



Rising Above the Past—Soaring Towards the Future



Facts:

- ★ About **100,000 children a year in Florida are referred** into the juvenile justice system. Seventy percent are boys. *(2005 Outcome Evaluation Report, February 15, 2005, Justice Research Center, Tallahassee, Florida)*
- ★ **Florida is the third largest population of children in confinement** among the fifty states. It is among 19 states with an increase in juvenile commitment rates between 1997 and 2003, a period of declining juvenile crime. When released youth are placed on probation or on conditional release. These programs are supervisory rather than rehabilitative and do not receive funding to effectively connect youth to their families and communities through family engagement and support activities, educational services, or employability opportunities. *(2004-5 Profile of Delinquency, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice)*
- ★ 57% of youth leaving residential programs are re-arrested, about **40% are re-adjudicated within 12 months** and about 29% get re-committed. *(Program Accountability Measures (PAM) 2005, School Related referrals, office of Research and Planning, Department of Juvenile Justice, Tallahassee, April 2006)*
- ★ In a survey conducted by the Department of Juvenile Justice, **63% of the youth reviewed had a diagnosed mental health disorder and/or high risk behaviors** including substance abuse. *(National Mental Health Association, 2005)*
- ★ In the past year, out of **138** youth participating in the Polk County Juvenile Boot Camp, there have been **16** who wanted or required an alternative living opportunity. **(12%)**
- ★ There are currently **no alternative homes** available for youth completing commitment programs who have the need for alternative home placement that is designed to enhance learned pro-social skills, promote ongoing treatment, and community involvement.
- ★ There are currently **no known treatment programs, support programs, or outreach groups** designed to specifically address the distinctive needs of youth who have completed Juvenile Justice programs in the Polk, Highland or Hardee county areas.
- ★ There are currently **0** teen specific, relapse prevention support groups regularly held in Polk County.
- ★ A study involving Teen Challenge reported an **84% success rate** for youth who participated in continuous faith-based support groups, Mental Health treatment programs, and Substance Abuse treatment programs tested **7 years after program** completion. *The key ingredient is continuity of service while in the program and through the after care program(s).* This statistic overpowers those of **detoxification facilities with a 1% cure rate** and the **therapeutic community cure rate of 10%**. *(US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Dr. Catherine Hess)*
- ★ Aftercare model, *Straight Ahead Ministries*, reports a **92% success rate** for post-committed and delinquent youth by providing a holistic, faith-based alternative housing and counseling approach.
- ★ Programs that promote protective factors and help reduce the risk factors that lead to juvenile crime are some of the **best investments a community can make** to lower its rate of delinquency. *(U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, August 1999)*

The Phoenix Hope Foundation Mission:

- ★ To operate **Project PHOENIX** providing continued therapeutic services and support groups for at-risk, delinquent, post-committed youth and affected family members in Polk, Highlands, and Hardee counties—**free of charge**.
- ★ To operate **The Phoenix Hope House** as an alternative, faith-based, family-modeled living environment for youth who request assistance and/or are unable to return to their homes of origin. This opportunity will provide youth who the opportunity to attend school, therapy, support groups, participate in community activities, and have a faith-based home environment while learning and developing independent living and pro-social skills—**free of charge**.

Impact on the Polk, Highlands, and Hardee County Communities:

- ★ **The services provided by The Phoenix HOPE Foundation will:**
 - ◆ Be the first private organization to promote and foster a professional alliance with local government agencies to provide a viable faith-based, family environment, and community support for its at-risk, delinquent, and post-committed youth,
 - ◆ Display an atmosphere of care and concern going beyond the mandated commitment period and reach out to the family system as a whole,
 - ◆ Project a pro-active approach to reducing recidivism and substance abuse relapse by developing partnerships and innovative strategies to enhance outcomes of post-committed youth, thus reducing substance abuse relapse and crimes committed by these juvenile offenders in Polk, Highlands, and Hardee Counties,
 - ◆ Provide educational support to enhance positive academic outcomes and literacy for at-risk youth.

The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.:

The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization that was founded to provide Polk County S.T.A.R. program youth continued mental health and substance abuse services post-residential commitment. We recognize the critical need within our Polk County community for quality services specifically designed to meet the specialized needs of adolescent youth who are re-entering the community after a long period of incarceration. In meeting this need we are developing two separate, but related entities in which to carry out our mission—The Phoenix HOPE House and the Phoenix Counseling and Resource Center. The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.'s first commitment is to the youth successfully completing the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program and their families. Our second commitment is to other post-committed youth and their families who reside in the tri-county area of Polk, Highlands, and Hardee.

