



# **Converge Day Treatment Center**

## **Policy Manual**

**2018-2019**

## **CONVERGE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Converge Day Treatment Center is a nonprofit agency and facility school designed to provide a highly-structured therapeutic and educational environment for elementary students who need intensive mental health support in order to develop the tools and coping skills for succeeding in education and in life. This day treatment center will primarily provide services for children ages 5 to 21. There will be two major components of the Converge program – educational and therapeutic. The educational component will include individualized instruction in the academic content of all core areas (math, science, social studies, reading, and writing) provided primarily by a highly qualified special education teacher with support from paraprofessionals. The clinical component of this program will include individualized behavior plans, individual therapy, twice weekly group therapy, and family therapy provided by qualified mental health professionals or graduate-level counseling or doctoral students under supervision. Once students have completed their identified goals, a transition plan will be created that will allow the student to move successfully back into the public school setting. This transition plan will generally include an interim process of increments of time spent in the public school while continuing to receive core support at Converge. After they have transitioned back to the public school full time, six months of after-care service will be offered to parents, which will include ongoing family therapy, individual therapy, and consultation with public school staff.

The Converge program was developed in direct response to the growing number of students in the Northeastern Colorado region who have serious emotional disabilities or autism spectrum disorder, and who have difficulty meeting the behavioral and academic requirements of public school. Many of these students are at risk for out-of-home placement in a residential facility. The goal of this program is to intervene quickly and effectively in the lives of these students to 1) prevent a more restrictive placement outside of their home, and 2) to support the child and their families by helping them develop the tools and skills needed to cope with these challenging emotional disabilities.

### **Objectives:**

Converge is being established to provide high-quality, intensive educational and therapeutic programming for children with serious emotional disabilities who need a higher level of support than that available in a less-restrictive setting within their public school setting. This program is also designed to provide appropriate “step-down” treatment for students previously hospitalized for psychiatric needs or placed in a residential treatment center, who need a safe and supportive environment to prepare for re-entry into public school. To meet these needs, Converge will focus on the following four objectives:

- To provide an intensive and individualized academic and treatment program to students who have difficulties functioning in a regular or specialized placement in their community public school.
- To provide a detailed assessment to facilitate the development of an IEP and treatment plan specific to the educational, emotional, behavioral, and social needs of each student.
- To assist students to acquire adaptive skills, improve their interpersonal relationships, increase their motivation to learn, develop self-control, and to set clear, high, obtainable goals for their future.
- To network with surrounding schools, community agencies, and university faculty and students to provide wraparound support for students and their families.

Mission:

Converge Day Treatment Center is dedicated to serving children and strengthening families through the convergence of high-quality and effective educational and therapeutic interventions that are both family-focused and child-centered. Converge aims to reduce the need for inpatient care, to promote interagency collaboration, and to promote the successful transition of students with serious emotional disabilities into their regular school setting.

Vision:

Our vision is to “converge” educational and therapeutic services that **promote** children’s social-emotional development, **prevent** the development of more significant mental health challenges in the future, and effectively **treat** emotional problems that currently exist.

**Educational and Therapeutic Components**

There are two major components of the Converge program. The director, psychology and counseling interns, teachers, and youth treatment counselors work closely together to ensure that the two components complement one another.

**Services**

Converge Day Treatment Center offers children age five to eighteen, who have an Individualized Education Plan as a student with a serious emotional disability, an opportunity to receive intensive therapeutic treatment by highly qualified staff in a supportive and structured private educational setting. The long-term goal of Converge is to effectively treat students’ current emotional problems and to promote the future emotional health and resilience of our students and their families by giving them a solid

foundation of knowledge and skills to thrive in the face of challenges. Specific services to be provided will be as follows:

Academic Instruction: Students in the program will receive individualized instruction at their grade level in these five major academic areas: science, social studies, math, reading, and writing. Instruction will be provided by a licensed special education teacher with support from paraprofessionals. They will participate in annual state-wide standardized testing and their progress in each academic area will be regularly monitored with curriculum-based measures. The curriculum will be chosen from materials that align with Colorado State Content Standards. Students will also participate in art, music, and physical education activities.

Individual Therapy: Individual therapy will be provided by a qualified and licensed mental health professional (licensed psychologist, LPC, LCSW, LMFT) or by a closely supervised practicum student or intern during the school day twice per week, or as described in their individualized treatment plan. This therapy will include both cognitive-behavioral approaches and play therapy techniques.

Group Therapy: Group therapy will be provided by a qualified and licensed mental health professional (licensed psychologist, LPC, LCSW, LMFT) or by a closely supervised practicum student or intern on a daily basis. This therapy will include a psycho-educational component during which a variety of affective education topics will be covered, including social skills, emotional control, anger management, character education, conflict resolution, future goal-setting and planning, and empathy.

Family Therapy: Family therapy will be provided on a weekly basis as a mandatory aspect of the program. This therapy will be provided directly by, or under the close supervision of, a licensed marriage and family therapist. Family therapy is based on the belief that the family is a unique social system with its own structure and patterns of communication, leading to the development of a unique family personality that is powerful and affects all of its members. The family therapist will help the family to identify conflicts and anxieties while developing strategies to resolve them. The overall purpose is to strengthen all family members so they can work on their problems together.

Additional Services: Additional services may be provided in collaboration with community agencies. These services could include equine therapy, aquatic therapy at a nearby indoor pool, sensory integration therapy, and parenting courses. A certified lifeguard will be present for all swimming activities. Therapeutic horseback riding will take place at Blue Horizons, Inc., a company licensed to provide these services.

