

Covid-19 6.26.20

Dear Parents,

We hope this communication reaches you in a safe and healthy condition. As each of you are aware, if you are following the COVID news from Utah, there has been a dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases during the past month, since moving to a lower level of community precautions. As such, given the elevated risk of exposure, Utah has become a state to which some states are strongly recommending their citizens not travel. The status of restrictions in our community is being scrutinized closely. Some considerations include returning to a higher level of community restrictions (e.g. limits on size of gatherings, no dine in eating, etc.). In Salt Lake County, where Youth Care is located, wearing masks outside of your home has been mandated by the local government officials to begin June 27, 2020. Therefore, we feel it is important that we share this information so those of you considering traveling to Utah are sufficiently informed and warned of the elevated risk of being here. Additionally, given this dramatic increase in cases, our Management and COVID-19 teams felt it needful to clarify the following points:

- Youth Care will proceed with allowing visits from families of our students as previously offered up until the end of July 2020. Regarding this, we ask you to continue follow the outlined process and clarify questions or misunderstandings with the therapist working with your child. We also ask that you are thoughtful about the current elevated risk of traveling to Utah and strongly request that if you are traveling to and remaining in Utah, ALL guidelines for community contact be followed.
- All Youth Care students will wear masks whenever they are off campus and in the community.
- All Youth Care employees will be expected to wear masks when in contact with our students or other staff.
- Youth Care will continue to follow strict screening of all employees coming onto campus and NO other persons or visitors will be allowed within the facility.
- Youth Care is currently assessing the plan for the next Parent Days (currently scheduled for August 2020) and will keep you updated. We are confident, however, that **there will NOT be an in-person Parent Days.**

We are hopeful that these stricter precautions and renewed efforts to social distance and use basic hygiene practices will allow for a return to a more normal level of functioning soon. As always, we express thanks for your ongoing support in this process and have appreciated the positive feedback from those of you who have traveled to Utah to see your children.

Regards,
Dr. Mickelsen
Medical Director

Covid-19 6.19.20

Dear parents,

Two weeks ago, Youth Care began in person, off campus visitation for parents of our students. Within these few weeks we have had several successful visits and many more have been scheduled. The reunion of students with their parents has been very positive and heartwarming to witness. However, as this process has been a little more challenging than originally anticipated and given some changes in personnel at Youth Care, we would like to remind you of the process for setting up visits with your children:

- Inform your child's therapist of your desire to visit. In collaboration with the therapist, a determination will be made as to the appropriateness (i.e. safety) of a visit. If a visit is deemed appropriate, parents are to propose two dates for visiting and relay those to the therapist. Therapists will also review information about the procedure with the parents including the requirement to obtain a negative COVID-19 test prior to the visit.
- The therapist will then notify Cindy Warner, R.N (Youth Care Nursing Director) of the parent's intention to visit and share the two proposed dates.
- Cindy will then reach out to the parents to schedule the exact dates and time for the visit.
- One to two days prior to your arrival in Utah, a representative from the medical team will reach out to the parents and review screening questions as well as explain the process of drop off and pick up of your children for the visit.
- Currently we are only scheduling visits through the month of July. Future visitation will be dependent on the guidelines and restrictions, country and statewide, related to Covid-19. We will communicate plans and updates as they are determined.

We acknowledge the great efforts being made on the part of many of you traveling to Utah to see your children. We hope we can assist in making your visits successful and rewarding. Thank you for your patience in this process.

Also, we would like to bring your attention to the following items:

First: Communication between parents and their children at Youth Care is key. In addition to family therapy and phone calls on the weekend, letters are another important avenue to communicate. Most of our students eagerly look forward to receiving mail. However, while letters are welcome and highly encouraged, we would like to remind you that sending packages, other than for your child's birthday or a special holiday, is not in keeping with Youth Care's policy. Additionally, contents of the packages are to be according to the same policy. This reminder comes because this policy has not been followed as closely as it should. Issues with volume of packages, content (including unsafe objects) and distraction this creates (whether it be from the students requesting/anticipating packages or peers who are not receiving as many packages) has been problematic. We respectfully request each of you review the package policy available on the Parent Portal and help us rectify this problem.