The mission of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. is to support and cultivate the social, spiritual, and emotional development of our community members. It is the goal of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. to provide specialized mental health services, family counseling, independent living training, pro-social skills development, and support groups to promote long-term recovery and personal success.

The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. Founders and Members:

We are the community. We are mothers, fathers, professionals, taxpayers, and community leaders, who passionately seek and want more for our community and fellow citizens. We are concerned about the availability and effectiveness of services for youth

who have successfully completed the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program and other commitment programs and are subsequently returning to their families and communities.

Specifically, Connie Zink, MA LMHC and Erica Allen, BA, longtime residents of Polk County, are the founders of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. Ms. Zink and Mrs. Allen are also the directors of Phoenix Clinical Services, Inc., the contracted agency who provides Mental Health and Substance Abuse treatment services at the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program. Ms. Zink and Mrs. Allen have a combined total of 32 years experience working with disabled youth, at-risk youth, and juvenile offenders as well as with their families. Ms. Zink and Mrs. Allen have been specifically involved in providing clinical and case management services to the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program for a combined total of 7 years.

Erica Allen, President of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc., is also a certified teacher with the Florida Department of Education specializing in Learning Disabilities (Kindergarten through 12th grade) and a certified Behavior Analyst Assistant. Mrs. Allen has worked in the Polk County school system developing specialized behavioral interventions for adolescent youth while teaching life, social, and vocational skills. Additionally, Mrs. Allen is experienced in working with delinquent youth not only in the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program, but also at the Juvenile Assessment Center, the Polk Halfway House, and Polk Regional Juvenile Detention Center where she acted as the Exceptional Student Education Coordinator. While working at the Polk County Boot Camp, she piloted a special projects team which redeveloped the model for the current Transition program. Currently, Mrs. Allen is the Mental Health Services Administrator for Phoenix Clinical Services, Inc., and has been the Restorative Justice Coordinator at the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program for the past two years. Mrs. Allen has been proactive in addressing victim issues with Recruits and Residents within the program. Mrs. Allen actively facilitates the scheduling of events and projects to help these youth be involved in giving back to the community as well as provide the youth opportunities to understand the impact of their negative choices and repair the harm they have caused. Mrs. Allen was recently awarded the Meritorious Service Medal from Sheriff Grady Judd for her commitment to quality Mental Health and Substance Abuse services at the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program.

Connie Zink, a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, is currently the Clinical Director of Phoenix Clinical Services at the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program. Ms. Zink is the acting Vice President of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc., Ms. Zink previously served as the Lead Clinician/Clinical Supervisor at the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program for three years. Ms. Zink additionally has experience working with delinquent youth at the Polk Regional Juvenile Detention Center and other residential facilities to include the Polk Halfway House and Bradley Manor. At the Polk Regional Juvenile Detention Center, Ms. Zink provided educational instruction and life/social skills training. At the Polk Halfway House, Ms. Zink served as the Transition Specialist, providing guidance support services, vocational planning, and transition development. At Bradley Manor, Ms. Zink provided case management services and facilitated family counseling sessions to promote stable reunification with caregivers and the community. Moreover, Ms. Zink previously was contracted by the Department of Children and Families to complete Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessments on behalf of dependent children (ages 0 – 21) in the state's care. Ms. Zink's assessments for the Department of Children and Families provided the needed framework for delivery of foster care services, such as mental

health/substance abuse treatment, psychiatric services, medical services, developmental testing, educational support, vocational planning, job placement, and recreational options.

Alyce Badcock has been appointed to The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors and she is serving as the current Treasurer of the foundation. Mrs. Badcock has formerly worked as an educator with middle school youth being served in Exceptional Student Education programs for ten years. Mrs. Badcock currently serves of the Polk County Sheriff's S.T.A.R. Program advisory counsel, works with faith-based ministries at the Polk County Jail and is a volunteer with her church youth program.

Abby Candlish has been appointed to The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors and is currently serving as the foundation Secretary. Ms. Candlish has worked for the Polk County Sheriff's Office for the past 10 years and has worked with the youth at the Polk County Juvenile Boot Camp and now Polk County Sheriff's S.T.A.R. Program for 3 years. She currently serves as the Quality Assurance Analyst for Polk County Sheriff's S.T.A.R. Program.

