

AUTUMN  
2021

# ROCKSOLID

## REFUGE

### NEWSLETTER

Wilderness Trip  
Education with Excellence  
Farewell & Success

I am writing this feeling overwhelmed by God's goodness for all we have experienced through the summer and particularly, Family Camp. When you hear parents tell of the anxiety and stress that had become so normal in their homes and the anxiousness of even coming to Family Camp. Not knowing how they could begin to heal personally and relationally with their son. It breaks your heart. The amazing way we were able to witness God bringing families together was truly inspiring. Praise God!!!

The parents arrived Wednesday in time for supper and spent the evening playing games and connecting with their son (Cross Net was a real hit!). Thursday through Saturday mornings were spent with the parents participating in training sessions, relationship building in the afternoons, and then chapel, followed by games and campfires in the evenings. Family Camp concluded Sunday with a church service together. The message came from Micah 7:1-10, with a reality check into the deep struggle of family that has been common throughout human history. The gospel provides hope, as God by His grace, gives us forgiveness, redemption and hope for today, tomorrow and all eternity. Christ brought the victory through His life, death, and resurrection.

Particular highlights from Family Camp included: Parents who didn't consider themselves 'athletic' playing games with their son to build relationship. A student going for a horse ride with his mom because

it was important to her, even though he would have rather not. Sitting with families talking through challenges, taking real steps toward an open and honest relationship that they really need to have. Late nights around the fire, laughing, telling stories, enjoying time together in a way that just hasn't been a reality for these families. Saturday's hearty fish fry around the fire with fish caught by our guys (mostly up at Dore Lake). Me taking a soccer ball in the face from a mom while I was making the save... felt like a kick to the face.

Sunday afternoon we ended the weekend with Tim's graduation ceremony. His transformation has been a gift from God. Pray for Tim as he starts the school year at a Christian high school. His mom is thankful for all that has been put into her son. You have been so much a part of that too. Thank you!

We also shared a few projects we'd hoped to have completed this summer. The concrete and pad are ready for the barn and duplex to be brought onsite. The movers are booked and they should be here before the end of September. Your partnership has helped make that possible.

Thank you for your faithful commitment to pray and support youth and their families as they rebuild relationships and grow together.

God bless!

Dallas Block



## Wilderness Camping Trip

The students and a few staff had the privilege of spending a week at Dore Lake in August. Our gracious hosts, Eric & Rhonda Dueck and Ron & Lynn Friesen provided a very memorable trip which included fishing, watersports, quadding, archery, and hiking. As students continue their schooling over the summer, it was a great opportunity for everyone to relax in the tranquil location nestled in God's beautiful creation. Our devotionals and evenings around the campfire were meaningful times to experience God in new ways. Many questions and conversations came up, which was a clear indication that God was working in young hearts and lives.



## Education with Excellence

Skipping school is usually the first sign an adolescent is experiencing life challenges. Educational progress often stops when teen struggles are left up to the school system to address. By the time young men come through the doors at Rock Solid Refuge they have usually missed significant amounts of school, experienced considerable levels of failure and have developed increased anxiety around their education.

One of our top priorities is quality education. Class attendance is mandatory and teens have success when their attendance soars to 100%. By changing their attitude around school to have a more positive focus, they are better prepared to engage in higher education and experience success for a brighter future.



Unfortunately, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education has cut our education funding. This decision leaves a substantial deficit in our budget. It also creates a significant challenge to continue offering a high level of education to our unique student body.

**Your monthly gifts will allow us to continue providing one on one care to each adolescent and hire another certified Teacher. Would you pray for God to meet this need generously and consider sharing the need with others you know? Will you help keep students in the classroom with your monthly gift? [YOUR partnership provides a brighter future for youth at Rock Solid!](#)**



## 10 Years as Executive Director

Ten years ago, Dallas Block resigned as the Chairman of the RSR board to take the role of Executive Director! We asked a few people to share their thoughts about Dallas and his commitment to adolescents.

I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus - Philippians 1:6

Dallas was instrumental in beginning the work of God at Rock Solid Refuge. His persevering hope, and determined efforts were needed to lead a team to meet the challenges and demands of establishing RSR. In the ten years that I have known and worked with Dallas, it has been evident that he cares deeply for those that are broken and struggling, and is committed to their healing. His family has been an integral part of this venture as they care for, and do life with the staff and students. I have been so blessed to have them as colleagues, friends, and partners in Christ. They have helped to make Rock Solid not a workplace, but a family. May God bless and keep them as they continue to do the work they are called to.

*Cindy Willms, Former RSR School Principal/Teacher*



There are few Dallas Blocks in this world! There are very few people with the passion and conviction to start up an organization simply because there is a need. And there are even less people that will start up an organization that has its main focus in not only helping others, but helping young people who are struggling, often from broken families.

