



The Family LIFE Center
— *of West Michigan* —

Resident Handbook

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Welcome to the Family LIFE Center Home! We are all very excited that you have decided to come and be a part of our family during this challenging time in your life. We know that being in a new environment can be very difficult and we hope that you adjust quickly to the changes and feel “at home” very soon. We are so glad you are here and we look forward to getting to know you.

We understand that you may be feeling a little overwhelmed with your situation. Perhaps you have decisions to make and a lot to think about. Certainly you have some work to do in preparation for the birth of your child. We strongly desire to provide an environment that is safe and comfortable while preparing you to face the challenges that are coming your way.

As you may know, having a large family can be difficult, especially in a family like ours here at Family LIFE Center Home where there are a lot of people of different ages, backgrounds, experiences, etc... Our desire is to provide a family environment in which everyone can feel safe and comfortable and which allows us to all live together in harmony. To do so, it is important that we have certain guidelines in place. The remainder of this handbook will discuss these guidelines in detail. Please read it thoroughly and carefully and make notes of any questions you have or areas where you need further clarification. We understand that some of these guidelines may require a change for you and may even feel limiting, but we believe they are necessary to provide that environment mentioned above, which will allow you to prepare for your future and allow us all to live together in harmony.

Again, we are so excited you are here!

Dress Guidelines

- * We have a good variety of maternity clothes for you to use during your time here.
- * Our goal for dress in the home is that everyone exercises modesty that is comfortable for others.
- * To assure this standard, the following dress guidelines will be expected:

1. Avoid clothing with inappropriate logos (such as beer logos).
2. Avoid clothing that is too tight or too big.
3. Avoid clothing that is in poor condition (such as with holes).
4. Avoid short shorts and tank tops.



- * Your houseparents will advise you regarding appropriate dress for church, job hunting and interviews.
- * Your housemom will be reviewing the dress guidelines in more detail.
- * If you have a clothing item you are not sure of, please check with your housemom.

Classes

We offer several educational classes to help you to be well-informed regarding the options available for an expecting mother and to help you prepare for your future. You will be expected to attend all sessions of the following classes:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Prenatal Care and Nutrition | 4. Childbirth Class |
| 2. Sexual Integrity Class | 5. Financial Planning Class |
| 3. Parenting Class | 6. Adoption Class |

Curfew

- * 9:00pm Monday through Thursday
- * In-room time is 9:30pm on week nights.
- * Weekends vary with your privilege level.
- * Times may be adjusted at Houseparent's discretion.
- * If an emergency or unforeseen circumstance causes you to be late in returning to the home, please notify the houseparents as soon as possible.



Bedtime Procedures

- * Lights out 30 minutes after your in-room time. Lights and radios in your room should be off. .
- * Sleep between the sheets in your bed and not on top of the comforter.
- * Do not sleep on the pillows with shams.
- * If you have a problem during the night, please contact the houseparents on duty and do not disturb other residents or off-duty houseparents.

Morning Procedures

- * Houseparents will help you with a “down-time” and a departure time.
- * You should set your alarm, allowing yourself time for shower, dressing, cleaning room and bathroom, eating breakfast, doing morning chore, and making your lunch.
- * You may sleep in on Saturdays as approved by houseparents on duty.

Borrowed Items

- * We ask that you please take good care of the home's items that you use.



- * All items should be left at time of discharge or departure.
- * Please launder any maternity items you have used before discharge.
- * Do not borrow any items from other residents.

Resident Rights

* Should you feel that any of your basic rights are being violated, please request an appointment with the houseparents to discuss your concerns. Use appropriate problem solving skills.

Education

- * High School or GED is a first priority; girls who do not have a diploma will work toward it while in the home.
- * There is a mandatory study hour until it is no longer needed.
- * If you're not in school, you will be working or volunteering.



Work

- * If you are not in school, you are required to work at least 20 hours (whether in a paying job or volunteer position).
- * Houseparents will help you acquire a job or volunteer position.
- * Places of employment must be within a 20 mile radius of the home.
- * Final acceptance of a position must be approved by houseparents.
- * You may work Monday through Friday 8:00am to 9:00pm and Saturday 8:00am to 9:00pm (some adjustments may be considered but must be approved by houseparents).
- * Work will not be permitted on Sunday.
- * You will also need one morning or afternoon off during the week for counseling and doctor's appointments.
- * No working at the same place as another resident.
- * No mall jobs.

Family Visits

- * You are eligible for your first visit after completing your first week in the home.
- * Minimum of 24 hours notice must be given (visitors should never just "stop by" the home).

