

Resident & Parent Handbook



INDEPENDENCE



GENEROSITY



MASTERY



BELONGING

Art by Tony Blundell



Greater Minnesota
FAMILY SERVICES

Serving the Families of Minnesota
A Circle of Courage Agency

Shelter Care Program

WELCOME

Welcome to Greater Minnesota Shelter Care. At Shelter Care, we hope to encourage feelings of belonging happiness, joy, hope, being protected by our shelter team as well as feel safe in our environment. We want everyone to feel comfortable and welcomed within our shelter community. Our shelter community is one of importance in influencing the development of youth's self. We look forward to working with caregivers to help youth be more prepared to face life's challenges.

What is Shelter Care?

- Shelter Care and Group Home Setting
- Licensed by the State of Minnesota
- Program Capacity: 13-17 residents
- Population Served: Boys and girls ages 9-17
- Staff to resident ratio: 1 staff to 6 youth, ages 9-11 / 1 staff to 8 youth, ages 12-17
- Shelter Care provides shelter care and group home services for youth at a crucial time in their lives. Youth are involved in individual and group therapy. Shelter Care programming focuses to improve social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes.

Shelter Care is located on a beautiful five-acre parcel of land just outside of Willmar, MN, surrounded by wetlands. Our Shelter Care is a perfect location for helping to make a lasting difference in young people's lives in times of crisis or transition.

Tell me about your program.

Greater Minnesota Family Services believes in the transformative power of relationships. Empathetic connection is the vehicle to address the presenting concerns that bring youth and their families to us. At Shelter Care we believe in the innate human tendency toward positive growth.

What therapy is offered?

Shelter Care's therapy team utilizes evidence-based practices to heal old wounds and prepare youth to return to their communities. Our therapists are trained in and can offer a variety of therapies to help youth and families meet their goals.

- Managing and Adapting Practices (MAP)
- Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)
- Attachment Based Family Therapy (ABFT)

How we feel about family!

Each member of the Sheltercare team brings their own lived experiences and expertise to the program and who we serve. We do also realize the youth we serve may not have a family. Here at Sheltercare, we hope you find a sense of belonging. We also hope you find a sense of belonging within your home community, wherever that may be.

“ When children believe their caregivers are caring, protective and support them for who they are, they will feel more secure and will be able to grow as well as withstand life’s stressors.”

Attachment Based Family Therapy (ABFT) is a trust-based, emotion-focused psychotherapy model that aims to repair interpersonal ruptures and rebuild an emotionally protective, secure-based parent–child relationship. Our therapists use ABFT’s five treatment tasks:

- Reframing the therapy to focus on interpersonal development.
- Building an alliance with the adolescent.
- Building an alliance with the parents.
- Facilitating conversations to resolve attachment ruptures.
- Promoting autonomy and competency in the adolescent.

This handbook will help you understand the rules, expectations, and benefits to our program. We ask that you take the time to review this, and please feel free to contact Steve Michaud *Program Director* [smichaud@greaterminnesota.org] or Teigan Herlmaier *Site Manager* [theirlmaier@greaterminnesota.org] or call 320.235.3664 with any questions you may have.

Our Mission:

To provide a safe environment with consistent structure while building a trusting relationship with each resident to help them overcome their struggles and to live their healthiest life possible.

Our Values:

Safety
Respect
Responsibility
Boundaries and Belonging

Privacy:

Information: State and federal guidelines (including HIPAA) set strict boundaries for treatment centers to protect your privacy.

Visitor and Resident interactions:

- Residents are not allowed in each other's rooms.
- Residents are not allowed in the living areas of the opposite gender.
- Family members and other guests are not allowed to loiter in the residents' rooms, or resident living areas, or resident bathrooms. This is to ensure the safety and privacy of all persons in, and visiting, Shelter Care.
- Tours of the shelter living environment need to be scheduled in advance and are only available when youth are off grounds.

Safety:

To ensure the safety of all residents and persons in the facility, guns and other weapons are not allowed on the property. Any suspicious persons or concerns will be addressed by the local authorities. For the safety of everyone at Shelter Care, should your child have persons come visit who are not on their approved contact list that you create and approve at intake, they will not be allowed to visit.

Intake:

- All paperwork will be signed.
- Staff will perform a safety inspection on resident.
- Any money, jewelry, cell phones, iPod, or other items we describe as contraband will be gathered at this time and either sent home with parents/guardians or secured at shelter care until discharge.
- Resident will remain at shelter care for the first 72 hours before attending school, day treatment, etc. During this time staff will meet one on one with the resident and review the handbook, residents' rights and complete all resident intake paperwork.
- All residents' belongings will be inventoried and searched by staff. All clothing will be washed and dried before given to resident.
- Resident will meet with Shelter Care Nurse within 24 hours for health assessment.

