

No Such Thing As a Bad Kid

Key Principles and Techniques for Working
with Troubled Children and Youth

The DVD & Video Series
Part I

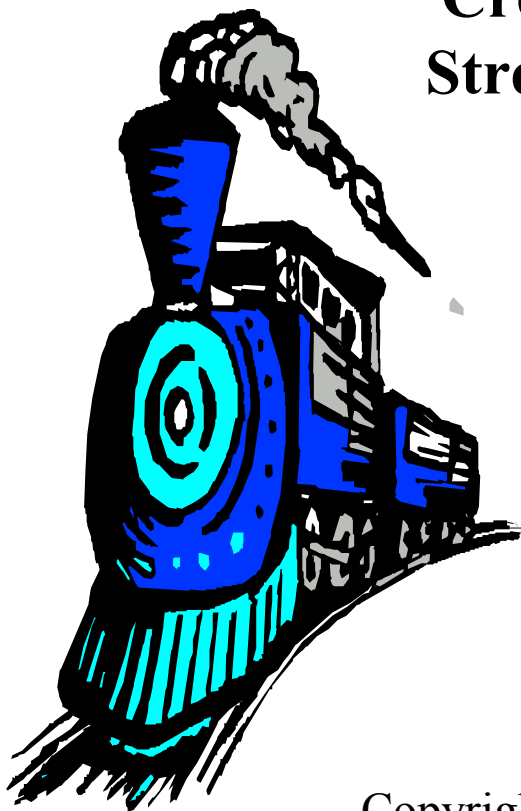
**Creating and Maintaining a
Strength-Based Environment**

How a Positive, Hope-Inspiring
Environment Changes Lives

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The Power of Believing



“He’s a little horse,
but he doesn’t
know he’s a little
horse. He thinks
he’s BIG!

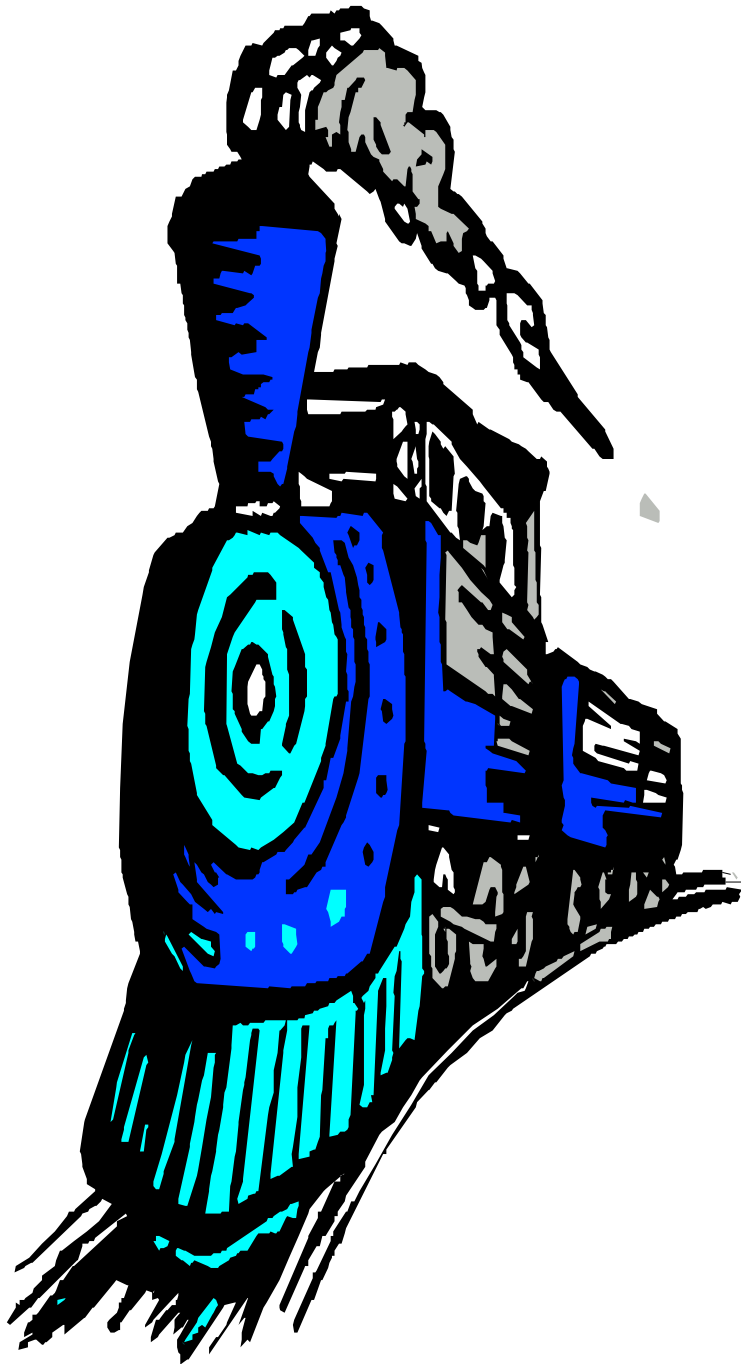
Charles Howard, Owner

*Make every kid feel special!
Remind them that there is
no such thing as a bad kid;
just bad luck and bad choices.*

