



Prospective Parent Frequently Asked Questions:

General Program Questions

1. How often will I communicate with staff?

Your son's teacher and case manager will provide alternating bi-weekly updates, and your son's therapist will provide phone calls to assist in family dynamics additionally. So, you can expect at least one form of communication each week throughout his stay. When your son first arrives and as he prepares for graduation the communication will be more often.

2. How often will I communicate with my son?

The residents have access to a house phone for parent contacts. These calls are, on average, 15 minutes each, and up to three times weekly. If more time is needed for critical matters, it can be provided.

3. What is expected from us—the parent's—while our son is at Rising Peak Academy?

You will be advised to be consistent with your personal recovery through the 12 steps of Al-anon. We ask all our parents to attend regular Al-anon meetings and work the 12 steps to aid in the recovery of the family. Additionally, you will be advised to secure an individual or family therapist in your hometown and to meet with this person regularly to gain healing for the entire family unit.

4. How often will my son receive therapy while at Rising Peak Academy?

On average your son will meet with a licensed therapist for individual therapy once per week. He will also attend 3 group sessions weekly. These are led by licensed professionals and include process groups and community development groups. Impromptu individual sessions and group sessions with licensed professionals happen quite often as well.

5. Does Rising Peak Academy utilize the 12 Steps for recovery from addictions?

Yes. The residents attend a minimum of 3 AA meetings weekly. All residents obtain a local sponsor that's been vetted and approved by RPA staff to guide the residents through the 12 Steps of AA. Additionally, residents lead their own daily spiritual groups and weekly AA meetings in the Lodge.

6. What will my son be doing while not in school or therapy?

Living in Northwest Montana means the options of outdoor activities are endless. While not in school your son will have opportunities to snow ski, hike, fly fish, swim, rock climb, mountain bike, wakeboard, and any other activity he can create.



7. Are there any alternative forms of therapy provided by Rising Peak Academy in which my son will have the opportunities to partake?

Rising Peak Academy residents participate in equine therapy and yoga bi-weekly, as well as art weekly. For each of these experiential activities a certified specialist is contracted to provide best care for your son.

8. Will I get to see my son while he is a resident of Rising Peak Academy?

Yes. We welcome you to the Family Program weekends which take place multiple times a year and which your son's therapist or case manager will provide more information so as to plan for travel. Based on your son's progress and your personal progress (outlined in FAQ 3.) you will be invited to share a long weekend with your son in northwest Montana off the RPA campus. Details of this will be provided by your son's case manager when ready. As progression in recovery continues your son will be available to return home for a home visit. The purpose of this home visit, along with reconnecting with family, is to make amends as needed. This means home visits will take place after your son is on Step 9.

9. What happens if my son relapses while at Rising Peak Academy?

Consequences to relapse are addressed case-by-case. Rising Peak Academy is designed for adolescent boys to experience recovery. RPA works closely with Wilderness Treatment Center (WTC), which is just 40 miles away and if a refresher on Steps 1-3 and/or the cessation of addiction is necessary for a resident who has relapsed, he may attend a modified stay at WTC prior to returning to his community at Rising Peak Academy.

Academic Questions

10. What is the academic program like at Rising Peak Academy?

At RPA we enroll students in online courses via two national vendors, Virtual High School and Blueprint Education. Course enrollment is based on a transcript review, diagnostic exams, student interest and parent/guardian input. In general, we focus on enrolling students in *core academic courses that count towards high school graduation credits*. However, each student's academic plan is highly individualized and is created by a team to meet his needs. The team may include parents/guardians, RPA Academic Supervisor, student, former school counselor(s), former tutor(s), former school psychologist(s), and former teachers.



11. Why are RPA courses online?

By using distance-learning vendors RPA students are able to take only courses that *they* need to accomplish in pursuit of their educational goals (high school graduation, GED/HiSet completion, college preparation, etc.). Instead of a traditional classroom structure with a variety of content teachers delivering instruction on a set schedule, RPA students complete courses at their own pace, on their own schedule, and with differentiated content based on academic need. In other words, individualized online classes enable RPA students to focus on their academic success and allows for personalized feedback from instructors. In addition, students inherently learn time-management skills, workload prioritization, and self-motivational tactics that will transfer directly to post-secondary coursework and/or employment.

12. Who guides the boys to make sure they're working on their classes?

The bulk of responsibility for course completion is on the student. However, the RPA Academic Supervisor guides each of the boys toward his coursework success. The Supervisor's role is to ensure the academic plan set forth by the student's team is being diligently followed and that each student has the support and resources he needs to be successful. This may include corresponding with the student's online teachers, proctoring final exams, helping students study, coordinating content-area experts to tutor individual students, organizing field trips and projects for experiential learning opportunities, hosting career pathway community speakers, and communicating with parents/guardians regarding academic progress. The Supervisor is on site during school hours to coach and motivate students as well! Currently, we use the EXCEL teaching model and Leadership Blueprint™ to set daily and weekly academic goals with each student. The students set goals on Monday, and have class meetings with the Academic Supervisor twice daily to review accomplishments and roadblocks. On Friday, students document what they have achieved, with the opportunity to earn incentives!

13. Is the entire school day online, then?

No. Please see our **Example School Schedule** for more information, but, the academic day is a mix of online coursework, group discussions, pen & paper writing assignments, and Socratic Seminar. The Socratic method targets development of critical-thinking skills, conflict resolution, and speech and debate strategies. The Seminar also embeds social-emotional learning into our day through explicit and implicit instruction around empathy, patience, and respect.

Afternoon electives change with the seasons but typically include options such as art, music, horseback riding/equine therapy, yoga, and outdoor education. Please note, most electives are not eligible for high school credit but do serve as important aspects of both holistic student development and the boys' steps towards recovery from addiction.



14. How does the academic program at RPA support the therapeutic program?

Rising Peak staffs an inter-disciplinary team to help support the students' first priority: sobriety. The Director, Counselor, Case Manager, and Academic Supervisor meet three times a week to ensure the recovery process and the academic program support each other. Terminology, behavior management systems, and goals for both components of a student's stay at RPA are shared among staff to help create a true team-based culture. As a team, we are committed to both the academic success and the addiction recovery of your son, and will communicate regularly with all involved to ensure best practices are in place.

15. Can you give me some examples of high school classes available through RPA?

Courses available depend on the semester and year a student enrolls, but a typical semester will find the following courses available to RPA students:

Core Courses

English 1, 2, 3, 4
Pre-Algebra
Algebra
Geometry
Pre-Calculus
Differential Calculus
Biology
Chemistry

Elective Courses for Credit

Earth & Space Sciences
Constitutional Law
Spanish, German, and French
Animal Behavior & Zoology
CAD
Art History
Journalism
Java & Computer Programming

In addition to earning high school credit, students have the possibility of earning college credit through our partnership with Flathead Valley Community College! Via the "Running Start" program, students and their parents/guardians can determine if dual-credit courses make sense for their goals. To learn more, visit

<https://www.fvcc.edu/what-we-offer/running-start-program/> .