

LIVE FREE - TC VICTORIA IN THE NEWS!



Recently Teen Challenge Victoria was featured in a newspaper column citing that we had begun working with people presenting with addiction to Internet Games. The interest in this column was high, in that we received a barrage of calls from other media outlets including television and radio. I appeared on several news programs briefly and also a number of radio programs, with continued interest from major news programs wanting to talk about the issue of Internet gaming addiction.

Common question, **“is this really an addiction”**. Wikipedia describes addiction as this: **Addiction** is the continued use of a mood altering substance or behavior despite adverse consequences.

The first young man that presented to Teen Challenge with this problem was a few years ago. He presented with suicidal ideations (thinking about committing suicide). He disclosed that this had begun after sessions lasting for many consecutive hours of Internet gaming activity. He sometimes would fall asleep at the computer and fall off his chair, where he stayed on the floor until he awoke and would log on and get back into it. He cut himself off from his family and friends, dropped out of university, and just did games. One of his friends convinced him to try Teen Challenge because she was deeply concerned for him. These in my opinion are adverse consequences. So according to the definition, **YES** this is real!!

I have heard of a young man in England that died of DVT (deep vein thrombosis) because he was so gripped by the games that he developed a blood clot which killed him. A mother just last week at a church we were ministering at, disclosed to me that her 17 year old son was diagnosed with malnutrition and his hands were constantly blue as a result of his sedentary lifestyle, neglecting even the basics of life like food and exercise. This week I have spoken with a Father and a 17 year old girl, refusing to focus on her course studies because she finds an escape from the pressures of life on a website for hours. **THIS CONDITION IS REAL!**

Parents, I strongly encourage you to monitor the usage of Internet by your children. Of course you will need to be modeling correct behavior yourself regarding these matters or you will not be regarded as authentic. Don't be a do as I say, not what I do as a parent. Don't allow hours of isolated usage, or treat the computer as a convenient baby sitter. If necessary take computers out of bedrooms so you can see what is happening on the screen. Set boundaries of usage and adhere to them. Yes that means put up with a bit of whining and moaning as the boundaries get tested. Most importantly regarding your kids get very deliberate about affirming them and let them be convinced by your words and actions that they are your most important possession. They're the only eternal thing outside of yourself you are responsible for. Remember the words of GOD when he spoke out of heaven to his Son. “This is my beloved son in whom I delight”. Let them know that your heart is absolutely for them. If you are really interested in them they will be more likely to respond to your request as they recognize that you only want what is best for them. Do other activities, outings on purpose to places they are interested in. Sit with them and just have fun and listen to their hearts, affirm good character qualities focusing on internal rather than just achievement. Good behavior flows from a good character.

Malachi 4:6 “He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse”. Fathers you are the culture makers of your families, you have what it takes to lead your family into wellness if your heart is first turned toward the Lord, and then towards your children.



If you need help or resources please contact Teen Challenge

Many Blessings
Neil Meyer
Executive Director

LIVE FREE - TC IN SCHOOLS.....

Over the past year, Kyabram P-12 College has invited some of the Teen Challenge students to come into their Year 9 and Year 10 classrooms to share their testimonies. Unfortunately the Year 9 and Year 10 students are coming in to the age of experimenting with drugs and alcohol. The stories of the Teen Challenge men have opened their eyes in regards to making good decisions in their young lives. The feedback we have received from the students and faculty at the college has been nothing but positive. We have been invited back to speak next year. This is such a great experience for some of the younger Teen Challenge students to help the kids see how having “a good time” can have long lasting effects.



Here is a class report written by one of the Year 10 students after a TC visit:

Real people, real pain, real stories, real journeys, real addictions, real consequences. Reality. This is what teenagers need to witness; they need to see how drugs and alcohol truly affect people's lives. Television and movies give a fictional understanding of what the real dangers and hardships of an addiction are; teens need to see the truth.

