	10%
Incarcerated	26	8%
Refusals	5	2%
Deceased	4	1%
Military	4	1%
In treatment	1	0.3%
Out of the country	1	0.3%

3. Response rates by year and population served

Year	Overall response rate N=315	Men n=163*	Women n=77	Boys n=41	Girls n=34
2005 (n=80)	68 (85%)	37 of 41 (90%)*	15 of 18 (83%)	8 of 13 (62%)	8 of 8 (100%)
2004 (n=70)	34 (49%)	13 of 36 (36%)	13 of 22 (59%)	2 of 3 (67%)	6 of 9 (67%)
2003 (n=65)	29 (45%)	12 of 34 (35%)	11 of 17 (65%)	5 of 10 (50%)	1 of 4 (25%)
2002 (n=45)	20 (44%)	14 of 28 (50%)	3 of 9 (33%)	3 of 7 (43%)	0 of 1 (0%)
2001 (n=55)	23 (42%)	9 of 24 (38%)	4 of 11 (36%)	5 of 8 (63%)	5 of 12 (42%)
Total	174 (55%)	85 of 163 (52%)	46 of 77 (60%)	23 of 41 (56%)	20 of 34 (59%)

* One 2005 men's program was accidentally (and randomly) interviewed. We included his survey as a complete and increased the sample size from 314 to 315.

Participants

The participants in this outcome report consist of 174 graduates of Minnesota Teen Challenge who took part in a telephone interview between October, 2006 and January 2007. This sample represents 55 percent of the original sample of 315 graduates.

A response rate of 55 percent, just over half of the original sample, means that results should be viewed with some caution in generalizing to the overall Teen Challenge treatment population. We do not know the status of many of those who were not found at follow-up.

Looking more closely at the response rates, we see that the response rate for the most recent year of graduation, 2005, was excellent at 85 percent. It is reasonable to expect that as years pass, people move and contact information becomes less reliable. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect response rates to fall as they did for the years 2004-2001 (49%, 45%, 44%, and 42%, respectively). As shown in Figure 4, the largest proportion (39%) of respondents are from 2005, and the rest are spread out fairly equally across the prior years.

4. Graduation year of respondents

	Number (174)	Percent of total sample
2001	22	13%
2002	22	13%
2003	28	16%
2004	34	20%
2005	68	39%

The ratio of males to females in the follow-up sample was 62:38, slightly more balanced toward females than in the total Teen Challenge treatment population (73:27). This result is typical since it is easier to obtain accurate contact information for women than for men.

Three-quarters of the follow-up were in the adult program, and the remainder in the teen program, as shown in Figure 5. Overall, in terms of age and gender, the follow-up sample appears to be reasonably close to the general Teen Challenge treatment population.

5. Type of Teen Challenge program attended by respondents

	Number (174)	Percent
Boys	23	13%
Girls	20	12%
Men's	85	49%
Women's	46	26%

6. Age at time of follow-up contact

	Number (174)	Percent
17 years	3	2%
18-20 years	19	11%
21-30 years	77	44%
31-40 years	27	16%
41-50 years	41	24%
51-60 years	6	3%
>60 years	1	1%

Participants used a wide range of substances prior to their admission to Teen Challenge. As shown in Figure 7, alcohol and marijuana were the most-used substances. Cocaine (crack) and hallucinogens were also used quite frequently.

7. Substance use at time of admission

	Number (174)	Percent
Alcohol	150	86%
Marijuana	143	82%
Cocaine	125	72%
Hallucinogens	105	60%
Methamphetamine	75	43%
Amphetamines	68	39%
Barbiturates	56	32%
Opiates	43	25%
Over-the-counter/prescription meds	40	23%
Other	77	44%

Though alcohol and marijuana were used by the most respondents, it was alcohol and methamphetamines that were named as the biggest problems by respondents.

8. Biggest problem at time of admission

	Number (174)	Percent
Alcohol	50	29%
Methamphetamine	39	23%
Cocaine	30	18%
Marijuana	23	14%
Opiates	7	4%
Hallucinogens	4	2%
Over-the-counter/prescription meds	4	2%
Huffing (inhalants)	1	1%
More than one	13	8%

Sixty-two percent of participants (107 of 174) attended at least one other treatment program before entering Minnesota Teen Challenge. Overall, participants reported attending treatment an average of 3.5 times (range of 1 to 22). On the average, their length of stay in a treatment program was 30 days. More information about these treatment programs is given in a later section.

Outcomes

Substance Use

When asked about their desire to use during the first six months after completing the Teen Challenge program, most respondents reported relatively no desire (53%) or a weak level of desire (20%).

9. Desire to use during first 6 months

	Number (174)	Percent
No desire	92	53%
Weak	35	20%
Moderate	33	19%
Very strong	14	8%

When asked about relapses, 52 percent stated that they had no relapses. However, in an earlier portion of the interview, 12 of these individuals did admit to using alcohol (and in 2 cases also marijuana). It may be that some of these respondents did not consider their use a “relapse” either because it was short-lived or (in their eyes) did not cause them problems. Five of these respondents were using alcohol at intake into Teen Challenge, but none of these respondents reported alcohol as their “main problem” prior to treatment. Nine of these respondents were using marijuana at intake into Teen Challenge, and five reported marijuana as their “main problem” prior to treatment. To be as accurate as possible, these discrepant responders are not counted as completely abstinent, as shown in the Figure 10, below. As shown in this figure, another 16 percent reported one relapse, and relatively few reported more than three relapses.

10. Self-reported relapses since graduation

	Number (174)	Percent
None, haven't used	78	45%
Reported no relapse but reported use in the prior six months*	12	7%
1 time	27	16%
2-3 times	29	17%
4-5 times	10	6%
6-10 times	2	1%
More than 10 times	14	8%

* Twelve individuals stated they had not relapsed, yet in a different section of the interview admitted to alcohol (and in 2 case also marijuana use) in the prior 6 months.

Relapse rates were calculated separately for those respondents who report that alcohol was their “main problem” at entry into Teen Challenge. For these respondents, 39 percent had not used any substances since graduation. This is a slightly lower rate than for those whose “main problem” was other drugs.

Abstinence and substance use in the prior six months

Respondents were read a list of substances, assured confidentiality, and asked if they had used any during the prior six months.

- Two-thirds of respondents (66%) reported that they had not used alcohol or drugs during the prior six months
- For adults, 73 percent reported no use during the prior six months
- For graduates of the Teen program, 37 percent reported no use during the prior six months
- Women were slightly less likely to report no use during the prior six months (56% of women versus 69% of men)

A full set of comparisons of 2005 graduates only; men versus women; and adults versus teens are included on page 32.

The following figure shows the number and percent of respondents who reported no use during the prior six months by year of graduation from Teen Challenge.

11. Abstinence during prior 6 months, by year of program completion

	Number	Percent
2001 graduates (n=22)	13	59%
2002 graduates (n=22)	16	73%
2003 graduates (n=28)	17	61%
2004 graduates (n=34)	15	44%
2005 graduates (n=68)	50	74%
Total (N=174)	115	66%

As shown in Figure 12, about one-third (32%) reported alcohol use during the six months prior to the follow-up phone call. Thirteen percent reported using marijuana. Other drugs were used less often.

12. Substance use during prior 6 months

	Number (174)	Percent
Alcohol	55	32%
Marijuana	23	13%
Cocaine	11	6%
Hallucinogens	3	2%
Methamphetamine	3	2%
Over-the-counter/Prescription meds	8	5%
Opiates	3	2%
Amphetamines	1	1%
Barbiturates	1	1%

Comparisons between substances used in the previous six months and substance reported to be the “biggest problem” before treatment

In examining the substances used in the past six months in comparison to the substance that the participant reported as the “biggest problem” at treatment entry, there does not seem to be a clear correlation.

- Of the 55 people who said they used alcohol in the previous six months, 15 reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.
- Of the 23 people who said they used marijuana in the previous six months, four reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.

- Of the 11 people who said they used cocaine in the previous six months, five reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.
- Of the three people who said they used methamphetamine in the previous six months, two reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.

It is interesting to note that there appears to be a stronger relationship between before and after stimulant use (cocaine and methamphetamine) than with alcohol or marijuana. It is also important to note that the substance for which we have information is for the six-month period before follow-up contact. It is not necessarily the substance that initiated a relapse. Relapse may have occurred earlier.

Longest periods of abstinence among relapsers

For about half (44%) of those who relapsed, their longest period of abstinence was less than one year. The remaining 56 percent reported periods of abstinence ranging from one to five years, but most typically one to two years.

13. Longest abstinence among relapsers

	Number (84)	Percent
Less than 1 month	2	2%
1-5 months	13	16%
6 months	8	10%
7-11 months	14	17%
One Year	12	14%
13-23 months	12	14%
Two Years	9	11%
25-35 months	4	5%
Three Years	3	4%
37-47 months	2	2%
Four Years	2	2%
49-59 months	1	1%
Five Years	2	2%

Most respondents who used alcohol and/or other drugs stated that their use was less than before their treatment experience at Teen Challenge.

14. Use levels since Teen Challenge

	Lot less	Somewhat less	About same	Somewhat more	A lot more
Drugs (N=83)	92%	6%	0%	0%	2%
Alcohol (N=84)	83%	2%	4%	6%	5%

When asked to describe the main factors contributing to their relapse, most respondents said that their choice of peers was the most significant factor. “Hanging out with the wrong crowd,” “hanging out with using friends,” and “peer pressure” were given as reasons for relapse by over one-third (36%) of respondents. One-fourth said that their own curiosity or desire to use was a contributing factor. These two factors were cited as the top two most important factors contributing to relapse. As shown in Figure 15, other factors such as negative emotion states (stress, boredom, being unhappy or angry, loneliness, fear), spiritual issues (not staying connected to God, lack of devotional time and prayer, not going to church), family problems, mental health problems, involvement in sexual relationships and legal problems were also named as factors contributing to relapse.

15. In their own words: Relapse factors

	Contributing factors		The most important factor	
	Number of participants (83)	Percent of participants	Number of participants (78)	Percent of participants
Hanging out with wrong crowd	30	36%	11	14%
Wanted to use (desire, curiosity)	21	25%	13	17%
Stress	17	21%	4	5%
Boredom	11	13%	3	4%
Unhappy, angry	9	11%	3	4%
Not staying connected to God	8	10%	6	8%
Mental health problem	8	10%	6	8%
Family problems	8	10%	5	6%
Hanging out in wrong places	7	8%	2	3%
Involved in a sexual relationship	7	8%	5	6%
Loneliness	7	8%	3	4%
Lack of control, selfishness	6	7%	2	3%
Devotional time, prayer	5	6%	3	4%
Stopped going to church	2	2%	-	-
Fear	2	2%	2	3%
Legal	2	2%	1	1%
No reason ("I'm an addict," "didn't get help," "stupidity")	7	8%	-	-
"I drink but it's not a problem"	3	4%	1	1%
Lack of support, no aftercare, no transitional support for basic needs, not enough personal time, being in an abusive relationship, physical health problems, stopped medications	Each 1	Each 1%	No aftercare, abusive relationship, and physical health each 1	Each 1%

Note: This was an open-ended question. Responses were grouped together in categories. Respondents could give up to three responses. Therefore, percentages do not total 100.

Although a full listing of verbatim responses to this question are included in the Appendix, the following are some selected responses.

Going through a lot of depression. Allowing myself to be around old friends that still use.

I was in a relationship with someone who drank. He influenced me to drink. It was a stressful, abusive relationship so drinking would help cure the pain.

The program was too strict so I wanted to make my own decisions right after the program without people telling me if it was right or wrong. That's what my friends were doing so I wanted to fit in so I wanted to use too.

I stopped praying, reading my bible. I put God aside. I wasn't handling my bipolar, not taking my meds.

Fear of the future, just not being sure what will happen in the future. Frustration, just that I think of where I am in my life right now, no job, money, in treatment again, too much anxiety.

Still in my head, thinking about drugs or alcohol, finally gave in. Hanging out with same people and environment.

Not having a deep personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I let it slide. Quit going to church. Not having any accountability with friends and support system.

Normal every day pressures that overwhelmed me with my daily living. Financial problems. Wanted to escape from responsibilities and from different parts of your mind.

Stress – not being able to find a job and all that. The people I hung around with. My ex-girlfriend she was using a lot so she influenced me.

I started dating a guy who drank so eventually I began to drink too. I had an emotional breakdown with my boyfriend so I went to use crack.

Loneliness. Boredom. Not staying connected to a church.

Factors that contributed to sobriety

All participants, regardless of their length of post-treatment sobriety, were asked what factors helped them maintain sobriety. Over half (58%) reported that their connection to God was a significant factor. Other spiritually-related factors such as attending church (9%), engaging in daily prayer/scripture reading (8%), church support (6%), being active in the ministry (4%), the Bible (2%) were also frequently named. Taking all these faith-based factors together, a full 73 percent of Minnesota Teen Challenge participants mentioned at least one as a contributing factor in their sobriety.

Family (34%) and other people (positive people, Christian friends; 17%), personal support network (12%), mentors and sponsors (4%) and recovery groups (3%) were also named frequently.

