



# Youth Empowerment Integration Program

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## Welcome

Welcome to Youth Empowerment Integration Program (YEIP)! We are excited to be able to offer this new program designed to meet the needs of Participants. During the orientation process, Participants will undergo several types of assessments to determine their needs and create individualized life skills plans. This handbook is meant to explain policies so that expectations are clear and to give our participants the best program possible. It is only with Participant, staff, Executive Leadership, and community support will the YEIP be successful.

Activities offered will be determined by Participant interested, Phase levels, staffing, and funding. We intend to offer more than hands on daily living skills but discussion groups with topics such as character building, activities such as camping and woodworking, and/or job readiness training such as work ethics.

We ask Participants and guardians review this Handbook in its entirety and keep it as a reference during your stay in YEIP. Please note, the online version will contain all updates. Anyone with questions or suggestions for improvement should contact the Executive Director.

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Youth Empowerment Integration Program is to assist youth needing new living situations as they transition to becoming successful self-sufficient adults in a healthy, safe, nurturing, Montessori-style environment by creating individualized plan and teaching practical life skills.

## Types of Bed Placements

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program will have these primary bed types: Emergency, Federal, State, and Private. Youth will be treated equally regardless of which type of bed placement they enter The YEIP on.

## Program Goals

*We have several goals for the YEIP.*

*Participants will understand the importance of*

- 1. Giving back to their community.*
- 2. Being productive members of society.*
- 3. How to advocate for themselves.*

*Participants will be able to*

- 1. Demonstrate life skills.*
- 2. Experience additional activities for proactive use of free time (i.e. hobbies)*
- 3. Gain employment and/or enroll in further education.*

## Participants can expect

The Program's role is that of a parent. Participants should remember that they are minors and will have to earn freedoms such as hanging out with friends. This can be earned by following the rules, doing is what is expected of you, using good communication skills, and being respectful. Behaviors such as sneaking out, refusing staff direction, or being disrespectful will be dealt with accordingly with possible disciplinary repercussions. That said, The Program's desire is to focus on the positive and to make experiences memorable.

## Participant Selection

Upon completion of relevant and/or required documentation, participants will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. **Criteria** include:

- Must be between 16 and 21 and able to commit 6-24 months.
- Must be homeless or receiving foster care services
- Must have no history of sexual offenses; criminal or otherwise.
- Must be in an educational program and employed or volunteering part-time.
- No suicide ideation or attempts within 30 days.
- Must agree to participate in counseling or therapy on a regular basis, both group and individual.
- Must be willing and able to
  - complete Program goals,
  - follow policies,
  - engage in self-discovery,
  - accept criticism, and practice maturity

## Application Process

The Application Process consists of several steps. Ideally these will be done individually and allow time between them. Realistically, steps may be combined or omitted based on individual needs on a case by case basis.

## Complete application

Application packet may be completed and returned via email or fax or by phone as determined appropriate by Executive Leadership staff. Written letter of interest by applicant explaining why they think this program would benefit them, what they hope to accomplish, and how they intend to give back to their community. encouraged. There will also be a list of questions to which the youth can write or type their answers such as:

- What is the difference between being mature and being an adult?
- How would you handle the following situation...

## Interview

The interview process should be face-to-face with the applicant whenever possible. However, face-to-face via Skype, Face Time, or other means is acceptable. A list of questions will be asked and may include things such as:

- If you could be anything you wanted in 5 years, what would that be? Why?
- What do want to learn to do most?
- Do you like school? Why or Why not? What can we change to make it a good experience for you?
- Why is being a contributing member of society important?

The applicant has the right to ask questions anytime about the YEIP during the interview.

## Acceptance

Once accepted into the YEIP, a date for admission will be established. The applicant becomes the participant; yeah! Necessary documents will be sent to the guardian to be completed by the guardian



and/or new participant if not already completed. These include a detailed personal belongings inventory form for everything the participant is bringing with them. A copy of the handbook will be emailed to the guardian and the applicant for review if not provided at the end of the interview. The guardian will be required to provide necessary documentation at this time such as birth certificate, social security card, immunization records, allergy information, school records, and court documents.

### Participation Contract & Expectations

After being offered a spot in the YEIP, applicants will be required to review policies, expectations, and sign an agreement contract.

### Admittance

The personal belonging form items will be reviewed during the admittance process. Completion of a 30-day program plan will be completed. A bed will be assigned, and the initial Phase will begin. Staff will schedule initial medical, dental, and optometry appointments as well as psychiatric and psychological assessments. A counselor or therapist will be assigned whom accepts the participant's insurance and any additional self-help groups necessary for success (i.e. AA, NA) will be scheduled. Participant will be enrolled in an appropriate educational program and expected to attend daily. Youth will be allowed the opportunity to ask questions while the handbook is reviewed. Allergies, chores, medications, and other routine issues will be addressed. Any items brought along which staff consider inappropriate for The YEIP (i.e. lighters, weapons) will be collected and stored until participant leaves The YEIP or given to their guardian to dispose of. Participation Agreement will be reviewed thoroughly and signed. The complete process will take approximately 2 hours if items/forms are completed as requested prior to time of admission.

