

## As seen on the nationally syndicated TV program Dr. Phil: The Hunt for Amanda

Sixteen-year-old Amanda has been missing for five months. Her parents believe she ran away with her boyfriend and what they call his "gypsy family." Dr. Phil puts his own investigator on the case to go in search of the runaway teen.

### She Disappears

Amanda's parents describe the events leading up to her disappearance, and reveal startling descriptions of her boyfriend and his family.

### The Search

Dr. Phil puts former FBI agent Harold Copus on the hunt for Amanda. Has she been with a band of gypsies, as her parents believe?

### Happy Reunion?

Linda sees Amanda for the first time in months. Find out why their joyful reunion suddenly goes sour.

### A Family Matter

Dr. Phil reunites Amanda with her father for the first time since she ran away. With so much love between them, how did their problems go so far? Dr. Phil sits down with the whole family to find out.

### The Meltdown

Amanda's calm behavior doesn't last long. She has an emotional episode so extreme, her father fears physical injury and security has to be called to the hotel.

### The Boyfriend

Amanda's mother blames her daughter's defiant behavior on the influence of her boyfriend. Dr. Phil talks to George, and the family makes a tough decision about Amanda's future.

"Look, here's the bottom line," Dr. Phil says to Paul and Linda. "I can't make a decision about what needs to happen here. You need to make a decision about what needs to happen here."

If you believe that Amanda is manageable in the home, if you believe that you can talk to her and reason with her and she will behave in a way that is in her best interest then I am ready, willing and able to provide you professional support to do that. If you do not believe that that will work, then you've got one of two options. You just throw your hands up and say we're going to let the tail wag the dog here, we're going to let the 16-year-old make the decision for what happens, or third option, you've got to put her somewhere that she can be managed and there are places that you can put runaways."

One example is the Aspen Education Group, which is dedicated to helping troubled and out-of-control teenagers and their families. Dr. Phil says that Aspen is willing to enroll Amanda in their Copper Canyon Academy, one of the nation's top therapeutic boarding schools for girls.

During the show Dr. Phil welcomed Mark Hobbins, Senior Vice President of Aspen Education Group. "What does your group do in this situation?" Dr. Phil asks.

Mark says, "What I think we want to accomplish is ... to help her define and re-define, frankly, her sense of reality, and some sense of responsibility and accountability as a child to a family, to a parent. And to help parents create, and sort of reconnect, so that you can develop a more healthy relationship. And then you, Amanda, can find better coping skills so you feel like you're being heard, while at the same time your parents are going to have an opportunity to help you understand their position, and I think rediscover this love, this sense of family belonging that you state you want, and we believe we can help you get."

"What do you think about that?" Dr. Phil asks Amanda's parents.

"I think there's not a doubt in my mind if we get home, she will run," says Linda.

"You don't think you can manage her in the home?" Dr. Phil asks.

"I don't," Linda replies, "especially after this last couple days. I really don't." Paul is equally pessimistic.

Dr. Phil asks the parents, "Is it your decision that she should go to Copper Canyon?" They both say yes. "Are you willing to sit down privately with her, and talk with her now?" Both agree to do so. Dr. Phil then turns to Amanda. "Is it your decision that you will willingly go to the Copper Canyon Academy in respect to their decision?"

"Yes," she says, "I just want to be heard. I feel like I'm not getting heard and I feel like they're only getting their way."

"And then after that conversation, if their mind is unchanged, then you're prepared to respect their decision and willingly go to the academy?" Dr. Phil asks.

"Well, that's what they're going to do," she says cynically. "They're going to pretend that they're going to listen and they're going to say, 'Yep, OK, whatever.'"

But Dr. Phil presses on. "And if that's what happens are you prepared to willingly go to the academy?"

"Sure," says Amanda with resignation.

"I do listen to you, OK? I will listen," Linda says.

"Well, the show's about over, but the story's not," says Dr. Phil.

Read the entire story at <http://www.drphil.com/shows/show/667/>

