



# Family Handbook



## The Family's Role

Woodburn Christian Children's Home recognizes that a parents/guardians' involvement in their child's placement is essential to the successful treatment. For this reason, we involve the parents/guardians in many aspects of the child's care. This involvement may range from visits and phone calls with your child to working with the treatment team on discipline issues and treatment goals.

Parents/guardians experiences with their child has given them valuable insight, which can be vital to a child's adjustment and progress. During the initial 30 days of placement you will be asked many questions that pertain to the care and treatment of your child. This information is valuable to WCCH staff members as they are trying to effectively to care for a young person they just met.

Your family's concerns are primary focus for our staff. We will work closely with you to establish goals for your family.

Common problems we have experienced include:

- Parent-child communication
- Setting and/or following limits
- Effective discipline
- Manipulation
- Delinquent behavior
- Anger management
- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse

**We cannot overemphasize the importance of your teamwork with us in accomplishing your goals for your family. Your family’s cooperation and communication will be vital to your child’s progress and your family’s success.**

**Communication with Staff**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to call and talk to the Program Director if they have any questions or concerns. Staff members may also be calling you with question and information concerning your child’s care at WCCH. The Program Director or other staff will visit with you before and after each schedule visit.

**The Staff at WCCH**

House Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director: Hal Rogers

Office Manager: Carol Rogers

Executive Director: Joe Heins

## **Communication with Your Child**

You will have opportunities to communicate with your child during his/her stay at WCCH and we encourage you do so in the appropriate ways. The initial phase of placement requires a significant adjustment and re-orientation.

Therefore, it is our policy at WCCH to limit contact with your child for the first 30 days of placement.

During the first 30 days, we encourage you to call the Program Director for updates on your child. Also, we encourage you to write your child letters, which will be delivered after the initial 30 d Phone calls are the most frequently used form of communication between parents/guardians and your child. We encourage that the parents/guardians place a call at the designated time each week. Please keep all calls positive and that they are with family members.

Mail can also be a very important means of communicating with your child. Children love to receive mail and letters allow the expression of thoughts which verbal communication might otherwise hinder. Money or other valuables should not be sent through the mail because of the risks involved. Also, residents do not have access to email or Facebook during their stay at WCCH.

## **Visits**

Visiting is an important part of the WCCH treatment program. It is through visits that families build relationships, practice new skills and methods of dealing with problems, and evaluate progress. Visits are also a way for you to reconnect with your community and attend events in your community that are important to you (cultural events, your church, school events, etc.). We encourage these visits are spent with family members.

Visits will start after the initial 30 days of placement and are essential to success. Visits will occur every month. Visits may look like the following:

- On campus and supervised (2 hours)
- Off campus (6 hours)
- Off campus (all weekend)
- Off campus (week long)

Visits are intended to work on issues with the family and not be spent with peers, boyfriends, girlfriends, or others who may disrupt in the treatment of your child. Extended family members who want to visit with your child are encouraged to do so during home visits. All residents look forward to these visits and they are not an option. Make sure you have made appropriate measures to accommodate your child's visit.

Close to the end of your child's stay here at WCCH visits may occur more often. When these visits are going well, we will know your child is ready to return home.

Also, we understand that in every family special occasions or circumstances arise, we want to make sure your child gets the opportunity to be a part of these occasions. Please contact the Program Director to discuss these events.

### **Woodburn Christian Children's Home Program**

While at WCCH your child will have development in 4 areas: Physical, Educational, Emotional, and Spiritual.

## **Counseling**

Each child attends individual and group Christian counseling sessions. The program incorporates a three-tier counseling methodology. Each tier reflects different intervention strategies rooted in goal-driven Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Trauma Focused CBT. Each child's progress is reviewed weekly during treatment team meetings with counselors, houseparents, and administrative staff. Goals and objectives for each child are developed within 45 days after joining the program, and are maintained through discharge, and follow-up.

