

Kids Helping Kids Host Home Component

DEC 18 2000
CDJFS-LICENSING SECTION

Kids Helping Kids uses a unique method of treatment which includes sending first phase or newcomer clients (clients in the first two or three months of treatment) home with an oldcomer (a client who has reached second phase or higher) and that client's parents. There are several things accomplished with this approach.

1. We are able to have clients (newcomers and oldcomers) in structure 24 hours a day over many months for a fraction of the cost of residential care.
2. The homes provide a warm, non-institutional setting for our new clients.
3. Oldcomers model for the newcomers new and more functional ways of interacting with family members.
4. This exchange allows the oldcomer an opportunity to mentor another teen, reinforcing what the oldcomer himself has learned.
5. This exchange actually brings the program home to the whole family. Parents and siblings interact with clients while they develop insight and learn new coping skills.

Parents who live within a fifty mile radius of the KHK facility are required to provide safe transportation and a home which is constantly supervised when their child makes 2nd phase. First phase typically takes two or three months depending on the individual progress of the client. Therefore, parents are in our education groups for some period of time before they begin to take clients home. They are educated about rules and securing their home. More importantly, the KHK staff members get to know the parents by treatment issues their kids address and interactions with them over time. We know well in advance if there is any major dysfunction in the home that would preclude the parents providing a safe place for newcomers.

The commitment on the part of the parents also eliminates many families before they begin. For instance, people actively abusing drugs and/or alcohol do not choose to admit their children to KHK when told they cannot drink in front of the kids, have alcohol in the home unless it is under lock and key, or interact with their own kids or newcomers smelling of alcohol. Kids will tell us during therapy if their parents abuse drugs or are for some other reason not reliable. We do not get the "average" chemically dependent adolescent because of this parental commitment.

Host homes are inspected after they have been secured and before the client goes home. Parents sign a host home agreement and are required to be in the home and supervise whenever kids are there.

Contact with KHK staff, including a clinician, is available 24 hours/day. Three different staff persons carry beepers. Messages are routed through the Academy of Medicine.

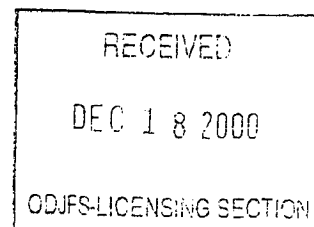
**NO TV, RADIO, READING, ALARMED FROM INSIDE,
CONSTANT RESTRAINT - VERY INSTITUTIONALIZED**

The typical routine for clients in the host home: the KHK facility closes at 8:00 p.m. Parents are required to pick up their household at that time. They usually arrive home between 8:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. All clients, both newcomers and oldcomers, must write a moral inventory (M.I.) daily. They do this on the way home or when they arrive. The M.I. consists of challenges for change, a blessing, good points, and two short-term goals that can be accomplished within 24 to 48 hours. Newcomers discuss their M.I. with their oldcomer. The oldcomers discuss their M.I. with their parents. They then kick back and talk among themselves while having a snack, shower and go to bed.

The kids sleep together in the same room, usually two oldcomers and two newcomers. The rooms have been searched and stripped of anything but beds. When the clients go to bed an alarm is placed on the bedroom door so that if it is opened after parents retire they will be alerted. Anything that could be harmful if swallowed or used as a weapon has been secured under lock and key throughout the house. Home assignments are made with safety and relationship building in mind. Often a new second phaser will be paired with a 4th or 5th phase out-of-town foster brother or sister and they both will have newcomers. (Obviously, only same sex clients go home together.) They get up the next morning, have breakfast and come back to the facility. Our facility opens at 6:30 a.m. so that parents who work may drop off the household beforehand.

The oldcomers mentor and are responsible for the newcomers in the host home. The parents are responsible for supervision and safe transportation. The teens eat dinner at the KHK facility. KHK closes early on Thursday evening, after dinner, and Saturday evening before dinner. Clients eat in the host home on Saturday evening and Sunday only.

While our typical new clients exhibited several behavioral symptoms of chemical dependency before coming into treatment, they usually were in the most conflict with their own parents and behave well in the home of others. This separation gives the kids and their parents time to heal. It also gives the staff something meaningful to use as reinforcement for the clients working on goals and becoming increasingly more honest with their feelings. **Usually, separation makes the heart grow fonder.** As clients get in touch with feelings of love for their parents and shame for the way they have behaved, they become more willing to work for the privilege of talking to their family members to make amends and going home. As clients become more willing to accept responsibility for their behavior, parents become willing to look at their own. This is a very powerful process. By the time a client makes 2nd phase and goes back home, the client has made amends to his parents. They go back home while still in the supportive environment of the program. Individual family therapy beings with all parties willing to work toward resolving family conflicts.



Kids Helping Kids takes several precautions to make sure things run well in the host home:

1. Training of parents before client makes 2nd phase.
2. Host home agreement between KHK and host parents.
3. On call staff.
4. Written rules for parents in home.
5. Education of all clients on the rules of appropriate behavior for all in the host home and a mechanism for kids to immediately report to staff anything that falls outside the norm.
6. Special group sessions immediately after a client goes home to address issues of being host parents.

KHK's professional liability insurance specifically addresses coverage for host home incidents.

Limits are \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000.