Eric Holm currently serves The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. as the Director of the Board. Mr. Holm is also employed by The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. as the Residential Coordinator and will be living in the Phoenix HOPE House providing daily guidance and support to the young men living there. He has served as a missionary with Youth for Christ and has worked with at risk youth for 8 years. Mr. Holm is also the Chairperson for the Polk Regional Juvenile Detention Center Advisory Board. On his own time, Mr. Holm volunteers as a Polk County Firefighter.

Teressa Sample, Advisory Counsel Chairperson for The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc., is also the administrator of the Polk County Sheriff's S.T.A.R. Program Conditional Release unit. Mrs. Sample has served the Polk County Sheriff's Office for 25 years and has worked at the Polk County Juvenile Boot Camp for the past 11 years. Ms. Sample serves on many boards and is currently the President of the Drug Prevention Resource Center, President of the American Business Woman's Association—Downtown Lakeland Chapter, Secretary for the Juvenile Justice Board of Polk, highland's, and Hardee Counties and works on many other juvenile related committees.

“Our focused attention of older youth insists upon the inherent value of all youth, no matter how bumpy their roads to successful adulthood.”

—Lisa McGill, Director,
Youth Transition Funder's Group

THE PHOENIX HOPE FOUNDATION, INC. PROGRAMS

THE PHOENIX HOPE HOUSE

The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. has recognized the critical need for faith-based transitional living and support services to assist post-committed youth. Therefore, The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. will sponsor The Phoenix HOPE House for youth (ages 14-19) who have demonstrated a desire to manifest positive change in their lives and desire alternative placement to promote continued successful outcomes. Placement in The Phoenix HOPE House will be voluntary and based on need. Ideally, the home will serve eight to ten (8-15) residents at any given time.

Qualifications for residency at The Phoenix HOPE House will include, but not be limited to:

- ★ Post-committed male juvenile offenders (ages 14-19),
- ★ Demonstration of a desire to manifest positive change,
- ★ Inability to return to family and/or community of origin, and
- ★ Desire and support of family for permanent or temporary alternative placement.

The Phoenix HOPE House will provide its residents the structure, cohesiveness, and support of a positive faith-based family system. The live-in house parents will provide youth with stable and consistent supervision to ensure youth's emotional safety, security, and development. The Phoenix HOPE House model is designed to foster necessary skills for transition to independent living. The Phoenix HOPE House will foster the residents' ability to exercise autonomy – the gradual process of maturation, learning self-direction, social perspective, and responsibility. Additionally, as would children living in a traditional family setting, youth in residency will be provided the ability to participate in activities, services, and events within the community. Residents will engage in extra-curricular activities and participate in volunteer projects that provide the youth the opportunity to develop a vested interest in their community.

Although great strides are made by youth while in commitment programs, The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. acknowledges the need for continued mental health/substance abuse treatment and transitional support services. Utilizing the resources of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc., residents of The Phoenix HOPE House will be provided ongoing mental health and substance abuse treatment services through the Project PHOENIX. Such services will be provided at no cost to the clients.

Moreover, an integral part of The Phoenix HOPE House programming is the development of significant, long-term, quality relationships between current residents, alumnae, staff, volunteers, and mentors. The Phoenix HOPE House is committed to provide post-residential guidance and support to all of its alumnae (through age 21) who are living independently within the community. Alumnae will also be encouraged to provide mentorship to current residents within the program.

PROJECT PHOENIX

Project PHOENIX will provide post-commitment counseling services to youth who have completed juvenile offender programs (primarily Polk County S.T.A.R. Program graduates) and their families. Such services will be provided in an environment that is comfortable and enticing to the youth and their families. Indoor recreation activities will be provided on-site to include basketball, soccer, volleyball, skateboard ramps, bicycle ramps, weightlifting, dance, art, music, etc. Additionally, opportunities for educational development will also be available through after school tutoring and mentoring. Youth participating in therapeutic or support services will receive all services free of charge and will be allowed free access to activities. Fees for access to the recreation center will only be charged to youth and families not engaged in treatment.

