



Following up with graduates of Minnesota Teen Challenge

*Results of one-year interviews with persons
completing treatment in 2007 through 2009*

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Summary

This report provides information about outcomes after graduation from Minnesota Teen Challenge’s 12-month Life Care residential treatment program. Data from this one-year follow-up study of persons who completed treatment from August 2007 through May 2009 are compared with data from a previous follow-up study conducted with persons completing treatment from 2001-2005 (report published in 2007). In particular, direct comparisons are made between current findings and data for 2005 graduates, because both follow-up periods were approximately one year after participants graduated.

1. Participation in two 12-month follow-up studies of graduates of Teen Challenge Life Care residential treatment program

Report year	Graduation year	Number of graduates	Number selected for follow-up	Number participating in interviews	Response rate
2010 study	August 2007-May 2009	315	238	141	59%
2007 study	2005	154	81	68	85%

Key findings include the following:

- **At follow-up (about one year after graduation), the percentage of Teen Challenge graduates who reported that they had not relapsed has improved:** 73 percent of graduates from the 2010 study reported “no relapse” during the year following graduation compared to 60 percent of the 2005 graduates.
- **At one year follow-up, the percentage of Teen Challenge graduates who consistently report sobriety has improved:** 62 percent of graduates from the 2010 study reported *no relapses since graduation* nor *use in the past 6 months* compared to 57 percent of 2005 graduates. In order to examine consistent sobriety, researchers examined responses to two questions – one related to *no relapses since graduation* and another related to *no substance use in the past 6 months*.
- **6-month sobriety rates have remained constant:** In both studies, 2005 graduates and recent graduates, 74 percent reported no use of alcohol or drugs during the six months prior to follow-up interviews. Although questions about substance use were asked slightly differently in the two studies, it is unlikely that these changes affected overall results.

- **Having a job and a mentor after program completion reduces the likelihood of relapse.** Study findings show that graduates who have both are significantly more likely to avoid relapse than those who have neither.
- **In comments from respondents, a theme emerged about placing greater emphasis on transitioning back into the community or “real world.”**
Respondents felt this could occur both before graduation and upon graduation.

2. Summary of outcomes at one-year follow-up: 2007-2009 graduates versus 2005 graduates

	2007-2009 graduates (141)	2005 graduates (68)
Consistently reported no relapse since graduation nor use in past six months	62%	57%
No use in the past 6-months	74%	74%
Treatment after Teen Challenge	6%	11%
Substance use past year (6 months for 2005 grads):		
Alcohol	26%	19%
Marijuana	9%	10%
Drug use now “a lot less”	94%	96%
Alcohol use now “a lot less”	78%	96%
Currently using tobacco product	31%	31%
Working at least 40 hrs week	39%	50%
Full-time student	29%	31%
Arrested since graduation	5%	12%
Incarcerated since treatment	4%	9%
Made a personal commitment to Christ at entry to Teen Challenge	92%	87%
Connected to a church within 1 month of discharge	82%	91%
Had mentor at Teen Challenge	58%	68%
Had a mentor at follow-up contact	65%	56%
Participated in support group since graduating	35%	35%
Rated Teen Challenge quality “outstanding”	53%	44%

Other interesting findings include:

- Prior to admission, participants used a wide range of substances. Alcohol (34%) and methamphetamine (29%) were named as the biggest problems.
- Alcohol (26%) was the main substance used since graduation followed by prescription medications and marijuana (9% each).
- The top three factors contributing to relapse were: “family problems” (24%), “loneliness” (21%), and “hanging out with the wrong crowd” (18%).
- The top three factors helping to maintain sobriety were: “staying connected to God” (62%), “family” (36%), and “hanging out with positive people” (22%).
- Almost all (96%) respondents said that while at Teen Challenge (92%) or just before (4%), they made a personal commitment to Christ that was a turning point in their lives; 94 percent of these participants said that this commitment “definitely” helped their sobriety.
- At follow-up, 74 percent of respondents were employed. Given the economic conditions at the time of follow-up, these employment rates represent a significant positive outcome.
- Most rated the quality of Teen Challenge as outstanding (53%) or very good (29%).

Key issues to consider in future program planning include:

- Increase efforts around transitioning graduates into the community.
- Increase emphasis on building the right kinds of support systems for graduates after completion of the Teen Challenge program.
- Strengthen relapse prevention efforts around alcohol use, in particular.

In addition, if follow-up continues with Teen Challenge participants Wilder Research staff will work with Teen Challenge to implement additional strategies to improve study response rates.

Background

The mission of Minnesota Teen Challenge is to assist teens and adults in gaining freedom from chemical addictions and other life controlling problems by addressing their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. For more than 25 years, Minnesota Teen Challenge has been restoring hope to teens and adults struggling with drug and alcohol addiction. Minnesota Teen Challenge has campuses located in Minneapolis, Brainerd, and Duluth, Minnesota.

Minnesota Teen Challenge has both a short-term program and a long-term faith-based program. These two programs allow them to serve individuals with a broad spectrum of addiction issues; from those seeking treatment for the first time, to those who have been struggling with addiction for many years.

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 the information gathered to make program improvements.

This report provides outcomes of graduates from Minnesota Teen Challenge's 12-month Life Care residential treatment program. Data from this one-year follow-up study of persons who completed treatment from August 2007 through May 2009 are compared with data from a previous follow-up study conducted with persons completing treatment from 2001-2005 (report published in 2007). The first study followed up with graduates between one and five years after treatment completion, while the most recent study followed up with graduates at one year. Throughout this report, comparisons will be made with findings from the 2007 study; in particular, direct comparisons to results of follow-up with 2005 graduates, because both cohorts were contacted for follow-up at approximately one year after graduation.

Method

In 2008, Minnesota Teen Challenge staff contracted with Wilder Research to sample and conduct one-year follow-up telephone interviews with graduates of Teen Challenge's 12-month 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. This study followed a study of Teen Challenge graduates who completed treatment over a longer period of time (from 2001 to 2005).

Wilder Research worked with Teen Challenge staff to refine the evaluation design, development of outcome measures, sampling methodology and survey instrument.

Research questions

1. How are the lives of graduates better as a result of program participation (measures may include: family functioning and cohesion, education, mental health, housing stability, connections to faith communities, and employment)?
2. What types of outcomes related to sobriety are achieved over the long-term for graduates?
3. How has the program made a difference to society? What positive impacts have graduates made in their communities?
4. How many clients relapse? What are the rates of chemical use and chemical dependency for program graduates? What are some of the challenges and difficulties that graduates have faced? How many graduates are involved with the criminal justice system?
5. What aspects of Minnesota Teen Challenge activities are perceived by graduates as most effective? What aspects are seen as least effective?
6. How satisfied are Minnesota Teen Challenge graduates with the program?
7. What suggestions do graduates have for improving the program?

Sampling

Wilder Research and Minnesota Teen Challenge staff selected a sample of graduates of the 12-month Life Care program. Participants graduated between August 2007 and May 2009. Every female adult graduate, every teen graduate, and a random sample of half of adult male graduates from August 2007 through December 2008 were included.

However, because of the smaller than anticipated number of graduates, sampling half percent of male graduates was eliminated in 2009. At that time, all men were selected for inclusion in the study.

All information for the sample was obtained from the Minnesota Teen Challenge alumni database beginning in July of 2007 and continued monthly through May of 2009. A staff member 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 315 persons between August of 2007 and May of 2009.

Total per year:	August-December	2007	61
	January-December	2008	170
	January-May	2009	84
Total over last 3 years =			315

Sample selection

Wilder Research selected the sample size based on the following assumptions and decisions.

- For men, the percentage estimates for overall findings are accurate within plus or minus 5.5% (95% confidence level). The total number of men was 209. The sample selected was 132 (see below for specific sampling of each year).
- For women, the entire population of 72 women was selected (100%). Therefore, no estimate of sampling error is calculated.
- Estimates have wider margins of error for individual yearly adult cohort groups (approximately +/- 12% by year).

- For adolescents, the entire population of 34 youth was selected (100%). Therefore, no estimate of sampling error is calculated.

3. Sample selection by graduation year and population served

		Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total sample size
8/2007-12/2007	Population	47	9	3	2	
	Sample	25	ALL	ALL	ALL	39
2008	Population	117	35	15	3	
	Sample	62	ALL	ALL	ALL	115
1/2009-5/2009	Population	45	28	7	4	
	Sample	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL	84
Totals by program	Population	209	72	25	9	315
	Sample	132	72	25	9	238
Percent of total population		66%	23%	8%	3%	
Sampling percent within sub-group		63%	100%	100%	100%	
Sampling percent of total population		42%	23%	8%	3%	76%

Response rates

The following figure describes the reasons that some Teen Challenge graduates did not complete an interview.

4. Overall response rates

N=238	Number	Percent
Completes	141	59%
Unable to locate	74	31%
Repeated calls, no response	9	4%
Incarcerated	6	2%
Refusals	6	2%
Deceased	1	1%
In treatment	1	1%

5. Response rates by graduation year and population served

Graduation year	Total N=238	Men (sampled 50%) n=132	Women n=72	Boys n=25	Girls n=9
8/2007-12/2007 (n=39)	24 (62%)	13 of 25 (56%)	7 of 9 (78%)	3 of 3 (100%)	1 of 2 (50%)
2008 (n=115)	65 (56%)	34 of 62 (52%)	24 of 35 (69%)	5 of 15 (33%)	2 of 3 (67%)
1/2009-5/2009 (n=84)	52 (62%)	31 of 45 (67%)	17 of 28 (61%)	1 of 7 (14%)	3 of 4 (75%)
Total	141 (59%)	78 of 132 (59%)	48 of 72 (67%)	9 of 25 (36%)	6 of 9 (67%)

Response rates: current study and previous study of 2005 graduates

Throughout this report, when available, responses from the current study are compared with responses from the previous study (report published in 2007). To ensure as much comparability as possible, the data from one cohort described in the 2007 report – 2005 graduates who were contacted about one-year following graduation – are used to compare to the current study group. The following is an overview of the response rates for both groups.

As mentioned in this (2010) study, a sample of 238 graduates was selected for follow-up.

- Between September 2008 and July 2010, 141 graduates (59%) completed a 12-month follow-up telephone interview with Wilder Research staff.
- Boys had the lowest response rate (36%) and women and girls had the highest response rates (67% for each).

In the previous (2007) study, there were 154 Teen Challenge participants who graduated in 2005. Of this group, 81 graduates were selected for follow-up. Because this group was part of a larger study of graduates from 2001-2005, telephone follow-up occurred at approximately 12-months following graduating. Thus, the 2005 graduates can be compared with the current study.

