

Dear Parents of Abundant Life Academy,

Welcome to Abundant Life Academy where **JESUS** is the only answer!

My name is Craig Rogers, and I am the CEO and Co-Founder of Abundant Life Academy. I welcome you and your family to Abundant Life Academy! I realize that this is probably the most trying time of your life. Hang in there! You are not alone, and God has you and your child in His grip. You are only a few months from having a tremendous blessing of peace and comfort. Praise Him! Praise Him now for what He will be doing in the life of your child. No matter what it seems like now, understand that all things are possible through Christ. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Lord of the breakthroughs, that He calms every storm!

Over the course of the last few years, we have served many families, and the story is always the same. In the first few weeks after enrollment, parents go through tremendous pain, and almost always feel a sense of great loss. At the same time, they feel a sense of relief and calm. Parents tell us that they seem “cut-off” from their child, and this feeling can cause a great deal of despair. The mixed emotions are normal, but agonizing nonetheless, and they should be... after all, you love your child deeply. However, I want to remind you that you are not alone, and we have some suggestions that will help you get through the next few weeks. First, stand in FAITH! Remember that He gives you the peace that you need. Look to Jesus for your comfort. Of course, prayer is the best thing you can do right now. Abundant Life Academy and our staff will not be your sense of peace. Only the Holy Spirit can give you that. Pray and then praise God, and thank Him for His grace and ask for more!

The next thing you can do is to purchase the materials and books that you will be reading in the next few weeks. Also, please take your DISC Assessment before your first session with your Parent Coach. This assessment is vital to the ongoing and continuous “family-restoration” process. Your Parent Coach will explain the value of the DISC (assessing temperaments and strategizing for restoration) and how it pertains to human behavior and accountability. Your child will be going through these components with us while participating in the ALA Leadership Program. Your involvement in the DISC system is imperative to your child’s success. Please call Kathy Reese, Parent Coach, and she will walk you through this process – 909-731-1874 or 909-338-2220. Kathy will be sending you the Parent Manual. Through reading this Manual, you will begin to understand the vernaculars, systems, procedures, and protocols that we use. The more you know about the program and what your child is going through, the better the communication you will have with your teen. One of Kathy’s ministries is to minister to the new parents in their first few weeks after enrollment as they transition from “admissions” to “enrollment”. Kathy is the temporary liaison between the parents and school as she “bridges the gap”.

What to Expect in the Next Few Weeks:

If your teen is like most new arrivals, they are not going to be overly thrilled. At least 90% of the new arrivals are not very happy with their parents before they are enrolled into Abundant Life Academy, and that won’t change for a while. (Remember, we are dealing with “entitled” teens). You will certainly get more of the same type of negative behavior for at least the first couple of weeks or more after enrollment. In fact, don't be alarmed if the negative behavior of the past escalates. Hang in there because things will improve.

In the beginning, your child will slowly integrate into the program as they are mentored and supported by caring and positive role models. Throughout the first month or two, your child will be given more and more opportunity to become involved with leadership, but first, they will be taught the norms and expectations of the program, while building strong relationships with the most positive members of the team. Soon thereafter your child will be fully integrated into the program and become a positive member of the student community.

Once your teen arrives at the campus, the staff will call and let you know that your teen has arrived safely. Most of the time, the staff will allow your child to speak to you at that time. Sometimes, however, teens choose not to speak to their parents. Don't be alarmed - this is normal! If you do communicate with your son or daughter, expect the communication to be subdued or very agitated. This is also normal. Teens that have been pulled out of their comfort zones are usually thrown off-track and operate very cautiously while they are taking everything in. It is a big change for them and they are without their normal negative coping skills. Trust me, this is a good thing! In some cases, it is best that there is no contact between the parent and the child until the child truly appreciates the parents (this can be a week, a month, and in some rare cases several months). In these cases, the youth is abusive toward the parents and there is no value to giving them an opportunity to use a phone call to torment you. ALA evaluates these situations on a case-by-case basis. Our hope is that the student will begin to take ownership of their past negative behaviors, hold themselves accountable, repent, and renew a positive relationship with his or her parents. We can't force your child to speak with you, but we can prevent parental abuse.

Upon arrival, your teen is checked in. He or she tours the campus and meets the other students and staff. Then, your child will be shown his or her room and everything gets unpacked. The staff searches all belongings and takes an inventory. At that time, a staff and student leader will go over the basics with your teen. It is explained that he or she will be on a restricted status for the first week or so. What this means is your child will be watched very closely. We want to get to know your teen, and make sure that he or she is able to make good decisions before venturing out with the community. It is better to be safe than sorry.