Project PHOENIX will utilize science-based cognitive behavioral therapeutic models. The counseling services will mimic the model utilized within the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program setting by Phoenix Clinical Services, Inc. and facilitate continuity of services to the youth post-commitment. Services will be delivered by licensed clinicians and non-licensed clinicians working under the supervision of a licensed Clinical Director. Volunteers will be recruited to assist with services as needed.

Services offered will include, but not be limited to:

- ★ Individual Mental Health Treatment,
- ★ Family Therapy,
- ★ Group Therapy,
- ★ Parenting Classes,
- ★ Anger Management Classes, and
- ★ Facilitated Support Groups (focusing on substance abuse prevention, intervention, relapse prevention, and other issues relevant to maintaining sobriety and a crime-free life).

Group Therapy topics will include, but not be limited to:

- ★ Bereavement,
- ★ Effective Communication,
- ★ Abuse and Trauma,
- ★ Peer Issues,
- ★ Family Issues, and
- ★ Domestic Violence.

The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. will actively pursue and involve other community organizations to provide services at the Project PHOENIX to post-committed juveniles and their families. Such partnered organizations may include: Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, Mother's Against Drunk Driving, Youth for Christ, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Local churches will also be invited to participate in and support the foundation's mission.

The Impact of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. on Polk County:

US Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings 2005, Press Release 09-28-05

“1 million students who drop out of high school each year cost our nation \$260 billion in lost wages, lost taxes and lost productivity over their life time...when you loose a million students every year that has a tremendous impact on our economy and it represents the American dream...denied.”

Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, 2002

“5.4 million of our nations most vulnerable youth aging out of foster care, teenage parents, out of school students, those in danger of dropping out, and youth involved in the juvenile justice system lack the services and social supports they need to succeed as productive workers, responsible parents and engaged citizens.”

The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. has cultivated a working relationship with the Polk County Sheriff's Office to improve the quality of life for post-committed youth and their families through innovation, education, teamwork, and community partnerships. The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. appreciates the core values of Sheriff Grady Judd and his administration whereby championing the mission of the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program. The Polk County Sheriff, Grady Judd, is excited about the vision and commitment of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. The Sheriff has voluntarily offered support and endorsement to The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. as he has acknowledged the need for ongoing support services for the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program youth and understands the impact the foundation is likely to make, not only for the youth we serve, but also in the Polk County community as a whole.

The foundation proposes a comprehensive service model that will enhance opportunities for post-committed youth to reconnect with their communities while providing ongoing support and treatment to better ensure successful transition and long-term recovery. This innovative pilot program will be the first of its kind in Central Florida. Our desired outcomes are to participate in reducing recidivism, reducing substance abuse relapse, increase the number of at-risk youth who will complete high school or GED and proceed with higher education or trade school, and increase successful job placement of said youth through a variety of community-based and faith-based initiatives.

Additionally, the collaborative community-based and faith-based effort, will provide the youth ongoing opportunity to easily access cost-free, congruent therapeutic models and residential support services thus enhancing their ability to maintain a crime and drug free life, reducing recidivism rates, and enhancing positive outcomes for the Polk County S.T.A.R. Program program.

**“For these are all our children. We will all
profit by, or pay for, whatever they become.”**

—Youth Transition Funder's Group

Partnerships and Support:

The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. understands and appreciates the necessity of community investment in this project. As The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. moves forward in its development, we respectfully request your support and endorsement of our goals and mission. As an emerging foundation, The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. has many imminent needs if we are to serve the population in our focus group. As a compassionate community leader, we respectfully request your assistance to educate other state and local leaders on our purpose and to secure funding to help save the lives of the youth we are all ardently vested.

Why You Should Get Involved:

“When I first began working with delinquent youth, I was intrigued by how a child gets himself to the point in his life that he requires society to lock him away. I have experienced cycles in my own understanding of which went from believing that they were all just ‘bad’ kids to the more rational belief that they are kids making bad choices usually due to lack of appropriate familial support and modeling. When you can see remorse form in their eyes and a desire to live a different life, I believe they should no longer be judged by their past, but instead be supported as they make a new future. They are holding out their hands and we can’t ignore it any longer. It is our responsibility—they belong to us all.”

--Erica Allen, President
The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.

“After working with at-risk youth and their families for more than 13 years, I continue to be saddened and frustrated by the limited community services and support for this special population. The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. is an innovation organization specifically designed to foster and nurture the emotional well-being of post-committed youth and their families, which will improve their opportunities for a positive and successful life. Everyone deserves HOPE.”