- Between October 2006 and January 2007, 68 graduates (85%) completed a follow-up telephone interview with Wilder Research staff.
- As in the recent study, boys had the lowest response rate (62%) and girls had the highest response rate (100%).

Participants

The participants in this outcome report consist of 141 graduates of Minnesota Teen Challenge who took part in a telephone interview between August of 2008 and June of 2010, one year following Teen Challenge graduation. This group of respondents represents 59 percent of the original sample of 238 graduates.

A response rate of 59 percent means that the data 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.

6. Graduation year of respondents

	Number (141)	Percent
2007	25	18%
2008	63	45%
2009	53	38%

The ratio of males to females in the follow-up sample was 87:54, slightly more balanced toward females than in the total Teen Challenge treatment population (73:27). This is due to two factors. First, for the majority of the study period, only 50 percent of the adult male graduates were selected for the study (because of their larger numbers and an interest in getting feedback from all populations). Second, it has been commonly found in survey research that it is easier to obtain accurate contact information for women than for men.

More than three-quarters of the follow-up were in the adult program and the remainder in the teen program, as shown in Figure 7. Overall, in terms of age and gender, the follow-up sample appears to be reasonably close to the general Teen Challenge treatment population.

7. Type of Teen Challenge program attended by respondents

	Number (141)	Percent
Boys	9	6%
Girls	6	4%
Men's	78	55%
Women's	48	34%

8. Age at time of follow-up contact

	Number (141)	Percent
17 years or younger	2	2%
18-20 years	15	11%
21-30 years	48	33%
31-40 years	33	24%
41-50 years	33	24%
51-55 years	10	6%

Participants used a wide range of substances prior to their admission to Teen Challenge. As shown in Figure 9, alcohol and marijuana were the most-used substances. Cocaine, methamphetamines and crack were also used quite frequently.

9. Substance use at time of admission

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Alcohol	118	84%	70%
Marijuana	95	67%	63%
Cocaine	85	60%	63%*
Methamphetamine	71	50%	44%
Crack	62	44%	63%*
Prescription meds	54	38%	52%*
Hallucinogens/psychedelics	49	35%	59%*
Ecstasy	41	29%	59%*
Other opiates/synthetics	36	26%	22%*
Over-the-counter	30	21%	52%*
Stimulants	30	21%	-
Amphetamines	25	18%	26%
Heroin	18	13%	22%*
Barbiturates	18	13%	19%
Benzodiazepines	17	12%	-
Inhalants	16	11%	-
Non-prescription Methadone	16	11%	-
Tranquilizers	14	10%	-
PCP	11	8%	-
Sedative/Hypnotic/Anxiolytic	9	6%	-
Ketamine	6	4%	-
Other	6	4%	22%

Note: Respondents could have used more than one substance at admission.

* Over-the-counter and prescription drugs were combined as one answer choice in 2007, as were ecstasy and hallucinogen, crack and cocaine and opiates and heroin.

Though alcohol and marijuana were used the most, it was alcohol (34%) and methamphetamines (29%) that were named as the biggest problems by the respondents. This was similar to the results of follow-up of 2005 graduates.

10. Biggest problem at time of admission

	Number (n=138)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Alcohol	47	34%	31%
Methamphetamine	41	29%	28%
Marijuana	10	7%	15%
Cocaine	10	7%	13%
Crack	14	10%	-
Opiates	6	4%	4%
Prescription medications	4	3%	3%*
Heroin	4	3%	-
Ecstasy	1	1%	-
Amphetamines	1	1%	-

* *Over-the-counter and prescription drugs were combined as one answer choice in 2007, as were LSD, ecstasy and hallucinogen, crack and cocaine and opiates and heroin.*

Outcomes

Substance use

Relapse rates

When asked about relapse, 73 percent stated that they had not relapsed since graduating from Teen Challenge. However, in another section of the interview, 15 of these individuals did admit to using one or more substances in the past 12 months. 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. To be as accurate as possible, these discrepant responders are not counted as consistent sobriety, as shown in the Figure 11, below. Also shown in this figure, another 8 percent reported one relapse and 10 percent reported relapsing between two and three times. Relatively few reported more than three relapses.

Comparisons are made to 2007 study data – specifically 2005 graduates who were also interviewed at approximately one year after graduation. Data shows that at one year follow-up, the percentage of Teen Challenge graduates who consistently report no relapses has improved by 5 percentage points from 57 percent to 62 percent.

11. Self-reported relapses since graduation

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Consistently report no relapse or use in the past 6 months	88	62%	57%
Inconsistent: reported no relapse but use in the past 6 months*	15	11%	3%
1 time	11	8%	13%
2-3 times	14	10%	15%
4-5 times	3	2%	4%
6-10 times	4	3%	-
More than 10 times	6	4%	7%

* Individuals stated they had not relapsed, yet in a different section of the interview admitted to use of specific substance in the past 6-months.

Sobriety and substance use

Industry standards around outcomes for alcohol and drug treatment suggest that measuring relapse rates or sobriety at six months from program completion is important. In the 2010 study, respondents were read a list of substances, assured confidentiality and asked if they had used any drug during the prior year. They were then asked a follow-up question about whether they had used these substances in the past six months. In the previous study, 2005 graduates were read a list of substances and asked only about their six-month use.

Three-quarters (74%) of both the 2010 cohort and the 2005 graduates had not used substances in the past six months. Although the question was asked differently of the 2005 cohort, both cohorts had strikingly similar six-month sobriety rates.

12. Sobriety during prior 6 months

	Number	Percent
2005 graduates, 2007 study (N=68)	50	74%
2007-2009 graduates, 2010 study (N=138*)	102	74%

* Information about use in the past 6 months was missing for three respondents.

Note: Because the question was unclear, use of over-the counter medications was not categorized as substance use.

Below is a comparison between results of interviews with recent graduates and the previous study conducted with 2005 graduates:

2007-2009 graduates (2010 study)	2005 graduates (2007 study)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">For adults, 75% reported that they had not used alcohol or drugs during the prior six months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For adults, 77% reported that they had not used alcohol or drugs during the prior six months
<ul style="list-style-type: none">For Teen program graduates, 64% reported no use during the prior six months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For Teen program graduates, 63% reported no use during the prior six months
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women and men were equally likely to report no use during the prior six months (74% both)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women were slightly less likely to report no use since graduating from Teen Challenge (70% of women versus 76% of men)

A full set of comparisons of men versus women as well as adults versus teens are included in the appendix.

Alcohol, prescription medications, and marijuana were the substances most likely to be used. As shown in Figure 13, about a quarter (26%) reported alcohol use during the year prior to the follow-up phone call. Nine percent reported using marijuana and prescription medications. The 2007 study data indicate that over-the-counter/prescription meds were

reported by fewer respondents as a substance used during the past *six* months. It should be noted that in the 2007 study, the two drugs were a combined answer choice. Other drugs were used less often.

It should also be noted that 16 respondents (11%) in the current study reported use of over-the-counter medication in the past year. Because the question was not clear that the respondent should answer about *misuse* of these medications, this use was excluded from the analysis.

13. Substance use during past year (since graduating)

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)*
Alcohol	37	26%	19%
Prescription meds	13	9%	4%**
Marijuana	13	9%	10%
Hallucinogens	5	4%	0%
Methamphetamine	4	3%	0%**
Cocaine	3	2%	6%**
Crack	3	2%	-
Heroin	3	2%	2%**
Other	3	2%	-
Opiates/synthetics	3	2%	2%**
Ecstasy/other club drugs	1	1%	0%**
Inhalants	1	1%	-
Amphetamines	1	1%	1%
Stimulants	1	1%	-
Benzodiazepines	1	1%	-
Ketamine	0	0%	-
Non-prescription Methadone	0	0%	-
PCP	0	0%	-
Barbiturates	0	0%	0%
Tranquilizers	0	0%	-
Any use ("yes" to any of the above)	50	35%	26%***

* Question was asked "during the past 6 months."

** Over-the-counter and prescription drugs were combined as one answer choice in 2007, as were LSD and ecstasy, crack and cocaine, and opiates and heroin.

*** Any use in the past six months.

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

In examining the substances used during the last year in comparison to the substance that the participant reported as the “biggest problem” at treatment entry.

- Of the 37 people who said they used alcohol in the previous year since graduating, 16 reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.
- Of the 13 people who said they used prescription drugs in the previous year since graduating, one reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.
- Of the 13 people who said they used marijuana in the previous year since graduating, four reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.
- Of the five people who said they used hallucinogens in the previous year since graduating, no one reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.
- Of the four people who said they used methamphetamine in the previous year since graduating, three reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.
- Of the three people who said they used cocaine in the previous year since graduating, two reported it as their biggest problem prior to treatment.

Longest periods of abstinence among relapsers

Follow-up interviews were conducted at just over one year after participants completed the program. Therefore, the longest a graduate could be abstinent is about a year (or slightly longer depending on when they were interviewed). Figure 14 reports the longest period of abstinence among those who reported that they had relapsed. It appears that a larger number of more recent graduates (2010 study) who relapsed remained abstinent for more than six months (61%) versus 2006 graduates (44%).

14. Longest abstinence among relapsers

	Number (37)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=56)
Less than 1 month	1	3%	4%
1-5 months	9	24%	28%
6 months	5	14%	24%
7-11 months	16	43%	32%
One Year	1	3%	4%
13 months or more*	5	14%	8%

* For some respondents, the follow-up period was slightly longer than a year as it took longer to locate them for the follow-up interview.

For 2005 graduates, nearly all (96%) of respondents who relapsed said that their drug use levels since Teen Challenge were “a lot less” and the same amount said that their alcohol use was “a lot less.”

In the 2010 study, similar percentages of respondents reported that their drug use was “a lot less” (94%). However, fewer graduates in the 2010 study reported that their alcohol use was “a lot less.” Overall, 92 percent of graduates report that their alcohol use is at least “somewhat less” or “a lot less.”

15. Use levels since Teen Challenge: 2010 Study

	A lot less	Somewhat less	About same	Somewhat more	A lot more
Drugs (N=36)	94%	3%	3%	0%	0%
Alcohol (N=36)	78%	14%	8%	0%	0%

When asked to describe the main factors contributing to their relapse, a quarter of respondents (24%) described family and other relationship problems. Also frequently mentioned were loneliness and isolation (21%) and hanging out with the wrong crowd (18%). As shown in Figure 16, there were many contributing factors including stress, boredom, desire to use, spending time in the wrong environment, as well as physical and mental health.

It appears that contributing factors remain relatively consistent over the two study periods.