As a Year 10 student at Kyabram P-12 College in Northern Victoria, I got the chance to see the ugly side of an addiction. This was shown from the perspective of reforming drug and alcohol addicts from a local rehabilitation program, *Live Free, Teen Challenge*. These brave people opened up to the class about their difficult journeys through a life of drugs and alcohol. They shared horrific stories of police smashing down their front door, constantly feeling paranoid and anxious, watching their best friends overdose, losing the people they love and wondering what happened to their lives.

This captivated all of the students and left us in silence as we tried to imagine what life would be like in their shoes. It left a real impact; it may have been scary or confronting but this is what teenagers need. Most teens in our community are exposed to drugs and alcohol on a regular basis even though it is illegal. Some people believe that drugs and alcohol are only an issue in lower-class or unsteady families. It is not. One of the young men said that he came from a “good home,” this didn't stop him from taking drugs in his early high school years. I have witnessed students my age from expensive private schools taking drugs and alcohol; it isn't about class or social status it is about deeper issues.

These teens may think that they know the concerns of drinking or taking drugs but in truth they forget the true consequences. It was explained to them that the physical after-effects are not always the hardest part to deal with; it is usually the loss of family, friends and loved ones because of your addiction that is difficult to cope with. This pain is often what drives addicts to reform themselves.

One man explained that “... as soon as you start going to parties and thinking that ‘if there is no alcohol it won't be any fun’, that is the moment that you become an addict.” Every single student in the class, including myself, was speechless; we could not believe the truth behind that one man's words.

It is a common trend amongst young people to drink alcohol at a young age. If you asked them ‘why?’ most would say “because it feels good,” “because it tastes good”, or my favourite, “because I can”. Do they have any idea about the real risks; not just the hangovers or the violence but the possibility of having an addiction, of losing everyone and everything that they care about and not knowing if they even have a future anymore?

Teenagers need to see first-hand what can happen, we can learn from other people's mistakes, so give us a chance to do that. We need to encourage people, from programs such as *Teen Challenge*, to share their stories with teenagers across the country. Having this experience could change the life of many students if it was given a chance, it could give our community a brighter future.

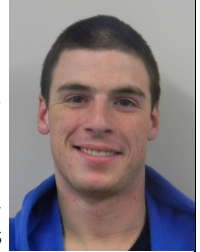
Yours sincerely,
Catherine P

WE'RE SAD TO SAY GOODBYE!....



Psalm 116: "I love the Lord, for He heard my voice; He heard my cry for mercy....when I was in great need He saved me. How can I repay the Lord for all His mercy. O Lord I am your servant....you have freed me from my chains.....Praise the Lord." This is an appropriate verse to describe the reality that is Roland Scourgies story. As described in our last newsletter, Roland came to TC whilst in a very dark place, in every way. He was physically, emotionally and spiritually affected by the lifestyle of alcohol abuse. He had lost all hope and direction. Well now it's a very different story for him and he is about to embark on a new chapter in his story. This means a relocation to QLD to participate in full time studies. It's a bitter-sweet thing for us as we say goodbye, Roland has become such a great and positive part of the TC Community, but we recognize that the Lord has made a way for him to pursue his dream. Well done Roland and may the Lord Bless you and keep you as you go, we will surely miss you.

Joel's Story of Hope....



I grew up in Melbourne in a stable, loving, caring Christian home, the oldest of 2 children. My whole life I have always pushed the limits in everything I did whether it was skateboarding, mountain biking, climbing trees etc. I was always living on the edge even as a small child. I started using drugs when I was 15. By 17 I was selling drugs. I was first arrested that year, then again at 18 for selling drugs. My long-term girlfriend left me at this time; I lost my job and was in serious trouble with the police. My family had been devastated by my destructive behaviour. I no longer cared about anything and began to pride myself on my chaotic and violent life. I lived for destruction, drugs or anything that would cover up the way I was really feeling; hating myself hating every day. I got myself into some serious trouble. One day I had a shotgun held against my head. I remember praying, God, please keep me safe, and take away the fear. Even though God did deliver me from that situation, I continued to live the same way. Then I lost 3 friends to suicide, one of them my closest mates and I hit rock bottom. I had no hope for life, I just wanted to die. I entered the Teen Challenge program on January 19th, 2012 and in the first week I gave my life back to the Lord. Since then my life has changed, I now have hope for the future, my family is happy and so proud of me and I am happy. I see with clarity what life is really all about and that no matter how far I run away from God, He will never let go of me. I am completely at peace, through the love of Jesus. I now live to make my family more happy and proud each day, rather than myself.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

