

# JohnHoward

The John Howard Society of North Island

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## Oasis & Headstart

Full-Time Attendance Programs



## PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

Updated September 2018

## Youth Criminal Justice in Canada and Full-Time Attendance Programs

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Full-Time Attendance programs (FTAP's) came about in 2003 under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA). The purpose of FTAP's is encourage reduced reliance on incarceration. The YCJA emphasizes rehabilitation and community-based alternatives.

There are approximately 20 FTAP's 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 while receiving intensive rehabilitative programming, i.e. 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 historically 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 Youth Criminal Justice Act, visit this website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/youth-justice>

## Oasis/Headstart Program Overview

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The Full-Time Attendance Programs (FTAP's), Oasis and Headstart, are alternative to custody programs funded in part by the Ministry for Children and Family Development and the Federal Government. These programs are intended for youth between the ages of 14-18. Oasis services female clients, and Headstart services male clients.

To be eligible to attend these programs, youth must be referred by a probation officer and must have a valid court-order directing them to attend a Full-Time Attendance Program.

Youth live with caregivers who are contracted with John Howard to provide them with a nurturing and safe living environment for six months. There is a maximum of one 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, i.e. 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 extracurricular activity in the community such as art classes, martial arts, yoga, etc.

The Oasis and Headstart programs are located in one building in beautiful downtown Campbell River. The programs share the same manager, counsellors and support staff but the programs are run separately.

## A Typical Week in Oasis/ Headstart

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Youth participate in daily programming that incorporates both group activities and individual blocks where each participant will have the opportunity to address their individual goals (i.e. counselling, school, independent living skills, work experience, etc.). Each youth will work directly with their primary counsellor to identify personal goals and evaluate their progress. YPO's, parents, and other supports may also be involved to identify a youth's goals. There are regular aspects of program that youth are expected to participate in, which include: check-ins, cooking, physical education, individual/ group counselling, spending supervised time in the community, work experience, independent learning (school/ employment related goals) and weekly chores. Throughout the week there are many opportunities to engage in activities, and youth are invited to share their ideas about what they would like to do. Some examples of common activities are: walks, spending time at the beach, arts & crafts, swimming, skating, team sports, working out, bike riding, bowling, playing pool, and paid work opportunities. Youth can earn high school credits while in program by incorporating school blocks into their daily schedule.

## Counselling Services

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### Clinical Counsellor

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Youth can anticipate weekly individual sessions with the Clinical Counsellor. They may also be involved in weekly group counselling. The Clinical Counsellor 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

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Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services are 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.*

## Staff that Youth Will Be Working With

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### Primary Youth Counsellor

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Each youth will be assigned a primary youth counsellor. He/she's primary is the youth's main support while he/she is in program. They are the "go-to" person for questions or concerns, and will help set and manage goals for your youth's time in program.

### Teacher

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The 180° program has its own School District 72 teacher. The teacher will support the youth in developing an individual learning plan to meet his/her academic and/ or employment goals.

### Clinical Counsellor

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Meets regularly with youth to provide counselling. In some cases, the clinical counsellor may work with youth and their family members.

### Youth & Family Transition Counsellor

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Will work to support transitioning into the program, assist you in staying connected with your youth during their time in program, and help organize and facilitate a smooth and successful transition back home upon completion of the program.

### Activity and Supervision Workers

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The Activity and Supervision Workers will be spending time with youth, doing activities, both inside and outside of day program hours.

## Program Manager

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Oversees the day-to-day running of the program and is an active part of case management. The Program Manager can be contacted to answer any questions or concerns.

## Family Resource Worker

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Works with caregivers and helps youth get set up in their carehome when they first arrive. Youth can meet with the Family Resource worker if they have any questions or concerns about their care home.

## Family Carehome Recruiter

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Our Family Carehome Recruiter also works closely with caregivers and will often check in with the youth and caregivers.

## Administrative Support

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The Administrative Support person is often one of the first faces the youth will see as they enter the building each morning. She will welcome them with open arms and loves to connect with the youth in program.

## Caregivers/ Homes

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While in Oasis/Headstart youth live with local families contracted with John Howard. 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 John Howard.

