



Parent & Caregiver Guide

Orion House, Inc.
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Orionhouse.org

Orion House is an equal opportunity provider.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Director at 603-863-4918. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

Dear Caregivers and Parents,

We have put together this guide to provide some basic information about the Orion House program. We know this experience is likely a stressful one, so if we can do anything to make the process easier, please let us know. If you ever have any questions, please don't hesitate to call and ask!

Faculty

Directors:

Executive Director: Danielle Paranto, M.Ed

Email: principal@granitehillsschool.org

Program Director: Melanie Gioioso, MS in Progress

Email: mgioioso@orionhouse.org

Clinical Staff:

Treatment Coordinator: Michelle Parker, MS

Email: michelle@orionhouse.org

Family and Resident Worker: Barbara Bishop

Email: barbara@orionhouse.org

Resident Care:

Residential Health Care Coordinator: Lisa Brooks

Email: lisa@orionhouse.org

Transition and Education Coordinator: Angie Armstrong

Email: aarmstrong@orionhouse.org

Additionally, **Residential Counselors** work with your children throughout the day. Orion House currently employs 7 Residential Counselors who provide 24-7 care and supervision to the residents.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Orion House will embrace the strengths and acknowledge struggles as we join with youth to promote growth so that each may pursue personal wellbeing and independence.

Orion House Overview

The Orion House is a 17-bed residential group home for male adolescent youth between the ages of 14 and 20. As a recognized Private Non-Medical Institution, the Orion House carries certification by the State of New Hampshire's Department for Children Youth and Families and licensure by the State of New Hampshire's Department of Child Care Licensing. Our services are designated "intermediate" in nature. Youth are typically referred and funded through the Department of Health offices of Child Protection, Juvenile Justice or Behavioral Health and must be committed to personal change and invested in taking personal responsibility for their actions, their treatment and their future. Referrals are screened based upon previous diagnostic assessments as well as their current level of need. Should a youth present as requiring a higher level of need, the referral team is notified of the reason for the denial within 48 hours and provided recommendations based on the Orion House's review of the youth's needs.

Orion House provides a structured and nurturing environment that addresses: behavioral, emotional, familial and adult living needs of the resident. With the use of a treatment team and experienced residential counselors, Orion House offers a trauma informed approach in developing individual skills sets that promote the independence and wellbeing of our residents. Our clinical staff are trained in Cognitive and Dialectical Behavioral Methodologies and our residential counselors are consistently trained in trust-based approaches as well as Handle with Care de-escalation techniques.

Arriving at the Orion House

Prior or upon arriving, the resident and their caregiver will need to fill out an Orion House **Intake Packet**. This packet includes paperwork from Orion House as well as Releases for our local health care providers. Residents and Parents will also be provided the Resident Manual and Parent Handbook that outlines the program and expectations of the house.

The resident is free to bring their personal belongings such as bedding, clothing, hygiene products, etc. However, if the resident needs bedding or hygiene products, we can provide that for them. We do have some items of clothing available should this be a need for your child. All of the items will be inventoried to ensure the resident's personal property is identified.

There are things that the residents cannot have here on their first day. During their first 30 days, they cannot have most electronic devices (televisions, game systems, cell phones). Please do not bring furniture- we unfortunately don't have the space. If you would like to bring the resident food, please stick to bringing only one meal or a few small items.

During the first 30 days of admission, the resident and their caretakers are asked to complete a variety of assessments to help identify treatment goals and objectives in five domains: Safety/behavior, Family/community, Medical/Mental Health, Education and Independent Living. This 30 Day Summary, which includes Recommendations, highlights individualized interventions and techniques for working with the resident. From this the resident's Treatment Plan is developed.

On campus Visits and Telephone calls are encouraged during the first 30 days to help the resident transition smoothly into the house. Once a treatment plan has been agreed upon, arrangements for off campus and home visits can be discussed.

The resident's treatment plan provides current information of skills and needs and identifies goals and objectives to assist the resident in meeting his goals. Orion House incorporates both sociology-oriented and psychology-based treatment interventions. Rehabilitative progress and graduation from our program are directly connected to a resident's successful completion of their individual treatment goals and objectives. Naturally, residents accomplish their objectives and goals at varying paces. Therefore, the length of stay for our youth varies based on their individual needs.

