



Adult & Teen Challenge Appalachian Region

Putting Hope Within Reach Of Every Addict



"I always found myself around outlaws and criminals, bikers and gang members, thieves and con artists."

My name is Chris. Growing up I was always around some form of drug abuse or alcoholism. My parents would have friends over and when I saw them using drugs and alcohol, I viewed it as "family fun." The atmosphere seemed happy to me as a little boy. I didn't realize at the time the deception I was living in, and it wasn't until I experienced it for myself that I learned it wasn't fun at all. The "family fun" was all a lie because someone always got hurt and all who participated were broken and lost.

I used marijuana for the first time around 6 years old and alcohol and pills when I was 13. By age 16 I was using methamphetamines. I took Meth when I was mad, happy, sad, and every other emotion in between. It didn't matter how I was feeling, I used meth. I dealt with rejection, and I always found myself around outlaws and criminals, bikers and gang members, thieves and con artists. I wanted to be accepted but found myself living life feeling alone. I was in and out of jail and prison from the ages of 18 to 30 but each time I was released I returned to drugs and crime. I was broken and abused. I hated myself and everyone around me. The last time I was placed in jail I was scheduled to be sentenced from 2 to 15 years. One evening while being allowed to spend time in the rec center yard by myself, I began to reflect on my life. After recounting the mess I had made of my life, I fell to my knees and began crying uncontrollably. I begged God for help that night.

I had to serve at least 2 years of my sentence to be eligible for parole. Those 2 years were some of the most challenging times I faced in prison. I had accepted Jesus Christ into my life, but the temptations were great because of my surroundings. Right around the time I was eligible for parole, I met a guy who had graduated from Adult & Teen Challenge. He encouraged me to come to the Training Center to allow Jesus to continue what he had started in my life and for further training and discipline. At first, I wasn't open to that idea. I had been locked up for a few years and I wanted to be free. The Lord kept tugging at my heart about coming to the training center and he confirmed it to me through another inmate who was already headed to Adult & Teen Challenge.

I was released from prison through the non-violent offender's program, and I came directly to the Training Center. Since coming to Adult & Teen Challenge I have come to know Jesus Christ better and he has helped me learn who I really am. The staff here, through the help of the Holy Spirit, has shown me that I am loved, accepted, and capable of living a successful life. I know that God has a future for me and a plan to get me there. I have found the way, the truth, and the life after searching for so many years. Only God could change me into the person I am today and bring the healing needed to my life. I'm so thankful that I came to Adult & Teen Challenge, and I thank everyone who makes it possible for me to walk this new journey.

Jenny's story.. From Broken to Beautiful



When Jenny arrived at the Appalachian Regional Training Center, she may have been the most hardened young lady to have walked through our doors. As you can see in her picture, she was a hurting young lady. As she sat with her mother in our Admissions Office, she was angry, rebellious, and honestly quite mean. As our girl's staff searched her personal items, she angrily expressed her disapproval of the items she could not keep. At Adult & Teen Challenge this is nothing new, but Jenny's rebellion was more intense than the average enrollee. Her language reflected her anger and as she was telling her mother bye, she shouted "You better pick me up in 30 days and not a day later." All her mother could do was cry.

The first few days were rough for Jenny. She fought hard not to let us love her, but the more she fought, the more we loved. Thirty days came and went, but Jenny never mentioned going home again. As she sat in our church and chapel services she refused to participate for the first two months. She would stand during worship with her arms crossed still in a state of pain and rebellion. Then the moment happened when Jenny began to feel the presence of God. As our staff led worship they noticed that Jenny had her hands raised. As she began to surrender herself the tears began to flow. Not only from Jenny, but from our staff as well. We were truly experiencing the power of Jesus Christ breaking the chains in Jenny's life. Since that day Jenny has never been the same. Jenny wanted to share her story with you and we hope that through her words you too will feel the same presence of God that Jenny felt the day she was set free...

"For as long as I can remember, I struggled with depression. I gave my life to God at a young age but the depression I felt caused me to become confused and it drove me away from God. To cope with the pain I was experiencing I began to cut myself. This left deep scars on my body. I was introduced to marijuana and then I began drinking alcohol and using other drugs. I became fully dependent on pain medication and when it stopped working I began injecting heroin into my veins. I moved around a lot and I always gravitated towards controlling guys. I hurt a lot of people, especially my family.

I despised who I was so much that the thought of dying became a comfort to me. I attempted suicide by overdosing, but someone found me and rushed me to the hospital. My heart had already stopped beating. I left the hospital and as soon as I hit the streets, I was high. Death seemed better to me than life and one way or another, I was going to die. I was full of anger and rebellion and hated the thought of facing another day. Being in a cemetery was better than living on the streets.



Darkness lived within me and radiated from me. Even my eyes projected darkness. I would joke about Satanic activity, but I didn't even realize that it had me bound. I was controlled by the darkness that I joked about, which is also why I found comfort in death. My mind was warped and tormented. I will never forget the day my mom brought me to Adult & Teen Challenge- Appalachian Region. I look back now and hardly even recognize that girl sitting in the Admissions office. Nor can I believe that I once lived with the anger and rebellion I did. Even my parents were shocked with amazement at the person I had become on their first visit with me at the Training Center. My dad was so astonished that he asked a staff member what they had done with his daughter. All I can say is that's what my God can do! God has made his mercy and grace so evident to me that living is all I want to do. I graduated in 2017 and today I am married, and the mother of 3 little girls. I never thought I could have the life I do now. God has blessed me immensely!