



Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Jim Pillen, Governor

September 1, 2025

The Honorable Jim Pillen
Governor of Nebraska
P.O. Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509

The Honorable Brian Hardin
Members of the Health & Human Services Committee
Nebraska Legislature
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Mr. Gene Cotter
Probation Administrator
State of Nebraska
P.O. Box 98910
Lincoln, NE 68509

Ms. Sage Leis
Nebraska Strengthening Families Act Committee
c/o Nebraska Children's Commission
1225 L Street, Suite 401
Lincoln, NE 68508

Subject: Normalcy plans & annual reports

Dear Governor Pillen, Chairman Hardin, Mr. Cotter and Ms. Leis:

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 43-4706, attached are normalcy plans for all childcare institutions currently under contract with the department and all Youth Residential Treatment Centers (YRTC), as well as annual normalcy reports for all institutions that have accepted child placements. The institutions are as follows: Care-RIE, Cedars Youth Services, Child Saving Institute (CSI), Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWIN), Boys Town (Father Flanagan's Boys' Home), Independence Rising (fka Center for Independent Living of Central Nebraska), Omaha Home for Boys (OHB), Rite of Passage (Uta Halee Academy), Women in Community Services (WIC), YRTC-Hastings, YRTC-Kearney, and YRTC-Lincoln.

The attached normalcy plans and reports are submitted directly by the institutions and are not modified by DHHS. The information contained within the plans and reports is provided in accordance with statutory requirements.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Bish, Ph.D.
Director, Division of Children and Family Services

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Care-RIE

Report Author:

Chrystol Spraling

Author's Title:

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Contract Date:

7/1/2024

Plan Date:

7/1/2024

Planning Period (fill in the year):

July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

The three barriers that this agency addresses placement disruption, lack of programs and trauma of the youth. Placement disruption is a barrier because this agency is a short-term placement, for this reason we try to get youth in programs as soon as possible. The next barrier is the lack of programs to meet everyone's needs. Lastly, due to the trauma that most of the youth here experience the youth are not always willing to join in activities or participate in activities.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

Normalcy is an essential aspect of supporting children and youth in foster care. Here's a detailed description of the concept and some examples:

Participating in Sports or Clubs: Encouraging children to join sports teams, dance classes, or other extracurricular activities.

Attending Sleepovers: Allowing sleepovers with friends or family members.

Driving Lessons: Supporting older youth in obtaining a driver's license.

Job Opportunities: Helping teens find part-time jobs or volunteer opportunities.

Cultural and Religious Activities: Supporting participation in cultural events or religious ceremonies.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

Developing goals and action steps in a child-care institution's case plan involves a collaborative process. Here are some key steps:

Assessment: Begin by assessing the child's needs, strengths, and challenges. Understand their developmental stage and individual requirements.

Involving the Family: Collaborate with the child's family, family network, and other providers. Their input is crucial for successful planning.

Identify Outcomes: Determine the desired outcomes. What changes should occur to reduce risk and address the effects of maltreatment? These outcomes serve as benchmarks for progress.

Set Goals: Define specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals. These provide direction and guide interventions.

Tasks and Strategies: Break down the goals into actionable tasks. Consider creative approaches to tackle challenges. Flexibility is essential as needs and resources may change.

Implement and Evaluate: Implement the plan, monitor progress, and evaluate regularly. Adjust as needed to ensure positive outcomes

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

The law explicitly defines a caregiver to include a "designated official for a childcare institution in which a child in foster care has been placed." The law requires that a designated official be always onsite to exercise the reasonable and prudent parent standard. This ensures that children in group homes or other residential facilities have access to someone who is trained in making decisions using this standard and can consent to the youth's participation in activities. Care-RIE will always have a designated official onsite.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

- short trips or excursions.
- Camping/hiking
- Sports and clubs
- Swimming and water activities
- Day/sleep over camps
- Field trips
- School related activities
- Youth organization activities
- Attending a movie/mall or other social outing with friends
- Spending the night away from the caregiver's home at the home of friends or as part of a planned activity
- Volunteering and internships
- Dating
- Travel in cars with peers and/or the parents of peers
- Access to a telephone for phone calls
- Access to the internet and social media

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

In applying the standard, Care-RIE should gather adequate information about the activity, think about the youth, and consider the following:

- The appropriateness of the activity, child/youth's age, and developmental stage
- Potential safety risks involved in the activity
- Supports, planning, or accommodations that can help manage the potential risks of the activity
- Determining if supervision will be provided or is needed
- Encouraging the child/youth's formation of healthy age-appropriate social relationships and bonds•
- Allowing the child/youth to maintain an age-appropriate degree of personal privacy
- Helping the child/youth develop skills and nurtures an interest or talent
- Encouraging the emotional, developmental, or cultural growth of the child/youth
- Helping connect the child/youth to the community
- Helping the child/youth to use and develop age-appropriate autonomy and decision-making skills

Youth with Disabilities

a) Youth with disabilities and special needs should have access to the same opportunities for participation in age and developmentally appropriate activities as their peers without special needs.

Under federal and state law, individuals with disabilities cannot be excluded from services and

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

Care-RIE will make decisions for each individual on a case-by-case situation. Using the standards: In applying the standard, a Care-RIE will gather adequate information about the activity, think about the youth, and consider the following:

- The appropriateness of the activity, child/youth's age, and developmental stage.
- Potential safety risks involved in the activity.
- Supports, planning, or accommodations that can help manage the potential risks of the activity.
- Determine if supervision will be provided or is needed.
- Encourage the child/youth's formation of healthy age-appropriate social relationships and bonds.
- Allow the child/youth to maintain an age-appropriate degree of personal privacy.
- Helps the child/youth develop skills and nurtures an interest or talent.
- Encourage emotional, developmental, or cultural growth of the child/youth.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

In applying the standard, a Care-RIE will gather adequate information about the activity, think about the youth, and consider the following:

- The appropriateness of the activity, child/youth's age, and developmental stage.
- Potential safety risks involved in the activity.
- Supports, planning, or accommodations that can help manage the potential risks of the activity.
- Determine if supervision will be provided or is needed.
- Encourage the child/youth's formation of healthy age-appropriate social relationships and bonds.
- Allow the child/youth to maintain an age-appropriate degree of personal privacy.
- Helps the child/youth develop skills and nurtures an interest or talent.
- Encourage emotional, developmental, or cultural growth of the child/youth.
- Helps connect the child/youth to the community.
- Helps the child/youth to use and develop age-appropriate autonomy and decision-making skills.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

In all efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent part standard as apart of CARE-RIE will:

Notify and Invite youth Young people in foster care should be aware that:

- They have a right to normalcy, as well as a right to participate in discussions about their rights and potential changes to them.
- They should have opportunities to participate in any conversations about normalcy at local, county, and state levels.
- Their participation may include, but is not limited to, assisting with planning all sessions in which they will participate (i.e., round-table and panel discussions, policy meetings, committees drafting documents related to normalcy and/or foster care more generally).

To invite young people in foster care to participate in local, county, and state meetings about normalcy, organizations should provide:

- A formal invitation to meetings about normalcy at the agency or organization
- Information about the meeting content, names of participants and panels, and any necessary preparation material

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

CEDARS Youth Services: Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter

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Contract Date:

7/1/2024-6/30/2025

Plan Date:

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Planning Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

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What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

CEDARS Youth Services works to ensure that every youth placed in Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter experiences safety, stability, and enduring family relationships. Staff training, program policies and procedures, and the physical space have all been designed to create a homelike atmosphere in the shelter (comfortable furnishings, bedrooms that can be decorated, access to a backyard with bicycles, green space, and a basketball court). Typically, CEDARS program structure provides opportunities to participate in education and extra-curricular activities at each youth's home school, join in family events, participate in recreation in the community, and work at a part-time job. Youth placed in Emergency Shelter can choose to check in any money they have or earn to staff for safe-keeping while placed in Shelter, or may choose to maintain possession of it. Youth have opportunities to go shopping in the community, which promotes normalcy. If a youth has a driver's license and their own vehicle (with required registration and insurance), they are allowed to keep their vehicle. If youth participate in school sports, clubs or activities, transportation is provided for youth to attend all practices, performances, games and rehearsals. Youth are also able to attend school activities such as dances and athletic events which is a normal experience for youth. Each youth in care has an individualized service plan that is designed in partnership with the youth to best meet their developmental and social and emotional needs and interests.

Youth are able to conduct visits with members of their support networks by utilizing technology or via on-campus visits. Additionally, all staff are trained on the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard and apply the standard as applicable and appropriate to help youth pursue and experience normalcy. Existing barriers to normalcy include lack of parental engagement, challenges regarding school enrollment (particularly for youth from outside the Lincoln community, and youth experiencing frequent placement disruptions.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter offers a consistent routine and access to activities and services. Family engagement is a priority and youth in care can communicate with their families via telephone, on-site visits, or during home visits as outlined in each individualized service plan. Activities are planned and available for individual and group participation each day; youth are engaged in determining activities and schedules are posted throughout the Shelter. To assist youth with education, job searches, and entertainment, access to on-site technology includes computers with internet access, televisions, and video game systems with appropriate content restrictions in place. Typically, weekly visits are scheduled to the public library with access to books, magazines, and computers for social media engagement. Educational stability is maintained by providing transportation to a student's home school for those who are from the local area. Shelter staff, in tandem with CEDARS Education program, work to re-enroll any students not currently attending school or to develop a plan for the GED if appropriate. For youth suspended or expelled, homework support and tutoring is available so youth don't fall behind on their coursework. For youth involved in extra-curricular activities or employment, transportation is coordinated to allow them to continue while placed in Shelter. Youth are also provided with coaching and support to obtain or maintain employment while in care. Physical, dental, and mental health are all assessed at the time of intake. Immediate needs are addressed right away, and ongoing health needs are met as needed. CEDARS maintains working partnerships with medical and dental providers in the community to ensure these needs are met. Youth are provided with the necessary technology to ensure they can complete their homework, connect with their support networks, and to utilize for entertainment. Many youth get their physical, mental, and behavioral health needs met via telehealth services, when appropriate. Youth whose discharge plan is to independent living or older teens returning home are permitted to use their personal cell phones.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

CEDARS has clear policies and procedures that guide individualized assessment and case planning processes. CEDARS is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA), which provides guidance related to assessment and service planning practices. Emergency Shelter staff and case managers utilize SMART goals when working with clients on service plan goals. Beginning at the time of intake, youth are informed of the importance of their role in establishing goals, monitoring progress, and planning for their stay. The CEDARS Case Manager works with the youth and their family or DHHS Caseworker/Probation Officer (if applicable), teachers, therapist or counselor, and other supports to develop a plan built on the youth's strengths and needs. The individualized Service Plan goals for each youth are based upon identified needs and goals in the referral and any needs identified during the assessment process, which takes place within 24 hours of admission. The individualized Service Plan is created within five days of intake and is reviewed and updated on a biweekly basis to monitor progress and barriers, and to make any adjustments to goals or action steps as appropriate. Shelter staff engage each youth in daily conversations about their progress and any barriers to reaching their goals. CEDARS Case Managers arrange biweekly team meetings that include DHHS, Probation Officers, family members, attorneys, to review goals, progress on goals, behavioral needs, and updates on discharge plans. In addition to these team meetings, Pioneers Center Case Managers and leadership have weekly meetings reviewing youth progress, needs, and brainstorming additional strategies to engage the youth more effectively or services to advocate for the youth. Case Managers also meet with the CEDARS education team to review the educational needs and progress and to identify activities or services needed to support the youth in their educational experience while placed in shelter.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

CEDARS follows established policies and procedures on staffing and supervision. CEDARS utilizes the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard when giving permission and consent for age or developmentally appropriate activities.

In addition to 40 hours of training through the CEDARS New Employee Training program, new staff members also participate in 32 hours of training on Risking Connection, which is the trauma-informed model of care that CEDARS utilizes. Additionally, new staff participate in 40 hours of on-site shadowing with current staff members. All staff receive regular 1:1 supervision (monthly) with a supervisor, during which time additional coaching or support can be offered.

CEDARS Emergency shelter employs case managers within the shelter. Youth are assigned a CEDARS case manager who has regular contact with the youth. This case manager schedules and facilitates frequent team meetings, typically weekly, to ensure the youth can request permission to participate in any activities or schedule any visits with guardians and other decision makers on their teams.

Shelter is staffed at a staff/client ratio of 1:4 during awake hours. All staff members also receive training on the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS). Clients are informed at the time of intake on the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities, consistent with the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard. This process is posted in the Shelter, along with request forms that clients can complete. When a request form has been completed and turned in by a client, it is reviewed by Shelter management staff and the client is notified if their request was approved or denied, and why, if appropriate. Youth can also make a request verbally.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

We have long-standing relationships with community partners and donors which typically allows us to offer many community activities to youth. Some of the community activities that youth are typically able to participate in are: educational outings such as visiting museums, the State Capitol Building, nature centers, Lincoln Children's Zoo, Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo, or the Farmer's Market; volunteer opportunities such as picking up trash in a city park; recreational outings including Urban Air, bowling, going to the movie theater, Round 1 at the mall, Putt-Putt golfing, fishing, laser tag, visiting local parks, weekly ice cream outings, and having meals out at restaurants. Additionally, youth can go to the YMCA, the library, have shopping outings, and attend local sporting events.

On-site activities include basketball, volleyball, soccer, bike riding, gardening, playing music, TV, movies, video games, and reading. Youth can take walks on campus (if there are no restrictions from probation or DHHS), get a haircut, and make calls to friends who are approved contacts. Youth can access the canteen in the Shelter which has various snacks to choose from, in addition to scheduled daily meals and snacks. Art supplies are available for youth to use at their leisure or during structured arts and crafts groups, along with crochet and knitting supplies. Additional groups are available on-site, covering topics including nutrition, budgeting, healthy relationships, cooking, and meditation. Youth also have the opportunity to interact with a therapy dog, who visits the Emergency Shelter.

Staff has also began to identify community activities that may be of interest to the youth. These activities are shared via our Slack communication platform which have included: back to school bash at the university, opportunities to read with therapy animals at the library, a new park made for teens in a nearby community, a screen printing activity at the library, a teen activity at The Bay, firework displays, and car shows. Youth are provided with this information and allowed to identify activities they would like to participate in. Lead staff plan activities weekly with the input from youth.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

CEDARS Youth Services designed the physical space and programming of the Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter to be accessible to youth with a range of disabilities and special needs. The facility is ADA compliant, including an elevator and handicapped-accessible restroom and shower facilities. Staff receive training in understanding a range of communication styles and behavior patterns and provide support to youth based on their developmental level. Support is provided to each youth according to their individualized case plan and may include assistance with homework, personal care, or outdoor activities.

In August 2022, CEDARS Pioneers Center Shelter obtained training and consultation from the Brain Injury Alliance, an Occupational Therapist from Madonna Rehabilitation, and a Speech-Language Pathologist from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for environmental accommodations that can be made to support youth with a variety of mental health and acquired injury needs. These accommodations have included adaptations to lighting, understanding of various auditory sensory needs, and opportunities for sensory seeking and avoiding youth so they can better engage in school and programming.

Lead staff plan activities on a weekly basis, with input from the youth, to ensure that the activities being offered and scheduled are in line with the youth's interests, skills, abilities and developmentally appropriate. This weekly planning allows us to create programming that responds to the needs and interests of youth rather than adhering to a consistent rotation of activities.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency. As stated previously, CEDARS has clear policies and procedures to ensure that every youth has an individualized case plan based on their unique strengths and needs. CEDARS utilizes an internally-created comprehensive assessment which is administered at time of intake. This assessment includes the following domains: placement/housing; family & relationships; parenting (for youth who are parenting); self-identity; independent living/concrete supports; education/child development; employment; legal; recreation; physical health; substance use; and mental health/safety/trauma. Youth goals are based on the assessed needs of each specific youth, as well as upon any needs specified in the referral. Care is taken to plan activities that are based on the current interests of the youth in the Shelter. Meal planning includes a review of the health, religious, and/or cultural needs of youth. Youth are provided with choices and provided a voice in both their own case planning and in the programming provided. CEDARS is committed to preserving the rights of all clients regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical abilities, religious beliefs, racial background, or economic status. This is evidenced in our approach to all aspects of care. For example, CEDARS Emergency Shelter frequently serves youth who identify as transgender. CEDARS Emergency Shelter program and staff respect youth's specified gender identity, and youth are able to be housed with the gender that corresponds to their gender identity while they are placed with us. Youth are addressed using their preferred name and pronouns while in CEDARS care. In August 2022, CEDARS Emergency Shelter developed differentiated programs to support youth's individualized needs. These three tracks within shelter are called Balance, Courage and Resilience and each track offers different levels of structured activities and programming throughout the day. Balance offers high level programming and structure, Courage offers a moderate level of structure for youth to have prescribed programming activities and some free time, while Resilience offers programming with high levels of unstructured free time aimed at youth whose discharge plan is one where they will have to manage their free time independently. Youth are matched to the structure that best fits their needs. Groups offered in each program throughout the week are selected by lead staff who tailor the groups the needs and interests of the youth currently being served.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

CEDARS has a non-discrimination policy for employees and clients and CEDARS strives to recruit a diverse workforce to provide role models for youth in care. One key initiative of CEDARS current Strategic Plan is to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the CEDARS organization, with goals to decrease racial disparity between employees and clients, as well as between licensed foster families and clients. Within programming space, attention is given to the selection of art, décor, and photographs to provide a welcoming space for a diverse population of youth. Connections to community organizations that support specific minority populations are also made through referrals and invitations for program speakers, etc. Staff are provided training on cultural competency and respectfully working with a diverse array of clients. Understanding diversity includes racial and ethnic minorities, refugees and immigrants, LGBTQ identity, socio-economic status, and religion. The Service Director for Emergency Shelter sits on the Lancaster County Committee for Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED). This committee meets quarterly and is comprised of stakeholders from all system points and works to address disparities in ethnic and minority representation. CEDARS also has an internal Inclusion and Diversity Committee which hosts awareness events, training opportunities, and seeks to foster diversity and equity. Internal procedures for Pioneers Center for review of referrals, interview and admissions processes, and decisions regarding discharge (especially when unplanned) follow identified processes that have the intention of reducing the impact of implicit bias. Our agency regularly reviews admissions and discharge data along with demographic data to look for trends that might indicate disproportionality in our internal processes. Shelter also engages staff with extensive knowledge in BIPOC hair care needs to purchase culturally appropriate products.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

Youth involved with CEDARS programs are invited and encouraged to be involved with the Youth Action Board (YAB), which is a youth advisory board that is part of the Lincoln Homeless Coalition. CEDARS Bridges Transitional Living and Street Outreach Services Program Director Christina Lloyd facilitates this group, with the purpose being to ensure that youth voices are heard as part of decision-making pertaining to homeless or near-homeless populations in Lincoln. Youth from all CEDARS programs, including Emergency Shelter, are invited to attend and are welcome to participate. The YAB meets twice a month, with one meeting solely promoting normalcy by being a recreational team-building activity in the community and the other time being a "working meeting" where the youth provide feedback and input regarding the array of homelessness prevention services in the community and ideas for serving those who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. Some youth who participate are "system-involved" and are able to talk freely at that meeting about their experiences and needs, and the meeting is guided by the youth.

CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter creates opportunities where youth can be nominated for 'Peer Leader'. This youth is asked for feedback on programming needs for youth and is allowed to select outings and activities for all of the youth to participate in. Youth meet with support services on regular basis (typically weekly) to discuss food preferences and recommendations to incorporate preferred foods into the menu. They also provide feedback on snacks that they like and are able to request special cakes for birthdays and other significant celebrations.

