

VALLEY YOUTH HOUSE

STUDENT INTERNSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

Administration and Human Resources

827-829 Linden Street, Allentown, PA 18101 (610) 820-0166 / Fax (610) 820-5907

Adolescents and Families Together, Victim Intervention, Truancy Program, Juvenile Mentoring

524 Walnut Street Allentown, PA 18101 (610) 432-6481 / Fax (610) 432-6648

Adolescents and Families Together, Family Preservation Program, Provider 50

1615 Northampton Street, Easton, PA 18042 (610) 252-2681 / Fax (610) 252-9923

Adolescents and Families Together-Bucks County

75 W. Ashland St., Doylestown, PA 18901 (215) 489-2801 / Fax (215) 489-2893

Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Family Based Mental Health, Family Impact, Family Intervention, Student Assistance Program

531 Main Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018 (610) 954-9561 / Fax (610) 954-5944

Independent and Transitional Living Program

103 West Fourth Street Bethlehem, PA 18015 (610) 317-0721 / Fax (610) 317-8569

Preadolescent Treatment Home Services (PATHS)

1185 Moser Road, Breinigsville, PA 18031 (610) 706-0799 / Fax (610) 706-0290

Project Child

2200 West Broad Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018 (610) 419-4500 / Fax (610) 419-3888

In-Home Services

801 Hamilton Street, Suite 502, Allentown, PA 18101 (610) 782-9243 / Fax (610) 782-9284

Valley Youth House-Lehigh Valley

539 Eighth Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18018 (610) 691-1200 / Fax (610) 882-1068

Valley Youth House-Bucks County Shelter

800 N. York Road, Building 22, Warminster, PA 18974 (215) 442-9760 / (215) 442-9766

Valley Youth House-Bucks County Group Home

800 N. York Road, Building 28, Warminster, PA 18974 (215) 443-2520 / Fax (215) 443-2524

WHO WE ARE

Valley Youth House (VYH) is a private, non-profit agency that offers a comprehensive range of counseling, educational and shelter services to troubled children, adolescents and their families. During 1998, over 3,700 youth received some type of service from Valley Youth House. Over 95% of these clients and their families reside within the Lehigh Valley. Most of these youths are runaways, “throwaways”, neglected, abused, truant, drug involved, pregnant, parenting, or delinquent. Our target population encompasses youths from birth to 17 years of age and come from every ethnic background and socio-economic level.

Formed in 1973 as a local response to the problem of runaway youth, the agency has grown to one of the ten largest agencies in the country to service the child and adolescent population. Led by a 30-member Board of Directors, Valley Youth House brings a dedicated commitment and creative therapeutic approach to serving troubled youth and their families. Some examples of our innovative therapeutic approaches over the past 30 years include:

- One of the original 66 runaway shelters funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.
- Pennsylvania’s first independent living program (1978). Valley Youth House has continued to provide innovative model design and independent living education and consultation.
- One of the first (1978) Lehigh Valley human service agencies to use outreach in providing treatment services to families unwilling or unable to come to an office for needed services.
- The first (1978) Lehigh Valley agency and among the first nationally to train and use peer adolescents in the identification and referral process of troubled youth. This model is presently used by many school Student Assistance Programs (SAP) and used as a foundation of the current national youth development movement.
- One of Pennsylvania’s first family preservation programs (1989). Valley Youth House was also one of the first FPPs to develop and use the team concept rather than the Homebuilder’s Model.
- The first Lehigh Valley agency to develop and use alternative group counseling techniques in the area of video, art, theater, and sculpture in drug prevention work with troubled adolescents (DreamWorks, ArtWorks, and the Clay Experience, 1985).
- The first Pennsylvania agency to create and produce an adolescent drinking and driving video (Face the Facts, 1986). This video won a PA Governor’s Highway Safety Award.
- Development of the modified team approach in providing intensive in-home service (1991).
- Development and implementation of one of the country’s few child sex offender group and individual treatment programs in the country (1995).

On being community based...

All Valley Youth House programs are provided in the Lehigh Valley. Since its inception, Valley Youth House has maintained a commitment to providing services in the communities where we live and work. Our offices are located in neighborhoods where our typical client lives, as a means of assuring our services are accessible to those who need and use them. Almost 70% of Valley Youth House services are provided as outreach, which is a primary critical engagement strategy. Outreach helps to reduce a youth or a family’s resistance to initiating services that best assures problem resolution.

