

Saint Child Family Guidelines

Welcome to Saint Child! We're proud of the warm, nurturing family environment we maintain here. As with any family, we have some rules that help us all get along well together, as well as encourage emotional, spiritual and parenting growth.

Religion:

We are a Christian household, and want to give each resident the opportunity to grow spiritually. Two of the ways we do this is through church attendance and in-home devotions.

- Residents are required to attend church with us Sunday mornings. (Residents will also have the opportunity to participate in other church activities and services in the community.)
- A blessing and devotion will be given at each dinner meal.
- All residents will be required to participate in a weekly in-home Bible study.
- Personal devotions are encouraged.

Counseling:

Whether residents already have a counselor or use one provided by Saint Child:

- Residents are required to participate in a bi-weekly/monthly counseling session.
- These counseling sessions remain personal and confidential between counselor and resident.

Housekeeping:

We're proud of the beautiful 1908 historic house we share. All of us help with the daily tasks of housekeeping and cooking necessary to keep it nice.

- Beds will be made and bedrooms tidied **before** residents leave for the day, and no later than 9:00 a.m. We often give tours to potential residents and others, so your personal space must be clean.
- Each resident will receive specific tasks to do, like vacuuming a room, sweeping steps, dusting etc., in addition to tidying her own room. These tasks will be assigned weekly by the House Mom. It is expected that chores are done throughout the week.
- All residents will do their own laundry, including towels and sheets on a weekly basis. Each room is assigned a specific day of the week for laundry:

Yellow Room: Monday
Green Room: Tuesday
Rose Room: Wednesday
Lavender Room: Thursday
Blue Room: Friday

We ask that you try to have a full load and that you remove, fold and put away all of your clothes from the dryer before going to bed on your laundry day.

Food:

- Nutrition is critical during pregnancy and nursing. Hunger during pregnancy can be unusually intense; therefore, **healthy** snacking is encouraged between meals – fruit, veggies, milk, etc. We all enjoy the occasional sweet or salty snack. However, a steady diet of junk food is not healthy for you or your baby. The House Mom will monitor intake of junk food.
- We eat dinner together as a family each evening. Each woman will plan and cook one dinner for the whole family per week, which has been a tremendous opportunity for us to try new things and expand our culinary skills. Some residents are better chefs than others. Barring specific medical needs, the family eats what is set before us. You are expected to **politely** taste what has been prepared. No negative comments will be tolerated or you will be assigned the task of kitchen clean-up for the entire week.
- You are responsible for preparing yourself a healthy breakfast and lunch everyday. Breakfast is between 7am and 9am; lunch is between 11:30am and 1pm. Dinner as a big family is at 6:00 pm, it is important we follow a regular dining schedule daily. If it is your assigned evening to cook, plan on beginning preparations no later than 5pm.
- Each resident also helps wash dishes, set the table, and sweep the kitchen floor. **Each resident must wash her dishes immediately following her own meals and snacks; this means if the dishes in the dishwasher are clean, please put them away instead of leaving your dirty dishes in the sink.** Also, whoever bottle feeds is expected to put her bottles and nipples in the dishwasher or hand wash and put away.
- Food is not allowed in the living room, but you may enjoy snacks (not meals) in the basement family room while watching a movie! Remember, **you must clean up after yourself!** If you repeatedly do not clean up after yourself, ½ of your pass time will be forfeited for the coming weekend. Food is not allowed on the second level. Water bottles are allowed upstairs, but use coasters on wood furniture, and clean up spills promptly.
- The first 3 days after having your baby, bed rest due to sickness or doctors orders are exceptions to the above rule. The house mom may allow eating of meals in the bedroom and this will be under the house mom's discretion.
- With the understanding that all food brought into the Home becomes available to the whole family, each resident will grocery shop with the House Mother on a weekly basis and purchase items from a planned grocery list. It is expected you will learn to budget your resources, including food stamps and WIC, wisely and will purchase healthy food. If you want (or absolutely crave) something like soda or chips, it must be pre-approved by the House Mother and added to the grocery list **before** going to the store.
- The kitchen closes at 8:30 at night. Please try to prepare any evening snacks prior to that time.