16. In their own words: Sobriety factors

	Number (172)	Percent
Staying connected to God	99	58%
My family	58	34%
My determination	45	26%
Positive people, Christian friends	30	17%
Accountability	22	13%
Personal support network	21	12%
Attending church	15	9%
Daily prayer/scripture	14	8%
Having responsibilities	12	7%
Work, staying busy	11	6%
Having church support	11	6%
Positive lifestyle	7	4%
Being active in the ministry	7	4%
My mentors, sponsor	6	4%
Staying connected to Teen Challenge	5	3%
Attending recovery group	5	3%
Having goals	4	2%
Happiness, feeling good	4	2%
The Bible, Bible education	3	2%
An understanding of my purpose here	3	2%
Spiritual connectedness, personal time, helping others in their recovery, getting counseling, attending a Christian college, stability, ability to ask for help, learning the effects of drugs/alcohol, went to treatment, being incarcerated/on probation, everybody's prayers, "I drink now but it's not a problem"	Each N=1-2	Each 1% or less

Note: This was an open-ended question. Responses were grouped together in categories. Respondents could give up to three responses. Therefore, percentages do not total 100.

Although a full listing of verbatim responses to this question are included in the Appendix, the following are some selected responses.

Learning to do new things. I changed my life. My life-style is completely different now. I do positive stuff now. Good relationships with family, and friends. Good, positive people surround me every day. They have a good influence on my decisions.

My faith. I have something else to live for besides drugs and alcohol. New friends – I am involved in other activities with people who don't use. My parents – having a closer relationship with them and not wanting them to go through the hell I put them through when I was using drugs.

God being in my life. He helped me overcome that part of my life, gave me strength. Being around good friends that are very supportive to me not using.

A strong support system, family, and friends are very supportive and help me through life. Teen Challenge paperwork and workbooks. I still have them and go through them when I need to. Counseling for depression. I am constantly going and also involved in my church.

Getting married, buying a house, being more responsible, and maintaining a relationship. My age, just growing up, getting older, wiser, you know. The program, I learned how to apply what I learn to my life.

Trusting and having a relationship with Jesus Christ. That's all in a nutshell. Oh, and I help others in their recovery. That's huge for me.

My continued effort to use the tools that I learned at Teen Challenge; prayer, accountability. Personal relationship with God. I attend church regularly and am around church people. Support groups. I go to meetings with other ex-addicts, that we support each other not to use but to better our lives.

God, my relationship with God, praying, attending church. My children, just looking at them and realizing that they need me for everything. What I want to do in my life, with my life. I am in graduate school. I have a good job. I want sobriety.

My faith. I have a relationship with Jesus Christ; spend time/prayer and Bible. Mentors keep in contact. I never return to the old neighborhood, environment, or town where I used to use.

Nicotine use

At time of follow-up, 32 percent smoked or used tobacco products. In contrast, 89 percent stated they used nicotine before treatment at Teen Challenge.

Employment and education

Over three-fourths (78%) the respondents reported that they are currently working. Of those working, almost three-fourths (71%) were working full-time or more (at least 40 hours a week); about half (48%) were at their current job for less than a year, one-fourth for one year, and another fourth (27%) were at their current job for two years or more.

Among all respondents (whether currently employed or not), the majority (86%) reported their job situation was better, 13 percent said it was about the same, and none said it was worse.

In looking at the data, there appears to be some correlation between current employment and likelihood that the respondent relapsed after graduating from Teen Challenge. Sixty-nine percent of those who had maintained sobriety since graduating Teen Challenge were employed 30 or more hours per week; 57 percent of those who had relapsed since graduating Teen Challenge were employed 30 or more hours per week.

17. Employment outcomes

	Number (174)	Percent	Percent of just those working (135)
Currently working for pay	136	78%	
Average hours/week			
Less than 20 hours	3	2%	2%
20-39 hours	37	21%	27%
40 hours	51	29%	38%
41-50 hours	29	17%	22%
51-80 hours	15	8%	11%
Not working for pay	38	22%	
Length of time at current job			
Less than 6 months	42	24%	31%
6 months to less than a year	23	13%	17%
1 year to less than 2 years	34	20%	25%
2 years to less than 3 years	13	7%	10%
3 years to less than 4 years	7	4%	5%
4 years to less than 5 years	9	5%	7%
5 or more years	7	4%	5%
Not working for pay	38	22%	
Number of employers since leaving Teen Challenge			
None	14	8%	
1	48	28%	
2-3	82	47%	
4-7	24	14%	
8 or more	6	3%	
Job situation now compared to before Teen Challenge (N=171)			
Better	149	87%	
About the Same	22	13%	
Worse	0	0%	

- Eighty-two percent of respondents were either working 30 or more hours per week or a full-time student.

Education

At the time of follow-up, most of the Teen Challenge respondents had at least a high school education either by graduation (78%) or by passing a high school equivalency test (GED) (13%). Almost half (43%) of respondents had some education beyond high school, and 14 percent reporting receiving a degree.

When asked specifically about their educational activities since leaving Teen Challenge, 55 percent reported attending school or any other educational or vocational program. Of these, about half (55%) were in school at the time of the follow-up contact, and the majority of these (79%) said they were full-time students.

18. Education outcomes

	Number (173)	Percent	Percent of just those attending any school since Teen Challenge (96)
Highest grade completed			
Less than 12 grades	38	22%	
12 grades (high school)	60	35%	
13-15 grades (some college)	63	36%	
16 grades (college)	8	5%	
17 or more grades (graduate study)	4	2%	
Attended school since Teen Challenge	96	55%	
Currently in school (N=96)	53	31%	55%
Currently full-time students (N=96)	42	24%	44%

Living situation

At time of follow-up contact, most graduates were living independently, as shown in Figure 19. One-half of the respondents were living in their own house or apartment, and another third (35%) were living with relatives, friends, or roommates. Relatively few (6%) reported currently living in a halfway house, sober house, transitional housing, or treatment facility.

19. Living situation at follow-up

	Number (173)	Percent
Living in own house or apartment	87	50%
Living with relatives	38	22%
Living with friends or roommates	22	13%
In MN Teen Challenge Restoration Program	11	6%
Living in a halfway house or sober house	5	3%
In transitional housing	5	3%
In college or university dorm	3	2%
Teen Challenge employee/intern benefit	2	1%
In a treatment facility	1	1%

A small proportion of graduates reported living in shelters, transitional or supportive housing situations at some time during the outcome period. As shown in Figure 20, 16 percent lived in a halfway house or sober house, and 13 percent lived in transitional housing.

20. Non-independent housing after graduation

	Number (174)	Percent
Halfway house or sober house	28	16%
Transitional housing	22	13%
Emergency shelter	6	3%
Permanent housing with staff that provided supportive services	11	6%
Hospital or mental health facility	4	2%

Forty-one percent were paying all their own living expenses, and another 16 percent reported paying at least half of their own expenses. Of those not paying their full living expenses, about two-thirds (61%) said that they receive assistance from others with whom they are living (relatives, friends, roommates). Only 3 percent reported receiving government subsidies.

21. Living expense responsibility

	Number (174)	Percent	Of only those of don't pay all (103)
Pays all of housing expenses	71	41%	
Pays most (50-99%) of housing exp.	27	16%	
Pays for some (1-49%) of housing exp.	36	21%	
Doesn't pay for any of housing exp.	40	23%	
Of those who don't pay all of housing expenses (N=103).....who else pays?			
Roommates, friends relatives who live with	63	36%	61%
Minnesota Teen Challenge	13	7%	13%
Friends, relatives, who don't live with participant	12	7%	12%
Job provides housing	5	3%	5%
Section 8, Housing Assistance, or Subsidized Housing	2	1%	2%
Military housing	1	1%	1%
Financial aid for school	1	1%	1%
Other government benefits	4	2%	4%

Housing was stable for most respondents; about two-thirds (63%) reported living in their current place for at least the past six months. Of those who moved within the six months prior to contact, most (78%) said they'd just moved once during this period of time.

Relationships

Over one-fourth (29%) of participants reported living with a spouse or partner, and almost half said that they had children. Of those with children, 43 percent said that their children were living with them.

22. Relationships

	Number (174)	Percent
Married, living with partner	35	20%
Married, not living with partner	5	3%
Living with spouse/partner, not married	16	9%
Have children	81	47%
Children living with participant	35	20%

The majority of participants said that their relationships with family and friends improved after their participation in Minnesota Teen Challenge.

23. Change in relationships

	Better	Same	Worse
Spouse/partner (N=76)	82%	17%	1%
Children (N=72)	88%	13%	0%
Brothers and sisters (N=165)	85%	15%	1%
Parents (N=154)	94%	5%	1%
Other relatives and friends (N=172)	87%	11%	2%

Legal involvement

Teen Challenge staff report that a growing number of referrals to the program come from the criminal justice system. At one to five years following treatment completion, most respondents (73%) had not had further legal involvement. However, as shown in Figure 24, 17 percent were arrested at least once since graduation and 10 percent were charged with a new crime. Most of these (12 out of 16) were misdemeanors. Eight percent reported being incarcerated at least once since graduation. It should be noted that an additional 26 potential respondents (8% of the original sample of 315) were incarcerated at the time of follow-up and unable to be contacted for the interview.

24. Legal involvement after graduation

	Number (174)	Percent
Arrested since graduation	29	17%
One time	18	10%
Two times	6	3%
Three times	3	2%
Eight times	1	1%
On probation since graduation	36*	21%
One time	33	19%
Two times	2	1%
Charged with new crime (N=172)	18	10%
One time	10	6%
Two times	6	3%
Three times	2	1%
Convicted of misdemeanor OR felony	15	9%
Convicted of a misdemeanor	12	7%
One time	8	5%
Two times	3	2%
Three times	1	1%
Convicted of a felony (1 conviction, each)	4	2%
Been incarcerated	22	13%
One time	14	8%
Two times	5	3%
Three times	1	1%
Four times	1	1%

Figure 24 shows that fewer recent graduates have been arrested, charged or incarcerated since they graduated from Teen Challenge.

25. Legal involvement: respondents who had been arrested, charged, or incarcerated, by graduation year

	Number (174)	Percent
2001 (n=22)	7	32%
2002 (n=22)	3	14%
2003 (n=28)	7	25%
2004 (n=34)	6	18%
2005 (n=68)	9	13%

Spiritual commitment and involvement

Almost all (97%) respondents said that they made a personal commitment to Christ either while at Minnesota Teen Challenge or immediately before. Most (91%) said that this commitment definitely helped their sobriety. Over three-fourths (81%) said that they made a connection to a church or ministry within six months after graduation, and at the time of follow-up, 74 percent reported attending church-related activities at least once a week.

As mentioned previously, 73 percent of respondents mentioned relationship with God, church, or some other faith-related factor as being important in helping them maintain their sobriety. In looking at the data, there appears to be some correlation between likelihood that the respondent relapsed after graduating from Teen Challenge and whether the respondent mentioned faith-based factors as important to their maintaining sobriety. Eighty-nine percent of those who had maintained sobriety since graduating Teen Challenge mentioned a faith-based factor as important to their sobriety; 62 percent of those who had relapsed since graduating Teen Challenge mentioned a faith-based factor as important to their sobriety.

26. Commitment to Christ and Church involvement

	Number (174)	Percent
Made a personal commitment to Christ while in Teen Challenge	146	84%
If not, did so immediately prior	23	13%
Did commitment help sobriety? (N=169)		
Definitely yes	154	91%
Probably yes	7	4%
Probably no	7	4%
Definitely no	1	1%
Length of time after Teen Challenge to connect to church/ministry		
Less than 1 month	140	81%
1-5 months	8	5%
6 or more months	16	9%
Still looking	5	3%
Not really looking	5	3%
Participated in church/ministry past 6 months		
More than 1 time a week	95	55%
Once a week	33	19%
2-3 times a month	23	13%
Once a month	11	6%
1-5 times a year	7	4%
No	5	3%

Mentors and support

About three-fourths (74%) of respondents stated that they had a mentor while at the Teen Challenge Program, and over half (56%) said that they currently had a mentor or sponsor who held them accountable in their day-to-day lives.

In looking at the data, there appears to be no correlation between likelihood that the respondent relapsed after graduating from Teen Challenge and whether the respondent had a mentor while at Teen Challenge. Seventy-six percent of those who had maintained sobriety since graduating Teen Challenge had a mentor at Teen Challenge; 72 percent of those who had relapsed since graduating Teen Challenge had a mentor at Teen Challenge.

Fewer than one-half (41%) attended any support group since graduation, and about one-fourth (28%) said that they were currently attending. Those currently attending listed a wide range of support groups, with Alcoholics Anonymous and Christian-based groups being predominant. Of those currently attending a support group, 85 percent said it was important in maintaining their sobriety.

In looking at the data, there appears to be some correlation between likelihood that the respondent relapsed after graduating from Teen Challenge and whether the respondent had attended any support groups since graduation. Only 37 percent of those who had maintained sobriety since graduating Teen Challenge had attended a support group since graduating; half (50%) of those who had relapsed since graduating Teen Challenge had attended a support group. Interestingly, only one (8%) of the small group of 12 people who reported no relapses but who reported use during the prior six months had attended a support group since graduating.

