

YOUTHLINK RESIDENCE



YOUTH
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...Providing youth with guidance, support and opportunities to make positive life choices.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our MISSION is to support vulnerable youth in making positive life choices.

VISION STATEMENT

Our VISION is to encourage youth and their supports to develop the knowledge and skills to cope with the past, live in the present and reach to the future by:

Identifying and reducing barriers to self-sufficiency, healthy sustenance, and constructive behaviour;

Offering youth responsive and accessible services that help youth help themselves;
and

Respecting youth's rights while emphasizing responsibility.

(1) WHAT IS YOUTHLINK (YLR) RESIDENCE ALL ABOUT?

Youthlink Residence is a home and treatment program for twelve young women between the ages of 14 and 18.

Everyone who comes to live at the house has problems in their life that they cannot manage by themselves. They do not have the people or services required to help them with these problems. We believe that all young people have the ability to make positive changes in their life and the staff at the house can assist with these changes. We encourage young women to set goals for themselves, such as succeeding at school, finding a job, learning to get along with others, returning home, or preparing to live independently. We expect all residents to work on their goals to the best of their ability.

We enjoy and value the diversity of races, classes, cultures, abilities, religions and sexual orientation. We believe that people have a right to live in a safe and respectful environment and we strive to respect individuality and honour our differences; therefore any discrimination against others is unacceptable.

The staff have a responsibility to provide safety, support, guidance and good times as well as food and shelter. You have the responsibility to follow YLR's program, work towards your goals and ask questions about anything you do not understand. Working together will prove to be an important and productive experience for all of us.

(2) WHAT IS THE ADMISSION PROCEDURE?

Young women who are interested in living at YLR will first have an intake interview with a social worker. If you are over sixteen, you can attend alone or you can bring a friend or family member if it makes you feel more comfortable. If you are under sixteen, your parent or guardian should attend this intake meeting with you.

You may have to attend two or three interviews before the admission process is completed. Be prepared for a lot of personal questions about your family history, school, health, history of abuse, the use of drugs and alcohol, self-harm or suicidal attempts. You may also be asked to sign a form called "release of information." This will allow us to give and receive confidential information with other treatment programs and counsellors. We will keep all of your information confidential and it will only be available to staff conducting the interview. If you move into YLR, the information will then be shared with the staff team. This may be uncomfortable for you, but in order for all the staff at YLR to effectively work with you, it is important that they have information about you. After the interview process, if the social

worker feels that our program suits your needs, you will be asked to come and see the house. An appointment will be made for you to have a Talk and Tour with a staff at YL. You may ask any questions you have about the house and program at any time.

When accepted into the program, we ask that you carefully consider the program rules and be willing to follow them before you make your final decision to move in. You will also be given forms for you to take to your doctor and will need to have a medical examination before moving in. If for any reason you are not accepted into the program you will be told why.

(3) HOW WILL MY FAMILY BE INVOLVED?

Your family or guardians may be vital resources to you, and in such situations continued contact is encouraged. In consultation with you, your parents or guardians may be encouraged to attend meetings such as "Plan of Care" or "Case Conference." If possible and appropriate, your parents or guardians will participate in your initial referral into the program and remain involved throughout your stay and discharge process.

Your parents or guardians are expected to contribute to the transportation, clothing, medical and dental expenses and your personal spending allowance.

The law states that when a resident is under 16, the staff are required to share information with the parents or official guardians.

(4) WHO ARE THE STAFF AT YLR?

The permanent staff consists of **Residential Counsellors** and the **Program Manager**. We have a few part time workers but most work full time. There are also relief workers, students and volunteers who are occasionally at the house.

Each resident is assigned a **Residential Case Manager** who is a full time residential counsellor. She is responsible for your paper work and facilitating your plan of care meetings and conferences. All of the staff here work with you and make treatment decisions.

The Program Manager oversees the program and staff. You probably met her at your interview. She is often at the house during the day when you are at school, however she welcomes you into her office to talk or just to visit whenever she is here. The Program Manager is responsible for managing the YLR program. Her responsibilities include supervising the staff team, administrative duties, and program scheduling. She will also be present in some of the meetings you may

have with your **Residential Case Manager**, to assist with your "Plan of Care" and "Case Conferences."

The Overnight Counsellors are there to help you prepare for bed in the evening and to keep the house safe overnight. These workers stay awake and will check on you periodically throughout the night. They can also provide crisis counseling if/when necessary.

The Senior Residential Counsellor: in addition to her regular tasks as a Residential Counsellor she looks after some administrative duties and the household finances. When the Program Supervisor is not available, the Senior Residential Counsellor will supervise the program and may attend your meetings.

The Counsellors at Head Office can take on different roles of involvement with your stay at Youthlink. Your "Intake" interview process is completed with the counsellor who works directly with our staff team. There are several social workers/counsellors who work at Head Office as well as with the YLR staff team on family and/or individual counseling. Everyone will be assigned a counsellor from our Head Office. They will be involved with your "Case Management", treatment planning with the YLR staff team and after care when needed.

The Relief Workers are staff who are called in on occasion to work when a regular staff is sick or on vacation.

