

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONSIDERING RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

When residential treatment is being considered, there are certain questions that you will want to ask to help determine whether or not the treatment center is appropriate for the needs of your child. At Fletcher & Associates, we know that any time your child spends away from home should be used wisely. We recommend residential treatment only when we believe it would benefit a child.

Here are some things to consider:

- **Academics, while important, are not the primary consideration.** While the strength of the academic component of the residential treatment center is a foremost concern for most parents, please consider that the primary concern should be that emotional and behavioral needs are met. Academics should be a second consideration. Remember, if emotional and behavioral needs are not addressed appropriately, you could send your child to a program with academics as strong as Princeton University and the tendency will be failure. If you are considering residential treatment, it is very likely that poor academic progress is being sabotaged by emotional and behavioral difficulties.
- **Choose the program for it's value. Don't just choose a program for it's location.** Many families, in an effort to keep their child close by, look for residential programs that are in the same community where they live. It is by design that there are not a lot of residential treatment centers in each community. Most of the time the goal is to remove the adolescent from his/her community to decrease the influences that may be contributing to the emotional and behavioral difficulties.
- **Ask questions about the family component of the program.** Think in terms of short term and long term goals when it comes to the needs of your child. Remember the he or she will be coming back to the family at some point and the family will need intervention to change the environment and set healthy expectations. The environment needs to change as well as the child.

When searching for the most appropriate residential treatment program, here are some things to ask:

1. What is the age range served by the program?
2. Does the program include girls and boys or just girls or just boys?
3. What are the qualifications you look for regarding admissions and what would eliminate my child from being considered?
4. What is the level system used that will help determine success?
5. What is the typical length of treatment?
6. How is the program accredited?
7. What type of system is used to communicate to the home therapist and the parents about progress?
8. It is highly likely that your child will not go willingly to residential treatment. What are your suggestions to get him or her there?
9. What is the philosophy of the program?
10. Can I get a list of parents who have had children go through the program so I can interview them?
11. Will my insurance cover the residential treatment program?
12. What does a child have to do to be successful at the program?
13. How long has the treatment center been in existence and what are the qualifications and what is the screening process for the staff working with my child?
14. How are academic needs addressed?
15. How do you manage medications?
16. What is a typical day like?
17. What is a typical week like?
18. How do you measure success when you follow up with graduates?
19. Do I have to go when you have a bed available?
20. What is the application process?