### Observation

During the first seven days the Participant will complete an *Assessments* and *Observation* period.

### Required Services Provided

Services are a combination of requirements by licensing, contracts, and/or earned privileges. Minimum services include but are not limited to shelter, utilities (water, sewer, garbage, electric), landline telephone, basic sustenance (breakfast, lunch, dinner), basic hygiene (soap, shampoo), medical services as authorized by participant's medical insurance, basic clothing as determined by the YEIP program, and transportation to medical appointments either by staff or through participant's medical insurance when available. Earned privileges may include but are not limited to cable, Wi-Fi, cell phones, allowance, incentives, and transportation to other locations such as work and school.

### Phases

There are five (5) progressive phases participants will be placed in. Each phase has minimum requirements, expectations, skills focuses, incentives, and privileges. In extreme cases due to an individual's choices, they may find themselves returned to a lower phase after receiving one verbal reminder from an Executive Administrator.

Participants should expect to participate in individual and group therapy, Alcohol or Narcotics Anonymous Meetings, Behavior Management, and/or other self-help groups as deemed appropriate by professionals and/or staff for their needs. If family reconciliation is a goal, participants can also be

expected to participate in family therapy. Most therapy will be attended off site and provided by someone through the Participant's insurance program.

#### Phase 1: Orientation & Assessment – 2 weeks Minimum

Everyone starts off in the Orientation and Assessment Phase. Staff will spend time getting to know you, observe your behavior and interactions, and complete various assessments. Participants are not being judged but this time allows staff to learn how to best mentor participants to ascertain their needs and determine a course of actions to achieve success in both the YEIP and life. During this time, participants are restricted to the residence except while at an appointment or school, or otherwise determined by Executive Leadership and in the presence of assigned staff. Participants will be working with staff to set goals and create a graduation plan. Medical, dental, and/or optometry screenings will be scheduled immediately.

#### Phase 2: Real World Life Skills – 30 days Minimum

During Phase 2, participants will focus on life skills and acclimating to their educational program. Activities will include how to properly clean bathroom, kitchen, et al. Youth will begin earning points by attending class, completing workshops, attending appointments, and even doing their homework. These points will be used to “pay” for their “rent” and other necessities as a way to teach how to budget and earn for bills.

This part of The YEIP is set up for successful completion; however, each week is a new start to try again if participants struggle. Completion of this stage is a major component of the basic graduation requirement. It is meant as a time for participants to show that they can consistently complete tasks to specific expectations. During subsequent stages, the choice to not complete tasks appropriately may have positive or negative consequences such as earning an “allowance”, points, or additional privileges. Participants will be opening a savings account, volunteering within the community, able to participate in extracurricular activities at school, and utilizing the local library and/or gym.

#### Phase 3: Self Discovery & Advocacy - 30 days Minimum

Phase 3 is a time where participants will focus on learning about themselves and what they want. Youth will learn and explore different hobbies, sports, games, and/or activities. Participants will complete exercises on self-discovery, explore their values, recognize their personal values, and practice critical learning problem solving skills while to address real world issues that they might encounter. Activities will also include job search and higher education.

This phase is anticipated to be the longest Phase but Executive Leadership of the Youth Empowerment Integration Program feels that this is the most critical of all the phases. Participants in this phase may be allowed more freedoms such as an extended curfew and additional privilege assigned based on the participant's individualize program plan. Normalcy activities will also be increased.

#### Phase 4: Community Connections – 30 days Minimum

By Phase 4, Participants should be working with a focus on their education. They may continue to work on some Phase 3 items and will begin to explore opportunities to volunteer or be otherwise involved within the community based on the participant's individualized program plan. Successful completion of this Phase is required for Honors Graduation.

## Phase 5: Graduation – 30 days Minimum

Yeah! You've made to Phase 5! We strongly encourage youth to transition to a Supervised Independent Living Program and to utilize their college fund or attend a trade school. Participants will be creating a plan to transition out of The YEIP include new housing, employment, and transportation. They will learn how to access medical independently and how to interact with the medical staff.

### Levels

Participants are assigned levels by their guardian program (i.e. CPS) based on the needs and behaviors of individual clients. General requirements that the Youth Empowerment Integration Program may be required to include are:

#### Basic

Program participants showing that the need little to no reminders to complete daily tasks, attend to responsibilities independently such as school or work, and do not exhibit behavior issues are usually assigned a basic level.

The Basic Service Level consists of a supportive setting, preferably in a family, that is designed to maintain or improve the child's functioning, including (Youth for Tomorrow, 2018):

- Routine guidance and supervision to ensure the child's safety and sense of security;
  - Affection, reassurance, and involvement in activities appropriate to the child's age and development to promote the child's well-being;
  - Contact, in a manner that is deemed in the best interest of the child, with family members and other persons significant to the child to maintain a sense of identity and culture; and
  - Access to therapeutic, habilitative, and medical intervention and guidance from professionals or paraprofessionals, on an as-needed basis, to help the child maintain functioning appropriate to the child's age and development.
1. A child whose characteristics include one or more of the following:
    - A. Transient difficulties and occasional misbehavior;
    - B. Acting out in response to stress, but episodes of acting out are brief; and
    - C. Behavior that is minimally disturbing to others, but the behavior is considered typical for the child's age and can be corrected.
  2. A child with developmental delays or mental retardation whose characteristics include minor to moderate difficulties with conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills.

