

My Experience With Glacier Mountain Academy

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For those who are considering sending a child to a facility such as Glacier Mountain Academy, I present my own experience with my son. I do not intend any accusations against the academy, Larry Bauer, or any of the employees. What I present is simply my opinion based on my experience and the experience of my son as he relayed it to me. **Making the**



decision. My son was just about to turn 15. Although I didn't believe he was into drugs and he hadn't had any run-ins with the law, we were having huge problems with school and at home.

Grades were in the basement, respect was out the window, and overall attitude was dismal. We felt we had tried everything. My wife and I looked into the option of sending him to an academy. We talked with him about it, as well. Everyone I talked to seemed to agree that he was headed

down a bad road, and this might be just the thing to help set him straight. We did a lot of research. I wanted a good environment that would give some emphasis on academics. We wanted a place that had other boys with similar, rather than significantly worse, problems. Glacier Mountain Academy seemed to fit the bill. Larry was very insightful and seemed to understand everything we had been going through. He was very reassuring. We talked with him

several times as he was always readily accessible and consistently returned our calls promptly. I talked with a past student and 2 parents after asking for references. That seemed ok. No red flags, but I didn't get a real solid sense of things as I had hoped. Well, it all went back to Larry, who really made me feel this was absolutely the right thing to do. So we did it.

The drop off.

My son, my wife and I flew out to Spokane and rented a car to Sandpoint, Idaho. Leaving

my son there was so excruciatingly difficult. The house was run down a bit, but I wasn't concerned with the quality of the house, just the quality of the care. I met Larry, his daughter (who for all practical purposes was the house mom), the house staff member, and the three other boys who were already in the program. It was explained to me that as you progress in the program, you are allowed a private room in the house, and eventually, to move into the

bigger house in town which had more amenities and which housed the boys who were doing well. Long story short: we left, I cried.

Red Flags Start Accumulating.

The first month we aren't supposed to have contact with our son. Yet he called on a couple of occasions (snuck the phone). Just for a minute. Left a message on the answering machine that he wanted out. He said it wasn't at all what we thought it was, and that if we knew what it was like we would pull him

out. This was very concerning. I expected him to have a problem at some point, and tell us he wanted to come home, but the way he phrased things made me really wonder. He was allowed to call home a little early when it was his birthday. The things he was telling us were in total contradiction to what we were hearing from Larry. (My wife was in contact with him a few times.) One thing was that Larry indicated that our son was attending school and doing his

assignments, etc. Our son said that there was no instruction and he wasn't getting schoolwork. Larry indicated that our son was taking his meds routinely, yet our son indicated that he wasn't. Eventually the time passed when the meds would have run out if he had been taking them. Also on the phone call, I heard a few other disconcerting things. One was that there was a new kid who ran away, and Larry had the *other boys* running through the hillsides

trying to catch the kid. Also there were several new boys that arrived. Sounding as though the house was surely going to be overcrowded, I asked if that meant he was going to move to the next house soon. He said there was no other house, and, while on the phone, it was explained to him that that house had been sold. There was an unsettling feeling now, anytime we had contact with Glacier Mountain. Several days later I received another call

from my son. This was from a neighboring house as he had run away for a short period. He used a code word we had agreed upon ahead of time, in the event that things were horribly wrong, and I needed to come right away. This was on my voice mail, if you can imagine. I called out there ASAP and got hold of a guy who was a brand-new house supervisor. He said there was trouble and my son had run away, but now was with Larry. I asked for a call back right away,

but never received one. The next day I found out that the new supervisor was fired for using physical force with my son. Still no further word from my son, or Larry all the *nextday*, despite numerous phone calls to the various numbers. The following day I took a flight out. I arrived in Sandpoint late that night, so decided to check on my son first thing in the morning. I checked with my wife to see if anyone from Glacier Mountain had called, but no

one had. I couldn't believe it. Surely Larry must have know that we had very limited info and were extremely concerned.

The Pick-up.

The next morning I went to the house to pick up my son. Several of the boys were there along with another new house supervisor. It was his very first day, so he was freaked to see me. No other supervisors were there. I had my son immediatley pack his stuff. Larry came out within just a few minutes. He gave a very lame excuse for

not having called me in the past three days. I told him that I simply thought it would be best that I take my son now. He suggested I wait for the three-month mark, but I declined. We agreed that he would mail me a check to reimburse me for the unused tuition. Larry also agreed that they would mail back my son's electronics which were confiscated by Larry's daughter and which were in her possession.

My Son Fills Me In.

It turns out Glacier Mountain

Academy was nothing like I had hoped it would be. My son said he maybe saw the whites of Larry's eyes an hour a week, no more. There were nearly no constructive activities. Many, many hours playing video games. The supervision was almost non-existent. The supervisors are frequently people who have only been through a similar experience themselves, but have no formal training. Some of the supervisors allowed smoking pot in the house, and were known

to indulge in it themselves. The academics were a joke. There was only Larry's daughter who occasionally handed out some assignments, but didn't do any instruction. I don't believe she has training or certification in any type of teaching. What a dismal disappointment!

Glacier Mountain Academy Incognito.

Well, I shouldn't be surprised, but I am. I haven't received a refund. I have called a dozen or so times, and haven't had a single returned

call. I had friends in another state call to see if Larry was just ignoring me. Sure enough, they soon had a return call; Larry, ready to be helpful again. I had a lawyer send him a letter as well. Still no answer. The next step is to hire an attorney in Sandpoint.

The Moral of the Story.

I don't know if there is one. I know that I will never send one of my children away again, unless they pose an imminent threat to themselves or others. I want the best for my

kids. At a certain point I felt I was failing miserably. But now I know, as long as I keep trying, I am the best parent and provide the best home for my son.

[Click here to see the Idaho Attorney General Consumer Protection Unit Report. See page 6.](#)

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rbecker@bis.midco.net

If you are considering sending your child to an academy such as Glacier Mountain Academy, in Sandpoint Idaho, headed by Larry Bauer, feel free to e-mail me if you have questions. In 2007, I pulled my son out after six weeks due to serious concerns. rbecker@bis.midco.net

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