--Connie Zink, Vice President
The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.

“Growing up in a good home, with parents who have been married almost 35 years, my mother asked me one day why I am so passionate about working with the often forgotten youth I see everyday. I have witnessed many broken young people who desperately seek a way out of the immensely difficult situations they live in with no one to help them. I desire to be part of creating an environment that will help these young men reach the goals and desires they once thought were not possible. Every young person who desires it, deserves the opportunity to live in an environment that will support positive outcomes in their lives. At the Phoenix HOPE House, we will provide that opportunity.”

Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 1 Corinthians 4:15

--Eric Holm, Missionary
Youth for Christ
Director of the Board
The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.

“While working as a case manager at the Polk County Juvenile Boot Camp, the lack of options for the youth who did not have a home to go to or who wanted another alternative to the dysfunctional home or neighborhood they came from was frustrating and often heartbreaking. In the two and a half years as a case manager, I can think of at least five youth on my case load that desperately needed the help of the Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. Additionally, the need for ongoing therapeutic support is immense, yet there are so few appropriate options. So for those who needed help, but had none, I am honored to part of this foundation and to be able to help those that do and will need these services in the future.”

--Abby Candlish, Quality Assurance Analyst
Polk County Sheriff's S.T.A.R. Program
Secretary
The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.

“My experience with troubled youth and families in our communities has shown that there is a definite need for providing services...that are currently non-existent for youth and families. I applaud The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. in its efforts to partnership with community leaders, community businesses and politicians to work together in assisting troubled youth in our communities. I have devoted the past eleven years to helping children and families find healthy ways to move forward in their lives and making sure that good information is accessible to them - challenging children and families to use difficult situations or life circumstances as an opportunity for positive change. Youth are our most precious and valuable resource and as community leaders, we need to protect and encourage them to prosper and grow into young and successful adults.”

-- Administrator Teresa Sample
Polk County Sheriff's S.T.A.R. Program
Conditional Release Unit
The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.
Advisory Board Chairperson

“I believe in the mission of the Polk County Sheriff's S.T.A.R. Program and truly believe they do a tremendous service to the youth placed in their care and in the Polk County community. It saddens my heart to know and witness the hurt that these youth experience, and I believe we can help them improve their lives through The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. I am excited to be a part of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. and believe it is a worthwhile investment for all members of our community to be involved in. We can change our world, one child at a time.”

--Alyce Badcock, Treasurer
The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc.

“Having dedicated my life to serving my community through law enforcement, I know first-hand the importance of keeping our youth positively focused, deterred from delinquency, and averted from a potential life of crime. The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. is a project with remarkable goals...and I laud their efforts. I wholeheartedly support the concept of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. and know miracles will be worked as a result of their work.”

--Grady Judd, Sheriff
Polk County Sheriff's Office

“The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. is meeting a great need within the Polk County area specifically with the youth who have completed Polk County Sheriff’s S.T.A.R. Program and their affected family members. The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. mission is in line with the outcomes we work for everyday in this program and will no doubt make an incredible impact on the youth and families in our communities. I strongly support and eagerly endorse The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. and its mission to this community.”

--Captain Kurt Lockwood, Commander
Polk County Sheriff’s S.T.A.R. Program

“I believe it is important for us to take advantage of this window of opportunity to guide these young people and let them know they have positive choices available to them. The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. is that safety net that can make an enormous difference in the lives of our state’s younger generation....This support is essential in giving at-risk young people the best chance possible to have a substantive quality of life allowing them to succeed and therein give back to their communities.”

--Dennis A. Ross
Florida House of Representatives
District 63

“The founders of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. are outstanding individuals with a deep desire to improve the lives of committed and post-committed juveniles. Their past success with at-risk youth and juvenile offenders gives me full confidence that The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. programs will provide a stable, positive environment where youth are rehabilitated and prepared to lead a productive life in their communities.”

--Paula Dockery
The Florida Senate
District 15

“As a public servant, I am always excited to see community members not only identify a need, but also seek to fill the need. The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. has done just that. Their mission to provide...counseling and resources for these youth and affected family members is much needed. I encourage and endorse the efforts and mission of The Phoenix HOPE Foundation, Inc. and believe they will have a direct positive impact on long term substance abuse recovery, recidivism, and breaking the cycles of family dysfunction.”

--Joe Negron
Florida House of Representatives
District 82