Students from several different schools and colleges do "work placement" programs at our house. Some students may be here two evenings a week and others are here full time. They come from different areas of study so their responsibilities will differ...they should be considered as regular staff members.

There are eight full time front line staff, two full time overnight staff and two part time overnight staff. There is 24 hour on-call support available to the staff.

THE AVERAGE RATIO OF STAFF TO RESIDENT IS:

A.M. 1:0 (Ideally, if all are at programs)

P.M. 1:4

O/N 1:6

THERE IS 24 HOUR SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS.

(5) THE PROGRAM AND EXPECTATIONS

DAY PROGRAM: **All residents are to be involved in a day program between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm, Monday to Friday, all year. **You are expected to have a day program upon admission to YLR, which could be school, or a job training program.

During the summer months it may also be summer school or volunteer work. You are expected to be in a program at all times...so if you decide to change or leave one program you are expected to participate in another immediately. The staff will assist you and work with you in maintaining a suitable ongoing program. Your attendance will be monitored on a daily or weekly basis.

CURFEW AND BEDTIMES: Your curfew is the time you are expected to be home. Bedtime is the time you are expected to be settled in your room. You can however, quietly read in your room or visit with your roommate if you are not prepared to sleep. Lights need to be out at a reasonable time, which can be negotiated with your roommate. All showers, baths and other preparations should be completed before bedtime. Everyone starts out with the same curfews (which depend on age and program level) and bedtimes but your weekend time can increase depending on your level of responsibility.

SUNDAY TO THURSDAY

FRIDAY, SATURDAY & HOLIDAYS

Level 1

CURFEW: **9:00 Pm**

BEDTIME: **10:00Pm**

10:00 Pm

12:00 Am

Level 2

CURFEW: **10:00 Pm**

BEDTIME: **10:00Pm**

11:00 Pm

12:00 Am

Level 3

CURFEW: **10:00 Pm**

BEDTIME: **10:00Pm**

11:30 Pm

12:00 Am

Curfews can be negotiated for work, special events or activities

DAILY ROUTINE OF A TYPICAL RESIDENT (2nd floor) FOR A ONE WEEK PERIOD OF TIME

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Wake ups -				Get Ready -		Breakfast
Day Program						
School, Job, Job Training - 9AM to 3PM					Chore and Clean bedroom Receive allowance	
Homework/ quiet hour Time 5- 6 PM	Homework/ quiet hour Time 5 - 6 PM	Homework/ quiet hour Time 5 - 6 PM	Life Skills Group Time 5 - 6 PM	Free time		
Dinner 6PM	Dinner 6PM	Dinner 6PM	Dinner 6PM	Make your own meal		Dinner 6PM All Home
Self- Care Group (7-8pm)	Peer Support Time 7 - 8PM	Activity Night (7-8pm)	Gym night	Free time	Free time	Free time
In house night to be home by 5:00PM	In house night to be home by 5.00 PM	Curfew 10PM (In house for Level 1 of 2 nd Floor, to be home at 5PM)	In house night to be home by 5.00 PM	Curfew 11PM	Curfew 11PM	Curfew 10PM
Bedtime 10pm				Bedtime 12pm	Bedtime 12pm	Bedtime 10pm
	All are in house		All are in house			

OTHER EXPECTATIONS AND POSSIBLE PLANS, WHICH DO NOT HAVE A SET TIME, INCLUDE:

- All unscheduled time is utilised to do check-ins, for social time and residents spend time in the community
- All second floor residents choose a night of the week to do snack chore (clean kitchen before bed) and a night to do laundry
- All residents attend individual counselling and some have family counselling
- Residents may participate in extracurricular activities and have appointments to attend
- Summer weekends and curfews are more negotiable
- Summer day programs may include volunteer work
- The third floor residents' program is individualized depending upon their level of independence skills.
- Planned activities – college students, who are doing their placements here, organize and facilitate this group. It is scheduled two evenings per week (Self Care and Activity Night) and may be an outing, a craft or a drama group.

Savings Plan

All Third floor residents who are working OR second floor residents working during the summer, are expected to give YLR 30% of their take home pay. This money will be kept in a Youthlink account and when you are discharged, a cheque will be issued to you by Youthlink for the TOTAL amount you handed in. A record will be kept of every deposit you make for both yours and YLR records. This saving plan is put in place to help residents when leaving Youthlink. Most of the residents move out on their own after leaving Youthlink and have struggled starting up on their own (especially furnishing a new apartment etc). This plan has been put in place to allow the transition out on your own to be a little smoother. For those who won't be moving on to independence, learning this lifeskill is also useful and once you move on from YLR you can reap the rewards of SAVING!!! This is a mandatory program expectation.