16. In their own words: Relapse factors

	Contributing factors			The most important factor		
	Number of participants (38)	Percent of participants	Percent 2005 graduates N=56	Number of participants (35)	Percent of participants	Percent 2005 graduates N=56
Family problems	9	24%	4%	3	9%	4%
Loneliness	8	21%	7%	2	6%	4%
Hanging out with wrong crowd	7	18%	20%	3	9%	20%
Physical health	5	13%	2%	2	6%	4%
Stress	5	13%	11%	3	9%	8%
Boredom	5	13%	9%	3	9%	8%
Mental health problem	4	11%	4%	4	11%	8%
Hanging out in wrong places	4	11%	4%	2	6%	
Not staying connected to God	3	8%	7%	2	6%	8%
Wanted to use (desire, curiosity)	3	8%	13%	2	6%	16%
Excitement of being out of Teen Challenge and having money	3	8%	0%	-	-	
Employment issues	3	8%		1	3%	
Lack of devotional time, prayer	2	5%	4%	-	-	4%
Unhappy, angry	2	5%	5%	-	-	
Lack of sober network	2	5%		2	6%	
Stopped going to church, no aftercare, no transitional support for basic needs, not enough personal time, family's lack of faith in client's ability to stay clean, not being honest with self about addiction, complacency, ability to ask for help, housing	Each 1		Each 3%	Each 1	No personal time, family's lack of faith, not being honest with self, complacency, ability to ask for help, finances	Each 3%

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.

A full listing of verbatim responses to this question is included in the Appendix. The following are some selected responses.

I didn't have a balance in my life I wasn't allowing people into my life.
Isolating myself.
No support network.
Family issues.
Relationships.
Family not having any Faith in my ability to stay sober.
Stress.
Boredom.
Idle time.

Factors that contributed to sobriety

All participants, regardless of their length of post-treatment sobriety, were asked an open-ended question about factors that helped them maintain sobriety. Responses were grouped into themes:

- 62 percent mentioned staying connected to God as a factor that contributed to their sobriety; this connection was also an often mentioned theme for 2005 graduates (58%).

In addition, a quarter of participants in the 2010 study mentioned other spiritually-based factors such as daily prayer and scripture reading (10%), attending church (10%), and Bible education (7%).

For a many respondents, relationship-related factors were cited as significant contributors to maintaining sobriety. For example, family (36%), positive peers (22%), personal support network (15%) were mentioned as themes contributing to sobriety. Another frequently mentioned factor was the respondent's determination to stay sober (19%).

17. In their own words: Sobriety factors

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates N=68
Staying connected to God	86	62%	58%
My family	50	36%	34%
Hanging out with positive people	31	22%	17%
Determination to stay sober	26	19%	26%
Personal support network	21	15%	12%
Daily prayer and scripture reading	14	10%	8%
Attending church	14	10%	9%
Staying connected to Teen Challenge	14	10%	3%
Working and staying busy	13	9%	6%
Accountability (to friends, family, self)	11	8%	13%
Bible and Bible education	10	7%	2%
Understanding my purpose here	6	4%	2%
Being active in church	6	4%	-
What I learned at Teen Challenge	6	4%	-
My mentors and sponsors	5	4%	4%
Making good decisions	5	4%	-
Hope	4	3%	-
Support from others, having a church support network, having goals, attending recovery group, attending a Christian college, better coping skills, physical activity and hobbies, discipline, emotional maturity, having responsibilities, happiness, stability, not isolating myself, ability to ask for help, learning the effects of drugs/alcohol, spiritual connectedness, went to treatment, became incarcerated, fear of going to jail, medication, moved, length of the program	1-3	1-2%	-

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.

A full listing of verbatim responses to this question is included in the Appendix. The following are some selected responses.

My relationship with Jesus.

God's deliverance.

Learning Christ – relationship with God.

Word of God.

My home Church.

God.

Being connected with my pastor who is my counselor.

The place I work at is nonprofit Ministry so it keeps me tied in to the whole of it the accountability it keeps a guy on track with your Bible studies.

My mentor.

Working for Teen Challenge and having no drugs or alcohol around here.

There is no one under the influence around me.

TCMI it's so important. Coming out of Teen Challenge got me to become studious, being in a school setting got me focused.

Staying away from my families who all still use. They are not living a righteous life they are still doing dumb stuff.

Healthy support group around me.

Having great support from friends.

The responsibility I have to others and myself.

I wanted it for myself. I wanted to be done using.

Knowing that I am a valuable person.

An academic setting got me to become aware of what I was capable of.

Just staying in touch with the special aspects of my life.

My kids.

My family.

Nicotine use

At the time of follow-up, 31 percent of respondents smoked or used other tobacco products. In contrast, 87 percent stated they used nicotine before treatment at Teen Challenge.

This data is remarkably similar to that of the 2005 graduates. At follow-up, the same percentage of 2005 graduates (31%) reported that they smoked or used other tobacco products. Eighty-five percent of these smoked or used tobacco products before entering Teen Challenge.

Employment and education

Upon graduation from Teen Challenge, participants are required to be employed. At one-year follow-up, three-fourths (74%) were currently working for pay. Of those who are *employed*:

- Half (52%) reported that they work full-time (40 or more hours per week), and 42 percent work between 20 and 39 hours per week.
- 58 percent were at their current job for less than a year and one-third (33%) were at their current job for at least a year but not two years.

Given the economic conditions at the time of follow-up for the 2010 data, these employment rates represent a significant positive outcome.

Among all respondents (whether currently employed or not), the vast majority (86%) reported their job situation was better, 12 percent said it was about the same, and 2 percent said it was worse.

18. Employment outcomes

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 graduates (N=68)
Currently working for pay	105	74%	74%
Number of employers since leaving Teen Challenge			
None	22	16%	13%
1	62	44%	40%
2-3	49	35%	43%
4 or more	7	5%	4%
Job situation now compared to before Teen Challenge (N=138)			
Better	119	86%	87%
About the Same	16	12%	13%
Worse	3	2%	-

19. For those employed, hours worked and length of current job

	Number (105)	Percent	Percent 2005 graduates (N=50)
Of those employed, average hours/week			
Less than 20 hours	6	6%	6%
20-39 hours	44	42%	26%
40 hours	35	33%	30%
41-50 hours	15	14%	26%
51-85 hours	5	5%	12%
Of those employed, length of time at current job			
Less than 6 months	25	24%	46%
6 months to less than a year	36	34%	20%
1 year to less than 2 years	35	33%	30%
2 years to less than 3 years	-	-	
More than 3 years (may have continued job held before Teen Challenge)	9	9%	6%

Education

When asked specifically about their educational activities since leaving Teen Challenge, 58 percent reported attending school or other educational or vocational program. Of these, two-thirds (68%) were in school at the time of the follow-up contact, and the majority of these (75%) were full-time students.

20. Education outcomes

	Number (140)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=24-68)
Attended school since Teen Challenge	81	58%	52%
Of those who attended, currently in school (N=81)	55	68%	69%
Of those currently in school, full-time students (N=55)	41	75%	88%

Living situation

At time of follow-up contact, most graduates were living independently, as shown in Figure 21. Four in 10 were living in their own house or apartment, and 19 percent were living with relatives. Relatively few reported currently living in a halfway house, sober house, transitional housing, or treatment facility.

21. Living situation at follow-up

	Number (140)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Living in own house or apartment	56	40%	31%
Living with relatives	26	19%	29%
Living with friends or roommates	20	14%	19%
In college or university dorm	18	13%	3%
In transitional housing	8	6%	-
Living in a halfway house or sober house	5	4%	3%
In a treatment facility	4	3%	2%
Teen Challenge Apartments	2	2%	12%
Teen Challenge employee/intern benefit	1	1%	1%

Respondents were asked if they had lived in a variety of structured housing facilities at some point between graduation from Teen Challenge and the 12-month follow-up. During that period, a quarter of respondents reported living in transitional housing (26%) and 14 percent reported living in a halfway or sober house. Fewer graduates reported living in permanent housing with staff that provided supportive services, emergency shelters, and hospital or mental health facilities.

22. Housing facilities used at some point between graduation and follow up contact

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Transitional housing	36	26%	15%
Halfway house or sober house	19	14%	16%
Permanent housing with staff that provided supportive services	9	6%	4%
Emergency shelter	3	2%	4%
Hospital or mental health facility	1	1%	0%

Eighteen percent of participants receive assistance with housing expenses from their roommates, or other friends or relatives that they live with. Government benefits and programs such as Section 8 and subsidizing housing assisted some graduates with their housing expenses as shown in Figure 23.

23. Assistance with housing expenses

	Number (N=139-141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Roommates, friends, or relatives who live with you	25	18%	61%
Other government benefits	22	16%	2%
Friends, relatives, who don't live with participant	17	12%	11%
Section 8, Housing Assistance, or Subsidized Housing	6	4%	0%
Military housing	0	0%	1%
Something else (N=15)			24%
Group residential housing	6	40%	
Financial aid for school	3	20%	1%
Job provides housing	3	20%	5%
Pathway	1	7%	-
General Residence Assistance	1	7%	-
MN Teen Challenge	1	7%	13%

Housing was stable for 40 percent of respondents. Sixty percent had moved in the past year. Of those who did move in the past year, most (68%) only reported moving once during this period of time. Twenty-one percent reported moving twice.

Relationships

Few (14%) Teen Challenge graduates reported that they were currently married. Twenty percent of participants reported living with a spouse or partner. These rates are similar to those of the 2005 graduates.

Approximately half (53%) said that they have children. Of those with children, 37 percent said that their children were living with them at time of follow-up.

24. Relationships

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Married, living with partner	17	12%	10%
Married, not living with partner	3	2%	3%
Living with spouse/partner, not married	11	8%	9%
Not married, not living with spouse/partner	110	78%	78%
Have children	75	53%	43%
Children living with participant (N=75)	28	37%	(N=29) 24%

The majority of participants said that their relationships with family and friends improved after their participation in Minnesota Teen Challenge. While not part of the interview, several respondents reported a change in the relationship with their ex-spouse. Of the 27 who offered this information, 19 (70%) reported that their relationship with their ex-spouse is “better” and eight (30%) reported that the relationship is “the same.”

25. Change in relationships

	Worse	Same	Better	Better 2005 Graduates (N=59-68)
Spouse/partner (N=70)	0%	4%	96%	76%
Children (N=77)*	0%	7%	93%	79%
Brothers and sisters (N=136)	3%	14%	83%	85%
Parents (N=134)	1%	9%	90%	93%
Other relatives and friends (N=139)	0%	17%	83%	88%

* Seventy-five respondents answered that they have children but 77 report a change in their relationship with their children.