Schedule:

Even in a beautiful old mansion, sharing a living space with several other people can be difficult. For that reason, we have to coordinate schedules.

- Bedtime is at 10:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday; and by Midnight on Friday and Saturday. Overhead lights must be out at these times. (The last one up turns out all the lights.) Repeated offenses can result in lost pass time.
- Residents are expected to be out of bed at least an hour before they need to leave for school, work or other appointments, and no later than 8:30 a.m. Please use this time to shower/bathe, to complete your other personal primping for the day, to tidy your room, and to prepare your breakfast (followed by doing your dishes.) Again, time management is an important skill in a family. Saturday wake up time is at the discretion of the Resident Assistant and Sunday depends on the time Sunday morning service begins.
- House mom will wake up residents at 8:30 am with the exception of a mother with an infant under 6 weeks old or sickness of the infant or resident.
- Time management is an essential life skill; therefore, residents are expected to be on time for family and House activities and for personal activities.

Dress:

All dress must be modest and appropriate for activities scheduled both outside and inside the home.

- **These dress items are prohibited:** excessively tight pants or shirts, exposed mid-drifts (including shirts revealing trunk of body when lifting arms), and clothing that is sexually suggestive, gang-related or otherwise in conflict with the values of Saint Child. Residents must wear appropriate undergarments when in public portions of the house. **Clothing is subject to staff approval.**
- Residents must wear appropriate clothing when leaving their bedrooms. If you do not have appropriate clothing upon entry of THOR, discuss this with the director and the House Mom.

Grooming:

This may seem instinctive, but we welcome residents from a wide range of backgrounds, with different ideas of what level of personal hygiene is acceptable. For that reason, we have the following requirements:

- **We bathe or shower daily**, but are careful to conserve water. Please keep your hair washed and healthy.
- **A deodorant or antiperspirant is a daily requirement.** If fragrances don't bother you during your pregnancy, it is often pleasant to treat yourself to a light perfume or cologne on a regular basis.
- Although pregnancy may give your face a healthy glow, it's still important to wash your face daily, and if you wish apply a bit of make-up and styling your hair before you leave the second floor each day.
- Brush your teeth twice a day, morning and night, and use mouthwash when necessary.
- If you do not have these items, see the House Mom or Resident Assistant immediately.

How We Treat Each Other:

We strive to keep a fun, nurturing family environment. When conflict arises, we deal with each other gently and respectfully.

- Verbal outbursts will not be tolerated. Our words hold the power of life and death according to the Bible; therefore, we speak kindly and with encouragement to one another even when we disagree.
- **Honesty is very important.** Any resident presenting false or misleading information or withholding information **may** be asked to leave the program immediately.
- When a resident leaves the premises of the home, she **must** use the sign-in/sign-out sheet to remind others of where she is going, and when she is going to be home. A resident going to places other than what has been agreed upon may be asked to leave the program immediately.
- Due to maintaining safety from drugs and drug paraphernalia and theft, Saint Child retains the right to periodic and unscheduled searches of residents' rooms.
- It is at the discretion of the house parents to withhold pass time for infractions or if dismissal from the program is necessary.
- No borrowing or offering money will be allowed.
- There will be no borrowing or using others personal items such as cell phones, ipods, computers, etc.
- There is no asking or offering of rides in residents personal cars.
- No selling of items (cell phones, bus passes, etc) will be allowed.
- No more than \$20 cash will be allowed for each resident to have in their possession. For your safety we ask that all money be deposited into a checking account or put under lock and key in the office.

Medical Considerations:

We want you and your baby to be happy and healthy. For that reason, we cannot support behaviors that may endanger the health of your baby.