### **PROGRAM REFERRALS:**

The **admission criteria** for the program, is as follows:

- a) Students age 5 to 21
- b) Behaviorally and/or emotionally challenged students meeting special education criteria for serious emotional disability or autism spectrum disorder. If the student is not currently placed in special education, we will consider the student on a case-by-case basis and conduct the necessary evaluation and IEP paperwork to determine eligibility if they meet screening criteria for a student with an emotional disability or an autism spectrum disorder.
- c) Home school has exhausted all appropriate resources with the student; (Least Restrictive Environment-15+hurs/week Special Education Services)
- d) Protective and safety issues for the student can be managed.
- e) Ability to function in the community
- f) Ability to function minimally in structured group

The participating schools make referrals through the Converge director. The school needs to complete the referral form and send any qualifying information such as an IEP and any discipline reports. The Converge director reviews the referral paperwork for documentation that admission criteria has been met.

If the student meets admission criteria an initial meeting is scheduled by the program director. This assessment meeting consists of a mandatory core group of individuals including student, parent/guardian, school district personnel (with the authority to authorize referral and payment of excess costs), special education representative (if the student is currently in special education), program director, and Converge staff. This meeting can also include other individual's invested in the youth i.e. probation, therapists, teachers, etc. Careful consideration will be given before students are accepted during the last month of the year.

The purpose of the initial meeting is to:

- a) Educate the student and his family about the day treatment program.
- b) Determine if the program can help meet the student's needs.
- c) Obtain commitments of the student and his family to actively participate in the program, if accepted.
- d) Inform families that the expected tenure is 15 months, dependent on progress, and some students need longer and some have completed the program sooner.

If appropriateness is determined, an IEP Review (or an initial IEP meeting if needed) and Intake Meeting will be arranged to complete paperwork and discuss a starting date. If the student is not accepted, the Converge team will work with the home school district to discuss options for the student.

If the student is accepted, but there is not an opening, then the student will be placed on the wait list.

### **Wait List Prioritization**

**If the program is full and a wait list exists, the following criteria will be used to prioritize admission. The following wait list criteria are not listed in order of prioritization.**

- 1) Student is 5 to 16 years old.
- 2) Student is returning from a higher level of care such as residential or hospital setting.
- 3) Student is in jeopardy of needing higher level of care if day treatment is not available.
- 4) Student and family have exhausted outpatient and community resources.

### **Intake**

Within the intake there are numerous releases that need authorization e.g. transportation, medical authorization, crisis prevention intervention, release of information etc. Immunizations and birth certificates are also required at this time. These releases are updated yearly. There is also an extensive psychosocial history taken. Physicals are required within 10 days of admission if the student has not had a physical in the last year.

### **Transition**

Once students have completed goals identified by family, team, and collaterals as necessary for success in a public school setting, a transition plan is developed. Transitions vary from student to student and are based on individual needs. There is extensive coordination between Converge, family and home school districts throughout the transition process. Generally, the transition plan involves moving into the regular school, one day, or one class period (dependent on distance from Converge), at a time as tolerated and successful, to full inclusion as the student demonstrates their ability to function successfully in the public school setting.

### **Summer Program**

Converge will provide a five-week summer program during June and July. The students will meet from Monday to Thursday from 8:00 to 2:30PM. The summer schedule includes both educational and social/experiential activities. There is extensive group work and experiential activities in the summer. Individual therapy sessions continue through the summer.

### **Discharge**

The Converge program has an 24-month limit, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the school district of residence for a longer duration, if a day treatment center has been determined by the IEP staffing team to be the least restrictive learning environment for that student's individual needs. The discharge date for each student is set at 18 months from admission although the time it takes for students to successfully complete their educational and behavioral goals at Converge will vary from student to

student based on the seriousness of their presenting emotional/behavioral problems and on the rate of their progress in the program. We try to return students to their home school for at least a one-day or one-class transition after one calendar year. We also attempt to plan transitions and discharges so they follow the quarter and semester breaks within the school calendar. We want to send students, when they are ready to return, back to their public school setting, however we do not want to set them up for failure by sending them too soon. Converge collaborates (from admission to discharge) with the home school district to determine the appropriate transition plan to meet the individual needs of each student.

The official discharge from Converge will be determined by a meeting held with all collaterals. A meeting will be held to consider discharge for any of the following reasons:

- a) The student has 80% success toward all emotional/behavioral goals.
- b) It is determined that the student needs a less structured program.
- c) It is determined that the student needs a more structured program.
- d) The student displays behaviors to the degree that continued enrollment in the program is detrimental to the progress of the other students.

Discharge is ultimately the decision of the IEP team.

### **Aftercare**

Six months of aftercare is offered to all students and families that have successfully completed the program. Aftercare is completely voluntary. The amount and frequency of contacts is based on the needs of the student and family.

### **Daily School Schedule**

A typical school day would look as follows:

8:00: Check-in and attendance procedures/ review day's schedule and daily goals

8:15: Reading/Writing blocks

9:45: Math blocks

11:00: Lunch

11:30: Science/ Social Studies

12:35: Specials/ Community-Based Activities

1:35: Fine Arts

2:30: End of Day

\*Individual therapy would occur throughout the day as per scheduled individually with each child. Instruction would be made up during individualized computer time so they don't miss out on group instruction. Children receive a minimum of one individual therapy session per week.

