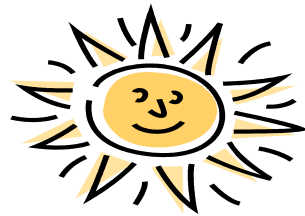


**John Howard Society North Island
(JHSNI)
Full-Time Attendance Program**

Oasis/HEADSTART



**Parent/Guardian
HANDBOOK**



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Youth Criminal Justice in Canada & Full-Time Attendance Programs

Full-Time Attendance programs (FTAPs) came about in 2003 as a result of changes to youth justice in Canada. In 2003 the Government of Canada replaced the Young Offenders Act (YOA) with the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA).

- Unlike the YOA, the YCJA encourages reduced reliance on incarceration. Instead, the YCJA emphasizes rehabilitation and community-based alternatives, such as Full-Time Attendance and other programs.
- There are approximately 20 Full-Time Attendance Programs across BC. Each program is unique, however they are all considered to be a direct alternative to custody.
- Youth reside in attendance programs for six (6) months, or more, while receiving intensive rehabilitative programming, e.g. counselling, skill development/enhancement, employment readiness and opportunities for academic achievement.
- Research shows that community-based alternatives are far more effective than incarceration in preventing repeat offences.
- B.C. has always promoted community-based alternatives over incarceration. Not surprisingly, since the 1980s, B.C. has one of the lowest incarceration rates in the Canada and is considered a leader internationally on youth justice issues.

For more information on the YCJA and alternatives to custody please visit the following websites:

The YCJA explained: <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/yj-jj/repos-depot/index.html>

MCFD Fact Sheet: http://www.gov.bc.ca/mcf/mediaroom/childcare/facts/2007/docs/fs_071106_YouthJustice_Alternatives.pdf

<http://justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/yj-jj/repos-depot/3modules/04you-ado/3040301f.html>

<http://Canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/yj-jj/information/rec-dos.html>

Program Overview

Oasis & Headstart

Who can attend?

The Full-Time Attendance Programs are for youth between 14 and 18 years of age who live in British Columbia.

The Oasis program is for girls and Headstart is for boys. Youth are only referred by a probation officer and must have a valid court-order to be eligible to attend these 6-month programs.

What are the Full-Time Attendance Programs?

The Full-Time Attendance Programs (FTAP), Headstart and Oasis, are alternative to custody programs funded in part by the Ministry for Children and Family Development and the Federal Government.

Youth live with Caregivers who are contracted with JHSNI to provide them with a nurturing and safe living environment for 6 months. There is a maximum of two youth per Carehome at any time.

Youth attend Day Program from Monday to Friday. Day Program for Oasis/Headstart consists of school, life skills, recreation/physical education, employment readiness, counselling, etc.

Youth are typically supervised at all times for the first 30 days. **After** 30 days, if things are going well, e.g. the youth is cooperating, meeting expectations and the probation officer is in agreement, s/he may be eligible for 'structured' free time, such as attending an extra-curricular activity in the community such as art classes, martial arts, yoga, etc.

The Oasis and Headstart programs are housed in one building in downtown Campbell River. The programs share the same manager, counsellors and support staff but ***there is no interaction between youth in the Oasis (girls program) or Headstart (boys program).***

STAFF & Structure

Youth Counsellor: Each youth is assigned a Key Youth Counsellor. The Youth Counsellor is the main contact for the youth while s/he is here. Please feel free to contact the youth's counsellor with any questions or concerns.

Family Resource Worker: The Family Resource Worker works with caregivers and helps a youth to get set up in their carehome when they first arrive. The Family Resource worker does not work directly with the youth.

Caregiver(s): Each youth lives with a contracted caregiver while s/he is at Oasis/HeadStart.

Program Manager: The Program Manager oversees the day-to-day running of the program and is an active part of case management. She can be contacted if parents/guardians have questions/concerns about the program or their child.

Counselling Coordinator: The Counselling Coordinator meets regularly with youth to provide counselling. In some cases the Counselling Coordinator may work with youth and their family members. The Counselling Coordinator can liaise with other counsellors working with the youth and make referrals as needed.

Teachers: Oasis and Headstart programs each has its own teacher. Youth in these programs will work with the teacher to develop an individual learning plan. each day to meet academic goals.

DAY PROGRAM

Structure, rules and other stuff...