27. Mentors and support

	Number (174)	Percent
Had a mentor while in Teen Challenge	128	74%
Currently has mentor/sponsor	98	56%
Attended any support group since graduation	72	41%
Currently attending a support group	48	28%
Type of support group (multiple responses)		Of those attending only (48)
Alcoholics Anonymous	15	31%
Celebrate Recovery	11	23%
Bible Study Group	9	19%
Narcotics Anonymous	8	17%
Christian 12 Step Program	5	11%
Life Rebuilders	3	6%
Church Support Group	3	6%
Cocaine Anonymous	2	4%
Free Indeed, Youth for Christ, Serenity Village	Each 1	Each 2%

Participants' evaluation of other treatment experiences

As described in previous sections, 107 of the 174 participants (62%) had attended at least one treatment program before entering Minnesota Teen Challenge. Twenty-six (15%) attended a program (including Teen Challenge's Restoration Program) after graduating Teen Challenge. The participants attended a wide range of other treatment programs before, and to a far lesser extent, afterwards. The experiences with other treatment programs prior to entering Teen Challenge are summarized in Figure 28. As shown, the treatment programs attended by the most participants included: Fairview Riverside in Minneapolis, Fountain Lake in Albert Lea, and Hazelden in Center City. Overall, respondents rated Minnesota Teen Challenge as more effective than other treatment programs they had attended.

Treatment before Minnesota Teen Challenge

These 107 respondents described 219 different treatment episodes at 130 different programs before entering treatment at Teen Challenge. Seven percent of these treatment episodes were in faith-based facilities. For those who had been in treatment prior to Teen Challenge, the average number of times in treatment was 3.5.

28. Number of treatment episodes before entering Teen Challenge

	Number (174)	Percent
No treatment reported before entering Teen Challenge	67	39%
One time	30	17%
Two times	25	14%
Three to five times	36	21%
Six to nine times	10	6%
11 to 15 times	3	2%
22 times	1	1%

The average length of stay was 30 days (median). Respondents graduated from treatment 83 percent of the time. When asked to compare the effectiveness of these treatment episodes to Teen Challenge, just 2 percent described the previous treatment as “more effective,” 4 percent described the previous treatment as “equally effective,” and 94 percent described the previous treatment as “less effective.” The most frequently-named treatment centers are shown in the figure below.

29. Treatment Centers attended before Minnesota Teen Challenge

Treatment program	Number of respondents	Lengths of stay	Graduated? (% "yes")	Faith-Based? (% "yes")	More effective than Teen Challenge (% "yes")
Fairview Riverside, Mpls., MN	14	5-30	93%	0	7%
Fountain Lake, Albert Lea, MN	7	15-30	86%	0	0%
Hazelden, Center City, MN	7	7-32	86%	0	0%
Unity Hospital Fridley, MN	6	7-30	50%	0	0%
Dellwood Recovery Program	6	21-90	83%	0	0%
New Beginnings, Waverly, MN	5	20-25	100%	0	0%

All other treatment programs were named fewer than five times. Because of these small numbers, further analysis is not reported. These remaining treatment programs are listed in the Appendix.

Treatment after Minnesota Teen Challenge

Twenty-six participants (15%) had attended treatment after graduating from Teen Challenge. Respondents described 33 different treatment episodes at 16 different treatment programs after discharge from Teen Challenge. Teen Challenge Restoration Program was attended by 13 of these respondents, with lengths of stay from 22 days to 15 months. Ten of the 13 graduated, and all described the treatment program as faith-based. In addition, two respondents in the sample were re-admitted to Minnesota Teen Challenge.

Each of the remaining 14 treatment centers were named only by only one or two of the nine respondents. These treatment programs are listed in the Appendix.

30. Participants' evaluation of other programs

	Number of participants	Number of times	% saying it was faith-based	% said it was more effective
Treatment programs following Teen Challenge	26	33	73%	39%

Closer look: Respondents completing treatment in 2005

A closer look at people completing treatment in 2005 is helpful for two reasons: First, the best response rate was achieved for this group, 85 percent (68 completed interviews from a sample of 80) and therefore is more representative. Second, by occurring approximately one year after treatment, the follow-up time frame is closest to most published outcome studies.

A description of the sample is found in Figure 31, and basic outcome information is found in Figure 32. About two-thirds (66%) were men, and three-fourths (77%) were adults. About half (52%) had previous treatment. Overall, these characteristics were similar to those of other years. However, compared with 2001, a larger proportion in the 2005 group was in the adult program as opposed to the teen program (77%/24% vs. 55%/46%).

Alcohol was named as the biggest problem. While alcohol has consistently been named as the biggest substance problem across the years, methamphetamine assumed the number two position in 2003, replacing cocaine. In terms of all substances used, it does appear that the 2005 group was more likely to use over-the-counter or prescription meds prior to entry into Minnesota Teen Challenge than earlier cohorts (31% in 2005, compared with 18%, 14%, 18%, 21% years 2001-2004, respectively).

31. Admission characteristics for 2005 graduates

	Number of participants (68)	Percent of participants
Gender		
Men	45	66%
Women	23	34%
Age category		
Adult	52	77%
Teen	16	24%
Had previous treatment	52	77%
Substance named as “biggest problem”		
Alcohol	21	31%
Methamphetamine	19	28%
Marijuana	10	15%
Cocaine	9	13%

The outcomes of the 2005 graduates, shown in Figure 32 below are impressive. About three-fourths (74%) reported being abstinent in the six months before the follow-up contact and 57 percent reported no substance use since graduation. (Another 3% reported that they had not “relapsed” but had used a substance during the six months prior to the telephone contact.)

A large proportion are working and/or going to school. A subset of nine graduates, or 13 percent report significant legal problems, i.e., either being arrested, charged with a new crime or incarcerated since discharge.

32. Outcomes for 2005 graduates

	Number of participants (68)	Percent of participants
A. Consistently reported no relapse or use*	39	57%
B. Inconsistent: Reported “no relapse” but use in past 6 months	2	3%
C. Consistently reported relapse AND use in past 6 months	27	40%
Reported no use in past 6 months	50	74%
Adult program graduates: reported no use in past 6 months (n=52)	40	77%
Teen program graduates: reported no use in the past 6 months (n=16)	10	63%
Employed 40+ hours/week	34	50%
Full-time students	21	31%
Living in own house/apt	21	31%
Treatment	8	12%
Arrested	8	12%
Incarcerated	6	9%
Arrested, charged with new crime, or incarcerated since discharge	9	13%

* Responded that they did not have any relapse since discharge (Q 32) AND no use in the past six months (Q30).

As the length of time since completing treatment increased, the proportion of respondents living in their own house/apartment increased. This was a steady trend going back from 2005 graduates to 2001 graduates. This may be indicative of greater stability/independence over time, as well as increased independence that corresponds with increased age.

This increase in stability over time is seen in the following figure:

33. Trends over time in housing stability

Item	Percent reporting "yes" to each item in a given year				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Living in own house or apartment	73%	73%	61%	50%	31%
Paying own living expenses	59%	50%	43%	38%	32%
Moved in past six months	23%	32%	32%	38%	44%
Living with spouse or partner	64%	59%	25%	29%	10%
Children living with you	41%	23%	21%	24%	10%

The trends over time may reflect actual increase in stability over time, or it may be that more stable graduates were contacted in earlier years.

Interestingly, there is no difference across the years in reporting having children (as opposed to the children living with them); about one-half (43% to 55%) of the participants each year report having at least one child.

Closer look: Adults versus teen graduates

The follow-up sample contained 131 participants in the adult program and 43 in the teen program. The proportion of females was greater in the teen group, where almost half (47%) were girls, compared with about a third (35%) in the adult group.

An important factor in looking at the differences between teens and adults is the year of treatment attendance. The distribution is different, as shown in Figure 34. As more of the teens have had a longer follow-up period (e.g., 23% of the teens vs. 9% of the adults graduated in 2001), some of the differences between the groups may be due to length of follow-up rather than difference in age

34. Year of discharge by age

	Adult (131)	Teen (43)
2001	9%	23%
2002	15%	7%
2003	17%	14%
2004	20%	19%
2005	40%	37%

With this caveat in mind, the following were found:

These two age groups differed in the types of substances named as the “biggest problem” before entering Teen Challenge.

- For adults, the substances named as biggest problems before treatment were: alcohol (31%), methamphetamines (24%), cocaine (20%) marijuana (7%) and opiates (5%).
- For teens, the substances named as biggest problems before treatment were: marijuana (35%), alcohol (23%), methamphetamines (18%), cocaine (10%), and hallucinogens (8%).

Many outcome variables are different between the two groups, generally showing a less favorable course for teens, as shown in Figure 35. Overall, more teens described use of alcohol and drugs after treatment. For example, while almost three-fourths (73%) of adults reported they had not used any substance in the six month period before the follow-up contact, only 37 percent of teens reported this to be true. Alcohol and marijuana were the primary substances upon which teens relapsed. Almost two-thirds

(61%) of the teens admitted using some alcohol during the prior six months, and almost one-third (30%) admitted using marijuana. (Note there may be overlap between these two responses.)

Despite the differences in use, the punitive consequences of use do not differ greatly. For example, about the same proportion of teens and adults had legal consequences.

There are some interesting comparisons between the two groups' post-Teen Challenge experience. While equal proportions made a commitment to Christ at entry and had a mentor during their Teen Challenge stay, fewer teens found a church connection within the first month after treatment, attended a support group, or had a mentor at the time of the follow-up contact.

35. Outcomes for adults and teens

	Adult (131)	Teen (43)
A. Consistently reported no relapse or use*	51%	29%
B. Inconsistent: Reported "no relapse" but use in past 6 months	4%	17%
C. Consistently reported relapse AND use in past 6 months	45%	55%
Reported no use in past 6 months	73%	37%
Entered another treatment after Teen Challenge	18%	7%
Past 6 months has used:		
Alcohol	22%	61%
Marijuana	8%	30%
Drug use now "a lot less"	96%	78%
Alcohol use now "a lot less"	92%	63%
Length of longest abstinence (mean, sd) in months	17 \pm 14	15 \pm 13
Currently using tobacco product	29%	42%
Working at least 40 hrs week	62%	33%
Full-time student	18%	42%
Arrested since graduation	17%	16%
Incarcerated since treatment	15%	7%
Made a personal commitment to Christ at entry to Teen Challenge	84%	84%
Connected to a church within 1 month of discharge	77%	63%
Had a mentor at Teen Challenge	73%	74%
Had a mentor at follow-up contact	60%	44%
Participated in support group	50%	16%
Rated Teen Challenge quality "outstanding"	52%	33%

* Responded that they did not have any relapse since discharge (Q 32) AND no use in the past 6 months (Q30).

Closer look: Gender

The overall follow-up sample consisted of 66 females and 108 males. There was little difference in the proportion who had previous treatments: 58 percent of the females had at least one prior inpatient treatment (range 1-22 treatments) and 64 percent of the men had prior treatment (range also 1-22 treatments).

There was a difference in substance named as the biggest problem before entry to treatment. For females, it was methamphetamine; for males, it was alcohol. The distribution was as follows:

- For females: methamphetamine (26%), alcohol (23%), marijuana (15%), cocaine (12%).
- For males: alcohol (33%), methamphetamines (21%). Cocaine (21%), marijuana (12%).

At time of follow-up, their outcomes were fairly similar. For example, 45 percent of both males and females consistently reported no relapse and no use within the past six months. Despite the differences in substance rated as the biggest problem before treatment, alcohol and marijuana were the two substances used most (see Figure 36). A small proportion used cocaine (3% of the women and 8% of the men) or methamphetamine (2% of both men and women).

The reasons for relapse appear to differ somewhat. When asked about the main reason for the most recent relapse, the distribution was as follows:

- For females, the stated reasons for relapse were: being with the wrong crowd (17%), wanted to (desire, curiosity) (14%), mental health problems (14%), and being involved in a sexual relationship (10%)
- For males, the stated reasons for relapse were: wanted to (desire, curiosity) (18%), being with the wrong crowd (12%), not being connected with God (10%), family problems (8%), and no reason (I'm an addict, didn't get help, stupidity) (8%)

However, the top two factors they attribute to their sobriety are the same: staying connected with God (25% of both females and males) and their families (15% of females, 14% of males).

36. Outcomes by gender

	Female (64-66)	Male (108)
A. Consistently reported no relapse or use	45%	45%
B. Inconsistent: Reported “no relapse” but use in past 6 months	8%	7%
C. Consistently reported relapse AND use in past 6 months	47%	48%
Reported no use in past 6 months	58%	69%
Treatment after Teen Challenge	12%	17%
Past 6 months has used:		
Alcohol	38%	28%
Marijuana	15%	12%
Drug use now “a lot less”	41%	45%
Alcohol use now “a lot less”	38%	42%
Currently using tobacco product	29%	34%
Working at least 40 hrs week	36%	66%
Full-time student	30%	20%
Arrested since graduation	8%	22%
Incarcerated since treatment	6%	17%
Made a personal commitment to Christ at entry to Teen Challenge	85%	83%
Connected to a church within 1 month of discharge	80%	81%
Had a mentor at Teen Challenge	71%	75%
Had a mentor at follow-up contact	53%	58%
Participated in support group	39%	43%
Rated Teen Challenge quality “outstanding”	50%	45%

Feedback about Teen Challenge experience

Participants in this follow-up study were largely very positive about their experience at Teen Challenge. As shown in Figure 37, almost all (87%) felt that the statement “I think my circumstances today would be a lot worse if I hadn’t gone through the Teen Challenge program” was “completely true” for them. A similar proportion (86%) said that it was “completely true” that the spiritual aspect of Teen Challenge made a difference in their lives.

