

*Homespace Corporation
Second Chance Home*

Resident Handbook

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Welcome!!

Welcome!

Homespace welcomes you to its family of supportive staff and residents. We hope that your participation in the program leads to the fulfillment of goals that you have set for yourself and for your child(ren). Not only will you find a comfortable, safe home behind our walls, but also an environment in which individuals are encouraged to value themselves and others.

This is your guide to the policies, procedures, expectations, and information that will help you become a successful Homespace resident. This handbook was designed with what policies have been successful in the past, along with improvements for the future.

It is our goal at Homespace to provide an environment that is conducive to your personal goal achievement and your acquisition of independent living skills. Please feel free to bring all questions and concerns to the Homespace staff for clarification and guidance.

Sincerely,

The Homespace Staff

Homespace Values

The Homespace mission statement is best achieved through a set of values that helps guide both residents and staff. In becoming a Homespace resident it is important to recognize these values so that you may understand our policies and procedures, as well as be able to live the values in your own life.

Family

Homespace's main focus is that of the family. We try to foster an environment in which young families can learn to grow and care for each other in order to produce a healthy, functional unit. Along with this, it is important for residents to belong to and respect our bigger Homespace family so that a successful living environment is achieved. Some features and policies of Homespace that you will find influenced by this value include; the babysitting policy, the Homespace "family" staff, parenting classes, and group meetings.

Integrity

This value includes being accountable for ones actions, while also respecting the rights of others. Homespace staff follows this value by treating all residents fairly, and with respect. Some features and policies of Homespace that you will find influenced by this value include; the expectations of Homespace residents and the expectations of Homespace staff.

Security

Before any goals can be attained, residents must feel both physically and emotionally secure. This value is achieved by providing safe, comfortable housing and a supportive staff. Some features and policies of Homespace that you will find influenced by this value include; the curfew policy, the visiting guest policy, the alarm systems and securely gated living area, and the 24-hour staff on duty.

Empowerment

This value holds much importance in that a person who feels empowered can achieve many great things. The Homespace staff lives by this value by encouraging confidence and high self-esteem, as well as through teaching the residents to be advocates for themselves. Some features and policies of Homespace that you will find influenced by this value include; group meetings, goal planning and achievement, and the assistance in locating secure housing for a successful discharge.

Collaboration

This value involves the teamwork and cooperation of residents while working with Homespace staff, other residents, and the bigger community. Collaboration allows for the enrichment of the individual in that she can teach and support others, while being taught and supported herself. This can lead to an environment in which people are no longer strangers, but instead partners and friends. Some features and policies of Homespace that you will find influenced by this value include; meetings with staff, planning activities with other residents, and volunteer opportunities in the community.

The Homespace “Family”

Homespace employs a supportive staff to help all residents achieve their best. Staff is available 24 hours a day to ensure a safe and comfortable environment. All staff is available to provide assistance and offer guidance.

Executive Director

The Executive Director’s role is to oversee all operations of Homespace. The Executive Director participates in the selection and screening process of potential residents. The Executive Director makes all final decisions regarding any matters related to Homespace residents, staff, volunteers, and property.

Program Director

The role of the Program Director is to oversee the overall functioning of both Second Chance Home and SILP. The Program Director supervised the Case Planner, Independent Living Coordinator, and Childcare Worker Supervisor and

Case Planner

The role of the Case Planner is to assist residents in developing realistic goals, make referrals for needed services, and monitor the progress of residents. The Case Planner is available to address everyday concerns and questions, as well as to acclimate the resident to the Homespace environment. The Case Planner manages the admissions process. Residents meet on an individual basis with the Case Planner either weekly or bi-weekly to work on goals related to school, work, day care, medical appointments, mental health needs. The Case Planner can also provide referrals to other supportive services in the community.

