

Hope Forest Academy



2024 Program Statement

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General Statement & Program Purpose

- Hope Forest Academy is a group home owned and operated by Rite of Passage Inc. and licensed by Florida Department of Children and Families.
- Youth ages 12-17 are referred through community-based care agencies contracted with DCF.
- Residential group home care is provided to youth who align with “at risk” criteria as defined in Chapter 65C-46, F. S.
- Both community and dependent youth are served.

Overview of the Program's Milieu

The program features evidence-based practices within a normalized environment that follows an Integrated Care Model Program approach. Additional program features include:

- Programming that targets risk factors and issues specific to adolescent male youth
- Trauma-focused approach to treatment and programming
- Normalized milieu that promotes diverse social and educational interactions
- Individualized treatment plans that address the specific needs and risk factors of each young man in our care
- CTE opportunities



Target Population and Exclusionary Criteria

Hope Forest Academy serves youth ages 12-17 (based on age upon acceptance) referred through social services and community-based care agencies. Youth appropriate to the Hope Forest Academy program align with “at risk” criteria as defined Chapter 65C-46, F.S. and do not present with the following exclusionary criteria:

- Youth who are younger than 12 or older than 17 upon request for admission.
- Youth at imminent risk of causing serious harm to self or others, potentially indicating a need for psychiatric hospitalization and stabilization.
- Youth is actively psychotic or in need of crisis psychiatric hospitalization or stabilization.
- Youth is experiencing behavioral and or emotional symptoms which appear primarily psychiatric in etiology.
- Youth who has been diagnosed with schizoaffective disorders and/or Intermittent Explosive Disorder.
- Youth who has been diagnosed with a sole diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder or Intellectual Disability.
- Youth is a juvenile sex offender or primarily exhibits problematic sexualized behaviors and does not manifest other delinquent or antisocial behaviors.
- Youth is unable to perform skills of daily living and requires custodial care and/or interventions beyond the capability of this setting, services or staff.
- Youth with substance use treatment needs requiring medically supervised withdrawal management or out of home substance use treatment intervention. Youth with possible substance use will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Youth at imminent risk of causing serious harm to self or others including, but not limited to, youth recently assessed as moderate to high risk for fire setting.

Assessments

Clinical Assessments	Educational Assessments	Medical Assessments
SASSI-A2 MAYSI Assessment of Suicide Risk (ASR) Beck's Depression Inventory H.I.T. ACE	SHIPLEY-2 WISC-IV	Comprehensive physical assessment (CPA)

Treatment Services

On-site treatment services include:

- Trauma-Informed Approach utilized evidence-based models such as Seeking Safety and Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- REAL Essentials Advanced curriculum used to support youth development of health relationships and social connectivity
- Reaching for Horizons CSEC group curriculum used to address trafficking vulnerabilities, prevent victimization and support recovery
- Substance Abuse treatment services
- Individual counseling available

All youth collaboratively participate in the development of their individualized treatment plan which includes the following:

1. Treatment goals;
2. Action steps which will be taken to accomplish identified goals;
3. Target dates for the accomplishment of action steps and goals;
4. A description of the services to be provided and the frequency of such services;
5. The assignment of a primary therapist or counselor;
6. The youth's diagnosis, including diagnostic codes; and
7. Discharge criteria.

Medical Services

- Basic first aid care is provided on-site
- Youth received medical care from off-site medical professionals within the community

Education & Vocational Services

Education

- Youth attend public schools within the Lake County School District
- GED prep is available on-site

CTE

- Hope Forest Academy offers multiple vocational opportunities including culinary, equestrian care, culinary, horticulture and small engine repair

Extracurricular/Recreation Services

Recreation and Leisure Time

Youth who regularly engage in aerobic exercise demonstrate significant improvements in both depressive and state anxiety scores. This effect is greatly increased when employed in tandem with Motivational Interviewing (MI) practices. Individual Wellness Plan activities may include basketball, soccer, pickleball, kickball and clubs such as Student Council, book club or faith-based studies.

Health and Wellness Activities

Athletics serve as a natural opportunity to incorporate Positive Youth Development, enabling staff to coach youth and for youth to be encouraged rather than directed. Athletics also allow youth to learn positive ways of regulating their emotions, a skill which is transferable to other areas of a youth's life and adds recreational options when they return to their home and community.

Employment

Youth are encouraged to seek off-site employment opportunities in order to develop professional skills and financial literacy. Assistance is provided with job searches, resume development, application completion and transportation to and from the work place.

Successful Transition

- Hope Forest Academy works collaboratively with placing agencies and courts to ensure a smooth transition process when youth leave our care.
- Transition includes development of a discharge plan that includes input from the youth, parent/guardian (as applicable), foster parents, caregivers, DCF, youth's attorney and guardian ad litem.