Wednesday Reflections:

Residents may provide feedback and make written suggestions on a weekly basis every Thursday regarding their experiences here. Therefore, every Wednesday evening residents can write about their week. This is a time for them to give voice and share thoughts regarding the Shelter Care and how it is meeting or not meeting their current needs. The Shelter Care team will then review these written feedback sheets at our Thursday staff meetings, as well as reviewing the residents' weekly program progress summaries. Based on the reviewal of both, the program will then provide supportive responses to the residents.

BELONGING

This value means your thoughts, actions and words create a sense of community, kindness, and safety for others. All shelter members feel a sense of belonging and safety when interacting with you. The belonging value of the programming is focusing primarily on Safety and Respect.

GENEROSITY

You have become able to share your gifts of time, talent, and treasures with others. This area of the programming will work on showing empathy and compassion for others while maintaining Safety and Respect.

MASTERY

You are becoming skilled in many areas of your life. You demonstrate self-control and strive to achieve personal goals rather than superiority. In this area of the programming the resident is focusing on their academics, individual therapy, and day treatment.

INDEPENDENCE

Resident has begun to make their own decisions and have become responsible for their own failure or success. Resident has begun setting their own goals and are holding themselves accountable. This area of the program residents should be able to display all areas of Safety, Responsibility and Respect without prompts from staff. They should be displaying role model behaviors for their peers.

INTERMEDIATE GOALS & EXPECTATIONS RELATED TO SAFETY, RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Safety:

- Residents are asked to be visible to staff and seek staff direction before moving about the house and grounds.
- Resident are encouraged to attend all meal times with other residents and eat appropriate amount at each meal.
- Bedroom doors must always remain open unless a resident has staff permission to close their door. Residents who share rooms may not have doors closed at any time.
- Staff members may perform safety inspections involving the searching of residents and /or their belongings at any time.
- For safety purposes upon intake and return from off grounds, staff members perform safety inspections involving the searching of residents, and their belongings. All belongings will then be inventoried and washed.
- If a resident is under suspicion of an eating disorder, they will be directed to use the bathroom before meals and will not have access to a bathroom for one hour after meals per Individual Needs Assessment.
- Residents will not possess any items described as contraband while staying at Shelter Care.
- Only 1 resident is allowed outside at a time without staff, and this is at staff's discretion.
- Only 1 resident is allowed downstairs at a time and must have staff permission.

Contraband is:

- Tobacco products or paraphernalia.
- Razors, knives, or anything perceived by staff as a weapon.
- Pornographic/sexually explicit material, satanic-gang-drug related materials.
- Radios, clocks, tapes, CD's, iPods, notebooks, MP3 players, cell phones, money, etc.
- Anything that can be used to harm self or others

Contraband found by staff will be confiscated and destroyed at staff discretion or placed in a secure area until discharge.

Resident will not engage in any Major Safety Violations while staying at Shelter Care.

Major Safety Violations are:

- Physical maltreatment of self, another resident, or staff.
- Verbal abuse and/or terroristic threats towards anyone.
- Theft or vandalism/destruction of property.
- Possession of any contraband.
- Self-injurious behaviors (cutting, burning, piercing, etc.)
- Running away.
- Sexual acting out or inappropriate touching.

Repeated Major Safety Violations may result in the residents' discharge from the program.**Increased Safety Measures:**

If at any time during a resident's placement at Shelter Care, staff or the clinical team deem it necessary to increase supervision for safety purposes the following measures will be implemented to provide safety for the resident, peers and staff.

- Self-injurious behaviors (Cutting, burning, markings of body, etc.): Bed checks may be increased as will line of sight supervision. All items of concern may be removed from resident's room. Resident will need to help develop and sign a safety contract. The Shelter team and clinical team will re-evaluate the resident at the next team meeting and decide if they are in a safer state.
- Suicidal Ideation: Resident may be placed on this highest level of supervision; resident will always be with Shelter Care staff and bed-checks will be increased. Their room may be cleared of all items apart from a book and bedding. Resident may need to wear Shelter Care provided sweatpants and sweatshirt or T-shirt. Resident will need to develop and sign a safety contract. The Shelter team and clinical team will re-evaluate at the next weekly team meeting to determine if they are in a safer state.
- Suicidal Ideation with/plan: The Shelter Care team will complete a safety assessment with the resident and determine whether we are able to continue to meet the residents current level of needs or if a more secure setting is necessary for the safety of the resident.