\*Group therapy occurs once or twice weekly for 30 minutes during an individualized computer-based instruction period.

\*Instruction blocks are broken up by several planned movement breaks and/or recess times throughout the day

## **Behavior Modification Interventions**

Level 1: Classroom-based rewards system and point sheet

Level 2: Student Reminder

Staff will give student a reminder to follow directions; if student uses the reminder then the problem is resolved.

Level 3: 5 to 10-minute break in the classroom break space or the hallway with supervision and support to use a coping strategy

Level 4: Quiet Area

- a) Student asked to go to quiet room to have the opportunity to remove themselves from the problem.
- b) Student can sit or stand and are allowed to draw or write on the chalkboard if desired.
- c) Student asked not to talk or make noise for 10 minutes.
- d) Staff will continue to check on student to determine whether they are ready to talk about the issue.
- e) Plan developed with student on how he/she is going to handle the remainder of the day.

Level 5: Refocus plan

Student asked to complete a written plan/or dictate to staff if needed, to identify the problem and specific plan to correct the problem.

Level 6: In-School Suspension

- a) Student remains in the break room with staff for designated amount of time, and has a separate cubicle desk area in which to complete school work.
- b) Student is given alternative assignments to complete during the day.
- c) The number of days on refocus time is based of the severity of the problem and the individualized treatment plan of the student.

Level 7: 30-day behavior contract

- a) Student, family, and staff will draw up a behavior plan identifying which behaviors need to change in order for student to remain in the day treatment center.
- b) A meeting will be held with referring school representative, student, family, and treatment team staff to discuss and sign the 30-day contract.
- c) Should the student violate the contract he/she will be asked to leave the day treatment program.

Used only if needed: TCI Physical Restraint or seclusion

Only used when a student is at immediate risk of harming him/herself or others and ended the moment the child demonstrates the ability to stay safe. Student will receive ample debriefing time with a trusted adult to process the situation and make a plan to maintain safe behavior.

**Sample Refocus Plan**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My Problem: (what I did)

Motivation: (why I did it)

Who it affected:

Why I should change my behavior in the future:

Steps of my Plan:

1.

2.

3.

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_

Student

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Staff

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are strongly encouraged to attend school on a regular basis during the school term. Regular attendance is essential for students to profit from the education and therapy provided at Converge Day Treatment Center.

The Colorado School Attendance Law 22-33-104 states, "Every child who has attained the age of seven and is under the age of seventeen shall attend public school for at least 1056 hours if a secondary pupil or 968 hours if an elementary school pupil during each school year."

In the event students are absent from school or leave school during the day without authorization, the following procedures shall guide the Converge staff, students, and parents.

Converge administration will determine if absences are excused or unexcused, based upon Colorado Law 22-33-104. Prearranged absences will be classified as excused or unexcused based upon the criteria for legally excused absences. Absences determined detrimental to the individual student's progress may be considered unexcused. We ask that parents limit appointments and other non-school related activities to outside school hours whenever possible. Parents are requested to call 970-396-9523 to report absences anytime before 9:00 a.m. If a parent does not call in before 9:00 a.m., the CONVERGE staff will attempt to contact the parent to verify the student's absence. If a parent/Guardian cannot be reached, the absence will be considered unexcused until a note from the parent/guardian is received.

1. Legally excused absences:
  - a. Personal illness or injury
  - b. Serious illness or death in the family
  - c. Attending funeral
  - d. Medical or psychiatric appointments
  - e. Court appearances
  - f. Home district closed for snow
  - g. Home district buses not running
  - h. Other legitimate reasons with parent/guardian and administration approval
  - i. Prearranged absences with parent/guardian and administration approval.
  
2. Legally unexcused absences:
  - a. Suspensions
  - b. Absences with or without parental consent not recognized as excused under Colorado Law 22-33-104

- c. Walking off campus and/or all restriction from campus by Converge staff due to severe disruptive behavior.
  - d. All absences are considered unexcused except those mentioned in Part 1
3. Tardy to school: reporting to school after the first class begins.
- a. No points earned for class missed
  - b. Points are earned from the time of class entry
  - c. Continued tardies shall result in a conference with administrator.
4. An excess of 35% absences per quarter whether excused or unexcused, shall result in an incomplete grade.
5. Decisions regarding unexcused absences can be appealed to the Converge Program administrator.
6. Definitions:

Whole day absence:

- 1. Leaves campus before having spent 2.5 hours at CONVERGE.
- 2. Does not attend any of the day.

Half-day absence:

- 1. Arrival 2.5 hours after the school day begins.
- 2. Student must attend at least 2.5 hours to be counted present for ½ day.

7. After the 10<sup>th</sup> absence of the school year, phone notification or written excuses will no longer be accepted, and the only excused absence will be:
- a. Pre-arranged absences approved by the administration, and arranged prior to the absence.
  - b. Suitable proof from a physician verifying illness or injury.

Circumstances of the unexcused absences will be reviewed by Converge administration. Parents, school district and agency representatives will be notified as excessive absences are recognized.

Excessive unexcused absences shall result in one or more of the following consequences (the needs of the individual student shall guide the selection):

- a. Development of an improvement plan.
- b. Loss of privileges (breaks, social opportunities.).
- c. Conferences leading to remedial and/or disciplinary action.

- d. Enactment of nonattendance petition to the courts by the home school district.
- e. Review staffing to determine an appropriate educational/therapeutic placement to address excessive absences.