#### Moderate

Those considered moderate level require a higher level of care.

The Moderate Service Level consists of a structured supportive setting, preferably in a family, in which most activities are designed to improve the child's functioning including (Youth for Tomorrow, 2018):

1. More than routine guidance and supervision to ensure the child's safety and sense of security;
2. Affection, reassurance, and involvement in structured activities appropriate to the child's age and development to promote the child's well-being;
3. Contact, in a manner that is deemed in the best interest of the child, with family members and other persons significant to the child to maintain a sense of identity and culture; and

4. Access to therapeutic, habilitative, and medical intervention and guidance from professionals or paraprofessionals to help the child attain or maintain functioning appropriate to the child's age and development.
- A. In addition to the description in subsection (a) of this section, a child with primary medical or habilitative needs may require intermittent interventions from a skilled caregiver who has demonstrated competence.
    1. A child whose characteristics include one or more of the following:
      - A. Frequent non-violent, anti-social acts;
      - B. Occasional physical aggression;
      - C. Minor self-injurious actions; and
      - D. Difficulties that present a moderate risk of harm to self or others.
    2. A child who abuses alcohol, drugs, or other consciousness-altering substances whose characteristics include one or more of the following:
      - Substance abuse to the extent or frequency that the child is at-risk of substantial problems; and
        - A. A historical diagnosis of substance abuse or dependency with a need for regular community support through groups or similar interventions.
    3. A child with developmental delays or mental retardation whose characteristics include:
      - Moderate to substantial difficulties with conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills to include daily living and self-care; and
        - A. Moderate impairment in communication, cognition, or expressions of affect.
    4. A child with primary medical or habilitative needs, whose characteristics include one or more of the following:
      - A. Occasional exacerbations or intermittent interventions in relation to the diagnosed medical condition;
      - B. Limited daily living and self-care skills;
      - C. Ambulatory with assistance; and
      - D. Daily access to on-call, skilled caregivers with demonstrated competence.

### Specialized

The majority of participants in the Youth Empowerment Integration Program are anticipated to be assigned to the Specialized care levels.

The Specialized Service Level consists of a treatment setting, preferably in a family, in which caregivers have specialized training to provide therapeutic, habilitative, and medical support and interventions including (Youth for Tomorrow, 2018):

- 24-hour supervision to ensure the child's safety and sense of security, which includes close monitoring and increased limit setting;
- Affection, reassurance, and involvement in therapeutic activities appropriate to the child's age and development to promote the child's well-being;
- Contact, in a manner that is deemed in the best interest of the child, with family members and other persons significant to the child to maintain a sense of identity and culture; and

- Therapeutic, habilitative, and medical intervention and guidance that is regularly scheduled and professionally designed and supervised to help the child attain functioning appropriate to the child's age and development.
- In addition to the description in subsection (a) of this section, a child with primary medical or habilitative needs may require regular interventions from a caregiver who has demonstrated competence.

**A child whose characteristics include one or more of the following:**

- A. Unpredictable non-violent, anti-social acts;
- B. Frequent or unpredictable physical aggression;
- C. Being markedly withdrawn and isolated;
- D. Major self-injurious actions to include recent suicide attempts; and
- E. Difficulties that present a significant risk of harm to self or others.

**A child who abuses alcohol, drugs, or other conscious-altering substances whose characteristics include one or more of the following:**

- A. Severe impairment because of the substance abuse; and
- B. A primary diagnosis of substance abuse or dependency.

**(3) A child with developmental delays or mental retardation whose characteristics include one or more of the following:**

- A. Severely impaired conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills to include daily living and self-care;
- B. severe impairment in communication, cognition, or expressions of affect;
- C. Lack of motivation or the inability to complete self-care activities or participate in social activities;
- D. Inability to respond appropriately to an emergency; and
- E. Multiple physical disabilities including sensory impairments.

**A child with primary medical or habilitative needs whose characteristics include one or more of the following:**

- A. Regular or frequent exacerbations or interventions in relation to the diagnosed medical condition;
- B. Severely limited daily living and self-care skills;
- C. Non-ambulatory or confined to a bed; and
- D. Constant access to on-site, medically skilled caregivers with demonstrated competencies in the interventions needed by children in their care.

**Intensive**

**The Intense Service Level consists of a high degree of structure, preferably in a family, to limit the child's access to environments as necessary to protect the child. The caregivers have specialized training to provide intense therapeutic and habilitative supports and interventions with limited outside access, including (Youth for Tomorrow, 2018):**

- 24-hour supervision to ensure the child’s safety and sense of security, which includes frequent one-to-one monitoring with the ability to provide immediate on-site response.
- Affection, reassurance, and involvement in therapeutic activities appropriate to the child’s age and development to promote the child’s well-being;
- Contact, in a manner that is deemed in the best interest of the child, with family members and other persons significant to the child, to maintain a sense of identity and culture;
- Therapeutic, habilitative, and medical intervention and guidance that is frequently scheduled and professionally designed and supervised to help the child attain functioning more appropriate to the child’s age and development; and
- Consistent and frequent attention, direction, and assistance to help the child attain stabilization and connect appropriately with the child’s environment.
- In addition to the description in subsection (a) of this section, a child with developmental delays or mental retardation needs professionally directed, designed and monitored interventions to enhance mobility, communication, sensory, motor, and cognitive development, and self-help skills.

