



PARENT HANDBOOK

Salem4Youth partners with families whose sons are in need of being placed outside the home for a period of time due to rebellion, anger, substance abuse, and other self-destructive and/or family disruptive behaviors. Salem4Youth is not a mental health agency, and as such is not able to serve clients with severe mental health diagnosis.

Salem4Youth is committed to reconciling the teen with his family, which requires families to participate in its programming. Salem4Youth also seeks to work with the family's local church in order to provide support and assistance to the family following their season at Salem.

After carefully reading through this handbook, please feel free to direct any question to our Executive Director.

Salem Program Overview

The Salem4Youth program typically lasts 10 to 14 months. The Salem program includes 5 specific features:

- Residential Mentoring
- Counseling
- Vocational Training
- Education
- Parent Training

Residential Mentoring

Each student lives in a residential dorm with trained staff whose primary role is to provide life mentoring. This is achieved through the development of a trusting relationship and based upon the pattern described in Deuteronomy 6:5-7, which states, *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”*

Counseling

Each student meets weekly with a trained and experienced counselor. The basis of the Salem counseling program is biblical truth. In addition to providing traditional counseling services, the counseling team directs each student through a series of Life Guides that are designed to help reach the heart and lead to lasting change.

Work Training

Each student is assigned 10 to 12 hours of work per week. This is designed to produce a positive work ethic. Work projects are based upon a student’s physical ability, level in the program, and are designed to allow the student to see the benefits of his work.

Education

Each student attends Valor Jr./Sr. High School on weekdays. Valor is a school that offers both traditional and online classes. Class selection is based upon a student’s grade level, ability, and educational needs. Valor’s certified Special Education teachers oversee accommodations for students with IEPs (Individual Education Plan).

Parent Training

Parents are a key part of the program. Parent-student counseling sessions occur regularly and a number of resources are provided to families to assist in the process of reconciling with their teen.

Parental Commitment

We believe that one of the most important factors in the success of the Salem program is the parent’s commitment to the process. This includes supporting the staff, program, rules, and philosophy. It is common for students to attempt to split, through deception and manipulation, the Salem team and his parents. This potential must be recognized and effort must be exerted in order to prevent the split. There are many ways that parents can inadvertently diminish the effectiveness of the program. Some ways include; discussing a possibility of the child coming home without graduating the program, enabling their child to escape the consequences of their

behavior, jumping to the defense of the child when the child complains about the program or staff, etc.

Our hope is that parents will always come to us with questions, and keep in mind the goal that we are working towards together. We are always willing to address questions and concerns, but hope that parents will remain trusting as we look for answers and solutions together, knowing that we are all looking out for the best interest of the child.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Telephone Calls

After the first 7-10 days of residence at Salem, students will make a phone call home. This call will be arranged by and monitored by the counseling staff. For the remainder of Phase 1 his weekly phone calls will be dependent on his participation in counseling. Once a student reaches Phase 2 he will call home once a week. These calls will be 15 minutes in duration and will be supervised by the Cottage Staff. If the call student becomes argumentative and disrespectful, the Cottage Staff may end the phone call in order to process the situation with the student. The student will usually be given the chance to try again if he is able to do so. Students will also call upon the occasion of a successful Phase advancement petition.

Mail

New students most often begin to receive mail from immediate family within the first 14 days of placement. In rare cases, Salem will ask that mail be limited or not sent. This would be communicated with an explanation in the student's treatment goals. Based upon the student's phase level and at the counselor's discretion, in consultation with you, others may be able to send mail to your son. You may send envelopes and stamps, or Salem can purchase them for your child from their expense account. Please send all mail with a return address. No mail is dispersed without a return address.

Gifts

Gifts may be sent to your child on holidays, birthdays, and special events. Due to the nature of the program, we ask that you discuss any gifts with your counselor or the front office before purchasing/sending.

PARENT RESOURCES

Orientation

At admission, each parent receives a Parent Handbook, which describes the program your son will follow during his time at Salem.

Counseling Sessions

Starting immediately upon enrollment, you will begin planning your monthly counseling sessions here on the Ranch. Parents are expected to attend together and in person as often as possible. These counseling sessions will help you to explore parenting approaches and strategies as well as help to reconcile past issues between you and your son.

Parental Visits

Salem is committed to the reconciliation of your family. Parent visits and home visits are coordinated with your son's place in the program. Salem reserves the right to limit visits, should they not be in the best interest of the student, the family, and/or our program.

When traveling home for a visit, your son's counselor will communicate with you and your son regarding expectations, structure, and guidelines for their time at home. During the visit, if you or your son needs to talk to someone during a hard moment, do not hesitate to call.

THE SALEM PROGRAM

(THIS SECTION COPIED FROM THE STUDENT HANDBOOK)

The Salem program is divided up into 4 Phases. Each subsequent phase carries more privilege and responsibility than the phase previous to it. Phase promotion is earned through demonstration of forward progress through the program in a variety of areas.