37. Evaluation of Teen Challenge Program

Sample size for each item = 173-174 Teen Challenge....	Completely true	Mostly true	Mostly false	Completely false
Taught me how to have a chemical-free lifestyle	54%	40%	5%	1%
showed me how to positively handle life situations	49%	47%	3%	1%
helped me improve my work habits	49%	35%	12%	5%
showed me how to have healthy supportive relationships	57%	36%	6%	1%
helped me develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ	83%	13%	3%	0%
I think my circumstances today would be a lot worse if I hadn’t gone through the Teen Challenge program	87%	12%	2%	0%
The spiritual part of Teen Challenge made a difference in my life	86%	13%	2%	0%

Overall, the majority of respondents rated the overall quality as outstanding (47%) or very good (36%).

38. Quality rating of Teen Challenge

	Number of participants (174)	Percent of participants
Outstanding	82	47%
Very good	63	36%
Good	21	12%
OK	5	3%
Poor	3	2%
Terrible	0	0%

When asked to name the part of the program that helped them the most, the faith-based aspect of the program was mentioned most often. A quarter of respondents also mentioned Level II training and particularly mentioned the instruction given by Brother Earl. Responses to the open-ended question were grouped together in Figure 39.

39. In their own words: parts of Teen Challenge that helped the most

	Number of participants (173)	Percent of participants
Connection with God (faith-based part)	53	31%
Level II Training (Brother Earl's classes)	43	25%
One-to-one counseling	20	12%
The staff (supportive, committed)	19	11%
The fellowship with other students	14	8%
Structure of the program (e.g. schedule)	12	7%
Being in spiritual surroundings	11	6%
Attending church, chapel, morning worship	11	6%
Level III Training (dealing with emotions)	11	6%
Length of the program	10	6%
Prayer	9	5%
The PACE program/classes	8	5%
The discipline (e.g. rules enforced)	8	5%
Getting saved, knowing that I am forgiven, music ministry, healing/healing prayers, learning how to live a full life (care for myself and extend that to others), the contracts, getting away/isolation (from old environment), personal time, mentorship, taking us to events in the community, tools tailored to fit specific individual needs	Each 1-7	Each <5%

Note: This was an open-ended question. Responses were grouped together in categories. Respondents could give up to three responses. Therefore, percentages do not total 100.

Although a full list of verbatim responses are included in the Appendix, selected responses include:

- The counseling, in a group or one-to-one. Being more honest with myself, get over my past. It helped me forgive people including myself. I forgave myself.
- The fact that they took us out to the community to events, concerts, and showed us that we could enjoy ourselves without drugs and alcohol.

Just the way they challenged me to pursue higher potentials, how to resolve conflicts, how to deal with life, patience, humiliation to deal with every day life.

My relationship with Christ. He became real to me while I was there, gave me the power I did not have.

Phase II, Brother Earl, the study of the bible that teaches what we're supposed to do in our everyday life, and how to practice it in the real world. It really humbled me.

The staff. They were very supportive and behind you. They seemed to be tough on you at times but you needed that to have the necessary structure.

The life change it made in my life. Teen Challenge is the toughest thing I have ever done. It's the hardest thing around. It forced me to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ. No matter what was going on around me, I had to turn to Jesus. There was no place else to go. I was at a dead end.

Brother Earl's class. He taught us from experience. He knew what it was like to be hooked on drugs and alcohol and he related his teachings so that we understood. His class is what impacted me the most.

Just having someone to talk to. The support of the women staff was wonderful.

Length of the program. Time away from the world.

The structure. I needed that at the time of my life. I was running like a chicken without a head before Teen Challenge. So having a schedule that was structured was very important to me.

Suggestions for improving Minnesota Teen Challenge

Participants were asked, "If you could do one thing to improve the Teen Challenge program, what would that be?" Many respondents had no suggestions and commented that they thought it was good as is. Other responses were varied and are helpful for program planning. Many respondents had comments about strengthening the aftercare services provided by Teen Challenge and allowing participants to experience the "real world" while still in care. Others wanted more one-to-one time with counselors or suggested that the program hire more staff. Still others wanted more interaction between men and women – which was interestingly one of the leading contributors to relapse listed by respondents.

The following are some selected responses. A full list of verbatim responses to the open-ended question separated by type of population served is included in the Appendix.

Responses from Teen program participants

Better follow-up. After graduation no one calls to see how you are doing. There should be some type of follow-up program.

To help students at the end during the exit time to transition to a normal life into the real world. Like help with a church, job, housing, etc.

More interaction with the outside world while in the program. I was cut off and then thrown back in with friends who I hadn't had any contact with for over a year. It would have helped to have some interaction while in the program so I would have known how to handle my drug-using friends better.

Instead of just talking about real life situations have some opportunity to put what we talked about and what we learned into practice before graduating.

Girls should be allowed to talk to guys while at the program so that we can know how to relate to them once we get out and have healthy relationships.

Responses from Men's program participants

Aftercare. I would promote aftercare more. There was not enough for us to turn to once we left Teen Challenge. No connection to the outside recovery world.

Be more lenient with families. Allow Teen Challenge participants to sit with family at certain settings (church). Allow Teen Challenge participants who have earned trust to spend weekends/time with families. Make families a part of the recovery process.

Hire more employees to work more closely with the people who are considering leaving. Have a separate program to help them cope with the structure because they're used to having structure and being on schedule.

Have more to do with the females. Men and women should be together, not separate.

Down size. Too many students. It's way too big for the staff. People in back are sometimes using – not enough staff for the number of people/students.

The aftercare follow-up – re-entry into community. Help with finding jobs. Help with housing. Better service/resources to help finding/going back into the community. Do some pre-re-entry into the community work.

The transition to the outside world. I felt we were not given enough opportunity to connect with people. For instance; with job interviews Teen Challenge would dictate the time when you could see people. Teen Challenge should trust the individual to re-connect with outside community.

Responses from Women's program participants

I would explain to the staff that when we first get to the program we are all “baby Christians” and they should stop expecting that we're all mature Christians and we are given expectations that we are all perfect. We faked it to graduate.

A relapse prevention program. When you're done with the program you're just put out there. We need interaction after graduation to prevent a relapse.

Incorporate more education about what addiction really is. Be able to have a healthy balance between the focus on addiction and the spiritual parts. They should also have a better after-care. Add a transitional component to the program. You are so isolated for so long that it's kind of a shock when you go back into the real world.

Toward the end of the program allow us girls to be able to interact with guys to re-learn how to communicate and have a healthy relationship with guys because we didn't have that. It makes it very awkward. I sometimes still find myself being embarrassed of how to act around males.

Hire more staff. They expanded and didn't make room. I had three counselors in a short time and people fall through the cracks. Some people went for more than a month without meeting with a counselor.

Maybe help people in the last part in the last phase of the program. Allow people to get out more in the community and look for jobs. Help them transition back into the community before leaving the program.

Issues to consider

At follow-up, graduates of Minnesota Teen Challenge are satisfied with the program and feel that it made a difference in their lives. Eight in 10 rated the quality of Teen Challenge as “outstanding” or “very good.” Almost all said they made a personal commitment to Christ at the beginning of their Teen Challenge stay and the majority mentioned factors related to faith that made a difference in maintaining their sobriety.

Two-thirds had not used alcohol or other drugs in the six months prior to the follow-up interview. Almost all respondents who had a relapse since graduating Teen Challenge said their drug use was “a lot less” than before Teen Challenge and 83 percent said their alcohol use was “a lot less.”

The top two factors contributed to relapse were “hanging out with the wrong crowd” and simply having the desire to use. Negative emotions, such as stress or anger were also frequently mentioned.

The following are a few issues to consider in future program planning:

Increase emphasis on a family program and/or greater family involvement, especially for teens. Emancipation is an important issue for any teen and his/her family, and even more so for families where there is addiction. What is the family's role and responsibility in recovery? How much rule setting? When and how can they “let go” and let the teen face his or her own consequences?

Engagement with Teen support groups. This is hard for any treatment center, and may be especially so for Teen Challenge in that they are looking for specific Christ-based support groups. They may do best to organize some super teen alumni and help them hold groups at their site. Minnesota Teen Challenge youth could then start attending before they are discharged, and continue on afterwards.

More services and attention post-residential treatment. It is important to move from “treatment” to a broader perspective of “recovery” during this period. For example, changing the name of services from “aftercare” to “continuing care” sends an important message; “after” sounds like something (i.e., the main work of recovery) is completed. It's not. In fact, it's just beginning. Transition services could include a halfway house or “three-quarter-way” house, recovery groups, and descending-frequency telephone (or in-person) case management. The longer a person stays in any form of treatment the better his/her outcomes.

Strengthen relapse prevention sessions, making the point that alcohol and marijuana are major relapse drugs, and are serious. Many addicts downplay these.

Increase individual counseling to address specific issues and to monitor progress. Reconsider staff/student ratio. Rapport with a counselor can decrease attrition and increase compliance with program goals.

Incorporate counseling groups/topics of dealing with relationships. Relationship issues, including intimacy, commitment, and sex are can be major recovery hurdles for people of any age. Relationship issues were frequently mentioned as a relapse factor and emphasis on these issues were also offered by several respondents as a suggestion for improving the program.

Broaden recovery to include living an overall healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating, exercise and use of leisure time. This could be incorporated into the theme of God's gift and will for us.

Appendix

Verbatim responses to open-ended questions:

Suggestions for program improvement

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse

Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most

Treatment programs attended before and after completing Teen Challenge

“Industry Standards” of outcomes for alcohol and drug treatment

Full verbatim responses: Suggestions for program improvement

Responses from Teen program participants

Nothing at all/everything was good as is. (4 responses)

Have more Bible discipleship – teaching. Have less casting out demons. Less talk about things that have already been dealt with on the cross. More talk and teachings about Jesus.

Cutting out the singing for other churches. There should be more activities we can do instead of singing. It's not for all of us.

Have correspondence between graduates and current residents on a personal level not just at the national conferences.

Provide separate rooming. Private rooms.

The food. (3 responses)

Allow people to use tobacco (to smoke). You would be surprised the number of problems and negative behaviors that caused. You can't expect people to quit cold turkey.

I would make it so that they wouldn't push their views on people, like their charismatic opinions. The whole Assemblies of God views.

I can't think of anything. (4 responses)

A little bit more of a separation between males and females. They were a distraction during church in the mornings, passing notes because teenagers just do those things.

Do more out-of-the-church activities like street witnessing. We're too isolated from the world.

Probably make the program not frowned upon. Most people feel that the teens are just there because their parents sent them there not because they want to change.

The re-entry level should be broken into age appropriate groups, (i.e., teens to mid 20's, and 25 and up). Currently things we talk about didn't apply to teens – seems like a joke. We need to talk about things that would help teenagers re-enter our community/world.

For teen boy program, we got the shaft in going back into the real world. More of a re-entry program for teen boys. Particularly in lining up a job. It's too easy to go back home to parents who will support you and to do nothing.

Have more room/space.

Better follow-up. After graduation no one calls to see how you are doing. There should be some type of follow-up program.

To help students at the end during the exit time to transition to a normal life into the real world. Like help with a church, job, housing, etc.

Have a second opinion on authoritative decisions. I don't think that one person should make all the judgment calls; what's right and wrong.

That they forced us to wear skirts. I was never comfortable wearing them (for girls only).

Have more outings to the community. We're stuck in that building for too much time. The girls began to have their periods at the same time and that caused way too much trouble that staff was not even aware of.

During transition to have interaction with the opposite sex. During the program you're kept isolated. Some of the people had problems with dealing with the opposite sex inappropriately before entering the program. When you graduate you're just let free. Should have some interaction during transition.

More interaction with the outside world while in the program. I was cut off and then thrown back in with friends who I hadn't had any contact with for over a year. It would have helped to have some interaction while in the program so I would have known how to handle my drug-using friends better.

Not to force the teens so much. That made us want to leave, to run from there. That was for the teen program.

Instead of just talking about real life situations have some opportunity to put what we talked about and what we learned into practice before graduating.

Let there be more family connection while you are there. We should be allowed more phone time to talk to family.

Attending church should be optional not mandatory.

More activities. The girls didn't go out a lot. Getting out of the building more often.

More one-on-one contact between students and staff.

The program should not reform peoples' lives but help people find themselves and their personalities without changing them to a totally different [person].

The staff/deans should have more one-to-one conversations or make sure we're ready to move on to the next stage or to exit the program.