## **Residential Living**

### **Our Role:**

Residential care provided within the context of a Christian environment has been the heart of the Woodburn Christian Children's Home since 1972. The group home with the direct supervision of the house parents is where young people in our program spend the largest amount of their time. That is where the staff will help families by providing an atmosphere that is beneficial to their child's physical, emotional, educational and spiritual growth. The staff's role is not to replace the parents/guardians rightful authority, but to act as temporary helpers: helping young people to understand and obey their parent's authority, and helping the parents to understand and to use properly their authority to promote their own child's growth and maturity.

### **Rules and Expectations of Conduct:**

Compared to most families, WCCH is highly structured setting with rules and expectations. Most young people who come to us have problems which are a result of not having clear expectations or not having cooperated with the rules which he/she have been given. We believe that each individual is

responsible for his/her own thoughts, words, and actions. We work with young people to understand and accept that responsibility. We also believe that a clear expectations and rules based on unchanging Biblical principles help young people become responsible for themselves and their future. Once clear expectations and rules have been set, young people learn to grow by consistently being help responsible for those expectations and rules.

As parents/guardians you are aware that young people don't always understand or appreciate the rules that you or other authorities have for them. If your child raises a question about one of our rules or expectations, we would encourage you to support our position for the sake of working for your child's benefit. We are open to discuss at an appropriate time any questions you might have regarding the reason for a particular expectation, rule, or disciplinary action.

Residents are subject to drug testing while at WCCH.

**Behavior Management:**

WCCH exists to teach young people how to make better behavioral choices so that they can live successful lives. We want your child to learn that everything a child does has a consequence. Sometimes these consequences are things one likes and sometimes they are things one dislikes. If one pays attention to the consequences of his/her actions one can teach what behaviors are good for and what behaviors are harmful. Here at WCCH we use consequences to try to help young people learn these lessons quickly so that your child can be united with family, if possible.



When your child breaks the rules or demonstrate behaviors that are harmful, we will attempt to use natural and logical consequences to try to help you learn more quickly.

Natural consequences are things that happen because of a person's behavior no matter what. For example, if your child punches the wall, the natural consequence might be that his/her hand hurts or that the wall is now damaged. Natural consequences are really helpful because they can teach how to avoid hurtful behaviors. Whenever possible, the staff members at WCCCH will allow natural consequences to teach a resident. We will do that by talking (we call it "processing") about the behavior and what happened as a result. We do this so that the resident understands how his/her behavior led to the natural consequence.

The problem is that natural consequences don't always happen. In situations where natural consequences aren't enough, we will use what we call logical consequences. A logical consequence is what should happen as a result of a resident's behavior. For example, if your child punches the wall and damage the wall, the logical thing for you to do is fix the wall (or pay for it to be fixed). If a resident steals something, the logical consequence is to give it back and ask forgiveness. Sometimes the logical consequence for a behavior that was hurtful to another person would be to do something for that person to make up for the behavior. The goal is always the same: we want residents to learn from their behavior and make better decisions. At the end of this handbook you will find a list of "House Rules." These rules are areas that we think are important and they are things that may result in natural or logical consequences if broken.

At no time will we ever hurt your child as a consequence. We will never hit, slap, call your child names, or make fun of your child. Our goal is to teach not to hurt.

**Treatment Program: The Phase Model**

Everyone who comes to WCCH has a treatment plan. Your child’s treatment plan is a summary of what is going well in his/her life and what areas your child needs to work on. Your child, parents/guardians, counselor, house parents, and staff members here at WCCH will all contribute to the treatment plan so that it accurately represents the resident. In order to move through his/her treatment plan and monitor the progress we have developed the Phase Model. The Phase Model is a graduated program and not a level system. There are 5 phases and each phase time table varies, but generally depends on your child’s participation in the treatment program. Each phase has goals that are written specifically for your child in your treatment plan. The treatment plan is written with your child’s input, parents/guardians’ input, and the input of the WCCH treatment team. The five phases are outlined below:

- Phase 1: Acclimation, Assessment, and Acceptance
- Phase 2: Skill Development
- Phase 3: Mastery
- Phase 4: Generosity and Advanced Mastery
- Phase 5: Independence

When your child have completed Phase 5 he/she will be ready to be reunited with your family, if possible. The harder your child work on his/her treatment objectives, the faster he/she will move through the treatment plan and the faster he/she will return home. If your child is not able to leave WCCH at this time in his/her life your child will be allowed more freedom as long as it follows the rules at WCCH. These freedoms are subject to WCCH staff authorization.