SECOND FLOOR LEVEL SYSTEM

LEVEL 1 (for the first month or longer if needed)

Consists of **4 in-house nights**

Sunday: expected to eat dinner at the residence, however you can go out afterwards

Monday; Homework hour (5-6pm), Self Care Group (7pm)

Tuesday: Homework hour (5-6pm), Peer Support (7pm)

Wednesday: Homework hour (5-6pm), Activity Night (7pm)

Thursday: Lifeskills (5-6pm), Gym Night (7pm)

CURFEW: 9pm (weeknights), 10pm (weekends)

You can go out Friday and Saturday nights and Sunday after dinner as long as you are not grounded

LEVEL 2 (as long as necessary)

Consists of **3 in-house nights**

Sunday: expected to eat dinner at the residence, however you can go out afterwards

Monday: Homework hour (5-6pm), Self Care Group (7pm)

Tuesday: Homework hour (5-6pm), Peer Support (7pm)

Wednesday: Homework hour (5-6pm), you can go out afterwards if you chose not to participate in the activity night

Thursday: Lifeskills (5-6pm), Gym Night (7pm)

CURFEW: 10pm (weeknights), 11pm (weekends)

You can go out Wednesday, Friday and Saturday and Sunday after dinner if you are not grounded.

LEVEL 3 (before moving to the third floor)

Consists of **2 in-house nights**

Sunday: expected to eat dinner here, but you can go out afterwards

Monday: Homework hour can be done independently, optional Self Care group

Tuesday: Homework hour (can be done independently), Peer Support (7pm)

Wednesday: Homework hour can be done independently, optional Activity Night

Thursday: Lifeskills (5-6pm), Gym Night (7pm)

CURFEW: 10pm (weeknights), 11: 30 pm (weekends)

You can go out Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday if you are not grounded.

CONSEQUENCE FOR LATE CURFEW

- If you are late for curfew you will receive an in-house grounding the following day.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS: If you need an extension on your curfew for a special occasion then you must negotiate with staff ahead of time. (No phoning in and requesting while you're out.) If you are under 16, staff may need to confirm any extensions with a parent or guardian.

PEER SUPPORT & PLANNING: This meeting is held every Tuesday evening from 7:00pm to 8:00pm. Attendance at this group is mandatory. Chores and laundry schedules and your night for snack chore are determined. Once a month you will participate in Sunday Cook. Each resident is given the opportunity to present

suggestions. Staff facilitates this group which is used to discuss conflicts and issues that arise in the house as well as any community concerns.

Sometimes there may be a special circumstance that may cause you to miss these meetings. This should be negotiated ahead of time with staff as the consequence for missing a floor meeting without permission is that you will be expected to serve an "in-house" the following evening.

The third floor has their floor meeting at an earlier time, but sometimes the house meetings are held together when necessary.

LIFESKILLS: This meeting is held every Thursday evening from 5:00pm to 6:00pm. Attendance at this group is mandatory. It is fun and educational and some of the topics we have discussed are: different cultural traditions, racism, and other oppressions, how to stay safe on the street, safe sex, self care, relaxation, and nutrition. Sometimes we invite guest speakers or go on outings.

SELF CARE GROUP: This meeting is held every Monday from 7:00 to 8:00pm. Attendance is mandatory for both Level 1 and 2 of the second floor program and is optional for Level 3 and 3rd Floor residents. This group focuses on a variety of self-care activities such as: art groups, "pamper yourself nights" (manicures/pedicures), yoga, etc. It is meant to help provide ideas of ways to cope with stress and release energy in a positive way.

ACTIVITY NIGHT: On Wednesday evenings there is often a fun activity, game or craft planned. This is a mandatory group for residents on Level 1 of the 2nd Floor Program. Though it is not mandatory for other residents, we do encourage you to participate.

All residents are offered recreational activities in the community. It may be through a community centre or Parks and Rec. This may be sports, swimming, social groups, dance classes, etc.

GYM NIGHT: On Thursday evenings there is a planned outing to the gym. The house has a membership to Nyles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. This is an excellent facility with access to a pool, workout equipment, sauna, hot tub, steam room and a running track. All second floor residents are expected to attend and third floor residents are welcome to join in!!!

COUNSELLING: Staff will spend some time talking alone with you each evening. This time is called a "check in." You may use this time to speak about your day or any issues going on in your life. Within the first few weeks of arriving at Youthlink you will be assigned a counsellor who works at head office. You will be expected to attend counselling sessions and it is up to you and your counsellor to negotiate how often you arrange meetings. You may already have your own counsellor, therapist or psychiatrist. We will encourage you to continue with any of these individuals that you already find helpful.

MEALS: Dinner meals are prepared by the overnight staff Monday to Thursday. Friday and Saturday are "make your own" and Sundays are "Cook with Staff" nights. You will be expected to prepare your own food during the day, except for dinner. Staff will help you prepare your breakfast and lunch if required. There is always food available, however we ask that no cooking or baking be done at night after curfew. You are invited to request your favourite dishes as meals from a variety of ethnic origins are encouraged. We encourage you to eat dinner with the group at the dinner table, but if this is uncomfortable for you, you can eat in the kitchen or at an alternative time. Food is not allowed anywhere in the house except for the kitchen, dining room or living room. Staff will discourage you from commenting on the type or quantity of food others eat or from making negative comments about the food. If you are going to miss a dinner and would like some saved for you, please ask the staff before 4:30pm that day.

MEAL PREPARATION: Monday to Thursday dinner meals are prepared. After dinner, everyone is expected to wash their own dishes and put them in the dishwasher. The resident on the Dining Room chore is expected to clean off the rest of the table and put left-overs in the fridge. The resident on the Kitchen chore is expected to wash all dishes from the dinner preparation, load and empty the dishwasher, wipe off the kitchen counters and sweep and mop the kitchen floor. If you have some difficulty with cooking food or do not know how, staff will arrange with you, when treatment planning, to help you learn how to cook. A meal is planned for Sunday night by the assigned residents each week. Staff will be there to help you to prepare the meal and answer any questions you may have. This is a great opportunity to learn new skills and discover new foods!!!