CEDARS is currently creating an application/nomination process whereby a youth served in one of our programs can become a full and voting member of the CEDARS Youth Services Board of Directors. Implementation of this process will likely occur in early to mid-2024. CEDARS continues to explore different configurations and options to ensure the inclusion of youth voice in programming.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Child Saving Institute

Report Author:

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Contract Date:

April 30, 2024

Plan Date:

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All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

CSI strives to provide a sense of "normalcy" for all youth served. Our staff works closely with the youths' caseworkers, parents, and other involved individuals to ensure they are registered at their home schools and prepared to attend classes throughout their shelter stays. We support and encourage family visits and home passes and maintain existing relationships with healthcare providers for medical, dental, and mental health needs. During a youth's stay at the shelter, it is required for all youth to participate in family team meetings, along with legal guardians, guardians ad litem, case managers and/or probation officers, CSI staff, and other involved professionals and informal supports. During these meetings, held at least once per week, the youth's progress toward individualized goals and barriers to goal attainment are discussed with the ultimate aim of supporting each youth's post-discharge success.

Barriers to normalcy are addressed on an individual basis with each youth, with plans developed during family team meetings and implemented day-to-day. One barrier to normalcy is the variety of meals given to youth at dinner time that they may not be used to. One way this has been addressed is to allow youth to have input when making the weekly menu. Youth have been able to have "comfort foods" inserted into the menu along with the opportunity to cook them. Another barrier to normalcy is the limitations to entertainment that the youth have in the shelter. To address this, CSI provides a video game system and familiar (appropriate) games to play, along with the opportunity to watch TV during free time. Many youth enjoy playing cards and UNO and CSI provides cards and the staff often engage in games with the youth. CSI provides basic hygiene items but youth may also have preferred hygiene products that they used at home. CSI provides individual containers for each youth so that the youth's family can bring these preferred items to use at the shelter. CSI continuously updates policies and procedures. We are also in midst of a capital campaign that will support the construction of a new shelter, with upgraded educational and recreational space, for 16 youth. This facility will be complete in 2025.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

Every youth in the shelter is encouraged to bring in appropriate family photos and photos of friends. The youth can wear their own clothing, shop for clothing, wear makeup, fix their hair, and have access to flat/curling irons and blow dryers. Each youth has the ability to attend their home school and can attend after school functions such as sports, band, music, prom, homecoming, etc. and home passes and family visits are encouraged.

At the time of intake, all medical information is obtained, including the youth's primary physician. Medical, vision and dental appointments are made with the youth's current medical provider.

Programming is based on the youth's individualized needs, which are identified and discussed at the time of intake and during all scheduled family team meetings.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

Family team meetings are conducted with the youth, the youth's family, the youth's caseworker, the GAL, CSI staff, and others involved in the case as appropriate. During these meetings, an individualized plan is developed with the input of all parties, including the youths. All youth have access to parenting classes, independent living classes, and mental health services. Our program is incentive-based, and youth have a say in their incentives. Youth are also paid a weekly allowance for completing chores.

The CSI shelter works in collaboration with each youth's treatment team to identify specific needs and plans to meet those needs. For example, when a youth is identified as at risk of "aging out" of the child welfare system, independent living programming is provided by shelter staff and/or by referral. Changes are implemented dependent on the needs of each youth.

In addition, all youth participates in classes such as finance, cooking, and resume building. Staff work one-on-one with youth with lower IQ levels or other exceptional needs to ensure material is easily understood.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

The program director provides direct supervision to the shelter supervisors and key staff. Individual supervision is based on the need of the individual. In addition, shelter supervisors provide individual supervision to assigned shelter staff and informal coaching as they support activities of daily living. Necessary training is provided during biweekly team meetings. Staff are also trained in CPI so that they are equipped to handle volatile situations.

CSI provides 24/7 awake supervision and maintains a staff/youth ratio of 1:6 . Throughout the week, various activities based on age and developmental needs are offered to all youth. Because of the flexibility in programming, CSI is able to meet the needs of youth of various ages and developmental stages.

Timely, thorough staff training and supervision ensures a clear understanding of each youth's needs and ways to support success. Specifically, youth are informed of boundary policies to ensure that there is no horseplay and no touching between youth. Youth are not allowed in each other's doorways so that staff are able to maintain supervision of all interactions between youth.

All outings are staffed with more than one staff to ensure safety for everyone.

If a youth is placed on suicide watch, they are either in staff eyesight or checked on every 15 minutes while in their room. If there is a safety concern with a youth and their family, a plan will be implemented with the probation officer's involvement and if necessary, the visits will be supervised.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

CSI programming includes various outings. Examples include rollerskating, YMCA/gym, movies, parks, libraries, bike rides, baseball games, and other community events. In addition to off-site activities, shelter youth engage in a weekly group facilitated by a mental health practitioner and participate in board games, Ps4, arts and crafts, and other healthy activities.

CSI partnered with UNO's Service Learning community in the development of a host of healthy group activities inclusive of all youth. The menu of inclusive group activities will continue to be developed.

In addition; we partner with the Summer Fun Program for activities to take place during the summer months. Starting in May the youth and staff will attend activities such as Petting Zoo at Scatter Joy Acres, No More Empty Pots, Soccer Camp, Mahoney, Lauritzen Gardens, STEM at UP, Wildlife Safari and many more outings.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Each youth has an individualized service plans that are appropriate to the youths age and developmental stage and take disabilities into consideration as needed. All groups/activities are age and developmentally appropriate.

Upon shelter intake, information is obtained from all relevant parties, including probation officers, caseworkers, parents, therapists, school personnel, etc. A mental health practitioner and supervisory team review all available historical information and conduct a bio-psycho-social assessment. Each youth completes the ASEBA (Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment). The ASEBA offers a comprehensive approach to assessing adaptive and maladaptive functioning. Following the assessment process, the team works with each youth to develop age- and developmentally-appropriate goals.

No changes are anticipated during the next review period.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

CSI supports each youth in the establishment of individualized goals. Shelter staff meet the youth where they are both mentally and emotionally.

Youth served in CSI's shelter are met with openness, understanding, and compassion.

Example: We do not speak about a youths' charges as the charges do not define the youth. We teach to the behaviors that led them to receive these charges and open their eyes to fun, prosocial activities that are healthy, legal, and build healthy relationships.

Bi-weekly staff meetings give the staff the opportunity to discuss any concerns with a particular youth so that their needs can be met in the best way possible. If necessary, these discussions will involve probation officers or DHHS

Caseworkers in ensure that the youth's needs are being met.

Staff also have the opportunity to send group emails if they are observing any concerns with a particular youth. This alerts the team to the concern so that it can be addressed in a timely manner.

One example is the tracking of attendance at school. If a youth is often marked absent in their classes, the CSI tutor will talk to the youth and contact the school administrator to see what the issue. In one example, the tutor arranged for a meeting at the school that included the family, probation, and the IEP team, to discuss the absences from class and a solution

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

CSI has had an active Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) team since 2009. The membership of this team is diverse in regard to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, and department membership. The team helps to facilitate a welcoming and inclusive program delivery system and work environment. This team has brought many training opportunities to agency staff. The shelter director is the co-chair to the agency's DEI committee and member of the Alternatives to Detention (ATD) committee in Douglas County.

Disproportionate impact continues to be an area of great concern. The CSI shelter accepts referred youth regardless of color and other attributes. The program director addresses disproportionate impact within the community through participation in committees such as Alternatives to Detention and RED (Racial and Ethnic Disparities).

Continue to gain knowledge and resources in order to help youth and families experience success.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

CSI youth regularly discuss desired changes daily during groups facilitated by shelter staff. Youth also have input on menus, outings, and daily/weekly activities within the boundaries of a solid and appropriate structure provided by shelter staff.

Our youth "board" consists of all current shelter youth, staff, and supervisors. Every day, youth provide input on activities and appropriate topics of discussion. A daily meeting occurs at 4:00pm. Additionally, every month a youth survey is distributed. The anonymous survey collects youth input about how staff support them, desired changes, etc. Each survey is reviewed and, if changes are needed, the director proceeds with the implementation and updates the shelter's policies and procedures.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska

Report Author: Kelsey Molina	Author's Title: Supportive Health Services Director
Phone Number: 308-633-3892	Email Address: kmolina@capwn.org
Contract Date: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025	Plan Date: 07/01/2024

Planning Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

The establishment of normalcy is proven by research and experience to help youth learn how to navigate the world responsibly and with confidence. The reasonable and prudent parent standards as well as case planning are key provisions targeted at promoting normalcy for youth in shelter care. CAPWN's youth Shelter promotes a trauma informed care approach to youth in shelter in striving to provide normalcy for youth in shelter. The youth shelter will join forces with youth, responsible agencies, and parent/guardians, when appropriate, and encouraging individuality. A major goal of this plan is to ensure that the youth's individual goals for themselves are being addressed while maintaining safety, age-appropriateness, legal guardian input, and maintain youth in as "home-like" of a setting as possible.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

The CAPWN youth shelter works with parents, families and placing parties to encourage positive relationships as governed by the court or DHHS. The youth shelter also encourages professionalism with working with service providers as they provide services for the youth. The shelter is accommodating to meetings and transportation of the youth being provided services. Youth have access to computer/laptop and to regulated internet. The shelter also has a television with ROKU that allows youth to watch entertainment - like TV shows, movies, YouTube videos and more. The shelter attempts to work with youth coming from different school districts when distance is not an issue, the shelter will be training the youth to their "home" school to maintain normalcy. School districts will generally work with youth in person, google classroom, or education software on-line to fulfill their education. The school district will also provide the students with their own computer and in instances when this is not the case, the shelter will have one they can use. Youth are asked health questions during intake and if they have not had recent checkups, those will be scheduled in addition to any health care a youth may need or identify during their stay. Youth also follow a daily routine which includes hygiene, education, meals, activities, groups, consistent bedtimes, etc. By participating in a daily routine, youth learn valuable life skills.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

After entering the shelter, every age-appropriate youth completes the Casey Life Skills Assessment which helps to develop age-appropriate goals for the youth's case plan. The Youth Shelter follows case planning of the youth as part of team meeting discussions and the desires and needs of the youth are discussed. Team meeting usually include the youth, probation officer, DHHS care worker, parent, and youth shelter staff. Youth goals are usually discussed and a routine in which to accomplish those goals is devised. The shelter provides support, redirection, and encouragement regarding these goals.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

CAPWN Youth Shelter's policies on staffing, supervision, permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities are consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standards. The youth shelter provides opportunities for recreation daily. Youth Shelter staff are trained in reasonable and prudent parenting standards.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

CAPWN Youth Shelter utilized another CAPWN position as a staff community liaison to communicate with shelter staff regarding events and activities that youth can volunteer aa or partake in. Staff also attempts to keep apprised of school activities, community activities or youth special interest activities within the community. One staff member is responsible for creating and updating a monthly calendar of internal and external activities for youth to participate in.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

The CAPWN Youth Shelter is accessible for youth with special needs and disabilities. If youth require more support services than we could provide in-house, we will utilize youth shelter partner agencies who specialize in providing care for their needs and development.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency. The CAPWN Youth Shelter partakes in team meetings and case management plans tailored to each youth's individual needs. The youth shelter can manage the growth of the youth and adjust and redirect the youth regarding their goals and needs. The youth shelter staff strives to empower youth to advocate for themselves both verbally and in writing. During case planning for all youth, the following individualized needs are considered: the child's goals, parent/guardian input when appropriate, child's age and maturity, and potential risks.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

The youth shelter respects and nurtures youth's cultural traditions and backgrounds. We attempt to accommodate an individual youth's culture by allowing youth to make meals or staff make meals consistent with the youth's culture in addition to encouraging youth to participate in diverse cultural activities. We strive to employ diverse staff from different backgrounds to be representative of the youth we are serving. CAPWN believes it is necessary for diversity training and training to empathize for the different populations we may serve. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are of the utmost importance at our agency and are practiced by staff and taught to youth.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

CAPWN has a new program that will be putting together a youth board who will assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parenting standard as well as promoting and supporting normalcy. Additionally, CAPWN has a position on its board of directors that is a liaison for youth in the programs as well as the community to provide information supporting and implementing normalcy as well as other youth-led initiatives.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Father Flanagan's Boys' Home

Report Author:

Deb McGuire

Author's Title:

Program Support Coordinator

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531-355-1328

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Contract Date:

July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025

Plan Date:

July 8, 2024

Planning Period (fill in the year):

July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
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Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

Boys Town does everything possible to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent when youth must be placed outside of their homes. In addition to the number of items that are discussed below that break down these barriers, we also ensure that youth and families are provided with information and are aware of what the program entails during the admissions process. Each youth and their family/team members will sit through an admission meeting where program details are explained and questions are asked. This provides youth, families, team members, and our family teachers and consultants an opportunity to get to know each other and the program in person. This process continues during placement as youth and families attend team meetings to discuss how youth are doing in the program, activities they are involved in as well as questions or concerns. Although these meetings occur throughout placement, it is not the only opportunity for these discussions. A very important part of our program is self-government and self-determination. This element occurs at a youth level, in homes, on clubs/teams, in classrooms, and in the community. A few important examples of self-government are youth advocating for themselves or others, reporting safety issues, encouraging peers, and holding each other accountable. We value our kids learning to speak up for what is right, making requests and developing their citizenship skills in all environments. We continue to utilize technology to help limit barriers. Each home is equipped with an iPad to help youth maintain face to face conversations with families members in addition to phone calls and visits. Utilizing technology for team meetings has also increased opportunities for families to be involved in team meetings by providing them opportunities to participate in person, via phone, or face to face through technology resources. Boys Town staff members teach youth social skills, ensure they continue to go to school, and work with youth and families to develop individualized, skill focused service plans that address behavior problems areas. Boys Town focuses on meeting educational, medical, psychological, emotional and behavioral need of the youth in care.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

The Boys Town Model allows youth to have daily contact as well as ongoing visits with family. We encourage family to come to campus to attend youth sporting events, youth activities and more throughout the year to help build and maintain relationships. Youth are able to access developmentally appropriate technology within their school and home settings including: iPads in each home so youth are able to video friends and family, increased technology in the classroom and at home for educational needs, and access to dedicated space and technology for therapy visits completed virtually. This year all of our high school youth were provided individual laptops to use throughout their school day. Our new Education Center is equipped with cutting-edge science labs, and our classrooms are equipped with innovative technology and welcoming learning environments. We continue to meet educational needs in a variety of ways not only through the typical classroom settings, but through our Career Center and Life Skills Development programs. Our Career Center offers courses such as: Certified Nursing Assistant courses, culinary arts, small motor, graphic design, communication and media sciences, constructive, automotive, and welding courses. Students have the opportunities to develop skills they can bring into jobs, careers, or have a jump start on further their education path. The Boys Town Behavioral Health Clinic as well as Boys Town Hospital and Clinic located right on campus allow youth to get their healthcare needs met. Family Teachers within the home ensure that they set up youth for success by incorporating a family like, sustainable routine. If youth know what to expect on a day in, day out basis, they are able to relax as they know what to expect. Youth engage in typical day to day activities that you would see in any home such as playing games together, watching TV, cooking and cleaning together and having family meals together.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

Boys Town continues to use an individualized case plan for each youth that documents their progress in the program as well as their participation in multiple activities. Youth have a voice in these service plans as they complete Daily Skill Reviews that allow structured time to talk with Family Teachers and Assistant Family Teachers about what has gone positively with their day and what they are going to work on the next day. Youth are encouraged to be involved in appropriate activities as these activities help them practice skills in multiple settings that will only help them be more successful. Team Meetings, held monthly, allow youth and all members of the youth's service team to look at the youth's progress as well as discuss activities the youth is in or activities with which the youth may want to be involved. Services always focus on promoting positive, pro-social behaviors and building self-esteem and skill development and are designed to be appropriate to the age, gender, cultural heritage, developmental and functional level of each child. The service planning process programs include: pre-admission, admission team meeting, preliminary service plan, standard and specialized assessments, initial team meeting, service plan goals, service plan, skill reviews, regular service plan reports, and discharge summary/aftercare plan. As discussed previously, we have an ever-growing list of activities in which youth can participate. Youth are also able to have jobs on and off campus to help create normalcy.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

Boys Town has documents to help support these policies that are found in all levels of care. Documents used in the Intervention and Assessment Program, Enhanced Family Home Program, and Family Home Program are as follows:

- Promoting Normalcy for Youth in Care
- Parent or Legal Guardian Rights- Enhanced Family Home, Family Home
- Parent or Legal Guardian Rights- Intervention and Assessment
- Employee to Service Recipient Ratios
- Youth Rights- Enhanced Family Home, Family Home
- Nebraska Bill of Rights
- Youth Rights- Intervention and Assessment

Policies are reviewed annually and changes are made as needed to promote normalcy for youth.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

Boys Town staff, both in homes and in the schools are aware of the activities with which youth can be involved. These activities remain the same as those discussed below. In order to promote and support access, activities are regularly discussed in the schools/homes/family meetings. Opportunities are also announced in the school and sent out via email to make students aware of opportunities in which they may be interested. Some activities include: band, baseball, basketball, board game club, book club, cheer, chess club, craft club, cross country, drama club, flags, football, golf club, HOSA, Manga club, meditation club, mindfulness club, NHS, National music honors society, peer ministry, ROTC, science club, small engines club, soccer, softball, Spanish club, STEM/Robotics club, student council, swim team, track, voices, volleyball, walking club, wrestling, writing club. This list is ever-growing!

Boys Town also has an extensive list of elective courses that are offered which are made available to all students.

It is important to note that youth can also have jobs both on and off the Boys Town Campus.

We have a youth support team that works with donors in the community to regularly secure donations of tickets to various events in the community, including sporting events, community theater, concerts and more. Boys Town hosts a Christmas Concert annually and brings in a recording artist to lead the community in getting into the holiday spirit.

Each home also does activities both on and off campus regularly. Youth have input into these outings and will vote on what they would like to do as a family during their self-government meetings. This teaches youth to compromise with others and also how to have fun in a pro social, healthy environment.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Boys Town has many identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs are able to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Approximately one-third of Boys Town children are special education certified. These children receive an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which not only sets goals for their education but also helps to further individualize their service plans. Boys Town schools also have Special Education- endorsed family faculty members who serve as case managers for needed services. Boys Town provides remedial academics, response to intervention, special education classes, and mentoring. In addition, with the new education center, Boys Town schools are working hard to increase the number of Special Education teachers to meet the individual needs of our students. This year Boys Town schools hired twenty new teachers to allow for smaller class sizes and increased monitoring.

Boys Town collaborates with many local and community organizations for many years both in Nebraska and Iowa. Boys Town has formal and informal relationships that are in existence. Boys Town has collaborated with the following service providers who also help in the support of ensuring youth are offered all necessary services to provide ongoing normalcy: mental health agencies, family service agencies, educational service agencies, substance abuse agencies, health care service agencies. Additional resources are also included but not limited to: individual therapy, family therapy, chemical use therapy, mentoring, psychiatric services, variety of medical services, educational or vocational services, and independent living services.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

As discussed throughout this "Normalcy Plan" Boys Town staff is continually working to ensure they are meeting the individualized needs of all youth in the system. This can be seen based upon Boys Town's service planning process that is discussed within Section Three. Each service plan is individualized, and progress is constantly monitored. Our skilled Consultants work with the entire team to reevaluate needs and adjust service plans to ensure youth needs are met. From a youth's day of admission, throughout ongoing meetings and assessments, the individual needs of youth are addressed.

Each quarter all of the youth participate in a scheduled safety review and youth satisfaction survey. This gives youth the opportunity to safely express any concerns that they might have or any needs that they feel are not being met.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

Served data from 2023 demonstrates that Boys Town is serving white, African American, Asian, American Indian, Latino /Hispanic, pacific islander, and youth who identify with multiple races.