Runaway:

- The runaway disclaimer will be signed upon intake.
- Shelter Care is not a locked facility. If a resident chooses to leave the property/school/our off-ground outings a staff will keep line of sight when possible and make the appropriate call to either the Kandiyohi Sheriff department or the Willmar Police department to report the resident is missing.
- The resident will be considered for discharge at that point and may not be allowed to return to shelter care until he/she has been placed and observed in a secure setting for a period no less than 24 hours.
- Remittance into Shelter Care program will be based on discussion involving the shelter care team, legal guardians, and the placing agency. From that discussion, the decision to readmit or not will be determined.

Respect:

- Not using offensive words directed at anyone
- Resident will display age appropriate conversations.
- Physical boundaries (no touching/hugging/etc.)
- Residents are not allowed in each other's bedrooms.
- Wearing appropriate clothing. (Any clothing staff members feel is inappropriate will be confiscated and returned at discharge).

Responsibility:

- Followed daily program per program schedule.
- Completed household assigned chore per daily chore list.
- Attend and participate in school portion of the day.
- Activities: residents are expected to attend and participate in all activities, unless staff has given them direction to do otherwise.
- Resident will take his/her medications as prescribed.
- Resident will follow the visitation and communication policy.
- No trading or borrowing items from other residents.

Opportunities:

- On ground activities.
- Outgoing phone calls to parent or legal guardian.
- Handheld video games until 9:30 pm
- Board games/cards.
- Residents own personal hygiene (shampoo, conditioner, body wash, brush/comb, deodorant).
- Use of Shelter Care musical instruments at staff discretion.
- Off-ground rec & fitness activities (at staff discretion).
- Can help plan, make, serve, and clean up a snack for the house once a week.
- Personal nail care privileges (polish, clipping, filing).
- Pop, hot chocolate, popcorn from 3:00 - 7:00 pm (Friday through Sunday).
- Use of own personal make-up, personal hair straighteners.
- Printing off lyrics/pictures at staff discretion.
- Hair cut (guardians or county should provide funds, staff can transport).

School Year Visiting Hours:

- **Monday-Thursday:** 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, **Fridays:** 12 Noon - 7:30 pm
- **Saturday-Sunday:** 10:00 am - 7:30 pm

Summer/Holiday Visiting Hours:

- **Monday-Friday:** 9:00 am - 7:00 pm
- **Saturday-Sunday:** 10:00 am - 7:30 pm

Types of visits:

- **On-site visits:** The resident and visitor will visit at the Shelter Care in a designated area. Visitor may bring in lunch or dinner. Staff will supervise if requested by legal guardian and if staff coverage allows. Outside food/drink cannot come into the shelter building.
- **Off-site visits:** After 7 days of intake, the visitor can come to shelter care and bring the resident off-site in the Willmar area for a specified amount of time. Upon return, staff will check the resident for any contraband and talk with the visitor about how their visit went.
- **Home visit:** The visitor may come and pick up the resident and bring him/her home for an overnight or weekend pass. Visitor, resident, and staff will sign a visitation contract. The resident should return to Shelter Care no later than time specified on the visitation contract. Upon return, staff will check the resident for any contraband and talk with the visitor about how their visit went.

All visits for the week need to be confirmed with Site Manager Teigan before 4 pm on Wednesday by email or phone call to shelter.

Food:

Due to limited space, we are unable to store food for individual residents. We ask that you DO NOT bring items for your child to keep at the facility. All food and drinks you bring in when visiting your child must be consumed before the visit ends. We ask that you please be mindful of amounts of caffeine and sugar intakes.

Weekend Snack = 1 can pop per weekend, 1 cup hot chocolate per weekend, 1 bowl popcorn per weekend

Chores:

- Residents are assigned chores weekly to complete as part of their responsibility.
- Super Clean room is on Saturdays.
- Super Clean House is on Sundays.

Laundry:

Residents are assigned a specific day for their laundry to be cleaned. Shelter Care overnight staff will do residents laundry that evening. Assigned days are posted on residents' door of their bedroom. If residents need laundry washed before/after their laundry day it is their responsibility to ask staff to assist them in completing this.

Exceptions: If resident has minimal clothing, or clothing is urinated on. If resident misses assigned laundry day, staff may not do their laundry.