Legal involvement

Most respondents have no legal involvement since completion of the Teen Challenge program. As shown in Figure 26, only seven respondents (5%) have been arrested since graduation and six were charged with a new crime. Four percent reported being incarcerated since graduation. However, it should be noted that an additional six graduates could not respond to the survey because it was known that they were currently in jail or prison. Their responses could not be included in this report.

There appears to be a strong relationship between legal involvement and substance use. For example, of the seven who reported that they were arrested, all seven reported that they had used in the past six months. Over half (60%) of those who had been on probation at some point during the past year also reported using during the past six months. Additionally, nearly all (5 of 6) graduates charged with a new crime reported substance use in the past six months.

26. Legal involvement after graduation

	Number (141)	Percent	Number 2005 Graduates (68)	Percent 2005 Graduates
Arrested since graduation	7	5%	8	12%
On probation since graduation	35	25%	17	25%
Charged with new crime since graduation	6	4%	5	7%
Convicted of a felony	0	-	1	1%
Convicted of a misdemeanor	2	1%	2	3%
Been incarcerated	6	4%	6	9%

Spiritual commitment and involvement

Almost all (92%) respondents said that they made a personal commitment to Christ that became a turning point in their lives while in Minnesota Teen Challenge. An additional 4 percent had made this commitment to Christ just *prior* to entering Teen Challenge. Nearly all (94%) said that this commitment “definitely” helped their sobriety. Most (90%) 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.

27. Commitment to Christ and Church involvement

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Made a personal commitment to Christ while in Teen Challenge	129	92%	87%
Not while in the program but did so immediately prior	6	4%	10%
Did commitment help sobriety? (N=135; those who made the commitment only)			
Definitely yes	127	94%	94%
Probably yes	8	6%	6%
Probably no	0	0%	0%
Definitely no	0	0%	0%
Length of time after Teen Challenge to connect to church/ ministry			
Less than 1 month	115	82%	91%
1-5 months	11	8%	0%
6 or more months	6	4%	3%
Still looking	7	5%	3%
Not really looking	2	1%	3%
Participated in church/ministry past 6 months			
More than 1 time a week	85	60%	63%
Once a week	19	14%	18%
2-3 times a month	26	18%	10%
Once a month	6	4%	4%
1-3 times in the past 6 months (2010)/1-5 times in past year (2005)	4	3%	4%
No	1	1%	0%

Mentors and support

Over half (58%) of respondents stated that they had an assigned mentor while at the Teen Challenge Program, and slightly more (65%) reported that they had a mentor or sponsor who held them accountable in their day-to-day lives at the time of follow up. Of the 91 graduates who currently have a mentor/sponsor, nearly half (46%) reported that their mentor is the same one they had in the Teen Challenge program.

In examining the data, there appears to be no direct relationship between the likelihood that the respondent relapsed after graduating and whether the respondent had a mentor while at Teen Challenge or whether they had a mentor at one-year follow-up. Of those who report that they have not relapsed, just over half (55%) had an assigned mentor while at Teen Challenge, and 68 percent *currently* have a mentor or sponsor. These rates are similar for those who report relapses.

However, it appears that having *both* a mentor and a job reduces the likelihood of relapse. Study findings indicate that Teen Challenge graduates who reported that they currently have a mentor or sponsor *and* are working for pay are significantly more likely to avoid relapse than those who have neither (this relationship reached statistical significance).

28. Mentors and support

	Number (141)	Percent	Percent 2005 Graduates N=68
Had an <i>assigned</i> mentor while in Teen Challenge	82	58%	-
Had someone that you considered a mentor while at Teen Challenge	-	-	68%
Currently has mentor/sponsor	91	65%	56%
Same mentor from Teen Challenge program (N=91)	42	46%	-
Currently attending a support group	49	35%	31%

More than a third (35%) said that they were currently attending a support group, with some attending more than one. Celebrate Recovery and Alcoholics Anonymous were the most frequent support groups mentioned. Of those currently attending, 90 said the support group was important to maintaining their sobriety.

29. Of those who attended support groups, type attended

Type of support group (multiple responses)	(49)	Of those attending only	Of those attending only 2005 (N=26)
Celebrate Recovery	34	69%	23%
Alcoholics Anonymous	13	27%	8%
Narcotics Anonymous	3	6%	15%
Bible Study Group	2	4%	27%
Cocaine Anonymous	2	4%	8%
Free Indeed	2	4%	4%
Hot Spot, CHARM, Urban Ventures, 2218, Quest 180	1 (each)	2%	-

Treatment after Minnesota Teen Challenge

Nine participants (6%) had attended treatment after graduating from Teen Challenge. Eight of nine reported attending one inpatient treatment program, and one graduate reported attending a treatment program three times. Five of nine graduated or completed the program. One was readmitted to Minnesota Teen Challenge for a second treatment program.

In addition, one graduate could not participate in the study because he/she was currently in treatment.

Feedback about Teen Challenge experience

Participants in this study were largely very positive about their experiences at Teen Challenge. As shown in Figure 30, almost all (91%) 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. In both study periods, 88 percent of respondents rated as “completely true” the spiritual aspect of Teen Challenge made a difference in their lives.

One difference between the two study periods was the percentage of participants who agreed as “completely true” with the statement, “Teen Challenge taught me how to have a chemical-free lifestyle.” The percentage rose from 54 percent for 2005 graduates to 67 percent for graduates interviewed for the 2010 study.

30. Feedback about impact of Minnesota Teen Challenge Program

N=141 Teen Challenge...	Completely true	Percent of participants 2005 graduates Completely true	Mostly true	Mostly false	Completely false
Taught me how to have a chemical-free lifestyle	67%	54%	29%	3%	1%
Showed me how to positively handle life situations	56%	52%	38%	6%	0%
Helped me improve my work habits	55%	59%	32%	9%	4%
Showed me how to have healthy supportive relationships	64%	60%	31%	3%	1%
Helped me develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ	89%	93%	9%	1%	1%
I think my circumstances today would be a lot worse if I hadn’t gone through the Teen Challenge program	91%	91%	9%	1%	0%
The spiritual part of Teen Challenge made a difference in my life	88%	88%	10%	1%	1%

Overall, the majority of respondents rated the overall quality as “outstanding” (53%) or “very good” (29%).

31. Quality rating of Teen Challenge

	Number of participants (139)	Percent of participants	Percent of participants 2005 Study (N=68)
Outstanding	74	53%	44%
Very good	40	29%	43%
Good	20	14%	13%
OK	3	2%	0%
Poor	1	1%	0%
Terrible	1	1%	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. Many respondents also mentioned the Teen Challenge staff as an aspect of the program that helped them the most. Responses to the open-ended questions were grouped together and are shown in Figure 32.

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

	Number of participants (141)	Percent of participants	Percent of 2005 Graduates (N=68)
Connection with God (faith-based part)	35	24%	25%
The staff (supportive, committed)	24	12%	8%
One-to-one counseling	18	13%	5%
Structure of the program (e.g. schedule)	17	12%	3%
The fellowship with other students	17	12%	7%
Attending church, chapel, morning worship	14	10%	3%
Level II Training (Brother Earl's classes)	14	10%	17%
The discipline (e.g. rules enforced)	13	9%	3%
Learning how to live a full life	8	6%	2%
Prayer	7	4%	5%
Length of the program	6	4%	5%
Level III Training (where you deal with emotions)	5	3%	3%
Level IV training (starting school/social life before graduating)	5	3%	-
Service work (in church and community)	5	3%	-
Music ministry	4	3%	2%
Taking us to events in the community	3	2%	-
Being in spiritual surroundings, getting saved, healing/healing prayer, the contracts, being introduced to different people, getting away from/isolation from old environment, personal time, tools tailored to specific individual needs, length of sobriety	2005 graduates: Knowing that I am forgiven, the contracts, getting away/isolation (from old environment), personal time, mentorship, tools tailored to fit specific individual needs, getting saved, PACE	Each 1-2 Each <1.4%	Each <5%

Note: This was an open-ended question. Responses were grouped together into 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 discipline/structure.

Learning – “the strict discipline” of learning how to trust God and that God has His Hand on the program – the discipline they taught me – was key for me.

Working throughout the community – having the opportunity to participate or serve in the churches and the community organizations.

The Spiritual emphasis week – where we had the options to fast and pray.

The counseling received. Dealing with my relationship issues and my coping skills.

The length of the program. The structured part of the program, the whole day being consistently structured and being busy.

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. A number of respondents overwhelmingly cited that improvements are needed with the Level IV classes and general practices around how graduates transition back into their communities. Other responses varied and may be helpful for program planning, such as adjustments to classes, recommendations about staffing, and suggestions for transitions. The following are some selected responses based on these three themes. A full list of verbatim responses to the open-ended question is included in the Appendix.

Adjustments to classes and counseling

Do something; class on positive communication/interaction with women and how to interact with the outside world and with women once you are out of Teen Challenge.

More counseling. More one-on-one counseling, there is a lot but not enough.

Add more parenting classes – especially for fathers. Put this toward the end of the program. Also add more transition classes to help one adjust to the outside world.

Suggestions for transitioning back to community

In the 4th class, they need to let people go out and associate with the world more. The passes are not enough. It was still a major culture shock when I got out of there. The lecture was there but not the practice.

We didn't get much of a chance to get out of there and look for work and housing. That transition – they needed to talk more about that in the Level 4 classroom.

They need to have more information on how to deal with relationships and how to bridge and connect with the outside, every day life before release back into the community.

The transitional period. Level 4 could be improved. Individuals should have more exposure to life after Teen Challenge while they are still in the program.

More help before I graduated getting established in a home church.

Recommendations about staffing

I personally would let the staff members have more time to spend one-on-one with clients.

Accountability of the staff that run the program. It should be someone outside of the program to hold them accountable: Board of directors, ministry or church elders.

Add more staff.

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. Almost all of the respondents (96%) rated the quality of Teen Challenge as “outstanding,” “very good” or “good.” Most 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.

Nearly three-quarters had not used alcohol or other drugs in the year since graduating from Teen Challenge. Almost all respondents who did report a relapse since graduating from Teen Challenge said that their drug use was “a lot less” and 78 percent said that their alcohol use was “a lot less” than before Teen Challenge.

At one-year follow-up, three-fourths (74%) were currently working for pay. This is a significant accomplishment given the difficult economic circumstances and the statewide increase in unemployment rates during the follow-up period.