Second: Youth Care is committed to serving each of our students and families as best we can. It has come to our attention that many of your efforts to reach staff on campus have been unsuccessful and when voicemail messages have been left some have gone unreturned. This has

led our management team to adjust our practice. As such, we would ask when you call and are unable to reach a staff, please leave a voicemail message on the house (i.e. Alpine, Brighton, Horizon, Summit) voicemail. These voicemails will be checked daily and follow up initiated on that same day.

As we come to the end of another week of this journey, we share this thought: Often, as we work with your children in their treatment, we encourage them to step back and see the bigger picture of what is going on in their lives and with their unique challenges. We encourage them to shift how they think or act and to gain a new perspective. In this same light we would like to share this video which encourages each of us to use the many changes and experiences that have come because of the COVID-19 crisis constructively and view some aspects of our lives with some new perspective.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMiUrdEYpxk>

Warm Regards,

Dr. Richard Mickelsen
Medical Director

Covid-19 5.29.2020

Dear Parents,

During the past few weeks, Youth Care's COVID-19 team has been closely tracking changes related to this virus throughout the country and especially throughout the state of Utah. We are aware that restrictions are loosening up in many areas, including Utah. Locally, this loosening appears to be associated with an increase in the number of confirmed cases of COVID. While this is not completely unexpected, it remains a concern for us. However, while recognizing the need to be cautious and minimize the exposure and risk to our students and staff, we recognize the importance and therapeutic value of in-person visits, when possible, between students and their families. Therefore, Youth Care has decided to move forward with in-person visitations. The steps listed below outline the current plan for these visits.

Step One – Desire to visit:

- Parents will notify their child's therapist of their intention to visit.
- Therapist will then, in concert with the student's treatment team, determine whether an off-site visit is appropriate (e.g. due to safety issues). If a visit is deemed appropriate, then
 - Parents will identify two periods of time in June or July that would work (only one time period will be used)
 - Therapist will determine length of visitation times based on student's level of safety.
 - Therapist will email information regarding requested dates and length to Medical Team Scheduler.

Step Two – Scheduling a visit:

- The Medical Team scheduler gathers the above information, formalizes the visit on the master schedule and then confirms the date(s)/duration of the visit with the family via e-mail.
- Additionally, the Medical Team scheduler will also provide information about procedures for pick-up/drop-off of the students.

Step Three - Prior to arriving for the visit:

- Each family member visiting will need to have written confirmation of a NEGATIVE COVID test before picking up your child.
 - You may do this at home before leaving your state (must be within 5 days of actual visit)
 - If unable to do the test in your home state, you may come to Utah, have a test done, wait for the results and, if Negative, the visit can proceed.
 - Psychiatrists at Youth Care will need confirmation that a visit has been planned and a request made for a prescription for COVID testing, at least three days prior to arriving in Utah. Therefore, parents are to notify the therapist who will communicate this need to the patient's psychiatrist. The prescription for the COVID-19 test will need to be picked up at Youth Care at a pre-arranged time.

Step Four - Picking up your child for a visit:

- Arrive at Youth Care a few minutes prior to the prearranged time for pick-up. Park in front of the Brighton House and remain in your vehicle.
- Medical Team member will be available for pick-up and drop-off. They will:
- Confirm negative COVID test documentation.
- Screen family members in their car in the Brighton drive-through for pick-up (the same will be done upon drop-off)
- Have any medications that will be needed during the visit ready to go.

Step Five - Visits:

- All visitation will occur off campus.
- It is expected that COVID-19 guidelines will be followed:
 - Wear a mask in public settings
 - Visit areas where social Distancing of 6 Ft. can be maintained
 - Appropriate (20 second minimum) handwashing and use of hand sanitizer
 - We would ask that there be no indoor dining

Please note that, at the present time, no visits will be scheduled past July 31st due to some concern of another spike of the virus in late summer. Additionally, please be aware that planned visits could be altered should individual safety concerns arise with our students. If you have further questions, please address them to the therapist.

We appreciate your patience with this process and hope this move towards in-person visits will further the progress in each of our student's treatment.

Respectfully,

Dr. Mickelsen

Covid-19 5.22.2020

Dear Parents,

Thank you again for all those who participated in our virtual Parent Days.