Independent Living Coordinator

The role of the Independent Living Coordinator is to assess and assist in the areas of parenting, budgeting, nutrition, housekeeping, time management, and daily living skills. The Family Life Educator oversees the daycare and helps plan family and children activities. Residents meet on an individual basis with the Family Life Educator either weekly or bi-weekly.

Child Care Worker Supervisor

The role of the Childcare Worker Supervisor is to supervise the Childcare Workers employed at Second Chance Home and SILP. This person responds to any issues/concerns involving a childcare worker at Homespace.

Child Care Workers

Child Care Workers provide 24 hour support and assistance to our residents. They oversee the overall functioning of Second Chance Home, supervise the residents and children that live at the house, and are available to provide guidance regarding your daily living and parenting needs.

What You Can Expect From Homespace...

1.) Peaceful home setting that is meant to bring comfort and security to you and your child(ren).

- 2.) Supportive staff that aim to assist in goal achievement and success for each resident and is available to help you overcome hurdles, discuss general concerns, and offer encouragement.
- 3.) A safe, secure environment including staff on duty 24 hours a day.
- 4.) The opportunity for you to develop healthy parenting skills that will benefit you and your child(ren).
- 5.) A family environment in which staff and residents form relationships that are mutually caring and respectful.
- 6.) Your privacy and confidentiality to be respected while you live at Second Chance Home.

What Homespace Expects From You...

- 1.) A positive attitude!
- 2.) Respectful interactions with all other residents and staff.
- 3.) Engagement in case planning and parenting skills training so that you can continue on the road towards self-sufficiency.
- 4.) The desire to learn and grow as an individual and a parent.
- 5.) Active participation in all group meetings, individual meetings, and Homespace events.
- 6.) To keep your room and the community space of Second Chance Home clean and tidy.
- 7.) Residents are expected to follow ALL rules and regulations so that safety, comfort, and progression of the individual are achieved.

GAP: "Getting Acquainted Period"

We understand that when a new resident moves into Second Chance Home she might feel a bit uncomfortable in her new surroundings. It is also the same for staff as we have a new family living with us who we are just getting to know. To help everyone make this adjustment and become more familiar with one another we have developed a "Getting

Acquainted Period” (GAP) that is used at both of our programs. The policies are a bit different during GAP and the differences are based on what program you are in.

Second Chance Home residents are placed on a **2-week** GAP when they come to the program. This thirty-day period is used as a time for you and the staff of Homespace to get to know each other better. During this time you are only allowed to go out into the community if you are escorted by staff (with the exception on school/work). Also, during this time you should be providing your Case Planner with the contact information of relatives that you would like to possibly spend weekend home visits with so that the screening process can begin.

Curfew

Curfew: 7:00 pm Sunday through Thursday
Weekends: For residents **17 years old and over**:
9:00pm or 11:00pm with a ride home only
For residents **16 years old and younger** your curfew will be determined by your Case Planner.

Bath, Book, Bed!

Second Chance Home strongly believes that routine and the development of a healthy bond between mother and child is critical. As a result, the program has implemented a night time routine that is to be followed by every mother and child. Beginning at 7:00pm, every mother is asked to give their child a soothing bath, read a book in their bedroom together, and then put their child to bed. It is our hope that this routine will develop healthy patterns for you and your child and be fun too!

Meals

Second Chance Home provides all of the food for the residents of Homespace. Every resident is expected to make breakfast and lunch for themselves and their child. Additionally it is expected that residents make sure that they always clean up after themselves after eating. Every night a different resident is assigned to cook dinner for the other families in the house. A weekly menu is created by the Senior Childcare Worker but please feel free to let that person know if you would like to cook something special on your assigned night. We are happy to make changes to the menu so that you can enjoy cooking!

****When preparing any food in the kitchen we all staff and residents to wear plastic gloves so as to prevent the spread of germs. The gloves are located in the kitchen****

Nursery

Restrictions

Every resident is responsible for their own decision-making. A restriction can be given when a resident does not comply with program policies. Restrictions are different depending on the violation and are determined by the Childcare Worker Supervisor. Failure to comply with a restriction can lead to serious consequences.