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

- ***Increase efforts around transitioning graduates into the community.*** Feedback from participants indicates that transitioning from the structure of Teen Challenge back into the community is a critical time. Many respondents indicated that it would be helpful to have more emphasis on the transition period. Since the time of these interviews, the program has placed increased efforts and resources in preparing participants for life in the community.
- ***Increase emphasis and efforts around building the right kinds of support systems for graduates after completion of the Teen Challenge program.*** Most graduates who relapsed reported that “hanging with the wrong crowd” was a big factor as to why they relapsed. Help participants to better identify the support systems and people who are “right” for them so that they might decrease their likelihood of relapsing.
- ***Strengthen relapse prevention efforts around alcohol use, in particular.*** The use of alcohol is the most common gateway by which graduates return to substance use. However, this follow-up study is not able to quantify the extent of alcohol use or the level of harm it causes. The fact that some graduates report no relapse, but at the same time report some alcohol use since program completion is worthy of further investigation.

- ***Implement strategies to improve response rates.*** In comparison to response rates for the most recent graduates reported in the 2007 study (the 2005 comparison group), the response rates in the current study are lower. Better results were achieved when Teen Challenge staff made contact calls to graduates on weekends and evenings, and without this strategy, response rates may have suffered. It is worth exploring ways to implement weekend and evening contacts as well as improving other ways of tracking clients after graduation.

Appendix

Closer look: gender

Closer look: adults versus teen graduates

Verbatim responses to open-ended questions

Closer look: Gender

The overall follow-up sample consisted of 54 females and 87 males. Slightly more than half of the women (65%) and 80 percent of men are currently working for pay. Men are more often working full-time (45%) than women (30%). In addition, men were less likely to be employed full-time than in the previous study (45% down from 67%), while women were more likely to be employed full-time (30% up from 17%). These employment trends mirror many of the trends linked to the downturn in the economy in the most recent study period.

More women (69%) than men (51%) have gone to school or some type of educational or vocational program since leaving Teen Challenge.

There was a difference in substance named as the biggest problem before entry to treatment. For females, it was alcohol (43%); for males, it was methamphetamine (34%). This is different than the findings of the 2007 study which found that 26 percent of females reported methamphetamine as their biggest problem before treatment and 33 percent of males reported that alcohol was their biggest problem before entering Teen Challenge.

At program entry, the top three substances named as biggest problems were:

- For females, alcohol (43%), methamphetamine (22%), and crack (9%)
- For males, methamphetamines (34%), alcohol (28%), and crack (11%)

Despite the differences in substance rated as the biggest problem before treatment, alcohol, marijuana, and prescription drugs were the three substances used most among males and females after graduation (see Figure A1).

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 most commonly stated reasons for relapse were: family and other relationship problems (19%), loneliness and isolation (16%), and immense stress and pressure (13%).
- For males, the most commonly stated reasons for relapse were: hanging out with using friends or the wrong crowd (17%) and hanging out at the wrong place (9%).

The top two factors that men and women attribute to their sobriety are the same: staying connected with God (28% of females and 21% males) and their families (14% of both females and males).

A1. Outcomes by gender

	Female (54)	Male (87)	Female 2005 Survey (23)	Male 2005 Survey (45)
Consistently reported no relapse or use*	59%	64%	61%	56%
No substance use in past 6-months	74%	74%	70%	76%
Treatment after Teen Challenge	6%	7%	13%	11%
During past year has used (past 6 months for 2005):				
Alcohol	24%	28%	22%	18%
Marijuana	7%	10%	9%	11%
Prescription drugs	11%	8%	-	-
Drug use now "a lot less"	88%	100%	100%	95%
Alcohol use now "a lot less"	81%	75%	100%	95%
Currently using tobacco product	30%	32%	17%	38%
Working at least 40 hrs week	30%	45%	17%	67%
Full-time student	33%	26%	48%	22%
Gone to school, educational or vocational program since MTC	69%	51%	74%	40%
Living in own house or apartment	32%	45%	17%	38%
Arrested since graduation	0%	8%	0%	18%
Incarcerated since treatment	2%	6%	0%	13%
Made a personal commitment to Christ at entry to Teen Challenge	93%	91%	91%	84%
Connected to a church within 1 month of discharge	82%	82%	87%	93%
Had ASSIGNED* mentor at Teen Challenge	61%	56%	70%	67%
Same mentor as while in the program	34%	54%	-	-
Had a mentor at follow-up contact	65%	64%	65%	51%
Participated in support group	35%	35%	30%	38%
Rated Teen Challenge quality "outstanding"	45%	58%	61%	36%

*Use in past year for 2010 grads and past 6 months for 2005 grads

Closer look: Adults versus teen graduates

The follow-up sample contained 126 participants in the adult program and 15 in the teen program.

Adults and teens 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 (34%), methamphetamines (33%), crack (10%), cocaine (6%), marijuana (5%), and opiates (5%).
- For teens, the substances named as biggest problems before treatment were: marijuana (29%), alcohol (27%), cocaine (14%), and crack, heroin, and ecstasy (7% respectively).

Alcohol and marijuana were the primary substances used since graduation. Half (47%) of the teens admitted using some alcohol during the last year, and 40 percent admitted to using marijuana.

Adults and teens differ in the factors that contributed to their relapse. Teens mostly reported that hanging out with using friends and peer pressure caused them to relapse as did hanging out in the wrong environment or place. Adults were more likely to report that loneliness or isolation and family and relationship problems were what led them to relapse.

A2. Outcomes for adults and teens

	Adult (126)	Teen (15)	Adult 2005 Study (52)	Teen 2005 Study (16)
Consistently reported no relapse or use*	64%	47%	56%	63%
Reported no use in past six months	75%	64%	77%	63%
Treatment after Teen Challenge	7%	0%	14%	6%
During past year has used (past 6 months for 2007):				
Alcohol	24%	47%	14%	38%
Marijuana	6%	40%	6%	25%
Drug use now “a lot less”	93%	100%	100%	80%
Alcohol use now “a lot less”	82%	63%	96%	100%
Currently using tobacco product	29%	47%	31%	31%
Length of longest abstinence (mean, sd) in months	9 ₊₇	8 ₊₂	8 ₊₃	7 ₊₄
Working at least 40 hrs week	41%	27%	58%	25%
Full-time student	25%	60%	23%	56%
Gone to school, educational or vocational program since MTC	54%	93%	44%	75%
Living in own house or apartment	42%	27%	37%	13%
Arrested since graduation	5%	7%	14%	6%
Incarcerated since treatment	5%	0%	10%	6%
Made a personal commitment to Christ at entry to Teen Challenge	55%	100%**	89%	81%
Connected to a church within 1 month of discharge	83%	73%	92%	88%
Had ASSIGNED*** mentor at Teen Challenge	60%	47%	69%	63%
Same mentor as while in the program	49%	22%	-	-
Had a mentor at follow-up contact	65%	60%	60%	44%
Participated in support group	38%	13%	42%	13%
Rated Teen Challenge quality “outstanding”	56%	27%	46%	38%

* Use in past year for 2010 grads and past 6 months for 2005 grads

** All 15 teens reported that they made a personal commitment to Christ while at Teen Challenge rather than at entry to Teen Challenge.

*** 2007 study participants were asked if they “had a mentor at Teen Challenge” but not if they had a mentor who was an “assigned mentor while at Teen Challenge.”

Verbatim responses to open-ended questions

A3. Suggestions for program improvement

Suggestions for program improvement

No change (13 responses)

Nothing. (4)

Nothing. If it's not broken don't fix it.

Nothing. Everything was more than I could ask for.

I can't think of anything now. I'm talking from a perspective of somebody who really wanted to change. Others might say more passes but some people would abuse it.

I don't even know but now that I'm out.

Nothing. Okay as is. Maybe have more jobs available so clients can have income and stay in the program longer. "Work to help family by earning some income." Overall it speaks for itself. The people are doing a wonderful job.

I don't know. It was a fantastic program. I don't think I could improve it.

Don't know. Nothing. It seems fine.

Nothing I would change. Great job!

No room for improvement. Pastor Rick doing an outstanding job. Get the truth out and silence the critics.

Adjustments to classes and counseling (33 responses)

Do something; class on positive communication/interaction with women and how to interact with the outside world and with women once you are out of Teen Challenge.

Allow more time for interaction with family – wife and kids – if you have that. We're kept away from family. Should be part of the overall program.

One thing that has come to mind: I experienced a lot of dead religion, an emphasis on rules and regulations and do and don't. It was distracting, sometimes. I needed to learn those things. I needed to learn to submit to those things but it was a distraction from my relationship with Jesus Christ. God cared about more about my performance as opposed to a relationship with his son – me.

I personally would let the staff members have more time to spend one-on-one time with clients.

Have more spiritual emphasis weeks.

That I spoke out on. A different level three curriculum and text book. I don't think it was structured enough. There wasn't any real accountability with the coursework.

Teen girls. I would have each individual decide instead of their Dean of Women/men) what activity to participate in during the weekend or whenever.

More student involvement. There is so much growth during their time for students. Teen Challenge – they ask our testimonies to be very brief. I would increase the time for testimony of students in the program.

Be able to have more interaction with while in the program. Make that part of the program structure.

A3. Suggestions for program improvement (continued)

Suggestions for program improvement

Adjustments to classes and counseling (33 responses) (continued)

More counseling.

Have them focus more on relationship when you are done, i.e., focus more on being in a healthy relationship.

They should be more consistent – not have so many immediate changes.

More frequent counseling appointments/sessions.

Better organize the events.

Bring back teen boys they discontinued this program that I was in (Teen Challenge for Boys).

Include more regular fun activities. Don't keep individuals engrossed in church all the time. We need to do everyday stuff.

I felt that they really stress that you had to worship one way. "When you get blessed with the holy spirit" Jumping up, speaking in tongues, Pentecostal way. I'm not that type of person. I felt people were looking down at me for not being that way. This was the biggest problem I had.

Have more opportunity to work in the outside work. Maybe do a work study program to get the feel of having a job outside Teen Challenge before being dismissed.

Add more parenting classes – especially for fathers and toward the end of the program. Have more transition passes to help one adjust to the community/outside world.

Communication amongst the leaders/deans.

More counseling. More of the one-on-one counseling. A lot but not enough.

It's a tough one. I was in the teen boys program. Being a little more lenient. The men were able to carry \$20 on them but we weren't, as a liability, because we were teenagers. Trusting us more as youth. People underestimate youth so much. Why would you underestimate the people who are going to take your place in the world?

A better integration of the teen boys program into the program as a whole. No.

I can't answer that. I was in it for 17 months. I have my own feelings about things (faith). There is a lot of specific dogmas and doctrines pushed on people there. It's extra-biblical – as in extra-terrestrial. It's the type of Christian.

Make it a priority. More emphasis on your/one physical health and wellbeing.

Have a smaller population. Too many people.

They need more guidance on male and female interaction/relationships within the program.

Get rid of the dress code, get rid of collared shirts and tucked in shirts – it's legalism.

Take Tuesday night from 7-8 have intercession. Prayer quiet time with music, no works; just music and prayer.