PROGRAM AND SERVICES

C the FuTuRE

...Is an acronym for the Orion House's overview of the programs and services the agency provides. Collectively, C the FuTuRE is an effective methodology that blends both cognitive based therapy and clinical sociology. The delivery of services to youth focuses on five principle domains: Community, Family, Treatment, Residency and Education.

COMMUNITY

At Orion House, serving the youth through our "Community" domain means teaching residents how to engage in their community in a positive way.

Residents are encouraged to find opportunities within the community to assist with developing healthy hobbies and habits. This may include:

- Sports teams
- Employment
- Church
- Support Groups
- Fitness Center
- Community Service

The Orion House works progressively with residents on the development of a Transition Plan. For some residents this includes reunification with their parents and for others this means into adulthood. Orion House provides individual and group supports and services to residents who are planning to transition from the house as an adult. This includes support with finding employment, driver education, college preparedness, as well as education around money management, personal care and medical management.

FAMILY

Orion House strongly believes that in order to assist residents with meeting their goals, the whole family and support system must be included in developing a successful plan.

Family members and support resources are encouraged to keep in contact with residents and the treatment members of the house. Families are able to call daily and are asked to work with the clinical team in developing treatment goals for the resident. Family visits include: on campus, local community, day visit and overnight(s) as appropriate. Family support will be offered as needed.

Identified family and support team members will receive monthly progress reports which provide a summary of the resident's activities for the month and progress notes on the resident's treatment

objectives. Additionally, these same team members will be invited to treatment meetings every 90 days, providing an opportunity to discuss achievements, progress and challenges. During these meetings, the resident's transition plan is reviewed and adjusted based on progress.

THERAPY

As an Intermediate facility, the Orion House provides a Family and Resident Worker who provides both individual and group supports to the residents. Residents receive specialized mental health and psychiatric services through community based mental health providers.

Each resident at Orion House is provided with the following therapeutic services:

- Mentorship and advocacy by a Case Manager
- Milieu Counseling and Behavior Management from a Masters Level Counselor
- Family support as prescribed in the resident's treatment plan
- Group counseling that focuses on emotional regulation, substance awareness and education, transitional goals and skills, and problem solving skills.
- Medication Management that focuses on Distribution of Medication, arrangement and attendance at appointments, education around medication, and over the counter medication management.
- Therapeutic Recreation that focuses on resident's wellbeing and personal health.

Residency

As an intermediate group home, the Orion House provides a home-like setting with 8 bedrooms. Residents typically share a room with another resident and are expected to keep their area clean and remain respectful to their roommate. The house is separated into North and South sides based on the age of the resident as well as identified treatment needs. The house includes one kitchen with a household stove for residents and a commercial stove for house staff. Two dining rooms as well as two living rooms. There is a study lab that includes desktops for residents' use. Staff offices are throughout the house. The outside campus includes a small therapeutic farm with has chickens, rabbits, sheep and donkeys as well as a greenhouse and garden area. Additionally, there is a ball field, basketball hoop and some trails for walking.

A typical day at the Orion House includes Educational Programming, Chores, Study Time, Individual and Group Therapy and then Free Time. Privileges such as later bed times, out of staff supervision, video games, TVs, cell phones, sign outs are afforded based on a resident's ability to maintain daily scores over 75%. These scores are based on the resident's behaviors, actions and decision making throughout the day.

On non-school days and weekends, activities are planned based on resident interest and behavior. Frequent activities include fishing, swimming, hiking, sight-seeing, and community based activities.

Once the resident has been here for 30 days and/or had their first treatment meeting, they can begin to apply for privileges based on their behavior and ability to follow the program expectations. Examples of privileges include: later bedtime, having a TV, video games, the ability to be out of staff supervision, cell phones, sign-outs in the community, among other things.

Education

Education is a major component of treatment at Orion House. In order to reside at our facility, every youth to the best of his ability, must make education a priority. Through a Title I grant that focuses on Drop Out Prevention, residents are afforded a large array of educational supports to include; in-school

behavioral and academic monitoring, individual tutoring and daily study hour from the Orion House's Educational Coordinator.

Should a resident require a more therapeutic and structured environment or have disabilities that require specialized services, the Granite Hill School offers open enrollment for our residents. For more information on the Granite Hill School, you can visit the link below.

