

Frequently Asked

QUESTIONS

FOR STUDIO BLUE YOUTH SERVICES



24/7 Crisis Hotline 226-668-0357 | www.thewomenscentre.org/studioblue | youthresidence@thewomenscentre.org

·Why are youth placed in the Studio Blue program?

- Youth are often referred to Studio Blue because they are receiving service from the Children's Aid Society (CAS) or due to family circumstances where parents feel unable to provide appropriate support. Many youth in our program have experienced challenges such as running away from home, legal difficulties, or exposure to unsafe environments, including substance use or exploitation.

·What is the age range for the Studio Blue Youth Services Program?

- 15-18 years old.

·Does a youth have to have been trafficked to admit to the program?

- No, youth at risk of being trafficked or vulnerable to exploitation can admit to the program.

·Can a youth call to receive services or does someone else have to refer them?

- A youth can call and self-refer to the program at any time, or can allow a family member or trusted individual, such as a teacher, counsellor, or social worker, to make the referral on their behalf.

·Does a youth have to live at the residence to receive counselling?

- No. The Women's Centre offers a range of outreach counselling services for anyone needing support or can provide referrals to other youth-based support programs.

·Does it cost money to stay at Studio Blue?

- The program requires a nominal payment for room and board, with specific arrangements discussed during the intake process. If a youth does not have an established income, staff will provide support to help them secure it. Youth are not expected to make payments until their income has been arranged, and we are committed to assisting them throughout this process

·What if a youth requires money while staying at Studio Blue?

- The most essential needs will already be provided. This includes personal care items, transportation, and food/snacks.
- Beyond meeting basic needs, we provide meaningful opportunities for growth and connection. Youth have access to local recreational facilities, such as the YMCA, where they can participate in activities that foster wellness and community engagement. Additionally, our staff organizes engaging weekend activities and outings to enhance their experience.

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· **How long can a youth stay at the residence?**

- The duration of a youth's stay at the residence is not fixed, as each individual's circumstances are unique, and some may require a longer period to prepare for independent living. Ideally, the program is structured to support a stay of approximately 9 to 12 months.

· **What does the Studio Blue residence offer?**

- Studio Blue provides a safe place to stay and heal that is inspected and licensed by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. The program provides a secure and nurturing living environment, offering nutritious meals and snacks, transportation for school and medical appointments.
- Staff are available on-site to provide counselling and support to help youth heal from their trauma and start to rebuild their lives.
- We ensure that all youth have access to weather-appropriate clothing, as well as comprehensive medical, dental, and other essential services.
- Additionally, staff will make every effort to be a fully inclusive space and will work with youth to ensure that spiritual/religious, ethno-cultural, gender identity, dietary requirements are met.

· **Can a youth bring a pet with them into the residence?**

- Unfortunately, youth are not permitted to bring pets into the residence. However, we understand the positive impact animals can have on emotional well-being. To support this, staff and volunteers may bring their own pets to the residence as part of therapeutic programming or activities.

· **Are friends and family allowed to visit?**

- To ensure the confidentiality and comfort of everyone living in the residence, visits with friends are encouraged to take place outside of the residence.
- Family members are welcome to visit; however, visits will be limited to the counselling room to maintain privacy and respect for all residents
- Additionally, anyone identified as abusive will not be permitted on the property.

· **Can youth bring their cellphone, laptop, or tablet while living at the residence?**

- Yes, youth are permitted to keep their personal devices, such as cellphones, laptops, or tablets, while staying at the residence.
- Cell phones are handed in at night and given back in the morning.
- For safety purposes, phones will be connected to Life 360 to ensure responsible use. We prioritize the safety and well-being of all residents and maintain guidelines for device and social media usage to promote a secure and respectful environment.

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·How are the rooms assigned?

- Studio Blue is a 7 bedroom, 8 bed home.
- When the residence has more than 7 residents, two youth will share a room.
- The bathrooms are shared amongst all residents.