This week, the county in which Youth Care is located has moved to YELLOW status (low risk.) Due to this change, we will be meeting in the next two weeks to discuss and define when and how we will begin allowing parent visitations. We know you are anxious to see your children, so we will begin to develop parameters, which will allow for the safest roll out of allowing visitations.

This week we wanted to share with you a change that will take place with our student activities at Youth Care. We recognize the need and benefit for our students to have more opportunities to return to participating in activities in the community, while maintaining social distance from the public. We are hopeful this change will: 1) increase the number of opportunities for students to learn/rehearse essential skills that are part of their individualized treatment plans; 2) raise the motivation of our students to earn the levels required for such activities; and 3) provide another distraction from their daily regimen.

In order to accomplish these goals, this week we are beginning to increase our students' off-site activities, but with close attention being paid to the guidelines from the Utah Department of Health. In order to accomplish our goal of more off-site activities yet reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, Youth Care will be providing cloth face masks for our students and staff to wear when in close contact to members of the public. The following is a brief summary of our new protocol for off-site activities:

Prior to the off-site activity:

- Masks provided will be made with elastic loops. This design will pose less safety risk to our students than ties/strings. However, given some inherent risk, these masks, when not being used, will be stored in a secure location.
- Youth Care staff will retrieve the masks, count the number of masks to be used and document that number on a tracking form.
- Students and staff will be asked to use proper hand hygiene prior to use of the masks.
- Students and staff will be educated regarding the proper technique for putting on, wearing (i.e. keeping nose and mouth covered), and taking off the masks.

While on the off-site activity:

- No masks will be required if students/staff are able to be in a community area (i.e. park) and are able to maintain the 6 ft. social distancing requirement.
- No masks will be required when staff/students use the drive through option at restaurants.
- When eating at an establishment (no in-restaurant eating for now) students and staff will be regularly reminded to maintain 6 ft. distance from the public and, unless eating, wear the mask.

At the end of the off-site activity:

- Staff in charge will collect and count the number of masks retrieved. They will ensure that the number retrieved matches the number on the tracking form of masks distributed at the beginning of the activity.
- All masks, after being returned to the secure area following an activity, will be laundered appropriately and replaced in the secure location for re-use.

Regards,
Dr. Mickelsen

Covid-19 5.15.2020

Dear Parents,

This week has seen another first at Youth Care. Throughout this week, most of you have participated in our first “virtual” Parent Days. It has been a unique and challenging undertaking for our team. In the coming days, we will begin to dissect the planning and execution of this event and look forward to your constructive feedback through a survey which each of you will receive. Youth Care highly values your input and finds it key in reviewing the process to the end of making changes and achieving the improvements in the treatment of your children. Initial feedback from our staff has been positive. The virtual format has allowed more parents to participate in the process, which, for some, is often limited by time, financial costs or family/work commitments. The flexibility has been beneficial. However, the initial unfamiliarity with the platform used by some team members along with an unanticipated need for broader communication within our organization have posed some challenges. While not intentional, we recognize these challenges may have contributed to a suboptimal experience for some of you. We are working to improve this experience should it be needed in the future. Our team is very appreciative of your flexibility and patience throughout this week. Though new, we feel it has been a positive experience for our Youth Care team overall.

As we move forward in our treatment of your children, a major hurdle for our program remains the question about visitation. We feel very fortunate that, despite many moving parts within our organization, our campus has remained free of COVID-19. Each of you has assisted us in this effort and we thank you. Youth Care’s COVID-19 team is monitoring the statistics around the country daily. We use data from the CDC, WHO and the State of Utah to make determinations for the safest and best practices to keep everyone on the Youth Care campus, including your children and staff, safe and healthy. The governor and state epidemiologist of the State of Utah decided that, with some exceptions, most of the state will move to YELLOW status starting at 12:01 AM, Saturday 5/16/20. YELLOW does not mean “normal”. The “wash your hands, wear masks in public and social distance” are still the basic, crucial guidelines to follow. The State of Utah is doing a good job flattening the curve. But, as our Governor said, if people don’t continue to follow basic guidelines and we have a spike in cases, we will be dialed back to ORANGE.

