

Phoenix House

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THE PHOENIX ACADEMY OF YORKTOWN: NO ORDINARY SCHOOL

Partnership Between Top Treatment Provider and NYC Education Department Helps Kids Get Their Lives Back on Track

On a rural campus in Yorktown, New York – 40 miles north of New York City – Phoenix House and the New York City Department of Education have teamed to provide a unique opportunity for troubled New York City teenagers. The Phoenix Academy, which opened in 1981, is a fully accredited residential high school accommodating 200 adolescents in need of a highly-structured learning and substance abuse treatment environment.

The program blends the treatment principles of Phoenix House, the nation's largest nonprofit provider of substance abuse treatment services, with the educational standards of the NYC Department of Education. The result is a premier adolescent treatment facility for adolescents confronting multiple personal problems, including substance abuse, delinquency, poverty and academic deficits. In addition to the Yorktown Academy, Phoenix House now operates ten other academies throughout the country.

At the Phoenix Academy of Yorktown, students pursue an accelerated course of study and learn invaluable life skills, including honesty, responsibility and how to live without drugs. They overcome dependency, gain self-esteem, and recapture opportunities for higher education and productive careers. They can earn a high school diploma at the Academy or transfer back to their high schools after completing the drug treatment component.

The Yorktown Academy is currently celebrating the fact that every student who took the English, Math and American History Regents exams in January passed. Among these was Danny, one of a select group of New Yorkers to score a perfect 100 on the Math Regents A.

“This is one of the few places within New York State where teenagers can simultaneously address their substance abuse and their educations in a comprehensive manner that can lead to long term success in both areas,” says Jack Klimp, Senior Vice President of the Phoenix House's New York Region and a former 3-Star Lt. General in the United State Marine Corps.

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“While the impressive performance of our students on the Regents exams would be impressive even in a traditional high school, we believe that it represents an especially significant achievement, because all of the students are simultaneously working hard to overcome their substance abuse problems and many have serious learning and/or emotional disabilities and large gaps in their educational background,” said Gen. Klimp.

Gen. Klimp sees important similarities between the Phoenix Academy and the Marine Corps: “Phoenix House is very similar in an amazing number of ways to the Corps. The manner in which we help people beat their addiction to drugs is not unlike the method the Marine Corps uses to transform young Americans into United State Marines – strengthening character and developing self-esteem. Both approaches employ a rigorous regimen of activities that reduces idle time to a minimum and elevates the importance of peer relationships.”

Established in 1967, Phoenix House is the nation’s leading non-profit substance abuse treatment and prevention organization, operating over 100 residential and outpatient programs for adults and adolescents in nine states, working with more than 5,300 individuals each day. Since these programs began, more than 100,000 individuals have been treated.

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Tours of the Phoenix Academy are available. If you would like to visit the facility, sit in on classes and meet some of the students, please contact Robin Newhook, Director of Development for Phoenix House’s New York Region at (914) 455-5152.