Seabiscuit

When challenging kids sense deep inside that the adults in their lives believe in them, dramatic changes often occur.

The Train



“You’re a big, strong, powerful train. But, right now, you’re off track. We’ve got to help you get yourself back on the rails.”

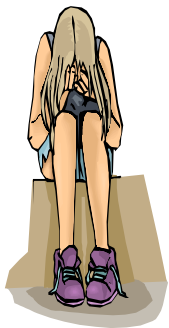
“How should we celebrate the great month you’re going to have?”

“It’s Not a Learning Disability.”



It’s a Road Block

Let’s find a detour and enjoy the scenery! 4



Gus on Pejorative Labeling



Look, I know some of us can be quite difficult. I was a hellion my first six months, considered quite obnoxious. But it was simply defensive posturing. (Can you say defense mechanism?) Kids aren't bad. They're just screwed up. The kid who's pushing you away the most is probably the one who needs you the most.

I think every residential center would be better off if they never used words as manipulative, lazy, un-invested, controlling, and obnoxious. They're pejorative adjectives. When you label one of us in such a way, you contaminate the waters and no one wants to swim with us any more.

"Manipulative kids aren't fun to work with."

"They're a pain in the ass."

"Boy, is that kid manipulative!"

Every time we get blasted for being "manipulative" (or any other such term), our self-concept suffers. We take on that word – we internalize a sense of badness. Yet the kid you call "manipulative" might have come to your facility with a history of manipulating his way out of getting beaten. So, maybe manipulating ain't so bad. Maybe it simply needs to be understood in the context of a child's situation. Maybe people don't need to use these words anymore.

Strength-Based Beliefs & Terminology

Pejorative Label	Positive, Hope-Based Reframe
Obnoxious	Good at pushing people away
Rude, arrogant	Good at affecting people
Resistant	Cautious
Lazy, un-invested	Good at preventing further hurts, failures
Manipulative	Good at getting needs met
Just looking for attention	Good at caring about and loving yourself
Close-mouthed	Loyal to family or friends
Different, odd	Under-appreciated
Stubborn & defiant	Good at standing up for yourself
Tantrum, fit, outburst	Big message
Learning disability	Roadblocks

Strength-Based Mission Statement

We believe there is no such thing as a bad kid; just bad luck and bad choices.

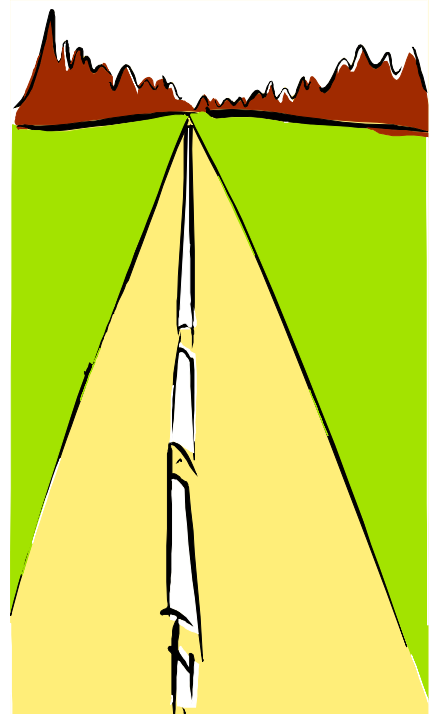
We believe that all individuals possess core strengths that can be utilized to lead meaningful lives.

We strive to help people help themselves.

Our work involves mutually identifying, developing, encouraging, practicing, and maximizing the inherent strengths in every individual we engage.

To accomplish our treatment goals we establish a positive, upbeat, and safe environment that instills hope, provides multiple opportunities for success, and, at all times, adheres to the golden rule.

We believe a good life is all about making good choices. Although we have deep respect and empathy for where our kids have been, our major focus on the present and the road ahead.



**Believe in kids...
and they will believe in themselves
Find their strengths...
and you will find your own**