In addition, Boys Town has a Behavioral Health Services hotline that families can call for additional information, guidance, and to help direct them to the best program or service for their situations. A specialist is available to explain services from psychiatry services, parenting classes, online supports, and help guide individuals seeking help to one of our many programs. If a parent is seeking help for a child in their home, they are able to hear about services, and gain information on how to enter specific programs. If there is interest in utilizing a program, the specialist helps provide them any application forms needed, gets them connected to the admission team for the program and can start processing right away. Boys Town has a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Per our 2023 Transparency Report, every area had increased diverse promotion rates. Boys Town continues to work towards updating training opportunities related to diversity, recognizing cultural biases and learning the cultural needs of the youth that we serve.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

Boys Town youth vote annually to elect a Mayor and Vice Mayor to represent them. This year's mayor campaigned on the platform: Raise Your Voice, Make a Choice. The Mayor recognized that most youth have experienced feeling that their voice was not heard. As mayor, they wants to ensure that all youth on campus feel that their voice is heard and valued. Their goals are to increase community activities and outings and start a girls' wrestling team.

Peer Ministers are also available to assist in the implementation of the reasonable and prudent parenting standard. Peer Ministers are chosen through an application and interview process. They are students whom adults identify as peer leaders both inside and outside of the classroom. They exhibit a spirit of service and willingness to give their time to peers, Boys Town and the wider community which may include helping walk a new student to their classes, making school announcements, and helping with a variety of activities.

Within their own homes, youth can participate and advocate through self-government meetings. These meetings occur daily and allow youth within the home to bring up topics. These meetings teach youth self-empowerment, decision making, and problem solving. Some examples of meeting topics include making outing plans, changing home routines, birthday party planning, how to make new youth feel welcome, and more. It allows all youth in the home to be a part of decision making and have their voice heard. Youth can be voted as manager within their home as well. Some duties may include leading self-government meetings, helping to hold peers accountable, being a leader for advocating, and more. We also have opportunities for youth to participate in a variety of committees on our campus such as the wellness committee. Youth participate and work with adults to plan activities to promote physical activity, and discuss healthy food choices.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Center for Independent Living of Central Nebraska

Report Author:

Sarah Hampton

Author's Title:

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Contract Date:

07-01-24

Plan Date:

07-30-24

Planning Period (fill in the year):

July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

Independence Rising views normalcy as an inclusive setting and environment for all youth residing in the Independence Rising emergency shelter. This means that regardless of age, gender, and program (respite, probation, or DHHS) all children will be treated equally. Equal treatment includes normalizing the same rules, daily procedure, and inclusive settings so that children are among a group of their peers as much as possible. Normalcy also includes meeting the unique needs and situations of each child, which includes addressing behaviors, needs for requested time alone, and other needs as identified by service provider or staff at the agency.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

There is a designated visitation schedule for each child that is residing at the shelter. This schedule will take into consideration the parent and family member schedule, as well as scheduling around the children's appointments in order for family members to visit the children as allowed and appropriate. The unique needs of each child will be addressed by each agency staff in order to fulfill the individual needs of each child in the areas of relationships, technology, education, school, and health care. A document of each child's individual needs as they pertain to this will be documented and placed in their file.

All basic needs of each child (mentally, physically, emotionally) will be addressed. We can bring in outside resources to aid with meeting their needs if they go beyond what the shelter can provide.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

The designated agency staff will work with the placing agency staff on identifying needs for each child in this area. Based on those needs, plans will be developed and as appropriate with the input of the parents, child, and agency staff in order to develop a plan that meets these needs of each unique youth. These plan goals will be documented at least daily in order to determine goal progression as well as the need to modify, change, or enhance the plans as required and appropriately requested. Plan information will be provided to appropriate individuals. Agency staff will attend team meetings as appropriate and requested.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

Agency staff are well trained in the activities, programs, and offerings at the shelter site. Youth will not be required to spend time unsupervised, as well as on outings that are not school related. Staff meetings will be held ongoing in order to staff each youth and their goals in these areas to ensure each youth is being offered appropriate services by the shelter.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

Daily activities will be offered and scheduled around any school, counseling, etc. These activities will be scheduled to promote crafts, goal setting, self regulation of behaviors, social development skills, reflection, daily living skill development and self esteem building. We will also offer a variety of services to come in to the shelter as available including church services, yoga, dance lessons, art, activities, etc. As safe and appropriate, staff will take youth on outings for swimming, museums, etc.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Independence Rising also offers grant funded independent living services for people with disabilities so the agency has a wealth of knowledge in this area and train staff accordingly. Based on individual disabilities of the child, whether developmental, intellectual, physical, or co-occurring, the agency is equipped and ready to appropriately serve individuals with disabilities in the inclusive environment. This may include modifying reading and writing activities so that children can be successful regardless of their skill level in this area, explaining directions in a manner that's understandable to each child, posting schedules and information in the shelter for daily activities, rules, and chores that includes pictures as well as words, so that all children can understand the direction. Finally, developing a plan and addressing any other unique needs and goals of children with disabilities.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

Each child will have their individual needs and goals considered with the input of agency staff, parents, and the child themselves as appropriate. All children will reside in the inclusive environment, however, planning consideration and program development will be given to the needs and goals of each individual child.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

This shelter is in a rural part of Nebraska and the diversity of population is not as prevalent as it is in more urban areas of the state. However, the shelter will offer services statewide and as minority children reside at the shelter, the agency will work towards identifying the needs of the diverse population, as well as meeting those needs for each unique child. For example, if the child is African American, Native American, etc. Agency staff will be trained on the culture and how to best work with these populations.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

Select agency staff within Independence Rising have been trained on the development of a youth board with transition age youth for decision making activities. Plans are underway to develop a youth board. Specific to the shelter, the agency has staff employed that have peer experiences that would be applicable to youth population served by the shelter. These staff, as well as outside youth that do not work for the agency, will be asked to work towards development of a volunteer advisory board to address the prudent parent standard.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

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Omaha Home for Boys

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Contract Date:

7-1-2024

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7-31-2024

Planning Period (fill in the year):

July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

Each new hire trainee receives onboarding training in the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard (RPPS). employees are informed of the common barriers that are inherent in child-care settings such as OHB. Employees are informed of their responsibility to remove barriers to access to normalcy that are not related to what is age and developmentally appropriate for Each child. OHB staff also review rules and access to activities to assure they don't unintentionally restrict children's access to activities. Staff are encouraged to advocate for involvement for youth in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities based on the interests and abilities of each child. The most challenging examples of access to activities for children in our setting are those in which supervision would be limited. OHB be has a licensing obligation to supervise children within site an sound at all times. However, in attempt to hold up this obligation, we may unintentionally limit access to social or enrichment activities that are appropriate for the age and developmental abilities of our service population. Examples may include attending a sporting event, going shopping, or going out to eat with friends. In these circumstances, OHB staff are trained to communicate with guardians and placement coordinators to assure they give consent for such activities that would not have supervision. We train each staff member that the RPPS gives them the autonomy to make decisions. Home visits and family engagement are a central and vital element of each youth's individualized service plan. Home passes and family visits are not restricted consequently. OHB makes every effort to engage families and encourages regular contact. Programs discuss group activities and community outings with direct-care staff in every team meeting. OHB collects data related to normalcy through Safety & Satisfaction surveys every six months. Results of the Safety & Satisfaction surveys are used to inform the policies and procedures of OHB.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

Youth Advocates (direct-care staff) maintain daily conversations with parents for any noteworthy updates for behavioral, medical, academic updates or incidents. Parents maintain their rights as guardians in decision making unless otherwise determined by court. OHB staff make accommodations for each family for contact, visitation, and home visits based on their schedules and the needs of the youth. OHB residents use typical technology such mobile phones, tablets, video game consoles, TV, and computers as long as they follow the rules for use. OHB students maintain enrollment in their "home school" while they work towards earning credits in our satellite school on OHB campus. The OHB classroom provided a low student to teach ratio which lends itself toward one-on-one help and academic recovery. Students also participate in career exploration and various presentations to learn about educational and vocational opportunities in our community. Each youth has an opportunity to gain employment in the community. Each client is permitted to join a sports team or activity, as appropriate. All physical, dental, and medical services for clients are referred outside the agency to professional providers in the community under the consent of the parent/guardian and/or the placing agency. OHB makes every effort to arrange medical care with the resident's established primary care physician, dentist, and mental health practitioner, when applicable. All youth have access to mental health services through our clinical programs or may maintain a pre-existing therapeutic relationship while in our care. OHB has a Medical Treatment Policy and Procedure to give guidance and satisfactory care for each youth. Staff encourage parent and guardian participation and input for all medical appointments they may need. Staff incorporates a consistent and predictable daily schedule to establish positive routines and healthy habits.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

All plans are individualized, based on the strengths, goals, and input of the youth and their families. Each youth's goal development begins at intake and involves input from the youth, their guardian, and placement representative. The youth and their guardian's interest in age and developmentally appropriate activities in paramount in determining what goals will be set. Each month, during their Team Meeting the youth, family, and OHB Specialist discuss age and developmentally appropriate activities that occur at OHB, home, and in the community. The OHB Specialist then indicates those activities on the case plan. Reunification and transition planning supports a continuum of healthy and fundamentally appropriate access to activities such as employment and school activities. Family Team Meetings are used on at least monthly basis to gather input and progress from the OHB staff, placing agency, parent/guardian, client, and any other formal or informal supports desired by the client and guardian.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

All direct-care staff are trained in the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting standards. OHB staff provides supervision and guidance in regards to appropriate activities. OHB encourages input from parents/guardians and referring agencies for determining activities in which a youth can engage. While input from parents/guardians is encouraged, OHB staff are still empowered to make decisions regarding participation in other activities. Treatment planning occurs monthly to discuss any interventions that may be helpful which may include activities. Direct-care staff by job description have the autonomy to make prudent parenting decisions as long as they are in line with the treatment planning laid out by the service plan. Staff are given the ability to make parenting decisions to include "yes" and "no" answers for access to activities and experiences. OHB puts staff and youth in positions to show growth through experiences and trials even when problem behavior may occur. OHB staff work as advocates for youth to assure they continue to have opportunities to implement learned behavioral changes.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

OHB has a current list of normalcy activities which is reviewed at least twice annually or as needed based on youth input at nightly meetings.

On-Site activities that OHB provides include, but are not limited to: Board games; video games; Legos; movie nights; recreation access; scheduled recreation activities; swimming pool access; Youth Employment Program; Trade Skills Program; Youth Council; career exploration; art classes; 4-H; College World Series team visit; holiday dinner celebrations; volunteer work, Campus Clean-up Day; Wellness Program; indoor/outdoor basketball courts; tennis courts; racquetball courts; access to bicycles and space to ride bikes/skateboards; psychosocial Groups.

Community activities that OHB promotes and supports include but are not limited to: Lancers games; UNO hockey; volleyball; soccer and basketball games; Nebraska Cornhusker football games; OHB Gala event; volunteer work at local parks; county fair; 4-H events at county fairs; visits to the Old Market; access to local skateboard parks; movies; bowling; cultural fairs; off-campus basketball; ropes course; Top Golf; Haunted Houses; haircuts.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

OHB utilizes an individualized treatment planning process for all youth being served. Accommodations are made to support those with disabilities and special needs on an individualized basis with regards to participation in developmentally appropriate activities. OHB has a policy and an obligation to only accept clients for services who can be accommodated effectively.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

Table meetings are used in the homes to provide input on daily activities, routines, rules, questions, feedback. The Youth Council provides feedback on staff and services. Restorative Justice is used as a platform for youth to appropriately express their voices and learn problem solving and conflict resolution. All plans are individualized, based on the strengths, goals, and input of the youth and their families. OHB utilizes a Client Service Plan Procedure to help address services, supports, activities, and experiences provided to the youth we serve. OHB provides services for the youth to talk to a representative from the Nebraska Juvenile Reentry program about their client records.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

All OHB staff receive training on topics including Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Trauma-Informed Care; Client Rights and Responsibilities; and the organization's Policies & Procedures. OHB utilizes a Client Service Plan Procedure to help address services, supports, activities, and experiences on an individual basis with youth we serve. OHB offers services such as transportation to and from home passes, school, medical, and legal appointments. OHB provides therapy for mental health and substance abuse. OHB Invites families to campus to visit. Direct care staff make weekly contact with parents/guardians.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

OHB has reinstated a Youth Council that is comprised of at least two members in each of its residential programs and may include past and former clients from any OHB program. OHB involves staff members at all levels to include direct-care staff, management, and Quality Improvement. The Youth Council offers an opportunity for the youth to be heard and take a hands-on approach to creating change in the organization. Youth gain experience in leadership and advocating for their needs. Members gain an understanding of how they can make change to enrich their experience at OHB. The Youth Council uses the Restorative Justice model to assure that identified priorities receive attention and follow through until the group is satisfied with the resolution.

Each home provides the opportunity for youth to make decisions in by holding a nightly family meeting. Youth can vote on house rules, family outings, and voice any campus concerns. OHB encourages youth to file a grievance if they feel we are not promoting or supporting normalcy. Youth at OHB can utilize the "My 2 Cents" process to submit comments/suggestions to our Quality Improvement department if they feel we are not promoting or supporting normalcy. Youth at OHB complete a Safety & Satisfaction survey every six months.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Rite of Passage- Uta Halee Academy

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Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

Rite of Passage makes every effort to ensure student experiences in our programs are as normalized as possible. Uta Halee Academy (UHA) provides opportunities for the community to be involved in the facility activities. This is achieved through hosting an "open house" on an annual basis, encouraging and allowing students to participate in middle or high school sports, offering Graduation Ceremonies, community service opportunities, on campus visitation, and allowing students to go on passes in the community as the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) recommends. The young ladies in care have their own bedrooms that they can personalize within reasonable limits. Students attend school in an educational building wherein classrooms are developed as they would be in the community. Additionally, UHA has a partnership with the Girl Scouts of America, UNO Mentoring, and HETRA where our students can work with approved volunteers on a variety of programs and services for the students in care.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

Students have access to family/significant others on a regular basis; as approved by the MDT. Per policy, students receive a minimum of two phone calls a week; however, they typically receive more dependent upon program schedule and resource allocation. Students are able to write and receive as much written correspondence as they wish and Rite of Passage pays for the postage. Students are offered on campus visitation and community passes are granted as deemed appropriate by the MDT. Students have access to technology through the educational program. This access is monitored and students agree to utilize the technology responsibly and as intended. The facility offers an age-appropriate educational experience which is specific to a student's educational plan based on credits earned, aptitude, barriers to learning, strength-based strategies, and career aspirations. Students receive health care through community based resources as they would if they were in the home. The facility maintains strong community partnerships which foster exceptional communication and treatment planning to address students' needs. Students also have a structured day via a posted schedule so they are aware of the daily plan based on a variety of schedules based on need (i.e. week day schedule, weekend schedule, assembly schedule, etc.) Students have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities through organizations such as Equine Therapy with HETRA and Basketball, Volleyball through the YMCA. In addition, students have participated in on-site activities as well such as Art, Music Therapy, Culinary, gardening, etc. As the census increases, more activities will be provided for the students. In addition, all students have the opportunity to become certified in CPR/First Aid during their time at UHA.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

Upon admission into the program, each student has an individualized and prescriptive treatment plan developed for them that meets the criteria for CARF accreditation, the Rules and Regulations of the State of Nebraska, as well as the expectations of Rite of Passage. The individualized treatment plan is developed based off a battery of assessments and input from the student and treatment team. The treatment plan is completed and updated every 30 days to review progress towards each goal and revises as needed.

In addition, each student receives an Initial Diagnostic Interview with a licensed clinician (unless they have had an evaluation recently) which helps with the treatment planning.

Each month, the student, UHA Case manager, placing agency, and legal guardian all meet to review the treatment progress.

Within 30 days and every 90-days, a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting occurs to discuss the treatment goals and progress as well. Revisions, updates, and changes to the plan are discussed during this time.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

Rite of Passage-Uta Halee Academy adheres to a 1:6 staffing ratio as outlined by our licensing agency, Department of Health and Human Services.

In addition, ROP-UHA train all staff on the Interactive Supervision policy which includes the following examples:

- Being in the "mix"- meaning you can hear and see students and know exactly what is going on. If they are playing cards, you are playing cards with them or at least sitting next to them.
- Ensuring that you know where exits and entrances are located
- Ensuring that you are up to date on individualized concerns

In addition, within the intake process, UHA has legal guardians complete consents which allow the students to participate in developmentally appropriate activities both on site and off-site.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

Upon intake, each student is asked to list their "Strengths, Needs, Activities, and Preferences." This helps us identify which activities each student enjoys and wishes to participate in. In addition, staff and students are surveyed on a quarterly basis (at least) and are given the chance to provide input into the program activities. Leadership will review the surveys and make adjustments as needed.

In addition, Status Students are able to participate in weekly "Status Meetings," and are given an opportunity to provide input into activities on site.

During the 4-6pm timeframe, UHA's schedule lists "9th block" which is extracurricular activities. Typically, UHA has anywhere from 2-4 activities to choose from, students have the opportunity to pick their favorite one to participate in.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

UHA has admissions criteria and the facility does not generally admit students who fall outside of this criteria to ensure the best service provision possible. However, if students with specific circumstances are admitted, they are staffed with the MDT in advance of their admission so that the administration can develop a plan to ensure quality service delivery.

Examples:

- Students that have family members that do not speak English are provided with a translator during meetings, phone calls, etc. Material about the program has been revamped to be in Spanish as well.
- Students have the opportunity to practice whichever religion they believe in on a regular basis

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

Upon admission into the program, each student has an individualized and prescriptive treatment plan developed for them that meets the criteria for CARF accreditation, the Rules and Regulations of the State of Nebraska, as well as the expectations of Rite of Passage. Treatment plans are developed based on a battery of assessments, risk assessment, input from the MDT and the student herself as well. The Case Manager completes the treatment plan within 30 days of intake and updates it every 30 days. However, the Director of Student Services is responsible for ensuring that she reviews the plans to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met. For instance, ensuring that all students are signed up for the accurate treatment group. The following treatment groups are offered to ensure all individualized needs are met: Thinking for a Change, Aggression Replacement Training, University of Cincinnati Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse, and Trauma group.

In addition, each student receives weekly individual therapy. This will be outlined in their treatment plan as well.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

All students that are referred to Uta Halee are reviewed and screened based on their collateral data and interview (when applicable). Rite of Passage prides itself on the implementation of culturally responsive practices. The facility evaluates the needs of the facility population on an annual basis through the development of a culturally responsive plan. The facility makes an effort to incorporate as many services as possible into programming based on student needs. These practices range from culturally sensitive hygiene products, to offering a variety of religious services, and other female specific programming components. The facility has also offered parental involvement and educational opportunities, such as family groups, based on need and the interest level within the population.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

In accordance with CARF requirements, UHA has implemented a "Status Club" which includes Interns and Contributors who have the opportunity to meet with the campus leadership to discuss needs, concerns and suggestions to improve programming. Additionally, all students in the program are surveyed quarterly to ensure they have an opportunity to render feedback related to all programming services. Based on that feedback, the facility makes adjustments as needed.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Women In Community Service Inc

Report Author:

Tauni Waddington

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Contract Date:

Plan Date:

October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024

Planning Period (fill in the year):

October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

Follow the Normalcy plan that has been established.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

Education is the paramount component to our program. Residents are all required to attend school or work daily. Each resident has a daily program. They have access to have medical appointments. They have access to their chrome books for school work.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

Each resident has an individualized plan and their goals are established with their team and reviewed monthly (at a minimum).

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

Due to the nature of placement of our programming there is 24 hour supervision. We follow the prudent parent standard with each resident on an individual basis.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

We are normally involved in many community activities. While many activities have been cancelled due to the ongoing issues with the pandemic, we are slowly resuming participation in activities available, and determined to be safe for the clients, and our community.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

We meet the needs of our residents that have specialized needs. We are ADA compliant, but our facility, due to the nature of it's age, is not wheel chair accessible. We have not been asked to accomodate clients with wheelchair needs.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

Each resident has an individualized plan and goals. Goals are established and reviewed in monthly team meetings with all team members. Team members may include: Case Manager, Probation Officer or DHHS Case Worker, Guardian Ad Litem, CASA Worker, Therapist, Parent or Legal Guardian, Attorney.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

We have a very diverse staff and strive to maintain this diversity.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

Our Case Manager / Supervisor meets with our residents regularly for group discussions.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center Hastings

Report Author:

Camella Jacobe

Author's Title:

Facility Administrator

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Contract Date:

N/A

Plan Date:

8/12/2024

Planning Period (fill in the year):

July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

YRTC Hastings' ideal plan would be to have youth in the community more, helping with community or volunteer services and/or attending college classes off campus when applicable. Unfortunately when our census of youth increases and our we are not fully staffed, we are unable to go below staff/youth ratio, so it limits being able to take youth off campus for this. We do our best to offer some of those services on site on our campus, however having the youth identify that they are able to accomplish these types of opportunities in the community, even if not in their own community, is more beneficial for their growth and understanding of communities.