- If a resident is found using or possessing alcoholic beverages or drugs not prescribed by her physician, **she will be asked to leave the program immediately.**
- **Smoking is prohibited** while at our home. This rule must be observed by all residents and their visitors. If a resident is found smoking, we assume the resident is telling us she desires to leave THOR. If a resident smells like smoke upon entering the premises, it will be the house parents discretion to apply consequences up to 3 times and/or dismissal from the program.
- All residents will attend childbirth classes, go to medical appointments, and follow the doctors' medical recommendations completely and to report to the House Mom all doctors directives.
- Residents are responsible for learning about the processes of pregnancy and childbirth, and are encouraged to maintain a healthy pregnancy to the best of their abilities. Many resources can be found in the THOR library and video library.

Visitation:

We understand it may be hard to be separated from your friends and family for your first week including at least one weekend at the house. However, for this short period of time it is important for you to establish new and helpful relationships in the home. This time apart also provides an opportunity for you to evaluate how your friends or family are contributing to your ability to make healthy choices for yourself and your baby.

- Parents are welcome in our home with the understanding that they will notify the House Mother or Resident Assistant in advance to work out arrangements for the visit with us. Sunday afternoon visits may be arranged for after church until 7 p.m. only. Other visits are to be arranged with the House Mom.
- Relatives and friends will be allowed to visit on the same basis as parents. (If a resident's parents object to a visitor, this will be given serious consideration on our part.)
- We want to meet your friends and relatives; residents will not be allowed to go out with them without the Houseparents/Resident Assistant's approval.
- Passes may be given to visit with friends on Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sunday afternoons. Passes must be earned. This time with your family and /or friends will be at the discretion of the House parents. Pass time will not be allowed if chores are not done or family guidelines are not followed.

Minor Pass Time

Friday: after school - 9pm
 Saturday: 8am - 9pm
 Sunday: After church until 7pm

Adult Pass Time

Friday: 1pm - 10pm
 Saturday: 8am - 10pm
 Sunday: After church until 7pm

- Visitations are allowed in the living room, dining room or family room only. Guests are not allowed on the second floor of the Home, this area is reserved for our residents and their babies.
- Overnight home visits must be arranged with us a minimum of 3 days in advance. These visits will not occur more than twice monthly or until a resident has been in our home for two full weeks. Also, once visiting arrangements have been made, they may not be changed in the middle of a visit.
- Overnight visits are only Friday nights, returning Saturday by 10pm (adult) and 9pm (minor).
- No birthmother will be allowed to go on overnight visits after 34 weeks of pregnancy.
- After the birth of baby, residents **will not** be permitted to go out on an overnight pass. Residents are not to take passes on two consecutive days until the infant is at least six weeks old.
- Residents will not be allowed to stay out all night with anyone other than their parent/guardian or those approved by staff in advance.
- Sexual abstinence is required at all times while residing at the Home. NO EXCEPTIONS! We will assume if you do not comply that you no longer wish to stay at THOR and will be dismissed from the program.

Work:

If a resident has graduated from high school or completed her high school equivalency test, she is required to participate in one of the following activities for at least 20 hours per week:

- attend college level coursework at PCC or local trade school,
- seek job training and/or volunteer placement, or be employed.

School:

All residents of Saint Child are required to attend school or work at least 20 hours per week.

- If a resident has not graduated from high school, she will attend school or study towards her high school equivalency test.
- A resident is encouraged to participate in any school-sponsored activity according to her physical ability, if her grades are above average.
- If a resident maintains a below-average grade in any school subject, she will be required to attend study hall for the remainder of the marking period and/or until the grade is raised to average or better. Study hall will be held at the dining room table and will consist of 30 minutes to one hour per subject per day in the subject(s) that are below average, except Saturday and Sunday.

Phone use:

All residents are expected to use the phone in a courteous manner. Please be considerate of other members of the household who may be waiting for a call or wanting to call out. Misuse of the phone privileges will result in restricted use of the telephone.

