

# YOUTH HANDBOOK

*Basis + Headstart*  
FULL TIME ATTENDANCE PROGRAMS



Updated November 2021

**JohnHoward**  
The John Howard Society of North Island



## ABOUT US

A QUICK OVERVIEW

### Located in Campbell River, BC

Oasis and Headstart are a 6-month program for young people (13 to 19) involved in the Youth Justice System, who want to make positive life changes. While you're here, you can work on the things you need to build the life you have in mind. In the program, we will help you set goals in the areas that are important for that like:

- School
- Work
- Recreation
- Connecting with Culture
- Life skills
- Relationships
- Volunteering
- Community Events
- Counselling
- Saving/Budgeting
- Personal Health
- Living Arrangements

It's important to us that your time here is valuable, so you are involved in your program design – from setting goals to creating schedules and looking at progress.

The daily program runs **Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm**. There are some afternoon and weekend activities available with staff, and you can make plans for more structured time in the community (to do rec activities, work, or volunteer). You will have a primary counsellor, so there is always a 'go-to' person for you. And we have family caregivers for you to stay with, so there's a safe, stable place for you to be.

***If you need detox when you arrive, let us know how we can help.  
There is 24-hour support.***

*Detoxing typically takes between 5 to 10 days.*

*You would have regular contact with your primary counsellor and caregivers,  
and additional support from our clinical counsellor and activity worker if needed.*

*You can expect to be seen by a local doctor within 24 hours of your arrival.*

# A TYPICAL DAY

IN THE PROGRAM



During the weekdays, you will be dropped off at a day program to participate in activities related to your goals and for recreation. For example, your week could be a combination of check-ins, cooking, physical education, individual/ group counselling, cultural connections, supervised time in the community, work experience, independent learning (school), and weekly chores. If you have specific ideas, you are invited to share those with staff and add to the weekly schedule.

## Example of a daily schedule:

### Wake up at care home

9 am	<b>Caregiver drives you to program</b>	After the first month, you can apply to walk, bike, or bus this commute
9 – 9:15	<b>Check-in</b>	Time with other youth/staff for a casual or more formal group check-in
9:15 am	<b>Walk or Counselling</b>	Individual or group counselling if you want
10:15 am	<b>P.E. Block</b>	Chance to participate in sports or workout routines at a local school gym or exercise facility
11:30 am	<b>Lunch</b>	
12 pm	<b>School Block</b>	1-1 school support with a teacher in the program or time to do independent learning towards other learning/training goals
1 pm	<b>Activity</b>	Other activities as planned, such as art projects, hikes, bowling, swimming/skating
2 pm	<b>Regular pick up</b>	The caregiver picks you up from program
2 – 4 pm	<b>Extra activities can be arranged</b>	Activity workers can make plans with you outside of regular program hours

# WHO ARE WE



PEOPLE YOU'LL MEET IN PROGRAM

## **Primary Counsellors**

These staff will be your main supports while you are here.

## **Teachers**

There is one School District 72 teacher to help you create an individual learning plan.

## **Clinical Counsellor**

Can work with just you or with you and your family members.

## **Activity Workers**

Spend time with you both in the program and after the program doing activities.

## **Youth & Family Transition Counsellor**

Supports your entry to the program and your return home by helping set up things in your home community and making plans for long-term living goals.

## **Family Caregiver**

They will provide support to you in the care home. Your caregiver(s) will take time to learn about your likes and dislikes, show you your room, and tell you about the basic routines in their home (meal times, shopping days, bedtime, etc.). If you are unsure of or uncomfortable with anything, speak to your caregiver(s) or your youth counsellor about it.

## **Family Resource Workers**

Works with our family caregivers and helps you set up in your care home. Talk to the family resource worker if you have any care home questions or concerns.

## **Administrative Support Person**

This is often the first face you see when you enter the building each morning. She will be part of helping you feel welcome.

## **Program Manager**

Is responsible for the overall program and supports the staff. You can meet with the Program Manager if you have any questions or concerns.