Life Skills



While at Oasis/Headstart youth participate in daily Life Skills class. In Life Skills youth are asked to focus on topics like healthy sexuality, anger/emotion management, health, career preparation, etc.



ACADEMICS/ SCHOOL

While in Oasis/Headstart youth can earn high school course credits. Oasis and Headstart each has its own individual teacher supplied by School District 72. Upon intake, the teacher will review the youth's school records and will talk with the youth about her/his strengths and interests as they relate to academics.

The teacher and youth will plan out an education program. Typically, youth earn credits in PE, Planning and academic courses like English, Math, Social Studies, or Science.

2 to 3 hours of school each day. *A youth can spend more time on school if s/he wishes.

Counselling Services

Counselling Coordinator

Youth can access the Counselling Coordinator for general counselling or to work on specific areas. The Counselling Coordinator will also work with guardians/parents, as necessary, to ensure the best possible outcome for the youth during and after program.

Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services

Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services is available to youth by referral only. Only the probation officer can refer a youth.

Youth can access a variety of other counselling services while in Campbell River based on their individual needs.





CAREHOMES/Caregivers

While in Oasis/Headstart youth live with local families contracted with JHSNI. Each adult member of the carehome family must undergo extensive screening, including a criminal record search, a check with the local child welfare authority (MCFD) and an intensive home study. As well, youth are not permitted to be left alone at any time with a friend or extended member of the caregiver's family without this person having been screened and approved first by JHSNI.

Sharing information and Confidentiality

Information is shared with the caregiver about the youth on a need-to-know basis. The goal in sharing information is to prepare the caregiver to best meet the needs of the youth. Caregivers are bound by confidentiality and may not disclose confidential information about the youth to anyone not working with Oasis/Headstart or professionally involved with the youth. The caregiver's ability to share information with family or parents may also be limited depending on the direction received from the youth's probation officer.

Daily logs

Caregivers are required to keep a daily log of their time spent with the youth. These logs are handwritten and signed by the caregivers. They are given each day to the youth's Key Worker and will eventually be placed in the youth's file.

Privacy

Each youth has her/his own bedroom. Caregivers are expected to respect the privacy of the youth. However, they may enter a youth's room from time to time to ensure that everything is safe and in order. This would only be done when the youth is not in a compromising position, e.g. changing, etc.

Day-to-day living issues

Youth and caregivers have daily contact with program staff. In addition, youth, caregivers and program staff meet formally in the carehome once or twice each month (or more, if needed) to discuss all issues-- positive and negative. These meetings provide youth with opportunities for learning conflict resolution and relationship skills. Youth are supported in these meetings by their Key Worker and/or a program counsellor while caregivers are supported by the Family Resource Worker.

Part of the family

Youth spend evenings and weekends with the caregivers and are treated as part of the family. So, this means they are included in family meals and outings. We work with the caregivers to make sure the activities are reasonable and within the youths' capabilities.

24/7 Support

The Family Resource Worker (FRW) works only with caregivers. The FRW is available by emergency pager 24/7. In the event of a crisis in the carehome, the FRW will provide immediate assistance to the caregivers as well as the youth.

Medication

Caregivers do not administer medication to youth. However, they do keep it locked up and will record the time and date as well as dosage of any medication taken.

Alcohol/substance use in the carehome

We ask that all alcohol is locked away and not consumed in front of a youth.

It goes without saying that we do not condone the use of illicit substances by caregivers. Caregivers found to be using illicit substances while a youth is in their care will be immediately suspended pending further investigation.



GENERAL RULES & Responsibilities

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Day Program and in the Carehome

Verbal abuse towards staff, caregivers and other youth is not permitted. This includes threats, name calling, put-downs, racial or sexist comments, and so forth.

Destruction or vandalism such as “tagging”, hitting/throwing/kicking property, smoking inside the building, stomping or heavily jumping on floors or furniture, etc., is not allowed.



