

Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

Facility Name _____

SPECIALIZED TREATMENT UNIT YOUTH HANDBOOK

SPECIALIZED TREATMENT UNIT



YOUTH HANDBOOK

On behalf of the staff, welcome to the Specialized Treatment Unit (STU) at _____ facility. We will do all we can to make your stay here safe and positive. We will also do all we can to help you learn and practice ways to make better choices about your behavior, your relationships, and your future.

This handbook was written to explain the program available to youth who are admitted to the STU. The handbook will also explain your rights and expectations for your behavior while you are here. Answers to most of your questions about where you are living and how staff can help you are in this handbook.

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
MISSION STATEMENT
Our Mission is to protect and serve the citizens of Georgia by holding young offenders accountable for their actions through the delivery of services and sanctions in appropriate settings and by supporting youth in their communities to become productive and law-abiding citizens.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is for your information and should give you the answers to many of your questions. Read all of the information carefully so you understand how the program works and what the expectations are for your participation. Ask questions about anything you don't understand, since the rules apply to you as soon as you enter the facility.

The STU is a secure program where you will live for the time required to help you achieve your treatment goals. STU staff will do all we can to make your stay helpful to you. We know that you may not want to be here and you may have strong feelings about why you have been placed in this program. You will be expected to engage in daily programming, actively participating in treatment groups, school, and recreational activities. You will be rewarded for good behavior, and held accountable for inappropriate behavior. You all are given this resident handbook upon arrival, and are expected to understand what's inside. If you have any question about the handbook, feel free to ask any staff members for help. All Staff are knowledgeable of the resident handbook, and can answer any questions you might have. You will be provided an Advocate who will be assigned to do weekly check-ins/reports with you, and will guide in the right direction. Providing you with a safe and secure environment is our first priority. Actively and positively engaging you in programming will follow. Open communication, respect for others, and a positive attitude will play a major role in your success while at the Stabilization Unit.

When you first arrive on the unit, you will meet with staff to learn about how the STU program works and what is expected of you while you are here. Staff will explain the rules of the program. You will be able to read this handbook again and someone will go over it with you. If you have any questions or need help understanding something in the handbook, you may ask staff members at any time to help you.

YOUTH RIGHTS

- You have the right to have all of your basic and daily needs care for through competent medical and residential care.
- You have the right to an education appropriate to your abilities.
- You have the right to receive visits and maintain phone calls with your legal guardian.
- You have the right to visit with and maintain phone contact with those involved in your case: DCF worker, Guardian, lawyer, and probation officer/DYS caseworker.
- You have the right to send and receive mail after it has been screened.
- You have the right to engage in physical activity daily.
- You have the right to be safe.
- You have the right to request changes in program or policy using a grievance form.
- You have the right to practice your religion.
- You have the right to a competent program advocate.
- You have the right to be viewed as a person capable of changing, growing and becoming positively connected to my community no matter what types of delinquent behavior I have committed.
- You have the right to contribute things that you are good at and other strengths in all assessment and diagnostic processes.
- You have the right to learn from your mistakes and to have support to learn that mistakes don't mean failure. You have the right to view past setbacks as a lack of skills that you can acquire to change your life for the better.

- You have the right to have your culture included as a strength, and services which honor and respect my cultural beliefs.
- You have the right to be assured that all written and oral, formal and informal communications about you include your strengths as well as needs.
- You have the right to have your family involved in the juvenile justice system in a way that recognizes and supports your strengths as well as needs.
- You have a right to stay connected to your family no matter what types of challenges you face.
- You have the right to be viewed and treated as more than a statistic, stereotype, risk score, diagnosis, label or pathology unit.
- You have the right to develop as an adolescent- to try out new identities, to learn to be accountable and say you're sorry for the harm you've caused others- all of which is made even more difficult if you're labeled a "bad kid."
- You have the right to be viewed and treated as a worthy human, potential leader and success of the future.

(The above is heavily borrowed and quoted from: www.reclaimingfutures.org/youth_bill_of_rights)

TREATMENT PROGRAM

STU staff will focus on your treatment needs throughout your stay. The STU uses several kinds of treatment (like groups and one-to-one counseling), recreation activities, and educational programs as ways to help you improve your life. In the beginning, anger and self-control will be the main focus. As you show more control, other needs will also be addressed. As you achieve your treatment goals, you will start spending more time in the general population. STU staff will help you make use of the skills you have learned to be successful. STU's treatment programs will help you improve your relationship with others, how to manage your emotions and how to solve personal problems. Since your need for treatment is an important part of why you are here, you are expected to participate in treatment activities for your entire stay in the STU.

TREATMENT STAFF

The Psychologist is the leader of a team of treatment staff that include Social Service Providers (SSPs), Juvenile Detention Counselors (JDCs), Recreational staff and Teachers. Some of you will also continue to be treated by a psychiatrist. Treatment staff works on the unit, and will be involved with your treatment each day. It is your responsibility to work with the team to meet your treatment goals. It is STU staffs' responsibility to help you as much as possible, and also to keep you and others safe while you are on this unit. If we all work together, it will be the best combination to help you improve your life.

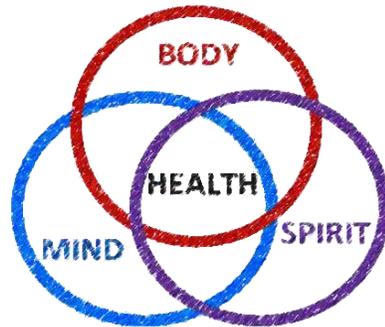
STU Treatment Staff include:



Treatment Staff will:

- ✓ Meet to review your needs
- ✓ Create a treatment plan for you that will be used to decide the kind of treatment you get and how long it will last.
- ✓ Make sure all other staff know when there is a change in your program
- ✓ Keep you on track with your goals
- ✓ Tell you clearly what is expected of you

- ✓ Help you set goals for yourself
- ✓ Help you find answers to your daily problems
- ✓ Help you think of and plan some realistic expectations for your future



TREATMENT TEAM MEETINGS

Treatment team meetings will take place weekly to discuss your treatment plan and your progress toward treatment goals. The entire treatment team will be involved in these meetings.