·Are residents responsible for any chores?

- Yes, all youth are responsible for helping to maintain a clean and tidy living environment.
- Each resident is expected to sign up for specific chores throughout the week to ensure communal spaces are well-kept.
- Additionally, youth are required to keep their personal bedroom spaces clean and organized, as well as collaborate with others to maintain shared areas such as bathrooms.

·Do the youth have to participate in any programming or groups?

- Yes, group attendance is mandatory. These gatherings and sessions are thoughtfully structured to benefit residents, focusing on skill-building, personal development, and collaborative activities.
- Programming may include workshops, counselling sessions, and interactive exercises designed to promote growth, learning, and teamwork. During their stay, youth engage in activities aimed at gaining valuable life skills, such as cooking, resume-building, and other practical tools to support their future success.
- There are also weekly house meetings that all residents must attend to discuss any issues arising in the residence.

Can youth come and go? Is there free time?

- As Studio Blue Youth Services is a voluntary program, and not a locked-down facility. After the first week of stabilization, youth can have time out in the community and free time is built into day-to day programming.
- Youth can stay as long or as short a time that they like. Ideally the program is best suited to be completed in one year, and youth can discharge on their own volition.

·Are overnights allowed?

- Once the youth have settled into the program, are following the rules, and the family/friend is deemed as a safe person, the youth may wish to spend a night with them, this can be arranged, provided a parent or guardian verifies the plan with staff beforehand. This may not happen for at least a few months.
- Overnights at a friend's place may also be considered. However, permission from that parent or guardian is required along with some safety details such as the address and who else might be present.

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·What happens if a youth breaks a rule?

- If a rule is broken, staff will address the situation privately with the youth involved. This approach allows for open dialogue, ensuring the youth has an opportunity to share their perspective and actively participate in determining appropriate consequences for their actions.

What is the program's Harm Reduction Model (Cigarettes, Marijuana, etc.)

As it is illegal for individuals under the age of 19 to purchase or possess cigarettes, or marijuana, smoking and associated paraphernalia is not permitted inside the residence however:

- The program and direct service delivery is operated within a Harm Reduction lens incorporating a critical analysis to youth, staff and community health and safety. As youth arrive to our program we work with them as a group and individually to reduce barriers and enhance knowledge and understanding essential for making good choices.
- As it relates to the use of nicotine and marijuana we provide youth with the tools they require to inform their decisions, including providing each youth with a key to a metal security box where they are able to place items. This box is secured into the bricks, behind the privacy fence of our back yard. This is monitored by security cameras.
- The youth are encouraged to seek medical care for any experienced condition where CBD could benefit them and reduce the impacts of their conditions.
- Youth are provided a safe and protected from the elements area in which to smoke in adherence to legislation and by-laws.
- Additionally, staff are available to connect youth with addiction services if they express an interest in pursuing support.
- If the staff note presenting behavioural challenges or expressed concerns that might impact the health and safety of any stakeholder this is from a holistic harm reduction lens that includes the youth and the behavioural impacts to any individual or group.

·Are youth allowed to keep medication in their rooms?

- All medications are securely stored in a locked box kept in the office, and staff will dispense them at the appropriate times.
- However, exceptions are made for life-saving medications, such as puffers, nitroglycerin, epi-pens, or other essential items that youth typically carry with them for safety reasons.

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·What is the curfew?

- Bed time/lights out is 11pm Sunday through Thursday and Friday & Saturday at midnight
- The curfew will be established by staff and discussed during intake or orientation to ensure clarity and alignment with the residence's guidelines.

·What happens at the end of the stay when a youth is ready to move on from the program?

- It is expected that, by the time a youth's stay concludes, they will have worked collaboratively with staff to develop a thoughtful and individualized exit plan.
- This plan may involve returning to family, moving into a safe and supportive housing arrangement, or securing an apartment.