They should include – somewhere (before one leaves the program) a part where men and women have the opportunity to interact. Many of us leave and don't know how to talk to women/girls because we have been isolated.

The passes; I would have buddy with people who have been in the program longer. Should Buddy with the people who are new. More study time.

A3. Suggestions for program improvement (continued)

Suggestions for program improvement

Adjustments to classes and counseling (33 responses) (continued)

More personal and intimate. People feel like just a number. Organization: everything is last minute. Nobody knows where people are. Process roster checks lack of awareness. I have to round up people to do chores and that is not my job – their responsibilities. There are hard core guys. They may be in the program but are not changed.

Make it less strict as male/female relations. Not able to look in the eyes of the males. That was hard for me. I am a friendly person. No interaction like thank you. I don't believe people should have relationships in the program. When you go out you haven't had any interaction at all. You're facing this immediately in the world. Maybe some people can't.

Suggestions for transitioning back into the community (15 responses)

I would do more for level 4 so when you integrate into the community you are not so shocked – better preparation to go back into the community. Allow one week while in the program or one month before leaving make sure individuals have employment before leaving.

More after care support.

Level 4, we didn't get much of chance to get out of there and look for work and housing. That transition they needed more talk about that in the Level 4 classroom.

I would have housing (transitional) for the teen in Teen Challenge so they don't go back to their environment.

Spend more time connecting with the work force looking for jobs.

More follow-up with graduates, especially those who are out of state or out of town.

They need to have more information on how to deal with relationships and better transition program in how to bridge the connecting with outside, every day life before release back in society/community.

Lengthen Level 4.

The transitional period. Level 4 could be improved. Individual should have more exposure to life after Teen Challenge while they are still in the program.

They (TC) should allow individuals, before leaving program, time to actual leave to look for employment – not using the computer. Individuals should be allowed to actually talk in person to employers, of course they should come back – just allow for time to communicate in person.

The work details. Maybe longer or more emphasized. As more of a priority in Teen Challenges' eyes.

More help before I graduated getting established in a home church. Instead of being so structured being able to go out with the people I would be with. Time to find my own Church before I was on my own.

Value the professionalism that some people bring and be more supportive in their re-entry into the world and workforce.

In the 4th class, they need to let people go out and associate in the world more. The passes are not enough. It was still a major culture shock when I got out of there. The lecture was there but not the practice.

Have more interaction with outside/community – better contact with community before transitioning out of the program.

A3. Suggestions for program improvement (continued)

Suggestions for program improvement

Recommendations about staffing (14 responses)

It sure wasn't the leadership there at Teen Challenge. Those people are twisted. They should teach you how to deal with real life situations rather than stick you in a bubble and pretend everything is okay.

Accountability of the staff that run the program. It should be someone outside of the program to hold them accountable: Board of directors, ministry, or church elders.

The consistency of things. A lot of times there was too much favoritism. One girl would get disciplined for something. I know I didn't understand the whole picture, but I think some girls skated by.

I would be a little easier on the write-up for the consequences – be more lenient.

Add more staff.

Have more counselors.

Change "some" of the personnel – there are some unhealthy staff work at T.C. They need to recognize and address conflict among staff.

The way they work, they show Christ like quality. Not only did the staff talk about Christ but they demonstrated it in their actions.

Maybe have more staff on hand. Sometimes we were short-staffed when we needed a staff person the most.

They should pay attention to the authority (Board of Directors/ Exec. Director) treat people and make decisions of the overall program – the decisions are sometimes made without being discussed.

Asking more students about staff about what is going on. Improvements with staff. A couple of staff were not coinciding with Teen Challenge teachings. Must be done on anonymous level.

More staffing because of how many students there are and the level they come in on. Attention, processing stuff. Not necessarily counseling because that takes away your dependence on God.

More counselors at Grace Manor. It was lucky if you got 2 hours a month one-on-one with a counselor.

Some of the leadership staff. They should reach out to people more and not judge them or condemn them for their issues or from re-lapsing or leaving the program.

Other comments (10 responses)

Being able to have 2 cups of milk at each meal.

Better food. Too many starches/carbohydrates. Add more veggies.

Change the food. Get better food. Too many carbs and starches and empty calories. Get more quality food. Better balance healthy diet.

Food. Not so starchy. It bloats people up. That's the only thing I can think of.

Put in library and independent study.

More finances to expand the program.

More transportation is needed.

Clients should have more opportunities to voice our opinion – in addition to survey, have more questions and answer sessions with clients.

I have no criticism for Teen Challenge whatsoever. I think of some rules I didn't like, but they helped me out.

Reduce the level of exposure to politics we had to suffer through.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

ADULT MEN

Attending church/spiritual relationship (54 responses)

God (14)

Loving God.

My relationship w/God.

God's deliverance.

All in the God thing. What Teen Challenge said beneficial principles. Being obedient is a big thing.

The Lord.

Church – attendance (11).

Closeness with Church – attending every Sunday. Sunday school teacher, Confirmation teacher.

Going to church. A really good way to stay plugged into what you learned. Listening to Staying connected with the Church.

I set up some ministry work for people in need elsewhere (not in Teen Challenge). My ordination as a minister it happened within the last year.

The Church & Family they go together.

Vineyard, staying connected with God.

My relationship with Jesus Christ. (6)

Jesus Chris. (4)

Have Jesus Christ in my life.

A personal relationship with Jesus Christ that's clear cut and dry.

Christ (my commitment).

My relationship with Christ. I'm going to school to be a pastor.

My responsibility to faith, faith in who I am. God told me who I am.

Religion.

Spiritual beliefs.

Staying in the Word.

The goal I had in Teen Challenge a kid's view of God is through the example if their father. It kind of hit me.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

ADULT MEN (continued)

Family (27 responses)

Family. (8)

Support from family and friends. (2)

My children. (2)

The desire to retain relationships with family.

Better relationships with family.

Family environment & discipline appreciation for life.

Improved/support of family.

My son.

Family connection.

My kid wanting to be there for my kid and my fiancé.

My wife.

The support of my mother/family.

Being here with my family.

Wife/family.

My son. Be a better example and have him in my life.

Re-co family.

Quality of my life is better. Getting my life back, greater family and friends, and having fun doing it. My relationships are stronger.

My lady friend – my fiancé.

Positive people (19 responses)

Change of friends.

Positive people & staying close to family.

Regular fellowship.

Being involved with non-users friends.

I have a group of graduates keep in touch with a social group.

No one under the influence around me.

The environment you are around the company you keep.

The people I hung around with the hardest for me for recovery of my addiction was changing the kind of people I associated with or live with.

Being around positive people.

Not being around the wrong people.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

ADULT MEN (continued)

Family (27 responses) (continued)

Friends.

Keeping fellowship with the people in the program and getting a lot of support.

Support from sober friends.

Being connected and staying with friends who are on the right path.

Being around people who don't use.

Maintaining sober friends.

I stay close knit to the people who are still doing good from Teen Challenge. I'm still close to Teen Challenge. Our pastor is our level 2 from Teen Challenge.

Staying connected with sober friends.

Friends – Teen Challenge friends became too busy after graduation after a while.

Determination to stay sober (17 responses)

Better coping skills.

An academic setting got me to become aware of what I was capable of.

Just staying in touch with the special aspects of my life.

The sincere desire.

Illness. When I did use it made me sick.

Staying out of bars.

Discipline.

Maturing.

Keeping focus on my goals (I have accomplished half of them) that I set in Teen Challenge.

Enjoying my life w/o chemicals.

The wanting to be (sober).

Personal manifestation.

My self-discipline.

I want to have a better life.

Desire to be a better person.

My past – remembering how bad it was.

Future dreams and goals.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

ADULT MEN (continued)

Daily prayer and faith (17 responses)

Faith in God. (5)

Prayer. (4)

Devotions. (2)

Staying plugged in with God.

Spiritual beliefs.

Daily repentance to change my thinking more.

Living a discipline live in the word.

Having Close Christian fellowship with other believers.

Seeking the word of God, studying and meditating on the word daily.

Working – staying busy (13 responses).

Work – staying busy. (2)

Work. (2)

Staying busy – keeping balance.

Keeping busy answering my calling – working in Medical saving lives.

Employment (being employed).

The environment, my housing I live with all my other employees.

Working for Teen Challenge & having no drugs or alcohol around here.

Staying busy going to work and church.

Staying busy working.

Keeping busy – having a job.

Keeping busy with work.

Support system (11 responses)

Support-system.

Support: Church, friends & balance.

Support system getting involved in a church.

A great network from Teen Challenge.

Having great support from friends.

Healthy support group around me.

Support network.

I go to groups, volunteer, family members.

Someone I confide in about stuff going on, exercise & eating right that helps a lot.

Support system made us go to a lot of outside activities to create a support system.

Strong support of friends and relatives.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

ADULT MEN (continued)

Making good decisions (11 responses)

Better decision making skills.

Not hanging with other abusers.

Avoiding tempting situations.

I make better/good choices.

Staying away from my families who all still use. They are not living a righteous life they are still doing dumb stuff. Telling on myself when I have bad thoughts I don't anymore & go into my shell.

My time, spending time with my kids, with my friends, going to the movies, and finding good things to do.

Getting out of the environment I was in.

I was very tired of the lifestyle, lying, stealing, cheating, drugs. When I'm in Jesus more and more that is what I would like to become.

It's a better life: I feel safer. My life has order to it. If you had the choice to steal and rob or to go to service in a church and be a good neighbor and be healthy it's a no brainer.

I don't want to go back to my old lifestyle.

The desire to not return to that lifestyle.

Bible reading (10 responses)

Reading scripture and remembered many verses.

Participate in bible studies. My home church.

Reading Spiritual books & Bible.

Bible. (2)

Word of God. (2)

Bible – learning to remember the thing I study – and rely on, my understanding from my.

My Bible; reading it.

Using the Bible. Reading and memorizing scripture.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

ADULT MEN (continued)

Staying connected to Teen Challenge (9 responses)

TCTC it's so important. Coming out of Teen Challenge got me to become studious, being in a school setting got me focused.

Staying connected with Teen challenge, I go back to my House & do fellowship. And bring out 4 or 5 guys to my place on Saturdays & hang out.

Staying connected with the Program generals structure.

Support - Teen Challenge.

T.C. a Faith Base Program – understanding what God wants us to do.

Stayed close to T.C. staff.

I stay connected to Challenge.

Teen Challenge support.

Teen Challenge.

Accountability (8 responses)

Accountability. (2)

Accountability and support (what) different meetings, family, friends, program.

Accountability having friends who influence went through TC and still sober. Pastoral influence.