- * Approved females on your visitors list and your father may take you off the grounds for your visit.
- * Transportation needs to be provided by the visitor, and that person must be the one to bring you back.
- * All other approved visitors may visit with you at the home.
- * Once arrangements have been made, they should not be changed during the visit.
- * Visitors should always come in at the beginning and end of visits and check in with houseparents.
- * Boyfriends are allowed to visit the home when housefather is present.
- * Houseparents will establish guidelines for such a visit.
- * In home visits are not allowed on the 2nd floor of the home.
- * Visit time is based on your privilege level, availability to use privileges, and approval by houseparents.
- * Visits earned cannot be combined, nor may visits be split (a 4-hour into two 2-hour visits).
- * You will not be able to go on overnight visits or more than 50 miles from the home after you reach the 36th week of pregnancy.
- * Health conditions may further restrict travel and visits.
- * We do not accommodate overnight stays for friends and family.
- * A sign-out slip should be completed and signed before you leave the home.



NOTE: You are responsible to inform visitors of rules they need to know regarding visitation and to be sure that visitors return you to the home on time. If you will be late to the home for a specific reason, you should notify the houseparents immediately and gain their approval. Also, staff members reserve the right to restrict visitation during your time in the hospital.

Telephone Use

- * Telephone use and time is based on privilege level and availability of privileges.
- * Calls cannot be combined nor can they be split up.

- * Ask permission before using the phone.
 - * All calls are to be logged on the telephone form.
 - * No phone calls will be made or received after 10:00pm.
 - * The telephone will not be answered during dinner, family conference, or devotions.
 - * The best time to make or receive calls is 7-9pm weekdays.
 - * No long distance calls can be made without a phone card; no collect calls.
 - * Do not give out home phone number unless approved by houseparent.
 - * All cell phones must be turned in to the office. Residents may earn privileges to use cell phones for a limited time.
- *Cell phones are allowed only in the common area.



Computer Time

- *The Computer may be used to check e-mail and look for jobs.
- *The computer time is limited to 1 hour per day and is used on a need basis.
- *Social Networking sites are prohibited while living at the Family LIFE Center.

Meals

- * Dinner is served between 5:30 and 6:30pm
- * You may say, “No Thank You”, to one item on the table; you must help yourself to at least a spoonful of everything else.
- * You will be expected to finish what you put on your plate.
- * Some kind of breakfast is required.
- * Everyone is expected to help out with preparing the meals and clearing the table.
- * Devotions will be done after dinner and will be read on a rotation of residents and house parents.
- * We will shop for the food and house items once a week to go along with our planned menu.



Financial Issues

- * If you have an allowance or spending money, you can use it when you are on privileges.
- * Houseparents can hold money for safe keeping, if you would like.
- * All paychecks must be turned into houseparents to be cashed and divided up three ways; you will receive a receipt for your records:



- 70% of paycheck goes into a savings account that you will receive once you've completed the program.
- 10% may be kept for spending money, or you may choose to put it into savings.
- Borrowing or lending money is not permitted.
- Bridge cards will go towards purchasing the food for the ministry.

Hygiene

- * Each resident must shower every day.
- * Hair must be clean and well groomed.
- * Brush teeth daily.
- * Wash your hands before handling food or dishes.
- * Wash sheets and towels once a week.

Illness

- * If you are ill, please contact a houseparent so that you may receive proper care.
- * If you cannot carry out your daily responsibilities, you will go on "sick rule."
- * Residents on "sick rule":
 - Remain in bed all day with room lights out and blinds closed.
 - Reading, listening to the radio, or visiting with others is not permitted.
 - Houseparents will prepare appropriate meals and serve them to you in your room.
- * Our goal is to help you get the rest you need and to facilitate recovery quickly. Houseparents will contact your school if appropriate to excuse your absence. If you are employed, you should call your employer to let them know of your absence unless otherwise directed by houseparents.

Medication and Health

- * You will be expected to take any medications as prescribed by your doctor.
- * No medication prescribed or otherwise, may be kept in your room.
- * Analgesics (such as Tylenol), antacids (such as Tums), prenatal vitamins, or any other medicines must be kept and dispensed by houseparents.
- * You will be responsible to ask houseparents for your prescribed medications on a daily basis.

NOTE: Use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or non-prescribed drugs will result in serious program consequences may be reported to the police, and may result in discharge from the Family Life Center Home.

- * Smoking is prohibited (at home, work, school or on visits) during your time at the Family Life Center Home. No smoking will be permitted on Family LIFE Center Home property by residents, staff, or visitors.

Movies, Books and Music

- * You will have access to watch appropriate TV shows in the livingroom.
- * Your personal CD's, radio, and reading materials are allowed as long as they don't promote drugs, sex or violence.
- * We utilize a Christian Movie Guide to determine the appropriate moves.
- * Headphones are not permitted.
- * Volume should be kept at a level such that the music cannot be heard outside of your room.
- * Music may be played in the main areas of the house with houseparents approval.