As we approach the topic of visitation, other factors and questions are being discussed such as the status of movement within the state parents are coming from. How prevalent is the virus currently in the states from which parents are traveling? What means of travel will be used to come to the facility and what exposure to the virus does that create? What is the status of the state parents are traveling from...RED, ORANGE etc.? Would it be safe for parents from states with a higher level of exposure to travel to Utah to see their child? Up to this point, we feel the decisions we have made are sound based on available data—data we continue to monitor. By this continual monitoring, we believe we have been able to make decisions that have contributed to the safety and health of your children. There is hope that things are moving in a positive direction around the country. We feel that we are now in a position for a more in-depth discussion with our COVID team about how and when visits will begin and how they will be conducted. Much of the success of visitation will lie in the honesty and integrity of all involved and will, most likely, need to be determined on a case by case basis. Stay hopeful, stay safe and look for more information on visitation in the coming weeks.

Regards,

Dr. Mickelsen
Medical Director

Covid-19 5.8.2020

Dear Parents,

We hope this communication finds each of you well. For over thirty years, Youth Care has worked to serve students struggling with mental health and substance use challenges. Of course, a large portion of this work involves you, their parents. Parent Days was designed to help accomplish this task. For decades, Youth Care has found it to be a useful tool to educate parents on therapeutic principles, assist in improving relationships with their children through direct participation, provide for support from other parents who face similar challenges as well as connect with those professionals in whom the stewardship has been placed to direct your children's care. This event is eagerly anticipated and much planning and preparation (for Youth Care staff and parents) goes into its execution. In 2009, due to the Swine Flu epidemic Parent Days was cancelled. This was a great disappointment. At that time, the resources were not available to negotiate a solution to the barrier. However, we are grateful that despite similar limitations during this COVID-19 pandemic, technology affords us the opportunity to carry out this important aspect of our program. As we educate our students in skills that assist them in negotiating the challenges they face in life, we too take note that such skills are useful for us, their therapists, doctors, residential coaches and families. Specifically, despite the frustration and disappointment of not joining in person for Parent Days, we can apply the DBT skill of "Radical Acceptance" and focus on the opportunity at hand.

Below, you will find the outline for Parent Days. We are looking forward to being with you "virtually". If there are any questions about the events next week and your involvement in them, we would direct you to your child's therapist. Again, we appreciate your support of this event and trust it will accomplish the goals to **educate, build, support** and **connect**.

As stated in previous correspondence we continue to monitor the CDC and Utah Department of Health guidelines weekly in consideration of when in person visits can be safely resumed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Mickelsen
Medical Director

Covid-19 5.1.2020

Dear Parents,

Today is May 1st. While it signifies the beginning of another month it also brings to our thoughts two terms that seem to apply to our collective experience during this COVID-19 crisis and in the ongoing process of mental health treatment for your children. First, “Mayday”, the internationally used word (usually repeated three times in succession) indicates distress or a life-threatening emergency. It is a reminder that we, you and your children need help. While there is a need for help, assistance and support to deal with the pandemic, we more importantly recognize the mental health distress and life-threatening nature of the battles that each of your children are fighting. As such, we are grateful for your support, encouragement and responsiveness to your children’s call for help. Likewise, we are grateful for your support of our Youth Care team as we endeavor to assist them during their individual crises. Second, “May Day”, is an ancient festival of Spring celebrated on May 1st. This term reminds us of the hope that comes from Spring and a new season of life. Such hope is very welcome. Those of us at Youth Care express our hope that conditions, not just as it relates to the pandemic but as it relates to our students and each of you, their families, will improve and that we can be part of making that hope a reality.

While the details for our upcoming Parent Days are still being finalized, we did want to give you a glance at some of the components we are planning to incorporate into this event. Our desire is to make this event something that will be not only informative but also serve as tool in strengthening the therapeutic work in which each of our students and you are engaged. However, in advance, we ask for your assistance and patience as this is our first experience in undertaking such an event. One major difference will be that these components will not be condensed into a circumscribed time frame. As such, we ask for your assistance in accommodating the schedule to the best of your ability. The following is a glance of our preliminary plan. A final schedule will be sent to you next week:

- Families will have two video conference family therapies during the week of May 11-15.
- Families will have a virtual Educational Session with teachers and student during the week of May 11-15.
- Families will have a virtual meeting with psychiatrist and student during the week of May 11-16.
- Families will participate in a virtual parent support group sometime during May 14-15.
- Families will have opportunity to attend a clinical presentation on May 14.