The treatment team is a group of people who meet regularly to discuss the progress you and your family are making and make suggestions on how to better help you and your family.

## **Routines and Daily Schedules:**

Routines and daily schedules are vital to operating our home in an orderly fashion. They help to stabilize the individual houses in an atmosphere that is under added pressure from constant change. Also, this provides the opportunity for your child to learn time management skills. There are differences in the specific schedules from one house to another, but the order of events on a routine school, day maybe something like this: Morning; wake up, dress for school, straighten room, devotion, breakfast, morning chores, hygiene, and off to school. After returning from school; snack, homework, free time, supper, evening chores, showers, family time, prayers, and bedtime.

## **Education:**

When your child comes for treatment at WCCH your child will attend Harlan Christian or Woodlan Jr/Sr. High School. This decision will be made by parents/guardians, your child and the staff at WCCH. Your child will be expected to do his/her

school work and homework nightly. Homework will be brought home nightly so the tutor or house parents can check work and that it is done. Your child will work at the homework table every night until school work is completed. There will be tutors to help with homework.

### **Work Experiences:**

While living at WCCH, your child will have a variety of work experiences. These work experiences serve both to develop a solid foundation of work habits and attitudes and also to give your child the opportunity to learn about self as his/her skills are developed. Your child will earn a monthly allowance if chores are done appropriately. These opportunities include: lawns to mow, animals to care for, vehicles and buildings to maintain, gardens to tend, houses to clean, laundry to wash, snow to shovel, bushes to trim, etc.

### **Recreation and Free Time:**

Productive recreation and leisure time skills are often something that young people have not developed prior to coming to WCCH. Since we do not allow cell phones or other electronic equipment, we strive to help them experience a wide range of recreational activities in order to find appropriate, enjoyable ways to occupy their leisure time. As your child learns how to spend their free time, your child is usually able to participate with less supervision than initially required.

Recreational or leisure time activities can be on or off campus and can include but not limited to: computers (supervised), baseball, football, riding bikes, nature walks, campfires, swimming, videos, billiards, ping pong, crafts, shopping, or eating out with the WCCH family.

Residents are not allowed to date while in treatment unless approved by WCCH staff and parents/guardians. All dating will be supervised.

Other recreational activities will include our one annual vacation and other special activities or trips as planned by WCCH staff.

Your child will not be allowed to drive while at WCCH.

**Religious Activities:**

WCCH is a ministry of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. As part of normal family life your child will have the opportunity to attend religious services and activities. While on family visits or end of placement family is encouraged to attend the religious services of their choice. While at WCCH your child will attend religious services or activities with his/her house parents and WCCH family.

**Length of Placement:**

Short-term placement remains at WCCH for a period of 1 year. The principal objective for a short-term placement (usually 1 full school year) is to overcome behavioral and/or relationship problems, so that your child may be reunited with his/her family. Short-term placement is regulated by how he/she works on your treatment plan.

Long-term placements typically where your child remains at WCCH until graduation from high school. The principal objective for a long-term placement is to assist the family in raising a young person to maximize his/her potential: physically, educationally, emotionally, and spiritually.

## **Medical and Dental Care:**

After your child is admitted, he/she will receive a physical and a tuberculosis test. If your child has not had a dental examine within 6 months we will get your child a dental appointment. Any medical, dental, or eye expenses that is incurred during your child's placement at WCCH will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians. Woodburn Christian Children's Home will not be liable for any payments of medical treatment. Any routine or medical emergency that is required for your child, parents/guardians will be notified to discuss treatment for your child.