HOMEWORK/QUIET TIME: Is Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 5:00pm-6:00pm. During this time there is no use of the phone, stereos or t.v. The staff will be available to help you with homework if needed. If you have no homework, then this time may be used to do a quiet activity.

CHORES: Each Tuesday, you will be assigned your "major chore". You are expected to complete this chore by Sunday at 9:00pm. Your chore will be checked by staff, therefore make sure it is fully completed before you approach staff for your allowance. You are also expected to thoroughly clean your bedroom, which includes washing your sheets and putting all clothes away! After you have done these, you will receive your weekly allowance. No allowances are given out until Friday after school, unless it is a long weekend, in which case it will be available Thursday night. If you are going away for the weekend, you are expected to complete your chores before leaving. The consequence for not completing your chores by Sunday at 9:00pm is that you will not receive your allowance for that week. If you miss any portion of your chore (Sunday cook, Grocery Shopping, or Snack Chores) you will lose your whole allowance for the week. Also, on the week that you are assigned to Sunday Cook, five dollars will be held until you complete this portion of your chore.

LAUNDRY: You are responsible for doing your own laundry, however staff will be there to help you if you need them. During the Peer Support meeting, you will be able to sign up for a laundry time during the week. You may also use the machines during the periods that no one has signed up for. Sunday to Thursday, your last load should be started no later than 9pm and on Fridays and Saturdays at 10pm. The laundry room is closed each night at 10pm.

RADIO/STEREO, TELEVISION, TELEPHONES: You may use the residents' phone, television and radio during the following times:

- Monday to Thursday 4pm to 10pm.
- Fridays 4pm to Midnight.
- Saturdays all day to midnight.
- Sundays all day to 10pm.

WITH THESE EXCEPTIONS:

- During floor meetings and lifeskills
- During Homework/Quiet Time
- During your Day Program
- When the privilege was abused and therefore pulled.

If you have your own radio in your room, it should be kept at a reasonable volume. You may use it any time as long as you are not disturbing your roommate or another resident.

Telephone calls must be a maximum of 15 minutes in length, especially if another person is waiting to use the phone. Sometimes there are issues around the telephone around limiting one's time of use, or with another peer. If these issues are not resolved, each resident involved could lose phone privileges for a period of time decided by the staff.

STAFF TELEPHONE: The staff phone can be used to call family members or workers when the resident line is not available. Please ask for permission to use the staff phone as there may be times that you are asked to wait so that we can keep the phone lines free.

CELL PHONES:

Our policy on cell phones is that they are not to be used during dinner, Peer Support, Lifeskills, Quiet Hour, Follow-ups or Check-ins with staff, during chore time, or after 10pm. All second floor residents must hand in their cell phones every night at bedtime. If this is not followed or they become problematic, the consequence is as follows: for the first night you do not hand in your phone by 10pm sharp, you will lose your phone for 24 hours. For each of the following nights that you do not hand in your phone another 24 hours will be added onto this time.

BEDROOMS AND ROOMMATES: When you move in you will be assigned a bed that is currently available or that staff feel will be the most appropriate.

When sharing a room, it is expected that you keep your side of your room tidy and not put your things in your roommate's space. It is also expected that you respect your roommate's belongings...DO NOT use anything that belongs to other residents without their permission.

You are welcome to hang pictures in your room however we ask that you use Sticky Tac only (which will be provided by staff). Feel free to hang pictures and display things that are important to you, however if they are offensive or hurtful to anyone you will be asked to take it down. Sexually explicit, racist or homophobic material is not allowed to be displayed in the house.

You will be provided with bedding, a wastebasket, a lamp and a laundry hamper. Please let staff know if any of these items are missing. You will also have your own dresser, desk and a locked closet in your room.

You are expected to treat your roommate with respect by being considerate with radios, lights, etc. If you are having a problem with your roommate, which you cannot resolve between yourselves, please ask the staff to help you deal with the situation in an appropriate manner.

We respect your privacy when you are in your room...staff will knock before entering unless there is an emergency.

A "room check" will be done at least once a day...this is to make sure that windows are closed and secured, that curling irons, etc., have not been left plugged in and that there are no dirty dishes. There are times, for safety reasons, when a "room search" may need to be done. Items such as missing scissors, razors, weapons or medications will be immediately removed from your room. If found by the staff during the "room search", you will be asked to meet with staff as soon as possible if this kind of item is found in your room.

MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLES: Sometimes residents are tempted to steal things that don't belong to them. We recommend that you ask the staff to lock up your small valuables (such as jewelry or money) in the staff office. You and staff will be the only ones to have the combination to your closet. We suggest that you do not leave items of clothing or other belongings laying around in the bathrooms or other common areas. Unfortunately, we cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

FINANCIAL NEEDS: You will be provided with transit tickets/tokens, or a Metropass to attend your day program and any appointments you may need to attend. You may also receive 4 social tokens each week as long as it is not an in-house night or you do not have a grounding to serve. You will also receive a \$15

weekly cash allowance when you have completed your chores. Allowances are based on the completion of your weekly chore, room clean and Sunday Cook participation. If you do not complete these, you will lose your allowance for the week.

Soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, tampons, sanitary pads and laundry detergent are all provided. You will be expected to buy your own special or other brand name items if different from those supplied. Your personal, special hygiene or health needs should be discussed at your initial meetings. At the time of your "intake" we may ask your parents or guardian to contribute towards each of these needs. They will also be expected to supply you with suitable clothing. We receive donations of clothing items from the community which we distribute as needed.

Funding may be available if you participate in sports teams, music lessons, cultural events and extra-curricular activities. Your request for funding should go through your Residential Case Manager.

VISITORS: You may have visitors on weekends only, between 12:00pm and 9:00pm. You are expected to ask staff for approval prior to your visitor arriving. Guests are only allowed on the main floor and must be under the age of 19. There may be times when the staff need to ask your guest to leave or not allow you to have a visitor due to situations that may arise in the house. It is your responsibility to advise your guest of the house rules. If you and/or your guest do not abide by the rules, she/he will be asked to leave. You must be with your guest at all times.

- **NO ONE FROM THE 2ND FLOOR IS PERMITTED ON THE 3RD FLOOR THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.**

THE POLICY REGARDING "TOUCHING": During your life, you may have experienced unwanted or forced "touch". We want to help each resident develop boundaries around her body and personal space. Our policy recognizes that some kinds of touch are healthy and appropriate, such as friendly hugs or styling each others hair. However, it is important to first ask if it is okay. Every resident and staff has the right to say no if they do not wish to be touched. However, in the event of a medical emergency or to intervene in a physical fight, staff may need to touch you without asking for permission. This includes situations in which you are at risk of hurting yourself or others in which we may need to restrain you.

RAZORS, SCISSORS, KNIVES, OTHER SHARP OBJECTS, AND CLEANING SUPPLIES: All sharp objects are to be locked up in the staff office. Please ask the staff for whatever you need to use and return it after you have finished with it

If the staff find razors or other sharp objects left in the bathrooms, your bedroom or in any other space, they will be locked up or discarded.

MEDICATION AND HEALTH CARE: All medications are kept in a locked cupboard in the staff office. This includes all prescription medications and over the counter painkillers, Midol, cough syrup and birth control pills etc. You are not allowed to store any medications of any type in your room. A note from your doctor is necessary if you need to carry your medication with you at any time. There are many medications we do not supply, such as cold medication, without a doctors note because of the danger of drug interactions.

The staff will administer your medication as required in the staff office. You are responsible for your medication schedule, however the staff will do their best to remind you.

You are encouraged to be responsible for your own health care, however if you are sick for more than 2 days, you will be expected to see a doctor. The staff will help you implement the procedures recommended by the doctor. If you are under 16, your parent(s)/guardian will be informed of any medical concerns.

Precautions are taken to prevent the transmission of blood borne infections such as Hepatitis B and HIV. For this reason the staff will wear gloves if they are required to treat any kind of First Aid problem. This is done to protect you as well as the staff. You are also encouraged to practice "safe sex" methods if you are sexually active. Information on contraceptives and condoms are supplied.

FIRE SAFETY: Fire safety is very important at the house...fire drills are done once a month and safety checks are done nightly by the overnight workers. You are to leave the house by the closest fire exit when the fire alarm goes off. When you have safely left the house, you are expected to meet in the front of the house past the front yard on the sidewalk. You are not to re-enter the house until you are given instructions by the staff or a fire fighter.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE: Alcohol and/or illegal drugs are not allowed in the house or on property. If you have been out and return to the house under the influence of drugs or alcohol the staff will assess your condition...if you are extremely intoxicated and there is concern for your medical safety, you will be taken to the hospital by the staff or sent in an ambulance. Otherwise, you will be asked to go to your room and remain there quietly. Staff will check on you periodically. It is not appropriate for you to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol with friends or other residents in the common area of the house. Your prescribed medications will not be administered to you if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

SMOKING: There is No smoking on property, everyone must smoke on the other side of the stone wall.

Your last cigarette must be finished before 10 p.m. as this is curfew and you are expected to be in the house.

OTHER HOUSE RULES: The following rules are considered very serious:

THE "CONSEQUENCE" FOR BREAKING THESE RULES COULD BE DISCHARGE.

- **NO DRUGS OR ALCOHOL IN THE HOUSE OR ON THE PROPERTY.**
- **NO WEAPONS OF ANY KIND IN THE HOUSE OR ON THE PROPERTY.**
- **NO SEXUAL RELATIONS IN THE HOUSE.**
- **NO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE TOWARDS STAFF OR OTHER RESIDENTS.**
- **NO VERBAL THREATS OR VIOLENCE TOWARD STAFF OR OTHER RESIDENTS**
- **NO DISCRIMINATORY WORDS OR ACTIONS AGAINST STAFF OR OTHER RESIDENTS.**

DISCHARGE: Discharge from YLR happens in several different ways.