Look for a flyer entitled “Strategies for Sustaining Well Being” under the Parent Resources tab. We hope this may offer additional ideas for continued self-care.

Lastly, below is a picture of four F-35 military jets flying above Youth Care. In a gesture of gratitude for the work being done by health care professionals within the state of Utah, four fighter jets from Hill Air Force Base’s 388th Fighter Wing (just north of Salt Lake City) flew over the state of Utah saluting the medical workers for their service in this COVID-19 effort. While fleeting, this gesture was greatly appreciated by our staff and an impressive reminder that we don’t stand alone in this battle.



(Photo taken by Brian McDonald—Admissions Counselor for Youth Care)

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Mickelsen
Medical Director

Covid-19 4.24.2020

Dear Parents,

As we end another week during this challenging pandemic, we hope this communication finds you well and trust that you, your families and loved ones are safe and healthy. As members of our team speak with many of you, we are impressed with your positive attitudes despite being faced with very difficult circumstances. As a team and those helping to care for your children, we recognize that not only your steadiness at this time but also support and unified position with Youth Care's COVID-19 plan contributes to each student's ability to focus on their treatment.

On March 26, 2020, Utah Governor Herbert issued the "Stay Safe, Stay Home" directive. Since then the state of Utah has been, and continues to be, in the "Urgent" phase of a plan to address COVID-19. However, one week ago, Governor Herbert shared hopeful news that our state was seeing positive trends in "flattening the curve" including a decrease in new hospitalizations from the virus and adequate ICU bed availability. As such, if this trend continues, the state of Utah will begin shortly moving into the "Stabilization" phase. In the community, there will be a graduated move towards reopening certain businesses (eat-in restaurants, gyms, state parks, etc.) and limited but highly controlled movement outside our homes. Through this next phase, use of masks, social distancing, proper hygiene and temperature monitoring will remain the foundational behaviors emphasized. Additionally, a concerted effort is being made to make tools available that will better locate and track the presence of the virus in our community and identify populations that are more at risk, thus allowing for more effective containment. Testing is readily available and highly encouraged. It is expected that, provided continuing progress in containing the virus, more changes will be made to "open" businesses and services in our communities. The "Stabilization" phase is expected to last for several months at which point we will move into the "Recovery" phase.

During the "Stabilization" phase there will be very little change in Youth Care's current protocols for COVID-19 management. Specifically, strict application of our screening process (i.e. temperature checks, monitor for exposure to COVID-19 and travel outside the state) and no visitation from non-Youth Care staff onto the campus, will be followed. However, please know that Youth Care is mindful of the burden these limitations place on families and students. Therefore, as progress is being made in this battle and while current conditions do not allow for them, the Youth Care Management team will continue to carefully assess and communicate when the appropriate time will be to safely begin incorporating in-person visits back into our program.

Given the continued limitations and as previously communicated, Youth Care Parent Days are being modified. While the in-person participation by families of our students will be missed, we will be using a technology driven platform to structure and deliver this important experience. The Management team at Youth Care is actively working on the details of this event and encourages each of you to reserve the dates of May 14th and 15th in order to participate with us.

Additionally, in an ongoing effort to support our students, each psychiatrist at Youth Care is checking with the students regularly to ensure they have received proper education regarding COVID-19 and inquire if there are any concerns, worries or anxieties they may have about the pandemic or their families. Extra support or education will be given if needed.

Note: Below is a photo of our COVID communication board that we are using for all our employees. This communication tool is being updated regularly and consistently so that all staff are aware of the communication we are sending out to you as parents as well as internal communication regarding protocols and inspiring reminders. We are all in this together.



Warm Regards,

Dr. Richard Mickelsen
Medical Director

Covid-19 4.17.2020

Please see the three new resources posted on the Parent Resources page.

- Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event
- Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health: TIPS FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE, AND ISOLATION DURING AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAK
- ABCs of Self-Care

Covid-19 4.10.20

Dear Parents,

The challenge in protecting our students and staff at Youth Care continues. Our Management Team continues to communicate regularly to stay abreast of the latest information, developments, recommendations and pertinent information related to COVID-19 from the State of Utah Health Department, local government leaders and the CDC. As of yesterday, Governor Herbert, governor of the State of Utah has extended the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” directive until the end of April 2020. Data appears to show this has been effective in our state and thus a recommendation to continue it has been made. While there is no way of positively knowing when the peak will come, a recent model generated from the University of Utah predicts a peak this weekend, approximately two weeks prior to the previous model proposed from the University of Washington.

Thus far, the ongoing monitoring of students and staff has been going well. We have no known cases of COVID-19 on the Youth Care campus. A plan is in place should we be presented with this challenge. During the past week these efforts have been made to minimize the spread of the virus:

- Staff have been educated regarding the CDC’s recommendations for wearing masks to slow the spread of the virus in individuals who may be “pre-symptomatic” or “asymptomatic”. Unfortunately, Youth Care has not been able to procure medical masks, in a sufficient number, so as to provide them for staff. Our facility has a limited number of masks available that will be used in select cases. Staff have been informed on how to make or access cloth masks (through local neighborhood, religious or community organizations). In addition, staff have been educated regarding the goals and proper use and cleaning of masks.
- A new protocol for student hand sanitizing has been put into place. This will involve staff spraying the student’s hands with liquid sanitizer at designated times each day (e.g. prior to entering the classrooms, leaving the classroom prior to dinner). Students will be asked to rub in the solution.

As we have spoken to many of you in various regions of our country, we are grateful to hear that most are doing well with both the physical and emotional aspects of the changes that COVID-19 has had on your life. We continue to be committed to doing our part, in not only addressing the challenging mental health issues of your children, but also to ease any fears/concerns you may have about their physical well being while at Youth Care at this particular time.

Richard Mickelsen, M.D.
Medical Director – Youth Care

Covid-19 4.3.2020

Dear Parents,

One week ago the governor of the state of Utah issued the following directive: “Stay Home, Stay Safe” to all Utahns. This directive will be in effect until 12:59pm April 13, 2020. It is similar to, but not as restrictive as, a “Shelter in Place” directive currently effective in some states throughout the country. While this directive is intended to reduce the potential exposure to COVID-19 and limit the spread of the virus and “flatten the curve” of coronavirus cases, it does allow for “essential” businesses and workers to maintain their usual operations in serving the community. As an essential business, Youth Care remains fully operational and committed to providing quality mental health treatment to adolescents. Youth Care also fully supports the recommendations of local, regional and federal agencies in this fight against COVID-19. Efforts to comply with these directives remains ongoing. The following are changes have been implemented during this past week:

- Improvements in, and access to, technology platforms such as video conferencing that will allow compliance with the directive to limit the size of gatherings where possible
- Modifications have been made in the size of staff gatherings (i.e. shift change) that would allow for improved social distancing while maintaining good communication
- New products have been approved and procured to improve the hygiene within the facility
- Student’s temperatures will be checked daily before lunch. At the same time students will be asked to wash their hands and provided with ongoing education about good hygiene

Feedback from the students on the access to phone calls has been favorable. We hope it has likewise been helpful each of you. Please communicate any specific concerns to the therapist with whom you and your students are working.

Sincerely,

Richard Mickelsen, M.D.

Medical Director – Youth Care Inc.

Covid-19 3.27.20

Dear Parents,

We are happy to report that our students at Youth Care remain healthy and continue to be monitored (as per CDC recommendations) for any signs of COVID-19. The staff at Youth Care has continued to educate students who still have questions about this virus and the safety measures, which are being taken to keep them safe in the current environment. While some students have expressed concern or experienced heightened anxiety, they have responded favorably to the support and education offered to them.

As previously highlighted, there is ongoing and regular sanitizing of the physical facilities at Youth Care including weekly use of outside agencies to assist in deep cleaning of "high touch" and common areas.

We are appreciative of your willingness to follow the guidelines and avoid in person visitation. Despite this barrier, we hope that the increased phone calls have helped to allay anxiety for each of you as well as for our students.