## **Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency involving your child, it is important we be able to contact you as quickly as possible. Please make sure that the office has a current address and phone number.

We also want you to be able to reach us if you have a family emergency.

1. Call the office: 260-632-5551
2. Program Director: 260-760-8344

Clothing is an important subject for young people and many messages can be conveyed about a young person by his/her clothing. As a general rule, clothing that is tight, revealing, or contains inappropriate messages will not be allowed. If you would like to purchase clothing for your child while placed at WCCH, please ask the Program Director before doing so because not all types of clothing is permissible. See Attached Dress Code

Music is another powerful means of conveying messages. WCCH believe that the message of some music can be harmful by encouraging your child to rebel against authority and practice destructive habits. Young people at WCCH are not allowed to have recorded music, which communicates messages of violence, drug use, sexual content, satanic or occult beliefs, or other antisocial behaviors. Radio usage is outlined in the Rules for Residential Houses (Attached).

Miscellaneous items that are not allowed include tobacco, alcohol, drugs, weapons, occult, gang related, or pornographic products and any items which represent these activities. Cell phones and personal computers are also not allowed for residents. Any illegal items will be turned over to the proper authorities or destroyed. Upon arrival, all of your child's belongings are checked in by the house parents. If your child comes in with inappropriate items, they will be confiscated and sent home at the first opportunity. However, if your child has any of these items in his/her possession after the initial personal property inventory is completed, the item will be taken and not returned. It is your child's responsibility to ask whether a certain item is allowed before buying or bringing it on campus.





## **Girls' Dress Code**

- No Halter Tops
- No Tube Tops
- No Strapless Tops
- No Cleavage Shown
- No Bare Midriff
- No Mini-Skirts
- Skirts at Knees or Below
- No Undergarments Shown
- No Inappropriate Advertisements on Clothing
- No Bikinis, (one-piece swimsuit) Not White, No Cleavage Shown
- No Short-Shorts
- No Shorts below 60 degrees
- No Spandex
- Pants must be loose (able to pinch an 1" from thigh/leg without the fabric snapping back)
- Must Wear Shoes or Sandals
- No Night Gowns/Night Shirts worn out of Girl's Hall
- No Body Piercings
- No Holes in Pants
- No New Tattoos
- Approved Haircuts

## **Boys Dress Code**

- No Spandex Shorts
- No White Swim Trunks
- Shoes or Sandals Must be Worn
- No Inappropriate Advertisements on Clothing
- No Earrings
- No Body Piercings
- No Holes in Pants
- No New Tattoos
- Approved Haircuts
- No Skinny Pants Must be loose (Grab an 1")
- No Sagging Pants
- No Shorts Below 60 Degrees
- Belts Must be Worn
- Shirts Must be Worn at all Times Except When Swimming Unless Otherwise Instructed
- Undergarments Must be Covered at All Times
- Do Not Wear Hats in the House

## Rules for Residential Houses

1. **Each child must show proper respect** to all house parents, directors, visitors, volunteers, school employees and other children. This includes verbal and physical cues.
2. **There will be no bullying of any type:** child to child or house parent to child.
3. **Children must ask permission to do all things.** For example: go to bedroom, use the bathroom, bring something out of your room, watch TV, use the gaming system, etc.
4. **Children may not be in the house alone.** There must be an adult in the house with them at all times. Children must ask permission before going in the house.
5. **The child may not be alone with an adult of the opposite gender.** When possible two adults of opposite genders must supervise a child.
6. **House parents are responsible to know where the children are at all times** thus ensuring the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of each child.
7. **All children must remain in their bedrooms** during bedtime with doors closed. No child may leave their room without the house parent's permission in the morning. The only exception is to use the bathroom.