In addition, most often the new student "uses" his/her parents, meaning that the new student will only call parents if he/she wants or needs something. This should not be tolerated. This type of behavior is normal for the "entitled" teen. These children truly see their parents as means to an end, but do not appreciate their parents, nor do they respect their authority. In most cases, entitled teens want their parents to fulfill their own desires but want no strings attached. We caution you to not fall into this trap. The communication between parents and child should be all about restoration of the relationship. There is no need to continue to support the "one-way" relationship that the child is demanding. If the reason for the child's communication home is to "get something" from the parents, then our suggestion is that the parents choose to deny the entitled student's requests until he/she can truly appreciate the parent's support.

Understand that our staff is very focused on working directly with the students. In essence, they are very busy with the students on a one-on-one basis. Getting time to break away from working with the students is very difficult. Please expect our staff to communicate with you via phone calls no more than once per week. We encourage you to call or email Kathy at any time; she is here to serve you. In contacting myself and other ALA staff, please expect them to get back to you within 12 to 24 hours.

Regarding the first few contacts between students and their families, about 90% of the time teens try to manipulate their parents. This may occur during the first phone call, or could possibly occur several months into the program. Please understand that in the past students have pulled all kinds of stunts. To put it bluntly, they lie, threaten, yell, and sometimes even become abusive. Some students will go to great lengths to get the parents to pull them from the school. Remember, we are dealing with "entitled" teens. They seek comfort, not responsibility. Until students really embrace such things as discipline, responsibility, hard work, etc., they will not like being at ALA. Believe it or not, this is normal behavior. Most likely your son or daughter displayed this type of manipulative behavior prior to their enrollment. If this happens, we suggest that you end the phone call immediately and call back to speak directly with staff. Don't get into the manipulation game. Send a message to your child right off the bat that manipulation will not be rewarded. We avoid having to go through the manipulation by adhering to a strict policy.

Staff:

We have an Executive Director, Program Administrator, Program Director, Assistant Program Director, Family Representatives, Parent Coaches, Lead Life Coaches, Life Coaches, and Teachers. In addition, we have a Director of Ministry, an Academic Director, and various Christian Mentors and Leadership Trainers. The staff is involved in every daily activity, acting as supervisors, life coaches, and mentors. The staff is considered resource personnel, disciples, surrogate parents, disciplinarians, and good friends. Please understand that they spend 95% of their time with the students and about 5% conducting administrative duties. If it seems that the staff is hard to reach, then please call me at 435-899-9997 and I will facilitate your needs. As a "Parent Coach", it is my job to minister to you. I will see to it that the staff gets into contact with you at their earliest convenience. Please understand that every minute of admin detail is a minute away from the students. Most schools are the opposite, meaning that the main function of the professional staff is administrative. This is unacceptable to ALA. We want the best portion of our staff to be given to the students.

During the first 30 days, there will be very little contact from ALA's Directors. During that time, your child will be evaluated and slowly assimilated into the community. It will be Kathy Reese's responsibility to communicate with you and to give you the updated information you need. Again, Kathy is the "Parent Coach". She will be with you every step of the way in the beginning to ensure a smooth transition. Soon thereafter, you will begin to have more and more communication with the other professional staff. Don't worry; Kathy won't be leaving you; you will just have more of us to talk to.

The Daily Schedule:

Your child will get up early, and go to bed early. Your child will be doing a great deal of household chores. He/she will also be doing 4 to 6 hours of school per day. There will be leadership meetings, and group discussions, community service, and lots of work. There will be Academy Fellowship Meetings where all the students' "issues" will be dealt with, and Community Meetings where they share the experience of the day. The day is packed. The students play football, basketball, hike, exercise, attend local events, and do many Mercy Ministries and other community service activities. Also, in the beginning, there won't be many privileges, as we are dealing with "entitlementitis" issues. The students have to earn off-campus activities. Most students complain about being bored. This is because we are not entertaining them and they are required to work.

We are hoping that your son or daughter is going to learn to enjoy reading. Because of videos, television, and music (personal CD players), kids nowadays have lost the desire to read. This is a shame. They need to be bored enough to learn to enjoy reading again.

Every Sunday we go to church and then spend the rest of the day enjoying some much-needed time off. In relation to your child's previous schedule (at home), our schedule is very restricted and tremendously supervised.