### **Medication Policy & Procedure**

1. Written permission signed by a physician and parent must be provided before any prescription or over the counter medication can be administered. The permission for medication form has to be signed every year, even if there are no changes for the student.
2. Prescription medications must be in the original labeled bottle or container marked with following information:
  - Child's name
  - Licensed prescribing practitioner name, telephone number, and signature
  - Date authorized
  - Name of medication and dosage
  - Time of day medication is to be given
  - Route of medication
  - Length of time the medication is to be given
  - Reason for medication (unless this information needs to remain confidential)
  - Side effects or reactions to watch for
  - Special instructions
3. Parents or guardians need to bring the medication to school and pick up an out dated medication.
4. All medications to be taken at Converge must be in a locked box..
5. Any medication given to a student must be recorded in the medication log. The log must contain the following:
  - Child's name
  - Name of the medication, dosage, and route
  - Time medication is to be given
  - Special instructions
  - Name and initials of the individuals giving the medication
  - Notation if the medication was not given and the reason
6. The staff that give the medications will have completed a 4-hour approved medication administration training and have current first aid and universal precautions training prior to administering medication.

7. Topical preparations such as sunscreen, bug sprays, and other ointments may be administered to children with written parental authorization. These preparations may not be applied to open wounds or broken skin unless there is a written order by the prescribing practitioner

### **Child abuse reporting Policy & Procedure**

**All staff at Converge Day Treatment Center are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This requirement is not protected under the confidentiality of client and therapist.**

1. **Converge staff** who have reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the Morgan County Department of Human services or local law enforcement agency. Converge will also need to complete a critical incident report to the state.
2. Staff will be required to read and sign a statement clearly defining child abuse and neglect pursuant to state law and outlining the staff member's personal responsibility to report all incidents of child abuse or neglect according to state law.
3. At the time of admission the Converge staff will give the child's parent or guardian information that explains how to report suspected child abuse or child neglect.
4. If injury or bruising occurs at the Converge program during the course of an escort or restraint, the administrative staff will immediately check with the parties involved in the incident to find out what occurred and how it occurred.
  - a. If bruising or injury occurred during an escort or restraint (that was carried out according to policy) then calls will be made to the student's guardian/parent or caseworker to notify them of the incident.
  - b. If it appears that policies were not followed during an escort or restraint, where bruising or injury occurred, the Morgan County DHS office or Brush Police department may be called by Converge staff.
  - c. If a student claims to have been abused by Converge staff, he/she will be allowed to call DHS or the police department to make his/her own report of abuse.



## REPORTING OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

All employees of the Converge Day Treatment Center program must report known or suspected abuse or neglect.

The following types of known or suspected abuse or neglect must be reported:

2005 Colorado Children's code definitions, 19-1-103: *"Abuse" or "child abuse or neglect", means an act or omission in one of the following categories that threatens the health or welfare of a child."*

Physical abuse – *"any case in which a child exhibits evidence of skin bruising, malnutrition, failure to thrive, burns, fracture of any bone, subdural hematoma, soft tissue swelling or death and either: such conditions or death is not justifiably explained; the history given such condition is at variance with the degree or type of condition or death, or the circumstances indicate that such condition may not be the product of an accidental occurrence."*

Sexual abuse: *"Any case in which a child is subjected to unlawful sexual behavior as defined in section 16-22-102". 16-22-102 includes some of the following: sexual assault, Unlawful sexual contact, Sexual assault on a child by one in a position of trust, Enticement of a child, incest, sexual exploitation of children, indecent exposure, child prostitution, promotion of obscenity to a minor, in violation of section*

Failure to provide/Neglect: *"Any case in which a child is a child in need of services because the child's parents, legal guardian, or custodian fails to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision that a prudent parent would take."*

Emotional Abuse: *"emotional abuse" means an identifiable and substantial impairment of the child's intellectual or psychological functioning or development or a substantial risk of impairment of the child's*

Drug environment: *"Any case in which, in the presence of a child, or on the premises where a child is found, or where a child resides, a controlled substance, as defined in section 18-18-102 (5), C.R.S., is manufactured or attempted to be manufactured."*

If there is any uncertainty as to whether an incident, circumstance or concern should be reported, it categorically should be reported.

My signature below indicates that I understand the program's reporting requirements and procedures with respect to know or suspected abuse or neglect.

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**Employee Signature**  
**Critical Incident Reports**

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**Date**

**POLICY:** Within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, of the occurrence of a critical incident at the facility or within 24 hours of a child's return to the facility if the child was on authorized or unauthorized leave from the facility, the facility or child placement agency must report in writing to the licensing or certifying authority the following critical incidents involving a child in the care of the facility or a staff member on duty:

1. The death of a child or staff member as a result of an accident, suicide, assault, or any natural cause while at the facility.
2. An injury to a child or staff member that requires emergency medical attention by a health care professional or admission to a hospital.
3. A mandatory reportable illness, as required by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, of a child or staff member that requires emergency medical attention by a health care professional or admission to a hospital.
4. Any allegation of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect to a child that results in reporting to a law enforcement or social services agency.
5. Any fire that is responded to by a local fire department.
6. Any major threat to the security of a facility including, but not limited to, a threat to kidnap a child, riots, bomb threats, hostage situations, use of a weapon, or drive by shootings.
7. A drug or alcohol related incident involving a staff member or a child that requires outside medical or emergency response.
8. An assault, as defined by Sections 18-3-201 through 18-3-204, C.R.S., by a child upon a child, a child upon a staff member, or a staff member upon a child which results in a report to law enforcement.
9. A suicide attempt by a child at the facility, which requires emergency intervention.
10. Felony theft or destruction of property by a child while in placement at the facility for which law enforcement is notified.
11. Any police or sheriff contact with the facility for a crime committed by a resident while in placement at the facility.

