



New Directions

A Raise the Age program

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These services are provided by Northern Rivers Family of Services and member agencies.

New Directions is a gender-responsive, intensive residential treatment option serving 8 young women, ages 16 and 17, at our Schenectady residential facility at 122 Park Avenue. These adolescents historically have entered the criminal justice system prior to the enactment of Raise the Age legislation in the state. A multidisciplinary team delivers an innovative program model to help young women address factors that lead to criminal behavior and work toward successful community reintegration. The team integrates trauma-based interventions, substance abuse treatment, clinical support, behavioral health services, skill development through educational, vocational, and recreational opportunities, case management, and aftercare planning with residents and their families.

Referrals

Referrals for placement of qualifying youth will come directly from the counties.

Staffing

The program is led by a director and includes a clinician, a case manager, a coordinator of educational and vocational services, supervisors, and a team of direct-care workers and support staff to provide full 24/7/365 supervision and support. The facility also provides coordinated healthcare through its medical team, and features indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and a fully staffed kitchen.

Staff members receive comprehensive specialized training relevant to the issues residents face and benefit from organizational participation in a statewide Raise the Age learning collective in partnership with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).

Education

Each resident has a specially tailored educational program built in partnership with Northern Rivers' special education school, the School at Northeast, as well as a network of community partners community organizations. Workforce readiness and vocational skills are provided through a facility-based program and partnerships with local schools and organizations.

Reintegration and Aftercare

Families are engaged at the beginning of placement, and clinical sessions are held both at the Schenectady Residence and in their home. The targeted length of stay for residents is 8 months, with an additional 4 months in aftercare (12 months total). Each resident has a permanency plan and a supervised conditional release and aftercare strategy, developed by leveraging internal community-based resources along with external partners.

The Northern Rivers Difference

We're here to work with you to identify the right Northern Rivers residential environment to help any youth find success. While each residence is different, they're all staffed by knowledgeable, caring professionals who specialize in trauma-informed care and are invested in each youth's journey. We believe that every youth in our care deserves a rich, full experience. That's why we ensure that every one of our residents receives the following.

Education

Whether one of our 853 special education schools, public school, vocational programs, or higher education is appropriate, each resident has a customized educational plan with wraparound support.

Medical Care

Many residential sites have on-site medical care, and all youth have access to psychological, nursing, medication management, and physical health services.

Recreation

We offer a full range of therapeutic recreational activities inside our residences and out in the community. From intramural clubs to trips to sporting events, museums, and concerts, we allow every youth to broaden their horizons and nurture their passions.

Community Involvement and Volunteerism

We reinforce the importance of citizenship, and we encourage our residents to get involved with a wide variety of community and charitable initiatives. From neighborhood cleanups to awareness campaigns, we encourage each resident to pursue what's meaningful to them.

Family Integration

From the first day in care, we work with each youth's family and support system to identify challenges, develop resources, and build upon strengths.

Planning for the Future

Permanency is the goal for every youth in our care. Through clinical assessments and ongoing support, we focus on what comes next—whether that's returning to family or independence.

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