

Valley-Lake
Boy's Home,
Inc.

Parent
Hand Book

VALLEY-LAKE BOY'S HOME

MISSION STATEMENT

We strive to create an environment that is:

STRUCTURED enough to teach accountability for the consequences of choices;

ENRICHED enough to foster healthy coping skills;

SAFE enough to encourage attempts to change and;

SUPPORTIVE enough to develop the self-esteem, self-discipline and the motivation that makes success possible.

The Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc.

The Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc., is a private non-profit residential treatment facility for young males with severe behavior problems. The Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc., is licensed for fourteen boys between the ages of twelve and eighteen. The Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc., is licensed through the Department of Corrections. The goal of the Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc., is to provide a safe and secure environment in which a youth can work through the conflicts connected to his inappropriate and negative behaviors. The program is designed to facilitate attitudinal and behavioral changes that will allow these adolescents to function in the community without further involvement in the criminal justice system. The Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc., is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors who volunteer their services. The program has been in existence since 1975.

First Day at Valley-Lake

When a resident arrives at Valley-Lake, he will spend the first hour or two by filling out intake forms, having his clothing and property searched and transcribed onto a Property Inventory Sheet, and will be shown his room and locker. He will be given a supply of personal hygiene items and will be given the necessary linen he needs. The rule book and schedule will be explained to him. He will then be introduced to all staff and residents.

Staff

There are usually two staff on duty at all times. Typically, depending on the number of residents, a third staff member comes on duty after school during the school year and for the work day during the summer. A night person is on duty from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. This staff alertly supervises the night.

Your Child's Case Manager

Your son will be assigned a case manager who has the responsibility for the overall health and well-being of your son during his placement. If you have any questions regarding your son's home visits, privileges, finances, health or any other concerns, please feel free to call his case manager.

During the first thirty (30) days of your son's stay, his case manager will be gathering information regarding your son from some/all of the following sources:

- Sessions with your son

- Meetings/phone calls to you
- Your son's social worker/probation officer
- School officials
- Past records and/or reports

Using this information, an assessment will be made of the strengths and weaknesses in your son's life. From this assessment, your son and his case manager will write up a treatment plan or goals for change. There will be a staffing in 30 days where everyone connected can sit down and discuss the program, how his first 30 days have gone and the treatment plan.

Your son and his case manager will meet for a weekly session. During these sessions your son is encouraged to discuss whatever he chooses. The case manager will review his past weekly behavior, his behavior objectives, treatment plan, discuss topics of concern, plan and review home visits, etc. The case manager will also try to talk with you weekly. You are encouraged to call, if you have any questions or concerns.

THE PROGRAM

The program at the Valley-Lake Boy's Home is made up of the following sections and each section must be satisfactorily completed before release will be considered.

Treatment Plan

Treatment plans are goals for behavior changes. They are set up by the case manager, parents, probation officer/social worker and the resident.

Examples of Behavior Objectives are:

1. Joe will have six successful home visits in a row.
2. Joe maintain a daily average of 12.
3. Joe will complete any court orders.

Points/Merit Ladder/Clipboard

The merit ladder is a system of points consisting of downgrades and plus grades. Residents begin each day with ten points. Residents earn plus grades for positive behavior such as doing their job well, doing extra work and having an excellent attitude. Residents earn downgrades for negative behavior such as breaking rules, not following instructions and not doing homework after school. At the end of each day the points are added up.

A resident passes the day if they have seven or more points. A resident fails the day if they have received six or less points for the day.

A resident zeros for the day if they have 0 or less points. These points are tallied towards their 2,000-point requirement. We also figure out their daily point average and determine the next day's merit ladder order with the resident with the most points being first and the one with the least is last. If a resident chooses to run away, or becomes so disorderly, that the Sheriff's Office is called, it eliminates all points they have earned since their first day. They must also begin earning their points of the program over again.

While we make the best effort to hand out plus grades/downgrades fairly, it is inevitable that residents sometimes disagree with a decision or judgment. Some plus grades or downgrades are overlooked and other forms of rewards/consequences might be decided upon such as verbal praise, redirection or the gain or loss of privileges. These are all judgment calls by staff.

Level System

There are four levels at the Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc:

Blue Level is the highest. A resident who reaches this level will have the most privileges and freedom among the other levels. The penalties for violating blue level will be costly. The residents on blue are usually considered the most trustworthy.

Green Level is the next highest. A resident on this level is eligible for SNT, going on home visits and off-grounds with his parents. They may have their radio in their room and may have spending money. In order to move up to blue a resident must write up a statement of the reasons why he should be moved up and present it at the staff meeting closest to the eligible date.