Sending Money and Packages:

We do not recommend that you send your child money while a Phase I student. First of all, they don't need it, and second, it will only circumvent our efforts to deal with Entitlementitis. Also, we ask you to only send care packages that are packed with items of "necessity" - meaning, socks, underwear, gray gym shorts and t-shirts, tooth brushes, their favorite tooth paste, (we want them to begin to see the 'little' things in life as privileges) etc., and that is it. Before you send anything, please check with the Program Director.

Phase 1 students are not allowed to receive care packages from home unless requested by the family representative. If a Phase 1 student has an actual "need", our Staff will contact you with said "need". If your child emails you a list of things that he or she wants or thinks is needed, please set the boundaries, support the program, and say, "no, this is not allowed." We feel it is best to minimize such discussions with your child, as many of them will take up valuable phone time asking for items to be sent.

Education and Educational Progress:

Most of our students are academically unmotivated, and this does not change overnight! (If your student was doing well academically upon enrollment with ALA, then Praise God and we will continue with their academic success immediately!) Please understand that we will begin to work with your student academically as soon as they arrive on campus. Rod Quarnberg, our Academic Director, will be assessing your student's transcript that you had faxed to us and enrolling your child in the classes that they need. (If you have not had your child's school fax their transcript to Rod, please do so immediately!!) However, please do not expect a great deal of academic success in Phase 1. Please be patient. Students do a lot of improving academically in Phase 2. What they do not get done in Phase 1 they more than accomplish in Phases 2 and 3. Please encourage your child and insist on academic performance when you are speaking or writing to him/her. At ALA, our program is set up where the students cannot progress through the phases without taking education seriously and taking responsibility for completing all academic assignments. For the student to be successful, we need the parents 100% support by insisting to their child that all academic coursework must be completed. Any academic concerns need to be addressed to Rod Quarnberg by emailing him at rod@abundantlifeacademy.com or by phoning him at 435-899-0191. Specific academic questions can be addressed to Bill Sorbe, Academic Assistant, at bill@abundantlifeacademy.com, or you can call at 435-215-1555 Monday through Thursdays from 2-6 p.m. Kanab time.

Tuition:

Please have the monthly tuition to us by the 25th of each month, which is the following month's tuition. The tuition mailing address is:

Abundant Life Academy
Donna Zetts - CFO
220 West, 300 North
Kanab, UT 84741

You will receive a monthly invoice, but if the invoice is late getting to you, please send the tuition check anyway, to arrive to us no later than the 25th of the month. Any payment not received by the 1st of the month of service shall be assessed a late fee of \$25.00 per day. Please understand that Abundant Life Academy does everything to keep the cost down for the families that we serve. Our purpose is not to make money; our purpose is to serve Jesus Christ and the families that He has called us to serve. However, we need the payments to be on time in order to make everything work. If you cannot make a payment, we expect you to contact us immediately to explain the situation. Also, if you have not received an invoice, please call Donna Zetts immediately at 414-491-3110.

Staying in Faith:

During your enrollment process, we asked you to pray for God's perfect will regarding your child's enrollment. We trust that you came to the conclusion that Abundant Life Academy is where God wants your child. Please realize that when your son or daughter is in God's perfect will, you can guarantee that there will be spiritual opposition. In other words, you will be attacked. I encourage you keep your eyes on Jesus and not the circumstances. As opposition comes against you and your family, I encourage you to stand in faith. God is in control and will always be in control. He calls us to praise Him in all things, including what is happening to your son or daughter. Again, the most important thing you can do is pray. Get as many people as you can to pray with you. Pray for your child, the staff, and the other students.

Manipulation:

As you are aware, most of our students will try to manipulate to get what they want or what they feel they need. We are working very diligently to stop this manipulation and to help these kids understand that they can get their needs met by positive behavior and that they do not have to resort to undermining. Until this transition occurs, please understand how detrimental it is to the school and the other families when the parents succumb to their child's manipulation attempts. When one student gets away with 'pulling a fast one' on their parents, the temptation is too great for the other students to resist, and they will try the same thing. Once one trick is pulled off successfully, we can count on several other students trying more tricks.