The following is the latest in Youth Care's attempt to follow CDC, Utah Health Department and Acadia Health guidelines for protection/prevention of COVID-19 within our unique residential setting:

- Youth Care has developed a protocol for daily screening of staff and students for COVID-19 symptoms according to recommended guidelines. Implementation of this protocol has been delayed due to our current challenge of procuring the needed thermometers. Staff has been trained on the protocol and are ready to begin as soon as the supplies arrive. We expect this will provide another layer of protection for our students and staff.
- In order to address the limitations placed on the student's activities in the community creative planning has taken place and ideas implemented to allow for unique incentives and opportunities for on campus or, where possible, off campus activities while ensuring appropriate social distancing guidelines.

The following is information, which is very well known to most all of you regarding exposure. However, some may have questions as to what constitutes "exposure" to COVID-19. The following helps clarify:

How do I know if I was exposed?

You generally need to be in close contact with a sick person to get infected. Close contact includes:

- *Living in the same household as a sick person with COVID-19,*
- *Caring for a sick person with COVID-19,*
- *Being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for about 10 minutes, OR*
- *Being in direct contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.).*

Again, we appreciate the trust you have placed in our treatment staff at Youth Care and remain committed to ensure as safe of an environment for our students and staff.

Richard Mickelsen, M.D.

Medical Director – Youth Care Inc.

Covid-19 3.20.20

Dear Parents,

We wanted to follow up our last communication with a brief summary of events relating to the care of your children at Youth Care relating to COVID-19. In addition to the prior measures previously undertaken, the following is a list of interventions put in place during this past week to prevent the spread of the virus and provide continued education about this challenging situation that continues to evolve:

- Extra cleaning services and sanitation practices using internal processes and external resources is being put into place on a weekly basis.

Additionally, the following measures were implemented in order to address ongoing questions and concerns from students and their parents:

- In consultation with the Medical Team and Youth Care Administration, one of our educators with a degree in Community Health Education developed an educational tool to provide students with the facts about COVID-19 in Health class this week. Throughout the past week each student has been educated with this tool and given opportunities to ask questions they may have had. Staff continue to be available to answer any questions or concerns that arise from our students. We've posted this educational resource for you on the parent portal website under the Parent Resources Tab.
- Additional phone calls have (and will) continue to be facilitated between every student and their parent(s) on both Saturday and Sunday. The goal is to give students and parents an opportunity to be reassured their family members are doing well and allow for increased support during this stressful time.
- Outside on campus time for all students has been increased. This is important for our students to get fresh air and have the opportunity to exercise, play and relax outside.

This week has been especially challenging with the additional stressor of experiencing a 5.7 magnitude earthquake in Utah. I am very happy to report that although the earthquake was felt by our staff and students, we experienced no injuries nor damage to our facilities. The students and staff were terrific about following the earthquake protocols that our facility has put into place. During the course of the day our teachers went to all classes and reviewed the earthquake with our students and retrained all of them on the earthquake drills. We did experience aftershocks for the remainder of the day, but the seismology experts in UT are not predicting further activity. We realize it was a stressful day for you as parents being so far away.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Youth Care in this process. Further communication will follow as warranted.

Richard Mickelsen, M.D.

Medical Director – Youth Care

Covid-19 3.17.2020

In a continuing effort to keep the Youth Care environment safe for your children and our staff, many measures have been put in place that you have already received word about.

As an update for you, we wanted to let you know that we are having a professional cleaning company come in on a weekly basis to deep clean the kitchens and bathrooms in each house.

Please rest assured that we are doing everything possible to keep your children and our staff healthy.

Best Regards,
Peggy

Covid-19 3.13.2020

Dear Parents,

As most of you are aware there has been an increasing number of COVID-19 (Corona virus) cases identified throughout the United States. While the risk to our students remains low at this time, further exposure may occur as this virus takes greater hold in our communities and more individuals are affected. In our ongoing efforts to keep our students and staff safe from the potential threat of the COVID-19, the Youth Care Management Team has decided to cancel the previously scheduled Parent Days on May 13-16, 2020. By so doing we will minimize the potential exposure of our students and staff to the virus. However, we would ask that you keep those same dates open, as Youth Care is exploring the possibility of a virtual platform where continuing education and training for parents and families of our students could take place.