A report of a critical incident must be submitted on the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, and critical incident form.

**Procedure:** Staff who have knowledge of the incident will complete the critical incident report form which will be reviewed by the program manager and will be sent to the **Colorado Department of Human Services at 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203-1714 Phone: 303-866-5948 Fax: 303-866-4453.**

### **Confidentiality of Records**

The records concerning the licensing of the Converge Day Treatment Center is open to the public. Anyone wishing to review the licensing records will make a request to The

Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman St,  
Denver CO 80203-1714, 303-866-3755.

## **STUDENT RECORDS POLICY**

### **General Guidelines**

1. All student records are **confidential**. It is essential that staff members avoid discussion of students outside of school or in the presence of non-staff members. The names of students attending CONVERGE, or any information concerning students, should never be divulged to anyone outside of the program unless there is a release of information signed. All documents containing student names must be shredded rather than thrown away.
2. Records must be stored in a locked location.
3. Staff members must sign out student files on a sign out sheet if they take the files off the CONVERGE premises.

### **HIPPA Guidelines**

1. Converge staff will adhere to the HIPPA guidelines, policies, and procedures outlined by CMHC.

### **Discipline Policy**

We believe that discipline should be a means of teaching new behavior, providing structure and setting limits. Students will not be subjected to physical harm or humiliation.

Behavioral interventions are given in response to a child's behavior from the adult, peer, or the environment.

The purpose of using behavioral interventions is to provide external controls, which in turn helps the child develop internal control by seeing the result of his/her inappropriate behavior.

The following is to serve as a non-inclusive list of *sanctioned* interventions.

- o Sitting out from an activity to reflect on a behavior for no longer than 15 minutes, within eyesight of the staff.
- o Standing to reflect on behavior for no longer than 2 minutes, within eyesight of the staff.
- o Separation from the group for aggressive behavior.
- o Eating away from the group.
- o Loss of free time.
- o Billing the student and parent for any damage the student causes at the program.

- o Written apologies or assignments.
- o Contracting with student.

The following represents a list of *unsanctioned* interventions not to be used by any Converge staff.

- o Blanket wraps, which represent a form of mechanical restraint.
- o Denial of food at lunchtime.
- o Limiting the time a child has to eat to less than 15 minutes.
- o Any restraint that is not sanctioned by Converge Day Treatment Center.
- o Ridicule or degrading punishment.
- o Corporal or physical punishment.
- o Students are not allowed to discipline other students.
- o Verbal abuse or derogatory comments about the child, his family, race; religion or cultural background is not permitted.
- o Verbal threats that are humiliating or frightening are not allowed.
- o Any discipline designed or likely to cause physical pain.
- o Requiring a child to take an uncomfortable position such as squatting, bending, standing with nose to wall, holding hands over head, or sitting in a cross-legged position on the floor when solely used as a means of punishment.

### **THERAPEUTIC PHYSICAL INTERVENTION**

Restraint may only be used in those situations when staff members have determined that a student is a danger to himself/herself or others. Converge's staff members only use physical restraint as a last resort and only when all efforts to implement Converge's preventative/de-escalation techniques and positive behavioral interventions have failed to curtail the student's dangerous behavior.

CONVERGE utilizes the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention model, to intervene with emergency situations involving an escalated child. All Converge youth treatment counselors and educational aides are trained in TCI techniques in accordance with the TCI standards, and these techniques are reviewed with staff members every six months and re-assessed at a 4-hour training. The TCI training includes de-escalation and physical restraint techniques.

Physical restraint shall last only as long as is necessary to calm the student, and to insure that the student can demonstrate control and agree not to be a threat to self or others. According to Colorado Department of Human Services Day Treatment Program regulations, "A child must be released from a physical restraint within fifteen minutes after the initial of the restraint, except when precluded for safety reasons.

Staff members shall not restrain students in areas of the program that may pose a threat to the health and safety of the student. All staff members involved in the restraint are

responsible for monitoring the physical well being of the student during and after the restraint, including but not limited to breathing, pulse, color and signs of choking or respiratory distress. If there are enough staff members available, one person who does not have to be involved in the actual physical restraint of the student, will be assigned responsibility for this duty. Many Converge staff have also been trained in First Aid—in case a staff member or student is injured during a restraint. Staff members are required to report any injury, bruising or death that occurs as a result of a restraint to the county Department of Human Services or local law enforcement, pursuant to Colorado state law.

Staff members will always process the incident with the student involved as soon as possible after the restraint has ended in an attempt to avoid a reoccurrence of similar problems in the future. In addition, all staff members involved will review the appropriateness and effectiveness of the restraint as soon as possible after control and stability have been insured. Administrative review will occur within 48 hours of the occurrence. This internal review will carefully assess any injuries or bruising that occurred. Law enforcement will be requested when staff members perceive that safety is seriously compromised and/or that the student requires greater intervention that Converge staff can provide.

When physical restraint is used, parent/guardians will receive verbal notification on the day of the occurrence. Written documentation of the incident will be completed within 24 hours of the occurrence and will be forwarded to the parent/guardian. All incidents of physical restraint are documented on a Converge Occurrence Report Form .

Although few students require physical restraint, permission to restrain must be secured for all students who attend the program in order to insure the safety of all students.