(c) In addition to the description in subsection (a) of this section, a child with primary medical or habilitative needs requires frequent and consistent interventions. The child may be dependent on people or technology for accommodation and require interventions designed, monitored, or approved by an appropriately constituted interdisciplinary team.

**A child needing intense services has severe problems in one or more areas of functioning that present an imminent and critical danger of harm to self or others. The children needing intense services may include:**

1. a child whose characteristics include one or more of the following:
  - A. Extreme physical aggression that causes harm;
  - B. Recurring major self-injurious actions to include serious suicide attempts;
  - C. Other difficulties that present a critical risk of harm to self or others; and
  - D. Severely impaired reality testing, communication skills, cognitive, affect, or personal hygiene.
2. A child who abuses alcohol, drugs, or other conscious-altering substances whose characteristics include a primary diagnosis of substance dependency in addition to being extremely aggressive or self-destructive to the point of causing harm.
3. A child with developmental delays or mental retardation whose characteristics include one or more of the following:
  - Impairments so severe in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills that the child’s ability to actively participate in The YEIP is limited and requires constant one-to-one supervision for the safety of self or others; and
    - A. A consistent inability to cooperate in self-care while requiring constant one-to-one supervision for the safety of self or others.
4. A child with primary medical or habilitative needs that present an imminent and critical medical risk whose characteristics include one or more of the following:
  - Frequent acute exacerbations and chronic, intensive interventions in relation to the diagnosed medical condition;
    - A. Inability to perform daily living or self-care skills; and
    - B. 24-hour on-site, medical supervision to sustain life support.

### Length of Stay

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program can be worked in as short as 6 months or as long as two years, with an extension of up to one additional year; however, participants must be 18 years of age to successfully graduate the YEIP and graduate from an approved educational program.

### Monthly Participant Meeting

Participants should hold at least one house meeting per month in which at least 50% of the total house is in attendance with a sign-in sheet and minutes. If invited, staff may attend. This is meant to be a time for youth to speak among themselves regarding issues that they wish to bring to administration's attention.

### Weekly House Meeting

A weekly house meeting will be held and may be run by either staff or participants. Participants are expected to make a minimum of three of the four meetings per month unless at work or an approved appointment (i.e. medical appointment)

### Complaint

Complaints are used for allegations of discrimination in regards to race, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability or allegations of retaliation.

### Informal Administrative Conference

The individual with the complaint should present their complaint to the lowest level LCCA.

\*\*\*If unable to resolve\*\*\*

### Level One Complaint – Lowest level administrator

Submit complaint form to the campus/department with 15 days of the informal conference and/or incident/event that is the cause of the complaint. A hearing will be set within 10 days. The YEIP Director hearing the complaint will respond in writing within 10 days. The complainant has 10 days to appeal to the Executive Director after receiving the response.

\*\*\*If unable to resolve\*\*\*

### Level Two Complain – Executive Director

Submit complaint form to the Executive Director within 10 days after receiving the Level One response. A hearing will be set within 10 days. A written response will be provided within 10 days of the hearing. The complainant has 10 days to appeal the complete after receiving the response.

\*\*\*If unable to resolve\*\*\*

### Level Three Complaint – Board of Trustees

Submit complaint for to the Board of Trustees within 10 days after receiving the Level Two response. The Board places the matter on the agenda for the next Board meeting and informs the complainant in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing. The Board may or may not take action.

### Grievance

A grievance is meant to address a protected issue such as discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, et al.

If you have a grievance against a participant,

1. speak to participant directly,
2. speak to staff for intervention,
3. written request to Services Coordinator with 48-hour resolution via mediation.

If you have a grievance against staff,

1. seek clarification directly to/from staff,
2. inform 3<sup>rd</sup> party staff who will report to Program Manager and initiate mediation with participant and staff in question,
3. follow up with Program Manager regarding resolution. If need, Program Manager may refer to Executive Director for further mediation.

## Unsuccessful Discharges

There are many reasons that a participant may be involuntarily (unsuccessfully) discharged from the Youth Empowerment Integration Program. These reasons may include but are not limited to: drug and alcohol abuse, illegal activities, threats and/or acts of physical violence, repeated refusal to follow Graduation Plan and repeated disregard for the program norms and expectations which indicates a need for a higher level of structure. In the event of an involuntary discharge, the guardian or parent will be notified. You may appeal the status of your discharge in writing to the Executive Director.

## Policies

Policies are designed to clarify expectations, avoid the appearance of favoritism, and maintain consistent expectations. Policies may be changed, deleted, or adjusted as necessary. Some policies are required by law, contract, or for safety reasons.

### Assessment Policy

To assure success, The YEIP will complete several assessments upon admission into The YEIP and throughout The YEIP. These will assess the services needed by participants but will also assure that The YEIP is meeting participant needs.

