

Rebound

Life Choices Program



This program provides constructive social skills development for youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Youth attend the program to address concerns such as dealing with peer pressure, getting along with their families or because they have experienced conflict with the law. Created in 1984, Life Choices is the agency's flagship program.

How does the program work?

Youth referred to the program meet one night each week for 10 weeks. Volunteers, serving as program coaches, help youth using a variety of techniques, including role plays, small and large group discussions, video clips and guest speakers. Programs are offered in Sarnia, Petrolia and Forest.

How are sessions run?

Youth are divided into two groups based on age, totalling about 25 youth per session. The program is supported by 12 trained volunteers. Groups are divided into five smaller groups of five youth and two "table" coaches. There are also two parent sessions held, one prior to the program and one at the conclusion.

What topics does the program cover?

The 10 weekly sessions last 2.5 hours, covering such topics as:

- communication
- decision making
- goal setting
- teamwork
- freedom and responsibility
- assertiveness
- conflict resolution
- anger management
- respect for oneself and others
- peer relations

Who makes referrals?

Referrals can be made by parents, schools, other community agencies, police, the courts or probation office. The Sarnia police and O.P.P. refer youth to the Rebound program as a diversion from court. Life Choices is a recognized Extra-judicial Measures Program under the Youth Criminal Justice Act.



For more information on the program contact Sarnia-Lambton Rebound at 519-344-2841, or by email at info@reboundonline.com or visit the website at www.reboundonline.com.

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The Life Choices program is evidenced-based. Research shows that youth are better served in appropriate cognitive-based programs, allowing them to avoid a criminal record. Youth also receive valuable social skills training related to their particular issues. All youth are individually interviewed and assessed prior to beginning the program.

How are the youth supported?

Our trained staff and volunteers support youth in learning to:

- analyze interpersonal problems
- understand and consider other's feelings and values
- recognize how their behaviours affect others
- develop pro-social ways of reacting to conflict

What are the focused outcomes?

Life Choices focuses on the development of:

- pro-social attitudes and feelings
- increased self-control and problem-solving skills
- positive peer group choices
- increased communication with family and school

Is the program effective?

Upon completion, statistics show that only 10 youth out of 100 re-offend. Most graduates of the program leave with a newfound respect for themselves and others. While the program costs Rebound about \$1,000 per youth, it costs taxpayers about \$40,000 to provide a bed in a youth group home for a year.

When are the program sessions offered?

Life Choices offers three sessions during the year: one in the spring, another session in the fall and a third in the winter. Program funding is provided by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services, the United Way of Sarnia-Lambton and community donations.



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