

Phoenix Union High School District
4502 N. Central Ave
Phoenix, AZ 85012

June 18, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter of support for Teen Addiction Anonymous (Teen AA) as they pursue grants and or donations to improve adolescent health and the prevention of health risk behaviors in the community.

For the past thirty-two years, I have worked in the fields of education, corrections and addictions. I have participated in multiple models of drug intervention over those thirty-two years. From Positive Peer Culture in a lock-up setting, to Student Assistance Support Groups in the public school system. I have never seen anything as powerful as the Teen Addictions Anonymous approach to assisting youth to make better choices for their lives in such a short time.

For our youth, it is a double-edged sword for them to fight addictive behavior. On the one hand, they have family members and friends who engage in the same behaviors. In fact, by self report in our drug intervention groups for those disciplined for violations of our conduct code, many of our students either started using drugs and alcohol with their families, or they found their family member's stash of drugs or alcohol. Beyond drugs and alcohol, many of the parents of our students are involved in other addictive, health destructive behaviors and these are modeled as "coping mechanisms" for our young people. On the other hand, our young people are hurting and struggling to fill the voids in their lives. Addictive behavior can feel that it fills that void.

Teen AA is a safe, supportive place for young people to be exposed to healthy life skills and at the same time develop skills for personal empowerment and leadership with their peers. The power of Teen AA lies in the structure of the group meetings, the content of the group meetings and the fact that the students take ownership of the meetings while following the structure provided.

I have been fortunate to participate in three training sessions with Susan Rothery, as she has trained the intervention staff at Phoenix Union to implement this program. I have also been fortunate enough to have co-facilitated these groups at one of our campuses. In addition, I went and observed the groups in operation at all of our schools that implement the program. In every case, I have been able to witness the effect for good within this powerful experience for our students. Our staff are impacted for good through the training and motivated to implement the program, and our students are impacted to change their lives.

I strongly encourage any agency or organization to support the continuation of services provided by Teen AA through grants or donations.

Should further information be required, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Debi B Neat

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Safe and Drug Free School Trainer
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