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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON TEEN CHALLENGE

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### **1. Is Teen Challenge an American based organisation?**

Teen Challenge began in New York City in 1959 and now has representation in over 70 nations including Australia. The Australian Teen Challenge program commenced in 1971 and now has operations in each of the states and territories. Each Australian state based program is independently incorporated, governed by a Board of Directors from that state with no formal and national affiliations with other Australian Teen Challenge centres or international affiliations with America.

### **2. Is Teen Challenge associated by a particular religious denomination?**

Each of the Teen Challenge centres in Australia is affiliated with the State Executive of the Australian Christian Churches (previously Assemblies of God church). While Teen Challenge is accountable to the Australian Christian Churches executive, it works with all religious groups and broadly across the community sector.

### **3. To what extent is Christianity taught in Teen Challenge programs?**

Teen Challenge is a Christian based program. Our courses are based on principles, ethics and morals as outlined in the Bible. Students are encouraged to seek answers to any spiritual questions that they may have concerning their lives. Students have the opportunity to attend church and participate in regular Bible studies.

While Christian beliefs provide the basis of all Teen Challenge programs, compatible psychological principles and therapeutic approaches are integrated from a variety of theoretical models.

### **4. Does Teen Challenge practice exorcism or deliverance ministry?**

Teen Challenge staff and representatives do not practice exorcism or deliverance ministry. Should a particular client request that kind of approach, they will be referred back to a local church or an external specialist organisation.

### **5. Does Teen Challenge pray for its clients?**

Teen Challenge staff will offer to pray for clients and will only do so with the client's consent.

### **6. What qualifications does Teen Challenge staff possess?**

The minimum level qualification for all Teen Challenge staff who have client contact is a nationally accredited Certificate IV in Youth Work and Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs Work. Teen Challenge employs staff with bachelor level qualifications in Psychology, Social Work, Theology and Counselling.

### **7. Does Teen Challenge have professional medical and mental health support for its clients?**

Teen Challenge has contractual arrangements with general practitioners and mental health professionals who participate in the case management of clients on a day to day basis.

**8. Are clients in residential treatment programs under lock and key?**

Teen Challenge residential facilities never lock clients in and clients may depart at their own discretion. However, should a client depart from the program without permission, they may be in breach of the terms of their continued participation in the program. A client can negotiate with their caseworker to leave the Centre to attend to personal matters at any time.

**9. Can Teen Challenge clients in a residential treatment program have contact with family and friends?**

A client can expect to have regular contact with family and friends during their time at a Teen Challenge centre. Clients can arrange for family and friends to visit them at the Centre and are free to visit family and friends during routine weekend leave from the program. During the initial stage of their recovery, contact with family and friends is restricted including telephone calls until clients are equipped to deal with the issues around family and friends that are related to their addiction. Correspondence via mail is permitted at all times.

**10. Does Teen Challenge take the Centrelink benefit of their clients?**

Teen Challenge clients voluntarily make an arrangement with Centrelink for Teen Challenge to receive their Centrelink benefit directly to assist with the costs associated with food and accommodation. Fifteen percent of the client's Centrelink payment is given to the client from Teen Challenge. This is common practice among residential treatment providers across the nation. The money from Centrelink provides approximately one third of the total costs associated with the client's rehabilitation.

**11. Are Teen Challenge clients in residential program permitted to smoke?**

Teen Challenge residential treatment centres treat the whole person as they recover from addiction and therefore do not permit a client to continue with a nicotine addiction. Clients are informed about this prior to entry and indeed are supported by Teen Challenge outreach and referral workers in the detox process including reducing the number of cigarettes smoked each day to a point that will permit cessation. Clients are encouraged to use nicotine patches and other products that will assist with the detox process. Other Teen Challenge services including crisis accommodation, counselling, etc, do not insist clients refrain from smoking.

**12. Where does Teen Challenge get its funding?**

Teen Challenge employs a range of funding initiatives including event fundraising, donor campaigns and sponsorship programs. Teen Challenge has successfully applied for government funding for specific projects and for capital improvements.