Where the money comes from...

Historically, Valley Youth House has always had a very diverse funding base which includes several federal and state grants, numerous county purchases of service contracts, foundation and corporate support, the United Way, client fees, donations, and the Board of Directors Annual Giving Campaign. This funding diversity helps Valley Youth House maintain a high level of therapeutic, prevention and educational services in the event that a single funding source may be curtailed.

What we can offer to an intern student...

Because of our wide range of treatment services, Valley Youth House offers aspiring mental health professionals the choice of learning the counseling experience in either outpatient or residential settings. Working within one of these two settings offers interns an outstanding opportunity to put into practice their knowledge gained in the classroom and to hone professional skills. More specific information regarding our programs follows on next page.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Administration Internships

While most internships are in the (clinical) counseling area, internship opportunities are also available in administration. An administration internship is available for a minimum of twelve hours per week. Tasks and assignments depend on ongoing projects and opportunities available. Opportunities include orientation to program procedures and policies, program development, evaluation models, grant writing, board and committee meetings and policies, supervision, public relations, United Way presentations, funding, and personnel related issues.

Adolescents and Families Together

Opened in 1978, Adolescents and Families Together is an out-client community-counseling program for at-risk youth and their families. The program specializes in working with at-risk families, providing the majority of its services in schools and family homes. Interns will be working as a co-therapist in cooperation with staff therapists or will assume their own caseload. For example, interns could be providing aftercare services for youth staying at the Shelter, or working in the Truancy Intervention Program for selected school districts in Northampton and Lehigh Counties. Adolescents and Families Together offers graduate interns the opportunity to sharpen their skills in individual, group, parent, and family counseling modalities.

Children's Behavioral Health

As a case manager intern with Children's Behavior Health, undergraduates assist in the processing of Provider 50 and Family Impact Program services. The intern will become familiar with client files, learn documentation procedures, facilitate compliance with P50 files, and the opening and closing of cases. Interns will also make referrals, learn program implementation protocols, help coordinate communication between team members, and act as an advocate on assigned cases. The number of cases assigned to interns will vary depending upon their number of hours and needs.

Child Mentoring Program

Begun in 2000, the Child Mentoring Program provides one-on-one behavioral/emotional support to children ages 4-18 for approximately four hours per week through positive activities within the local community. The mentors also have the opportunity to interface with the client's family on a regular basis. The Child Mentoring Program offers group activities to the mentees to develop social skills, nurture self-esteem and to encourage recreation. The program provides services to clients of the child welfare system both in the community and the day care setting as well as clients of the mental health system.

The Child Mentoring Program is open to undergraduate and graduate interns (both clinical and administrative). Undergraduate interns will have the opportunity to mentor a child as well as get involved in the planning of group activities. Graduate interns may supervise mentors and be more actively involved in programmatic planning.

Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program

Begun in 1989, the Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Education Program provides school and community based group prevention and education services to Lehigh Valley youth. Services are provided at Lehigh and Northampton County elementary, middle and high schools during the school year as well as community sites throughout the year. This program operates with the belief that substance abuse, violence and other self-destructive behaviors can be prevented through life skills training.

Family Based Mental Health

The Family Based Mental Health Program was designed to reduce out-of-home placement due to the mental health needs of the child. Family counseling, individual counseling, education on mental illness, and respite care are available. Interns will act as case managers. Primary responsibilities will include facilitating the opening and closing of cases and compliance with Provider 50 files, make referrals, act as advocate and role model, coordinate agency meetings and communications between clients, agency personnel and Northampton County Mental Health case managers.

Family Intervention Program

Family Intervention Program provides comprehensive and coordinated intensive clinical and case management services and are provided to families in which children are identified as being at risk of child maltreatment due to substance abuse issues within the family. Any family member may be identified as possessing a drug problem. Primary outcome benefits are alleviation of the risk of abuse and neglect of the children and the elimination of substance abuse behaviors for the affected individuals. The short-term services are crisis counseling and emergency shelter. Long-term services are targeted at families containing a substance abusing parent or caregiver. Eligible families will benefit from additional services, which include a graduate volunteer mentor program in selected Bethlehem area schools and enhanced child, and adult mental health services. Undergraduate students could help co-facilitate drug and alcohol groups and develop curriculum. Graduate-level interns would provide counseling.

