

Colorado Q-House Program Statement

About Colorado Qualifying House

Our facility is a 6,700 sq. ft. mountain home located at 9,479 feet in altitude on 35 acres in the Colorado Rocky Mountains. We are located 20 minutes up Hwy 103 out of Idaho Springs. As part of the Idaho Springs and Clear Creek County community.

Designed as a retreat we are not only the highest elevation facility in the ROP family, but also the most beautiful and serene with our mountain setting.

Our Colorado Qualifying House is home for up to 15 at-risk youth, who are given the skills and opportunities to turn their lives around. The Q-House is operated as one of Rite of Passage's family of residential programs.

The Q-House began operations in 2006. As part of its core tenets, the Q-House is dedicated to improving the lives of youth and the program. When new social science and research emerges, the Q-House implements the best aspects of it.

Our Philosophy. By utilizing proven evidence-based practices, developing specific processes based on best-practices and establishing a positive organizational culture, Rite of Passage will frame a youth's experience at the Q-House into one that focuses on strengths and life skill development and educational opportunities.

We use a strengths-based approach that recognizes students have unique talents, skills and assets. Through skill development, the Q-House connects youth to the right mix of supports, opportunities and skill-based interventions to further develop these talents, while reducing their risks.

The Q-House operates collectively with the Division of Youth Services and Department of Human Services to identify candidates who may be eligible for placement, based on their assessment. Students are approved through the Juvenile Community Review Board as a final process of approval for entry into the Q House.

Service Delivery Model

The Colorado Qualifying House supports the change process by offering interventions and strategies for youth and families that are based on relevant research. Each youth who enters the program, along with his family and placing agency, participates in a comprehensive assessment with a mental health professional. The assessment covers the following areas.

- a. Medical health and dental care
- b. Mental health and psychological health including treatment history
- c. Education/vocation

- d. Personal/social development
- e. Family and community relationships
- f. Vocational training, if appropriate
- g. Recreation
- h. Life skills, if appropriate
- i. Emancipation skills, if appropriate
- j. Legal status and history
- k. Treatment/placement history
- l. Alcohol/substance abuse history

In addition, youth are evaluated for current mental health symptoms utilizing a battery of screening and assessment tools. These tools currently include the following:

- a. Mini Mental Status Exam (MMSE)
- b. Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ)
- c. Anxiety Scale (GAD-7)
- d. Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ)
- e. PTSD Checklist (PCL-C)
- f. Conduct Disorder Checklist
- g. ODD Checklist
- h. Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)
- i. Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-2 (MAYSI-2)
- j. Juvenile Automated Substance Abuse Evaluation (JASAE)

On the basis of the assessment, the MDT shall complete a treatment plan individualized for the youth. The treatment plan will target areas identified by the team and the assessment. The treatment plan will target the symptoms identified in the assessment and the goal of the treatment interventions is to reduce these symptoms. This treatment plan is reviewed and updated monthly by the treatment team.

The curricula used to deliver these services include:

- **Seeking Safety** is an evidence-based, present-focused counseling model to help people attain safety from trauma and/or substance abuse. It can be conducted in group (any size) and/or individual modality. It is an extremely safe model as it directly addresses both trauma and addiction, but without requiring clients to delve into the trauma narrative (the detailed account of disturbing trauma memories) thus making it relevant to a very broad range of clients.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse** is a curriculum designed for individuals who are moderate to high need in the area of substance abuse. The University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) developed this curriculum; therefore, it refers frequently to the legal effects of substance abuse and is well suited for a criminal justice population. This curriculum can be delivered as a stand-alone substance abuse intervention or incorporated into larger programs, particularly those designed for clients

in the corrections system. As the name of the curriculum suggests, this intervention relies on a cognitive-behavioral approach to teach participants strategies for avoiding substance abuse. The program places heavy emphasis on skill-building activities to assist with cognitive, social, emotional, and coping skills development.

- **Restorative Solutions.** This group focuses on understanding the feelings and the impact of negative activity on the victim. An emphasis is placed on restitution, restorative justice and victim issues, where students put themselves or family members into scenarios which encourage them to develop empathy.
- **Active Parenting.** This curriculum emphasizes basic principles that parents can apply in many situations as their children grow up. The program is divided into six sections, each focusing on a specific theme relevant to teen development. Major themes include building self-esteem, appropriate problem solving techniques, developing responsibility, learning effective communication skills, as well as how these issues relate to drug and alcohol use.
- **Ansell Casey Life Skills** This curriculum emphasizes an assessment to see where each student stands with life skills related to transition and employment skills. Areas of focus Career Planning, Communication, Daily Living, Home Life, Housing and Money Management, Self Care, Social Relationships, Work Life, Work and Study Skills.