# BEFORE YOU GET HERE

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE PROGRAM

### Things to pack and bring:

- 
- Personal items (pictures, books, things that will make your stay more comfortable)

---

  - Swimsuit and gym clothes

---

  - Clothing (socks, underwear, shirts, comfortable pants, rain jacket, shoes, etc.)

---

  - Any medications prescribed by a doctor

---

  - Any identification (BC ID, SIN #, care card, status card, birth certificate, etc.)

---

  - Resume (if employment is a goal of yours and you already have a resume)

---

  - Cigarettes or cessation products? Have you been smoking and plan to continue?
- 

### ***AVOID packing any of the following items.***

*If you bring them, we will keep them locked up or have to dispose of them:*

- Cell phones or devices with internet
- Alcohol, drugs or any paraphernalia
- Vaporizers, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco
- Pornographic or offensive material
- Offensive clothing/accessories
- Weapons (pocket knives, imitation weapons, etc.)
- Supplements (protein powder, diet pills)
- Allergy/Scented items (perfume or cologne)

### Things to do before you come to Oasis/Headstart:

- 
- Do you have a discharge plan in mind? Where will you go if you need to leave?

---

  - Who will be on your contact list? Make a list of positive support (family, professionals).

---

  - Visit a doctor for medical screening. Have a prescription for any medication you take.

---

  - Talk to Program Staff about any things you will need or expect from the program.

---

  - Think about your goals and how long you plan to be at the Oasis/Headstart Program.

---

  - Consider whether you will bring a covid-19 vaccination record or need help getting one.
-

# IMPORTANT

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



### **Where do I live? At a care home in the community**

Care homes are different families in our community who work with our program. Before entering the program, we will connect with you to help make the best fit. Some homes have pets, some have other kids, and each will have a different vibe. Let us know your likes and dislikes so we can make the transition easier for you.

### **Can I have my cell phone? No**

Like most treatment programs, we do not allow cell phones. This helps support you to focus on yourself and avoid distractions. We know music is important, so we will give you a new mp3 player when you get here, and it will be yours to keep when you finish the program.

### **Can I have my laptop, iPod, or tablet? No**

Same as cells phones, anything with personal internet access is not allowed. We do have these devices at the program and can set up supervised time. If you bring a phone/device or laptop, we will keep it locked up here.

### **How do I keep in touch with my people? Make a contact list**

When you arrive, we'll help you make a list of people that you want to keep in touch with while you're here. You can request to make changes to the contact list at any time. Appointment calls can be made during the day, but we usually ask you to make social calls in the evening.

### **Is there a dress code? No, but. . .**

We want to honour freedom of expression but ask that youth don't wear clothing that could be triggering or offensive. This means no clothing that visually promotes violence, drugs or alcohol.

### **Can I trade or sell things to other youth? No**

Borrowing, exchanging, or selling clothing (or other items) between people in the program can lead to problems, so we ask you not to. If youth trade alcohol or substances, it can result in discharge.

**How long is the program?** 1-6 months and it depends on what you want!

**Can I watch T.V. or playing video games?** Yes, with some restrictions.

Depending on your care home and your experiences, some shows (18, M) may not be appropriate to watch in the program. Any T.V. shows and movies with a rating of 14A or lower, and any video games they play have a rating of T or E are allowed. If there's a reason why something from a different category would be helpful, you can talk to your youth counsellor about it.

**Is smoking cigarettes allowed?** Yes, but. . .

We want to help you try and develop safer, healthier coping strategies, but understand that cigarettes might be a familiar coping tool. If you want to smoke cigarettes in the program, you will work with a counsellor to create a plan to consider how to afford and manage your use. We can allow cigarettes, but we **cannot allow** vapes, e-cigarettes, loose tobacco, or chewing tobacco rolling papers.

- We have to follow public health guidelines, so no smoking inside homes, buildings, or vehicles. We also ask you to avoid smoking while in the program from 9 am to 2 pm.
- Using tobacco for ceremonial purposes is usually ok. We'll just need to talk with you about it first.