YRTC Hastings will continue to recruit staff and find ways to retain staff in order to work on offering off campus opportunities more. Administration is working closely with Human Resources to find more ways to recruit, including more job fairs, more ways to recruit on-line, and visiting college campuses. YRTC Hastings will research retention among like facilities and see what is working with those facilities to retain employees, in order to improve retention at the Hastings facility.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

YRTC Hastings' current plan for providing normalcy efforts for our youth includes a detailed daily schedule, which includes year round school, evidence base groups, groups for young women, AA/NA group, Recovery group, individual therapy, family therapy, daily large muscle recreation, daily leisure recreation, daily details, daily hygiene, medication management, off campus volunteer/community service opportunities, on/off campus incentive opportunities. The youth also have access daily to medical, mental health, and grievance services. Our youth are provided 60 minutes of phone calls with individuals on their contact lists, 2 free state postage stamps weekly to write individuals, on/off campus visitation, and on campus on-line visitation. Youth who have completed their stages are that have had their 60-day notice go to the courts for release are offered day, overnight, and weekend furloughs home to allow for adjustment back to their home and community.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

All YRTC Hastings youth develop a Plan of Care and Mental Health Plan with a few weeks of admission. These plans include the individual needs of the youth identified through collateral information received as well as gathering information from the youth themselves on their needs through an initial assessment. These plans have identified goals. The youth move through the program through stages based off of progression of goals and individual assignments completed. The youth are able to advocate for stage advancement when they have reached their goals and assignment for each stage. The progress of these goals and stage advancements are shared with the youth in a Progress Letter each month. The Progress Letters are shared with the youth's outside team, including judges, attorneys, probation officers, and parents/guardians.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

Youth at YRTC Hastings are supervised through site and sound supervision by staff at all times during waking hours and through staggered 10 minute checks during sleeping hours. YRTC Hastings is accredited by the Prison Rape Elimination Act which requires the facility to maintain a staff/youth ratio of one staff for every eight youth during waking hours and one staff to sixteen youth during sleeping hours. YRTC Hastings currently uses a ratio of one staff for every six youth during waking hours and one staff for every twelve youth during sleeping hours.

YRTC Hastings has a Youth Council where youth are able to bring ideas for youth activities that represent their groups interests and likes. Youth are offered a variety of recreational and leisure activities based off of the input at Youth Council. The youth are also able to participate in surveys periodically where they can express their interests and likes for recreational activities.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

YRTC Hastings provides a variety of large muscle recreational activities that include volleyball, basketball, just dance, walking, weights, gaga ball, nine square, badminton, pickle ball, silent ball, boxing bag, flag football, and water play. YRTC Hastings provides a variety of leisure recreation activities that include crocheting, scraping booking, crafting, on-line games, board games, card games. interactive game show games, cooking, creating craft projects/cards for others, and television.

YRTC Hastings youth participated in a variety of community service/volunteer opportunities in the community that include, landscaping, painting building, concert/venue set up and clean up, assisting with farm animal care, handing out community flyers, participated in abuse awareness parade, and youth church services.

YRTC Hating youth also participated in off campus activities/incentive which included, church services, packing meals for Catholic Social Services, AA/NA groups, movies, swimming, YMCA, museum, and off campus dining.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

YRTC Hastings will provide accommodations for youth to participate in activities on a case by case basis. All buildings on campus are ADA accessible. YRTC Hastings is required to provide accommodations for disabled youth by the American Correctional Association (ACA). The YRTC facilities are required to maintain ACA accreditation.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

YRTC Hastings youth have individualized Plans of Care which are made in conjunction with the youth's facility treatment team, the youth's parent/guardian, and other community support persons to ensure we are meeting the youth's individual needs for treatment. The youth participate in a monthly family team meeting where progress and lack of progress are discussed with the youth's outside and internal teams in order to best serve the youth and ensure everyone involved with the youth are consistent and supportive.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

There is not a screening process to determine which youth are committed to YRTC Hastings. YRTC Hastings accepts every youth committed and works with each youth and family on the youth's individual needs. YRTC Hastings in conjunction with Probation works on reunification with parents/guardians back into the community. If reunification is not possible, YRTC Hastings works closely with Probation to determine appropriate placement the youth would have the most success in.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

YRTC Hastings currently has a Youth Council which meets monthly where the youth can bring concerns and requests to a diverse team of staff members. Youth complete an application to be in Youth Council and a part of Youth Council until released. Each Living Unit has a representative on Youth Council.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center Kearney

Report Author:

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Contract Date:

N/A

Plan Date:

Planning Period (fill in the year):

July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

YRTC-Kearney serves youth through individualized plans of care and evidence-based programming, which includes family treatment and enhancement of personal life skills. Specialized treatment is also available for substance abuse and youth who have sexually harmed. Transition back to the community will require collaboration between the YRTC treatment team, Probation's re-entry unit, community providers and schools to ensure a smooth transition. We incorporate opportunities to implementing change and keep the youth's adolescence in mind. This means we try to create opportunities that would allow youth to act and react in scenarios they may encounter in the community. Some examples include religious services, group/team events, school settings, and leisure activities and community service projects.

Always looking for more opportunities in the community or how we can bring normalcy to our youth on campus.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

YRTC-Kearney strives to offer recreational and personal growth activities both on campus and off. These opportunities include access to art/music materials and recreation opportunities. From an academic standpoint, YRTC-Kearney provides youth with traditional education and technological skills through an accredited high school. Relationships with family are fostered through both in person and virtual visits along with off campus visits. Kearney has increased the number of visits (via virtual means) and phone calls a youth can have with their families. Kearney follows a daily schedule which includes specific times for bed, waking hours, school, and other activities. Programming meetings occur at the conclusion of the school day. Kearney offers evidence-based cognitive-behavioral programming (MRT and ART).

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

Youth undergo an initial assessment upon arrival that aides in the development of the treatment plans. Treatment plans focus on areas of risk and need as identified by the Youth Level of Service/ Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI). Case managers at YRTC-Kearney are involved in developing a plan of care that involves input from the youth, the youth's treatments team, the youth's family, and their probation officer.

Recreational activities are often a part of the youth's plan of care as a pro-social activity to participate in. At YRTC-Kearney, we view these types of positive activities as a factor that helps in reducing recidivism.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

All on and off campus activities are supervised by YRTC staff members. YRTC-Kearney is required by the Prison Elimination Act (PREA) to maintain a one staff to eight youth ratios during waking hours. All activities must be approved by the Facility Administrator or their designee.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

At YRTC-Kearney, leisure activities are provided by the Recreation Department. Recreation staff include activities based in sports and in the education of various sports. Kearney's Recreation staff provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities to all our youth, which include softball, flag football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, and ultimate frisbee. In addition to these sports, Kearney's facility has a soccer field, an obstacle course, indoor pool, and weight room. In Kearney, we also provide craft projects and volunteer activities that are designed and facilitated by Kearney staff. Youth are orientated to opportunities for leisure activities through the youth manual, communication from direct care staff, and incentives for on and off campus activities (through the youth's case manager).

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Any accommodations for youth would be made on a case-by-case basis. YRTC-Kearney is required to provide accommodations for disabilities per standards of the American Correctional Association (ACA). Kearney has maintained its accreditation yearly.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

Individualized plans of care are made in conjunction with the youth's treatment team in Kearney, the youth's family/guardian, and any other community support that the youth may wish to have involved. The youth's probation officer is also highly involved in this process and provides input as to the youth's risks and needs as identified by their YLS/CMI. Each area of risk/needs is addressed in the case plan/progress letter with individualized goals and objectives. An Initial Assessment is also completed by mental health staff to identify any mental health or substance abuse treatment needs.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

YRTC-Kearney has no say in which youth are adjudicated to the facility, as they are committed by the courts. We do not screen youth in any way, we accept all youth that are committed.

Kearney encourages family contact as much as possible through phone calls and visitation. Since COVID-19, we have added virtual visits as an additional means to achieve family engagement. Family therapy services are also available. For example, family involvement is an important component of the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (ACRA), which is a SAMHSA recognized best practice for youth with substance abuse issues. Family therapy needs are determined by a youth's mental health counselor and treatment team.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

At the YRTC-Kearney, youth may make requests and suggestions through their group meetings, Case Managers, Unit Managers, or letters to the Facility Administrator or Program Manager. Kearney also has a grievance process that is handled directly by a Compliance team which does not report to the Facility Administrator.

Reference: Nebraska Revised Statute 43-4706
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-4706>

Institution Name:

Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment Center - Lincoln

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Contract Date:

N/A

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Planning Period (fill in the year):

July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025

All questions must be answered completely. Submit electronically to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov.
(The Normalcy Plan is submitted once and thereafter, anytime there are subsequent changes.)

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

What is your institution's plan to address barriers to normalcy?

Provide a unique and detailed plan for your agency to address overall barriers to normalcy in your child-care institution setting. This question looks at your agency's CURRENT plan. Identify what barriers to normalcy exist within your agency. Do not quote Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

YRTC-Lincoln individualizes care for each youth. Youth have their own treatment plan and individualized incentives for program participation. Youth are encouraged to remain connect to their family, mentors, friends, etc. who have been identified as positive supports in their lives. We celebrate all birthdays, holidays, and milestone achievements while at YRTC. We offer the youth the options of letters, phone calls, video visits, and in-person visits to families, professionals, and other external supports. YRTC has increased the amount of outings and furloughs for the youth. We are currently establishing an enhanced transition process to include more community involvement prior to youth discharge.

Barriers to normalcy would primarily relate to the structure and security of YRTC.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

What is your institution's plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your institution to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for making normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency and provide examples of normalcy efforts for all children placed at your agency that fall outside of the norm of meeting basic educational and medical needs.

YRTC-L has a full teaching staff, a registered nurse, a psychologist, and child and adolescent psychiatrist. The youth attend school all year with the exception of a few weeks for breaks. They are provided individual school schedules and taught in a classroom with direct instruction. We are able to accommodate individual educational needs. The youth are seen 5 days a week (or more) by our nurse. Our psychiatrist is on site once a week, at minimum. The psychologist for YRTC is on-site as needed and on video when applicable.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

What is your institution's procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process to address this requirement?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT procedure for developing goals and action steps in the case plan and case planning process for youth. Include examples of how your agency ensures that plans are individualized for the youth.

Each youth at YRTC-L has a unique treatment plan with achievable, individualized goals. Goals for the youth are derived from their demonstrated and predicted aptitude and are adjusted as needed. Youth, families, and professionals work together to create an individualized program to meet the needs of each youth.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

What is your institution's plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for handling policies on staffing, supervision, and giving permission and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities to ensure your agency addresses normalcy efforts when identifying developmentally appropriate activities.

Staffing and supervision is in place for the safety of each youth. The youth help create programming activities and ideas consistent with their wants, needs, and interests. YRTC-L also continues to enhance the items and materials available to the youth to remain as current as possible regarding age and time appropriate interests.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

What is your institution's plan for gathering a list of activities both onsite and in the community?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for gathering a list of normalcy activities that youth at your agency can participate in both onsite and in the community. Ensure that this list is available for easy access by the youth (posted in a common area, living area, etc.)

Youth have posted schedules, entertainment ideas, activity choices, etc. Staff assigned to youth assist with making sure the youth have what they need to participate in activities that interest them. The youth also have a clinical team, including a Program Coordinator, who helps facilitate activities, furloughs, and visits off campus.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

What accommodations and support services have been identified in your plan so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on how to provide normalcy activities for youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Provide additional examples from your agency beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

YRTC-L is ADA compliant. For any ADA accommodations, we will following the recommendation of our physician. We also have access to ADA rooms and medical equipment to accommodate youth needs.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

What is your institution's plan to ensure that the individualized needs of all children are being met?

Provide a detailed summary of how your agency CURRENTLY meets the individualized needs of youth at your agency.

YRTC-Lincoln individualizes care for each youth. Youth have their own treatment plan and individualized incentives for program participation. Youth are encouraged to remain connect to their family, mentors, friends, etc. who have been identified as positive supports in their lives. We celebrate all birthdays, holidays, and milestone achievements while at YRTC. We offer the youth the options of letters, phone calls, video visits, and in-person visits to families, professionals, and other external supports. YRTC has increased the amount of outings and furloughs for the youth. We are currently establishing an enhanced transition process to include more community involvement prior to youth discharge.

Each youth at YRTC-L has a unique treatment plan with achievable, individualized goals. Goals for the youth are derived from their demonstrated and predicted aptitude and are adjusted as needed. Youth, families, and professionals work together to create an individualized program to meet the needs of each youth.

Ultimately, if a youth needs something specific to meet their needs, YRTC-L will take the appropriate measures to accommodate. If a youth, at any time, does not feel like their needs are being met, they have a variety of outlets to share their concerns.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

What is your institution's plan to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations?

Definition of "disproportionate impact" (when statute or policy affects one race or ethnicity more than it affects another race or ethnicity). Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan on ensuring that youth of color are provided the opportunities for normalcy and ensure examples of how your agency addresses reducing youth of color's reentry into congregate care.

The courts commit youth to the YRTC facilities. YRTC does not control whether or not youth are placed in our care. At YRTC-L we take pride in having diversity in staff and encourage the individual interests of the youth. We also encourage youth to remain connected with external supports (family, mentors, friends, etc.). The youth have access to a variety of hygiene items to meet needs and requests.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

What is your institution's plan to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard and promoting/supporting normalcy?

Provide a detailed description of your agency's CURRENT plan for a youth board. Youth Boards should be independent from program expectations, clubs, or leadership programs. This should be youth-led and be able to address issues related to being in care (the voice of the youth).

YRTC-L has a very small population. The census fluctuates around 10-14 youth. All youth have the option to be heard, file a grievance, request a specific staff member, make requests, etc.

Institution Name:

CARE-RIE

Report Author:

Chrystol Spraling

Author's Title:

Executive Director

Phone Number:

(402) 609-0780

Email Address:

care_riemae@yahoo.com

Report Date:

7/22/2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

Implement a "Flex Shift Float Pool" to support spontaneous community outings and weekend activities.

- Create a Quick Trip Protocol empowering on-duty staff to take up to two youth on short, approved community-based outings without full administrative clearance.
 - Launch Youth Weekend Choice Boards where youth vote weekly on a selected group activity. Provide each youth a Room Personalization Mini-Grant at intake to decorate and customize their space.
 - Create an Affirmation Closet with inclusive clothing, hair care, and hygiene products reflecting diverse gender and cultural needs.
 - Facilitate quarterly "Who Am I?" identity workshops focused on personal storytelling, expression, and emotional safety.
- Partner with Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands or other approved Girls Mentoring Program to provide long-term mentoring relationships.
- Develop individualized "Progress Profiles" that reflect youth strengths beyond time-bound benchmarks.
- Integrate Youth-Guided Transition Coaching to ensure each discharge plan is youth-informed, not system-imposed.
 - Offer Post-Placement Check-Ins (30/60/90 days) to support youth during critical transition

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

We prioritize safe and consistent family connections as a core aspect of emotional normalcy and belonging.

We equip all youth with safe, structured access to the tools and digital literacy they need to engage in school, employment, and social connection.

Academic success and social integration at school are protected through continuity, support, and advocacy.

All youth receive timely, trauma-informed healthcare while being taught to understand and advocate for their own needs.

We balance predictability with personal choice in our daily schedules, empowering youth to feel stable yet free.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

Each youth completes a Normalcy Readiness and Interests Assessment within the first week of placement, administered by the assigned Case Manager.

The Case Manager leads an ISP meeting including the youth, assigned therapist, direct care staff, and DHHS CFS caseworker (when available). Family members are invited to participate if appropriate.

Weekly youth check-ins include progress updates on normalcy goals.

- Monthly case reviews document completed steps, current barriers, and any requested updates or adjustments.
- Plans are formally updated every 90 days during the scheduled ISP Review Meeting or sooner if the youth's interests, functioning, or placement changes.
- Youth are encouraged to bring input and written suggestions to their monthly check-ins and quarterly review.

All Case Managers and Direct Care Staff receive annual training on incorporating normalcy into ISP development.

- ISP templates include a dedicated "Normalcy Goals" section to ensure planning consistency.
- Documentation is maintained in the youth's physical and electronic case file, reviewed by the Program Director and Quality Assurance Consultant quarterly.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

Care-RIE ensures that all age-appropriate activities take place under the guidance of trained, authorized personnel.

All youth activities are reviewed for age and developmental appropriateness. The agency balances flexibility with clear procedures for consent and documentation.

Youth are invited to help identify and initiate participation in activities through goal-setting, interest inventories, and monthly life skill sessions.

All staff receive annual training on age and developmentally appropriate activity

The Program Director reviews all activity-related incidents, permissions, and denied requests monthly to ensure staff are implementing policies fairly and consistently.

- Quarterly audits of youth service plans check for documentation of participation in normalized activities.
- Youth are surveyed semi-annually on their satisfaction and perceived fairness regarding activity participation.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

Care-RIE uses a structured approach to curate a dynamic, youth-responsive list of normalcy activities.

This list is updated monthly and shared agency-wide.

- Youth interest surveys and suggestion boxes
- Staff-led brainstorming at monthly house meetings
- Community bulletin boards (libraries, churches, rec centers, nonprofits)
- Partnerships with schools, youth organizations, and cultural centers
- Seasonal events posted on city and county websites (e.g., Omaha Parks & Rec)
- Word-of-mouth from caregivers, clinicians, and school liaisons

The finalized list of approved and upcoming activities is:

- Posted in common areas (recreation room, kitchen, hallway bulletin board)
- Reviewed during weekly house meetings
- Integrated into ISP planning sessions
- Provided in welcome/intake packets for new youth
- Available on the Care-RIE Youth Info Board with event flyers, QR codes, sign-up sheets, and contact info

Youth may request additional activities for consideration at any time through their Case Manager, suggestion box, or by speaking to any staff member.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

At admission, every youth receives a comprehensive needs and ability screening. For youth with disabilities or special needs, Care-RIE conducts a Functional Access & Participation Review.

- Physical mobility considerations
- Communication needs (verbal/nonverbal, adaptive tech, etc.)
- Behavioral and emotional regulation supports
- Medication or health-related limitations
- Sensory preferences and sensitivities
- Assistive technology or device use

Care-RIE ensures all normalcy-related programs, events, and outings are reviewed through a universal design lens. Accommodations provided often exceed basic compliance and are customized based on the needs of the youth. ie. equipment access, transportation adaptations, and recreational needs

All direct care and supervisory staff receive annual specialized training on inclusion strategies and disability support.

Care-RIE will work closely with outside agencies and inclusive organizations to identify appropriate normalcy-based opportunities.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

Upon admission, every youth undergoes a multi-domain assessment facilitated by a Case Manager and Clinical Supervisor.

Every ISP is collaboratively developed

The ISP is structured into individualized domains, each with youth-specific goals and action steps

Each youth has a dedicated care team that meets regularly to review progress, adjust interventions, and ensure goals remain aligned with evolving needs.

Youth receive access to trauma-informed mental health services

Care-RIE provides wraparound educational services tailored to each child's current school status

Care-RIE prioritizes cultural responsiveness and spiritual inclusion as a core part of identity development.

Each youth's behavioral plan is tailored to their developmental level, trauma history, and communication style.