- Please keep your phone call to 20 minutes.
- No phone calls will be made in or out after 9:30 p.m.
- Make sure to write down messages for others in the house.
- Collect calls will not be accepted unless special permission is given.
- We do not have long distance available for use.
- If vulgar language or arguing on the phone is taking place, you will be asked to discontinue the call.
- Personal cell phones are permitted for use only on the main and lower levels of the house. No cell phones are permitted on the upper level. These must be turned in every evening to the House Mom or Resident Assistant at 9:30pm. This is to be considerate of everyone else's quiet time.
- Loss of pass time will result if any of the above phone guidelines are not followed.

Electronic Entertainment:

- The television and computer are turned off at 10pm Sunday through Thursday. **No** TVs or computers will be allowed in residents' bedrooms **at anytime**.
- Personal cd/mp3 players, radios, etc. are permitted until 10pm, if kept at a courteous volume (low). Stations, volume and time of listening are at the discretion of the staff. Misuse of this privilege will result in restricted use of the cd/mp3 player or radio for one week.
- CDs and tapes will not be brought into our home without our approval. All CD's are to be reviewed by the house mom prior to playing
- Television will be monitored by the staff. No R-rated videos or soap operas will be permitted. PG13 and lower are permitted with House Mom's discretion. All videos must be approved by staff before viewing regardless of rating. Crude sexual content, excessive violence or vulgar language is not allowed in our entertainment. Misuse of this privilege will result in restricted use of the television for a minimum of one week. No daytime TV Monday thru Friday unless on medical bed rest or sick.
- During the weekday you may watch TV after 5 pm.

- Chores, homework and case management tasks must be satisfactorily completed before the resident may watch TV.
- Use of the resident computers is limited to 30 minutes unless resident has prior permission from the House Mom for longer usage.

Baby Care Expectations:

Saint Child staff's goal is to train each Mother to care for her baby in the most excellent manner.

- Pediatrician contact information will be provided to Saint Child prior to the birth of the baby.
- Baby care during church services may be provided by the Church Nursery beginning at 6 weeks of age.
- Baby monitors **must be used** once the infant is brought home from the hospital. This allows you to call for help or advice even during the wee hours.
- As a new Mother, you are responsible for maintaining a fully prepared diaper bag each time you leave the House.
- Feeding your baby is a time to nurture and bond with your baby, therefore, we encourage you to do so without any distractions. Modesty is an important quality of self-esteem, so a resident will use a baby blanket or scarf or shawl to cover herself and her infant when breastfeeding at all times.
- Bottles must be prepared in the kitchen only and must be washed in the dishwasher or handwashed after each & every use. (Otherwise, bacteria can make your baby quite ill!)
- All diaper changes will be completed at the changing table in your room or in the family room downstairs. **You must dispose of diapers in your own personal diaper pail or take out to the dumpster immediately.** Do not use another resident's room, your bed or floor to change your baby-- accidents are common and messy with infants.
- Cloth diapers must be washed every other day and disposable diapers will be taken to the trash outside regularly. Do not dispose of diapers in any waste can other than the diaper pail in your room. You are responsible to empty your diaper pail every other day.
- Infants will sleep in the cradle, bassinet, or crib provided in your room. It is unsafe to sleep with a baby in your bed and this will not be allowed at Saint Child. A resident sleeping with her baby may be asked to leave the program immediately.
- **NEVER** leave an infant of any age unattended on a changing table, bed, sofa, etc.
- Saint Child is not responsible for child care. You need to arrange for babysitting if you are working or need a break. THOR can help you arrange occasional volunteers when you communicate to the house mom your need well in advance so preparations can be made.

Agreement and Signature Page for the Family Guidelines

We've prayerfully developed these policies in order to make Saint Child a pleasant, safe sanctuary for all its residents. Since it's impossible to anticipate every possible situation, Saint Child reserves the right to post additional house policies.

- I have read the above Family Guidelines. I understand that I am expected to follow these guidelines and that not doing so will result in a loss of privileges and may jeopardize my stay here.
- Saint Child reserves the right to dismiss any resident who withholds or presents false information at the time of entrance into the program.
- Saint Child reserves the right to periodic and unscheduled searches of resident's rooms.

Residents Name – Printed

Signature of Resident

Date

Staff's Name – Printed

Signature of Staff

Date