I have an interesting story to share with you. In the past, some ALA parents were so impressed with their daughter's growth that they decided to take her home after only four months. The other students readily admitted to each other that this girl's parents were being manipulated, and incidentally, if these kids had been given a chance, they would have informed these parents of the girl's manipulation and the fact that she was not ready to go home. Yes, there was tremendous growth in this student, but she had not had the time to put into practice the growth that she had experienced. Any student can act perfectly for a short period of time and convince the parents that he or she has turned around. Please remember -your child did not get to where he or she is in a matter of a few months - it took some time to develop the negative behaviors. It also takes time to be able to change these behaviors. Jesus can change a heart in an instant, but it takes time to put the new behaviors into practice, to effect true change, and to begin to shed the old behaviors and learn and practice new ones. In continuing the story about the girl, it was evident that the students that the girl left behind knew that she was not ready to go home and that she successfully manipulated her parents. Unfortunately, as a result of this bad decision, several of the other girls tried the same thing in following weeks after her departure. The decision to take her home early hurt everyone, and manipulative behavior is further reinforced with the remaining students. Please understand that if a parent chooses to pull a student early and does not allow the restoration process to be complete, that student will not be allowed to re-enroll in the program when things start to fall apart at home again. When God begins a good work in our lives, He expects us to follow through to the end regardless of our 'feelings'. Our feelings can lead us astray. Please stand strong with your child in realizing that God never asks us to do something half-way. Please let your child know from the beginning that he or she is going to complete and graduate the program before coming home. Period.

Communication:

It brings me great honor to present to you the ALA Communication Program and Protocol. Our hope is to provide you with a rich flow of information regarding your child and his or her progress, along with the latest happenings of Abundant Life Academy. It is our heart and our desire to keep you informed, up-to-date, and plugged in. We also want you to be intimately involved in all that we do.

The first communication process that you need to be aware of is our Student Record System. We refer to this system as the "SRS". The SRS is a secured database (password-protected) on our web site where we post and manage your child's progress notes. The Life Coaches of ALA post the student's progress on this secured database each week. Through a login process, you have access to these notes. To access your child's SRS, you need to go to www.abundantlifeacademy.com/info. A login box will appear. Your login information is your original login info (your email address) that you used when you registered for the ALA Application. (If you don't remember your login or password, please contact Heather Quist). Type in your login and password and you are in. Once you get into your child's SRS, click on "Student Notes". We suggest that you do this regularly and view the rich information regarding your child's progress.

The second communication process is our new "Ticket" system, designed specifically to enhance parent/staff communication. "Tickets" allow you to direct questions to specific departments, i.e. athletics, academics, finance, general, spiritual. Simply log in to the SRS system and click "Ticket" in the lower left section. Select department and type your message. The staff from that department will be alerted via email. They will respond back to you in a timely manner. A record of all your posted "Tickets" will appear under that section on your student's home page. If you have any questions or difficulty using the "Ticket" system, please contact Heather at 435-215-4117 or heather@abundantlifeacademy.com.

As in all communication between your child and the outside world, we will follow your guidance, meaning we will not allow your child to communicate with anyone unless we have your prior approval. Please send us a list of people who you want to be on your child's "approved list". We urge you to be selective on who is able to write to your child directly. Only direct relatives and approved adults such as his or her youth pastor, are allowed to write during the first two phases – no friends. Another approach that works well is to have all mail routed through you and sent to your child only with your approval. Also, mail from your child to others could be routed through you as well and then passed on to the appropriate individual. In this way, you're able to see and monitor for yourself the content that gets passed to and from your child. Please remember - don't include anyone on the approved list who will undermine your authority as the parent. Only include those who are 100% behind you and your decision to enroll your child into ALA. The guidelines for each Phase are as follows:

Phase 1 Student:

May visit with parents only on the phone
May receive emails and cards through regular mail from approved parents, grandparents, etc.

Phase 2 Student:

May visit with other *family* members on the phone with parents' permission
May receive emails and cards through regular mail from approved parents, grandparents, etc.

Phase 3 Student:

All of the above, plus they may have emails or letters from selected, approved friends with parent's permission.

Please send this list immediately. Include names, addresses, phone numbers, relationship to student and email addresses. Please send this list to abundantlifeacademy@msn.com, and in the subject field put 'Your Child's name - Contact List' – for example, “Mary Smith's Contact List”.