### Background Check Policy

All staff, contactors, subcontractors, and volunteers will complete state and federal background checks as required by law.

### Curfew Policy

Curfews are set as part of safety protocol. Participants are expected to adhere to their assigned curfew. Special occasions and/or individualized program plans may extend curfews for some participants and not for others. Participant behavior and attitude significantly will affect assigned curfew times.

### Chores Policy

All participants are required to participate in site chores as part of the life skills curriculum. If you are not going to be there during chore time, please speak with staff to assure you have a plan on how to get your chore completed without asking someone else to do it for you. Chore time will be posted as part of the daily schedule.



### Code of Conduct Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program expects participants to behave in a respectful manner. It will be unacceptable for participants to steal (take things without permission) from anyone or to threaten others in any way., The Code does not define all types and aspects of behavior but includes an appreciation for the rights of others. The Youth Empowerment Integration Program is committed to helping every participant fulfill his or her intellectual, social, physical and emotional potential; to foster an orderly and distraction-free environment whenever possible. Any conduct that causes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in or material interference with any Program function, activity, or purpose, or that interferes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will interfere with the health, safety, or well-being or the rights of others is prohibited.

### Restriction Policy

Participants who break the rules may be placed on Restriction or “grounded” by staff. This may be a result of disciplinary action.

### Documentation Policy

Participants should remember that pursuant to licensing staff are required to document positive and negative behaviors and interactions. This includes things reported by the school or community individuals.

### Food

All food should be eaten in designated areas, specifically the dining room and/or kitchen. On special occasions, treats may be eaten in the living room.

### House Rules

House rules are posted. Please abide by them to avoid disciplinary action.

### Mandated Reporting Policy

Staff and Volunteers are Mandated Reporters and must report specific situations to authorities.

### Confidentiality & HIPAA Policies

The YEIP abides by HIPAA for confidentiality. Per HIPAA, Participant health information will only be shared with appropriate persons. Staff will not share information with Participants about other Participants unless directed by Executive Leadership staff.

### Cultural Policy

Today, culture is such a broad term. Not only does it reflect different religious, ethnic, and social groups. It describes shared values, goals and practices of an organization and includes belief systems and values (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018).

### Non-discrimination Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, gender, religious creed, sexual orientation, and in some cases religion or political beliefs in its programs, services, or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

### Discipline and Natural Consequences Policy

The YEIP follows the state requirements. Discipline (Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 2018) must be: 1) Individualized and consistent for each child; 2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and 3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following: 1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior; 2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements; 3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and 4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age. There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child.

The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited: 1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment; 2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training; 3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child; 4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument; 5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth; 6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child; 7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language; 8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed or open; and 9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Discipline may include natural consequences or restrictions.

### Dress Code Policy

The dress code for participants should include pants properly sitting at the waist; not baggy or saggy pants. Shorts must come to the knee without being baggy. Shoes, socks, or slippers should be worn indoors at all times; shower shoes or flip-flops should be worn in the shower for health purposes. Clothing should be free of holes, rips, or tears; should not have inappropriate language, wording, logos, messages, or advertising. Shirts or undershirts should be worn at all times except in private or while participating in activities such as swimming or bathing. Shoes must be fastened appropriately. House shoes and/or slippers are not to be worn off site. No lending or sharing of clothes, shoes, etc.

### Clothing

When participant is in need of clothing, they should notify their CPS case manager and Executive Leadership. If the case manager is unable to obtain clothing or a gift card to purchase clothing, Executive Leadership will authorize funds to purchase necessities such as underwear, socks, shoes, jeans, shirts, and/or coats; items will be of reasonable cost. A Donation Closet will be established for extra clothing available to those in need. Items should be logged file as personal belongings.

### Driving Policy

To encourage normalcy, any participant wishing to complete a driver's education course may do so depending upon which Phase they are assigned. Participants owning vehicles must carry the state minimum insurance and provide The YEIP with proof of insurance; vehicles will not be driven by anyone unless they hold a valid state driver's license, with staff permission, and are covered by insurance.

### Drug and Alcohol Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program is a drug-free and alcohol-free program. Drugs are defined as any stimulant; intoxicant; nervous system depressant, hallucinogen, or any other chemical or plant substance, compound, or combination thereof used to induce an altered state unless prescribed by a licensed physician to a specific individual and will not be shared. Participants will refrain from consuming, manufacturing, possessing, and or selling of any illegal substances and/or alcohol.

Participants entering The YEIP with a history of drug and/or alcohol use, sales, or possession must agree to actively participate in an appropriate program and/or support group as indicated on their graduation, care, and/or placement plan. Games of chance, drinking games, contests, and other activities that induce, encourage, or result in the rapid consumption of alcohol are prohibited. We reserve the right to test for drugs and/or alcohol.

The manufacture, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs, any involvement in illegal drug use or traffic, and possession or use of highly addictive drugs are among the drug violations considered to be most serious. Participants manufacturing, selling, or distributing illegal drugs should expect a lengthy separation and/or expulsion from the YEIP. Participants possessing, using, selling, or manufacturing illegal substances may also be subject to mandatory penalties prescribed by the state including but not limited to detention or jail.