Residents who are attending adult learning or preparing for their Hi Set are able to attend classes at the Claremont Adult Learning Center. Residents are also able to attend college courses on line or in person based on a resident's transition plan.

Lastly, the Orion House offers **Independent Living** training throughout a resident's stay at the Orion House. For residents 16 and older, The New Hampshire Trails Independent Living Curriculum is taught several times a week. The Orion House provides opportunities for residents to cook, budget, and learn skills through participatory learning. Residents above the age of 16 are expected to participate in the house's work study program in which direct supervision is provided to assist residents with learning employment skills. Residents who are transitioning to independent living are provided educational programming 20 hours a week on job preparation and attainment, transportation, money management and personal care.

Orion House Behavioral Program

The Orion House's philosophy on behavioral change is based on trauma-informed practices that rely on trust and choice for the resident. All residents are treated with respect regardless of their treatment needs, decisions and behaviors. Throughout the house, all staff have been trained on the importance of developing and utilizing Interventions that build Trust Based Relationships with the residents. This includes having a non-judgmental approach towards the residents, providing them with therapeutic support as needed, and providing them with clear and appropriate limits for their actions. The Orion House has established a Behavior Continuum that outlines Behaviors that are considered inappropriate for the house. This continuum also identifies predictable consequences for poor decision making. The residents are also rewarded for positive decision making through higher privileges such as later bedtimes, less supervision, technology in rooms, cell phones, sign outs in the community.

The Orion House Staff are trained throughout the year on how to pro-actively and safely support residents who may struggle to manage their emotions and behaviors. As part of our goal to handle each resident with care, Orion House utilizes supportive techniques that are intended to help de-escalate and regulate the resident's emotions and actions. These techniques have proven successful in eliminating the use of physical management or seclusion. Orion House will only utilize physical management if a resident is being unsafe to himself or others. The Orion House is trained in the approved Handle with Care Techniques that provide residents and staff with a safe and therapeutic response to physically keeping a resident safe. Should an incident of this nature occur, parents/guardians and state workers will be notified immediately. Under no circumstances will the Orion House utilize physical management or seclusion as a form of punishment.

Orion House documents behaviors or incidents of concern with either a Behavioral Report which is internally communicated, an Incident Report which typically has a consequence attached and is reported to parents and team members within 48 business hours or a Critical Incident Report, which is communicated to all team members within 24 hours. Should a resident feel he has been unfairly treated, the Orion House has an established grievance procedure that allows residents to safely, confidentially and

without retaliation constructively communicate their concern. The **Grievance Procedure** which is outlined in the Resident Manual includes a step by step process for the residents to follow.

After all incidents, residents are expected to complete a processing discussion about their behaviors. This discussion may be in the moment or it may occur when the resident is ready to reflect on the incident. In this process, residents are asked to complete a problem solving analysis that helps identify what the barriers were to managing the incident appropriately. Residents are encouraged to identify replacement options to help break down the barriers so that future challenges can be managed productively.

MEALS

The Orion House works with the USDA and the National Food Program. Residents are provided 5 meals a day and always have access to fruit, vegetables, water and snacks such as peanut butter crackers, pretzels, granola bars, yogurt. Residents are provided breakfast, lunch, 3pm snack, dinner and a 7pm snack each day. Residents are encouraged to eat a balanced diet and participate in the development of the menus and meals throughout the day. Should your child had a dietary need please notify our Residential Care Coordinator.

MEDICATIONS

Regarding Medication and Medical Needs, please ensure that the Orion House has accurate medical information for your child. It is very important that we have their insurance information, medications, allergies, medical conditions, etc. Typically, the Orion House will take over getting prescription refills and setting up doctor's appointments. However, if you would prefer to do this yourself, that is fine as well. If you choose to set up doctor's appointments, we just ask that you work with us so we can manage your child's care together while he is at the house.

Please contact our **Residential Care Coordinator, Lisa Brooks**, regarding any matters involving medications or doctor's appointments.

As a final note, Orion House is here to help guide our residents and we look forward to working with you in this process. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns or needs, we are committed to helping your family through this process.

Orion House is immensely proud of the fact that we have been providing effective residential and behavioral services to the youth and families of New Hampshire for more than 40 years. We look forward to serving you as well~

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may

contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.