Family Preservation Program

Family Preservation Program is designed to reduce out-of-home placement of children from severely dysfunctional families through the provision of family counseling, case management, concrete services.

Independent Living Program

Our Independent Living Program, expanded in 1988, provides assistance to 16 through 18-year-old adolescents who have been in foster care and are making the transition to adulthood. The goals of the program are to assist youth in completing their education, getting and keeping a job, finding an apartment, budgeting, and developing life skills needed to live independently. The program maintains apartments for some adolescents, and provides out client services to adolescents living in foster homes and parental homes. Graduate and undergraduate interns will provide direct counseling and therapy to youth. Focus of counseling will typically include educational and job hunting services, life skills training, and individual and family counseling.

Pre Adolescent Treatment Home Services (PATHS)

PATHS provide temporary shelter for children ages 7–12 years. The overall goals of PATH residents are re-unification with the family or preparation for long-term foster care services. Undergraduate interns will provide direct care services including supervision of recreational programs, co-leading group therapy, and assist in developing healthy interpersonal skills and coping strategies. In addition to the above responsibilities, graduate interns will also lead individual, weekly group and family therapy sessions.

Project Child

1. Political Science

Project Child's sole mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect. One way we do that is to write, strengthen, or support legislation that makes it easier to report child abuse or to prevent perpetrators from gaining access to children. The prevention of child abuse also depends on helping families avoid or free themselves from the stresses which can lead to abuse. Project Child has a legislative task force which informs the membership of the movement of pending legislation affecting families and children.

An internship is available to support this task force. The intern must have a strong interest in the legislative process and a working knowledge of e-mail technology. The intern will keep track of legislation pertaining to Project Child's interests, will convene monthly meetings of the legislative task force, will visit legislators, and will contact key people by e-mail. The internship shall cover at least one academic year.

2. Business/Graphic Design

Project Child's sole mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect. To that end, the organization holds at least one educational event per month, publishes resources on child abuse prevention and reporting, hosts fundraising events and provides resources to the community. All of these events and services require the design and execution of publicity or promotion print pieces.

An internship is available for a business writing or graphic design student who wishes to explore the world of non-profit organizations. The candidate needs to have a sincere interest in children's welfare, writing and computer skills, and a strong design sense.

Street Outreach Program

The Street Outreach Program team provides regularly scheduled outreach via van to homeless youth in Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton sites. Specific services that are provided include: survival services including food and clothing; referrals to runaway shelters and medical services; information and education; and, individual assessment and counseling.

The Valley Youth House Shelter

Valley Youth House operates a twelve-bed runaway and emergency shelter located at 539 Eighth Avenue in Bethlehem. Youth, ages 12 through 17, may enter the shelter and receive counseling and shelter services at any time during the day or night.

When the youth enters the shelter, an interview that ascertains the youth's emergency needs and situation, and explanation of the services and responsibilities involved in a shelter stay is conducted. The parents are contacted within 24 hours, and attempts are made to set up parent and family counseling sessions.

The staff provides counseling to each youth and his or her family in an attempt to resolve problems and reunite them. In 50% to 65% of all cases, the youth and parents/guardians are reunited. Another 25% of our clients are eventually placed with other relatives or in foster homes. In the remaining 10% of cases, we are unsuccessful in resolving problems. The average shelter stay is six to ten days, and follow-up services are offered.

This program is open to undergraduate interns only. Specific responsibilities will include: entry intake and follow-up, assist with childcare, recreation and groups, drive clients to appointments, and observe individual and family counseling sessions.

Victim Intervention Program

The Victim Intervention Program offers a community based comprehensive sexual abuse treatment program for victims, non-offending parenting and perpetrators. Interns will assist in providing individual, family and group counseling both in the client's homes and at the Valley Youth House Walnut Street office. Clients and interns will have the use of a play therapy center that includes separate art and sand tray rooms. Victim Intervention Program is only open to second year graduate intern students.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Purpose

The student internship program at Valley Youth House has two purposes:

1. To provide a positive experiential learning experience for aspiring professionals seeking to enter the social service field. It provides the opportunity to reality test skills, ideas, expectations, and goals.
2. To assist Valley Youth House in their goal of providing services to youth and their families.