Initial violations will be addressed during an emergency meeting with appropriate staff. Additional violations of this policy may lead to immediate expulsion from Program as this constitutes an extremely unsafe environment for staff and other participants.

#### Smoking Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program is a Smoke Free campus including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, e-cigarettes and vapes. However, staff may smoke on scheduled breaks or during meal times away from the facility and/or in their personal vehicle. Staff are responsible for policing their cigarette butts and other materials and disposing them in appropriately.

#### Education Policy

Education is a primary focus of The Youth Empowerment Program. Education includes but is not limited to High School, GED, Alternative School, and/or College courses. Education includes hands on life skills. All participants should expect to be enrolled and actively participating in some form of structured educational program.

#### Electronics Policy

The possession and use of any electronic device is an earned privilege, not a right. Cell phones should be turned off while in class, meetings, or workshops. Social media should be appropriately used. The YEIP will not be responsible for any damage to, loss, or theft of any electronic device. Devices including cell phones may be confiscated or collected if left unattended or utilized in any manner that is believed to be prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. The YEIP shall have the right to determine the appropriate use of electronic devices. Participants will not record or photo staff or other Participants without consent of Executive Administrative staff and only under certain conditions. Any participant refusing to relinquish electronic upon request of staff is subject to disciplinary penalties.

## Headphones

When listening to music, please wear headphones. Others may not want to hear it. If you are on the phone, please make sure that the volume of your voice is low so as not to disturb others.

## Video Games and Movies

If you have a video game system, it should remain in your room unless it being utilized as a group activity and has been approved by staff in advance. All video games and movies should be rated age appropriate according to the ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board, n.d.) and/or approved by staff. YEIP does not accept any responsibility for personal items or electronics including video games or consoles even if being used as a group activity.

## Landline and Cell Phone Use

A landline is available during posted hours. Calls should remain appropriate and not distract or interfere with other activities in the area. If used inappropriately, limits may be imposed such as under staff supervision only. A cell phone is an earned privilege. At room time it should be plugged in and the ringer should be turned off. If there is an emergency after hours that requires you to receive a call, the caller should contact the staff phone. If staff have requested that a cell phone be turned in to them, it is expected that participants comply immediately. If not compliant, guardian may be contacted, and/or disciplinary action imposed. Residents will assure that staff have their current cell phone number at all times and answer their phones when called by staff.

## Computer Use

Staff computers cannot be used by participants unless under direct supervision and observance and for specific purposes (such as filing taxes). Participants with personal computers see Electronics Policy.

## Mail

Participants are encouraged to correspond with friends and family. Mail will be distributed to participants but opening of items in the presence of staff may be requested if there is any concern about contraband such as drugs, alcohol, or other inappropriate items. Electronic mail will be printed and provided to participant with every effort to maintain confidentiality and privacy.

## Gifts

Participants have the right to give and receive gifts. Items should be listed on personal property log. Inappropriate items may be confiscated and given to case worker.

## Employment Policy

Depending on which phase a participant is in, they will be encouraged to seek employment during the summer and/or on a part-time basis during the school year. However, this cannot interfere with education goals and is considered an earned privilege. A copy of the participant's schedule should be printed out for their file and their schedule placed on the Transportation Board; participant may use their phone to take a photo of the posted schedule at work and email it to staff to be printed. Transportation may not be provided if a schedule is not turned in to staff.

## Emergencies

Remain calm. Stop, look, and listen for staff instructions. Follow all staff directives. Remember that inappropriate behavior can cause major injury to you, your peers, staff, and damage to facility.

## Family Reconciliation Policy

Regardless of whether the participant has a goal to return to their family, the Youth Empowerment Integration Program encourages family involvement and healthy relationships whenever possible. Family may be required to complete Volunteer Application in order to comply with state requirements.

## Field Trip & Transportation Policy

The YEIP expects to have at least one field trip per month pending funding. Whenever possible, Participants will be included in planning of field trip including designation. Seatbelts must be worn correctly whenever in vehicles. Keep noise level to a minimum and hands to yourself. Follow rules and expectations at all times. Exhibit role model behavior at all times.

## Food & Kitchen Policy

When possible, participants should utilize free meal programs at school and/or work. Food should be eaten at designated locations only. Food should not be kept in bedrooms due to pest control concerns and, if found, will be disposed of by staff. Tentative menus will be posted monthly. However, please note that these may change due to participant schedules, emergencies, budget, and newly available donations are received. The YEIP will practice good stewardship by doing its best to utilize any foods donated to The YEIP and minimize waste. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, afternoon snack, and evening snack or dessert will be provided. If you have food allergies or religious requirements, it is your responsibility to notify administration; a list of those with allergies may be posted in the kitchen. Respect tables, chairs, dishes, and eating utensils. Properly dispose of your trash and put your scraped & rinsed dishes in the dishwasher. Food may not be taken into the bedrooms at any time. Eating in living areas not designated for eating (i.e. living room) with special permission of staff only (i.e. movie night).

