

# **Every Youth Matters**

## **Become A Family Care Home**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Q: What is a Family Care Home?**

**A:** We look for skilled and caring individuals and families who want to open their homes to youth in The John Howard Society of North Island's programs. Caregivers provide encouragement, supervision and the basic necessities of life to youth placed in their homes. The emphasis is on building positive relationships and fostering a nurturing family environment.

#### **Q: Who are the youth coming into Family Care Homes?**

**A:** Family Care Homes serve children and youth ages 12 to 19. They have entered different JHSNI Family Care Home programs for different reasons. Some youth come for treatment and other youth come because they are referred by their probation officer.

#### **Q: What kind of families is JHSNI looking for?**

**A:** JHSNI looks for all types of families who can provide a supportive and stable home environment: couples, single people, empty nesters, families of different cultural backgrounds, home owners, renters.

#### **Q: What kind of supports and services do I get as a JHSNI Family Care Home?**

**A:** JHSNI offers intensive supports to families and youth, including: daily check-ins with staff, 24-hour staff availability, financial reimbursement, training in a variety of relevant topics, monthly respite (another family takes the youth temporarily to give you a break), and additional short breaks when required. Caregivers participate in monthly meetings with other caregivers and staff to discuss ideas and strategies on how to best work with the youth in their respective homes.

#### **Q: Does the youth need her/his own bedroom?**

**A:** Yes, the youth needs to have his/her own bedroom, with a proper door for privacy.

**Q: We would like to help a youth but are not ready to commit to full time caregiving. Are there other ways to help?**

**A:** Short-term or respite care is one way to get involved by providing care to children/youth for a specified time while full time caregivers are unavailable or taking a break. It can be as short as a day or as long as a few weeks. Other ways to be involved include mentoring or job training.

**Q: Do I need to be at home full time to become a full-time caregiver?**

**A:** We prefer to have one adult available to us and the youth at all times. However, we recognize this is not always possible for some families. If you work outside of your home, or, in the case of a two-parent family, if both adults work outside of the home, you need to make sure that one of you or an alternate person is available in case the youth is sick and needs to remain at home. You also need to be available for regular meetings and training sessions during the week.

**Q: I smoke cigarettes regularly; does that automatically disqualify me as a caregiver?**

**A.** No, it does not disqualify you from applying or becoming a caregiver. Children and youth have the right to live in a smoke-free environment, so we ask that you don't smoke inside your home or your vehicle. Some of our youth also smoke cigarettes and we encourage caregivers to set up a designated covered space outside of their homes for this purpose.

**Q: Do I need to have my own vehicle?**

**A.** It is best for caregivers to have access to a reliable vehicle as you are required to transport youth to and from program daily as well as other destinations like the doctor's office or to an extra curricular activity in the evenings when public transportation is not available.

**Q: What is the pay?**

**A:** Family caregivers are paid contractors, receiving a monthly retainer and per diem fees. It works out to be \$100 per night that the youth is in your home. This money is to cover the cost of living for the youth, transportation, a recreational activity, a weekly allowance, clothing allowance, basic personal supplies, and fee for service for caregivers.

**Q: Are the youth violent?**

**A:** Youth are thoroughly screened by a screening committee before they are accepted into JHSNI programs. They are deemed to be safe to be in a care home program. At times we have some youth who may need to work on grounding strategies more than others. However, we will not put our staff, caregivers, other youth or the community at risk of violent behaviours. If in the event that staff, caregivers or other youth feel unsafe around a particular youth we will take all the steps necessary to resolve the situation, which may include the removal of such youth from the program.

**Q: Do caregivers receive training?**

**A:** Absolutely! Initial training includes: meeting the team, orientation to the program, reading the program manual and contract, and becoming familiar with the guidelines and standards for families. Following initial training, caregivers participate in monthly caregiver meetings which include sharing information, ideas and strategies and skill development. We also organize and facilitate regular training on different topics throughout the year and we sponsor or send caregivers to training facilitated and/or organized by other community groups.

**Q: How do I become a Family Care Home for youth?**

**A:** You can start by contacting the family care home recruiter at (250) 286-0222 extension 224 or [thanh@jhsni.bc.ca](mailto:thanh@jhsni.bc.ca) to set up an appointment for your initial interview. The application and home study process includes getting background checks for all adults in a household, filling out an application and other paperwork, having a home site inspection, and completing an assessment process. We meet with you and your family so you can learn more about caregiving and so we can learn more about you. This process can take two to four months.