

The paper for  
professionals who work  
with troubled youth



# STARR POINTS

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## Freedom from substance abuse: flexible programs help teens find solutions.

Substance abuse in teens is a lot like the tip of an iceberg – it's the problem you can see. But the real obstacle is what lies underneath – the issues that led to the substance abuse in the first place. To successfully treat substance abuse in young people, you have to go deeper, says Randy Copas, Senior Vice President of Programs at Starr Commonwealth. "We believe that in order to experience the transformation from substance-oriented living to recovery-oriented living, kids need to make four critical shifts in thinking that together help activate in them the courage and motivation to make deep-level changes in themselves and others."

It's a comprehensive approach, Copas explains, one tailored to the circumstance and, most importantly, to the teen. Starr Commonwealth offers both a 90-day residential treatment program for boys ages 13 to 18 on Starr's Albion campus as well as a community-based program in Detroit. Both are designed around Starr's nationally recognized strength-based treatment model and a developmental model of recovery (DMR) that includes peer group therapy. "At Starr, youth are

*Starr's Community-Based Alternatives Substance Abuse Treatment program offers structured services in a positive, therapeutic environment to help teens learn to take personal responsibility for their substance abuse and related behaviors. Peer group therapy, family support and community involvement give youth opportunities to exercise their new-found strengths and make deep-level changes in themselves and others.*

## Cyber-Starr

Whether you're showing your support or looking for ours, you'll find valuable information, resources and the latest news online when you visit us on:

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/starrcommonwealth](http://www.youtube.com/starrcommonwealth)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/starr.commonwealth](http://www.facebook.com/starr.commonwealth)

Websites: [www.starr.org](http://www.starr.org) / [www.starrtraining.org](http://www.starrtraining.org)



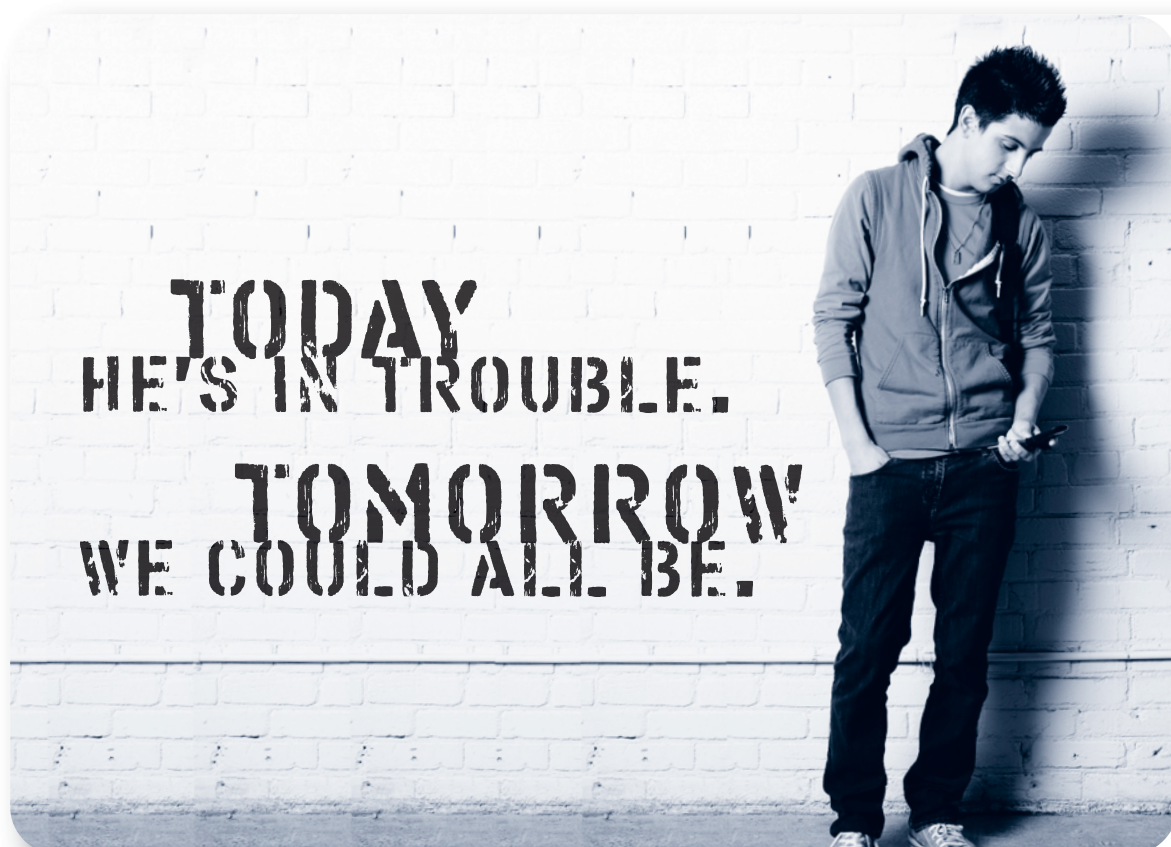
"There is no one-size-fits-all approach when you're treating young people."

