

# CAMP\*AIGN RESPONSE

To a concerned teacher (full text below)

April 18, 2009

Hi Tammy,

What a wonderful work you are doing. Thank you so much.

Let me comment: First, I would give anything to keep children from choosing a path that leads a life of hell. Human's take that path only because it is in keeping with the survival values of their particular "neighborhood." They simply have no clue what the future holds. (see [www.ForAmericanKids.org](http://www.ForAmericanKids.org)).

Thus, The Camp\*aign for American Kids emphasizes PRE-habilitation over rehabilitation. The impetus is to prevent soft-wired children from entering the hell that awaits them should they choose the wrong path. But also it is far more productive and cost-effective. This is important since, as the number of those needing rehab continues to sky-rocket, there will be even LESS resources (financial and human) to do the job. Our goal is to put a fence at the top of the cliff, vs. an ambulance at the bottom. At the current rate, the increase in the number of casualties is on track to overtake our capacity to provide rehab.

So **pre-hab** is critical. Furthermore, the only configuration available to effectively prehab youngsters, by the tens-of-thousands, is our nation's network of JOEYs (Joint Outdoor-Ecumenical youth programs). Joeys WORK. They work not because they are "faith-based" in the common sense. They are reality-based with a faith component. Faith is not imposed upon kids, as in the so-called Jesus camps or Christian Madrasahs. Faith is gently appreciated as a vital part of nature, and a universal impulse among humankind. Faith is available, and not intentionally omitted, as with many other youth programs. This is why JOEY are more effective at helping kids.

This is critically important, Tammy, since pure Faith (vs religion or religion expression) is not only a universal impulse among humankind, but also, pure Faith has survival value. Were Faith not significant to human well-being, it would have been jettisoned centuries ago through natural selection.

JOEYs begin receiving kids as early as seven, before damage can be neurologically hard-wired in a human. **THAT IS THE TIME** to enroll kids in the JOEY system. It is not expensive; parents can usually afford the cost (\$300 per kid per week) and camp\*ership aid is available. Also, parents see the JOEY program as a vacation-from-kids opportunity. Since JOEY is typically around 3-hours from home, it is a way for kids to be distanced from neighborhood, school yard and family influences. The JOEY experience is life-changing in that it provides an entirely NEW perspective on life (think of a child's first experience at Disney World: then add friends, nature, caring adults, trained counselors, recreation, and a bully-free environment). Plus, with texting and email, JOEY kids extend the experience throughout the school year. No longer is compliance with immediate surroundings critical to survival. They have seen that JOEY is a far better choice; contact with new friends, and counselors builds anticipation for the next JOEY season.

Truly, the only reason more parents don't enroll their children in a JOEY is simply because they are unaware that the opportunity exists. Please - help get the word out to parents, that JOEY kids are simply more likely to avoid a lifetime of misery and heartache.

Jon Sherry

The Camp\*aign for American Kids

From: Tammy  
Fort Wayne, Indiana Area

I work with those troubled adults trying to get their G.E.D's. Most of them have come straight from prison. However I do have some amazing story's.

They are still young adults, 21-30. I get about 10 at a time. They are hardened, some used to be gang members. I also mentor these young adults. No one wanted to grow up and say " I think I will sell drugs today, or beat up some one, or kill some one. It is kind like taking a Pit Bull, and making into a good family dog. Not easy to do.

It has taken me about 2 to 3 yrs total to get them productive. I am proud to say some of them have even had there felonies reduced to a lower level. They are now in the army and doing very well. Discipline, being the key word ... and some one to believe in them and love them no matter what.

This does not happen overnight. But it takes only one person to start. I have also worked with young troubled children from the ages of 5-7. One young man used to hit and kick his teacher's, including me. For one I do not reward bad Behavior. Then one day I thought to try something different. Since he liked to take control and do what ever he wanted, I decided to let him be my line leader for the day, only on one condition: Be good, be nice to all of your teacher's, do your Homework ... that kind of thing.

Then it was some one else's turn to me my line leader. My young man got to show ever one that a good leader also listens to other's. He has made improvement, but on occasion still needs some work. He is attached to me. Even though I am not teaching at Imagine Schools any more, once in a while I still have to show up to say " Hi" to my kids, and help keep my young man challenged.

The key ... this young man needs a challenge. He liked learning new things, and was easily bored. Of course the bigger problem: getting the parents to follow our suggestions. My goal is to not see this young man end up like the young adults I teach now.

Now what do we do? I look forward to feed back on this.  
Thanks for listening.  
Tammy.