

# Resource Guide

## BOOT CAMPS FOR TROUBLED TEENAGERS



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## Introduction

Teens with behavioral issues sometimes need more help than what parents can give. When your teen is disobedient, belligerent and defies you on large and small matters, you may start wondering if a behavior modification boot camp is the answer. When you've done all you can think of, it's a good idea to turn to professionals who specialize in helping troubled teens.

## What is a Teen Boot Camp?

A teen boot camp program is designed as a *short term, physically and emotionally* intense program for troubled teens. In contrast, a residential program helps teenagers over a longer time. Troubled teen therapeutic programs take a more holistic approach that may include outdoor adventure type activities and or wilderness therapy as part of a comprehensive therapeutic program.

## How do I Find “Good” Boot Camp For My Troubled Teen?

It isn't very easy to know if a boot camp advertised online is a good one or not.

**Boot camps have a horrible reputation**, and the state regulatory bodies have closed many due to abuse, neglect, harmful, and ineffective discipline.

Beyond just the reputation, there is an additional problem: there is no proof boot camps work. [Research has been done multiple times](#) into the effectiveness of boot camp regimens on troubled teens. These studies show there is no significant decrease in recidivism rates for boot camp programs when stacked against traditional treatment facilities.

## Boot Camps in the News

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### Videos Spark Investigation of California Youth Boot Camp - ABC NEWS



## Boot Camps in the News, continued...

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### Juvenile Boot Camp



[From the news...](#)

## Protests grow over death of teen in Fla. boot camp

ANDREA FANTA The Associated Press APR 22, 2006 12:00 AM

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- Gov. Jeb Bush is facing a rapidly growing furor over the death of a 14-year-old boy at a juvenile boot camp, with about 1,500 demonstrators yesterday accusing authorities of a cover-up, and Florida's chief law enforcement officer resigning under fire.

The student protesters, led by the Revs. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, demanded answers regarding the death in January of Martin Lee Anderson, who was punched and kicked by guards in a videotaped scuffle.

"You can't beat a 14-year-old kid to death and expect to just ignore it, expect people to not take notice," said student Mike Mathers. The protesters assembled on the Capitol steps, chanting "Justice delayed is justice denied" and "If you don't act, we will come back." They demanded the arrest of the guards and the release of the results of a second autopsy.

Martin Anderson was the third young black male to die in state custody in Florida in the past three years. The guards who hit him were black and white.

A first autopsy found that he died from complications of a blood disorder, but the boy's family and others disputed that. His remains were exhumed for another autopsy. Mr. Bush has appointed a special prosecutor.

Yesterday's protest came a day after Guy Tunnell, commissioner of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, resigned amid criticism over his handling of the case and a joke that the governor called "inappropriate."

The Miami Herald reported that at a meeting of department heads, Mr. Tunnell likened Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., to Osama bin Laden and Mr. Jackson to the outlaw Jesse James. Mr. Tunnell started the Panama City boot camp when he was Bay County's sheriff.

His agency was investigating the death until it was taken off the case by the special prosecutor. During the investigation, Mr. Tunnell had forwarded e-mails to the current sheriff that criticized those who questioned the effectiveness of the boot camp concept.

The governor said he did not ask Mr. Tunnell to step down. He said Mr. Tunnell recognized the problems that the e-mails and his comments had created. On Thursday, the governor met with Mr. Anderson's parents and their lawyer, a day after about 30 college students began a sit-in at Mr. Bush's office. The sit-in ended that afternoon.

The Legislature is considering a bill named in memory of Mr. Anderson that would get rid of boot camps. Mr. Bush said he would sign the bill and hopes the Legislature passes it.

Source: <https://www.post-gazette.com/news/nation/2006/04/22/Protests-grow-over-death-of-teen-in-Fla-boot-camp/stories/200604220131>

## The Teen Boot Camps Approach



The number one concern with traditional teen boot camps is the confrontational and restrictive approach. These camps are behavioral modification programs that use military-style discipline, intimidation, shock, and restrictions to tear down the teenager's sense of self and being.

The drill sergeant method includes include verbal – and in some cases, physical abuse and humiliating confrontations and public shaming. The boot camp's intention is psychological reprogramming to change thinking and behavior. The impact on children who attend these programs is often PTSD and lasting trauma, which results from emotional and physical limitations used in an attempt to break down the teen's resistance to authority and force their cooperation.