Ideally, you will have achieved goals that you set when you moved in, or perhaps you have decided you need a different type of living environment and that you and the staff agree that it is time for you to move on. You might want to move home with your family, to another residence, a co-op or you might be ready for independent living. In these cases your discharge date will be established far in advance of your move, to allow for a closure process with the other residents and the staff team.

If you decide that you no longer want to follow the house rules or the staff decide that you have been unable to follow the house rules and/or other expectations, then you will be given a discharge date. You will also have the opportunity for a closure process.

If you have been in serious violation of the house rules and the staff feel that other residents are in danger because of your behaviour, you will be discharged on very short notice. It could be as short as 24 hours, 48 hours or 7 days. If at some later date you wish to "try again" at YLR, you may re-apply for admission. We expect that you will wait 6 months from your discharge date and be prepared to commit to the program expectations.

Sometimes when a serious incident has happened or that staff feel you need a break you may be timed out to a shelter. The length of time will be based on what has happened. This will not be done without consultation with your parent/guardian.

(6) DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

You might not be familiar with the following list of words, terms or expressions that the staff will use:

SHIFT CHANGE: This is the period of time when the staff who are leaving, pass along information to the staff who are starting a shift. This exchange of information usually lasts between 15 to 30 minutes. Staff will not be available to you, except for emergencies, during this period. The staff work as a team...all relevant information about each resident will be shared at the "shift change" so that all staff will be aware of your needs or issues.

STAFF OFFICE: There are many staff offices in the house. Please wait to be invited in before entering. You are not permitted in the staff office without a staff member being present.

HOUSE ORIENTATION: For the first three days after moving in, you are expected to stay at the house to acquaint yourself with the house routines, get to know the other residents, and meet the staff etc. ...this is also the time the staff can get to know you. If you are unfamiliar with the neighbourhood, we will take you for a walk around the area and explain transportation routes, etc. If you feel comfortable, you can attend your regular day program, go out with staff for walks or go for short walks yourself if you have the approval from staff. You are not to have visitors during this time period unless it is family and/or guardians. The length of time your orientation lasts will be based on the individual and how well you're settling in.

PLAN OF CARE: During the first month of stay, we hold a "Plan of Care" meeting with you and possibly your parent(s), guardian, counselor and Residential Case Manager to determine long term goals and develop a plan on how to reach these goals.

REVIEW OF PLAN OF CARE: Once a month you will meet with your Residential Case Manager to review your goals and progress. New, short term goals will be set for the month at this meeting, occasionally other staff members may be involved in these meetings.

CONFERENCES: A "Conference" is a written review of your progress since moving into the house. Your Residential Case Manager will write the conference and present it to you 3 months, 6 months and 12 months after your admission date. There will also be a discharge conference prepared after you leave. Included in your conference will be reports on your day program progress, your counseling, your relationships with your peers, adults and your family, your health care and other relevant issues. Other staff, professionals and/or supports may be invited to add their opinions to your conference if you are under 16. You may receive copies of all your conferences if requested.

STAFF MEETING: Staff and consultants meet Tuesdays from 10am to 3pm. House business and treatment plans are discussed at this meeting. You will be informed and included in any plans that might pertain to you.

REQUESTS: If you require a “special privilege” (weekend sleepover at a friend’s place)...please submit a written request before Thursday. Put your request in the hands of a staff. We will discuss your request as a team and make a decision.

IN HOUSE: If you have broken curfew, missed your day program or floor meeting, you may be asked to stay “in house” (Groundings is the term you may know) as a consequence for your actions. You may be asked to stay in the house or come home early if the staff feel you are at risk in the community or would benefit from staying home to receive more staff time or attention.

(7) YOUR RIGHTS

The following are the rights of all young people who are in the residence as set out by the Child and Family Services Act.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Speak in private with, visit and receive visits from members of your family, unless you are a ward and CAS/CCAS has determined otherwise.
- Speak in private and receive visits from your lawyer, probation officer and other advocates.
- Send and receive mail that is not read or censored.
- Privacy and possession of your personal property.
- Participate in the religion of your choice.
- Participate in your “Plan of Care” and other treatment decisions.
- Receive well-balanced and nutritious meals.
- Be provided with appropriate clothing.
- Receive medical and dental care at regular intervals and when needed.
- Receive an appropriate education.
- Participate in recreational activities.
- Be advised of the...
 - Internal complaints procedure
 - The Child and Family Services Act
 - Your responsibilities while living in the residence
 - The house rules and consequences
 - The Advocates phone number, which is 1-800-263-2841
 - The Ombudsperson of Ontario, 586-3300

(8) ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Youthlink is committed to creating and sustaining a work environment which celebrates diversity and appreciates the dignity and worth of all staff members, Volunteers and clients. We are a community organization committed to ensuring that the words and actions of our members will not exclude, limit or degrade anyone on the basis of race, colour, sexual orientation, gender, class, religion,

citizenship, size, HIV status, family status, and physical or mental challenges. Harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated.

(9) COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At sometime you may find that you have an unsettled issue or problem with staff or the rules. You have the right to pursue the issue until you are satisfied that it has been resolved.