### **RECREATION – General activities**

Students will have physical education every school day off-campus (nearby park, nearby recreation center, nearby swimming pool, or at a horseback riding center). Activities will vary from week to week but will include the following: basketball, softball, dodge ball, volleyball, hockey, bowling, and other structured team building activities.

Procedure:

1. Take attendance at the beginning and end of activities, especially off-campus activities.
2. Shoes must be worn at all activities (except swimming).
3. Use staff discretion when choosing activities, teams, and player positions. Some issues to consider include:
  - Athletic ability/coordination required to participate in the activity.
  - Complexity of the activity. Can students learn the rules of the game?

- How structured does the activity need to be for the particular group?
  - How competitive is the activity? Can the students tolerate this level of competition?
  - Should certain students be placed on the same team or opposing teams?
  - Does the activity include potential physical contact and is the group of students capable of handling the contact?
4. Survey court, field and general playing area before initiating activity. For instance, look for defects in the playing area that could cause injury to students or staff.
  5. Check suitability and safety of equipment before using it (e.g. cracks in bats, air pressure in balls, etc.)
  6. Staff members need to be aware of the tone of the activity and should respond accordingly. For instance, are students overly anxious, overly aggressive, overly competitive, etc.? Staff members should quickly respond with appropriate limits. If students do not respond well to these limits, staff should not hesitate to change or discontinue the activity. If off campus, staff members should not hesitate to bring the group back early.

Staff members need to respond rapidly and decisively to any potentially dangerous situations. Staff members should not hesitate to call 911 if a dangerous incident occurs off campus. Remember, always **SAFETY FIRST**.

### **Recreation Special Activities**

**Parents/guardians will be asked to sign releases from the facility that provides these activities. Convergence staff will adhere to the following guidelines when the students attend these trips.**

As part of the student's therapeutic goals and social skills training, the students will have the opportunity to participate in special recreation activities including horseback riding, swimming, Special Olympics, and other physical activities, including, but not limited to frisbee golf, kickball, softball, basketball and no-touch, flag football. Parents/guardians will be asked to sign releases from the facility that provides these activities. Convergence staff will adhere to the following guidelines when the students attend these trips.

#### **Horseback Riding:**

- Students will be appropriately dressed for riding, which shall include closed shoes or boots, snug clothing, and long pants. Bare feet, flip flops, and loose clothing are prohibited.
- Students may participate in therapeutic horseback riding activities at Blue Horizons, Inc., which employs staff who are approved for providing these services.

- At the beginning of the session, students and staff will be assigned a horse that is suited to their abilities and will listen to and carefully follow instructions from the Blue Horizon's staff on how to handle the horse.

**Swimming:**

- Students will have the opportunity to swim one time weekly at the Star Athletic Club indoor pool. A certified lifeguard will be contracted by Converge and will be present at all times that students are in the water.
- Converge staff will participate in this activity by demonstrating and guiding the students in the aquatherapy lesson, and will swim with the students and observe them from the side of the pool throughout the free swim time.
- Any students who are unable to manage their behavior at the swimming area will have to sit with staff on the side of the pool or will be taken back to the classroom.

**Special Olympics and Other PE Activities:**

- Students will have the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of physical activities, at the Converge premises, and away from the campus at the recreation center, bowling alley, or at community parks. They will participate in some form of planned physical activity every day for one hour.
- On-grounds physical activities will include kickball, softball, flag football, frisbee golf, walking and running, basketball, and volleyball.

**Attendance on any of the above trips is based on the student's ability to manage their behaviors in the community.**

## Emergency Procedures

*RUNAWAY STUDENT:* When a student runs away from the Converge program, a runaway report will be filed with the Brush Police department by calling (970) 842-5001. Staff at the program will inform the parents/guardian immediately if their child has run away from the program. If student returns to the program without police intervention then staff will call the Police department and cancel the report.

If a student runs during a field trip, then the staff will contact the police department in that town and file a runaway report.

Based on the needs of the student or concern for danger to self or others a restraint may be used to prevent the student from running away.

When the student returns from a run, the staff and therapist will talk with the student and family about ways to prevent him/her from running in the future and to help him cope with any underlying issues.

*ALLERGIC REACTION:* Children's food and environmental allergies are listed in the child's file and the Baker Central School kitchen manager will be notified of these allergies. If a child experiences an allergic reaction that causes difficulty breathing, an EpiPen, if on hand, will be administered, and 911 will be called as well as the parents. Staff members are certified in First Aid/CPR and will continue to provide aid until help arrives.

*ATTEMPT OF UNAUTHORIZED PICKUP:* If an individual, not authorized by parent/guardian, attempts to pick up a child, we will not release child to them. The authorized parent/guardian will be contacted by phone. If they are unavailable, we will contact, in order of listing, those adults referenced by the parent as authorized emergency contacts. If an immediate threat is suspected, lock down procedures will be implemented and 911 will be called.

*EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION:* If an emergency (other than physical) exists, requiring personal transportation, A Director, special education teacher, or assistant teacher will be available to provide transportation.

*FIRE:* Fire evacuation plans are posted in the classroom by the door. If the smoke alarm is activated, an orderly evacuation of the school will begin immediately, followed by contacting parents to come pick up their child if needed. Drills are scheduled by the Director, at various times, at least quarterly, so everyone is familiar with the routine and conduct of same. Our school is also inspected annually by the Fire Department for fire

safety. Each staff member is trained in fire safety and the use of available fire extinguishers and fire alarms.