**Are there ways to make money?** Yes

We give you a '\$20.00 allowance' once per week – guaranteed. We also have small jobs in the program to help you build work experiences and small earnings. After your first month, you can apply for jobs in the community if that fits your goals. We have realized that having too much money can lead to problems and only allow youth to carry \$25. Your caregiver or youth counsellor will help you deposit the rest, keep your bank card safe for when you need it. When you want to make bigger purchases, we help you plan.

**Can I go out in the community on my own?** Yes, after the first month.

After settling into the program for a month, you can work with your youth counsellor and caregivers to start applying for structured free time alone in the community. The planned time is then approved and offers you an opportunity to practice the skills you've been developing and enrich your experience here. Some examples of structured free time are working out at the gym, participating in cultural activities, civic events, sports, participating in a youth group, bike rides, going to the movies, taking a course, etc.

## **Can I get a job? Yes**

There will be chances for you to get paid work experience while you're here. If finding a job is part of your plan, we can help you look after you've been here a month.

## **Can I go home for a visit? Yes, after the first month.**

Home visits are a chance for you to practice the things you've learned. They're also a chance to connect with key supportive people or services. You can make a plan for a home visit after you've been with us for a month. Our transition counsellor will support you to make the plan and help organize the visit. Family members who are approved (on your contact list) can visit you in Campbell River.

## **What If I want to leave? We can help you leave safely.**

Whether it's planning to return home after finishing the program, creating a new home, or needing to leave suddenly, we will help you do that safely and without judgement. We would love to support you in having a smooth transition after completing the program and celebrating your success. But if you need to leave early, we will work with you and your support team to ensure that you get where you're going safely.

## **Can I hold onto my medication? No, but the caregiver will keep it locked up.**

Any medication must be prescribed by a doctor (this includes over-the-counter medication). The medication is kept at your care home in a locked cabinet. When it's time to take, your caregiver will make sure it is available. If you'd like to make changes to medications, your primary counsellor can help book a doctor's appointment.

## **What happens if I use drugs or alcohol? We take time to explore it with you.**

If you end up using drugs or alcohol, the best thing is to tell a staff person you trust. Our first step will be making sure you're ok, and then we will talk to you to discuss what happened. Sometimes youth will take a few days away from the program or may need to discharge (leave). However, relapsing can be a part of the change cycle, so either way, we want to help you learn from the experience.

## **What happens first when I arrive? Inventory**

When you first get here, we'll do an inventory of your belongings. We'll keep that list to be sure that you have everything when you leave. If you have any 'leave at home' items with you, we will have to confiscate them, but there is no consequence. The things we can return to you when you leave will be kept in a locked cabinet.





# RIGHTS AND COMMITMENTS

THINGS WE ALL AGREE TO

In your first week here, we'll talk about how we protect your confidentiality, rights and responsibilities, and program commitments (or agreements to each other). We will also explore what you want to accomplish while you're here so your time at the FTAP Program will be meaningful.

## The key commitments we ask you to keep are:

- We **respect each other** and **create a safe space** for everyone who is working hard to change. For example, this means we avoid language or clothing with explicit talk that might trigger someone.
- **Be open** with staff and don't hide stuff from us. For example, cell phone access can distract you from what you're trying to do here. If you hide it, you might feel disconnected from the program and staff, making it harder for you to create positive change. We are here to support you. If you're struggling with something (anything), let us know, and we'll figure out what to do together.
- If you need something or are **not sure, ask us** about it. For example, you might want to go on social media to make healthy changes to the content, and once you ask, we can help you set it up.

If you're not keeping the program commitments, we'll start by asking what's going on and how we can help. If we need to take some action, we'll make it logical and reasonable. We've tried to cover the main things here, but if anything that's not covered comes up, we will talk to you and figure out the best way to move forward.

## Commitment

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information outlined in the Youth Handbook and agree to follow the rules/ expectations outlined.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and fully understand the information in the Youth Handbook. I agree to follow the commitments laid out in the Handbook to the best of my ability.

Youth Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_