For the teens it would be to change Level 4. To learn to communicate with the outside world instead of just the people in the program.

Girls should be allowed to talk to guys while at the program so that we can know how to relate to them once we get out and have healthy relationships.

To have a stronger discipline staff.

Maybe like have the teens interact with other teens at the program so when you get out you have other friends like yourself.

To have a little more respect/flexibility with new girls getting to the program. They would take the girls' jeans away and strip them. I just didn't see that necessary because it made the girls hate the program.

The transition/the after-care. You go from a rigid structure environment to a world of "wild things" where everything is fair play.

Responses from Men's program participants who graduated prior to 2005

Nothing. (2 responses)

More money so they can focus on individuals instead of fundraising.

I'd fire all the people and hire new staff. They get an office and they get a big head and can't tell them anything. No after-care. They throw you out after you've finished the program and have made enough money for them and have sung in the choir enough. They're all about money.

Leave it as is. Good program.

I can't really think of one thing. It worked for me/nothing to improve.
(4 responses)

I would have better communication skills. To have a reality that this is a big organization not just a small group of ten.

Make it bigger; add another building to make it better to what they're already doing.

Create a better aftercare program.

Aftercare. I would promote aftercare more. There was not enough for us to turn to once we left Teen Challenge. No connection to the outside recovery world.

I don't think I can answer this one. It's out of my qualifications.

Restructure phasing out so people have the opportunity to be more established (time away from Teen Challenge). Yes, before they graduate to be able to experience outside.

For me to be working there I could improve the program.

To have time or more time with family that can come to visit me. Involve the family in the healing process. Have my wife go through a session with me.

Not to allow court ordered people to enroll. They were not serious about recovery. They just wanted to escape a prison sentence.

To allow guys to have more freedom at the very end at the transitional phase to test and move into the real world.

Help the people that are there to be able to see their loved ones (families) more often while they are there.

More staff – program is getting so big.

Make it single bedroom for everyone.

I wouldn't change anything.

If I were a millionaire I would give them the money to improve all of its program especially to purchase a new building with modern facilities.

Hire more program staff to help hold people accountable.

Make it smaller. It's too big.

Be more lenient with families. Allow Teen Challenge participants to sit with family at certain settings (church). Allow Teen Challenge participants who have earned trust to spend weekends/time with families. Make families a part of the recovery process.

When people just go in. It took me about 6 months to surrender. When a person first goes in, they should ease up on the religion part. Not so much cramming it in. Addicts hate to be told what to do, so if they could ease up a little.

A little more small-group counseling instead of lectures – under 12 in a group.

I would not allow TV shows, regular television to be watched there. It really takes you away from what we're doing there. It's full of sex, crime, greed, violence, and anger.

Have more rewards for following the rules and staying on track with the program.

It's a God thing. I work there so it's growing with the grace of God.

Level 4, more time, and internet access to look for job, housing, church.

Hire more employees to work more closely with the people who are considering leaving. Have a separate program to help them cope with the structure because they're use to having structure and being on schedule.

Allow counselors to have more one-on-one time and get to know the clients better, get to know them on a personal level.

Not to let the residents impact the every day decisions. They (staff) believe and let the other residents influence their decisions on behavior and rules there.

Better staffing. They were not capable of or educated to handle this kind of population. They needed more training.

How they deal with people when they are ready to leave the program. Getting them hooked up with places they can go for help instead of just throwing them back into the world.

Have more to do with the females. Men and women should be together, not separate.

More effective transition into society.

Teen Challenge lacks helping people return to the community. That would be a big help if they would improve in that area.

Staff improvement. They would follow me around waiting for me to screw up. They were way too harsh. They push too much. Too quick on you, force you to do things.

I wouldn't change anything. I like the program.

Have better food and more coffee for 35 year olds and up.

I believe the program is getting too large for itself. Getting to be too much for the money. Relying too much on getting money from the outside rather than believing that Jesus will provide the money.

The after-care program was a big mess when I was there. When students get to the end they should have a positive exit to help students get a job, a place to live, to have access to out-of-state contacts to get back on your feet. Instead of letting you graduate and nowhere to go.

Responses from Men's program participants who graduated in 2005

Give more personal freedom after 30 days. Allow individuals to have more personal responsibility for their actions.

Communication with other staff members. Sometimes no one knew what was going on for events and meetings.

More one-on-one. The program has gotten way too big that we're just going through the program without really getting treatment or help that we really need.

I've never thought about it. I don't know what I would do. More consistency with the application of discipline.

Don't know. I think they should, I don't know, can't answer this one.

I would have them work on educating people to where their background is from. I'm from the farm (country) and all they talked about was city life and the alternatives instead of alcohol places that dealt with city life.

A more intense small group therapy in the last six months of treatment. It's more important than looking for housing or getting a job.

Have more mentors.

Cut out the TV watching. Take it away.

Down size. Too many students. It's way too big for the staff. People in back are sometimes using – not enough staff for the number of people/students.

I wouldn't change anything. Keep up what they are doing.

Better communication.

They are outstanding. I wouldn't change anything.

I would have them not to talk negative about other recovery groups. To have us attend AA and NA during Level 4.

The aftercare follow-up – re-entry into community. Help with finding jobs. Help with housing. Better service/resources to help finding/going back into the community. Do some pre-re-entry into the community work.

Make it that all Level 4's have the opportunity to go into the community to fellowship with others and share the word of God, not just pick and choose certain ones unless they have a problem or have relapsed.

More preparation with graduation such as preparing for life outside the program – 2-3 months where we're part of the program but lived in a halfway house and worked.

The program is getting too big. The personal attention that each person needs has deteriorated. Now the program is just a big system now. I don't see the success numbers that they report. I work for an after-care program and the success isn't as high as it was. Some staff doesn't care. Can't minister to everyone one-on-one now. Program has grown from 10 people to almost 400.

Be a little tougher – not give so many breaks.

I don't know. For my situation it worked.

Nothing. It was great when I was there.

Providing more opportunities to get out in the real world. More of a re-entry transitioning. It isn't for Level 4 students so much of a shock when they get out.

The disciplinary action they take to those who are not sent by the courts. How they treat us, it's like a jail. I was there for treatment, love, healing, etc. I was treated like a criminal at this place.

Have a better after-care. When people graduate after 13 months, they leave you hanging so they need to follow-up with us.

The 2:30 wake-up and driving five hours on Sundays.

The transition to the outside world. I felt we were not given enough opportunity to connect with people. For instance; with job interviews Teen Challenge would dictate the time when you could see people. Teen Challenge should trust the individual to re-connect with outside community.

Extend to 2 years. People who are dealing with drugs need 6 months just to detoxify. The additional time could be used to really deal with the issues that made them use in the first place.

I'm not the person to say. I can't point anything out and that's true bro.

I would continue to work on the transition phase. The aftercare program needs a lot of building or shaping.

Let them stay up for 30 minutes more.

The faith-based part of it.

There needs to be a better level 4 for transition for people. Lots of gay females didn't know what to do or where to go therefore many people relapse and continue on with their original life style. We were told not to express our points of views on some of the things we were taught for people who have problems. This is not to build in a part in Level 4 so people, women, and men can express their points of views before leaving Teen Challenge. This will help in transitioning back into the community.

That there be more support from the community. People think it's a cult and that it doesn't work. All the people here need to hear that there's hope and the community makes the program. Gain the support for the individuals to give them some and also so that the program gets outside (financial) support. The food portions are small.

I would get back to make the contracts harder. Need to complete 7 contracts. When I got there the contracts were hard. By the time I left they were easier. They're now making it easier to graduate.

To listen to the students more. Some students have things to say and they need to be heard. Their cries for help need to be heard.

To create more aftercare. Spend more time developing the aftercare. Ministry for individuals graduating.

Responses from Women's program participants who graduated prior to 2005

Return back to how it was in 2001 when I graduated. Be stricter and be more solid in the faith-based programs.

Get good "on fire" speaker – a revival preacher.

Maybe not the men get favored so much over the women. The men were favored and got to do more activities. Pastor favored certain people.

Support the women who are there, encourage them; let them know about bad men and ugly relationships so they will not get into one.

Have them read the Old Testament. They should read the Bible every day and could start with the Old Testament. If we're there for a year, why couldn't we have read the whole Bible?

Have 12 people assigned to 1 staff person. New people not [to] do work detail for first month. More time to study and read the Bible.

The length of time (4 hours). We had to do the cleaning like scrubbing the floor.

More outside facilitation work experience and longer Level 4. More opportunity to deal with the outside world. Maybe a work/class for 4 hours and be able to come back to the program to have that support system before leaving the program.

I would explain to the staff that when we first get to the program we are all "baby Christians" and they should stop expecting that we're all mature Christians and we are given expectations that we are all perfect. We faked it to graduate.

I really can't change anything because God is the one that does the work at Teen Challenge and I do not think we can improve God.

Better after-care. Have more follow-up.

A relapse prevention program. When you're done with the program you're just put out there. We need interaction after graduation to prevent a relapse.

If they could somehow focus on the holistic approach of nutrition and fitness; physical aspect, relaxation, etc.

Hire more staff. Have a lot more one-on-one counseling.

The mentor factor. They should have mentors assigned to them. When you got out of the program it seemed like they just "threw you out" to fend for yourself. It was a weird feeling. They should help you.

Nothing. It's a great program.

The after-graduation care. Have more follow-up available for out-of-state graduates. More support from Teen Challenge for non-Minnesotans who complete the program.

Better counseling. Counseling more often and better follow through.

I would provide housing (temporary) for ex-graduates while they get up on their feet. Is there a re-entry program? Give people on Level 4 more leeway to look for work/housing.

Sometimes the rigidity of the program can get in the way of what God wants to do. People could get help more if there was more flexibility.

That they should not allow prescription drugs to be used while there. To be more accepting of us addicts when we fail/use/relapse.

Incorporate more education about what addiction really is. Be able to have a healthy balance between the focus on addiction and the spiritual parts. They should also have a better after-care. Add a transitional component to the program. You are so isolated for so long that it's kind of a shock when you go back into the real world.

Maybe help people in the last part in the last phase of the program. Allow people to get out more in the community and look for jobs. Help them transition back into the community before leaving the program.

Toward the end of the program allow us girls to be able to interact with guys to re-learn how to communicate and have a healthy relationship with guys because we didn't have that. It makes it very awkward. I sometimes still find myself being embarrassed of how to act around males.

To have more counselors.

The transition out of it to the real world would be different. Implement one. They don't have a transition program.

During Level 4 they should have the men and females get together and attend groups together.

The food. I gained 60 pounds. The food was horrible.

More counselors for one-to-one counseling.

Spent more emphasis on those that are graduating, helping them transition back into the community; more structured free time, to look for a job and housing, and finding a church home.

Responses from Women's program participants who graduated in 2005

Include an exercise program.

To expand it and let it grow.

The food. Serve less carbs. Serve more fresh fruit and vegetables.

Increase the staff. An amazing program.

Add more in-depth Bible teachings and lessons and more Bible course work.

Make more staff available for one-to-one counseling. More time for each individual student.

Nothing really. Can't think of anything.

Have more support to help people find jobs before graduating from the program.

A lot more interaction with experienced Christians on a one-to-one basis. A mentor through the program would have helped.

Hire more staff. They expanded and didn't make room. I had three counselors in a short time and people fall through the cracks. Some people went for more than a month without meeting with a counselor.

Have more staff and counseling.

More one-to-one with the pastoral counselor.

Teaching women about men/women relationships.

Everything is ok. Would not change anything.

In Level 4 they should transition back to the real world. Prepare us for reality instead of bookwork.

Full verbatim responses: Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Responses from Teen program participants

I don't know. I just didn't feel like doing it. Working. I was busy.

Learning to do new things. I changed my life. My life-style is completely different now. I do positive stuff now. Good relationships with family, and friends. Good, positive people surround me every day. They have a good influence on my decisions.

Spending time with the Lord and reading Bible. Hang out with people with same faith and who have found the Lord like me. Feeding my heart with Jesus.

Good people, good family that surround me. Will power, the power to not use. My own strength.

Because I was at Elmore Treatment, then went straight to Hazelden, then to a halfway house so that's the whole time I was sober.

Testimonials at church. Commitment to a new life style. My parent. To be me.

Self-determination. Wife.

They pushed me. I got the concept of the program. Marine Corps – the discipline.

Never had a problem maintaining the foundation. Teen Challenge was very helpful in managing my family issues.

Mom's support. Work kept me busy and focused.

My faith. I have something else to live for besides drugs and alcohol. New friends – I am involved in other activities with people who don't use. My parents – having a closer relationship with them and not wanting them to go through hell I put them through when I was using drugs.

I kept busy. Went to a treatment center at New Hope.

Peer pressure.

Support – good family, friends, and peers. Ambition for the future – a better future. Moral.

Working, staying busy, and always trying to do something.

Family. Girlfriend. God and job.

God. My parents.

Accountability to my friends. I was living with a youth pastor then. Personal desire, a drive for myself, I wanted it bad.

Family, God, and friends.

God. Support system, family, and friends. Don't want to use drugs.

My parents. Sister.