AWOL

A resident is considered to be absent without leave (AWOL) when the resident is absent from the facility overnight without having made prior arrangements with staff. When a resident is AWOL various steps are taking, including filing a missing persons report with the Buffalo Police Department. Consequences for an AWOL are serious and could include termination from the program.

Meetings with Staff and Group Meetings

Meetings with Staff

Residents are required to meet with their Case Planner and Indep. Living Coordinator either on a weekly basis when you first enter the program. After your first 30 days in the program your workers will assess whether your meetings can be changed to bi-weekly. Your Case Planner will assist you in setting up goals related to school, work, day care, medical needs, counseling, etc. Additionally, your Case Planner will accompany you to your court hearings, maintain regular contact with your county worker, and work with you to achieve permanency.

Your Independent Living Coordinator will assist you in setting up goals related to parenting, budgeting, household maintenance, self care, etc.

Group Meetings

Attendance and participation in group meetings are required by all SILP residents. They are held every week on Tuesday nights from 6:00 pm-7:00 pm. The group topics vary, however they focus on independent living skills, personal well-being, and health awareness. Group takes place in the community room.

Children over 3 months old are not allowed to be in the community room during group. Daycare is provided in the Child Activity Center (Townhouse #13) where a childcare worker will supervise your child while you are in group. Children must be taken to the CAC by 5:45pm so that you are ready to begin group promptly at 6:00pm. You will then pick up your child as soon as group is over.

If your child(ren) are ill, it is still expected that you attend group; daycare will be held for them in a separate area. Homespace staff will review on a case by case basis as to whether or not the child is too ill to even attend the separate daycare. A doctor's note may be require

Visiting Policies and Guests on Premises

It is important that while living at Second Chance Home you feel as “at home” as possible. It is important for you to be able to have guests to visit you as often as possible. However, in order to protect the safety of everyone that lives at Second Chance Home we do have some policies in place regarding visitors.

During a screening your prospective visitor will be asked to provide two forms of identification (one form must be a photo ID) and he/she must sign off on various forms indicating that they will follow program policies when they are on the premises of Homespace. The forms of identification will be photocopied and kept in the front office for all staff to have access to.

After the visitor has been screened and approved to visit on our premises, he/she will be asked to bring a photo ID every time they visit and it will be kept in the front office for the duration of the visit.

Visitors are allowed on the first floor community areas of Second Chance Home only. Visitors are not permitted upstairs or in your bedroom at any time.

Other People Entering Second Chance Home

It is the responsibility of Homespace staff to allow guests into the building. Never open up a door for anyone other than your own guest. The entrance doors are on a double lock system for a reason. Never prop open these doorways or the front gates as it could allow unwanted people onto the premises.

Special Policies for Youth Ages 14 and 15

If you are under the age of 16 there are a few additional policies that you will need to follow so that we can assure your safety.

Instead of having a curfew of 7:00pm during the week, you will need to return to Second Chance Home directly after school. Your Case Planner will determine what time you will be expected home based on when your school dismisses you and this time will be communicated to the Child Care Workers. After school plans with friends and family are allowable and encouraged. Child Care Workers can allow permission for any time spent in the community that is 30 minutes or less. Any outing lasting more than 30 minutes, you will need to get pre-approved permission from either your Case Planner or Child Care Supervisor. Additionally, you will need to provide information about your transportation plan and when you will return to Second Chance Home in order for your outing to be approved.

On the weekends, you can only leave the house if you are accompanied by Second Chance Home staff or are on an approved home visit. It is expected that you comply with all arrangements made by your Case Planner regarding home visits and transportation plans.

Additionally, you must be escorted either by a Second Chance Home staff person or person deemed appropriate by staff at all times, with the exception of school. Your Case Planner has permission to allow flexibility with this policy for any youth who are 15 years old.