Yellow Level is the second towards the bottom. In order to get on yellow a resident ends the day between a 6 and a 1 or auto-fails from blue or green levels. A resident on yellow cannot go on a home visit, SNT or on an off-grounds with his parents when they visit. They will have no radio privileges or have possession of a radio in their room. There will be no spending money or money in their possession. Residents will not be allowed to be up past 9:00 p.m. Any items brought from parents will be kept in their cubby until they are off of yellow level. Yellow Level is also the level in which new residents are placed when they first arrive at Valley-Lake. They can

earn green level when they have had fourteen days of passing behavior and have not failed or zeroed.

Red Level is our lowest level. A resident gets on red level by ending the day at 0 or less points from green or yellow level or by receiving an auto-zero. There are many restrictions for the resident on red such as: all yellow restrictions, computer restrictions, no television and they must spend all their free time in their rooms.

Some examples on how a resident can auto-fail are: refusal to follow program rules or staff directions, threatening in anger either physical or verbally, not having gloves and hat along (during cold winter rules), run talk, not wearing their seatbelts while in Valley-Lake's direct care.

Some examples on how a resident can auto-zero are: having possession of stolen property, physical contact in anger, program zero, possession and/or use of contraband, ringing alarms, deliberate destruction of property or lying.

Items Not Allowed

- Cigarettes, tobacco products, vaping, e-cigs, supplies, matches or lighters.
- Any type of weapon or knives as defined by Valley-Lake staff.
- Any alcohol or controlled substances, inhalants, drug paraphernalia.
- Posters or clothing that refer to alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances or contain swearing.
- Obscene materials/sexually explicit materials.
- Motor vehicles or bikes.
- Tools.
- Tattooing Materials.

School

All the residents of the Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc., attend school in our self-contained classroom at the Breckenridge High School. There is an EBD/LD teacher and core class teachers. If your child has an IEP, the school case manager will be contacting you in regard to a meeting.

The classes are individualized to the achievement level of the child when necessary and possible. Residents may get help from both teachers or from staff.

Although rare, if a young mans behavior and attitude is trustworthy enough, the resident will be allowed to take classes with mainstream students. They must meet mainstream eligibility requirements in order to remain at mainstream. Being mainstreamed is sometimes requirement for a resident's release.

Please contact the Breckenridge High School, for all educational questions.
218-643-2694

Home visits

Permission for HV, and where a resident goes on a HV must be provided by their placing agent.

Residents must have reached 300 points before they can go on a home visit. Their first home visit is usually for only 24 hours. After the first home visit, they usually are for 48 hours and occur every two weeks. Residents leave for their home visits at 5:00 p.m. on Friday. They must return by 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, unless special arrangements have been made through your child's case managers.

Residents must follow their parent(s) rules, their probation curfew and any other rules set up by their case manager. Home visits are a privilege and a time to work on family relationships. They are not simply a vacation from Valley-Lake for the resident. Home visits may be modified at the discretion of the case manager. Home visits may be ended earlier and the resident returned early, if the parents feel the home visit is going poorly.

No home visits will be allowed on New Year's Eve, the 4th of July, Halloween, or the considered holiday weekend of the three mentioned.

Day to Day Program

6:00 a.m.	Wake-up
6:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.	Clean rooms, jobs, showers
7:50 a.m.	Leave for school
8:15 - 8:30 am.	Breakfast in school
8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.	School
3:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Return and snack
4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	Recreation
6:00 p.m.	Supper
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Leisure time (TV, games, sessions, homework and groups)

9:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. Last calls to bathroom
10:00 p.m. Lights out

Summer Schedule

During the summer, our schedule remains much the same. However, in place of school the residents work. Work is done at Valley-Lake and can include mowing, gardening and general maintenance in and around the buildings. They may also be eligible for CEP employment. Valley-Lake does participate in a summer school program. This gives your son the opportunity to earn some school credit.

Weekend Schedule

Saturday Night Treat is an enjoyable outing to reward residents who are doing well, but did not go on a home visit. To be eligible for SNT residents must have been at Valley-Lake for at least one weeks and must have earned his privileges. The residents usually participate in one of the following activities for SNT such as bowling, swimming, going to the movies, renting movies or attending a special event in town. This activity is supervised by Valley-Lake staff. Sunday is the day set aside for visiting, from 1pm-5pm. (See Visiting below)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thursday Night Bible Study

Bible study is held on Thursday nights at Valley-Lake and is conducted by local volunteers who come out to Valley-Lake. It normally lasts about 45 minutes. Attendance at Bible Study is voluntary. All residents regardless of their level may attend this. Residents who become disruptive will be asked to leave and may earn consequences for their behavior.