God. I got to know God and know what he wanted for me. He's given me power.

Family and family supportive in making decisions.

My lawyer who is also my pastor at church.

No response.

My son. I started going to church more. Being around positive people who don't use.

God being in my life. He helped me overcome that part of my life, gave me strength. Being around good friends that are very supportive to me not using.

It was my choice. I am in control. It's my problem. I can control it.

Because my health was in jeopardy. I get fuzzy and have memory loss so that's when I quit for long periods of time.

A strong support system, family, and friends are very supportive and help me through life. Teen Challenge paperwork and workbooks. I still have them and go through them when I need to. Counseling for depression. I am constantly going and also involved in my church.

My relationship with Jesus. My son.

Trying to stand on my own. Didn't hang out with old friends. Was a loner initially then I started hanging out with my friends again and I started using.

Being pregnant. Having a baby now; a newborn.

The support of family. When I was working and going to school and I was busy.

Not wanting to go down that same black dark hole. I grew up. Being an adult and responsible.

Being out of Teen Challenge.

My pregnancy right now. I passed out constantly. I got a big scare. I thought I was dying.

I was pregnant for 9 months. I live with my dad now and I'm a Sunday school teacher at our church. I don't have the desire to use any more.

God. His guidance to continue to seek Him and know Him. Mother, big time. She's awesome. She's always there for me. My sister's kids, my nieces, and nephews. I don't want them to end up like me. They motivated me.

Parents. Mentor. My faith.

God, the fear of God, if I start using I can go to hell. My little brother. I want to set a good example for him. Friends – they encourage me not to use.

My boyfriend, he's sober. Talked myself into not using.

God. People in my church and school supporting me not to use. Family and Teen Challenge alumni.

My relationship with God. I know what God's role in my life is now. He has come into my life. He showed me my gifts, and now I can share it with others. I hang around with new Christian people and we do things together. We account for each other. My family – I never want to hurt them again the way I did with drugs.

Responses from Men's program participants

Relationship with God. Past consequences. I've learned better. I feel better about myself.

Wife and family. Maintain relationship with God.

Getting married, buying a house, being more responsible, and maintaining a relationship. My age, just growing up, getting older, wiser, you know. The program, I learned how to apply what I learn to my life.

God.

My personal relationship with God. Hanging with Christian friends now.

Wife. My desire to be responsible and to keep her in my life. My relationship with God. I want it to be more effective to talk to others about God. Personal goals to be a better person.

Structure of Teen Challenge carried me through. Praying. Family.

Belief in God. I'm an apostolic minister. My obligation to my family. My love for serving.

My reading the Bible, contact with God everyday, etc. Accountability – my network is strong now. I'm doing the normal people thing.

Reliance on God. He's my anecdote, my strong source that keeps me from using.

God. He totally took my addiction away. I know that if I started a little use of drugs I would go back to where I was. I love my life the way it is now.

Family.

My daily prayer life and fellowship with others.

Jesus Christ. I was defeated by Satan and God cleaned me up so I owe everything to him. My church family. I am involved in this wonderful, this great set of people that keep me busy and focused with activities that are all positive ones.

My faith in God. I fear the fact that I could go back. My health, I want to be a healthy productive person. No desire, I got a job and I'm busy.

My wife and kids. The responsibility I have to them. God, freedom to choose, my relationship to God.

Trusting and having a relationship with Jesus Christ. That's all in a nutshell. Oh, and I help others in their recovery. That's huge for me.

Being around good people. The church that I attend.

My continued effort to use the tools that I learned at Teen Challenge; prayer, accountability. Personal relationship with God. I attend church regularly and am around church people. Support groups. I go to meetings with other ex-addicts, that we support each other not to use but to better our lives.

Keeping in touch with family and friends who don't use. Responsibility to my girlfriend and her daughter, want to do positive around them.

Leadership role for Teen Challenge. Accountability. I am very involved with Teen Challenge half-way houses so I am teaching others. Fellowship, going to church and reaching out and involved in an outreach mission. I share my past/history with them and how I am clean now. Being real with myself. I am facing day-to-day problems instead of escaping.

My relationship with the Lord Jesus. Knowing who I am – better self-esteem. Attending church regularly.

Jesus Christ. Stability. Wife.

Getting older and I know that there will come a time that I will have to face God. He'll ask me what have you done with your life and I want to be able to have a good answer. Also I want to leave a good example for my two daughters and my grandkids. I don't want them to be ashamed of me.

Church. Being accountable. Environment.

Just the desire not to use. Christian friends. Mentors.

My faith. Family. Freedom.

The Lord. My church. AA attendance.

Accountability with family and friends. Spiritually filled.

Relationship with God. I stay focused on what He has for me. I read the Bible and do what it says. My accountability to myself, my wife, my church, my mentor. I need them in my life.

My faith, support group, pastor, and people in the faith.

God, my relationship with God, praying, attending church. My children, just looking at them and realizing that they need me for everything. What I want to do in my life, with my life. I am in graduate school. I have a good job. I want sobriety.

Keeping plugged in to the ministry. Prayer. Staying focused with family.

God. Christian fellowship people. Remembering my drug history.

My salvation with God. People I associate with and people who help hold me accountable.

God. Family. My past experience and not wanting that life style.

Family – I don't want them to suffer because of my using. I go to jail, can't provide for them. Work – don't have the time or money anymore for that junk. Responsibility – I want to keep what I have, like my house, cars and stuff like that.

Family. I lived with my family so I was not allowed to drink or drug at their house. Church – I was attending all the time, going to church trying to be good.

Being incarcerated, can't or don't have any drugs or alcohol there. Just the fact that I am in a controlled environment.

Christian friends.

Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, and God.

Didn't want to get into trouble at the Re-entry house after Teen Challenge. No other reason.

Faith in God. Being fed up with life style.

Accountability to the mentors, family, God, and men's group. Studying my word (the Bible) and prayer. Someone else praying and me praying.

Understanding God and my purpose here.

Giving my life over to Christ. Doing the best I can to do His will rather than mine.

I have good accountability. Jesus Christ.

Accountability with my wife and family. Personal determination; I have decided not to use any more. The blanket answer, the Lord helped me not to use.

Contact with sober people. Being in sober community.

Accountability. My own personal business (demolition). My church members (fellowship).

Life in general. It's something I don't want to do.

Being delivered from the desire to use. Relationship with Jesus Christ.

The law. They have required me to do certain things (probation) that keep me from using. Myself, my will power. I have decided just not to do that anymore. It's too expensive.

God, my relationship with God. I read the Bible and that's all. The fact that I'm healthier, in a better mood, more proficient. I love that feeling when I'm sober.

Prayer. Accountability.

God. Mentor and sponsor. Counseling one-on-one. Bible.

Focusing on God. Living my life for God. My child.

Jesus Christ setting me free from all that. My desire not to go back to the old ways. Everybody's prayers; my family, Bible groups/studies.

Not wanting to do drugs anymore. Read scripture daily.

People around. Work at Teen Challenges.

My spiritual awakening experience at Teen Challenge. Education of what drugs do to the mind and body. Biblical education.

Church and staying strong in God's word.

Reading the Bible. Praying. Going to church.

The hope that God is working/creating my life for a greater purpose.

My family. Supportive friends. Relationship with God.

My faith and spirituality.

Christ.

God. Support of sober friends and family.

Support system. Relationship with God. Relationship with family.

Relationship with Jesus Christ. My family. Friends.

Living with Christian roommates. Going to a Christian college where they do not allow any drinking. My relationship with Jesus Christ.

Family. Friends from Teen Challenge program.

Staying busy, working a lot, doing positive things with my life and time. The people I chose to be with, basically my family because they don't do drugs or anything like that. Mainly it's me. I want to change my life around and not use any more.

Personal relationship with God. No desire to return to my former lifestyle. Desire to be of service to God's kingdom.

Desire to be/stay sober. Health – I'm diabetic and want to stay healthy. Family.

God. He has blessed me with a new job, a new chance at life. I can't go back to the old ways. Wife and children – I want to be with them all the time and be a good husband and father. Fear of having to go back to Teen Challenge. I am too old for this stuff.

My relationship with the Lord, praying, hanging out at God's places. Having friends that are sober and not into drinking scene. They helped me a lot.

My family. I have a girlfriend and my family wants me to get married and I want to do the right thing now. My relationship with God, knowing that he forgave me and gave me a second chance in life.

Not wanting to disappoint myself or my family. God in life. The people who I choose to hang out with now.

Staying with God.

Self-control, strength of the Lord, eyes, and ears to see and hear the Lord.

God. Support from friends and family.

Jesus Christ. Just knowing that I was saved after all the things I had done. I was free. I was forgiven. The format that we were taught at Teen Challenge even if we make a mistake. Humbled myself before God.

Celebrate recovery program. Serving in local church. Support system of other interns.

Responses from Women's program participants

Relationship with Christ.

My relationship with the Lord and Foundation. Family. Faith.

My family. My relationship with God.

I stay busy, working, helping my sick elder parents, taking them to doctor appointments, and doing and caring for them. I think of them more than my own needs.

Supportive husband. He's an awesome man of God. His faith is share with me. Yahweh, the creator, by filling me with truth and scriptures, and we are obedient to Yahweh forever.

My relationship with Christ.

Support of a church. Not being around anyone who uses.

I got saved and trust in the Lord and have hope.

God. My will. Determination.

Supportive family and friends. My desire to stay sober.

Church support. Health.

Relationship with Christ. Working in ministry.

Jesus Christ – my relationship with him. God is my strength and support. Support networks, plugged into a church group. I have goals in my life. I'm working, going to school, and my family support.

Jesus Christ. Husband.

I have outgrown that stage. My dad is an alcoholic so I don't want to end up like that. I want to have a real life and finish school/college.

The Lord and I don't want that old life style any more.

My faith, family, and friends.

Christ. My children. Wanting a better life.

Fear of going back to where I was; mental hospitals, jail, etc. Employment/job. Support of friends and church.

The Lord. My family back. Knowing I could lose everything – my family, my nursing license.

The responsibilities that I have now. My happiness when I am not out of control. I am happy.

My faith. I have a relationship with Jesus Christ; spend time/prayer and Bible. Mentors keep in contact. I never return to the old neighborhood, environment, or town where I used to use.

My relationship with God. My Teen Challenge mentor. Regular church attending.

God. Family. Myself, will power, not wanting to use.

Relationship with God. Christian environment. Christian friends.

I go to AA. I go to church. I hang out with positive friends who don't use.

Length of time away from that lifestyle of drugs. Learning my relationship with God. My gratitude for being given a second chance.

God. Our body is the temple of God and He said to keep pure and clean. Family. I have a great relationship with my parents; something I have never had. Amazing network of Christian friends that keeps me accountable and keeps me going.

Pregnancy. Nursing my baby. Wanting to be the best mom I could be.

Relationship with God. Christian friends' support. My family.

My Lord Jesus and reading, devotional time, and Christian fellowship with other Christians.

God. My church family.

The support I have now from my family. My relationship with Christ. My unborn child.

Support from family and friends. God.

The Lord Jesus Christ. Bible. Guidance of the Holy Spirit.

My relationship with God. My firm decision to not use anymore. Practicing the things I was taught at Teen Challenge.

God. Maintaining a relationship with God. Family support. Friends – having good friends that are sober.

Religion, having the God factor. Support from Teen Challenge graduates, the assistant dean of the ministry school. Family support.

Daily maintenance of prayer and devotions. Church attendance. Talking to people in a Christian environment. The support I get from them.

Accountability. Support from friends and church. Staying in touch with Teen Challenge.

The Bible. Church support.

The Lord, fellowship, and attending faith-based recovery group.

My support system, friends and family, relationship with Jesus Christ.

The training center, the ministry school. I'm still plugged into the program. My mentors. Staying in the ministry.

My Christian community. I'm surrounded by them. My ability to ask for help (humble). Faith. I can't see going back there. I've seen what God has done for me.

The support from my family. Having Christ as the leader in my life. Still being involved in or with Teen Challenge.

Full verbatim responses: Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapses

When respondents were asked to say, in their own words, what factors contributed to their relapse, many talked about emotional health issues such as boredom and loneliness. Many also talked about hanging out with the wrong crowd. Another common theme was relationship difficulties or influences from the opposite sex. These themes were true for both men and women and across age groups.

Responses from Teen program participants

I wasn't serious with my walk with the Lord. I hung out with people who were using and struggling. I was young, immature, and didn't learn my lesson.

I don't know. Just wanted to get high man. Just wanted to get high you know.

My lack of devotion. Just stress – family situations. Court cases.

My brother passing away.

Hang out with my same friend in high school.

Boredom. Addiction.

Peer pressure.

Boredom, environment, the people, curiosity.

I really don't know. It's kind of a broad question.

Environment. It wasn't new ground; I came back to the same neighborhood. Personal issues, problems within myself that have not been resolved as of yet. Peer pressure from friends that want me to still be like them and use.

Stress.

Going through a lot of depression. Allowing myself to be around old friends that still use.

Broke up with fiancé. I was confused and caused me lots of pain. The people I was with at that time at my workplace, they had a huge influence that got me to use again.