As students are provided most of their education through the classroom, it is the philosophy of Valley Youth House that the primary process for learning in an internship should be through direct experience. Therefore, students doing an internship at Valley Youth House are given a great deal of responsibility and contact with the agency clientele. This varies according to program assignment and the amount of time the student has available for an internship.

Program opportunities and assignments

A determination of which program a student will be placed will be made between the student and the Director of the Internship Program. Placement is based on the interest of the student, the needs of the agency, and an assessment of which program would provide the greatest opportunity for the student to achieve their goals for an internship.

The Valley Youth House Internship, is a minimum twelve-hour per week requirement. Although tasks are separated according to program, all programs entail similar responsibilities for student interns and are well structured giving students a positive developmental learning experience.

Orientation and Beginning

On the first day, the student begins their student internship, they will receive a formal orientation. This orientation is done either individually or with a group and will take place at the site where the internship is performed. The orientation provides the student with a Valley Youth House manual specific to their program containing all of the necessary information and forms that the student will need in performing their responsibilities at the agency.

The orientation will include:

1. A tour of the facility in which the student will be working.
2. An in-depth review of the policies and expectations of student interns.
3. An in-depth review of the procedures of the program in which they are placed.
4. A review of all forms the student will be working with in their internship.
5. A description of student supervision.

The first one to two weeks a student is at Valley Youth House should be a period of orientation and observation. It is a time in which students should become familiar with the process by which the program operates, observe counseling sessions, engage with clients and learn directly from their supervisor and staff what is involved in all aspects of the program in which they are working.

After the second week, students should begin getting more actively involved in work assignments, such as counseling sessions, conducting intakes, contact with other agencies, conducting follow-ups, and recreation, etc.

By mid-semester, a student should be completely familiar with the operation of the agency and should be actively involved with all aspects of the program in which they are working. From mid-semester to the end of a student's internship, a student should work primarily on developing their skills as a practitioner with special efforts made in areas designated during their mid-semester evaluation.

Supervision

Each student will be required to attend supervision on a weekly basis. Supervisors are assigned to students according to program and educational needs. This may take the form of either group or individual supervision. Supervision will include both discussions of issues related to the work the student has been doing, as well as educating the student on different processes and systems. In addition to weekly supervision, graduate level students take part in a biweekly group supervision, which acts as an educational and supportive forum for case discussions.

Semester Contracts

As students begin their internship at Valley Youth House, each student is required to develop a contract. This contract should reflect the student's goal for their internship and objectives for achieving each of these goals. It should be used by the student and supervisor as a guide for the student throughout the semester and will be used as part of their evaluation. Contracting is an ongoing process and is reviewed frequently and changed as needed.

Statistics

Each Valley Youth House program has slightly different statistical documentation systems. In general, each student is required to document work or services performed by the student on each day at the agency. The student will be oriented and provided with the appropriate statistical material at orientation, along with an explanation of how the forms are to be filled out. The purpose of these forms is to have written documentation of the work the student is doing and is used for the agency's monthly statistical report. Additionally, in that one of the goals for the internship program is to provide an experiential learning experience to students that is representative of social service employment, we endeavor to have approximately 40% of their time spent providing direct in-person services to clients. This is monitored through supervisory review of the student's monthly statistics.

Intern Application Process

The initial contact for a prospective student intern is an interview with the Director of the Student Internship Program. This interview has a three-fold purpose:

1. To provide the applicant with a description of Valley Youth House; its programs, philosophy and types of service.
2. To describe the Student Internship Program and opportunities available.
3. To assess the student's interests and capabilities and make a determination as to whether Valley Youth House would be an appropriate intern setting.

The Director of the Internship Program is available to meet with the representatives of colleges or universities who want to explore placing student interns at Valley Youth House. Student interested in an internship at Valley Youth House should complete the attached application and mail it back to the Director of the Internship Program. In order for interns to be accepted into the program, they must have their own transportation, preferably their own car, a driver's license, and obtain child abuse and criminal record checks through the state of Pennsylvania. Many students work their internship hours during evenings and weekends. It is highly recommended that students make these hours available in order to meet program requirements.