HERE IS HOW YOU CAN PURSUE A RESOLUTION:

1. Go directly to the person with whom you are having the issue. If you are unable to work it out then...
2. Go to your Primary Worker and talk to her; she will try to help you resolve the issue. Most likely things can be worked out, if not then...
3. Go to the program supervisor. If you do not feel that the issue has been resolved after she helps you then...
4. Ask to speak to the program manager. She works at Youthlink's Head Office. Your primary worker or the house supervisor can help you make an appointment to speak with her/him. If it is not resolved when you speak with the manager then...
5. Ask to speak with Youthlink's Executive Director.

At any time that you feel that your rights are being violated or that you are not being listened to or protected, then you should phone:

The Ministry of Community and Social Services Advocacy Office at: 1-800-263-2841.

(10) BENEFITS AND RISKS

BENEFITS:

- Learn new healthy coping skills
- Improve communication skills
- Positive life experiences
- Increase self-esteem
- Increase self awareness
- Provides structure and daily routines
- Positive role models
- Safe environment with 24 Hour monitoring/support
- Quick access to a multi-disciplinary team
- Support for families
- Physical, social, emotional and therapeutic needs are addressed and focused on
- Support after discharge can be provided

RISKS:

- Separation/isolation from family
- Exposure to peers at residence which can contribute to new negative behaviours
- Peers in crisis can be stressful to other residents
- Setbacks in academic programs
- 'Extreme norms' (staffing, recreation, food) which may be much more than families are able to provide you if you return home or you will have living independently or in a co-op

WELCOME TO THE THIRD FLOOR

PROGRAM AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE THIRD FLOOR:

The Third Floor of the Youthlink Residence is designed for those moving to independence. It is a transitional program geared towards educating young women who will be living in co-ops or on their own with minimal support. The overall goal is that third floor residents will learn the necessary skills to feel confident and comfortable living independently.

- ◆ All sections from the main booklet apply to the third floor. The only section that varies is section 5 and this is listed below. The third floor program runs on a level system. There are three separate levels in which each level provides a greater degree of independence and more privileges.

LEVEL 1

Curfew is 10:00pm on weekdays and 12:00am on weekends. Staff provide more support to individuals on this level and assist with booking appointments. You must complete your weekly grocery shopping with staff on Tuesday evening between 5:00pm and 6:00 Pm. Staff plan and help lead Sunday cook.

LEVEL 2

Curfew is 11:00pm on weekdays and 12:30am on weekends. Residents are provided with less staff support and are expected to arrange all of their own appointments. Residents on this level must go grocery shopping weekly on their own. Residents are expected to either work on weekends or volunteer for 4 hours each week. 30 percent of your earnings must be put into savings. On this level you are considered to be in more of a leadership role in the house and co-facilitate peer supports, some life skills, etc. You will also be in charge of planning the menu for Sunday cook.

LEVEL 3 (FLOOR MENTOR)

Curfew 12:00am on weekdays and 1:00am on weekends. Everything on this level is done independently. You may grocery shop on your own and are in charge of making the grocery list for Sunday Cook. During Sunday Cook, you will take the lead and teach others. You must work part-time (can work weekdays, just not on in-house nights). 30 percent of your earnings must be put into savings. Residents on this level must lead peer support, co-facilitate lifeskills and at times mentor newer residents. Floor mentors have a greater level of responsibility in regards to making sure the third floor is clean, other residents are completing their chores and helping peers work through conflicts and issues that arise. Most residents who achieve this level are ready to live independently and are staying with us while awaiting a bed at a co-op or are just finishing up the school year before moving out on their own.

DAY PROGRAM: (SAME AS FLOOR 2)

All residents are to be involved in a day program between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm, Monday to Friday, all year. This could include school, a job or job training program. During the summer months it may also be summer school or volunteer work. You are expected to be in a program at all times.....so if you decide to change or leave one program you are expected to participate in another immediately. **you are expected to have a day program upon admission to YLR. Your attendance will be monitored on a daily or weekly basis.

During the school year all residents are expected to complete four hours of volunteer work a week.

CURFEWS AND BEDTIME:

Your curfew is the time you are expected to be home. There is no time stated for bedtime as it is the responsibility of the third floor residents to settle at a reasonable hour. If a problem arises (ie. high noise level, not able to get up for school) then staff will individually plan with those who are having difficulties settling.

GROUPS:

There are two mandatory meetings on the third floor. Tuesdays from 5:00 to 6:00 PM, there is a floor meeting where weekly chores are assigned, Sunday dinner preparation/cook is assigned, suggestions presented, and any issues that arise on the floor are discussed. This group is facilitated by a residential counselor, all residents will have the opportunity to co-facilitate and everyone prepares the agenda.

Lifeskills are run on Mondays from 5:00 to 6:00 pm. Everyone will be working on the same lifeskills topic which typically changes each week. The lifeskills you need to learn will be determined by you and the lifeskills' co-ordinaters and a staff will be present to help everyone. There may be times that individual residents need to work on individual lifeskills and therefore they may do this on their own with staff planning and permission. Both Monday and Tuesday are considered in house nights and you must stay in from 5:00pm onwards.