8. **Children may not open bedroom windows without permission from house parents.**
9. **Boys and girls are not to be left alone together at any time or anywhere.** This rule is to be enforced both on-grounds and off-grounds as well as any youth trip whether church or school sponsored. This includes all areas of the house and basement.
10. **No boy is allowed in the girls' hallway under any circumstance or reason.**
11. **No girl is allowed in the boys' hallway under any circumstance or reason.**
12. **Boys and girls may not sit on same couch.**
13. **Only one child may be in the bathroom at a time.**
14. **There will be no boy--girl "intimate" relationships.** There will be no flirting, dating, note passing, holding hands, hugging or kissing. There is zero tolerance in this matter.
15. **Children may not visit another child's bedroom for any reason or any occasion.**
16. **All children (and house parents) are to be fully dressed** while in the hallway or common areas. This includes robes, pajamas and day clothes when applicable.

17. **All children must brush their teeth, comb their hair and shave** (if applicable) each day in the morning.
18. **Each child must take a shower each day.** The shower time limit is 10 minutes.
19. **Children must wear shoes at all times outside the house. No bare feet inside.** Socks, slippers or shoes must be worn inside the house.
20. **No money is to be kept in the bedrooms, school lockers, etc.** House parents are responsible to keep all money in a secure location.
21. **No food, candy, gum, water or drinks can be in your room.** Any exceptions subject to house parent's approval.
22. **Each child must display proper manners at the dining room table** (keep arms and elbows off table, small bites, chew with mouth closed, no talking with food in mouth).
23. **Bedrooms are to be kept neat and picked up every morning.** This includes making the bed. Dirty clothes go in the laundry basket in each child's bedroom.
24. **Children may have a clock radio in their bedroom.** The volume must be adjusted so that it cannot be heard outside of the room.
25. **Radio stations are limited to Christian radio and music, only.**

26. **Telephone calls are limited to 15 minutes and will be supervised by house parents.**
27. **Children may not have any personal electronic equipment** including iPad, iPod, gaming system, MP3, cell phones, computers or camera.
28. **Children are not allowed in house parent's apartment** for any reason or any occasion.
29. **Children will each have household and grounds chores.**
30. **Each child will be responsible to do their own laundry** (age applicable). This includes washing, drying, folding, and storing in dresser or hanging in closet.
31. **Each child will clean the bathroom after each use.** Including the sinks after you brush your teeth; putting away all personal items in their basket under the sink/in closet.
32. **Each child is responsible to clean up after themselves.**
33. **Each child must put used towels in proper places.** After shower, or after pool use. No wet towels are allowed in laundry baskets in their bedroom.
34. **No child is allowed to borrow the personal possessions of another child.**

35. **SCHOOL RELATED:**

- a) Children are not allowed to wear sweatpants, yoga pants or pajama pants to school. Only allowed during gym class or during sports practices and games as appropriate.
- b) Children may not bring personal possessions to school other than school related supplies without house parent permission.
- c) Children must bring home all homework each night, whether the homework was completed at school or not.

36. **OUTSIDE RULES:**

- d) Do not bounce balls or ride bikes in the shelter.
- e) Put away all toys and balls, etc. when finished playing.
- f) Each child is assigned a bike. They must ask permission to ride their bike and may not ride another bike. They must also ask permission to return bike to shelter. Only one child, at a time, allowed behind the shelter at the bike storage area.
- g) Boys and girls must play separately unless supervised or in organized activities.
- h) All play must be respectful – no bullying younger children.
- i) No rock throwing.
- j) No going into the pool area unless instructed by an adult.

- k) No going onto the woods unless instructed by an adult.
- l) No playing on the mound system, behind sheds or in sheds.

**DISCIPLINE POLICY:**

- Each child will be treated kindly and humanely.
- No mentally, physically or emotionally abusive treatment will be permitted.
- All discipline shall be administered as an educational process for the purpose of changing attitudes as well as conduct.
- All discipline will comply with 465 IAC 2-9-57.