Rights & Responsibilities

While in the program youth are considered to be “In Care” of the Ministry for Children and Family

Development (MCFD) and are protected by law. For more information, talk to the youth’s Probation Officer or Youth Counsellor and ask for a copy of the document called:

“Know Your Rights: A Guide for Young People in Care”

**** Please keep in mind that youth who are in care because of involvement with the Criminal Justice System do not have the same rights as other youth.***



Youth have the right:

- To express her/his opinion about decisions that impact her/him while in the program;
- To be treated with dignity and respect by JHSNI staff and caregivers;
- To refuse service and be informed of the consequences;
- To be respected for her/his cultural heritage and to request that her/his culture heritage be considered in planning;
- To invite family and/or legal guardians to participate in decisions;
- To make a complaint if s/he is not satisfied with the service;
- To determine the goals of her/his service plan;
- To be fed and nurtured according to community standards;
- To a reasonable level of privacy and possession of personal belongings;
- To be free from corporal punishment;
- To be informed of the standard of behaviour expected by the caregivers and consequences for failure to comply;
- To receive medical care when required and to advocate for dental care when required.



Youths' responsibilities:



- Cooperative attitude—Youth are expected to cooperate and comply with reasonable requests from staff or caregiver(s) without confrontation.
- Respect for self and others—youth must not be involved in or encourage others to get involved in any activity that is physically/emotionally damaging (e.g. no fighting, no physical contact, no spitting, name-calling, teasing, insulting behaviour, etc.).
- Respect for property-- Property of JHSNI and caregivers will be treated with respect. There is no tolerance for needless destruction, damage or injury to property, plants or animals.
- Stealing— youth must respect the belongings, food and personal possessions of JHSNI, other youth, caregivers and the community-- *failure to comply with this rule may result in criminal charges.*
- Drugs and Alcohol—youth must remain free of alcohol, drugs. Possession of a controlled substance is strictly prohibited—*failure to comply with this rule may result in criminal charges or other consequences.*
- Weapons—weapons or the use of any object as a weapon is strictly prohibited- *failure to comply with this rule may result in criminal charges.*

Supervision—Caregivers and program staff must monitor the youth's whereabouts at all times. *The RCMP will be contacted when a youth's whereabouts are not known after ten minutes.*



COMMUNICATION

Approved Contact List

Youth can only contact those approved by the probation officer (P.O.). Those people who are approved will be on the youth's "Approved Contact List". An individual may be removed from a youths contact list if staff and/or P.O feel contact has become inappropriate.

The P.O. has final say of the Approved Contact list, so contact her/him if there are any problems.

Calls to family, friends will take place from the carehome.

Time limits & other stuff...

Phone calls are 15-20 minutes, in total, per night.

Youth are not permitted to answer the phone in the carehome.

Computers & The Internet

There is **no** internet access except for school purposes. Youth are supervised at all times while using the internet.

Youth may use the computer to listen to music while doing school work.

**** MSN, Facebook, Nexopia, etc., are *not* permitted ****

Note: Music with lyrics deemed to be excessively violent, sexual, that glorifies crime or substance use and/or is otherwise obscene, is prohibited.



DRESS CODE

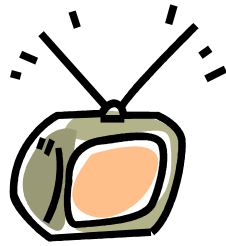
- Clothing that shows excessive underwear or skin is prohibited.
- Any language, images or logos deemed pornographic, offensive and/or as glorifying crime/violence are strictly prohibited.
- Replacement clothes will be supplied for the day if clothing is deemed unsuitable.



TECHNOLOGY

Cameras, cell phones, laptops, iPods, MP3 players, or other electronic and/or wireless devices are not permitted at Day Program. If electronic items appear in Day Program they will be confiscated and returned upon graduation. Youth may keep camera's, iPods, MP3 players and other electronic devices at the carehome. Taking pictures of other youth at program is strictly prohibited.

***Cell phones, laptops, etc. are not permitted in the Carehome or in Day Program. These will be confiscated from a youth and returned to her/him upon discharge.**



MEDIA RATING

Generally speaking, youth may only watch TV programs/movies with a rating of **14A** or **lower** and play video games with **ratings of "T" or "E"**.

Occasionally, program staff or caregivers may want to watch a TV program/movie with a higher rating. This is acceptable only when the TV show/movie in question has been pre-screened by staff/caregivers and is determined not to be too violent, sexist or contain graphic sexuality, glorify criminal behaviour/substance use or to be otherwise offensive or damaging to the youth. 18A / R rated movies may be shown for educational purposes only, under full supervision of staff.

As well, caregivers/staff will use their discretion to screen out movies with "**low**" ratings that still contain material deemed inappropriate. Any material (magazines, t-shirts, etc.) that is X-rated, pornographic or otherwise offensive is also strictly prohibited.