- Youth meet monthly with their Case Manager for structured feedback and goal updates
- Youth may submit grievances or requests confidentially
- The Program Director reviews all complaints and ensures youth voice is factored into service delivery changes
- Staff are trained in strengths-based communication to ensure youth feel heard and validated

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

Upon intake, Care-RIE collects detailed information on the youth's racial, cultural, spiritual, and community background. Example: A youth expressed feeling isolated at previous placements. Upon admission to CareRIE, the youth was paired with a mentor of shared racial identity and supported in attending community based Black youth empowerment groups.

Care-RIE actively recruits, hires, and promotes racially and culturally diverse staff to reflect the demographics of the youth we serve. Example: A youth was matched with a bilingual mentor and encouraged to maintain ties with extended family through weekly Spanish-language calls and culturally specific outings.

Care-RIE audits activity participation monthly to ensure equal access across race, gender, ability, and placement status. Staff are trained to recognize and remove barriers that might prevent youth of color from participating in social or enrichment opportunities.

Care-RIE tracks youth outcomes and collaborates with child welfare teams to reduce the risk of reentry for youth of color after discharge. Example: A youth preparing for discharge was linked with services, and culturally aligned foster family supports.

All behavioral interventions at Care-RIE are reviewed through an equity lens to prevent over disciplining of youth of color—a known driver of reentry and system distrust. A youth involved in a peer conflict was supported through a facilitated peer mediation

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

Care-RIE Youth Voice Collective (YVC)

- Open to all current residents age 13+
- Voluntary participation; not tied to behavioral status or program incentives
- Minimum of 5 core members; rotating or ad hoc participation welcome
- Staff introduces the board during orientation and house meetings
- Youth may self-nominate or be nominated by peers
- Flyers posted in living areas and shared during monthly ISP meetings
- A designated Youth Liaison (non-clinical staff) serves as logistical support—not a board leader
- Meetings occur bi-weekly, with optional working subgroups in between
- Advising staff and leadership on youth experiences of fairness, freedom, and participation under the RPPS
- Promoting normalcy by identifying and advocating for activities youth want to access (e.g., sleepovers, job support, tech access, dating, sports)
- Discussing barriers to normalcy or youth rights, including discipline, access to family, and cultural expression
- Proposing solutions or policies related to outings, supervision, and permission processes
- Evaluating activity access trends to ensure all youth (regardless of identity, ability, or behavior history) have fair opportunity
- Youth board meetings are separate from programming, chores, or therapy
- Responding to every formal recommendation from the Youth Board within 14 business days

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Chrystol Spraling

Designee's Title: Executive Director

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

Care-RIE ensures that all children placed in care are informed both verbally and in writing about the process for requesting participation in age- or developmentally-appropriate activities. During intake and orientation, trained staff review the normalcy policy with each child in an age-appropriate manner. Children are provided with a written summary outlining how to make requests, who to speak with, and the timeframe for receiving a response. This process is reinforced through ongoing conversations with staff and is documented in the child's file.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

Care-RIE ensures written notice of the process for children to request participation in age- or developmentally-appropriate activities is clearly posted in accessible, public locations within each residence. Specifically, the notification is placed in the residential binder located on the table in the main living area, and visibly displayed on the whiteboard/message board located in or between the dining area and living area in each home. These postings ensure all youth have continuous access to this information.

Institution Name:

CEDARS Youth Services: Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter

Report Author:

Allyson Rickertsen

Author's Title:

Pioneers Center Program Director

Phone Number:

402-890-9241

Email Address:

arickertsen@cedarskids.org

Report Date:

7/15/2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

Over the past year youth have been allowed and supported to obtain employment when it was appropriate and in line with their best interests. The clients were supported in writing resumes, obtaining outfits for interviews, and interview practice.

We had a youth that was able to participate in his show choir, he was supported through the audition process and was selected to join the group. Staff managed his rehearsal scheduled and ensured he had clothing that met the group requirements.

One youth wanted to play at an open mic night at a local coffee shop. Staff attended and supported the youth during this performance.

We also had a youth that was part of their school's wrestling team. The youth was allowed and supported to continue participating in this activity without any disruption.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

All youth who attended school were provided transportation daily to school. CEDARS provides educational support staff that contact schools following a youth's admittance to shelter to help establish needed re-entry meetings to help re-engage youth in schools when needed.

A youth identified culturally normal foods that they preferred, staff worked with them to obtain recipes and needed ingredients. Together they cooked tortillas and shared a meal together.

Several youth were parents to small children. For these youth facetime visits were facilitated in order for them to maintain developmentally appropriate contact for pre-verbal children.

All youth were provided transportation to their home school within a 25 mile radius of CEDARS Shelter to maintain normalcy in their education.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

One example of a case manager following the processes for assessment and individualized planning was for a youth. They completed an intake assessment the day following their intake. Their case manager set specific goals related to obtaining a stable living environment and supporting their mental health. This youth worked with therapists within CEDARS as well as established with an outpatient therapist that could continue to meet with them post-discharge. The case manager worked with DHHS to provide collateral to foster homes. A foster home was identified and the youth moved to this home. Within the first few months this youth was able to attend family vacations (to see the beach for the first time) and get pets for the first time.

During the last year CEDARS supervisor developed a "Warm Handoff Sheet" to help identify and communicate about youth's habits and preferences that can be shared with future caretakers. For example, it identifies the youth's wake up preferences (wake up early and shower, or sleep in late and shower at night time), favorite foods, activities they enjoy (favorite shows), triggers and what helps when they're upset. Things that caregivers would need to know to serve a youth well, but is often not included in the referral information shared with potential providers.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

CEDARS continues to follow expected staffing ratios as outlined in state licensing requirements. CEDARS continues to operate at a ratio of 1:4.

Over the last year CEDARS provided sufficient staffing so the youth could all go to the Omaha Zoo, this required additional staffing so the youth could stay for several hours rather than having to return at the time of normal shift change for staff. Staff were willing to work additional hours for that specific event so the youth could enjoy the full zoo experience. During the last year the youth went on a trip to a local trampoline park. The staff at the trampoline park recognized how much fun the kids were having and offered to extend their visit. The youth stayed at the park for nearly 8 hours. Staff accommodated this by meeting at the park and switching staff providing supervision- allowing the kids to participate regardless of staff assigned work hours.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

On a weekly basis lead staff conduct house meetings where youth are asked which activities they would like to do and these are scheduled in subsequent weeks. One such example include Urban Air as a frequently requested outing that the youth participated in on multiple occasions.

Lead staff were also given 2 hours of plan time per week where other staff provided coverage for supervision of youth, during this plan time lead staff found local events that they knew were in line with youth interests, culture and areas of interest. The youth went to the Strawberry Festival, car races, Kiewitt Luminarium, Lincoln and Omaha Zoos and the Nebraska State Capitol.

The staff also create daily activities in the building including scavenger hunts, trivia games, facemask/spa nights, and board game tournaments.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

We had a homeless youth that came to us and was diagnosed with a medical condition. Items were provided in the bathroom and living areas for them to use. They had access to utilizing the elevator as needed. They were also provided a bed that was lower to the ground that was easier to access.

At intake we take notes of allergies and dietary preferences. These are communicated with the kitchen staff after intake. Menus are always adapted to avoid any foods that aren't tolerated by kids.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

CEDARS Shelter continues to work with UNL to help analyze the data to learn about the effectiveness of the new programming structure.

Over the last year, we started the Momentum program. We recognized that having employment is a prosocial skill needed (and sometimes required by the court) for youth returning home. However, at times smart phone use and free time are not appropriate due to the client's ability to keep themselves safe. So we developed a new program track that supports youth in gaining employment while maintaining supervision and limitations to internet that are unsafe. Case managers worked with these youth to develop specific plans for how they would get to/from work while maintaining high levels of supervision.

Another example, one staff took some youth to ride the bus. They selected a location they'd like to ride to and learned how to download the bus app, read the bus schedule and locate bus stops. The staff traveled with the youth to help them learn these skills. After several different practice runs the youth reported feeling confident in using the bus system for transportation. Some of these youth were subsequently allowed to ride the bus to jobs and other outings as approved by their guardians.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

Over the past year, CQI data identified that there was equitable admission decisions and equitable discharges for youth of color when compared to youth who identify as white. Over the past year CEDARS Shelter, as part of their annual planning, developed intentional relationships with other organizations in the community to help connect youth with mentors that reflect their demographics more closely. CEDARS began offering compensation to recruit and retain employees that were bilingual and could provide services in the client's preferred language. CEDARS shelter also purchased devices that could translate languages to help the client feel more connected and engaged in programming and activities with staff and other youth.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

The youth participate in a weekly house meeting. During this meeting they are able to identify outings, groups and activities they want to complete on a weekly basis. Youth have been offered the opportunity to participate in a Community Youth Action Board.

We also offered to have youth participate in monthly meetings with our staff and food services team to identify snacks, meals, and recipes that they enjoyed and that reflected their cultural foods. The youth were able to give input on menus on a monthly basis.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Allyson Rickertsen

Designee's Title: Program Director

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

All youth placed in CEDARS shelter are provided a case manager that they meet within intake. The case manager is assessing for any social, emotional, cultural, spiritual, familial and other needs. As the client self identifies activities and practices that are important to them, the case manager is developing plans and offering resources to the client. For example, we currently have 3 youth placed in shelter that prefer to attend religious services on Sundays and supervisors have accommodated schedules to take them to their preferred service. Youth are informed verbally and in their "Welcome Packet" .

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

Written notices are placed in the commons area on the upper and lower areas where youth spend a majority of their time.

Institution Name:

Child Saving Institute

Report Author:

Maranda Buckley

Author's Title:

Director of Foster Care

Phone Number:

402-699-9949

Email Address:

mbuckley@childsaving.org

Report Date:

7/1/2024-6/30/2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

Child Saving Institute (CSI) continues to identify and reduce barriers to normalcy for youth in both shelter and foster care settings. To address material and resource limitations, CSI maintains an on-site hygiene and clothing closet to ensure youth have access to basic items that support dignity and self-expression. Transportation and delayed activity approvals remain challenges in foster care, and CSI addresses these through improved collaboration with DHHS, proactive planning, and quick-reference RPPS tools to guide foster parents. An example of overcoming such a barrier includes successfully facilitating out-of-state travel for a foster youth to join their foster family on vacation, this required timely coordination with DHHS, the biological family, and securing travel resources. In shelter care, youth are supported in maintaining their school placements and engaging in community events, which has led to greater inclusion and connection to typical developmental experiences.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

CSI ensures all youth have access to age- and developmentally appropriate experiences, with strong emphasis on education, health, relationships, and meaningful routines. Youth are supported in staying enrolled in their home schools to maintain consistency, and are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities, maintain part-time employment, and engage in religious or cultural events important to them. CSI utilizes CSI staff to help transport for extra-curricular activities, as approved. Access to technology is individualized, shelter youth use supervised devices with tutoring support, while foster youth are aided by their caregivers in utilizing tools like Google Classroom and telehealth. Holiday plans include home visits, virtual calls, and on-site celebrations. Foster Care Specialists and shelter staff monitor and adjust routines during monthly or one-on-one visits to ensure that youth are not only safe, but actively engaged in experiences reflective of typical childhood development.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

CSI's case planning is individualized and youth-driven, beginning at intake and reinforced during Family Team Decision-Making meetings and monthly service planning. Youth are encouraged to express their interests and goals, which are integrated into their formal plans. One example includes enrolling a youth in a local dance company after she shared an interest in performing arts; CSI coordinated approval, transportation, and ongoing supervision with the foster parent and broader team. Shelter staff similarly include hobbies and preferences in youth routines, such as incorporating baking into weekly activities or setting up dedicated time for artistic or fitness pursuits. These plans are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect each youth's development and evolving interests.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

CSI ensures all foster parents receive RPPS training and are encouraged to apply the standard to everyday decisions involving youth, such as authorizing sleepovers, participation in school clubs, and community events. Specialists provide regular monthly check-ins and remain available for consultation as needed. In shelter care, a 6:1 staff-to-youth ratio is maintained, with visual supervision standards upheld during outings. Staff are trained to recognize opportunities to support youth autonomy within safe boundaries, such as permitting supervised bike rides or unstructured time with peers in common areas. This balance of supervision and freedom is essential to providing youth with developmentally appropriate experiences that mirror those of their peers.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

Youth at CSI have access to a wide array of onsite and community-based activities. Shelter residents participate in weekly outings to places like museums, sporting events, and community parks. In foster care, CSI distributes quarterly community opportunity lists to families that include information about local camps, recreation programs, youth mentorships, and cultural events. Foster Care Specialists assist with registration and transportation logistics when needed. Activities are highlighted during home visits, in emails, and posted in common areas within the shelter. CSI also hosts monthly foster parent support groups and quarterly family fun nights to encourage socialization and strengthen peer networks across care-giving households.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

CSI individualizes services for youth with disabilities by integrating accommodations directly into their service plans. These efforts go beyond ADA compliance, incorporating tools such as sensory kits, visual schedules, social stories, and noise-canceling headphones. Foster parents receive guidance on how to modify environments and routines to meet their youth's needs. One youth with sensory sensitivities was recently supported in attending a neighborhood block party using a visual schedule and preparatory coaching. In shelter care, rooms are equipped with sensory lighting and regulation tools to support emotional and behavioral needs. These inclusive practices allow all youth to access the same developmental opportunities as their peers.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

CSI emphasizes the importance of individualized care in all aspects of service delivery. Youth are matched with foster homes and activities that reflect their personalities, interests, and cultural identities. For example, a youth who expressed anxiety around food scarcity was supported in meal planning in shelter care, while another youth with a passion for animals was placed in a foster home with pets. Specialists regularly assess and update youth plans to ensure their social, emotional, cultural, and recreational needs are being met in a responsive and respectful manner.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

CSI is committed to equity and has embedded cultural humility into staff training and caregiver support. Youth of color are connected to identity-affirming resources, such as culturally appropriate hair care, spiritual/religious resources, and community events like Juneteenth and Native American Heritage Month celebrations. Additionally, CSI facilitates mentoring relationships and targeted support for youth of color to promote positive identity development and reduce re-entry into congregate care settings. These efforts are driven by feedback from youth and caregivers and are intended to ensure all children have equitable access to normalcy experiences.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

Although a formal youth board is not yet established, CSI continues to prioritize youth voice through initiatives such as monthly feedback surveys, and activity voting systems. One direct result of this feedback was the introduction of a “Free Choice Hour” in shelter care, which allows youth to select independent or group activities. CSI is in the planning stages of piloting a virtual youth advisory panel that would meet regularly to provide input on program policies and help evaluate how RPPS is implemented across placements. Youth participation in program design is a growing component of CSI’s normalcy framework.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Maranda Buckley

Designee's Title: Director of Foster Care

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

All youth are informed both verbally and in writing of their right to request participation in age-appropriate activities during intake and case planning meetings. Written notices outlining the RPPS process are posted in common areas of the shelter, such as the intake hallway and community room. Foster youth and caregivers also receive this information via the foster parent handbook and email.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

client handbook
intake paperwork
visuals on walls in Shelter and Foster Care departments

Institution Name:

Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska

Report Author:

Kelsey Molina

Author's Title:

Supportive Health Services Director

Phone Number:

308-633-3892

Email Address:

kmolina@capwn.org

Report Date:

July 31, 2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

To support a sense of normalcy, Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWN) Youth Shelter conducts individualized assessments for each youth to identify their unique needs and determine what "normal" means to them, with the goal of maintaining that standard during their stay. Youth participate in a variety of age-appropriate social outings in the community, including trips to the movies, bowling, the library, the local skate park, the YCMA for daily exercise, community pathways, and local events such as Bands on Broadway, the pumpkin patch, and the Polar Plunge. A strong emphasis is placed on developing Independent Living Skills. Youth are encouraged to seek employment, budget and shop for groceries, maintain personal hygiene, set educational and career goals, keep up with regular exercise, and take responsibility for cleaning and household chores. Several youth have successfully balanced full-time school with part-time employment at local fast-food restaurants. They are required to create a weekly schedule to manage both school and work commitments, youth are also encouraged to engage in extracurricular activities; for example, several youth participate in a local boxing club where there is practice three times throughout the week. To participate, they must maintain their grades at school and their level at the shelter. Family contact is prioritized when permitted by the placing agency. Youth are allowed daily phone calls to individuals on their approved contact list, anytime up until 8:30 pm.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

Normalcy Efforts at CAPWN Youth Shelter Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWN) works to create a sense of normalcy for youth in its care by supporting family connections, education, healthcare, access to technology, and structured daily routines. Family Support and Counseling CAPWN prioritizes family relationships, offering mediation and counseling through partnerships with a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner and Mediation West. Visits with family and friends are encouraged when appropriate. Technology and Enrichment Youth have age-appropriate access to computers, internet, TV, games, craft supplies, and outdoor activities to support learning and recreation. Education Stability Youth are transported up to 25 miles to attend their home schools and participate in extracurriculars. Staff ensure daily school attendance and program involvement. Healthcare Access Staff coordinate all necessary medical and dental appointments to maintain youth well-being. Daily Routine and Life Skills A consistent daily schedule includes wake-up, meals, and bedtimes. Youth build independence through tasks like cooking and participating in community life. Community Involvement and Holidays Youth and staff volunteer annually at a Thanksgiving event and celebrate each holiday with themed meals they plan and prepare. They also take part in community events like the "Trees Along the Trail" Christmas contest.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

CAPWN follows a structured procedure for developing goals and action steps as part of each youth's case plan at the child-care facility. Lead by the Case Manager who works directly with the youth in the building of these plans using not only the Casey Life Skills Assessment but the overall needs that the youth would like to fill while at the shelter. These plans emphasize participating in age- and developmentally appropriate activities, with input from both staff and the youth. The youth are actively involved in setting their own goals, promoting autonomy and personal growth. They are also involved in the upkeep of their goals and can make changes to their plan as they grow in the program. The first and most important goal for all the youth is to ensure their safety. From there, youth are encouraged to identify goals that are meaningful to them and their growth. Some of the common goals of choice are securing employment, improving grades in school, learning to cook or bake, building a budget, working on healthy relationship skills, and focusing on their personal development. For example, we work closely with the Community College in Scottsbluff, where one of the youth was able to get started and complete their GED.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

CAPWN's policies regarding staffing, supervision, permissions, and consent for age- or developmentally appropriate activities align with the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS). All staff are trained in RPPS using state-approved curriculum, ensuring they are well-equipped to make informed decisions that promote normalcy and safety for each youth. The facility offers daily recreational opportunities, including outdoor activities such as basketball, football, four square, volleyball, supervised walks, and community outings. A designated staff member is available 24/7 to authorize activities under RPPS guidelines. During weekly staff meetings, team members regularly discuss each youth's individual needs and circumstances, including what activities are considered appropriate or not appropriate for them while in care.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

A list of activities offered by the child-care facility is included in the Youth Handbook. In addition, the facility maintains and promotes a list of community-based activities, ensuring youth are informed, encouraged, and supported in participating. Standard recreational outings include visits to the local mall, park and skate park, library, YMCA, bowling alley, movie theater, local hiking trails, the Wildcat Hills, the Badlands, Scotts Bluff National Monument, and school-sponsored events. Youth also engage in a variety of community service activities alongside staff. These include delivering Meals on Wheels, distributing Pup Packs and Cat Packs at local schools, and assisting at the CAPWN commodity warehouse.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

CAPWN provides accommodation and support services to ensure that youth with disabilities and special needs can fully participate in age- or developmentally appropriate activities, just like their peers. Individualized accommodation is made based on each youth's unique needs. The facility is handicapped accessible, and additional support is arranged as needed. For example, when a youth with diabetes was placed at the shelter, medical staff from the clinic provided on-site training to staff to ensure proper care. In another instance, a youth that had medial condition was ordered to the shelter by the court system. We made sure that they were provided with the hygienic supplies that they needed as well as another larger trashcan to keep in their room and bathroom as to not be embarrassed of the supplies they need to use. We also work to design our outings to be accessible for them so they can always participate.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

The individualized needs of all youth involved in the system are carefully considered. While the facility utilizes a level system to support behavioral management, it is implemented with flexibility to ensure each youth is treated as an individual. Adjustments are made to the level system as needed to align with each youth's unique circumstances and goals. Regardless of individualized plans, staff consistently strive to support the well-being and interests of all youth in their care. For example, one youth requested vegetarian meal options, citing health and wellness as the reason. Staff respected this decision and made intentional efforts to accommodate their needs during grocery shopping and meal preparation. In another instance, when a youth expressed a desire to attend church services while others did not, additional staff were scheduled to ensure one staff member could accompany the youth to church while another remained at the shelter to supervise the rest of the group. A further example involves a youth diagnosed with a medical condition, resulting in the loss of their eyelashes. While faux eyelashes were typically not allowed in the past, an exception was made to support this youth's self-esteem and individual needs. These examples reflect the shelter's commitment to honoring the personal preferences, medical needs, and cultural or spiritual practices of each youth, while maintaining a supportive and inclusive environment.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

CAPWN is committed to reducing the disproportionate impact of systems and services on children and other marginalized populations in Nebraska. This commitment is reflected in both policy and practice. Staff receive cultural competency training via RHYTTAC and hiring practices prioritize building a diverse workforce that reflects the backgrounds of the youth served. Language access is also a priority with several of our full-time staff members being bilingual to ensure effective communication with young people and their families. All youth at the shelter are treated with dignity, respect, and equality. The facility is able to provide single bedrooms to help encourage privacy and teach life skills for keeping their spaces clean. CAPWN recognizes and respects cultural diversity in daily living by allowing the young people to participate in menu planning and holiday celebrations.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

In the past, CAPWN supported youth involvement in implementing the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) and promoting normalcy by designating a youth liaison position on its Board of Directors. This role served as a voice for youth in CAPWN programs and the broader community, helping to inform youth-led initiatives and normalcy practices within the child-care facility. More recently, CAPWN began collaborating with the Youth Homelessness System Improvement (YHSI) Project. The Nebraska YHSI Project, funded by HUD in 2024, is designed to strengthen systems serving unhoused older youth by increasing coordination and centering the voices of youth with lived experience. Project objectives include: Expanding older youth leadership to guide system change Building a coordinated response to youth homelessness Ensuring all older youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness have access to safe, affirming, and developmentally appropriate services. This project works in partnership with CAPWN and, most importantly, directly with local older youth. Together, they are addressing barriers to safe and stable housing and driving long-term, systemic improvements. Our goal would be to aim these older youth from this initiative to assist in implementing RPPS standards and advancing efforts to support normalcy for all youth in care.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Kelsey Molina

Designee's Title: : Supportive Health Services Director

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

At intake, staff can communicate with youth about appropriate activities they can participate in. Youth will have access to a document where they can give their suggestions. Staff will discuss activities at their weekly meeting.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

The notification is posted outside of the window in the dining room. All youth have access to this notification as it is a common area where all youth and staff join.