MEALS AND MEAL PREPARATION:

You are responsible for preparing your own breakfast and lunch. Dinner meals are provided Sunday to Thursday. You are expected to come downstairs to prepare your own plate of food. If you are not home during dinner time the staff will set aside a plate of food for you. Friday and Saturday nights are 'prepare your own'. Sundays the residents cook with staff (one third floor resident and two second floor residents). Third floor residents level of responsibility in the Sunday cook process is determined by what level they are on (see level system). Everyone is responsible for cleaning their own dishes and pots. The residents who cook on Sunday are responsible for cleaning all pots and pans used for the meal.

Each third floor resident is given twenty-five dollars a week to buy items for breakfasts and lunches. This includes milk and bread for the week.

CHORES:

Each resident is assigned a weekly chore and the schedule rotates. You are responsible throughout the week to ensure that the area you are assigned is neat and tidy. Then on the weekend, between Friday and Sunday at 9:00pm, you need to do your "major chore". This consists of a thorough cleaning that includes vacuuming, mopping, cleaning toilets, tubs, sinks, etc. You are also expected to do a thorough cleaning of your bedroom on the weekend, including washing your sheets (unless they were washed when you did laundry during the week). After your chore and bedroom are completed you will receive your allowance. (Unless you are on Sunday Cook then five dollars will be held back until you complete this portion of your chore).

LAUNDRY:

There are no laundry facilities provided for the third floor residents. There is a Laundromat within a couple minutes walking distance and quarters will be provided. Remember...when you live independently, you will need to learn to budget for this expense.

COUNSELLING:

Staff are available to you when you need to talk. If you feel you would benefit from more counseling, we will refer you to one of our counselors or suggest a community resource or group. We will provide some daily support but the goal is that you have other resources that you may continue with when you move from Youthlink Residence.

You may already have your own counselor, support person, therapist or psychiatrist. We will encourage you to continue with any of these individuals that you already find helpful.

PHONE, STEREO/RADIO, AND TELEVISION:

There is one phone on the third floor which is shared by four residents. There is no access to the staff phone. You will not be able to make long distance calls on this phone. To do so you will need to discuss with staff who you need to call and we will determine if we will provide you with a phone card. No stereo is provided; if you have your own you may use it at a reasonable volume.

BEDROOMS:

There are two single rooms and one double room. When you move in you will be assigned the bed that is currently available.

When sharing the double room, it is expected that you keep your side of the room tidy and not put your things in your roommate's space.

Everyone is expected to respect their floormate's belongings. You are not allowed in anyone's room and cannot use others' belongings without permission. You are welcome to hang pictures, but we ask that you use Sticky Tac only (which staff will provide). You may also have a cork board in your room that you can post pictures on. You are not permitted to put anything on the painted walls. This will keep the paint on the walls in good condition. So please feel free to hang pictures and display things that are important to you. However, if the staff feel that a particular picture is offensive or hurtful to anyone, you will be asked to take it down. Sexually explicit, racist or homophobic material is not allowed to be displayed in the house.

You will be provided with bedding, a wastebasket, a lamp, a laundry hamper and an alarm clock (if you do not already have one, as it is your responsibility to get yourself up). Please let staff know if any of these items are missing. You will have your own dresser, desk and closet in your room that you will be able to lock.

You are expected to treat your floormates with respect by being considerate with radios, lights, etc. If you are having a problem with your floormates which you cannot resolve between yourselves, please ask the staff to help you deal with the situation.

RAZORS, KNIVES, MEDICATIONS, AND CLEANING SUPPLIES:

All sharp objects are locked up in the staff office. All cleaning supplies are also locked up. Please ask the staff for whatever you need to use and return it after you have finished with it.

If the staff find razors or other sharp objects left in the bathrooms, your bedroom, or in any other space, they will be taken and locked up or discarded. Your razor will be stored in the staff office which you will need to hand back in when you are done.

All medications are kept in a locked cupboard in the staff office. This includes all prescription medications, over the counter painkillers, Midol, cough syrup, birth control pills, etc. You are not allowed to store any medications of any type in your room. A note from your doctor is necessary if you need to carry your medication with you at any time.

The staff will administer your medication as required in the staff office. You are responsible for your medication schedule, however the staff will do their best to remind you.

You are encouraged to be responsible for your own health care, however if you are sick for more than 2 days, you will be expected to see a doctor. The staff will help you implement the procedures recommended by the doctor. If you are under 16, your parent(s)/guardian will be informed of any medical concerns.

Precautions are taken to prevent the transmission of blood born infections such as Hepatitis B and HIV. For this reason, the staff will wear gloves if they are required to treat any kind of first aid problem. This is done to protect you as well as the staff. You are also encouraged to practice "Safe Sex" methods if you are sexually active. Information on contraceptives and condoms are provided.

VISITORS:

All visits are up to staff discretion at the time.

There are no visitors allowed on the weekdays. You may have guests on Saturdays and Sundays between 12:00pm and 9:00pm. Guests are only allowed on the main/first floor of the house. It will be up to the staff on shift and may only be for a short period of time (meaning not the whole evening).

There may be times when the staff need to ask your guest to leave or will not allow you to have a visitor due to the situations that may arise in the house. It is your responsibility to advise your guest of the house rules. If you and/or your guest do not abide by the rules she/he will be asked to leave. You must be with your guest at all times.

SMOKING:

There is no smoking on property. You must smoke on the other side of the stone wall in front of the house.

Please read all other sections of the main booklet.