Clothing and Jewelry:

- Residents are allowed a limited amount of clothing. All extra clothing will be sent home or stored in a separate area as space permits.
- Residents will be allowed to exchange their clothing out on assigned days only.
- Hats are allowed but may not be worn in the house or at school.
- Proper attire during the winter months is required. This means all residents must wear a coat, pants, and proper shoes when outside or during transport to school, activities, and appointments. **There are no exceptions to this rule.**
- No tank tops/sleeveless shirts.
- Shorts must be finger length; staff may confiscate if deemed too short.
- Hoodie sweatshirts are allowed; however, no hoods may be worn in the house or at school.
- No low-riding or sagging of pants. Belts are allowed if used appropriately.
- No visible undergarments (bra straps, bras, boxers, etc.)
- No sexually suggestive pictures, cartoons, words/phrases.
- No inappropriate symbols or messages (gang related, drug/tobacco/alcohol-related).
- No trading or borrowing of items on inventory list with other residents. This may result in items being confiscated until discharge.
- Any leggings, yoga pants, jeggings must be worn with a shirt that covers their backside (these items may be confiscated if not deemed appropriate.)
- At intake residents and parents will inform staff of any piercings or tattoos. Residents with any professional (nose, lip, tongue, eyebrow, belly, etc.) will be allowed to keep their piercing in unless they misuse it, or it becomes infected.
No new piercings or tattoos are allowed during residents stay.
- Appropriate clothing must be worn to bed (not just a bra or underwear etc.) Males need to wear shirts and shorts to bed.
- Jewelry is NOT encouraged during residents stay. If resident chooses to bring jewelry regardless of this, please note that Shelter Care is **NOT** responsible for lost or stolen jewelry items.

Vehicle Usage:

- All residents must wear a seat belt while riding in the vehicle.
- Residents 12 and under may not ride in the front seat.
- Hands must be kept to one's self.
- Staff will control the volume of the radio.
- Residents will ride in gender separate vans, when proper vehicles are available.
- If there are any inappropriate actions on the part of the residents, the activity can be cancelled, and we will return to the facility.

Meals:

- Residents are provided 3 meals a day, as well as an afternoon snack and 8 pm snack.
- Residents must eat the meal provided or the alternative of one peanut butter and jelly sandwich or extra fruit/vegetable offered.
- All residents must sit at the table during mealtimes until all residents are finished eating or dismissed from staff.
- Proper table manners are encouraged. You may be prompted to excuse yourself from the table if manners become offensive. You will then be offered an alternative location and time to finish your meal while staff helps teach these skills.
- Milk will be served at meal times only. Water is offered throughout the day.
- Food is consumed in the dining area only. No sharing food.

Fraternization:

Shelter Care encourages appropriate friendships and boundaries. The expectation is that your focus and attention will be to your progress, not to others while apart of our shelter community. Should boundaries and relationships become significantly disruptive to the environment, this may result in a safety contract and may result in early discharge.

Academics:

- Academic needs for our residents are provided by Willmar Public School District.
- Shelter offers an online school option with a Willmar para hired to assist.

Day Treatment:

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Phone Calls:

- 15 minutes in length. 4 calls total. 2 inbound, 2 outbound.
- Weekdays: 3 - 7 pm
- Weekends/Holidays: 12 - 7 pm

Social workers, GAL, lawyers, probation officer are exceptions to these guidelines.

Room Belongings that are allowed in your Room:

- 1-3 Books
- 1 Day Treatment journal
- 1 Personal journal
- 1 Drawing pad
- 1 Cup of water
- 1 Deck of playing cards
- 1 Shelter Care MP3 player
- 1 Personal comfort item
- 1 Personal Blanket

Hygiene Items that are allowed in your Hygiene Baskets:

- 1 Toothbrush
- 1 Toothpaste tube
- 1 Deodorant (no aerosol)
- 1 Hairbrush/comb
- 1 Personal shampoo/conditioner
- 1 Personal lotion
- 1 Personal face wash product (none with alcohol)

All items are provided by Shelter Care. Use of body sprays, perfumes, cologne, etc. will not be permitted. Press-on nails, nail glue, and false eyelashes are not permitted.

Razors are not permitted.**Weekly Reviews:**

Weekly reviews will be sent via email to all members of the youth team such as parents, GAL, probation, social workers, therapists etc. If you are unable to access an email, we can help get the reviews to you another way. The weekly reviews are put together using our Daily Reflection Sheets. Please let us know at intake who should be added to this team list with contact emails/information.

Audio/Video Recording:

Our Shelter Facility uses live recorded audio and video footage in our commons areas for safety and security purposes. These systems are not located in resident bedrooms or bathrooms.

*We welcome you to our Shelter Community
and look forward to working along side you as we
guide support, and care for your youth.*



Shelter Care Program

[P] 320.235.3664 [F] 320.235.1671

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