Orientation Phase (OP):

Each student is placed on Orientation Phase as soon as he arrives at Salem. Orientation phase is meant to be a learning time and a "buffer" time as you transition to your life at Salem. While on Orientation your points will not counted for or against you, but you will be coached through the process. You will have an Orientation Packet assigned to you rather than a life guide. It will be your responsibility to study the handbook and complete the Orientation Packet as completely as you can. Once your packet is completed you will have a phone call home scheduled to take place with your counselor. This typically takes places after about a week, depending on behavior and attitude. Orientation phase typically lasts about 2 weeks, but can be shortened on a case by case basis.

Phase 1:

During Phase One you will be encouraged to explore the reasons you are at Salem, learn and follow the Salem guidelines and expectations, learn and practice the assigned Social Skills, and begin to form relationships with staff members.

Phase One students will live by the following guidelines:

Directly supervised by staff at all times

No TV or music privileges (Exception for movie night in the cottage)

Phase One dress code:

5 pairs of jeans or shorts, 8 shirts, one winter coat, one light jacket, one pair of shoes, one pair of sandals, and one pair of boots.

Complete Life Guides 1-6 (8?)

Will participate in short family visits that coincide with family counseling

Eligible to participate in sports, but will not be eligible for away games

Work with teacher and vocational staff for proper academic placement

Weekly calls home will begin based on successful completion of Life-Guides or as assigned by the Treatment Team

No off campus privileges (Exception for monthly visit to Salem Church for service and lunch.)

Mail to/from immediate family

Begin daily grades (gold, silver, bronze)

Phase 2:

During Phase 2 you will be expected to apply the lessons learned during Phase 1. A Phase 2 student should be choosing relationships with positive students and staff. He should be focusing on learning to live successfully within the rules and guidelines and working well with his counselor.

Phase 2 students will live by the following guidelines:

Must supervised at all times, greater distance from staff members may be allowed at staff discretion

Complete Life Guides 7-14

Some game room privileges (Determined by available game room hours at staff discretion)

Supervised weekly family phone calls (15 minutes)

Family visits to coincide with family counseling

May send and receive mail from approved contacts

Eligible to participate in sports – may play in both home and away games

Phase 2 dress code:

May add 3 shirts and two pairs of pants or shorts from home to dress code, may add another pair of shoes.

Eligible to participate in off campus Salem-sponsored events

No personal music privileges (CD player)

Phase 2 students may have personal musical instruments to play during free time. (See musical instrument policy for specific details)

Phase 3:

A successful Phase 3 student should have nearly mastered living within the Salem guidelines and expectations. He should be an example to other students by consistently making positive choices and discouraging negative behavior. He should then be able and willing to focus counseling and family issues without neglecting the daily responsibilities of Salem life.

A Phase 3 student will live by the following guidelines:

Relaxed supervision based on earned trust, should be able to run short, timed errands independently

Phase 3 students will typically be considered before Phase 1 and 2 students for privileges

Complete Life Guides 15-20

Eligible to use cottage personal CD players. (See music policy under "Cottage Life" section)

Eligible to attend church or youth group occasionally off campus with a mentor as opportunities arise

Supervised weekly family phone calls (15 minutes)

Phase 3 dress code:

Student determined with only restriction being modesty and all clothing with written messages must be approved before being included in wardrobe. Clothes will be stored neatly and in organized fashion. If the student is told he has too many clothes, he will follow staff directions without complaint.

Family visits to coincide with family counseling

One home visit will take place sometime during Phase Three as determined by Treatment Team and the student's parents.

Phase 4:

Phase 4 is the time to put into practice the positive skills, attitudes, and behaviors learned in the previous Phases. Phase 4 students should be a consistent, positive influence on the cottage as a whole. Phase 4 is the time to be working with your parents and counselor on a plan for your successful return home. This is also a time for cultivating those staff relationships that will help in the weeks and months after you leave Salem.

A Phase 4 student will live by the following guidelines:

Relaxed supervision based on earned trust at staff discretion

Modified Phase 4 grade sheet

Complete Life Guides 21-26 (24?)

Eligible to attend church or youth group occasionally off campus with a mentor

30 minute parent phone calls per schedule

Later bedtime

Family visits to coincide with family counseling

May plan an approved Sunday afternoon activity, activity must be approved by Cottage Staff

Will be considered for special privileges and opportunities as they arise

Extended home visit to be scheduled by your parents and the Treatment Team

Phase Advancement

Students advance through the program based upon 3 criteria:

- Therapeutic Progress. This is evaluated every two weeks by the treatment team based upon the student's work with a counselor and participation in the therapeutic groups.
- Life Guide Progress. This is evaluated on a weekly basis by the treatment team based upon student's participation in working on Life Guides with his counselor.
- Daily Grades. This is evaluated on a daily basis by the residential team based upon the student's behavior. As a result, all students (after week two and continuing through phase 3) are on gold, silver, or bronze status each day.

