

Actual Parent of a Stonewater Alumnus: I knew that he needed treatment. Just with the dramatic behavior changes. He would isolate himself in his room, he would come out and it wasn't him. We could tell that he had been on some drugs, and it just wasn't Colin. One day, he woke us up in the middle of the night because of his chest pains, he couldn't feel his heartbeat, and he'd overdosed, and we took him to the emergency room. That was one time, and then a couple of months later, another time, he overdosed, and he almost died, and we knew at that point that he needed help, beyond what we, as his parents could give him. We could give him all the love and support that he needed but he needed professional intervention where I was at my wits end. I'm about to have a nervous breakdown. Just trying to find it because we all want the best for our children, because we want to see good, long lasting, sustainable results. I called a friend of a friend who actually was a director at a California rehabilitation center and he said, "Tell me about your boy." So I told him about my boy. I told him about my boy. And he says, "Well, based on what you've told me, I think I found the perfect place for you. And it's called Stonewater Recovery Center and they only take about 20 boys from ages 11 to 18. It's very hands on, very personable. I will tell you they're like a family." When I spoke with Elizabeth Fikes in the middle of the night, again, just so, so desperate and so scared and on the edge of not knowing, "Am I doing the right thing or not?" And she just, she was like an angel. And I'm getting goosebumps just thinking about it, as I recollect on this, because I thought I was just at a point where I didn't know what to do, where to go. And there she was and said, "Well, we'll help your boy." I was a nervous wreck. We both were. We had just taken Colin out of detox, and he wanted to go home so bad, but we knew that if we brought him home, that he was just going to use again, and so we were just anxious and nervous and put him in the back seat of the car and took him directly from detox and drove him straight here, but just full of anxiety, nervousness, because he's in the back seat telling us, "Oh, you're wasting your money, and I'm just gonna drop out of school and I'm gonna do all these things," and I'm in my mind, I'm questioning myself as a parent and as this caretaker, "Am I doing the right thing? Maybe I'm just overreacting. Maybe I'm just overthinking this, and maybe maybe he will be okay. He tells me he's going to be okay." But my gut said, "Keep driving and don't stop. You're going to Stonewater." I remember we were sitting outside having lunch with him, and he said to us, "You know, Mom, I'm doing so well right now." And remember, this is just the first month that he's here, 30 days. And he says, "I don't, I don't know how I'm ever going to be able to repay you for what you've done for me." And I said, "The best way to repay me is to keep progressing in your recovery. That's how you can pay me back." But just the look in his eyes, and he's just so much calmer, he's at a better place, and he wants to do well. He talks about things that are positive. He's got a positive outlook, and now he wants to help people who are struggling with addiction. And I think that Stonewater has created that ripple effect, pardon the pun, the ripple effect with Colin, because he's going to continue and he's going to help others. I would say, don't hesitate. Don't hesitate to take your child. If you see all the signs, those red flags are right there in front of you, you have to take that leap of faith and and take them, because you don't want to lose your child to an overdose. We almost lost him to an overdose, and I could be sitting here talking to you right now about my dead child, but thankfully, I'm talking about my child who's successfully recovered from a deathly road that he took, that could have led him six feet under. So do it. Just do it. You won't regret it.