Institution Name:

Father Flanagan's Boys' Home/Boys Town

Report Author:

Deb McGuire

Author's Title:

Program Support Service Coordinator

Phone Number:

531-355-1328

Email Address:

deb.mcguire@boystown.org

Report Date:

June 30, 2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

See Addendum

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

Boys Town strives to achieve normalcy as much as possible for our youth. As barriers are identified we work to remediate them as quickly as possible as long as we can do so without violating the safety and well-being of the youth being served. Barriers can be identified through youth advocating for change in student council, self-government or regular safety checks. Youth have access to advocate for change at any level, and with any staff member.

This year we updated our Youth Orientation process to ensure that all youth entering our programs have access to important information such as rules, safety, reporting, rights, etc.

Youth are encouraged to maintain and work on their relationships with their families through weekly phone calls and regular visits. Families are also encouraged to come to campus to support their child in sports and extra-curricular activities and participate in holiday celebrations.

We provide each home with an I pad so that children who live too far away for regular in-person visits are able to have face to face contact via Zoom.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

Boys Town develops an individualized Service Plan for each child with goals and objectives that are developed with the child, family, Referral Worker, and other members of the team. Being involved in pro-social activities is foundational to our campus. Our youth have many opportunities to get involved in various activities, and this is often identified as a service plan goal. During the 24-25 school year, 83% of our youth were involved in at least one extra curricular activity or sport.

Boys Town provides strength-based services that are designed to support and teach children new skills that prepare them for success during their stay in the program as well as at their next environment, be it home, a foster home, independent living, or other appropriate placement.

Boys Town is excited to be able to offer a Golf Club to our students for the first time this spring. Boys Town is working with an organization called First Tee that supplies equipment and volunteer coaching to our students.

Boys Town also has grown their alumni supports over the past year and offers any Seniors the opportunity to work with our Successful Futures Program. This program helps plan for post-graduation plans, whether they involve post-secondary education, workforce training, armed forces, or trades. Senior students participate in various modules that cover everything from car maintenance, applying for an apartment, opening a checking or savings account, getting a driver's permit and advocating for themselves.

This year newly added activities and clubs included the Podcast Club and Mock Trial Club.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

Youth are encouraged to be involved in various activities that align with their individual interests. As long as an activity would not interfere with their individualized goals, family teachers or Consultants are open to providing consent for them to participate.

Youth attending Boys Town Schools are often able to participate in activities that they would not otherwise have had opportunities to do.

Boys Town has policies in place to help ensure youth and families know their rights and supports that are available. Our youth rights document outlines specifics on informed consent, right to nourishment and medical care, right to communicate with significant others, right to respect of body and person, right to have your own possessions, right to privacy, right to freedom of movement and natural elements, right to religion, right to education, right to useful work, right to a service plan with goals, right to leave the program, as well as information on our Youth Safety Line if these rights are not being met. Boys Town follows set procedures for staff ratios to help ensure each youth and family served is able to receive the utmost care. At admission, information is shared with parents or legal guardian's rights in programs. They are also provided with safety line information. Boys Town utilizes team meetings and continues discusses rights with youth and parents throughout services.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

Youth at Boys Town are able to participate in Band, Baseball, basketball, board game club, book club, cheer, chess club, craft club, cross country, drama club, flags, football, golf club, HOSA, Manga club, meditation club, mindfulness club, Mock Trial Club, NHS, National music honors society, peer ministry, Podcast Club, ROTC, science club, small engines club, soccer, softball, Spanish club, STEM/Robotics club, student council, swim team, track, voices, volleyball, walking club, wrestling, writing club.

Boys Town has also developed additional programs in its Career Readiness Center which offers close-knit set of programs in which high school students can find their passion, learn specific workplace skills and build connections with potential mentors while completing their required academic courses for high school graduation. Boys Town has closely followed workplace trends that indicate an increasing demand for workers who have been trained in the trades and skill-labor fields. Part of this process has involved exploring how to enhance the abilities of our students so they match what employers are looking for in prospective employees. Youth can currently become licensed CNAs, and complete courses such as: communication and media sciences, construction, health occupations, small engines, welding, graphic design, culinary arts, auto mechanics. During the summer on campus, Boys Town youth attend half day school and then participate in the Youth Enrichment Program. This program gives the youth exposure to multiple independent living skills which include things such as cooking, budgeting, as well as multiple other topics of interest to the youth including: learning how to fish, gardening skills, Zumba classes, hiking, team building activities and more.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

Boys Town education staff, family teachers, consultants, and other service providers constantly communicate so a child has wrap around services for any activity. For example, if a student has an IEP that has identified the youth needs more direct one on one help when learning a new skill this effort reaches beyond the class. 504 plans are also developed and followed for each student that needs accommodations.

All of our youth are provided the same opportunities for involvement in activities regardless of their abilities.

Over the past few years, we added additional support in Special Education. In 2021 we had a Special Education Department of three. Since then, the department has grown to 11 team members with the hopes of having a 17-team member Special Education Department by the start of the 2024-2025 school year. The Special Education Department is also holding quarterly meetings called Sit Down With Special Education. Special Education Coordinators present on a topic that is selected by Family Teachers, and then have an open Question & Answer session.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

As discussed throughout this Normalcy Plan Boys Town staff is continually working to ensure they are meeting the individualized needs of all youth in the system. This can be seen based upon Boys Town's service planning process. Each service plan is individualized, and progress is constantly monitored. Our skilled Consultants work with the entire team to reevaluate needs and adjust service plans to ensure youth needs are met. From a youth's day of admission, throughout ongoing meetings and assessments, the individual needs of youth are addressed.

Boys Town's sophisticated training system, Boys Town University, offers hundreds of trainings in many topics that are relevant for the services that we provide. When specialized needs arise, there is generally a training available for staff. When a special situation comes up, Boys Town has many resources available to assist in meeting the need. For example, we recently admitted several youth with Type 1 Diabetes. Our on-campus nurse was able to provide initial support, and a specialized training was identified through Children's Hospital for the staff. Individualized plans were created for each of the youth to ensure that needs were met.

If a youth with specialized needs is admitted to the program, special care is taken to ensure that each member of the team is aware of the needs, interventions and supports that are needed. Increased monitoring is provided if needed, and collaboration between teachers, coaches, family teachers and administration is always occurring.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

Since its inception, Father Flanagan's Boys' Home has been a welcoming home for all children, regardless of race, creed, or religion.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

Boys Town's youth vote annually for representation in their Student Council. The members of the student council identify and advocate for changes that promote normalcy.

Boys Town youth also vote each year on a mayor and vice-mayor. These students meet with the board to discuss and review normalcy for youth on campus, among other duties. Self-government has been a tradition since 1926 as a tool for citizens to build character, citizenship and a sense of community. Our current elected mayor and vice mayor participated in a variety of campus activities to build their leadership skills. The mayor is a member of the football, wrestling and track teams, involved in Peer Ministry and JROTC. The vice mayor is also three-sport athlete, and has their eyes set on a college track scholarship and a nursing career. Our small community gives our students the opportunity to participate in many more activities than a traditional school, and every youth is encouraged to get involved in at least one club or sport.

Youth are also able to get involved in each home through self-government meetings. Each home elects a manager weekly as a leader in the home. This position may include duties such as leading self-government meetings, being a leader for advocating for youth in the home, and helping to hold peers accountable.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Angela Powers

Designee's Title: Vice President of Youth Care, Nebraska

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

During admissions meetings, youth and families are informed of their opportunities to be involved in normalcy activities and are provided with their rights and the normalcy plan/policy. This is also posted in our admissions offices.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

This notification is posted in the youth care building in a conference room where all youth attend an Admission Meeting on their first day on campus. This information is also included in Youth Rights and Parent and Guardian Rights and Responsibilities. Each youth and family are provided with a physical copy of these documents and also sign an acknowledgment upon receipt.

Addendum for Boys Town Report

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

A major focus in our programs is teaching youth social, independent-living, and educational skills, and helping them build healthy relationships with their family and others. Youth and families engage with each other and have a clear voice in their service plans as well as the supports that are set in place to help them succeed.

Each summer our youth attend summer school in the morning, and then participate in Summer Enrichment. Summer Enrichment gives youth the opportunity to rotate through various modules of activities that expose them to things such as gardening, cupcake wars, career exploration (including the opportunity to become CPR certified!), painting canvases, 3D printing, and other crafts, Team Building activities and more.

During the month of March our Juniors and Seniors had the opportunity to attend Prom and Post Prom. The Post Prom Committee put in hundreds of hours of work in creating a fun, safe and memorable evening for our youth with a Disney theme. Youth had all of the same experiences on prom day to include hair, make-up, flowers, pictures and dressing up. Families were also able to come be a part of helping their children get ready for prom and take pictures. Younger children in our program who were not old enough to attend prom also had a special "Prom" event with fun games and a taco bar to attend that day.

Many new activities were added this year, to include weekly visits from the Omaha Street Percussion, American Midwest Ballet, Heartland Hip Hop to teach dance classes. Metro Community College came and taught our students to make 3D printed limbs for fictional animals that have lost them.

We value our youth advocating for changes, and by working alongside them we are not only able to address barriers to normalcy but we are helping them grow in their leadership skills and identify how they can contribute in great ways. During this school year our mayor advocated for a dress code change to allow students to have nose piercings, which was approved.

Institution Name:

Independence Rising (REPORTING JULY 1, 2024 TO JUNE 30 2025)

Report Author: VICKI ANSON	Author's Title: PROGRAM MANAGER
Phone Number: 308-382-9255	Email Address: vanson@irnebraska.org

Report Date:
July 22nd, 2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 20²⁴ through June 30, 20²⁵

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

See Addendum

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

1. Each youth receives a Chromebook and is trained in responsible technology use.
2. Coordinated virtual health care appointments with behavioral and primary care providers. In-person also takes place depending on the distance to their PCP or counselor.
3. Phone calls to their families are encouraged and take place daily if wanted by the youth.
4. Transportation is provided for sport activities.
5. School takes place on-site with accredited on-line courses. This is done due to the shelter is a short-term stay.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

See Addendum

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

- *We promote activities for youth to participate in sports activities as well as cooking and art as part of a typical teenager's daily life. We also gear attention towards individual youth experiences and interests. For example, a current youth who likes to rope, we have provided a plastic cow head and rope. These activities are fully supervised by a staff.
- Youth have daily chores where they are a part of the household as part of being a member. This may include sweeping, dusting, vacuuming.
- We offer regular movie nights.
- On site a pool table, fuse ball table, and assortment of card games and board games are provided for youth to play and are encouraged to interact with other member of the community.
- We have a fully functioning library with books that are age appropriate with a variety of topics that are of interest of youth.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

- *The youth have the opportunity to go to boxing, soccer/soccer camps, martial arts, swimming and wrestling each week. These are the offerings currently as we have all male youth. If female youth reside in the future, we have offerings in their interest areas also.
- As part of the school curriculum all youth attend weekly physical education credits at the local YMCA. Also, a part of this curriculum includes an art teacher who comes to the shelter and provides art lessons and cooking activities.
- We have weekly shopping trips if the youth receive money from doing paid chores.
- A basketball hoop is provided in the back yard so youth can play. Also offered is various sports equipment including a volleyball and net, soccer ball and goals, and tennis balls with rackets.
- Youth also walk to the park with staff at least once a week.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

- The shelter has an inclusive environment, so youth of all ability levels are able to function as independently as possible
- Instead of a level system that may be difficult for some youth to navigate, each youth has the ability to be success with the goal setting behavior system that the shelter incorporates for daily planning and behavior modification.
- If a youth with a physical disability resides at the shelter, we have a portable ramp, and modifications can be made for a bedroom on the first level if a youth is not able to access their bedroom by stairs.
- We provide one to one support for youth that require assistance with schoolwork. This also includes attending IEP and related meetings with home school districts for discussion and implementation for curricular needs and modifications for the youth to be able to be successful in their individualized school program.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

- Our shelter leadership staff meets with youth twice a month on a one to one basis to see how they are getting along, what they need from the shelter, what concerns they have, and what has been successful.
- When a youth is upset or having a behavior for that day, they have access to speak to administrative staff by phone, if that staff is not present on site. This includes any time during the day or night.
- One to one activities that the youth like to do in their interest area, the youth request a certain activity, will be scheduled and accommodated with staff. For example, one current youth has taken an interest in fishing. We schedule this youth to be able to complete this activity with as much time that is feasible, generally one to two times a week. We invested in fishing poles and also help the youth research this activity and develop his interest area.
- Another example of this is purchasing individual pets for youth that meet the licensure requirements. Animals such as hamsters and fish. This helps with developing responsibility and normalizing a home like environment.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

- We attend cultural events that can often be challenging in a rural setting. Example: recently we attended a Native American Pow wow where the youth were encouraged to learn the different Native American traditions.
- We weekly visit the local Mexican grocery store for the youth to explore and purchase items.
- Youth of all ethnic groups are encouraged to each of their ethnic backgrounds to explore their ethnic backgrounds and cultures, if interested.
- If a youth is interested in making different ethnic foods the shelter will help them explore the recipes and provide the ingredients to make these. Staff will help facilitate the process. For example, youth have made different foods of their culture including but not limited to Spanish rice and fry bread.
- At holidays, all youth are encouraged to choose a dish from their culture, and this is made as part of the holiday meal. Youth are encouraged to help make this dish, but do not have to help.
- The onsite library has books from many different cultures available for the youth.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

- Independence Rising values youth voice and choice, while the agency does not currently have a youth board, they have in the past.
- Currently, the shelter listens to individualized youth needs about what they need from probation, the court system, CFS, and any other needs they have from. out of home placement and help the youth learn to be self-advocates in order to have their voice heard. This may include helping a youth write a letter prior to court or setting up a meeting with their probation officer where a youth can choose a staff member, they are comfortable with the support them in the conversation.
- Independence Rising does have youth that have been in foster care or on probation that they discuss current needs of current youth in out of home placement with and get their opinion on specific needs.
- Putting together another youth board such as we have had in the past is a priority this year.
- For the agency this will include organizing meetings of youth we currently have ongoing communication with so we can meet together as a group.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Irene Britt

Designee's Title: Executive Director

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

-A daily schedule is supplied to youth and this schedule includes the weekly developmentally appropriate activities and outings. The outings are discussed and chosen with youth input. These activities are also discussed with the youth prior to the activity taking place. The youth can ask questions about the activities if they have questions those will be answered, and they can make an educated decision if they would like to participate.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

This is currently posted on our magnetic board by the front door. Each youth is given a copy of this.

Addendum for Independence Rising Report

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

****Successful Examples:****

1. ****Home-like Environment:**** The shelter operates in a residential-style home rather than an institutional building, which helps reduce the stigma and isolation youth often feel in congregate care.
2. ****Individual Goal Setting:**** Each youth is encouraged to create and work on personal goals, promoting autonomy and individualized growth. Each youth is treated the same and takes in to account a person's disability.
3. ****Furnished, Private Spaces:**** The shelter includes home furnishings and designated private areas that create a sense of safety, comfort, and personal space.
4. ****Social Skills & Open Communication:**** Staff model and encourage respectful dialogue, conflict resolution, and daily social interactions to foster a supportive, family-like dynamic among youth and staff.

Tools/Ideas to Address Barriers to Normalcy:*

1. **Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard Training:**** Staff receive ongoing training on applying this standard to help youth participate in typical adolescent experiences.
2. **Youth Voice Integration:**** Youth are included in discussions about daily routines, activities, and meals through regular daily scheduled meetings, promoting choice and ownership.
3. **Flexible Daily Schedules:**** Daily schedules are structured yet flexible, allowing youth to engage in normal routines (e.g., homework, chores, leisure activities) while meeting therapeutic or court-related requirements.
4. **Transportation Support:**** Staff assist with and provide transportation to extracurriculars and other age-appropriate activities.
5. **Celebration of Milestones:**** Birthdays, holidays, and personal accomplishments are recognized with family-style meals, decorations, and small celebrations.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

The shelter utilizes a youth-driven daily goal-setting model as part of its structured curriculum. Each youth is empowered to create individualized daily goals that focus on behavioral self-management and personal development. These goals are directly aligned with the youth's developmental stage and specific needs, and they support participation in age-appropriate activities, both within and outside of the shelter.

****Goal Development Procedures:****

- * At the beginning of each day, youth meet with staff to establish daily personal goals, which may include behavioral targets, communication strategies, coping skills, and participation in specific activities.
- * Goals are framed in a strengths-based and developmentally appropriate manner, allowing youth to take ownership of their behavior and progress throughout the day.

****Monitoring and Reflection Process:****

- * Staff provide ongoing support and redirection as needed during the day, reinforcing positive behaviors and modeling appropriate choices.
- * Youth are encouraged to check in with staff during transitions or moments of challenge to reflect on their progress and receive guidance.
- * At the end of the day, a structured reflection time is provided where youth and staff review the goals set, discuss the outcomes, and share constructive feedback.
- * This process fosters emotional insight, accountability, and skill-building in self-regulation and decision-making.