Dallas has worked tirelessly for 10 years as the Executive Director of Rock Solid, after serving as one of the founding members of the organization years before.

Many people look at the struggles in the world and love to talk or even complain about those struggles, but seldom do people take action or do anything to remedy the problem. Dallas is an action person who saw a significant need and put in dedicated and focused effort to meet that need.

We understand that unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain who build it; however, without Dallas' obedience, Rock Solid Refuge would not be a reality. Thank you so much for your commitment and fortitude in seeing Rock Solid Refuge move from an idea to a dream, to a God-breathed organization which has helped hundreds of young men and their families move forward in their lives.

*Steve Frew, Manager of Training and Staff Support*



I met Dallas in 2008 when I moved to Frontier and he was pastoring at a church in the community. When I began helping him on Friday nights when he operated a coffeehouse for the youth in the community, his love and concern for young people was quite evident. The move to lead Rock Solid 10 years ago seemed like a natural progression of God's leading in Dallas' life but I bet he never imagined where that would take him, his family, and the ministry. Through 8 years as a board member and 1 on staff, it was a personal blessing to work alongside Dallas in this vital ministry of serving young boys struggling with addictions.

Dallas, through all the ups and downs, laughter and tears, great days and challenging ones, you have never lost your focus and heart to further the work of Christ at Rock Solid Refuge. It was indeed both an honor and privilege to have been a part of this fantastic team. Congratulations on this milestone and blessings to you and your family as you move into the future serving Him.

*Michael J. Ross, Former Board Member and staff*



## A Fond Farewell to Micah Downing

Have you ever felt that God had been orchestrating your whole life for one moment? That was my experience when I started at Rock Solid six years ago. When God allowed some of my most painful situations to be used for good. I was able to give hope to a teen who was hurting. That experience was the first of many God would have for me during my time here. God has used the experiences and passions of my life in ways I never would have believed.

One of my favourite memories was sharing the gospel with a student. He understood Christ's sacrifice on the cross for his sin, but could not surrender to God's control. Teens struggle to have control as so many have been in circumstances that are out of control. I encouraged him to be honest with God and ask for His help to surrender. The teen agreed, and by the end of the prayer, the Spirit of God had moved in his heart so much that he gave his life to Christ.



Some come here hoping they will be able to help teens change, but I've learned that while students do change and grow, God tends to use THEM to change us. I've learned so much about God's love, about parenting, about teens, and I've become more self-disciplined.

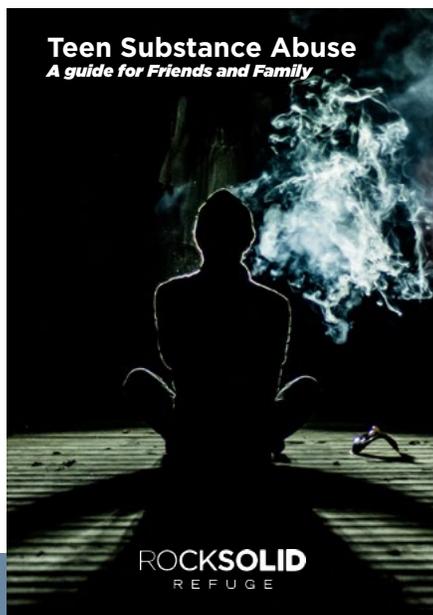
Our family is not completely sure what God has in store, but we hope to move closer to mountains, trees and the ocean. I want to write and perhaps become a parent coach. We are confident in God's goodness to provide. The students have taught me so much and I appreciate them. The staff have become close friends and we will miss them.

## From ADHD to a Master's Degree

I was told by a teacher I would not succeed, that higher education was not possible. I could not achieve because academically I was unable. Those words haunted me because I knew deep down that was not true. School was difficult, not impossible. At that moment I had a choice to believe what was said or I needed to change the narrative I was told.

Eight years later I received a Bachelor's degree and now a Master's in Counselling. I also have ADHD, a chemical imbalance and spent one school year in special education. My journey has been difficult and some days were incredibly hard. When I look back at the struggles, I can honestly say it has been worth it. I work with people who feel they cannot learn or the road is too hard. I get it. There is a struggle in life, yet there is also hope for a better future.

- James Simpson



## New Things at RSR

'Get to know Us' emails right to your inbox. Learn about the students & staff, graduations, new resources and event updates! If we don't have your email, please contact us today.

NEW Substance Abuse training series available on our website. Coming late 2021.

NEW HOPE catalog filled with 'gift' ideas to help students (contains everything from ramen noodles to a 12-passenger van!). Holiday or birthday shopping made easy...use it ANY time for ANY occasion. Watch for it!

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