If youth brings any of these things to program, they will be confiscated and held by the Youth Counsellor until discharge.

CIGARETTES & Smoking



DAY PROGRAM-- Smoking is ***not permitted*** during Day Program and during drop-off and pick-up times. However, youth are able to have one cigarette per day at an agreed upon time with youth counsellor. Oasis/ Headstart can provide youth with smoking cessation aids such as nicotine gum to help manage cravings.

CAREHOME-- No smoking is permitted in any JHSNI carehome. Caregivers will speak with the youth about when & where s/he can smoke outside.

General Cigarette Rules-- Family & friends listed in a youth's approved contact list can mail youth cigarettes, or money to buy cigarettes, but the programs do not supply cigarettes to youth.



MONEY/Additional Costs

Who Pays?

There is no cost for a youth to attend Oasis or Headstart. Caregivers provide youth with the basic clothing and toiletry supplies.

*Parents/Legal Guardians must still pay for such things as prescriptions and anything not covered by The John Howard Society of North Island.

If a youth is under the care of the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) then there may be some money available.

However, this is case specific and depends upon the youth's involvement with MCFD.

If you have any questions or concerns, talk to your child's probation officer and/or social worker.

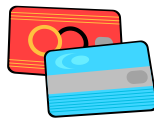
Allowance:



Youth receive \$20.00 a week for allowance. Youth can not have more than \$25.00 on her/his person at any time.

Cash: Youth are encouraged to place any additional cash in a bank account. Otherwise staff or caregivers will hold on to the cash and make it available to the youth for requested purchases.

Debit Cards:



All debit cards must be handed in to her/his Youth Counsellor who will hold on to it during the youth's time at Oasis/Headstart. Youth may withdraw money to make specific purchases only. If a youth withdraw more than \$25.00 from her/his bank account, the money will be held by the caregiver for safekeeping, until the youth actually spends it.



Bank Accounts:

The youth's counsellor will help her/him set up a bank account and learn about budgeting. Family are encouraged not to send money unless it is for something the youth needs and the program cannot pay (e.g. specialized courses, etc.)

HOME VISITS



The frequency and length of home visits depend on a number of factors. Firstly, in order to be eligible for a home visit, a youth generally has to be here for thirty (30) days. Other factors that can influence when and how often a youth can go on a home visit include the discharge plan as well as if there are identified safety concerns.

Home visits require approval of the youth's probation officer, legal guardian and the Oasis/Headstart Program Manager.

The Youth Counsellor will help youth contact her/his Probation Officer (P.O.) and complete the application form to set up a Home Visit.

The Youth Counsellor and program counsellors are there to help support parents/guardians to plan home visits and develop strategies for dealing with possible problems or concerns.

Travel costs to and from the visit **are not** covered by Oasis/Headstart, so arrangements for funding must happen through family, Social Worker, Probation Officer, etc.

Employment/VOLUNTEERING

Youth may be eligible for paid employment or volunteering in the community after completing the following steps:

- Have been in Oasis/Headstart for 30 days (*a youth may
- be eligible sooner if Independent Living is part of the Discharge Plan, s/he is meeting expectations, etc.).
- Completion of the Oasis/HeadStart Career Preparation Program. This program consists of lessons/activities on 11 topics and has a mandatory volunteer component.
- Met with School District 72 Career Coordinator to explore career opportunities and interests.
- Completed 30 hours of volunteer service.



Structured Unsupervised Time



Youth may be eligible for structured unsupervised time. Examples include taking classes, going to the gym, etc... There must be a specific plan in place before youth can begin structured unsupervised time.

To apply for unsupervised time, youth fill out an application form and give it to their Youth Counsellor. The Youth Counsellor will bring the application to the Oasis team at the weekly case review meeting and a decision will be made right away. The youth is informed of the decision.

This privilege *will* be reduced or eliminated if youth cannot manage the time responsibly or if youth do not comply with program rules.

If a youth loses her/his privilege after one week's time s/ he will have the chance to re-apply to the team to have the privilege reinstated.



What Parents/Caregivers Can Do...