The goal of each meeting will be:

1. To talk about your strengths - things you're doing well.
2. To talk about any difficulties you are having as you work towards your goals.
3. To talk about long term goals—things that need to be learned or completed before you can leave the STU.
4. To talk about what you need to do for the next week - short-term goals
5. To help figure out ways staff can help you meet your goals.

A member of your treatment team will meet with you on a regular basis to discuss your progress and other questions you have. You should ask questions, give opinions and be involved in your treatment program during your entire stay on the STU.



Every youth on the STU will have some individual goals they will be working on. There are also certain goals that will be the same for everyone youth in the STU. These include:

Beginning Goals

1. Stop aggressive and destructive behaviors by encouraging you to increase your trust in others, and learn how dangerous and negative actions can be replaced by healthy ones. Often, youth who are placed in the STU have very low trust in others. They don't realize their thinking and behavior have been influenced by past experiences.
2. Help you control negative behavior enough to successfully transfer you to a general population unit and to the next level of goals (Advanced Goals).

Advanced Goals

1. Learn and practice skills to stay out of trouble and increase your participation in treatment of your special needs. You are expected to be both more responsible and more motivated to take care of yourself in positive ways.
2. Learn and practice ways of helping others meet their treatment goals.
3. Start the shift to your placement back in general population. When you are ready to move to another unit your STU treatment and support will continue for a while

to make sure that you are able to practice things you learn when you are away from the STU.

TREATMENT GROUPS

The EQUIP Program Is to help you with problems in managing anger, thinking in positive ways about your own and others' social behavior, behaving constructively in difficult situations, and making mature moral decisions. The program involves:

- Equipment Skills training sessions that will be led by a mental health staff three time a week
- Mutual Help meetings led by the youth with adult coaching. In this group you will learn new skills to help others to think and act responsibly. You will also help make the STU a positive, caring place for you and your peers.

Activity Therapy You will be in activity therapy groups that help you learn and practice problem solving skills, sportsmanship, teamwork, goal-setting, and positive peer relations. Activity therapy will also help build self-esteem and confidence.

Life Skills Groups Life skills group will help you learn and practice interpersonal communication skills, healthy habits, leisure skills, physical fitness, basic hygiene and self-care.



PBIS

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a facility-wider program that involves not just you, but all staff within the facility. PBIS provides a common set of expectations for you to follow. The STU has developed a system that holds all youth accountable for their actions by defining expectations that will need to be carried out to receive positive reinforcements. This program has defined expectations for you and every other youth it serves. Based on your behavior you will receive reinforcements.

PBIS will provide you with:

- Direction
- Staff role modeling
- Reinforcing positive behavior and interventions
- Services defined as supports for youth who engage in problem behavior

BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To obey all federal and state laws at all times.
2. To respect peers and staff by obeying all legal and reasonable staff requests.
3. To refrain from bullying, harassment, and unlawful discrimination through the use of verbal abuse, ethnic slurs, slander, and/or obscene gestures.
4. To follow the rules, procedures, schedules and directions of staff while in the facility/program. Youth shall treat staff members and other youth with respect and shall not engage in activity that designed to be disruptive to the living environment.
5. To clean and maintain their living quarters. Youth are expected not to damage public or privately owned property located within the living quarters.
6. To ask for mental health, medical and dental care when needed.
7. To maintain his/her clothes, body, and hair in a clean and odor free condition.
8. To refrain from infringing upon the rights of other youth and/or staff.
9. To obey all orders of the court, to remain in placement and to participate fully, to the best of their ability, to achieve the goals identified in the Treatment Plan.
10. To refrain from possessing contraband and to discourage others from possessing contraband.
11. To promote the physical safety, sexual integrity, and personal security of others through the use of self-discipline.
12. To personally refrain from and discourage others from possessing or transmitting any kind of weapon or object which could be used as a weapon.

13. To personally refrain from and discourage others from possessing, using, buying selling or otherwise providing or having alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, or other illegal drugs, or from abusing any other substance as an intoxicant or stimulant.
14. To practice and encourage honesty in all interactions.

STU RULES

You are expected to follow the rules of this facility. Good behavior is expected of everyone. STU Rules include the following:

1. Rooms will be clean at all times, with beds made.
2. Youth will stand for daily inspection.
3. Youth will be neatly dressed, with their uniform worn properly.
4. Youth will perform personal hygiene each day (i.e., bath, hair, clothing, and proper maintenance of fingernails).
5. Youth will not cover their cell window or cell door window at any time.
6. Youth will not talk through room doors to other youth.
7. Youth will not engage in any form of aggression, either verbal or physical.
8. Youth will follow the daily and weekend schedule of activities.
9. Youth will not disrespect staff members in any way, including exposure of genitals.
10. Youth will be searched upon entering and exiting the dorm.
11. All items sent from another unit will be inspected and approved/disapproved prior to issuance to youth.
12. Youth will be expected to participate in all programs.
13. Youth will not damage, destroy, or deface property of the facility or others.
14. Youth will not engage in nuisance behaviors (i.e., kicking doors, yelling, and excessively loud talking).



As long as you are a resident here, always remember that if it matters to you, it matters to staff. Staff members are here to help you and you must tell them when you need help.