Private Religious Education

A resident's pastor or other spiritual case manager may have access to the Valley-Lake Boy's Home, Inc., to see the individual resident by making an appointment with the case manager. Every reasonable effort will be made to provide visiting pastors and spiritual case managers access to the resident in a private area of the facility.

Cognitive Behavior Group or Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Group usually lasts from 1 -2 hours. Group provides a weekly opportunity for residents to confront each other on what they see as positive and negative aspects of each other's behavior without retribution. This confrontation is topped when it becomes demeaning and belittling.

Residents also discuss concerns such as family relationships and obligations, peer pressure, intoxicant usage, etc.

Groups help the residents understand how others see them. Residents learn to be assertive. Residents realize that others have many of the same needs and wants as they do. Group also helps staff understand what roles the residents take in their relationships with their peers.

Letters

All letters (both incoming and outgoing) are screened by staff. This means we open the letters to look for contraband. If there are obvious gang drawings or inappropriate talk/words, we will not send the letter. We also screen for profanity and risk behavior. We will not send a letter if it contains the same Valley Lake will supply, paper, envelopes and stamps. To write to your son:

Name

Valley Lake Boys Home
PO Box 411
Breckenridge, MN 56520

Phone Calls

Parents may call to talk to their son once a day, per household for ten minutes until 9:30 p.m. Staff does reserve the right to shorten or to terminate the call if necessary. Residents may call home one time during the week. Any calls to and from other family members are at the case manager's discretion. They should be made/received during their shift. Siblings, under the age of 18 or who live in the same household as their parents will share the same 10 min phone call. All calls may be monitored by staff without prior knowledge (except calls to/from lawyers). Calls going out are generally for 10 minutes.

Money

Parents may send money to their child as often as they would like to. We have a lockbox we can keep a reasonable amount of money in for your son's allowance, if you wish to insure that he has money available when he is eligible to have some. Residents, who are green or blue, are allowed to have up to \$10 to spend per week. Case Managers are responsible for giving out this allowance. Residents at Valley-Lake have a chance.

to work all summer long either directly for Valley-Lake or for the CEP program.

The money earned is budgeted individually depending on financial obligations, privilege level and personal needs your son has.

Visitation Policy

We believe that visits by the resident's family are important for both the resident and their families. We encourage visitations on as many Sundays as possible. We hope that you will understand that we are an institution so our rules exist to meet many different responsibilities. We have set up the following visitation guidelines to help make the visits go as smoothly and safely as possible.

- Regular visitation hours are on Sunday from 1-5 p.m. unless prior arrangements have been made through your case manager.
- Valley-Lake is a no smoking facility. This includes all buildings and property.
- There is no smoking or vaping or use of any other tobacco or chemical use on Valley-Lake grounds.
- Visitors should report to a staff member to let them know they have arrived. Visitors will also need to sign in on the visitor's log.
- Please **remove** the keys from your vehicle and **lock** your doors.
- If a resident is on green or blue level, he may have his visit off grounds with prior authorization from their case manager.
- It is required that your arrival and departure be directly pointed out to a Valley-Lake staff member by the visitor personally.
- Only immediate family members are allowed to visit (parents, siblings, grandparents). All others are required to wait in the car. Any non-related visitor must have prior approval by the resident's case manager and probation officer or social worker.

- Parents are encouraged to call regarding weather conditions, if they are going to be late or have to cancel.
- We regret that occasionally, due to unexpected circumstances or your son's behavior we may have to cancel or shorten visits. We will attempt to contact parents in advance.
- All siblings must be supervised by their parents at all times.
- All residents must be within immediate staff supervision.
- The staff on duty retains the right to ask any visitors to leave.
- Any pets that are brought to Valley-Lake are to be kept in your vehicle. Parents are responsible for their own pets. Residents who do not have offgrounds, will not go out to vehicle to see the pet.
- Valley Lake has a dog who lives here. If you are concerned about the dog while visiting, please alert the staff.
- Residents are not allowed to be in your vehicle for other than leaving or returning from an off-grounds visit.
- To be consistent with our level system, each resident and their visitors **must** follow the rules of the program level they are on.
- If you wish to bring a treat for the whole group for a special occasion like a birthday, it must be approved by the resident's case manager prior to that day. Please remember that earned consequences apply if a treat/privilege is involved.
- Any item that the resident's level does not allow will be placed into that resident's cubby until he is eligible.
- Please do not give any money, gifts, etc., to the residents. Please give it to the staff on duty.
- No cell phones are allowed to be used by visitors or residents during visits and should be left in the vehicle.

