



Teen Outreach and Prevention Program (TOPP)

Southwest Key Program, Inc. has been providing highly effective youth support services to at-risk youth for more than 19 years. Our experiences working with this population for almost two decades has taught us that a young person's potential to succeed is dramatically impacted by their performance and connection to education. Studies show a direct correlation between youth dropping out of school and involvement in the juvenile justice system. Additional studies demonstrate that the educational level achieved by a young person has a direct impact on future employment and their ultimate economic stability. As such, making a positive connection between a young person and the educational system is critical in ensuring a positive future for these youth.

For many youth identified as at-risk, the school experience has been interrupted. Many young people skip classes or do not attend school on a regular basis. Others may be removed from the school and, therefore, unable to attend their home school for a period of time. Some students withdraw and enroll in numerous schools throughout their middle and/or high school years. All of these situations cause a disruption that can result in a young person falling behind academically and may eventually lead to the student dropping out of school all together. To address issues related to academic failure, school drop out, and delinquent and criminal behavior, Southwest Key developed the Teen Outreach Prevention Program (TOPP).

What Is TOPP?

The Teen Outreach and Prevention Program (TOPP) is an accountability-based program designed to prevent acts of truancy, drop out, expulsion, and delinquent or criminal behavior. Youth identified as at high risk for dropping out of school, as well as those involved in the juvenile justice systems are referred to the program from the Travis County Juvenile Probation Department, local Juvenile Probation Courts, and local school districts. Through the incorporation of educational support, after-school programs, and community service activities, youth develop the skills and self esteem needed to make positive changes in their lives.

What Can TOPP Offer Youth?

The ultimate goal of TOPP is to decrease the delinquent behavior and criminal activities displayed by high risk youth. TOPP accomplishes this by creating an innovative support system designed to increase high school attendance and encourage graduation and the pursuit of a college education. Through participation in core program components, TOPPS helps young people focus on relationship building, future planning, and the identification of personal beliefs and values. Program activities allow for the meaningful participation of youth in project activities while, at the same time, contributing to the community in which they live. TOPP provides youth with an individualized combination of support, encouragement, and challenge that empowers youth with the skills needed to succeed in school as well as later in life.

TOPP Program Components

- Accountability Based Programming
- Truancy Prevention and Educational Support
- Youth Monitoring and Tracking
- Case Management and Support Services
- Community Service Restitution





Program Structure and Services

The following mix of services combine intensive supervision and academic support with competency development activities, while engaging both youth and families in the educational process. In our experience this unique combination creates a safety net for those youth teetering on the edge of success in school. It is a holistic approach that supports the school administration, teachers, family and young person and engages all in the ultimate success of an individual youth.

Tutoring

Academic tutoring is provided to youth during or after school. Tutoring is provided by Southwest Key staff and by volunteers.

Youth Leadership and Community Service Opportunities

TOPP encourages the development of youth leadership skills by incorporating required participation in social and community service projects and family involvement activities. Southwest Key staff train and provide incentives to student leaders and encourage their participation in the growth and enhancement of their community.

Family Involvement

Our experience consistently demonstrates that familial involvement is critical in the future successes of our youth. TOPP provides families with the information and support needed to help guide their children to a more promising future. Parents are encouraged to be involved and connected to the school and are also provided with advanced vocational and college admission information, giving them the resources for themselves and to guide their children to the path of success.



Cultural Enrichment/Fine Arts

With this aspect of the program, youth are encouraged to acquire personal power and self-discipline. They are encouraged to engage in the community constructively through the study of the creative process. The long-term goal is to provide youth with a personal voice that allows them to assert their uniqueness and link to others. Exposure to fine arts and visual arts as a tool for prevention benefits both individuals and the community in which they live. Spectators, fans and aficionados connect with the artist when they listen, witness and demonstrate outward appreciation for the artist's work. These factor necessary components toward changing and developing positive behaviors.

To learn more information about the Teen Outreach Prevention Program and any other Southwest Key Program please contact us at www.swkey.org or e-mail info@swkey.org or write:
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