The place I work at is nonprofit Ministry so it keeps me tied in to the whole of it the accountability it keeps a guy on track with your Bible studies (2 pastoral influences).

The responsibility I have to myself and others.

Accountability.

Being accountable.

Understanding purpose for being here (4 responses)

Loving my new life style and the person I am now.

I feel complete and whole – I have a calling in my life by God that I didn't realize before. (T.C.).

Knowing that I am a valuable person.

The recovering of my mind filling myself with the word Jesus Christ meaning and purpose.

Mentors (2 responses)

The Mentorship in my accountability.

Christian mentors.

Other comments (2 responses)

Probation 30 years. I've got 12 years +6 months. This is a big thing hanging over me.

The physical addiction is what kept us in the trench.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Adult women

Attending church/spiritual relationship (39 responses)

God. (4)

God and the support groups.

God I'm a Christian.

Christ as an introduction into my life.

Christ.

Having God in my life replaced what I was looking for in drugs. Fulfillment in all aspects of my life. I was empty before. I was constantly searching for something to fill it.

I got God in my life and that is why I don't use these days.

Continue to live for and through Jesus.

Church – having a relationship with God.

Church involvement.

Church.

Getting into another God program Masters Commission unaccredited program.

Jesus – going to Church.

Jesus – my walk with the Lord.

Jesus Christ.

Jesus.

Jesus: because he saved me from all the non sobriety and gave me a new life.

Keeping in God's word.

Knowing the promises that God has given in his word. He hasn't made me to be in bondage to this addiction.

Knowing who I am in Jesus Christ.

Learning Christ – relationship with God.

My belief in God.

My devotions & being faithful in church.

My relationship with Christ and church connection.

My relationship with God that is number one.

My relationship with God.

My relationship with Jesus Christ

Personal relationship with God.

Personal relationship with Jesus Christ. (2)

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Adult women (continued)

Attending church/spiritual relationship (39 responses) (continued)

Relationship with God. (2)

Relationships with people and God.

Continuing education, my biblical knowledge.

Staying with and finding a home church and being connected with other Christians.

The Holy Spirit Jesus Christ.

Understanding the Lord more understanding of how God loves me.

Family (14 responses)

My family. (3)

Not wanting to be away from my kids.

Strong family ties.

My fiancée/my pregnancy.

My son.

My kids.

Family support.

Being around family.

My kids because I don't want to hurt them.

My family support network.

Family support.

Relationship with my family.

Determination to stay sober (10 responses)

The hurt that I caused my family by my drinking.

Staying responsible – pushing myself.

I wanted it for myself. I wanted to be done using.

My mental health is now working – I'm on medication.

I really wanted to be sober.

I don't want to be that person that has to rely on alcohol to get through things.

I wanted it to be free of addiction.

Self control.

Deciding not to give in to it anymore.

Determination.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Adult women (continued)

Positive people (9 responses)

Being with non user & other Christian people.

My friends.

Being around friends.

Not isolating myself as much.

My newer relationships with new people I can't hang out with my old friends an example is the Dean of the school and my classmates.

Good positive friendships.

The sober housing.

Surround myself with friends who have relationships with Jesus.

Friends made while at Teen Challenge – good support group.

Support system (9 responses)

Support system-friends & family.

Support from others in recovery.

Support system – Christian people.

Staying connected with healthy relationships.

Support from family & friends.

Long term of the program teaching you how to do it.

A strong support group like family and people around me, having a mentor helped.

Staying connected with others fosters support.

Having support people.

Making good decisions (8 responses)

Stay away people, (something) was the kingdom of God.

Continue to stay away from old friends.

Knowing that substances are not good for me and God.

My choice of friends.

My environment I'm not around people who abuse stuff.

Not talking to people I used to know.

My future that I'll be able to succeed in whatever I have been chosen to do.

Making righteous, good decisions according to the word.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Adult women (continued)

Other comments (7 responses)

Scared to go to prison.

Health.

Ministry school (attend).

Probation – regular meetings.

I'm in treatment again.

Moved/relocated to another state.

Women believers more mature.

Staying connected to Teen Challenge (7 responses)

Work with women at Teen Challenge.

Teen Challenge.

Teen Challenge – go back (camaraderie/friendship understanding, support).

Back at Teen Challenge – back in the network.

Because you stay at Teen Challenge so long without drugs you learn to live without them.

The length of time I was in Teen Challenge helped a lot.

Friendships from Teen Challenge.

Daily prayer and faith (4 responses)

Prayer & my family (mom).

God & prayer.

My faith.

My spirituality.

Working – staying busy (3 responses)

Keeping myself busy.

Job security.

Being able to find a job and have a job right away.

Accountability (3 responses)

Accountability.

Keeping accountability with others who are sober.

The people that instill stay connected with from the program – my accountability.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Adult women (continued)

Mentors (3 responses)

My sister is my mentor & my friend having them being ministers having my sister and her husband. Family atmosphere and somebody that I can connect with – fellowship with. When I was in Teen Challenge they only missed 2 times to come and visit me. They have 4 children. They brought me my supplies or snacks. They usually pray with me. They were in it & dependable. Faithful is the word. Even their kids, they are like my kids now.

My mentor.

My mentors.

Teen girls

My relationship with Christ.

God.

Faith in God.

Family.

Family, didn't want to get in trouble or disappoint them.

Family support.

Family and friends support.

Friends & family.

Boyfriend.

Boyfriend He was a recovering drug addict. I couldn't be with them.

Friendships made at T.C. staff and other colleagues.

Best friend. She is a recovering addict. I couldn't be with her if I used.

AA meetings I attend.

My stability.

Staying in sports.

Don't have desire to use.

What I learned at Teen Challenge.

A4. Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' sobriety and recovery

Teen boys

God.

Self determination.

Jesus & my faith.

Feeling accountable

Making good decisions.

God (relationship).

My faith.

Family.

Self control.

My girlfriend.

None.

My relationships with the people around me – family.

Life or death If I go back to where I was at, I would not make it for very long.

God.

The effects of drugs/at Teen Challenge.

God.

My family, their understanding of my mom when relapsed she was there for me.

Without my mom I wouldn't be doing as good as I am.

I do stay in constant prayer I pray twice a day a lot of things happen to yourself spiritually because of this.

Support from your relatives. Yes, they are definitely helpful.

Going to church and getting the Word.

A5. Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse

Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse

Adult men

Returned to old behaviors (7 responses)

I had been sober 21 months. I was naive and didn't take my recovery seriously.

I didn't have a balance in my life I wasn't allowing people into my life.

I wasn't taking care of myself, as before I went in. No exercise like I'm doing now.

I like the feeling.

Thinking that I was missing out on something I'd have to say.

I wanted to see if it affected me.

That I got the same thrill out of it that I did before, but I did not. (just a couple of weeks ago).

Boredom (3 responses)

Boredom. (3)

Environment (3 responses)

I go to the Casino with set amount & I leave when it's gone. I don't consider that a relapse.

Atmosphere (of the casino).

My environment.

Spiritual relationship (3 responses)

Not keeping God in my life.

Maintaining a daily return of prayer and devotion.

Turned away from God.

Being unemployed (3 responses)

Frustration at not being able to find work.

Having no job.

Looking for work – how they recruit.

Isolation/loneliness (2 responses)

Isolating myself.

Loneliness.

Not an alcoholic (2 responses)

I'm not addicted to it (drinking alcohol).

I am a social drinker and have always been abstemious.

Depression/mental health (2 responses)

Depression.

Some depression.

A5. Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse (continued)**Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse**

Adult men (continued)**Reconnecting with old friends (2 responses)**

Re-connected with old friends.

People I was hanging out with.

Physical health (2 responses)

Health reason.

My accident (motorcycle).

Family issues (2 responses)

My marriage, it was a struggle I had never been married before & been responsible.

Family issues.

Working too much (2 responses)

Lack of balance in my life – too much work and school.

I was working 7 days a week & not spending time with the Lord.

Other comments (4 reasons)

Finances.

Housing.

Stress.

Complacency.

Adult women**Isolation/Loneliness (5 responses)**

Isolating myself.

Lonely.

Loneliness. (3)

Depression/mental health (5 responses)

Death of father.

Mental health.

Depression (about my kids).

I drink for pain, I don't get out to a bar. Sometimes hurtful things going on.

Unhealed heart. I wasn't finished. My heart wasn't finished being healed.

Relationships(3 responses)

Relationships.

Family issues.

Family not having any faith in my ability to stay sober.

A5. Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse

Adult women (continued)**Stress (2 responses)**

Stress. (2)

Boredom (2 responses)

Idle time.

Boredom.

Financial issues (2 responses)

Employment issues.

Finances lack of them not having that higher paid job. Lots of doctor bills.

Other comments (5 responses)

Pain physical herniated disk. Impossible for me not to get narcotics from a doctor.

Just the excitement of being out of Teen Challenge.

People who I spoke to. They found out I was a drinker.

I didn't come out at first that I was in recovery. I felt guilty and said I can't drink with you no more.

I didn't have a sober network.

Teen boys

Curiosity.

Old friends and acquaintances that I was around.

Hanging out with the wrong people.

Being at the wrong place.

Having money.

Graduation Celebration after Teen Challenge was a bad few weeks when I went to Australia and Cambodia.

Sporting events.

Allowing yourself into normal society and expecting everything to be normal for you and old friends you go out thinking you can still be their good or best friend. I've had to drop friends I've had since 4th grade, because it's impossible to put yourself into temptation like that after a program like Teen Challenge.

The faith base part.

Boredom.

Not allowing yourself to be in a situation to being unlike we remember as happy but without drugs – this just doesn't work.

Peer pressure because my brother was a factor in doing my drugs.

Lack of money is why I used. Doesn't sound right, but it's true.

A5. Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse (continued)

Factors that contributed to respondents' most recent relapse

Teen girls

Relationships

Stress. Family and school.

Friends, I hang around with friends who do drugs, but they are my best friends since elementary school.

It's hard to make new friends because it's small and I live in a rural area.

Spiritual emphasis week was the core of the Teen Challenge experience.

Not reading Bible as much as I should.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most

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

Adult men

Connection with God (27 responses)

You're engulfed in spiritual guidance and teaching and the counseling.

The overall classes and spirituality of staff was most helpful.

Spiritual emphasis week was the core of the Teen Challenge experience.

Getting saved and water baptized while in the program.

The spoken word. They spoke life every day. They spoke the scriptures every day. I got the word of God every day.

Only going to church one day on Sundays in my life before this. That started the ball moving.

The faith base part.

The spiritual emphasis week – where we had the options to fast and pray.

Finding God – overall part.

Christian fellowship & time to devote my relationship with Christ.

The getting to know Jesus – the daily (P.S.N.C.) Prayer Services for New Christians, classes.