Any visitor that is obviously under the influence, extremely hostile, verbally abusive, and/or unable to control their behavior or comply with the rules and regulations will be denied visitation. All visitors must be approved for visitation.

Parents Responsibility

It is very important that parents keep in touch. We need to discuss any problems or concerns that may come up. You are encouraged to discuss a contact schedule with your son's case manager.

We ask that you be honest about your home situation and your child's behavior while he is on a home visit. It is helpful to know both the positive and the negative. We will not be able to address the family situation and your son's behavior when things are covered up. It will take longer to accomplish the goals we want to reach.

We hope that you will be able to participate in and attend all of your son's staffing's. You may want to consider outside courses or counseling to help you cope with and prepare for your son's return home.

We hope that your son's stay at Valley-Lake will be a positive experience both for you and for your son. We understand that you may not know what to expect so feel free to call your son's case manager with your questions and concerns.

PROBLEMS / QUESTIONS ASSISTANCE:

If parents, guardians or professionals in the community have questions about a resident at Valley Lake, they should call 218-643-4036 and ask for the resident's Case Manager, or ask any staff. Staff may not answer any questions about other residents or give names to anyone other than parents, placing agent or other contacts for that specific resident.

GRIEVANCE and COMPLAINT:

If a parent, guardian, or custodian has a complaint regarding his or her child's care at Valley Lake, he or she may call the resident's Case Manager or Valley Lake's Director at 218-643-4036.

Chemical Use Testing

Purpose: The Valley-Lake Boy's Home maintains a zero tolerance approach to the use of any illegal chemicals such as alcohol, drugs or tobacco. We believe that this policy of drug testing will act as both a deterrent to use and as a tool to identify those in need of further treatment. We believe that being drug-free during the length of the program can allow residents the opportunity to break old habits and build new, positive patterns before they return home.

Policy: It is the policy of the Valley-Lake Boy's Home to test residents for the usage of prescribed and non-prescribed drugs including (but not limited to) alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines and hallucinogens, as well as for tobacco use.

Release from the Program

The average length of stay at Valley-Lake is six to eight months. However, the length of stay can be shortened or lengthened depending on each resident and his situation. To earn release, all aspects of the program must be completed. He must earn a minimum of 2,000 points. This is usually the first and the easiest to accomplish. He must pass all of his school classes. His home situation must be as stable and positive as possible to support the changes made by the resident while at Valley-Lake.

Finally, all the treatment plan goals must be met. School or work/future plans must be set. By evaluating the progress, behavior and attitude in all of these areas, a decision can be made regarding a release date. This decision will be reached by all of those involved including his case manager, probation officer/social worker, parent(s), other staff and the resident himself.

RESIDENT RIGHTS AND BASIC SERVICES

A resident has the right to:

- Reasonable observance of cultural and ethnic practice and religion;
- Reasonable degree of privacy;
- Right to participate in development of the resident's treatment and case plan;
- To positive and proactive adult guidance, support, and supervision;
- To be free from abuse, neglect, inhumane treatment, and sexual exploitation;
- To adequate medical care;
- To nutritious and sufficient meals and sufficient clothing and housing;
- To live in clean, safe surroundings;
- To receive a public education;
- To reasonable communication & visitation with adults outside the facility, which may include parent, extended family members, siblings, legal guardian, caseworker, attorney, therapist, a physician, a religious advisor, & a case manager in accordance with resident's case plan;
- To daily bathing or showering and reasonable use of materials, including culturally specific appropriate skin care and hair care products or any special assistance necessary to maintain an acceptable level of personal hygiene;
- Access to protection and advocacy services;
- To retain and use a reasonable amount of personal property;
- To courteous and respectful treatment;
- To be free from bias and harassment regarding race, gender, age, disability, spirituality, and sexual orientation;
- To be informed of and to use a grievance procedure;
- To be free from restraint or seclusion used for a purpose other than to protect the resident from imminent danger to self or others as outlined in Valley-Lake's discipline plan.

2960.0080 Facility Operational Services, Policies and Practices.

Subpart 18.A.

Parent/Guardian Grievances

If you have a grievance (except for allegations of abuse and /or maltreatment) with either a staff member or another resident, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Talk to the resident's case manager about your concern.
2. You may contact the Executive Director, Program Director or Assistant Director by phone, mail or email.
3. You may request a grievance form from any staff or write the grievance in a letter or email to Case Manager or Director at Valley Lake.
4. Contact the placing agent.
5. If you do not feel that the issue was resolved, you may contact the licensor at MN DOC or contact the MN Department of Human Services.

If you feel that any Resident Rights have been violated, please contact someone at Valley Lake whom you are most comfortable talking with. If this does not resolve or if you need further explanation, please contact administration.