Habit. I got hooked on the whole drug thing, and all the people are doing it that I know. I guess I don't have another reason.

I was in a relationship with someone who drank. He influenced me to drink. It was a stressful, abusive relationship so drinking would help cure the pain.

Boredom. Feeling that now I'm in control of drugs. It doesn't control my life. It's just for recreational purposes now.

Stress. The world. It's crazy now. Peer pressure. Not being in a structured environment.

Depression. Boredom.

I was at the party and influenced to drink liquor. I turned 21 and celebrated with alcohol.

New Year's party 2007. I felt like drinking to celebrate.

Probably peer pressure, something to do. Lost my convictions, my spiritual ones. Not spending time with God.

The program was too strict so I wanted to make my own decisions right after the program without people telling me if it was right or wrong. That's what my friends were doing so I wanted to fit in so I wanted to use too.

Stress, my jobs, and going to school. Breakup with boyfriend.

Responses from Men's program participants who graduated prior to 2005

Stupidity.

Hanging out with old friends who are drinkers. Taking on too much than what I could handle; work, school – led to stress.

No after-care. Threw me out on the curb. Wouldn't help me get food for my family.

Void of staying connected with God. Lack of accountability. Hanging out with wrong crowd.

Curiosity to see if there was a difference.

I stopped praying, reading my Bible. I put God aside. I wasn't handling my bipolar, not taking my meds.

Over confident that I had arrived at sobriety, I was done with that problem. Stress with my ex-wife, a difficult divorce. I used that as an excuse.

Laziness. Not spiritual. Not staying strong in God's word.

To escape reality, cared of the outside world after Teen Challenge for one year. Stress reliever. Just sorting my mind out. I looked for my using friends. I wanted to go back to my friends.

I stopped trusting God, started trusting myself. That's everything.

Overwhelming. I was never accustomed to being responsible like having a job, wife, and kids, paying bills so I guess I just wanted to try and go back and hide in the substance abuse. Bringing a full paycheck home and surrendering it to the needs of the house and giving it to a woman. Especially giving it to a woman.

Just the social drinking one, two beers. I guess just to hang with the others.

I felt old and inadequate. I had not had sex in a long time so I felt sorry for myself and got stupid drunk. So that sums it up. That's all of it.

Stress. Pressure of getting a job, keeping job, long hours. Try to maintain relationship. Relationship.

Life situations/pain – emotional starting using alcohol as a remedy. Not getting along with my baby's mother.

My emotions – my heart was broken from a relationship. I went back to hanging around with using friends.

Tragedy in the family – my mother died. I was letting my spiritual life get down, depressed emotionally. A betrayal with my sister – family falling out.

Not having Christian friends around me.

Just being an alcoholic. That's why and that's all.

Fear of the future, just not being sure what will happen in the future. Frustration, just that I think of where I am in my life right now, no job, money, in treatment again, too much anxiety.

Loneliness. Bored. Just wanted to.

Because I never wanted to stop to begin with. No other reasons.

Not really sure. The desire I guess. Anger.

Selfishness. Did not have any regard for anyone. Disobedience. I knew God did not want me to do but I did anyway.

Still in my head, thinking about drugs or alcohol, finally gave in. Hanging out with same people and environment.

Responses from Men's program participants who graduated in 2005

Loss of contact with spiritual advisor and Bible study and AA meeting.

Everybody is doing it. At the time it was something I wanted to do.

Not having a deep personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I let it slide. Quit going to church. Not having any accountability with friends and support system.

The same crowds of people, small town, nothing to do but go out and drink. Loneliness. I'm the only child. I live on a farm and there's no excitement except go to the bar and have fun.

Normal every day pressures that overwhelmed me with my daily living. Financial problems. Wanted to escape from responsibilities and from different parts of your mind.

Fear. I stopped going to church and stopped praying and became afraid.

Socializing, re-connecting with wrong group. Being with old friends.

Unhappy with job situation.

Too much free time on my hands. Stressed home life.

Just thinking I could use and quit anytime.

The stress. Seeing others drink and knowing that I couldn't. The desire was still there.

Stress – not being able to find a job and all that. The people I hung around with. My ex-girlfriend she was using a lot so she influenced me.

Depression. Lonely.

Because I was going through a divorce and under a lot of stress. Not able to cope with disappointments and rejects that I turned to what I knew to relieve the pain.

Curiosity. Social interaction (my choice). I chose to be with some group of friends I had before Teen Challenge and not use – didn't work, relapsed.

Sex and drug abuse went hand-in-hand. When I entered a sexual relationship I started using again.

Responses from Women's program participants who graduated prior to 2005

Family issues. Death. Anger and bitterness.

I started dating a guy who drank so eventually I began to drink too. I had an emotional breakdown with my boyfriend so I went to use crack.

A lot of things going on – two of my children getting married, pressure, beginning to get depression.

Men. I use them for self-commiseration. I came back to Teen Challenge responsible to get to the bottom of why I do this.

Old friends. My environment. Stress.

Lack of devotion time. Not enough personal time. Relationship with opposite sex.

My surroundings/associates. Lack of self-control.

My desire to drink. Then the cravings for drugs would start.

Depression. Death in family.

Depression, being alone, wondering why I spent all the money and time at Teen Challenge. Questions about life, where am I going, who am I, etc. Purpose in life. Illness in the family. My step-father is dying.

I don't know how to answer that because I still drink but it's no longer a problem.

Wrong relationship with guy. Smoking. Compromising my relationship with God – started smoking and listening to music.

I knew I could control it after being dry over a year. Trading one thing for another. It's fun. Hanging out with the wrong crowd/people/friends.

Relationship unhealthy for me. Not asking for help.

Responses from Women's program participants who graduated in 2005

Help with cancer.

Hanging out with old friends. I went looking for them.

Hanging out with my old friends that use. No other thing/event/reason.

Family – trying to be around people who use. Seeking approval. Loneliness. Boredom.

Loneliness. Boredom. Not staying connected to a church.

Full verbatim responses: Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most

Responses from Boy's program participants

The constant interaction with staff. They were always there to help me out and listen to my problems.

Time of worship and going to youth groups and Brother Earl's class.

High school. I finished my high school diploma at Teen Challenge so I got a lot of support and help with the high school program there.

Spiritual Emphasis Week. That's when I got saved. I had five demons taken out of me.

The session that teaches us how to start a new lifestyle and dispose of the old lifestyle. Now to not depend on/do drugs.

Having all of the counselors meet with us daily and whenever we needed to meet.

All the counselors offer Christ's love. They don't force it on you.

The Christ-centered foundation, staff, and other leaders. The overall support system at Teen Challenge.

The overall program. The love and friendship and Christ – knowing that people at Teen Challenge care about you not the people who use drugs. People like ones on Minnesota Teen Challenge.

Mentorship. Having positive role models in my life like the dean and other staff.

The personal situation and the one-on-one talks with the counselors when I got into trouble.

The discipline.

The teaching I received.

The kids that I met there. I made really close friends/relationships.

Being away, out-of-state, getting away from friends and that. A fresh memory.

Bible study.

God. The whole spiritual program.

That they introduced me to different people to hold me accountable and stuff.

Level II part – studying and learning the Bible.

The structure and the whole God aspect. Everything is at a certain time. Structure – we had to do things on schedule, not just when and if we felt like it. The structure helped me get through things.

The time with staff. The one-on-one time.

The spirituality part. The focus on Christ and the power of God that I felt when he changed my life.

Support staff and Part II. It made me open my eyes to what was happening to me – by using – destroying my life.

Responses from Girl's program participants

Healing for damaged emotions. The book/class.

The fact that they took us out to the community to events, concerts, and showed us that we could enjoy ourselves without drugs and alcohol.

That love that one or two members showed me. They would listen and give me honest responses.

The PACE program, the workbooks and the spiritual aspect. It was like counseling where we searched deep into our lives. The music ministries. I am good at singing and that brought out the good in me.

Healing for damaged emotions and PACE classes. Level III classes were more interactive and talking out loud and they trained us on how to get healing.

Learning about your personal relationship with God.

The relationship with the other girls and the staff were good, and Jesus, definitely Jesus.

Probably the second level of the program.

The spiritual part, that someone (God) is always watching over you so it's best to make the right choices.

Being in Minnesota, moving to Minnesota from Pennsylvania was the first thing for me.

Going to church there.

The one-on-one counseling.

The family therapy. I worked on issues that I had with my mom. My mom was a heroin addict and we worked on getting me better/healthier. She had me set boundaries with my mother.

My own personal devotionals when I woke up in the mornings. Fasting – doing something for God, what he wanted.

The support of the staff and the fact that it's faith-based.

The inner healing class.

Level III healing class.

Prayer. I found that it was real and that God was really listening to me.

PACE. A contract that I made throughout my stay there. I liked the way it changed my way of looking at relationships and the value of a good, complete life.

Responses from Men's program participants who graduated prior to 2005

The every day devotions and prayer. All of the required part was most helpful for me.

The counseling, in a group or one-to-one. Being more honest with myself, get over my past. It helped me forgive people including myself. I forgave myself.

The spiritual component was most helpful for me.

The classes with Brother Earl.

The one-on-one counseling.

Just the way they challenged me to pursue higher potentials, how to resolve conflicts, how to deal with life, patience, humiliation to deal with every day life.

Being immersed in a place that centers on Christ.

The classes. All of them. Chapel services.

My relationship with Christ. He became real to me while I was there, gave me the power I did not have.

The spiritual aspect. This is the area in my life that I had never wanted to surrender to but I did at Teen Challenge.

PACE class. It met my own personal basic needs.

Phase II, Brother Earl, the study of the Bible that teaches what we're supposed to do in our everyday life, and how to practice it in the real world. It really humbled me.

The staff. They were very supportive and behind you. They seemed to be tough on you at times but you needed that to have the necessary structure.

Being out of the world. The opportunity to be away from the world stuff and grow spiritually.

The spiritual aspect of the program. It re-developed what was inside of me already. I just needed to be charged.

The spiritual part of the program. Experienced singing in front of other church groups and letting go the inside of me that was trapped in drugs.

The sessions with the counselor expressing myself. One-to-one sessions that helped me to release my past.

The life change it made in my life. Teen Challenge is the toughest thing I have ever done. It's the hardest thing around. It forced me to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ. No matter what was going on around me, I had to turn to Jesus. There was no place else to go. I was at a dead end.

The length of the program.

My pastoral counselor. He was able to identify my flaws and that translated into me opening up and letting all the guilt and shame I had inside for so many years and get healed and leave that lifestyle.

That they gave a person there a lot of opportunities to learn, to grow spiritually, and kept people busy all the time.

Them pointing me to rely on Jesus Christ. I mean every part of life because without Jesus I am nothing.

The fact that it is faith-based. Also getting away for one year from my environment. The people at the program were there and prayed for you.

Longevity of the program and spirituality.

The psychologist. He was very straight-forward and knew exactly what I was thinking and he made me realize it was a good thing.

Classes that challenge your walk with Christ. They help you see the importance of having a relationship with Christ.

Testimonies. Everybody's.

The faith base, reading and studying the Bible, getting to know God.

Being brought to the Lord. Showing me that He's there no matter what I've done, that I can be forgiven.

Phase II part of the program. Learning the Bible, learning about the practicalities of the world, learning life skills.

The Third Level on family relationships and how to keep your faith during difficult times.

The spiritual aspect.

Level II – learning to be obedient, learning the Bible, and looking deeper within yourself. Helped me deal with shame and guilt.

The Level II. The part that helped me understand and live God's word. What it means to live with God.

The overall program. Just being there allowed me time to rethink my situation.

Brother Earl's class. He taught us from experience. He knew what it was like to be hooked on drugs and alcohol and he related his teachings so that we understood. His class is what impacted me the most.

The counseling part of it. We met once a week and he guided me throughout the program with his suggestions and listening to me and my problems.

The spiritual emphasis week. That's the time that helped me to get delivered or be set free from all the negative stuff in my life.

Morning worship.

The teaching of discipline.

The personal time to get to know Jesus.

The teachings about relationships with Jesus Christ.

The accountability factors – having the rules and structure. I needed those to help me learn how to be responsible and not rely on drugs.

Everything helped me. The spiritual stuff I guess.

Brother Earl's class.

The watching the staff's commitment to the program which enabled me to trust God to lead me in the right direction.

The second stage of the program. Educational part, learning who Christ is in my life, trusting and believing in him.

The contracts which allowed me to study and understand the word – Bible.

Fellowship with other students, sharing God's blessings, praying with each other and for each other.

Responses from Men's program participants who graduated in 2005

The support, the book work, Bible study.

Learning who Jesus really is, to know the Bible. How to be humble and love and care for myself and then to extend it to others.

The fact that it was a year long. I was away from all my friends that use drugs and alcohol.

The biblical teaching and the time needed to implement it into your life. The length of the program.

It helped me make good decisions in my life. Nowadays I can't do nothing wrong. I always have a guilty conscience now. I did not have that before Teen Challenge.

Spiritual part changed my life. It made me realize that I could not do it on my own. I needed God in my life.

The daily living in a Teen Challenge house is an experience. Living in a spiritual environment like that.