The **extreme negative reinforcement treatment is an outdated, ineffective approach.** It can cause a child to disconnect further and often results in a lack of respect by the teen towards authority figures. The decision to send your teenage child to a boot camp environment can cause significant harm to parent-child relationships and produce intense distrust.



The most effective troubled teen programs treat the child and not her or his unruly behavior. You may find local outpatient programs in your community.

When outpatient programs fail, or if your child refuses to participate, then it is time to consult the experts. There is a lot of information online about troubled teen programs, and it is nearly impossible to choose a program by reading their website.

Dealing with the stresses of a troubled teen can feel completely overwhelming. You may be wondering if the problems will ever stop. Fortunately, there are professionals who can help you. A therapeutic boarding school or residential treatment center can provide a safe, nurturing environment that can help your teen begin to heal. So if you were concerned or worried that a boot camp was your only option, you can rest easy knowing that there are much better, proven options to help your teenager.

## Troubled Teen Wilderness Program

Many well known and competent teen wilderness programs in the US offer short-term adventure therapy, usually lasting up to twelve weeks. Removing a child from his home, friends, and peer pressure and placing him in a natural environment away from phones, video games, and substances is an effective intervention.



### GET HELP FOR YOUR TEEN NOW!

This is the most difficult decision you will make for your child. Speak to one of our counselors today.

[SPEAK TO A COUNSELOR NOW](#)



# Consider a Therapeutic Boarding School or Residential Treatment Center Instead of a Teen Boot Camp



**Therapeutic Boarding Schools** – These are academically focused programs that work to help your child improve their grades and learn. They offer teachers, tutors, administrators, and elective coaches for extra curricular activities and many offer wilderness and equine therapy. They also have therapists, psychiatrists, and other medical professionals who are specially trained in dealing with issues like depression, aggression, criminal behaviors, peer troubles and other issues faced by teens.

Therapeutic programs have been found to improve the outcome of treatment in adolescent patients. Finding the most qualified and most relevant to your child's specific needs requires you to do your research and or consult with an independent expert.

**Residential Treatment Centers** – While these centers also provide therapy in individual and group settings for teens, they are much more intensive in their approach. They are best for teens who are struggling with mental illness, substance abuse, and more severe problems that make placing them in a school setting ill advised. In a residential treatment center teens will be monitored 24/7, and provided with care to get to the core of their problems.

*FREE CHECKLIST*

HAVE YOU DONE ALL YOU CAN TO HELP YOUR TEENAGER, IS IT TIME TO CONSIDER A TROUBLED TEEN THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM?

● IS YOUR TEEN DEFIANT AND COMBATIVE ON BIG AND SMALL ISSUES?

● DOES HE REFUSE YOUR REQUESTS AND HAVE AN EXPLOSIVE TEMPER?

● HAS HIS OR HER BEHAVIOR CHANGED DRASTICALLY RECENTLY?

● IS HE OR SHE MAKING SELF-DESTRUCTIVE CHOICES?

VEILED THREATS  
SUICIDE IDEATION  
RUNNING AWAY  
SELF-MUTILATING/CUTTING  
TAKING EXCESSIVE RISKS  
USING DANGEROUS DRUGS OR ALCOHOL  
SEXUALLY PROMISCUOUS

Not sure what type of program or facility is best for your child?

**FOR HELP AND GUIDANCE, CALL US AT (866) 471-8579 TODAY!**

Our placement specialists are standing by.

● DOES IT SEEM LIKE SHE HAS LOST HER MORAL COMPASS?

● IS YOUR TEEN ENTITLED, DEMANDS ATTENTION, AND, OR THINGS WITHOUT REGARD FOR OTHER'S FEELINGS?

● IS SHE HANGING OUT WITH BAD INFLUENCERS, MAKING POOR CHOICES, THAT DO NOT AGREE WITH YOUR BELIEFS OR FAMILY VALUES?

For questions or -more information, please contact our placement specialist at 1-866-471-8579 or visit us at [zioneducationalsystems.com](http://zioneducationalsystems.com) or [teenbootcamps.org](http://teenbootcamps.org).