

Basic Information

The program at YDC is administered by a group of highly-skilled, team-oriented staff. We subscribe to the principles of trauma-informed care using the Sanctuary Model and BARJ (Balanced and Restorative Justice).

We provide shelter for dependent and adjudicated youth whose circumstances require they be held in a short-term, closely supervised, yet non-restricted setting. We see ourselves as a small community that is intended to keep the youth safe and secure, ensure they are treated with respect, and one in which all youth are motivated to begin the process of self-evaluation and betterment.

Routine medical services are provided by licensed board-certified doctors to include physical exams, medication monitoring, and assessment of non-emergency injuries. Dental services are provided for basic dental care.

Youth can also be assured of the following: The right to adequate shelter, food, clothing, and medical care; legal rights governed by DPW regulations Chapter 3800; and the right to both formal and informal education.

Admission Criteria

YDC serves both males and females between the ages of 10-21, who are referred to us by either Juvenile Probation or the Office of Children, Youth and Families.

Although lengths of stay vary on an individual basis; generally they are not to exceed 30 days, and provisions must be made by contracting agencies to ensure that youth are not detained unnecessarily or for inordinate amounts of time.

All youth admitted to YDC must be medically healthy and may not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Should a youth arrive at YDC for intake that presents with a medical emergency or appears to be under the influence, as assessed by a YDC staff member, he or she must be cleared by the proper authorities of all infirmities or influences prior to admission.

Our Mission
To provide a safe and secure environment which enables residents to develop and strengthen their emotional, social, intellectual and life skills to build a foundation for future success.

Our Vision
Residents of the Youth Development Center will become healthy, responsible citizens.

The York County Youth Development Center (YDC) is owned by the County of York.

The Center is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare.

York
County
Youth
Development
Center
3564 Heindel Road
York, PA 17402



The staff at YDC embrace the Sanctuary Model as our method for helping clients and their families through this difficult time in their lives. We recognize that each child is unique and brings with them a past that has included trauma. Staff also believe that the disruption of the home setting and separation of parent and child causes additional trauma. We're here to support our clients and families towards a better future.

YDC is a Sanctuary Program which means we operate as a community. Our knowledge of human nature, how people heal from trauma, the power of communities, and the chaotic nature of change are considered in every aspect of our program. Administration, staff, and residents all affect each other and rely on each other to create a healthy environment. In the Sanctuary Model there are Seven Commitments, a S.E.L.F. Model, and various other "tools" that we use to establish how we interact with one another, problem solve, learn new skills, and maintain a safe environment.

A Sanctuary community uses the **S.E.L.F.** Model as a tool to maintain a shared language which keeps everyone on the same page. Staff will be using this model when they intervene or process with you.

S = Safety - Being safe physically (outside of your body), psychologically (inside your body), socially (with others) and morally (doing what is right).

E = Emotional Management - is handling your feelings without being destructive to yourself or others (giving words for feelings), Neither expressing or suppressing, but managing.

L = Loss - is acknowledging the past, dealing with unresolved grief (saying goodbye), instead of doing what you have always done, and getting those same old results (doing away with old dysfunctional patterns and learning new/healthier patterns).

F = Future - Preparing for change, envisioning a different future, establishing the capacity for choice.

SEVEN COMMITMENTS:

Non-violence: Our environment must be safe. This includes being safe physically (outside), emotionally (inside), socially (with others), and morally (doing the right thing). Violence of every kind (verbal and physical aggression, sexual acting out, racism, sexism, etc.) must be exposed, discussed, and eliminated.

Emotional Intelligence: Everyone needs to manage their emotions. Conflicts must be talked about, not acted out. Feelings and emotions need to be brought up, discussed, and managed.

Inquiry and Social Learning: We must find solutions to our problems. Sometimes it's necessary to learn new solutions to get more positive results. Allow oneself the freedom to make mistakes when trying new solutions. We share and respect the ideas of our community members.

Shared Governance: Everyone's voice is important, so decision making is shared. Having a voice that is heard gives you a sense of power. This commitment is important to the survival and growth of all the other commitments.

Open Communication: We can say what we mean but we can't be mean when we say it. When we are committed to open communication, we can effectively work out our problems, resolve conflict, and support each other.

Social Responsibility: You're accountable for your own actions. Everyone needs to be responsible for their actions and how they affect the community. We all contribute to the organization's culture.

Growth and Change: You must be willing to learn new things. We are creating hope for our clients and ourselves.

ADDITIONAL "TOOLS"

Community Meetings take place at least twice per day, and allows an opportunity for the group to come together and take a pulse of the community before beginning a shift. Staff and clients model caring for one another, setting goals, while supporting each other with their goals.

Safety Plans list activities from which staff and clients can choose when feeling overwhelmed so that they can avoid engaging in unsafe behavior. Everyone needs help in regulating their emotions at times.

Team meetings are active and focused meetings conducted twice per month by staff. Everyone is expected to contribute, share their insights, and generate new ideas. We encourage all staff to feel comfortable talking and listening. It's an open forum for addressing concerns, discussing projects, and communicate new initiatives.

Red Flag meetings are held to address critical incidents or to identify collective disturbances. They are short and solution-oriented rather than focusing on describing the problem. This tool is based on the idea that many people coming together to address a problem are more likely to come up with innovative solutions.

Psycho-education Groups are done once daily and are facilitated by staff. We use this tool with clients to help them understand the things that have happened to them and the ways their experiences are affecting their current lives. They'll begin to understand their behaviors and emotions in the context of their experiences as well as learn new skills to keep them safe, manage emotions, deal with losses, and work towards a better future. Although the groups are powerfully therapeutic, they do not replace professional therapy.