As risk factors are lowered, we work to increase and strengthen protective factors. Protective factors are traits in a youth's life that reduce the likelihood of him committing another crime. Pro-social relationships, a functional family environment, and a positive outlook toward the future are just a few of these protective factors.

Fidelity. With the objective of enabling youth to succeed in the community and live a crime, violence and drug-free lifestyle, Colorado Qualifying House measures outcomes and results of the services provided. At the Colorado Qualifying House, our focus on fidelity means the extent to which our interventions were delivered as designed.

To make sure the Q-House's programs are delivered with fidelity and integrity the site initiates the following:

- **KPIs.** Q-House staff keeps records each month known as, "Key Performance Indicators" (KPIs). The KPIs are a blending of process and outcome indicators that are used to monitor the quality or performance of a program or service.
- **Continuous Quality Improvement.** The Q-House utilizes this system of measuring program quality through a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) approach. The CQI is a method of continuously examining processes and making them better. This method uses a team approach, involves the entire organization and has a strong emphasis on customer and client satisfaction.
- **Training.** Staff is trained through pre-service and in-service to ensure that they understand and are competent in delivering the cognitive-based services. Supervision and coaching is also encouraged to develop staff's skills.

Overview of Services

The Colorado Q-House is licensed through the State of Colorado Division of Child Care, and meets the highest standards of our industry. Within this structured and safe environment, Q-House staff provide youth with a wide array of rich and engaging programs that facilitate the change from negative behavior to pro-social behavior.

These services are offered that will also address non-criminogenic needs. By addressing this, the Q-House reduces barriers and helps develop the natural talents, assets and abilities of its youth.

The program features at the Q-House include the following:

Positive Skill Development Groups (PSD). Weekly at the Colorado Q-House, students engage in one positive skill development group. Through these meetings, staff facilitates learning and behavioral change by giving students interventions and strategies that address treatment needs. The PSDs are a time when students can use and practice specific skills and techniques to process treatment issues. During PSDs, students and staff can talk about problems, challenges and goals and identify a social skill that will help students replace the old, undesired behavior, then practice by role-playing the skill in a group. Staff will help students learn how use this new skill in real life situations.

- **Community Group.** With the objective to process issues, behaviors and actions within the living group that is counter to the positive organization culture. The community group will always teach and reinforce a skill.
- **Cognitive Intervention Group.** These groups are structured to discuss behavior and work with students to acquire and practice a new skill or strategy to use to resolve future issues or challenges (such as problem solving skills, basic social skills, etc.)
- **Targeted Skills Group.** Within this group, the staff has an established, pre-set agenda to address a specific cognitive behavioral skill(s) including social skills, thinking skills, conflict resolution, and problem solving skills or moral reasoning.

Medical. Due to our placement within the community, medical services are provided by a local medical clinic for non-emergency situations. For emergency instances, services are obtained through an urgent care or emergency department. Dental services are provided using a local dental network, easing the continuity of care, through locating a facility close to their parole location.

Our youth are medicaid eligible and are responsible to plan and set up appointments, provide insurance information at the time of service, and follow up with any special instructions, including the filling of prescriptions at the local pharmacy.

Mental Health Services The Q-House ensures each student has access to psychiatric services and medications prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner in order to prevent and/or treat health and behavioral health care problems.

Licensed therapists are able to discuss treatment issues with assigned youth. The frequency and duration of the therapy is noted on the Measured Achievement Plan. The therapists also provide family and individual counseling as appropriate.

Recreation. Rite of Passage has a proud heritage of recreation and physical fitness programs, and we continue this experience at the Q-House. Our recreation opportunities are designed to promote healthy, positive lifestyle choices.

The Clear Creek County Recreation District. The Q-House students participate with other community members in intramural basketball and softball. They utilize the local facility for weight lifting, swimming and running.

On Campus Features. Recreation and leisure time activities play an important role in the daily schedule. The Q-House youth learn how to use this time productively through active participation in many different activities including intramural sports, cycling, mountain biking, hiking, weight lifting, fishing, outdoor education, wilderness camping education, board games, etc. Many of these activities are provided on campus.

Extracurricular Activities. Opportunities exist for youth to participate in clubs, camping and field trips.

Education.

Primary Education Our newest offering now at the CO-Q in 2024 is our opening of Rocky Mountain Leadership School in Cooperation and approval through the Colorado Facility School Board our governing and oversight agency for the School. All other admission criteria apply to the students with the addition of only needing transcripts and any other educational information that may be requested for review from our educational department as part of the admission process. Students will be enrolled in direct instruction and utilize Edmentum as an online guide and textbook for some of the core subjects. Service learning and portfolio projects along with community involvement with a focus on education will also complete CDE requirements.