Recreation

- * There will be at least one scheduled family fun time a week.
- * All residents are expected to participate, unless excused for illness or due to loss of privileges.
- * We will go to the YMCA every morning Monday thru Friday at 9am.



Religious Activities



- * We will have a family devotion time five nights per week.
- * We will also attend church on Sundays.
- * After your first month in the home, you may attend a local church with family members or friends on your visitors list pending approval from houseparents.
- * Four-hour visits are not permitted during church hours.
- * Bibles, Bible studies, and other resources are available upon request.
- * We ask that you please bring your Bible to church and to devotions each night.

Running Away

- * If you choose to run away or leave Family LIFE Center Home, we are obligated to notify your parents or sponsor and to file a report with the police department.

Theft

- * Stealing in the home or in the community will result in serious program consequences.
- * Theft may be reported to the police.
- * You may face immediate discharge from the Family LIFE Center Home.

Violence

- * Corporal punishment will never be used in the home.
- * Physical violence between residents or from a resident toward a staff member will result in a thorough interview conducted by the appropriate staff and significant program consequences for all parties involved. In certain cases, the incident may be reported to the police and/or the resident may be discharged from the home.

Baby Items

- * You will have an opportunity to earn vouchers to purchase baby or apartment items.
- * Shopping with your vouchers is only available to girls who complete the program.



Housekeeping/Chores

- * You will be responsible for the upkeep of your personal living space.
- * You will share in the daily and weekly responsibilities of the home.
- * The following tasks will be a part of your regular responsibilities:

Bedroom Check

You will be responsible to perform the following tasks in your bedroom on a daily basis. These tasks should be done before 9am daily except on Saturday (noon).

1. Drawers organized and closed
2. Dresser tops dust/clutter free
3. Neat under beds
4. Trash can empty
5. Closed neatly organized.
6. Lights and fan off
7. Beds properly made
8. Floors clean
9. Blinds/drapes open

Bathroom Check

You will be responsible to perform the following tasks in your bathroom on a daily basis. They should be done before 9am daily except on Saturday (noon). If you share a bathroom, this responsibility will rotate on a weekly basis.

1. Trash emptied
2. Chrome dry/polished (no spots)
3. Towels neatly hung on racks
4. Shower curtain closed
5. Paper products in supply
6. Counters clean, dry, clear of personal items, hair, etc...
7. Toilet paper on roll
8. Toilet lid closed
9. Floors clean



Daily Chores

All residents and houseparents rotate through the daily chores of the kitchen (dishwasher/trash, cook, dinner clean-ups). The daily chore sheet is posted on the bulletin board. Houseparents will assist you as needed in becoming proficient with these chores.

Constants

You will be assigned a “constant” area in the home. You will make sure this area is neat at bedtime and at other times as instructed by the houseparents.

Weekly Chores

Weekly chores are our “deep cleaning” and are typically done on Weekdays. Each resident is assigned two areas, a cleaning checklist is supplied, and the chores are to be completed and checked by houseparents no later than 5:00pm. Residents who work on Saturday should arrange a time during the week with the houseparents for completing their weekly chores.



Laundry

- * You will be assigned a laundry day to do your own laundry.
- * It must be completed by 9pm that evening.
- * Approval from houseparents is needed to change your laundry day; emergency laundry time is available with approval from houseparents.
- * Please be sure you have at least a half load before doing laundry.
- * Laundry Supplies are provided.
- * Ask the houseparents on duty if you need assistance with your laundry.
- * Please wash your bed sheets each week.



Medical Care

- * During your stay, medical care through an excellent OB-GYN clinic will be provided for prenatal care, delivery, postnatal, and standard first aid care.

- * These services are provided at no financial cost to you with your Medicaid coverage as long as you remain in the home.
- * Housemother will take you to all appointments, and will be in the exam room with you.
- * You will also receive education in prenatal care, postnatal care, well-baby classes, and nutrition during your time in the program.
- * If you make an adoption plan, you may be moved from the maternity floor in the hospital to recover from labor and delivery.

Counseling

- * You will meet with a Family LIFE Center Home House mom once a week (more if the house mom deems it helpful).
- * You will meet with a Counselor once a week
- * Your counselor will help you to work through various physical, emotional and spiritual needs during your stay in the home and in preparation for your life after completing the program.
- * You and your counselor will explore both parenting and adoption choices.
- * Counselor may request that boyfriend or legal guardian(s) come in for joint counseling sessions.
- * You will be given assignments to complete in between sessions.
- * You will meet with a Spiritual Mentor to go through our program.

Life Skills Training

- * You will work on different life skills while in the home.
- * Houseparents will help you identify areas where you are strong, and areas where they can help you to grow.
- * We will have different volunteers teaching different life skills. You will be required to go to participate in their classes.