We are requesting that no visitors come to campus at this time. In addition, we are suspending any in-person family therapy sessions. We will continue to communicate any new information or updates relating to COVID-19.

Thank you for your support.

Richard Mickelsen, M.D.
Medical Director – Youth Care Inc.

Covid-19 3.6.2020

Dear Parents:

In an effort to keep the parents/guardians and other involved parties of our students updated on the COVID-19 (Corona virus); the management team at Youth Care is sending out this communication.

Please be assured that we recognize there may be concerns about the safety and wellbeing of the students in our unique residential environment. We understand that as this situation evolves concern may turn to fear very quickly. We feel it imperative to assure you that the health and safety of our students and staff is paramount.

After ongoing review of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) information and the Utah Health Department, Youth Care will be implementing the following strategies to protect our students, their families and staff against the potential threat of COVID-19:

- Proper handwashing: The CDC has determined the most effective defense against illness (viral, bacterial, etc.) is proper hand washing. Youth Care has a very strict hand washing technique which is taught to every student upon admission and reinforced each week during their nursing assessment. We will continue this practice as well as provide daily reminders to students and staff to use safe and proper handwashing technique after using the restroom, wiping/blowing their nose, before eating and after being outside or away from the facility.
- Using tissues to cover coughing/sneezing: The CDC also recommends reinforcing “respiratory etiquette” which involves covering the mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing and then discarding the used tissue in the garbage (rather than in a pocket, purse, etc.) If a tissue is not available, it is recommended to cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow rather than using your hands. These situations must be followed by proper handwashing technique. As a medical staff we will continue to educate all students regarding correct “respiratory etiquette”. We will ensure that daily monitoring and reminders are provided. Youth Care will make tissues available throughout the facility for easy access.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects: Another recommendation is disinfecting “high touch” surfaces (ie: desks, door handles, medication cart, etc.) frequently. This is a common practice for Youth Care and we will continue to monitor if the need arises to increase that frequency. We also regularly monitor cleanliness and sanitation practices within the homes to promote good infection prevention and control practices.
- Students and staff will also be encouraged to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Students will continue to be educated and asked to avoid sharing food or personal items.
- If a student shows any sign of respiratory illness (cough, respiratory problems with fever) they will be evaluated as soon as possible at Wasatch Pediatrics (the outside medical provider for Youth Care). If there is concern that a child may be positive for COVID-19, treatment and isolation will be initiated immediately, and parents will be notified. Youth Care will continue to gather relevant information from the Utah Health Department and CDC with regards to adjustments or changes to the current guidelines for prevention and treatment.

- Our admissions team has implemented a screening tool for all incoming students (and their parents/guardians who are accompanying them upon admission) in order to identify anyone at risk. This tool will gather information about recent travel to areas that are known to have a higher risk of exposure to COVID-19, exposure to anyone with COVID-19, and current symptoms (i.e. fever, unexplained respiratory problems) that may suggest current infection. If there are any concerns, then the Youth Care Medical/Nursing Director will be consulted, and recommendations made to address these concerns prior to arrival on the Youth Care campus.
- Youth Care will also be using the same screening tool for all outside visitors/vendors coming onto our campus.
- Each therapist will be reviewing the screening tool questions with all parents/guardians or other visitors of current students.

At this time, we are asking parents to refrain from making travel arrangements for the May 2020 Parent Days as we continue to monitor the feasibility of safely conducting this event. We will be in touch in the upcoming weeks regarding a final decision.

If there are any concerns that arise, the Youth Care Medical Director/Nursing Director will be consulted, and recommendations made prior to coming onto the Youth Care campus.

Again, we would like to acknowledge the general concern surrounding the COVID-19 (Corona virus) and the potential impact it might have in a residential treatment setting such as ours. We hope to convey our concern but also our confidence that through the above-mentioned practices and ongoing direction from the Utah Health Department and CDC we will be able to keep our students, their families and our staff safe and healthy.

Please feel free to address questions or concerns to our medical team at the following email address: medical@youthcare.com.

Sincerely,
Dr. Richard Mickelsen
Medical Director