Teaching about the word of God – the biblical aspects of the program.

Spiritual Growth – the religion and Church.

The spirituality.

The spiritual emphasis weeks where all classes & activities are stopped and we have a guest Pastor nationally known come in and preach for the whole week mornings and night to preach on the importance of Christ and what he has done a Motivational Speaker.

At midweek meeting I got a new partner. Going to a Tuesday night with my Pastor & this is our sports offered I got to know myself better & more in touch with the Lord.

The discovery of the word of Jesus Christ The truth is in the word and the word will set you free.

Christian faith.

Christian education classes.

Spirituality – making the personal commitment and restoring my life.

How to live as Christian lifestyle.

Finding God/Christ.

God.

Use the Bible to find ways to fix it and rely on Jesus even our kids belong to Jesus. The outcome is not ours and how to handle things because I can't control what is going to happen. I can pull through this with still praising God.

That they completely taught me how to live a whole new way/Christian life.

Having the structure Christian activities.

The faith in the Lord. It's the faith part of the program that was most helpful for me.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Adult men (continued)

Staffing (11 responses)

Counselor (specific name) a friend as much as a guide.

The staff – the way they work – they show Christ like qualities: not only did the staff talk about Christ but they demonstrated it in their actions.

It changed every last part of me. The support and compassion that they show from the first day you walk in. They all the staff are around everything

The teachers/staff – they took time to let you know you were important – they set a good example by their actions and what they said – they shared their experience and hope with you.

Staff was awesome.

The curriculum, digging deeper into my own problems, the pastoral counseling was fantastic.

The support, somebody walking beside me. The staff, the people while in the program, the best part about it.

The employees. The staff members who sat me down to talk me through my problems.

The staff is there all the time. I consider them my friends today.

The staff loving me.

A few staff members helped me to cope with things better.

Attending church, chapel, morning worship (10 responses)

Morning Chapel.

Chapel.

The Chapel services and the level two teaching & Biblical Studies.

Chapel in the morning brings everybody together.

When I was going to the different churches and meeting different people and singing in different choirs I am a tenor a soloist lowered my inhibitions people came to talk to me asked me to pray for them. I had a lot of fun doing it.

Chapel Services and Choir trips when we go to sing.

The morning worship, prayer, and choir.

When we went out to the churches and sang in the choir.

All the church visits, the services. That was a huge one.

Chapel (daily) in the mornings.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Adult men (continued)

One-to-one counseling (9 responses)

I would have to go with the counseling, the one on one.

The one on one with the counselor.

The class time experience/one on one with the teachers.

The counselor & the counseling that I received, it was the one on one communication really helped.

One on one relationship w/ Dean of Men Pastoral Counselor, wife and staff.

Guidance – marital & spiritual guidance.

The one on one relationship, staff to student relationships – and weekly Church the biblical education.

Time with the counselor.

Got more time with counselor and I felt that was better.

Level II (Brother Earl's classes) (8 responses)

(It was) Brother Earl.

Brother Earl's Part – Level 2.

The Level II – (life skills part).

The classes and communication – Brother Earl class.

The level two because it helps you apply the Bible.

My level 2. The whole time I was in level two I had to do it twice – I got into trouble.

My pastor Brother Earl: He laid out the truth and opened my eyes.

Level II.

Program structure (7 responses)

The discipline/structure.

The overall structure – learning how to submit to authority.

The structure. The daily schedule, the way they operate the program and the tasks you have to complete in the program.

The structure. The daily academics and life.

Strict rules they have. Dress code, went to church 4-5 times a week.

Getting a routine down, which I need.

The contract work. Personal transformation time.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Adult men (continued)

The fellowship with other students (5 responses)

The support of other guys going through the program.

The interaction with other participants – knowing we all shared in some of the same experiences.

The camaraderie, better relationships.

The Brotherhood that lasts more than a week.

The relationships you develop with the motherhood of the body of the people in Teen Challenge.

The discipline/rules (5 responses)

Learning – “the strict” discipline” of learning how to trust God & that God has his Hand on the program – the discipline they taught me – that was key for me.

The accountability.

The discipline it’s very difficult for addicts to be told “no” they are used to doing whatever they please.

The discipline.

Style living – the discipline was a big part for me.

Learning how to live a full life (5 responses)

A whole realm of things. Helped me focus on what’s most important in my life, with new outlook.

Learning how to relate the belief to everyday living.

Learning how to deal with other people.

How to live better.

They made me change, but it was good.

Length of the program (3 responses)

There is a lot of quantity not of quality time, the length of time being in the program.

The length of the program, it gave me time to get off the drug & disassociate with the people I was using with. It gave my family the time to build trust again. They saw I stuck with it this long, & began to change their minds about me.

Being there for a whole year.

Level IV (starting school/social life before graduating) (3 responses)

Level 4; being able to slowly get back to normal life – I was able to start school/social life before graduating – relearning that before completely leaving.

Level 4 – the classes & instruction, the things we learned about dealing with stress, conflict resolution spirituality and how to apply it to our own situations.

The 4 level; when they allowed me to transfer back to the community – and develop my confidence back.

The social part.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Adult men (continued)

Prayer (2 responses)

Sharing my testimony and praying with donors.

My prayer life and spiritual reflection.

Service work (1 response)

Working throughout the community – having the opportunity to participate or serve in the churches and the community organizations.

Other comments (5 responses)

Seeing a lot of graduates come back and work there and still maintain sobriety. Out in this world I see the graduates maintain. You are still in recovery; that really helped me out to see their in program outside w/o employment from Teen Challenge, maintain, find employment and pay their bills.

Better food, I was spoiled growing up.

The classes, the building.

The people that we met who belonged to those churches.

Working the call center.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Adult women

Connection with God (17 responses)

My relationship with Christ.

The personal attention given to me and the spiritual guidance shown daily encouragement, prayer advice (re: personal attention).

The Spiritual.

Relationship with God.

Just learning about Jesus & like word of God everyday.

Study the Bible – the class and different ways to look at things that apply the bible to our addiction and every day life experiences and the staff guidance and corrections/disciplines.

Finding Jesus – the Spiritual Emphasis Week – changed my life.

The Spiritual part. The seeds that were in the program were life changing.

The Spiritual emphasis week it helped me with my relationship with God.

The time away from everything to build my relationship with Christ. I needed to back away or a break.

Jesus finding out my identity in Christ. Who God says I am.

As a Christian, contacts like being codependent issues on anger and resentment which get at the root of why I was doing the things I was doing.

Staying with and finding a home church and being connected with Christians.

The God part having the right stuff.

Having Godly, loving staff was incredible.

The staff demonstrated the principles of the program on a daily basis and showed me that one could have a Godly life.

Jesus. Following the Bible.

One-to one counseling (7 responses)

The one on one with the staff.

Working (with) one on one counselor.

The counseling, it helped get through my problems.

Getting to the root cause of my addiction the Anger Contract part.

The counseling aspect appreciated. Being told you don't have to carry around all the shame you can let it go & that you have someone to tell that to.

The counseling received. Dealing with my relationship issues and my coping skills.

The counseling. Helped me determine why, what was causing me to use.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Adult women (continued)

The fellowship with other students (6 responses)

The fellowship, the morning worship meetings at the Stevens building and the Friday five that was fabulous. One thing that really helped being able to have the open door policy with my second counselor, was just fabulous, fabulous.

Fellow students.

Just the personal relationships with participants and staff.

The overall closeness of living with and connecting with others and the role models. They live out what Jesus spoke about and showed us how to model our life like Jesus.

The personal boundaries, and how to have good relationships with others. Just relying on God and not your own strength

How you are forced to live with 40 women. They wouldn't be there if they weren't screwed up.

Length of the program (5 responses)

The whole thing. I've been out of there over a year. I guess the positive talk. Nothing was negative.

A lengthy time of sobriety. Doing activities outside the program – learning to do things sober.

The length of the program I have been through so many treatments & prison. Staying connected for 15 months – you are there long enough to learn a new way.

It is hard to nail down 13 months there, 9 months in the ministry school.

The length of the program. The structured part of the program, the whole day being consistently structured and being busy.

Staffing (4 responses)

They were helpful, caring.

Encouragement from staff.

Having support like people.

The staff, they are so loving.

Level III (dealing with emotions) (4 responses)

Level 3 – the emotional support and working through life issues.

Healing for damage emotions and learning my true identity in Christ (level 3).

The classes Level 3 about coping and, firm open and honest dialogue with each other.

The individual work – level three helped me the most.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Adult women (continued)

Program structure (4 responses)

Having my personal right stripped away – I always liked being in control. Finally, at TC I had no control – no say in anything – made me rely on God & not myself or man.

The structure & the staff's commitment.

The disconnection with the real world not being able to talk to or associate with my old lifestyle & being able to focus on things I needed to do.

Because you quit drinking your problems don't go away, it makes you face things. That's what's wrong with the 30 day program. You can't solve your problems in that short a time. You get out.

Learning how to live a full life (3 responses)

Everybody thinks that they can do something better I was very capable of making my own mistakes 99% of the Teen Challenge has been good. Everything is a learning process. You don't learn about how to deal with personal relationships.

An opportunity for a real change in my life.

My other option was prison and that wouldn't have changed my life. There is so much!

Service work (3 responses)

The contacts that you work on.

Being able to find a job and have a job right away.

The contact work, which helped me overcome certain issues and healing.

Other comments (3 responses)

And you start drinking again.

From my family friends school & job – society.

It's a wonderful program.

Attending church, chapel, morning worship (2 responses)

Worship Services.

Chapel – we were exposed to different Ministry and teaching and help me to personally get more in depth with the Bible teachings.

Prayer (1 response)

The classes and devotion time and prayer time.

Level II (Brother Earl's classes) (1 response)

Level 2, it was 4 months. Every week we get a different book to work on.

A6. Part of the Minnesota Teen Challenge experience that helped respondents the most (continued)

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

Teen girls

The whole Program help me.

Everything – there wasn't anything in the program that was not helpful to me.

The spiritual aspects.

The spiritual part – it was different than others – this was more God focused.

The daily church service, my attending the worship part was.

God, how God is tied into the 12 steps.

Teen boys

The Group/Family that you lived with – who shared.

Lived with them. They are your brothers.

The people that you are in the program with the other people in the program keep you going.

The spiritual & Christ center aspect.

Being around the brotherhood, the students. Lot of staff, they connected with me, you.

The devotion, and social activities, overall interaction with positive people.

The classes – (level 2) help me the most.

School. I got to graduate from high school while I was there.

The Counseling, developing the one on relationship and learning.

The counselor. The experience of not being taught. A discussion that helps you get to the bottom of a situation.