****Integration into Case Planning:****

- * These daily goals are documented and regularly reviewed as part of the youth's overall case plan.
- * Trends in behavior, achievement of goals, and participation in developmentally appropriate activities inform the development of longer-term goals and service planning with the multidisciplinary team.
- * Case managers and caregivers use this information to coordinate with external supports, including school staff, therapists, and family members, to ensure continuity and alignment across settings.

Institution Name:

Omaha Home for Boys

Report Author:

Ross Wendel

Author's Title:

Sr. Manager of Quality Improvement

Phone Number:

(402) 457-7038

Email Address:

rwendel@ohb.org

Report Date:

7-1-2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

See Addendum

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

See Addendum

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

All case plans at OHB are individualized, developed based on the unique strengths, goals, and input of each youth and their family. Goal-setting begins at intake and involves active collaboration among the youth, their guardian, and the placement representative to ensure that the youth's interests and developmental needs are central to the plan.

During monthly Team Meetings, the youth, family members, and OHB Specialist review progress and discuss age- and developmentally appropriate activities occurring at OHB, in the youth's home, and within the community. These activities often include participation in school sports, such as track and field, and other extracurricular opportunities. The OHB Specialist then incorporates these interests and activities into the case plan, ensuring goals reflect the youth's evolving interests and abilities.

Our case plans prioritize reunification and transition planning that supports a continuum of healthy, age-appropriate access to activities such as employment and school involvement. To gather ongoing input and monitor progress, Family Team Meetings are held at least monthly. These meetings bring together OHB staff, the placing agency, parents or guardians, the youth, and any formal or informal supports identified by the youth and family, ensuring that the plan remains responsive and individualized.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

At OHB, all direct-care staff receive comprehensive training on the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting standards to support youth in accessing age- and developmentally appropriate activities safely and effectively. Staff provide supervision and guidance tailored to each youth's needs while encouraging independence and growth.

Youth who are functioning at an appropriate age and developmental level are granted increased access to unsupervised activities, reflecting their maturity and capability. While input from parents, guardians, and placement representatives is actively sought when determining activity participation, OHB staff are trained to advocate for youth when restrictions—such as being prohibited from attending school dances—are imposed despite the youth's developmental readiness. Staff have the autonomy to make prudent parenting decisions that align with each youth's individualized treatment plan.

Monthly treatment planning meetings serve as a forum to discuss interventions and activities that promote progress and well-being, ensuring decisions about participation align with treatment goals. Staff have the authority to grant or deny access to activities, recognizing that both outcomes are valuable learning opportunities.

OHB staff place youth in situations that encourage growth through real-life experiences, understanding that occasional problem behavior may occur during this process. They also serve as strong advocates, ensuring youth maintain opportunities to practice and reinforce positive behavioral changes, balancing safety with the freedom necessary for healthy development.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

See Addendum

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

At OHB, we use an individualized treatment planning process for every youth we serve, ensuring that accommodations for disabilities and special needs are thoughtfully integrated into their participation in developmentally appropriate activities. Our approach goes beyond simply meeting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements by tailoring support based on each youth's unique abilities, preferences, and goals.

We recognize that meaningful engagement in normalcy activities requires flexibility and creativity. For example, we modify activities to address physical, sensory, cognitive, or communication needs, ensuring youth can participate fully and safely. Staff receive training on disability awareness and inclusive practices, empowering them to adapt supervision and guidance to each youth's capabilities.

OHB has a clear policy to only accept clients whose needs can be effectively accommodated, ensuring we maintain a safe and supportive environment for all youth. Through collaboration with families, healthcare providers, and specialists, we develop individualized accommodations such as assistive technology, modified schedules, or alternative activity options.

These efforts ensure youth with disabilities or special needs have equitable access to the same enriching experiences as their peers, promoting growth, independence, and social connection in ways that respect their unique strengths and challenges.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

OHB uses a variety of strategies to meet the individualized needs of youth in our care, ensuring that each young person's strengths, goals, and voices guide their experience.

Table meetings are held regularly in each home, providing a forum for youth to give input on daily activities, routines, rules, and to share questions or feedback. This encourages youth engagement and helps tailor their environment to meet their preferences and needs.

The Youth Council offers a structured platform for youth to provide feedback on staff performance and agency services, fostering youth empowerment and continuous program improvement.

All case plans are individualized, developed through collaboration with the youth and their families to reflect their unique strengths and goals. OHB follows a formal Client Service Plan Procedure that addresses the specific services, supports, activities, and experiences necessary for each youth's success.

Additionally, OHB facilitates access to external resources such as the Nebraska Juvenile Reentry program, allowing youth to engage with representatives to discuss and understand their client records, supporting informed decision-making and future planning.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

See Addendum

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

See Addendum

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Ross Wendel

Designee's Title: Sr. Manager of Quality Improvement

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

See Addendum

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

Normalcy Plans are posted on a bulletin board in the main living area of each residential home.

Addendum for Omaha Home for Boys Report

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

Key Barriers Identified:

Licensing requirements for sight and sound supervision, which can unintentionally restrict appropriate social activities.

Staff uncertainty around policy and decision-making authority.

Logistical challenges such as limited staffing and transportation.

Cultural and language barriers that can impact youth and family involvement in planning and access.

A culture of risk-aversion that may lead to unnecessarily limiting youth experiences.

Current Strategies in Place:

Staff Training and Empowerment

All new staff are trained in the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard (RPPS) and are taught to recognize and reduce unnecessary barriers to normalcy. Staff are informed they have the autonomy to make everyday decisions and are responsible for advocating for each youth's access to developmentally appropriate activities.

Culture and Practice Review

OHB regularly reviews program rules and staff practices to ensure they are not unintentionally limiting youth experiences. Staff are encouraged to find solutions rather than default to "no," and to consider the youth's voice, abilities, and interests when making decisions.

Supervision Workarounds

While we are required to maintain sight and sound supervision, we recognize this can conflict with normalcy. For higher-risk activities like shopping, going out to eat, or attending events, staff are trained to seek consent from guardians and placement coordinators to allow participation with limited supervision when appropriate.

Language and Cultural Inclusion

Cultural and language barriers are addressed through contracted translation services during team meetings, helping families and youth fully participate in planning and access decisions.

Family Engagement and Visits

Home passes and family contact are prioritized and never restricted without cause. Family involvement is a core part of every youth's service plan, and staff actively work to maintain those connections.

Ongoing Discussion and Collaboration

Team meetings include regular discussions of youth interests, upcoming activities, and any access challenges. Staff are encouraged to bring forward barriers and brainstorm support strategies.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

At OHB, we prioritize fostering normalcy for all youth beyond meeting basic educational and medical needs. Our current plan supports maintaining family connections, encouraging age-appropriate activities, and providing access to community opportunities that promote growth, independence, and social development.

Family Connection and Participation

Youth Advocates (direct-care staff) maintain daily communication with parents or guardians to share updates on behavior, health, academics, and other important matters. Parents retain full decision-making authority unless otherwise ordered by the court. OHB accommodates family schedules to support regular contact, visitation, and home visits, reinforcing family bonds. Family therapy is offered at least once a month to strengthen these connections and support healing.

Access to Technology and Recreation

Youth have supervised access to common technology such as mobile phones, tablets, gaming consoles, televisions, and computers. Online gaming is a newer activity that youth can participate in, providing social and recreational opportunities similar to their peers.

Education and Career Preparation

Youth remain enrolled in their home school districts while attending OHB's on-campus satellite school, which offers a low student-to-teacher ratio for individualized academic support and credit recovery. Credits in progress before placement are continued without interruption to avoid academic delays. Each student is paired with an education advocate to assist with a smooth transition back to their home school. Regular ACT prep sessions are also provided to support post-secondary goals. Students participate in career exploration and community presentations to broaden their understanding of vocational opportunities.

Community Engagement and Extracurricular Activities

OHB encourages youth to join sports teams, clubs, or other community groups based on their interests and abilities. Youth are supported in finding community employment through help with job searches, transportation, and employer communication. These experiences promote confidence, life skills, and a sense of normalcy.

Holistic Medical and Mental Health Care

Physical, dental, and mental health services are accessed through community providers, with efforts to maintain continuity by scheduling appointments with youth's existing healthcare professionals when possible. Guardians are actively involved in medical decisions. Structured daily routines support mental wellness by fostering healthy habits and predictability.

Flexible Structure to Support Normalcy

Our daily schedules provide consistency while allowing flexibility for personalized routines, family involvement, and community outings. Staff collaborate with youth, families, and care teams to facilitate participation in social outings, cultural events, meals with friends, and other age-appropriate activities, including those requiring limited supervision when appropriate.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

OHB maintains a current list of normalcy activities available to youth both onsite and in the community. This list is reviewed and updated at least twice annually, or more frequently as needed based on feedback collected from youth during nightly meetings. This ensures the activities remain relevant, engaging, and aligned with the interests of those we serve.

Onsite Activities

OHB offers a wide variety of onsite activities designed to foster social interaction, skill-building, and recreation. These include board games, video games, Legos, movie nights, jigsaw puzzles, and cornhole (including tournaments). Youth have access to recreational facilities such as indoor/outdoor basketball courts, tennis courts, racquetball courts, and a swimming pool. Structured programs include the Youth Employment Program, Trade Skills Program, Youth Council, career exploration, art classes, psychosocial groups, and 4-H. Additional activities include holiday dinner celebrations, volunteer events like Campus Clean-up Day, a wellness program, and space for biking and skateboarding.

Community Activities

OHB actively promotes and supports youth participation in numerous community-based activities. Examples include fishing, street percussion (both onsite and in the community), ice skating, paintball, and attending local sports events such as Lancers games, UNO hockey, volleyball, soccer, and basketball games. Youth also take part in community events like the OHB Gala, county fairs, cultural fairs, and volunteer opportunities at local parks. Other activities include visits to the Old Market, local skateboard parks, movie outings, bowling, off-campus basketball games, ropes courses, Top Golf, haunted houses, and routine outings such as haircuts.

Accessibility of the Activity List

The comprehensive list of normalcy activities is included in our Normalcy Plan and posted in each program space, ensuring easy access for youth. This visibility encourages youth to explore options and request participation, promoting autonomy and engagement.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

At OHB, we recognize the critical importance of addressing disproportionate impacts on youth of color, particularly in providing equitable access to normalcy opportunities and reducing their reentry into congregate care. Our current plan includes proactive strategies focused on promoting equity, inclusion, and individualized support to meet the unique needs of these youth.

Ensuring Opportunities for Normalcy

OHB is committed to offering all youth equal access to age-appropriate and developmentally suitable normalcy activities. We place special emphasis on cultural relevance and inclusivity to ensure youth of color feel a sense of belonging and empowerment. Staff receive ongoing training in cultural competence and implicit bias, equipping them to better understand and address the

distinct experiences and challenges faced by youth of color. We actively seek input from youth and families to tailor activities that reflect their cultural identities and interests.

Reducing Reentry of Youth of Color into Congregate Care

To reduce the rates of reentry among youth of color, OHB employs targeted case planning and support services that address root causes, including systemic barriers and cultural factors. We prioritize family engagement, foster strong community connections, and develop individualized transition plans that promote successful reintegration into their homes and communities.

Our agency collaborates closely with community partners and culturally specific organizations to provide comprehensive wraparound services tailored to the needs of youth of color. These services include mentoring, advocacy, educational assistance, and mental health resources—all aimed at reducing recidivism and supporting long-term success.

Examples of Implementation

Culturally Relevant Programming: OHB incorporates cultural events, celebrations, and affinity groups that honor the diverse backgrounds of the youth served, enhancing inclusion and cultural pride.

Family-Centered Approach: Families of youth of color are actively involved in case planning and decision-making processes, recognizing their vital role in providing stability and ongoing support.

Data Monitoring: OHB regularly reviews placement, service, and reentry data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to identify disparities and inform adjustments to policies and practices.

Staff Diversity: We actively recruit and retain a diverse workforce to better reflect the youth served, fostering relatable role models and culturally responsive care.

Through these focused efforts, OHB strives to cultivate an equitable environment where youth of color have meaningful opportunities for normalcy and a clear, supported pathway to avoid repeated placements in congregate care.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a

youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

OHB's Youth Council is independent and youth-led, separate from program expectations, clubs, or leadership groups. The Youth Council currently involves all members from each residential program and may also include past and former clients from any OHB program, ensuring diverse and experienced membership.

Staff at all levels—from direct-care staff to management and Quality Improvement—support the Youth Council without interfering with its youth-led nature. This Council provides a meaningful platform for youth to voice concerns, advocate for their needs, and actively participate in shaping policies and practices at OHB.

Youth input through the Council has directly led to positive changes such as the addition of online gaming opportunities like playing Fortnite with friends, improvements to Wi-Fi access, and the purchase of new basketballs, footballs, nets, pool cues, and balls. The Council has also contributed to improvements in grievance procedures, ensuring youth concerns are addressed more effectively.

Participation in the Youth Council helps youth develop leadership skills and understand how to influence positive change to improve their experience. The Council uses the Restorative Justice model to identify priorities, address concerns collaboratively, and ensure sustained attention until the group is satisfied with outcomes.

Each residential home holds nightly family meetings where youth can make decisions by voting on house rules, family outings, and raising concerns about campus life. OHB encourages youth to file grievances if they feel the agency is not adequately supporting or promoting normalcy.

Additionally, youth can use the “My 2 Cents” process to submit comments or suggestions directly to the Quality Improvement department regarding normalcy or other concerns. Youth also complete a Safety & Satisfaction survey every six months to provide regular feedback.

Together, these avenues empower youth to express their voices independently and ensure their perspectives help create a supportive and responsive care environment.

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

At OHB, all youth are notified of their right to request participation in age or developmentally appropriate activities both verbally and in writing during the intake and orientation process. Direct-care staff review expectations, rights, and routines with each youth in a developmentally appropriate manner. This includes explaining the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard and how youth can make activity requests.

Youth are also informed during nightly family-style meetings in each home, where they have daily opportunities to suggest, request, or vote on upcoming activities, both on- and off-campus. In addition, information is posted in common areas outlining available normalcy activities and the process for submitting suggestions or requests.

Youth may also submit formal requests or feedback through the “My 2 Cents” process or speak directly with staff, including during team meetings or with their assigned OHB Specialist. Staff are trained to advocate for participation in extracurricular, social, and cultural activities based on the youth’s interests and developmental needs, and to communicate with guardians or placement coordinators for necessary consent when supervision requirements create limitations.

This layered and youth-centered approach ensures that all youth understand how to request access to normalcy opportunities and that their voices are heard consistently.

Institution Name:

Rite of Passage- Uta Halee Academy

Report Author:

Brittany Bowman

Author's Title:

Program Director

Phone Number:

513-601-9154

Email Address:

brittany.bowman@rop.com

Report Date:

7/1/2025-6/30/2026

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

See Addendum

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

Examples include:

- 1) UHA has celebrated all of the holidays during this time frame with our students, staff, and family members of our students. This may have included food, gifts (when applicable), and activities.
- 2) UHA students attend year-round education on site
- 3) UHA students have the opportunity to participate in Girls Scouts once a week (when applicable)
- 4) UHA students have the opportunity to visit with their families either in person or virtually
- 5) UHA Students have access to extracurricular activities such as sports, Culinary, art, etc.
- 6) UHA Group Home and Shelter have a weekend and weekday daily schedule that all students and staff follow
- 7) UHA students have access to on-site medical services. In addition, they have access to telehealth psychiatry services and off-site medical, dental, and vision services.
- 8) UHA students are offered family therapy services

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

- All students receive a case plan that is developed by the Uta Halee Academy treatment team, placing agency, legal guardian, and the student.
- Case Plans are updated on a regular basis and all students, placing agency, and legal guardian receive a copy of the case plan
- There are monthly Family Team Meetings and regular Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings scheduled to review the progress (or lack of progress) of the goals and objectives outlined in the case plan
- Students have the opportunity to have input in their case plan and identify which goals they would like to work on first
- Each week, students have the opportunity to participate in what is considered a "green week activity" which means they demonstrated safe behaviors that week. This means they earned an incentive on site or are able to participate in off-site outings.
- UHA has a treatment milestone policy that outlines the student status progression. This policy outlines the token economy, level systems, and incentives which each status progression.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

UHA believes in the enforcement of a rich student to staff ratio in an effort to ensure adequate and age appropriate supervision within the context of the Rules and Regulations set forth by the State of Nebraska. UHA operates off a 1:6 staff to student ratio. The supervision methodology emphasized within the organization is Interactive Supervision. Essentially, staff members are immersed in the student culture and maintain a "pulse" on what is going on in the milieu at all times. Students are afforded privileges based on a graduated structure that is treatment and performance based. As each students' plan is individualized to individual treatment needs, each student is viewed as an individual within a larger structured programming context. This allows some discretion and discernment regarding behavioral and treatment related growth. Programming activity offerings are developed based on age and needs of the population as well as the available staff members to facilitate those activities and what their areas of interest and expertise may be. Students have access to leisure, recreation, education, clubs, and craft activities on a weekly basis. Students also have the opportunity to participate in off-site outings when they earn it and when they are scheduled. This year, some examples of the activities/clubs that were offered were: Journalism, Hair, Nails, and Make Up, Diamond Art, Volleyball, Basketball, CNA, book club, and journalism.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

The facility currently offers and participates in a variety of activities on and off campus. Here are some examples:

On-Site:

- Girl Scouts
- CPR/First Aid
- Culinary Arts
- Yoga
- Bible Study
- AA/NA Groups
- Health & Wellness
- Graduations
- Crafts
- Holiday activities
- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Journalism
- Robotics
- Guest speakers through Metro Community College and Capital Beauty School
- Culinary

Off-Site

- Volunteering at the Open Door Mission
 - Attending city wide events that focus on the holiday
 - Sport Games
 - Off-site activities
 - Horse Therapy through HETRA
-

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

UHA has admissions criteria and the facility does not generally admit students who fall outside of this criteria to ensure the best service provision possible. However, if students with specific circumstances are admitted, they are staffed with the MDT in advance of their admission so that the administration can develop a plan to ensure quality service delivery. In addition, other documents are reviewed to make informed decisions such as IEP's, medical records, etc. when appropriate.

Rite of Passage is conscious of student needs and resulting, all student literature, brochures, and training opportunities are presented at a fifth grade level. Staff will also work through information with students to ensure a level of awareness and understanding related to the material being covered as a matter of policy and practice.

Examples that UHA provided this year:

- Religion opportunities
- Culture opportunities
- Translation Services for students that do not speak English as their first language

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

Students at UHA have a case plan that is developed within the required timeframe depending on what program they are assigned to (Group Home versus Crisis Stabilization-Shelter). The case plan is updated and discussed on a regular basis.

UHA creates this case plan using a risk assessment or with the collateral information to target at least the top three risk factors.

Below are services that are offered to UHA students:

- Individual Therapy
- Family Therapy
- Aggression Replacement Training group
- Thinking for a Change group
- UCCI- Substance Abuse group
- Seeking Safety & Trauma and Grief Component Therapy Group
- Positive Skill Development Group
- Positive Organizational Culture Group
- Equine Therapy
- Mindful Yoga
- Education services

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

Transitioning students within the UHA campus to other programs. For instance, students transitioning from our Shelter to our Day School so they can be in the community. Or from our Shelter to our Group Home. We have had several students do this in all of our programs. Being able to transition within the campus helps their anxiety and willingness to participate in the program since they already have a rapport with the staff members working here.

In addition, UHA invites families on site for family therapy, Open House, site-wide events, holidays, visitation, family team meetings, intake,, home passes, and parent-teacher conferences.