Phone Calls:

You will be contacted shortly by the Family Representative with a call-out schedule. Basically, we will provide you with a call-out schedule setting the day and time that your child calls you. In the beginning, your child will have one 10-minute phone call per week. (This increases as your child grows and matures). You will also have a Family Restoration phone call that will take the place of your child's call-out time every other week. The Family Restoration calls will begin once you finish parent coaching with Kathy Reese. This call will last between 45 minutes to an hour. It will be conducted by speakerphone with you, your child, and one of our professional staff. Please understand that phone calls are problematic. In some cases, especially early-on, students use phone calls to abuse parents through manipulation. Staff will always initiate phone calls and give you an update on your child's progress. The staff member will stand by and wait for the conversation to end, and then finish the call so that you can ask any questions or address a concern. If at any time the staff believes that your child is abusing you (using foul language, threatening language, or manipulation), he/she will end the conversation. Remember, staff should complete every phone call by addressing any concerns that you may have. If your child hangs up without allowing you to speak with a staff, then promptly call back. Once per month the student's outgoing phone call may be used to call others on your approval list.

Your Parent Coach will contact you during the first week. She will go over all protocols and procedures with you, including the Parent Manual and the Student Manual. During the first 30 days of your child's enrollment, you will be in contact with your Family Representative through the phone calls with your child and by email. Your longer Family Restoration Conference calls will begin after completion of parent coaching. We have this rule for two reasons. First, during the initial time with your child, we are getting to know your child as an individual and watching him or her closely to provide you with a complete assessment the areas that need the most help. During this early time, the students are just not ready emotionally or mentally to truly begin the restoration process with their families. Second, parent coaching is vitally important. Just as your child is getting new tools to use when he or she returns home, you also will be receiving new tools through parent coaching, and they will help you have more successful family restoration phone calls.

At the end of the 30 days or so, our Leadership Team will contact you with your child's complete assessment and will let you know the individual plan for restoration of your child and your family as a whole, working towards restoring your child unto God's authority and your parental authority. At this time, you will be set up with your Family Conference call schedule.

Emailing Your Child: The email address is abundantlifeacademy@msn.com. We encourage you to email your child often to encourage and exhort. Please understand that due to the fact that most of our students have issues with the Internet (mainly Instant Messenger), your child will not have direct access to email. We will print off your emails and give them to your child, encouraging a handwritten reply. Our staff will submit your child's reply to you on a weekly basis. **Please put your child's name in the subject field** so we know who the email is for. Please also advise anyone that you have put on your child's contact list to do the same!

Abundant Life Academy regularly posts pictures of activities on **myfamily.com** in addition to our website (<http://www.abundantlifeacademy.com>).

Here are the instructions for viewing pictures from the academy:

- Go to **myfamily.com**, if you are not already a member, go through the easy sign-up on their homepage. You can be as extensive or limited with your information as you want to be.
- Once you are finished creating an account, you will be offered an upgrade, simply select the free version.
- Then send an email to alastaff@abundantlifeacademy.com requesting to join myfamily.com. Note: You do not need to invite ALA to your family.
- Then please be patient you will have to wait for an invitation from Abundant Life Academy to join our family.
- Once you receive & accept our invitation you will be able to see the many pictures of our students and student activities that are posted on the site.

Note: In order to keep your confidentiality, parents will not be able to see other parents associated with ALA's account. One concern of a parent was that they didn't want other parents or anyone else to be able to 'see their profile'. Myfamily.com does not allow anyone you do not specifically invite to view your "Family" photos, so everything you post on your personal myfamily.com page is protected from everyone else including our other family members. That is all you need to do and now you'll be able to view the pictures and videos that are posted. If you have any questions email: heather@abundantlifeacademy.com

Letters and Cards:

We strongly encourage you and your family to send hand-written letters and cards to your child. Some parents have even had the student's home youth group make cards to send.

Our mailing address is as follows:

Abundant Life Academy
YOUR STUDENTS NAME
220 West 300 North
Kanab, UT 84741

Our staff is very busy and constantly engaged with the students. However, communication with the parents is very important to us and we need to stay in constant communication with you. This is my suggestion. Use email as the main communication protocol. Don't hesitate to call the staff when necessary, but try to use the email in all non-essential communication.

Visitation Policy:

Due to past experience, it is advised that you do not plan a visit to the campus during your child's first Phase. Normally, the first visit to the campus is made when you attend the Family Workshop, which is best scheduled for the beginning of the second Phase. Kathy Reese will explain the Family Workshop to you when she calls you. No matter how well your child is doing during the first 90-days of enrollment, an early visit will most likely cause your child to regress. There are many factors for this occurrence, but we have seen enough setbacks over the years to make

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