Secondary Education. College and vocation opportunities are available for students through online courses. Students are encouraged to apply and further their education through this method, allowing them to start at a college close to their transition location. Assistance for scholarship applications are also available.

Community Service and Work Experience. The community has played a critical role in shaping a youth's behavior. So too, must these community resources and assets be accessed to help re-shape a youth's delinquent behavior into pro-social behavior. Using this approach, the Q-House strives to rebuild the relationships youth have with their community by connecting them to resources, and providing community service opportunities.

In turn, we want youth to be viewed as a resource to their community, and we want youth to develop a sense of social responsibility and competency. While the Q-House works with numerous worthwhile organizations, ongoing community service projects include:

- Loaves and Fishes Food Bank
- Veterans of Foreign Wars

- Project Support Senior Center
- Faith Community
- Benovelent and Protective Order of Elks
- Lions International
- Open Space Commission
- Colorado Forest Service
- Public Assistance as requested

Students who have earned their High School Diploma or GED will be actively participating in a vocation or occupation in the community weekly as required and learn job experience and educational skills related to their chosen occupation. After completion of the Orientation phase of the Q House students have the opportunity and are encouraged to work off-campus. This is the best privilege for the youth to utilize to be able to save funds and prepare for transition back into the community. A majority of students will complete all court ordered community service and restitution.

Positive Organizational Culture. At the Q-House, staff role-model positive behavioral expectations, and use two effective behavioral models to support students' positive behavior. These two behavioral models are social learning theory and cognitive behavioral approaches.

The Q-House's Positive Organizational Culture. This culture is based on an environment that fosters trust, individual responsibility, mutual respect, achievement and learning.

Behavior Management System. A positive organizational culture utilizes the powerful influence of reinforcers to assist students in changing behaviors that minimize their ability to progress in their treatment plan. The norms of our positive organizational culture drive all positive reinforcers (i.e. progression in status which allows a student more frequent home passes, television time, movies, site visits, etc.), and negative reinforcers, (loss of privileges, essays, suspended status, disciplinary reviews, etc.)

Variances from the culture norms are processed by the staff as they occur. Positive/Negative reinforcers are used to reward/reprove behaviors based on the behavior being exhibited. In the event a student does not respond to this process and all options have been exhausted, he will be assigned to the Enhanced Supervision Program. If repeated incidents occur, and participation in the ESP is unsuccessful, the youth will be returned to a staff secure or secure setting for either a thirty day intervention program or complete regression.

Family Involvement. Family involvement and collaboration is important to these youth, and to the treatment process. When appropriate, the Q-House works to engage parents prior to the admission process. Staff will continue to work with them through their son's discharge. The Q-House staff work with families in four major ways:

1. **Admission.** Parents are involved at admission or even before. They are apprised by the student's Therapeutic Manager what the progression consists of and share expectations of the Q-House.

2. **Treatment Planning.** As appropriate, the Measured Achievement Plan is created in collaboration with the students, placement officials and parents. Copies of the MAP are sent to both placement official and/or parents for their signature. Plans are reviewed every 30 days and updated as needed based on a student's progress or regress in the program.
3. **Parent Communication.** The Case Manager encourages parents to keep in contact with their son while he is at the Q-House. Contact can be letter writing, telephone calls or personal visits.
4. **Home Passes.** Home passes allow the students to reconnect with their family and community, while accomplishing required goals assigned by their Case Manager.

Transition Plans. Like other services, the Transition Plan is driven by results of the PACT re-assessment. Criminogenic needs are prioritized and transition services are focused on the greatest needs, thereby reducing the probability of recidivism. The Transition Plan supports the youth's Measured Achievement Plan, and is completed at least 60 days before the youth exits the program.

Linkages with Community Resources. Youth will be matched and linked with all applicable and available community resources including health care, counseling services, workforce centers, recreational programs, food banks, civic organizations, youth groups and crisis hot lines.

Transition and Aftercare. ROP's Transition and Aftercare program has employed staff in each region since 2002, serving youth from the Q-House.

Q-House Staff

We recognize that quality employees are critical ingredients in operating a solid, quality program. Managing by teamwork and focusing on a unified mission gives youth a chance to see adults modeling cooperation, respect, and good communication skills.

Supervision. Rite of Passage utilizes interactive supervision methods to promote relationships between staff and youth. Staff engages in as many activities with the youth as possible, including sitting and eating meals with them and exercising with them when appropriate.

Qualifications. Staff is hired based on their work experience, educational level and their motivation to work with youth. The following specific requirements are applicable to all Direct Care Staff:

- Ensure all of the students' health, safety and welfare of all staff and students.
- Model and ensure all program norms are upheld without compromise
- Treat others with respect.
- Interactive supervision of students.
- Staff show commitment to work as a unified team for each other and improving the lives of our youth.