In addition, there are site-wide events that the families are invited to such as Open House, Mother's Day Event, Homecoming Dance, Graduation, etc.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

In accordance with CARF requirements, UHA has implemented a "Status Club" which includes Contributors who have the opportunity to meet with the campus leadership to discuss needs, concerns and suggestions to improve programming. Additionally, all students in the program are surveyed quarterly to ensure they have an opportunity to render feedback related to all programming services. Based on that feedback, the facility makes adjustments as needed. Lastly, every week, all students and staff participate in a site-wide assembly called "Townhall," from 4:00-4:30pm every Wednesday. Within this meeting, staff and students are able to discuss site-wide events, issues, ask questions, celebrate milestones, and receive awards.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Brittany Bowman

Designee's Title: Program Director

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

Within the intake process and ongoing in monthly Family Team Meetings with their Case Manager, placing agency, and legal guardian. This is listed in the Student Handbook where they receive a copy of this handbook at intake.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

Administration and Student Handbook and they receive a copy of this at intake

Rite of Passage Report Addendum

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

Rite of Passage has always prided itself as an organization on providing normalized experiences for students. Rite of Passage operates off of core tenants which include community/family involvement as part of its facility operations procedures. In an effort to allow for normalized programming, the facility has to assess and assume reasonable risk-which allows students to participate in activities such as high school sports. Although sports participation opens the facility up to the possibility of student injury, escape, etc. the facility has determined that the positive benefits of this experience outweighs the risks. During this time period, students were able to participate in Basketball and Volleyball with the YMCA.

The facility has also increased communication between the young ladies in care and other significant influences in their lives. Although this also assumes some risk dependent upon who the young ladies are permitted to communicate with; the overall benefits of increased family/significant other communication outweigh the perceived risks. The facility continues to evaluate procedures and practices to ensure that programming is as safe and as normalized as possible based on census, resources, population demographics, and the culture of the program at any given time.

In addition, here are a few other examples:

UHA has partnered with HETRA for equine therapy

UHA has participated in E Sports, Journalism, Yoga, AA Groups, Certified Nurse Assistance Course, and hair, nails, and make-up club

UHA students are able to participate in Girl Scouts

UHA students have the opportunity to have off-site outings and home passes

UHA students that have graduated with their high school diploma were able to enroll in Metro Community College courses. UHA also hosted graduation ceremonies for the students that graduated from high school at UHA.

Visitation is offered in person or virtually

Visitation and phone calls can be offered at different times to accommodate the families schedule

Institution Name:

Women In Community Service

Report Author:

Tauni Waddington

Author's Title:

Executive Director

Phone Number:

402-477-5256

Email Address:

wicshome@gmail.com

Report Date:

07/15/2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

The program at WICS Residence is a structured program that maintain a focus of consistency and behavioral expectations. Every client is informed and familiarized with the structure and behavioral goals, plus we include at least 3 individual goals for every client. The expectations and consequences are clarified for each client to help them achieve success in their individual resident program.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

Education is the paramount component to our program. Residents are all required to attend school or work daily. Each resident has a daily program. They have access to have medical appointments. They have access to their chrome books for school work.

Each resident has an individualized plan.

We will address any changes necessary as the need arises.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

Each residents goals are established and reviewed monthly in team meetings, and more frequently in staff meetings. Clients are expected to follow and are scored daily to follow at least 20 uniform behavioral goals, and up to 4 personal goals which are assigned to each client weekly, based on issues they may personally be struggling with. Each client knows their personal goals, and it helps each individual become accountable.

Changes will be made in the program as the need arises.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

We follow Prudent Parenting standards in each individualized client planning. We work with staff and other members of the team to determine individual needs and goals as needed with each client.

Changes will be made in the program as the need arises.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

We are involved in community activities as they arise such as Lied Center events, Jazz in June, Girl Scouts come in for weekly meetings, Stransky Park Concerts, weekly recreational activities in the community, local and national sporting events, Community art activities, tours of all colleges and universities in this area, both zoos, speakers, State games, community volunteering and many others.

Changes will be made as the needs arise.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

We work on an individualized basis and accommodate specialized needs on accordingly. This includes working with school administration for any individual behavioral / educational required by the client or working with individual therapists for specific coping skills that may be successfully implemented within the group living environment.

Changes will be made when they arise in the program.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

We review and implement during monthly team meetings their individualized goals. i.e.: some clients attend weekly counseling sessions, some more often, or different sessions such as IOP, OP or MRT sessions. It is always based on individual needs of each client.

Changes will be made in the program as the need arises.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

Our clientele are multi-national, and multi-cultural in nature. We work diligently teaching respect for, and learning about the different cultures in Social Groups, and have even invited client families to come in and prepare cultural dishes for all to share and experience. We engage our residents in diversity activities in the community regularly.

Changes will be made in the program as the need arises.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

Our staff is trained in "reasonable and prudent parenting" aspects, and this reflects in modeling appropriate treatment/behavior to our clients. With the Therapy Liaison aspect, the girls gain skills that help modeling those same skills within their peer group itself. The Therapy Liaison attends regular staff meetings, and reports client/peer issues, so that we can better address circumstances that improve staff development in working with an ever-changing population.

We make changes as the needs arise to our program.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Tauni Waddington

Designee's Title: Executive Director

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

Institution Name:

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - Hastings

Report Author:

Camella Jacobe

Author's Title:

Facility Administrator

Phone Number:

(402)462-1971

Email Address:

camella.jacobe@nebraska.gov

Report Date:

7/21/2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

We had one youth graduate with her diploma from our fully accredited school on site in February 2025. We have had two youth complete their Nursing Assistant certificate through Central Community College in Hastings, one youth in March 2025 and the other in July 2025. We have had youth complete job applications prior to discharge and have interviews set up upon discharge.

We continue to work closely with Human Resources to recruit staff. Human Resources has streamlined the process from the time a position is vacated, to posting the open position, to interviewing, and filling the position, decreasing the length of time a position stays open and not filled. We are able to fill positions quicker which ensures we are our staffing filled.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

We continue to follow a robust daily schedule, that includes school, groups, therapy, recreation, activities, and normal routine care. Youth are allowed to utilize computers in the school area for class work. We implemented zSpace in the classrooms where youth are offered opportunities for elective classes in 3D. Youth have been able to use the 3D system to learn how to weld, and to design gardens. This increases what we can provide in addition to the instructor led core classes that are offered in other public schools.

We continue to encourage parents/guardians multiple ways to engage with their youth while they are committed, including weekly updates on youth's progress via emails/phone conversations with the youth's case manager. Parents/guardians are also invited to every monthly family team meeting to discuss youth's progress. Our youth are able to have parents/guardians on their phone call system and can make calls to them each week. Our youth also have the opportunity to write their parents/guardians as well as have on campus visits, off campus visits, and visits via Webex. When a youth is ready for release and notice has been sent to the courts, youth are allowed off campus furloughs to placement upon release.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

Youth's Plan of Care establishes goals throughout their commitment. These goals align with needs established by the youth's Probation Officer that led to the youth's commitment. The youth moves through the goals on their own individualized pace. Youth advocate for themselves to advance stages when they feel they have met their goals. When needs arise to adjust goals based on age or development, the Plans of Care are revised to meet these needs. We have a full mental health staff team that also creates modified plans for youth when our typical plans of care do not work for the youth.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

Youth are provided various recreational and leisure activities daily, increasing the youth's experiences in type of activities, that they might have in a community setting. The activities are provided on a recreation calendar, where youth are able to view what activities will be what day. The youth are able to advocate for activities they enjoy through a recreational survey offered upon admission and then annually. In addition to these activities, youth council meets regularly where youth are able to advocate for activities.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

The activities are provided on a recreation calendar that is posted in each living unit, the Program Building, the Chapel, and the Administration building, where youth are able to view what activities will be what day.

Hastings has provided large muscle recreational activities that include volleyball, basketball, just dance, walking, weights, gaga ball, nine square, badminton, soccer, pickle ball, silent ball, boxing bag, flag football, and water play. YRTC Hastings provides a variety of leisure recreation activities that include crocheting, scrapbooking, crafting, on-line games, board games, card games, interactive game show games, cooking, creating craft projects/cards for others, and television.

YRTC Hastings transported youth to YRTC Kearney for swimming activities at their pool and recently contracted with the YMCA here in Hastings for youth to be able to go off campus to swim and utilized their weight room/fitness room.

YRTC Hastings youth participated in playing bingo at a nursing home with the residents.

Incentives this last year included getting meals from off campus food establishments, coffee from coffee shops, off campus movies, zombie walk at the park, and a day at the water park.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

All buildings are ADA accessible. YRTC Hastings will continue to provide accommodations for disabled youth or youth in need. YRTC Hastings has provided alternate ways for youth to complete stages assignments or school work when they have a reading deficit, including staff verbally processing work with youth. YRTC Hastings will ensure compliance with ADA requirement.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

YRTC Hastings youth have individualized Plans of Care which are made in conjunction with the youth's facility treatment team, the youth's parent/guardian, and other community support persons to ensure we are meeting the youth's individual needs for treatment. The youth participate in a monthly family team meeting where progress and lack of progress are discussed with the youth's outside and internal teams in order to best serve the youth and ensure everyone involved with the youth are consistent and supportive.

Placement goals are also discussed from the first treatment team meeting throughout the youth's stay, up to release, to ensure the youth and all parties are informed of placement goals and needs.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

There is not a screening process to determine which youth are committed to YRTC Hastings. YRTC Hastings accepts every youth committed and works with each youth and family on the youth's individual needs. YRTC Hastings in conjunction with Probation works on reunification with parents/guardians back into the community. If reunification is not possible, YRTC Hastings continues to work closely with Probation to determine appropriate placement the youth would have the most success in.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

YRTC Hastings currently has a Youth Council which meets monthly where the youth can bring concerns and requests to a diverse team of staff members. Youth complete an application to be in Youth Council and a part of Youth Council until released. The youth council this year also focused on leadership and how youth council members can promote leadership on campus.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Camella Jacobe

Designee's Title: Facility Administrator

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

YRTC Hastings currently has a Youth Council which meets monthly where the youth can bring concerns and requests to a diverse team of staff members. This is is writing in each living unit. This is also written in the youth handbook. Youth are also given the opportunity to fill out surveys for interests.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

It is posted in each living unit and the Administration building.

Institution Name:

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - Kearney

Report Author:

Cindy Krolikowski

Author's Title:

Facility Administrator

Phone Number:

308-865-5313

Email Address:

Cindy.Krolikowski@nebraska.gov

Report Date:

7-21-2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

YRTC-Kearney serves youth through individualized plans of care and evidence-based programming, which includes family treatment and enhancement of personal life skills. Specialized treatment is also available for substance abuse and youth who have sexually harmed. Transition back to the community will require collaboration between the YRTC treatment team, Probation's re-entry unit, community providers and schools to ensure a smooth transition.

We incorporate opportunities to implement change and keep the youth's adolescence in mind. This means we try to create opportunities that would allow youth to act and react in scenarios they may encounter in the community. Some examples include religious services, group/team events, school settings, and leisure activities and community service projects.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

YRTC-Kearney strives to offer recreational and personal growth activities both on campus and off. These opportunities include access to art/music materials and recreation opportunities. From an academic standpoint, YRTC-Kearney provides youth with traditional education and technological skills through an accredited high school. Relationships with family are fostered through both in person and virtual visits along with off campus visits. Kearney has increased the number of visits (via virtual means) and phone calls a youth can have with their families. Kearney follows a daily schedule which includes specific times for bed, waking hours, school, and other activities. Programming meetings occur at the conclusion of the school day. Kearney offers evidence-based cognitive-behavioral programming (MRT and ART).

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

Youth undergo an initial assessment upon arrival that aides in the development of the treatment plans. Treatment plans focus on areas of risk and need as identified by the Youth Level of Service/ Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI). Case managers at YRTC-Kearney are involved in developing a plan of care that involves input from the youth, the youth's treatments team, the youth's family, and their probation officer. Recreational activities are often a part of the youth's plan of care as a pro-social activity to participate in. At YRTC-Kearney, we view these types of positive activities as a factor that helps in reducing recidivism.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

All on and off campus activities are supervised by YRTC staff members. YRTC-Kearney is required by the Prison Elimination Act (PREA) to maintain a one staff to eight youth ratios during waking hours. All activities must be approved by the Facility Administrator or their designee.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

At YRTC-Kearney, leisure activities are provided by the Recreation Department. Recreation staff include activities based in sports and in the education of various sports. Kearney's Recreation staff provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities to all our youth, which include softball, flag football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, and ultimate frisbee. In addition to these sports, Kearney's facility has a soccer field, an obstacle course, indoor pool, and weight room. In Kearney, we also provide craft projects and volunteer activities that are designed and facilitated by Kearney staff. Youth are orientated to opportunities for leisure activities through the youth manual, communication from direct care staff, and incentives for on and off campus activities (through the youth's case manager).

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

Any accommodations for youth would be made on a case-by-case basis. YRTC-Kearney is required to provide accommodations for disabilities per standards of the American Correctional Association (ACA). Kearney has maintained its accreditation yearly.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

Individualized plans of care are made in conjunction with the youth's treatment team in Kearney, the youth's family/guardian, and any other community support that the youth may wish to have involved. The youth's probation officer is also highly involved in this process and provides input as to the youth's risks and needs as identified by their YLS/CMI. Each area of risk/needs is addressed in the case plan with individualized goals and objectives. An Initial Assessment is also completed by mental health staff to identify any mental health or substance abuse treatment needs.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

YRTC-Kearney has no say in which youth are adjudicated to the facility, as they are committed by the courts. We do not screen youth in any way, we accept all youth that are committed.

Kearney encourages family contact as much as possible through phone calls and visitation. Since COVID-19, we have added virtual visits as an additional means to achieve family engagement. Family therapy services are also available. For example, family involvement is an important component of the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (ACRA), which is a SAMHSA recognized best practice for youth with substance abuse issues. Family therapy needs are determined by a youth's mental health counselor and treatment team.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

AT the YRTC-Kearney, youth may make requests and suggestions through their group meetings, Case Managers, Unit Managers, or letters to the Facility Administrator or Program Manager. Kearney also has a grievance process that is handled directly by a Compliance team which does not report to the Facility Administrator.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: Cindy Krolikowski

Designee's Title: Facility Administrator

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

We have youth that are involved in the Student Council where they can offer suggestions about changes or different things they would like at the facility. They also can talk with their treatment teams, case manager and unit manager. Youth can also request to speak with the Facility Administrator to discuss ideas, concerns, or issues.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

Institution Name:

Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment Center - Lincoln

Report Author:

Sarah Brownell

Author's Title:

Facility Administrator

Phone Number:

402.471.0119

Email Address:

sarah.brownell@nebraska.gov

Report Date:

7/23/2025

Reporting Period (fill in the dates):

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

This report is required by Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-4706.

Instructions: **All questions must be answered completely.**

When providing examples, please do not include Personal Health Information (PHI).

This report should be submitted annually to dhhs.normalcy@nebraska.gov by July 15th

Requirement 1: Efforts to address barriers to normalcy that are inherent in a child-care institution setting.

Provide current examples that were successful and examples of ideas/tools to address overall barriers to normalcy at your institution.

YRTC-Lincoln individualized treatment plans for each youth.

Youth participated in identifying their goals and what motivated them to achieve their goals, both short-term and longterm.

Youth had access to several visits a week, to include both personal and professional visits.

Youth celebrated birthdays, holidays, and milestone achievements.

Youth participated in more off-site outings (stores, restaurants, gyms, parks, DMV, etc.) and furloughs in the community.

Requirement 2: Normalcy efforts for all children placed at the child-care institution, including, but not limited to, relationships with family, age or developmentally appropriate access to technology and technological skills, education and school stability, access to health care and information, and access to a sustainable and durable routine.

Provide examples of current normalcy efforts. Some examples could be access to telehealth/ technology, transportation plans for educational and extra-curricular activities, holiday activities for family members, etc.

Youth continue to have access to in-person teaching staff for education delivery.

Youth had immediate access to nursing, therapists, and psychiatry.

Youth had increased access to family visits and furloughs during birthdays and holidays.

Youth had increased opportunities for outings (stores, restaurants, gyms, parks, DMV, etc.) and furloughs to the community.

Requirement 3: Procedures for developing goals and action steps in the child-care institution's case plan and case planning process related to participation in age or developmentally-appropriate activities for each child placed at the child-care institution.

Provide current examples.

YRTC-Lincoln youth have individualized treatment plans, including their own goals and motivating factors.

Youth were assisted in making goals based on their demonstrated and predicted aptitude and adjustments were made as needed, case by case.

Youth, families, and professionals work collaboratively in the creation of individualized treatment plans.

Requirement 4: Policies on staffing, supervision, permission, and consent to age or developmentally appropriate activities consistent with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Provide current examples of how your normalcy efforts enhance youth well-being and promote typical childhood experiences.

Staffing and supervision is at the highest level at YRTC-Lincoln.

Youth assisted in creating programming activities consistent with their reported wants, needs, and interests.

YRTC-Lincoln continues to obtain the most recent technology (education, gaming, television) for age appropriate interests.

Requirement 5: A list of activities that the child-care institution provides onsite and a list of activities in the community regarding which the child-care institution will make children aware, promote, and support access.

Provide current examples of how your institution utilized the list of activities for youth, and provide a few examples of youth opportunities within your institution.

Youth followed posted schedules, including entertainment ideas and activity choices.

Material for desired activities and entertainment were provided to the youth by staff at the facility.

The Program Coordinator at YRTC-Lincoln assisted in increased activities, visits, outings, and furloughs.

Requirement 6: Identified accommodations and support services so that children with disabilities and special needs can participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities to the same extent as their peers.

Provide current examples of how your institution accommodates and supports youth with disabilities and/or special needs. Examples should include examples outside of regulated accommodations such as wheel-chair access bathrooms, etc.

YRTC-Lincoln remains ADA compliant.

All ADA accommodations are ordered by the facility physician.

YRTC-Lincoln has ADA rooms and access to necessary medical equipment/space.

Requirement 7: The individualized needs of all children involved in the system.

Provide current examples of how your institution has met the individualized needs of children.

YRTC-Lincoln individualized treatment plans for each youth.

Youth participated in identifying their goals and what motivated them to achieve their goals, both short-term and longterm.

Youth had access to several visits a week, to include both personal and professional visits.

Youth celebrated birthdays, holidays, and milestone achievements.

Youth had increased access to family visits and furloughs during birthdays and holidays.

Youth participated in more off-site outings (stores, restaurants, gyms, parks, DMV, etc.) and furloughs in the community.

Youth continue to have access to in-person teaching staff for education delivery.

Youth had immediate access to nursing, therapists, and psychiatry.

Requirement 8: Efforts to reduce the disproportionate impact of the system and services on families and children of color and other populations.

Provide current examples of how your institution has implemented normalcy activities for youth of color that reduce the race disproportionality of the system.

YRTC-Lincoln serves all youth committed to or transferred to YRTC-Lincoln by the committing court.

Requirement 9: Efforts to develop a youth board to assist in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard in the child-care institution and promoting and supporting normalcy.

Provide current examples of how your youth board has assisted in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to promote/support normalcy. If your institution does not have a youth board what steps has your institution made to implement one? What barriers have you encountered to implementing one?

YRTC-Lincoln has a small populaton - approximately 14 youth on average.

Youth who received their 60 Day Notice and were preparing for discharge were provided extra opportunities to advocate for improvements and/or changes.

YRTC-Lincoln continues to offer several different options for youth concerns to be heard. This includes specific requests for staff and grievance access.

In order to address any barriers identified in this report, do you need to modify your normalcy plan for the next state fiscal year? ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**

If yes, you must submit your updated plan by July 15th of the current year utilizing form CFS-1205.

Official designated to be the caregiver who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to decisions involving the participation of the child in age or developmentally appropriate activities:

Designee's Name: _____

Designee's Title: _____

Each child-care institution is required to notify in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, all children placed at the institution of the process for making a request to participate in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Please identify the process used for providing such notification.

YRTC-Lincoln provides the youth with a lengthy intake process. Youth and parents are provided handbooks with expectations and confirm an understanding.

A written notice of this process is required to be posted in an accessible, public place in the child-care institution. Please identify everywhere this notification is posted.

YRTC-Lincoln facility rules and handbook are posted for easy reference by the youth and the staff.