## Sharing Information and Confidentiality

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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

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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 primary counsellor and will eventually be placed in the youth's file.

## Privacy

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Each youth has a private 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, i.e. changing, etc.

## Day-to-Day Living Issues

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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 primary counsellor and/or a program counsellor while caregivers are supported by the Family Resource Worker.

## Part of the Family

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Youth spend evenings and weekends with the caregivers and are treated as part of the family. This means they are included in family meals and outings. Staff work with the caregivers to make sure the activities are reasonable and within a youth's capabilities.

## 24/7 Support

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On-call support is available to our caregivers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In the event of a crisis in the carehome, the on-call staff member will provide immediate assistance to the caregivers as well as the youth.

## Medication

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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

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We ask that all alcohol is kept locked away. 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.

## Rules and Expectations

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### Intake

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In the first week of program there will be some paperwork that youth go through with their primary youth counsellor. We will talk about things such as protecting confidentiality, rights and responsibilities, program expectations, develop a unique safety plan, etc. We will also explore needs and support youth in making some personal goals to make their time at program meaningful.

### Carehome

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When youth arrive to their carehome their caregivers will introduce them to the rules of their home, and what to expect if rules are broken. Many youth wonder what the consequences for certain behaviours will be. We try to use logical consequences that are related, reasonable, and respectful.

### Program

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Most of program rules and expectations are outlined in the youth handbook, or will be discussed with youth upon their arrival at program. If issues come up that have not been previously covered, we will talk with youth to clarify expectations.

### Technology

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- Laptops, cellphones, iPods, tablets, gaming consoles, etc. are not permitted.

- Youth are not permitted to access social media of any kind. However, if youth require access to social media for reasons that will be beneficial to their goals in program (i.e. removing inappropriate photos, changing a password for security reasons, etc.) they may submit a request form to their primary worker.
- Youth will be provided with an mp3 player upon arriving at program and will have supervised access to downloadable music.
- Cameras are not permitted at program. If a youth has a camera we will keep it for him/her and return it for home visits or special occasions. If youth choose to participate in a photography project, a camera will be provided.

## Dress Code

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We strive to create a respectful, safe environment for everyone, and request that clothing worn be free of any pornographic or offensive logos, including anything that promotes substance use, violence or stereotyping.

## Smoking

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We recognize that some youth who attend our program have developed a dependency to nicotine and may identify smoking as a primary coping mechanism. We will encourage youth to participate in a variety of cessation (reduce/ stop smoking) programs and have a strong focus on supporting the development of safer, healthier coping strategies. If youth are experiencing difficulty with quitting smoking, individual smoke breaks may be permitted during their time at day program. John Howard has a commitment to safer practices and, as such, will endeavor to ensure you do not place yourself at increased risk while attempting to get cigarettes.

- Use of e-cigarettes, vaporizers, loose tobacco, and chewing tobacco are prohibited.
- Smoking is not permitted inside any homes, buildings, or vehicles.
- Use of tobacco for ceremonial/ traditional purposes will be reviewed and approved on a case by case basis.

## Money

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- Youth will receive a \$20.00 allowance once per week - guaranteed!



- The most amount of money youth are permitted to carry on them is \$25.00. Caregivers or youth counsellors will hold onto any extra money youth have and make it available to them for requested purchases.
- If a youth has a bank card, their caregiver or youth counsellor will hold on to it for them. If a youth would like to withdraw money from their bank account to purchase a specific item(s), they will need to speak with your youth counsellor first.

## TV/ Movie/ Game Ratings

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- Youth are permitted to watch TV shows or movies with a rating of 14A or lower, as well as play video games with a rating of “T” or “E”. Any media above these ratings will need to be approved by the youth counsellor and will only be considered for educational purposes.
- Any media or materials (magazines, videos, posters) that are X-rated, pornographic or otherwise offensive are strictly prohibited.

## Rights & Responsibilities for Youth

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While in program youth are “in care” of the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) and are protected by law. For more information, talk to your youth’s probation officer and seek out a copy of the document called: “***Know Your Rights: A Guide for Young People in Care.***” The rights of youth in care, and youth involved in the Criminal Justice System do have some differences. Your youth’s probation officer can be of assistance in exploring these differences.