Randy Copas,  
Senior Vice President  
of Programs

given opportunities to turn their lives around in therapeutic programs marked by encouragement, dignity and respect," says Copas, adding that Starr's relapse prevention and after-care services are key to the program's high success rate. Another plus, especially for today's overly taxed courts, is the program's flexibility. Youth can enter either program at any time, depending on needs and circumstances. "There is no one-size-fits-all approach when you're treating young people," says Copas. "A teen in a community-based program may need a brief residential stay. A teen in the residential program may be ready for the support we can give him in a community-based program." Starr therapists and clinicians work closely with the courts and other concerned professionals and offer regular assessments and updates on a teen's progress. "It's about the right treatment at the right time," says Copas. "Every young person deserves to be given a solid chance at a better

life without substances and to be valued members of communities and families. Our programs are designed to meet the unique needs of each young person we serve and to help them step forward on the path to achieving their potential as healthy, recovering young people."

*Alternatives is Starr's 90-day residential program for substance abuse treatment. The program is designed for boys ages 13 to 18 with group placement determined by age, maturity, committing offense and established treatment needs. The program includes group meetings, individual and group therapy as well as structured BARJ activities, life skills training and a year-round, on-campus school to help teens make a fresh start. A written reintegration plan developed by students, families, staff and the referring professional offers teens a blueprint for maintaining the gains they've made. After-care services are provided for up to one year post-placement.*



TODAY  
HE'S IN TROUBLE.  
TOMORROW  
WE COULD ALL BE.

According to a study cited by the Juvenile Policy Institute, America is spending nearly \$6 billion each year imprisoning youth, even though the majority are held for nonviolent offenses. The study concludes that most youth could be managed safely in the community through successful alternative programs that lower recidivism by as much as 22 percent and return up to \$13 in benefits for every dollar spent. At Starr Commonwealth, our evidence-based treatment programs have an overall 80% success rate. No one in the state offers a more comprehensive continuum of proven programs and services for youth on issues ranging from substance abuse and delinquency to sexual offenses.

To learn more about Starr and our flexible community-based and residential treatment options, visit [starr.org](http://starr.org) or call us at 800.837.5591.



## THE LONG VIEW

Dr. James Longhurst is a licensed psychologist for Starr Commonwealth. In his role as Senior Vice President of Clinical and Psychological Services, Jim is involved in all case planning and clinical services for the organization. He is a member of the American Psychological Association and is a charter member of the International Positive Psychology Association. Jim is a certified lead facilitator and trainer for Starr's Healing of Racism and Glasswing™ facilitator training initiative.



## Starr's best kept secret

During the past year I have met with many probation officers, foster care specialists, and supervisors letting them know about Starr's programs. When I start talking with them about the scholarships we offer, nearly all of them say they were not aware that Starr helps kids pay for continuing their education. One agency worker commented that "this is a well kept secret!" Comments like that have led me to believe that we should be telling more people about our continuing commitment to help kids meet their needs and achieve their goals.

It all started with a gift from the Thomas Lloyd estate back in 1977. Mr. Lloyd was an industrialist and civic leader in Albion, Michigan and also was a trustee of Starr Commonwealth. His estate established an endowment to help youth who had completed a Starr program be able to attend two- or four-year colleges and universities. At first these scholarships were for youth who completed the residential programs but this was expanded in 1980 to include kids completing community-based programs. While most of the youth use the funds to go to undergraduate and graduate colleges and universities, some receive financial aid to complete vocational and/or technical training.