## Guest and/or Visitor Policy

Having guests or visitors over is a normal part of life. Please do not share information about other participants with peers or guests. You are responsible for their behavior and choices of your guests. Make sure that your guest or visitor is abiding by the rules and expectations. If privacy is needed, for counselor or case worker, please let staff know to make arrangements. Guests should otherwise remain in the common areas unless approved by staff. Please have guests sign into log book.

## Harassment Policy

Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as a physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct affects an individual's ability to participate in any aspect of The YEIP or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive environment; has the purpose or effect of substantially or reasonably interfering with an individual's performance; or otherwise adversely affects an individual's opportunities. Prohibited harassment includes dating violence and may include sexual advances, touching intimate body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature, jokes or conversations of a sexual nature, and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

## Dating Violence Policy

Dating violence occurs when one partner in a dating relationship, either past or current, intentionally uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other partner. Examples of dating may include assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from others and stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors. (Harmony School of Innovation, 2018)

## Bullying & Cyberbullying Policy

Bullying and Cyberbullying means a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more individuals directed at another individual that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing an individual in reasonable harm to the student's person or of damage to an individual's property; is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive education environment for a student; infringes on the rights of the victim. This includes the use of any electronic communication device including the use of cellular, landline or other telephones, computer, camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, any social media application, and internet websites. Bullying and Cyberbullying behaviors are unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action.

## Hygiene Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program will provide basic hygiene items such as its choice of soap, shampoo, razors, and deodorant. Participants are expected to bathe every other day at minimum. Haircuts will be offered periodically. Hair coloring and other body alterations must be approved in advance by Executive Leadership. Only one resident allowed in the bathroom at a time. Deodorant should be worn at all times. Brush teeth and wash face twice daily. Shampoo hair at least twice per week. Fingernails should be neat, clean and not longer than your fingertips without staff approval.

## Incentive Policy

Incentives may be available based on participant Phase, Graduation Plan, timelines, and service plan. These are individualized per participant needs and availability of incentives. These may include a weekly allowance and/or a point store.

## Inclement Weather Policy

In case of emergency, please follow staff directions and remember the discussions during monthly drills. In case of power outage, flashlights can be utilized; Open flames (i.e. matches and lighters) should never be used by participants. In case of evacuation, please follow staff directions.

## Laundry Policy

Participants are responsible to do their own laundry and help with site laundry as assigned. Assigned laundry hours will be posted. Staff can allow exceptions under specific circumstances. Soiled clothing is to be stored in your laundry bag. If you have clothing or linens that have been soiled by urine, feces or vomit, notify staff immediately.

### Life Skills Policy

Life skills will be practiced on a daily basis and will include but are not limited Activities of Daily Living. Staff have been trained for standards to allow consistency between staff; however, there is some latitude based on staff judgement. Activities of Daily Living are defined as “activities usually performed in the course of a normal day in a person's life, such as eating, toileting, dressing, bathing, or brushing the teeth.” (Mosby's Medical Dictionary, 8th edition, 2009)

### Locked Storage Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program will provide some means of locked storage for participants to utilize such as a locker or lock box.

### Storage Policy

Storage space is extremely limited. Therefore, the participant must make arrangements for all items to be retrieved within 30 days of exit date; otherwise, items will be recycled or donated.

### Meal Policy

Provided meals and snacks are provided at scheduled times as posted. Whenever possible participants will utilize free meal programs. In the event that a participant does not like what is served, a simple alternative will be provided such as a peanut butter sandwich. If a participant is allergic to a food, it should be disclosed at admission and either will not be served or an equivalent alternative will be provided. Participants are of an age and maturity that they should take a level of responsibility to avoid allergens.

### Medication Policy

All medications must be kept locked. This includes over-the-counter or non-prescription medications, mouthwash, blister packs, alternative remedies, creams, or self-administered medications.

### Normalcy Policy

Whenever possible the Youth Empowerment Integration Program encourages normalcy. Participant may be required to reach a particular Phase, be assessed at a particular state level, provide verifiable information, reach a specific age, and/or have CPS/Guardian approval.

### Office Policy

Participants should knock and be invited into the office. Participants should not be in the office unattended at any time.

### Overnight Visits Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program encourages normalcy. Whether having a guest overnight or staying over with a friend, state and federal guidelines will be followed. At minimum, the participant will need to provide friend's name, address, friend's phone number, and parent's phone number at least 24 hours in advance and will be verified with an adult at address provided.

If going on an overnight visit with staff, staff shall sleep separately. The Overnight Trip form will be completed including purpose, location and return information.

### Participation Policy

One of the admission requirements is for individuals to agree to and sign a Participation Agreement. To graduate from the YEIP, youth must participate in workshops, life skills, therapy, meetings, education, and other activities.

### Personal Property Policy

All personal property should be listed on a participant's Personal Property form and filed with the office. If an item is claimed by someone else and it is not listed on either person's personal property form, the item will be confiscated. Upon discharge, the form may be utilized to review items participant is taking with them. Items deemed inappropriate, illegal or offensive may be confiscated and returned to case worker including but not limited to weapons and lighters.

### Pet Policy

Having a pet is a privilege and may be considered as part of a Participant's Honors Graduation Plan.

### Photographs Policy

Participants are encouraged to authorize being photographed. It will allow The YEIP to share success stories, scrapbooks, and creating memories. Photographs of peers are allowed only upon consent of said peer.