*INJURY/ACCIDENT/ILLNESS:* If a child is hurt while at school, an accident report form will be completed so the parents will know the details of the incident. Parents will sign the form to acknowledge they were advised. If the accident is more than a scrape or small cut, for example, a lump from falling from playground equipment, parents will be called to inform them of the accident. In the event of an accident requiring professional medical assistance, 911 and the parents will be called. If a child becomes ill while at school the parent will be called to pick up and the child will wait on a cot in the office for their arrival.

*INTRUDER:* If an unknown person, perceived in any way as a threat, enters our property or attempts to enter our school, 911 will be called immediately. Any children and teachers on the playground will immediately be called inside and the door to the playground will be locked. (All other doors stay locked throughout the day.) The Director, or special education teacher, may then call for a "Lock Down" where the children and teachers will take cover inside, being protected from windows and kept out of sight. The same procedure will be used in the situation of an active shooter on the premises. Parents will be notified.

*INTRUDER LOCKOUT:* If a nearby Brush School District school has an intruder, we are on a notification list so that we may be on guard and proceed with a "Shelter-in-Place". The Director, or special education teacher's sole responsibility will be to monitor the reports being received from the police and maintain a visual of our school grounds. Upon hearing local news, parents may choose to pick up their child, at any time, by coming to the door (no one will be allowed in the school as a way to monitor each person) and we will release their child, at the door, to them.

*MISSING PERSON:* Teachers are required to continually account for each child. In the event a child is missing, our staff will search the building and immediate outdoor area. If not found, the police and the child's parents will be notified while our staff begins searching the area surrounding the school.

*PHONE:* During hour of operation, a phone is available to staff to receive incoming calls and place outgoing calls. Local emergency phone numbers are posted by the phones, as well as the number for Poison Control. If our phone service is down, staff will use personal cell phones to complete calls.

*POWER FAILURE:* A high-powered flashlight will be kept in the room in an easily-reached location in case of power failure and the classroom door and therapy room door will be open to allow in natural light. A cell phone is also available for emergency calls in the event of a power failure.

*SEVERE WEATHER CLOSURE:* Please check local news stations (Channel 9). If the Brush School District is closed, we will close our facility as well. All parents will receive a personal call notifying them of same before 6:30A.M. In the event of blizzard conditions occurring during the day, the staff will care for the children at the center until the parents/guardians can pick them up. Please be aware of weather conditions and plan to pick up your child early if severe weather is approaching.

*TORNADO:* In the event of a tornado alert by the Brush tornado siren, or via local weather report of a tornado alert or warning, the children will sit along the interior wall of their classroom. Drills are scheduled in the spring so all are familiar with the routine and precautions.

*UNFORESEEN CLOSURE:* Parents will be notified by email/phone, to pick up their child if for some reason the school would need to close during the day.

*WATER FAILURE:* If we were to lose our water supply and it could not be restored within a reasonable amount of time, parents will be notified by email/phone to pick up their child.

*WILDLIFE EMERGENCY:* In the event a dangerous animal is sighted on the property (rattlesnake, coyote, threatening dog), the children will be escorted back inside the school and will not go outside until the threat has moved away from the building.

*CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND THOSE WITH ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS:* Students with functional needs will receive one-on-one assistance and will have an identified staff member assigned to support them with emergency procedures, both within the building and involving evacuation from the building. They will participate in all drills with their assigned one-on-one staff member, or identified alternative staff member, which will be noted in the emergency procedure handbook in the main office.

## **Transportation Policy**

### **General Transportation**

The superintendents of the surrounding school districts have committed to providing transportation for students enrolled in the Converge program. Each student shall have transportation arranged by their home school district. When possible, coordination of transportation services shall be attempted. Riding these buses is a privilege and may be revoked if the transportation rules are not followed. If the student's bus privileges are revoked, it becomes the responsibility of the parents/guardians to make sure the student is in school. Only students scheduled to ride the bus may do so.

### **Student Transportation in Private Vehicles**

School district employees and responsible adults approved by the program director may transport a student or a group of students in their own vehicles for school-related purposes. Special permission shall be granted and documented in writing by the superintendent, the building principal or their designees for the specific trip. Such things as the number of students traveling, relative costs, safety factors, distance, convenience, etc. shall be considered before granting the use of private vehicles for the transportation of students.

Personnel with standing authorization or with special permission to use their own cars for transporting students must carry liability insurance coverage in compliance with state law. A record of such coverage shall be placed on file with the appropriate administrative official.

### **Policy for Field trips**

Parents will be notified of the field trip arrangements at least two days prior to the trip. Staff will contact the parents of youth who are not on time for the trip to notify them that the class has left for the field trip.

### **Meals**

Meals will be provided by Brush High School in the Brush School District. Students may also bring a lunch from home.

Converge students will eat lunch in the classroom after the tables have been cleared and sanitized.

### **Student personal belongings and money**

Students are provided with a tub classroom where they can store their personal items during the day. Converge is not responsible for any personal items that are lost, damaged or stolen.

### **Grievance Policy**

During the time that your child is placed at **Converge**, the following steps and procedures have been developed for dealing with any grievances or concerns, which you may have regarding the quality of care or treatment of your child.

All questions and concerns should be discussed as soon as possible with the therapist assigned to you and your child. This can be done by bringing up your concerns when you meet for family therapy or by contacting the therapist by telephone. The usual course of action would be for the therapist to discuss the situation with you and determine whether the concern can be remedied.