This year we will be able to help 47 young people achieve their dreams. Scholarships range from \$750 to \$10,000 and students can continue to apply for and receive funds so long as they are in good standing at their school. Recipients of scholarships are invited and recognized on the first Sunday in October during Starr's Founder's Day. A President's Reception is held after the program and the money raised through the purchase of the tickets to the reception goes directly to the scholarship fund.



*The following are excerpts from a selection of essays written by this year's Scholarship recipients.*

*"I feel this scholarship will help me in many ways. If I were to receive this scholarship, it would empower me to know that I have another family supporting me on my way to success.... If I fail, I wouldn't only be disappointing myself, I would be letting down others too."*

*"Although my childhood, especially my teenage years, have been hard, I have managed to make it in the right direction. I have good relationships throughout my family, have made numerous friends and look forward to what my future has to bring. I hope this letter means something to you as it does to me. All of this is possible because of how Starr helped me and how Starr is continuing to help me."*

*"Wow! I was really excited when I got my grades for this spring quarter from DePaul. These were the best grades I had all year. Even my math grade improved from last quarter. Hopefully the scholarship committee can see that they made a good investment in me."*

*"You can't take your past back and redo it, but you can look at the present and the future and make decisions to make your life better. The things you do will always be a part of you...I look forward to continue helping my community and I look forward to my future because I know I can succeed no matter what if I want it bad enough. There is always a silver lining in the cloud."*

Each application is examined individually and is considered for funding. Applications can be completed by going to [www.starr.org/scholarshipsandgrants](http://www.starr.org/scholarshipsandgrants) and writing an essay that contains the following:

- The student's educational goals and how the scholarship would help them achieve these goals
- How Starr Commonwealth has helped the student

While most of the kids receiving scholarships have completed a program, young people who were unable to complete the program can also apply for and receive funding. For example, there have been instances where funding for a youth's program runs out before completion resulting in the withdrawal of the youth from the program. There are also situations where youth have really struggled while in the program and did not complete their treatment goals. In both scenarios, we asked ourselves the question: "Why wouldn't we support these kids?" Their needs are just as great and deserve to be considered.

So, Starr's secret is out in the open now! As the scholarship program grows, we will be able to help more and more young people achieve their goals and meet their needs for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. I am very proud to be part of an organization that values an enduring commitment to kids, even when they aren't "kids" anymore. For more information on Starr's scholarship opportunities, contact Amy Reimann, Director of Archives and Alumni Affairs at 800.837.5591.

Starr Points is a quarterly newsletter published by Starr Commonwealth, an internationally recognized leader in transformational programs for children, families, schools and communities. Founded in 1913, Starr's treatment philosophy is rooted in seeing something good in every child, which serves as the guiding principle in its strength-based approach. Starr offers a full spectrum of community-based early intervention and prevention services along with specialized residential programs. Through the Starr Institute for Training, parents, clinicians, educators and childcare professionals now have access to Starr's highly successful and innovative techniques aimed at bringing out the best in every child. For more information, visit [www.starr.org](http://www.starr.org).

### Starr Commonwealth Programs

#### Albion, Michigan

Juvenile Justice (residential)  
Sexually Reactive Youth (residential)  
Abuse/Neglect (residential)  
Alternatives (substance abuse, residential)  
Montcalm Schools for Boys and Girls

#### Battle Creek, Michigan

Day Treatment  
Intensive In-Home  
Starr Life Skills  
(supervised independent living)  
Foster Care  
Juvenile Diversion Program  
Daytime Curfew  
Suspension Center  
Credit Enhancement Program

#### Columbus, Ohio

Sexually Reactive Youth (residential)  
Transitions (supervised transitional living)  
MyPlace Independent Living  
Treatment Foster Care  
Community-Based Treatment Center

#### Detroit, Michigan

Alternatives  
(substance abuse, community-based)  
New Boundaries (residential transition and reintegration support)  
Starr Life Skills  
(supervised independent living)  
Foster Care

For Michigan referrals, please call toll-free 800-837-5591 or e-mail [michintake@starr.org](mailto:michintake@starr.org)

For Ohio referrals, please call toll-free 866-289-9202 or e-mail [ohiointake@starr.org](mailto:ohiointake@starr.org)

[www.starr.org](http://www.starr.org)

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