### Pornography Policy

All pornography is unacceptable. This includes but is not limited to photos and suggestive wording, whether from you or of anyone else. Please note that sending inappropriate photographs by phone is against the law, is unacceptable, and may result in disciplinary action.

### Prohibited Behaviors

The following is a list of prohibited behaviors:

- handholding or kissing a housemate
- sexual gestures
- horseplay
- gang signs, language, or tagging
- cursing, negative written comments, or glorifying past criminal behaviors
- putting others down
- violence
- anything that violates someone physically, emotionally, socially, or sexually

### Quiet Time and Lights out Policy

Quiet time will start 10 pm each evening before school; on other nights it will begin at 11 pm each evening. This will allow anyone attending events or work quiet for sleep. Each participant should have their entire body including feet on their bed. No talking after lights out.

### Religious Policy

The Youth Empowerment Integration Program encourages Participants to participate in their choice of religious programs, or to not participate. Transportation will be provided whenever possible.



### Be Respectful

Do not enter another participant's room without staff permission. No writing on walls. Blankets should remain in bedrooms. No inappropriate gestures.

### Review of File Policy

Participants may request an appointment to review of their file at any time in writing with Executive Leadership.

### Routine Medical and Dental Care Policy

Initial medical and dental appointments will be scheduled within 3 business days of participant's enrollment into YEIP or according to contract guidelines whichever comes first. Whenever possible, a records request will be completed to obtain former medical and dental records so that the current professionals have as much history as possible.

### Riding Policy

Participants are free to ride with any friend whose name, home address, phone number, driver's license, and insurance are on file. Anytime a participant rides in a vehicle, they are expected to honor all local, state, and federal laws including but not limited to wearing of safety belts.

### Room Searches Policy

Rooms will be searched only with reasonable cause. The participant will be informed of the reason for any room search. A formal search by staff must be approved with the Executive Director or on call administration (if unable to reach Executive Director), except in the case of an immediate and clear emergency or danger to safety and health i.e. possession of a firearm.

The participant should be given the opportunity to open drawers, luggage, etc., as required, during the room search. In the absence of reasonable cause for such action is prohibited. A participant who believes this policy to have been violated may appeal directly to the executive director. The appeal should be in written form and should be presented within five business days of the actual occurrence.

Two staff should be present during the search. If participant refuses entrance for staff to search, staff will document suspicion, reason for suspicion, and participant's refusal including specific wording or descriptive behaviors.

### Signing in/out Policy

Each time a Participant leaves they should sign out. This includes when leaving campus with staff, going to school, or leaving the yard.

### Transportation Policy

The YEIP is required to transport to medical appointments or other location required by contracts. School transportation will be provided if other transportation is not available. Participants missing the school bus will be required to work off the cost of the ride.

Transportation to work will be provided depending on Participant's Phase and other factors. Transportation to other locations, such as the mall, will be providing as staff deem appropriate for Life Skills depending upon Phase and other factors. Participants should be sure to write all requests for transportation on either the appointment (include work) calendar or the activities (i.e. mall, bank) calendar. As mentioned, the appointment calendar takes precedence.

### Vehicle Policy

Approved staff may drive vehicles as assigned for business purposes. Participants will only be allowed to drive Program vehicles with approval from insurance company and Executive Director but will require participant to have legal driving permit and pay for their own insurance.

### Volunteering and Community Involvement Policy

Participants will be required to participate in community volunteering projects that may include activities such as park trash clean up.

### Safety Policy

Safety is something staff and participants should always keep in mind. Knives, guns, lighters, candles, any type of other weapon, and/or item that presents a safety issue is prohibited. Failure to follow policy may result in disciplinary action. Item will be confiscated and provided to guardian for safekeeping.

### Solicitation Policy

Participants will not solicit for donations without Executive Leadership consent which includes specific goals or purpose for solicitation. Failure to follow policy may result in disciplinary action.

### Individualized Program Plan

Each participant will have an individualize program plan in which they will have input. This helps to guide and is a combination of wants and needs. It can be adjusted and is an essential part of the graduation plan.

### Post High School Education

Participants choosing to remain in The YEIP after completing their high school level program are required to attend a post high school program but may be required to provide their own transportation depending upon the location of the educational facility.

### Job Readiness

One of the graduation requirements includes having some type of employment plan.

### Reporting to Legal Guardian or Parent

Monthly reports to Parent or Legal Guardian may be verbal or written. Informal quarterly written reports will be provided within 14 days following the end of each quarter.

### Graduation Requirements

To successfully graduate from the YEIP, participants must meet graduation requirements. Graduation can be basic or honors.

### Involuntary Exit

In rare occasion, participants may decide to not honor the Participant Agreement. In such a case, the participant will be found no longer appropriate for this program and will be involuntarily removed from the YEIP. Whenever possible, all exits will be provided boxes and/or duffle bags for move day.

### Follow Ups

After graduating from the Youth Empowerment Integration Program, participants agree to allow staff to complete follow ups at 30, 90 and 180 days.

### Alumni Incentives

Graduates are encouraged to mentor incoming participants and volunteer on campus.

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