## Communication

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Youth are permitted 20 minutes of call time in the carehome each day. They will create a contact list, approved by their YPO, during their first days of program. It is important to note that the calls from the carehome must be outgoing from the youth as incoming calls to the carehome are not permitted. If you have any questions or concerns, or need to get in contact with your youth, you can contact the program manager or primary youth counsellor.

## Home Visits

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A home visit is an opportunity for a youth to return to their home community and “practice” the new skills/ strengths they have developed while at program. It is also an opportunity to make meaningful connection with personal and professional supports.

- After a youth has successfully completed one month of program, they are able to apply for a home visit. Youth, their primary counsellor, their probation officer, and whomever will be responsible for them on their visit (i.e. parent/ guardian), will support them in completing an application as well as organize travel costs, etc.
- Family members, approved by a youth’s probation officer, are welcome to visit youth in Campbell River. Please talk to your youth’s primary counsellor to make these arrangements.

## Discharge Planning

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While at program, youth are supported to create a safe/ positive discharge plan. We would be delighted to celebrate their success and host a graduation upon their completion of program. If a youth is discharged early, we will work with the YPO to ensure that they arrive safely to an emergency discharge placement. We encourage parents/ guardians to be involved in the process of discharge planning. This often occurs through monthly Youth Centered Meetings (YCM’s), in which the youth is encouraged to invite their parent/ guardian. Meetings are most often held via telephone conference as we do not expect parents and helping professionals to travel to Campbell River to meet.

## Structured Free Time

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After a youth successfully completes their first month in program, they can begin exploring opportunities for structured free time in the community. Having structured free time is earned through demonstrating appropriate behaviour within program and the community as well as by following through with program expectations. Structured free time is an opportunity for youth to practice the skills they have been developing in program and to gain independence. Some examples of structured free time may include: working out at the gym, playing sports,

participating in a youth group, going for bike rides, going to the movies, taking a lesson of some sort, etc.) Any structured free time will involve collaborative safety planning with youth and their primary counsellor.

## Employment & Volunteer Opportunities

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There will be opportunities for youth to gain paid work experiences while at program. If youth are interested in getting a job, he/she is welcome to start looking after they have successfully completed one month of program. If the youth has a plan to seek employment, he/she will be asked to do some preparation with the support of our teacher and/ or his/her youth counsellor.

## Support for Parents

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If parents require additional support, staff can assist by connecting families with appropriate resources in the home community. The transition process (going to and returning from program) can be a positive, but also challenging, time for both youth and parents. Parents/guardians are always welcome to contact the program manager with any questions they may have.

## Complaint Process

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Problems are a part of life and often provide excellent opportunities for learning new coping and relationship skills. At Oasis and Headstart we take problems seriously and encourage youth to deal with issues in an open, honest, respectful, and constructive way while being supported. John Howard Society of North Island's formal complaint process is as follows:

- Step 1: talk to your primary counsellor
- Step 2: talk to Oasis/ Headstart manager, or
- Step 3: fill out a complaint form

## Complaints in the Carehome

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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 primary counsellor. Youth are encouraged to practice open communication and conflict resolution skills in working through any issues that arise in their carehome. The Family Resource Worker will help caregivers to problem solve 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.*

## Complaints in Day Program

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Youth are encouraged to speak to program staff about any complaints. We encourage open, honest, and respectful communication among youth and staff members, and are always willing to work through any problems or complaints a youth may have. Youth also have the option of voicing complaints during our monthly Youth Satisfaction Surveys as well as to meet with the program manager.

## Mail/Contact Information

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If you would like to mail something to your youth while in the program, please send to the following address:

*First Name FTAP (i.e. John FTAP)*

*201-140 10th Ave.*

*Campbell River, BC*

*V9W 4E3*

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to receive additional information, please contact the Program Manager, Angie Prescott: phone 250-286-0222 (Ext. 222)

Email: [angie.prescott@jhsni.bc.ca](mailto:angie.prescott@jhsni.bc.ca)