Students are able to apply for phase promotion when:

1. He has completed the required Life Guides
2. Achieved the appropriate Daily Grade points.
3. He receives a positive recommendation from his counselor and residential director

Parent/Staff Communication and Reports

Communication between the staff and parents is vital. It is essential for your student to understand that there will be a concerted and supportive effort between staff and their parents. Upon admission, we will provide you with a parent contact sheet that describes the best way to communicate with Salem based on various issues and at various times. You will be notified as soon as possible upon the event of any major issue, including: serious discipline issues, injury from work or sports, medical concerns, run-away, restraint situation, concerns of self-harm, etc. Less serious issues will be communicated during counseling sessions or upon request.

Holidays

Every year the Salem leadership review the needs of the student body, families, and staff in order to determine the holiday policies for each year. When possible, Salem closes for Christmas and Thanksgiving in order for both staff and students to spend the holidays with their families. The current year's policy will be communicated from Salem leadership as soon as a determination has been made for that year.

Travel

All travel to and from Salem is the responsibility of the parent. The only airport that Salem can provide transportation to is the Bloomington airport (airport code BMI).

Trips Away from the Facility

Your student may travel away from the Salem campus a number of times throughout the week (dependent on their phase level). This may include to and from church, special outings, sporting events, etc.

Runaway Situations

In a runaway situation, Salem will contact the Livingston County Sheriff's Department immediately and file a missing persons report. Please understand that we will do all we can to locate your son within a 24 hour time period (follow up on phone calls, search the three mile radius around Salem, and follow any leads that we might receive). This does not mean that we will be able to drive around for 24 hours, but we will search the area significantly until we are certain there is no immediate sighting, or until we have exhausted all possible leads. Salem will notify parents and keep them informed as frequently as possible. Salem's program has to continue regardless of a runaway situation. It is very helpful for the parent to do all that they can to check with friends, e-mails, blog accounts, etc. More often than not we see students make initial contact with family. We ask that you stay in communication with us in these situations as well. We will maintain communication with law enforcement and do as much as we can to assist them in their search.

Dismissal from Salem

Dismissal from Salem is rare, but it is occasionally necessary. It is our hope that Salem's program will be successful in the life of your son. While success cannot be guaranteed, our faithfulness to the Salem vision and program can be. That faithfulness, coupled with the working attitude of your son, will hopefully produce a changed heart. If their needs require intervention or treatment beyond the scope of Salem, we will communicate our concerns with you and assist you with referral options that might best suit your child's needs and your investment of time and money.

Additionally, if there is a blatant violation of the principles set forth by Salem, we may ask that you find other placement for your child.

Parents will be contacted immediately after the staff's first discussion about the possibility of dismissal.

Spiritual Life

Salem is a Christian ministry that is dedicated to convey the love of Christ to each student. We believe that a truly successful life includes a personal faith relationship with Jesus Christ, a lifestyle based on scripture, sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and involvement in a biblically based local church. Although we do not force the gospel or spirituality, we invite students into a relationship with Jesus Christ and provide regular opportunity to learn the scriptures.

Finances

To obtain and understand all options please contact our Executive Director.

Insurance

On occasion, parents wish to submit Salem fees to their insurance company. It is important to note that Salem is not a residential treatment center. Most in-patient benefits are restricted to a licensed residential treatment center. Therefore, Salem fees for room and board and program will not be reimbursed by your insurance. If you have further questions, please contact the Executive Director.

Student Expense Account

Each parent sets up an expense account for their student in the amount of \$60 - 100. This account is used for a variety of things a student may need, such as personal items (soap, shampoo, etc.), and school supplies. Expenditures from this account must be approved by both the staff and parents. None of this money will be given to your student and will be used solely for his needs.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline is used as an instructional tool to move someone in the right direction. Discipline, when implemented in a God pleasing manner, is an act of love (Hebrews 10). Salem believes that correction for inappropriate behavior is necessary, but must follow strict guidelines to ensure its effectiveness. Discipline at Salem is intended to be consistent, purposeful, fair, and sensitive to the individual needs of a child.

At no time will discipline be physically or emotionally damaging to the student, harsh, cruel, or administered out of anger or without counsel from and the concurrence of other staff members. There will be no "hazing" of any child. Furthermore, discipline will not include any action or word that might be detrimental to the child's spirit, or demeaning to his character in regards to academics, family background, past mistakes, or any social, physical, or emotional limitations. To ensure the success of this discipline policy, staff will explain the disciplinary

action so that the student will understand the action taken. Disciplinary action will take into account the seriousness of the offense, the student's age, how long the student has been at Salem, the frequency of misconduct, and the potential effect of the misconduct on Salem and other students.

Corporal Punishment

Salem does not use any form of corporal punishment for discipline of the students.

Physical Restraint

On rare occasions, students may be physically restrained by staff. Restraints are only used as a last resort and for the purpose of protecting students, staff, or others from danger or harm. All restraints are conducted in accordance with guidelines from the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention program. Only staff members that have trained in these procedures are allowed to perform restraints.

Positive Reinforcement

Just as Salem insures discipline and correction for misbehavior, we also seek to recognize and reward positive behavior. Salem strives to use praise, positive reinforcement, and encouragement to encourage self-esteem, self-control, and growth. Our goal in discipline is always to teach a child a new, healthier, and/or more productive alternative to their present behaviors. Positive behavior is rewarded through the point system.