CHANGE FOR CHANGE

The goal is to achieve a CHANGE FOR CHANGE collection in your church, or school. We will supply you with a promotional DVD that with the consent of your pastor or principal, can be shown at assembly or church meeting. Pick a week when there is no other focus, so it can be a Teen Challenge moment. Show the DVD the week before collection and encourage people to find loose change from ashtrays, in pockets, under couch cushions, ask friends during the week if they could spare some change as well. Make it a fun thing to collect as much as you can, its amazing what you can achieve if you do it with purpose. Bring the change on the following week, play the DVD again and take up a special collection of the coins or notes, what ever people want to give. A Teen Challenge person can be there to collect it and share at church if required. For the technically minded you can download the promo video at http://www.indimax.com.au/Change_FINAL_mp4.zip Your Change can bring Change. **TOGETHER** we can reach more people.

STREET COLLECTION TEAMS

Teen Challenge are conducting street collections at different locations around Melbourne. If you are willing to be part of a team and join our students in a collection, please call the office 0358523777. Brian Anderson will advise dates and locations. Just a small commitment of time will help rescue lives. By assisting with this vital ministry you are taking a stand against the issues that surround addiction. It's a small way of sending a message to your kids that you stand for freedom and loving the least of Jesus brethren.

PLEASE TAKE A STAND. HELP TEEN CHALLENGE TEACH PEOPLE TO LIVE FREE

PROGRAM UPDATE

We continue to establish a safe community to recover for our residents, this evidenced by growing longevity. Here are some facts for the quarter:

- Averaged 21 men in the Recovery Phase (12-18 month commitment)
- 3 men (1 new) as Servant Leader Training (SLT) Interns (12 month commitment)
- 2 men as Support Worker (12 month commitment)
- 1 students completed the Recovery Phase
- 1 intern graduated SLT
- Retained 5 out of 6 men entering Recovery Phase (another retention record... increasing the average stay to 223 days, PTL!!)
- 2 new student leader

MID-YEAR REPORT

Since the start of the year we have had a steady flow of new intakes. The staff have been exceptional. Weekly staff training continues to build skills and the level of commitment and focus on serving the men has intensified. The Freedom Jump (FJ 12) fundraiser on April 21 was a great success! The participants enjoyed the thrill of a lifetime! In April we closed for Easter week and sent all the men home or out to safe accommodation. All the men returned from this break refreshed. Thanks to all who billeted our men.

We have had many commitments to the Lord:

- 13 men made recommitments
- 8 men made first time commitments
- 4 men water baptised

SUCCESSFUL MEN

Congrats on finishing the Recovery Program: Michael Hardy

Congrats on being chosen to serve as Student Leader: Justin Thomson

Congrats to Paul Hamence in his role change, now serving as the Kitchen Supervisor!

Congrats to Avinash Sudhakar for finishing the Servant Leadership Training Internship! Thanks for staying on to serve the men as an Administration Support Worker.



CAN YOU PLEASE HELP WITH OUR WINTER NEEDS:

- Tradesmen - Electricians, Tree Loppers (for one off, weekend projects)
- Winter Clothes - warm jumpers ,rain jackets, gum boots, steel toe work boots
- Bedding - pillows, **king** single sheets sets, **double** donnas & covers, towels, etc.



Yes, we wish to make a tax deductible donation to help save lives!!

Monthly support of... \$50

\$100

\$250

\$ _____

OR: One off support of: \$ _____



BY CREDIT CARD

Card No: _____ / _____ / _____ Card holder name: _____

Signature: _____ Expiry date: ____/____

BY DIRECT DEBIT

Bank Account Name: Teen Challenge International Vic Inc Acc #: 10007175 BSB: 063-516

Name: Mr / Mrs / Ms _____

Address: _____ P/C: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (M) _____

Email: _____