Bonding is ongoing in any relationship. This is especially true with relationships between adults and their teenagers. Here are some practical ideas for strengthening your bond. Bonding may feel like the last thing you or your teenager wants, but now is the time when s/he needs you most. Try these strategies:

While your teen is in program:

- Adjust your attitude. When your teen's in trouble, communication can easily break down. When the going gets rough, you need to realize that your teen is not a problem to be solved, but a person to be understood. A key rule: Don't overreact. The biggest reason kids don't share information is because they're afraid their parents will freak out.
- Don't be put off by a brush-off. It helps to remember that your kid's not purposely playing bait and switch with your feelings.
- Don't play 20 questions. Youth often find the questions we ask intrusive and annoying. Try to pick up on her interests, just as you would with a person you want to get to know. Ask general questions about a topic your youth loves, or, when he makes a comment, add your own. Keep an eye out also for your youth's subtle conversational openings — a dramatic sigh, an exclamation, a lingering look.
- Follow a rule of giving compliments/affirmations/praise (when it is honest and appropriate) then your youth will be more likely to listen to your complaints.

- Give yourself the right to take time to answer requests from youth. Not every question needs an answer immediately. Let your youth know that you will give them an answer in an hour or later that day. This gives you time to think, consult, look for support and reflect on what you want to decide.
- Praise, Praise, Praise! People of all ages respond much more positively if they hear at least 3-5 genuine compliments before hearing a criticism.

When your teen comes home:

- Spend time together-- simply being in the same place at the same time with a teen can be a struggle. Teens have countless enticing ways to spend time without you but there *are* many activities you can share, as well as ways to turn everyday situations into bonding opportunities. Make dinner together; Have a sit down for dinner; Turn off the TV once in a while;
- Sometimes simply paying **positive** attention can intensify your relationship with your kid. It's easy to forget that teenagers, just like toddlers, really want you to watch them.
- Talk by typing. Learn to speak your youth's language of choice, whether it's e-mail, cell phone texting, posts on Facebook, or chatting online.
- Know when to linger. Just being in the right place at the right time — and in the right frame of mind — can up your chances for a heart-to-heart. If you observe your teen's routines and casually manage to be around when he seems most receptive, you'll lay the groundwork for some great discussions.



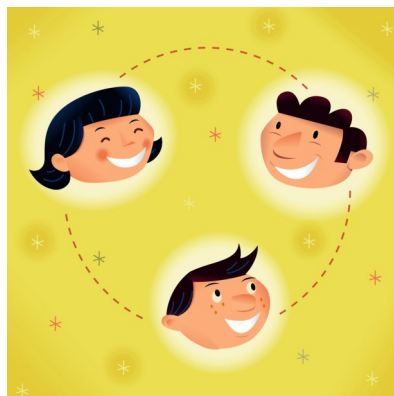
5 Don'ts for Bonding with Your Teen

Follow these rules to keep your signals clear and your bond strong.

- Don't ask endless questions; you're not an inquisitor.
- Don't tease or be sarcastic
- Don't talk when you could be listening.
- Don't cut your kid off when s/he's venting.
- Don't use Facebook, etc. as a way to spy, nag, or scold.

General Things You Can Do...

- Set a good example in how you deal with conflicts;
- Encourage a healthy lifestyle and healthy activities;
- Set expectations for behaviour and establish limits (the program Counselling Coordinator and Key Worker can assist with this, if needed).
- Praise your youth when s/he does right
- Develop structure in your youth's life, which includes knowing what the youth is doing and where s/he is going and with whom.



Complaints

Problems are a part of life and often provide excellent opportunities for learning new coping and relationship skills. At FTAP we take problems seriously and encourage youth to deal with problems in a constructive way while being supported.

In the Carehome:

Every effort is made to ensure that youth are placed in the carehome best-suited to meet her/his needs. There are weekly meetings to discuss problems and successes in the carehome with the youth, the caregiver and her/his Youth Counsellor. Youth are encouraged to work out problems with the Youth Counsellor and the caregiver.

The Family Resource Worker will help caregivers to deal with problems in a constructive manner as well. If a problem persists, a youth may be moved to a different carehome.

**** The number of carehomes is limited so it is important the youth are willing and able to fulfil basic expectations in the carehome. Unfortunately, there is the possibility that a youth will be exited from the program if we cannot find a carehome for her/him.***

In Day Program:

Program staff go to great lengths to tailor the Day Program to the interests and goals of each youth. Youth are expected to act in ways that are respectful of staff, other youth and JHSNI property. Youth who repeatedly refuse to comply with program may be discharged.