Level II, Brother Earl's class. It helped me relate your personal life to the Bible.

The spiritual part allowed me to open up and accept what God has to offer.

The strictness, having and enforcing rules.

Memorization, the contract, drilling into me the need to not do drugs and take care of myself.

The overall program was great.

My personal spiritual experience. Three months into the program a teacher prayed for me. During that prayer I had electrical current run through my body that changed my life – the prayer.

Class time, time to study the Bible, and the fellowship.

Brother Earl's Level II class.

The service, singing in choir, and the presence of God working through staff and others/client.

The teachings. Getting to know the Bible better and having the supportive staff to answer questions. The classes.

The Bible studies part.

The amount of time I had to learn about myself and who God is. The length in the program is the biggest factor.

Going to church and singing in churches, prayer.

Level II, Brother Earl's class. Also living with a bunch of guys, learning how to relate to one another and to keep each other to be accountable.

The spiritual part. I learned how to have a relationship with a higher power/ Jesus, who God wanted me to be.

My alone time with my Bible and prayer.

The guys coming together and helping each other out. Going to a different church every Sunday, fellowshiping and telling your story.

The staff. They talked to me and helped me when I needed some. Can't say more, dude. That's it.

So much – the contracts, the life problems that you had. We are given specific tools that are used for these problems, tailored to specific issues.

Phase II.

The fact that it was centered on the passion of God. We or I were after God's heart.

The spiritual aspect of the program. Everything from counseling in a Christian way and the study/classes that are all based on the scriptures/Bible.

The length of the program. It was good to be there a long time. It helped me clear my mind, life, and get back on track.

The faith-based part of it.

Spending the year getting to know Jesus Christ – a year of spiritual guidance.

The connection/interaction developed with people in similar situations and expressed myself and my views. Teen Challenge was like fertilizer for my soul.

Brother Earl's class, Level II. It's where the rubber met the road. Teaches you how to read the Bible, how to change attitudes, how to interact with people.

Prayer time – taught us how. Spiritual Impact Week – people coming in, evangelists, to talk about Jesus.

Responses from Women's program participants who graduated prior to 2005

The spiritual part.

The chapel and the curriculum which gave me the foundation. Chapel service.

Just having someone to talk to. The support of the women staff was wonderful.

When I would go to Brother Earl's. The stories that he told us were exactly what I had gone through. He was real. He had a lot of experience and treated women with respect at the program.

Discipline because I was only concerned for myself and as an addict we're very selfish people so I learned that I had to follow the rules like other people.

The counseling and prayer.

The length of the program.

Length of the program. Time away from the world.

Level III where we deal with our emotions.

The sisterhood, other students there.

The structure. I needed that at the time of my life. I was running like a chicken without a head before Teen Challenge. So having a schedule that was structured was very important to me.

That's a tough one. Healing for Damaged Emotions and the one-on-one meetings with the spiritual staff.

The contracts, the part where you write your story and begin reading and making a commitment/understanding, learning the Bible.

The counseling and the class work assignments (Bible training).

Scripture memorization and learning the Bible.

The Level III healing part. The contracts, what I promised to accomplish.

The part – Level II, putting the past in the past enabled me to forgive individuals who I felt had wronged me. By learning to let go of the past helped move me off drugs and into a new life.

The third level – Healing for Damaged Emotions part. It helped me a lot.

The classes, contracts which forces you to look deeper. Brought things to the light.

My counselor. She got right to the point. She didn't put up with my crap. I had to face my problems.

The classes that I went to. I had some really good teachers who helped to undo some unGodly thinking, helped me to put on the truth.

The fact that it was in-patient and that I was not able to go anywhere. Isolation.

Everything, every day is God centered.

The support services available, i.e., staff and other support ministry.

The PACE contract and getting to the root of the problem.

Chapel every day, singing.

The relationship with Jesus Christ. Teaching me how to have the relationship with Jesus Christ.

The discipline. They were strict and kept us accountable to our lives and responsibilities.

Living there. Having to be there all the time. Being away from my hometown and my surroundings. So the in-patient aspect. Having the presence of God be so strong.

The staff. They were always there to help and disciple me to follow Christ. They helped me learn how to follow Christ and walk the Christian life/walk.

The chapel every day, the overall prayer and chapel services.

Responses from Women's program participants who graduated in 2005

The spirituality and my commitment to Christ.

Meeting Jesus Christ and learning to develop a relationship with him.

The God/spirituality and staff and the length of the program.

The discipleship showed me how to get a relationship with God and keep it.

The individual counseling.

Level II, personal studies for new Christians. Teacher Brother Earl. He was very real and related to us. He's a good teacher.

The discipline. It was a great asset for me to focus on what I was doing – the structure of the whole program.

The discipleship – Level III Healing for Damaged Emotions.

My dedication and my commitment to Christ.

Intro to the word of God.

Overall good. The faith-based part.

Learning to develop positive relationships.

Getting saved, learning how to live a full life, meeting God.

Learning how to depend on God instead of others. Total depending on God.

Morning chapel because it's a time for singing and praise and sharing the gospel with other students.

Treatment programs attended before and after completing Teen Challenge

- Abbott Northwestern, Minneapolis, MN
- ACT, Olathe, KS
- ADAP, St. Paul, MN
- Agape House, Austin, MN
- Alaska Institute, Anchorage, AK
- Allen Hospital, Waterloo, IA
- Anoka County Treatment Center, Anoka, MN
- Anthony Lewis Center, Blaine, MN
- Arona ALC, Mounds View, MN
- Arrowhead Juvenile Center, Duluth, MN
- ASAC, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Aurora Program, Brainerd, MN
- Behavior Hall Center, Sioux Falls, SD
- Benhaven, Bay City, MI
- Bradford Health Services, Warrior, AL
- Bromenn, Normal, IL
- Cedar Ridge, Stillwater, MN
- Charlie's Place, Corpus Christie, TX
- Cochran House, Hastings, MN
- Crittenton Behavior Facility, Lee Summit, MO

- Crossroads, Owatonna, MN
- Cumberland Memorial Hospital, Cumberland, WI
- Daybreak, Spokane, WA
- Dunn County Health Center, Menomonee, WI
- Entry House, Chicago, IL
- Fairfield Treatment Center, Indianapolis, IN
- Fairview, Maplewood, MN
- Fairview Deaconess, Minneapolis, MN
- Fairview Ridge, Burnsville, MN
- Fergus Falls Regional Treatment Center, Fergus Falls, MN
- Freedom Village, Lakeville, NY
- Gateway, Kenosha, WI
- Glenmore, Crookston, MN
- Harbor Hall, Tetos Key, MI
- Haymarket House, Chicago, IL
- Healing Place, Laiville, KY
- Heartview Foundation, Bismarck, ND
- Heritage House, Decatur, IL
- Hibbing Family Medical Center, Hibbing, MN
- Hope House, Kodiak, AK
- House of Charity, Minneapolis, MN
- Imani House, Kansas City, MO
- Indianhead Treatment & Transitional Housing, Shell Lake, WI
- Johnson Hall, St. Peter, MN
- KCC, Kansas City, MO
- L.E. Phillips, Eau Claire, WI
- Lifestyles, Bloomington, MN
- Living Word, Brooklyn Park, MN
- Lodging Plus, Forest Lake, MN
- Liberalius, Carlton, MN
- Main Hospital, St. Cloud, MN
- Marion Family Recovery, Estherville, IA
- Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN

- Meadow Creek, Pine City, MN
- Medallion Program, Willmar, MN
- Mendota Mental Health, Madison, WI
- Mercy Hospital, Fridley, MN
- Methadone Maintenance Program, Minneapolis, MN
- Midwest Challenge, Minneapolis, MN
- Moses House, Kansas City, MO
- New Beginnings, Waverly, MN
- New Hope, Minneapolis, MN
- New Life, NH
- Northeast Regional Correctional Center, Saginaw, MN
- Place of Hope, St. Cloud, MN
- On-Belay, Minnetonka, MN
- Palm Beach Institute, West Palm Beach, FL
- Pathways, Minneapolis, MN
- Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN
- Pathways, Waterloo, IA
- Pharman, Eau Claire, WI
- Pine Shore, Pine City, MN
- Prairie Lakes, Willmar, MN; Pavillion, Champaign, IL
- Prodigal House, Minneapolis, MN
- Progress Valley, Richfield, MN
- Project Turnabout, Granite Falls, MN
- Ralpha, Houston, TX
- Recovery Plus, St. Cloud, MN
- Reflections, Reddington, PA
- Restoration Church, Kansas City, MO
- River Place, Anoka, MN
- Riverwood Program, Cambridge, MN
- Roger's Memorial Hospital, Milwaukee, WI
- St. Joseph's, Minot, ND
- St. Joseph's Hospital, St. Paul, MN
- St. Luke's Treatment Center, Sioux City, IA

- St. Mary's Hospital, Minneapolis, MN
- St. Peter, St. Peter, MN
- Sahara House, Princeton, MN
- Salvation Army, Minneapolis, MN
- Salvation Army Treatment Program, Chicago, IL
- Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Renexa, KS
- Spring Shadow Glen, Houston, TX
- Tabitha House, Kansas City, MO
- Tapestry, St. Paul, MN
- Teen Challenge, Minneapolis, MN
- The ARC, Jackson, MS
- Thistle Dew Boys Camp, Togo, MN
- Time Shore, Minneapolis, MN
- Turnabout, Granite Falls, MN
- Turning Point, Minneapolis, MN
- Twin Town Treatment, St. Paul, MN
- United Hospital, St. Paul, MN
- VA Hospital, Minneapolis, MN
- VA Hospital, St. Cloud, MN
- Valley Hope, Norton, KS
- Victory Drug Center, Washington, DC
- Willmar Crisis Center, Willmar, MN
- Winnebago Treatment Center, Winnebago, MN
- Woodland Hills, Duluth, MN

The following programs were attended by 18 respondents after graduating from Teen Challenge. Except where indicated, only one respondent attended these facilities. As noted in the reported, 13 respondents entered Teen Challenge Restoration program and two respondents re-entered Teen Challenge after graduating.

- Dallas Life Foundation, Dallas, TX
- Elmore Academy, Elmore, MN
- Place of Hope, St. Cloud, MN (2 respondents)
- Fairview Riverside, Minneapolis, MN
- Fountain Center, Albert Lea, MN (2 respondents)

- Hazelden, Center City, MN
- Metro Hope, Minneapolis, MN
- New Hope, Minneapolis, MN (2 respondents)
- New Vision, Alexandria, MN (2 respondents)
- Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN
- Spencer Recovery Center, Orange County, CA.
- Teen Challenge, Phoenix, AZ
- Teen Challenge, Tucson, AZ
- Walter Hoving Home, Garrison, NY

“Industry Standards” of outcomes for alcohol and drug treatment

Study	Treatment Center	Length of Follow-up period	Response Rate	Concept of “Success”	Percent Success
Middle-aged adults ¹ (50-65)	Hazelden	1 month	64%	Continuous abstinence	85%
Elderly adults ² (over age 65)			65%		84%
198 employee-assistance-referred adults in 4 different private treatment programs ³	2 inpatient, 2 outpatient, all private programs in Eastern US	6 months	94% of all admissions	Abstinent from alcohol for previous 30 days	59%
				Abstinent from drugs for previous 30 days	84%
230 men and 236 women with alcohol-use disorders	California VA	1 year-men	80% of those not known to be deceased	Abstinent & No drinking problems for previous 6 months	33% & 44%
		1 year-women			40% & 59%
		8 years-men			44% & 58%
		8 years-women			54% & 71%
212 fully employed men and women ⁵	Hazelden	6 months	82%	Continuous abstinence	59%
		1 year	75%	Continuous abstinence	53%
1,083 men and women average age 39 ⁶	Hazelden	1 month	79%	Continuous abstinence	77%
		6 months	76%	Continuous abstinence	59%
		1 year	71%	Continuous abstinence	53%
68 MN Teen Challenge graduates from 2005		1 year	85%	Abstinence for the previous 6 months	74%

¹ Oslin D.W., Slaymaker V.J., Blow F.C., Owen P.L., Collieran C. (2005). *Treatment outcomes for alcohol dependence among middle-aged and older adults. Addictive Behaviors. 30, 1431-1436.*

² Oslin D.W., Slaymaker V.J., Blow F.C., Owen P.L., Collieran C. (2005). *Treatment outcomes for alcohol dependence among middle-aged and older adults. Addictive Behaviors. 30, 1431-1436.*

³ McLellan, A.T. Grissom, P. Brill, J. Durell, D.S. Metzger and C.P. O'Brien (1993). *Private substance abuse treatment: Are some programs more effective than others?, Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 10, 243-254.*

⁴ Timko, C., Finney, J.W., and Moos, R.H. (2005). *The 8-year course of alcohol abuse: Gender differences in social context and coping. Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, 29, 612-621.*

⁵ Slaymaker, V. & Owen, P. (2006). *Employed men and women substance abusers: Job troubles and treatment outcomes. Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 31, 347-354.*

⁶ Stinchfield, R. & Owen, P. (1998). *Hazelden's model of treatment and its outcome. Addictive Behaviors, 23, 669-683.*