In the event that the parent **OR** guardian is dissatisfied with the outcome of the discussion with the therapist, and feels that the matter requires further attention, the Program manager will evaluate the concern and attempt to resolve the problem within a two (2) week period. Occasionally, a parent or guardian may feel that discussions with the therapist and the Program Manger have not resolved the concern or grievance. If this occurs, the parent or guardian has the option to file a formal grievance.

**Your child may raise concerns directly with Converge staff or contact the program director with the concerns. The program manager can be reached at 970 396-9523. The program director must resolve the issue within five (5) working days. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may file a formal grievance.**

### **Civil Rights Grievance Report Procedures**

In accordance with FNS Instruction 113.6, Converge provides a grievance procedure in the event a person believes he/she or their enrolled participant has been discriminated against and/or denied service on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in the food service program provided by Converge

#### **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

All complaints, written or verbal, alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability shall be processed within ninety (90) days of receipt in the manner prescribed in this instruction.

#### **Procedure for Filing Complaints of Discrimination:**

##### **1. Right to File a Complaint**

Any person alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability has a right to file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action. Under special circumstances this time limit may be extended.

## 2. Acceptance

All complaints, written or verbal, shall be accepted by Converge Nutrition and Health Services and forwarded to the SERO-USDA. It is necessary that the information be sufficient to determine the identity of the agency or individual toward which the complaint is directed, and to indicate the possibility of a violation. Anonymous complaints shall be handled as any other complaint.

## 3. Verbal Complaints

In the event that a complainant makes the allegation verbally or through a telephone conversation and refuses or is not inclined to place such allegations in writing, the person to whom the allegations are made shall write up the elements of the complainant for the complainant. Every effort shall be made to have the complainant provide the following information:

- a) Name, address, telephone number, or means of contacting the complainant.
- b) The specific location and name of the entity delivering the program, service, or benefit.
- c) The nature of the incident(s) or action(s) that led the complainant to believe discrimination was a factor.
- d) The basis on which the complainant feels discrimination exists (race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability)
- e) The names, titles and addresses of the persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action(s).
- f) The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory action occurred, or if continuing, the duration of such actions.

Civil Rights Grievance Report Form

Name:  
Address:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone:

If your grievance concerns a discriminatory action due to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, please be very specific and give full details concerning the occurrence.

State the reason(s) you are filing this grievance report.

What response did you receive from the sponsor representative during the alleged occurrence?

What results are you seeking from this communication?

Signature of Complainant

Date

Grievance Procedure (Student Copy)

Students and/or their authorized representatives, or family members, are permitted to file grievances, without fear of retaliation, regarding staff or operations.

Grievances can be submitted verbally or in writing to the Education Director, Converge Administrator, Executive Director, or licensing agency. (See list below). Grievances will be documented and a response will be provided to the individual(s) registering the grievance within 24 hours from the time the grievance is received. Efforts to resolve and/or alleviate the grievance issue(s) will be made within this 24 hour period by Converge staff.

Division of Child Care  
1575 Sherman St., Floor 1  
Denver, CO 80203  
800-799-5876

Colorado Department of Education  
1560 Broadway  
Suite 1175  
Denver, CO 80202  
Phone: 303-866-6473

Morgan County Human Services  
800 East Beaver Avenue, PO Box 220  
Fort Morgan, CO 80701  
970-542-3530

The Legal Center  
303-772-0300

Civil Rights Commission  
800-262-4845

Department of Human Services  
Child Care Licensing  
303-866-5958

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Representative Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CONVERGE Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of the  
Grievance Procedure and phone numbers. Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Grievance Procedure

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Division of Child Care  
1575 Sherman St., Floor 1  
Denver, CO 80203  
800-799-5876

Larimer County Human Services  
2555 Midpoint Dr., Suite E  
Ft. Collins, CO 80526  
970-498-6900

The Legal Center  
303-772-0300

Civil Rights Commission  
800-262-4845

Department of Human Services  
Child Care Licensing  
303-866-5958

Division of Behavioral Health  
Adolescent Substance Use Disorder  
Programs  
3824 West Princeton Circle  
Denver, CO 80236  
303-866-7400

## **Staff Requirements**

The Converge Day Treatment Center Program is will be licensed by the Colorado state Department of Human Services as a day treatment center. This license requires that all staff members names must be submitted to the Central Registry of Child Protection. Every new staff must also be fingerprinted to undergo a criminal history check. In addition, new employees will undergo a vehicle license check.

### **Requirements for Converge Staff:**

Valid First Aid and CPR for the at least 5 staff members

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI physical restraint) training certificate (all YTC's and aides)

Written references on file

Copy of teaching/professional license if applicable

Copy of resume and college transcripts

Copy of Driver's License

Medication Administration Training (At least 3 staff members)

Name submitted to the Central Registry of Child Protection

Fingerprinted to undergo criminal history check

In addition, each licensed staff member (whether through CDE or DORA) must maintain their license and complete professional development relevant to their job at Converge according to the requirements for renewing their license. Converge will have a line item in the budget to pay for a reasonable portion of professional development costs (no more than \$500 per staff member per school year). Professional development may include CPI renewal, First Aid and CPR renewal, training in threat assessment, training in specific intervention and strategies for working with students with emotional disabilities and/or autism, training in specific academic curriculum, training in differentiation, training in assessment, and so forth as applicable and available. Staff will also meet once per week to collaborate on center needs and to work on individual professional development goals.