



PARENT HANDBOOK



JUVENILE SEX OFFENDER RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

**Bethany Christian Services
Residential Treatment
901 Eastern Ave NE, PO Box 294
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0294**

TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Receptionist: **616.224.7613**
(Monday through Friday; 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.)

Therapists, unit supervisors, clinical supervisor, and program director can all be reached by calling the receptionist.

RIDGEVIEW EAST: **616.224.7614**

RIDGEVIEW WEST: **616.224.7612**

Both units are available by phone 24 hours a day.

To call a resident, please call directly to his unit, provide your name to the youth counseling staff answering the phone, and ask to speak with the resident.

FAX NUMBER: **616.224.7581**

Bethany is a 24-hour treatment setting for adolescents with sexual behavior problems, ages 10-17. The average length of stay is 12-16 months. Developing healthy relationships with others is emphasized throughout all components of the program.

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WELCOME TO BETHANY'S RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

The treatment program is an open program located on a 13-acre campus with two separate units serving 14 residents each. Dedicated youth specialist staff will offer direct supervision and counseling to all residents, assisting them in understanding and overcoming their sexual offense history.

Master's level therapists provide individual and group therapy for the residents. All staff have specific training in child sexual abuse and sexual offending issues.

Families are encouraged to be actively involved in the treatment process. Family therapy is available and focuses on understanding the youth's sexual offending dynamics and promoting change to develop or maintain healthy family relationships.

Bethany's residential treatment program is licensed by the State of Michigan and is fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children.



RESIDENT LIFE

The residential program provides a therapeutic living environment in a home-like setting. Each unit has a Great Room consisting of a kitchen, dining area, and living room. Bedrooms are located off the general living area providing visual access for supervision purposes. The unit supervisor and the youth specialist staff offices are also located in the unit.

To offer structure and positive reinforcement, each unit operates on a level system. Each resident will begin on level one and will progress through six levels based on his success in meeting treatment goals and group therapy work. Higher levels offer increased privileges and expect a greater level of responsibility. Daily activities are based on the resident's current level achievement.

The average school day schedule may consist of:

7:00 a.m. – rise and shine, prepare for the day, eat breakfast together

8:00 a.m.–3:00 p. m. – attend school with an hour break for lunch

3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m. – attend group therapy, a physical activity, life skills class, or free time (depending on the day)

5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m. – eat dinner together, work on chores, free time

7:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m. – homework time

8:00 p.m.–10:30 p.m. – free time, personal hygiene, evening chores

Bedtimes are between 9:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. depending on level privileges.

Bethany has the responsibility to provide for the basic needs of each resident. Clothes and toiletries will be purchased as needed. Parents have the option to provide their son with clothing and personal care products if they choose to do so.

Bethany is not responsible for personal belongings of residents. This includes belongings that become lost, stolen, broken, misplaced, worn out, etc. We discourage residents from keeping items at Bethany that are financially valuable or have a great deal of sentimental value.

REDIRECTION AND DISCIPLINE

When residents have difficulty following rules or showing respect for others, staff will redirect them to take responsibility for their behaviors and learn from their experiences.

Interventions may include:

- Prompts or reminders about his misbehavior.
- Being asked to take time away from the group.
- Being asked to write an assignment outlining problem solving options.
- Engaging in a discussion with staff to review the situation and problem-solve together.
- Loss of level privileges for a specified length of time.

All residential staff are trained in therapeutic crisis intervention, which provides them with skills to help the residents learn constructive ways to deal with life issues. This training model includes the use of physical interventions as a last resort to manage disruptive behaviors, in order to provide safety for all residents and staff.

If a resident commits a sexual offense, Bethany may file a report with local authorities. You will be notified if a report is being filed on your son.



THERAPY SERVICES

Bethany's therapy services are specifically designed to help youth who have committed sexual offenses.

As a parent, it will be important for you to understand what is expected from your son in therapy and to be supportive of the therapeutic process. Please remember that your son's therapy will be a long and difficult journey. Setbacks may occur along the way. Your active involvement in his treatment plan is a necessary component of his success.

GROUP THERAPY

- Sessions occur twice weekly for 60-90 minutes.
- Group is comprised of some residents from both units depending on age and stage of development.
- Group can help your son:
 - ◇ Understand his feelings and how to express them appropriately.
 - ◇ Explore how abuse has influenced his thinking and behavior.
 - ◇ Understand patterns of behavior.
 - ◇ Discuss planning and strategies used in his sexual offenses.
 - ◇ Learn about his sexual offense cycle.
 - ◇ Develop a relapse prevention plan.
 - ◇ Understand how trauma and negative life experiences effect behavioral choices.

FAMILY THERAPY

Family therapy is a very important part of your son's treatment and is recommended that you attend at least one session a month. Your son's therapist will work with you to schedule a mutually convenient time for these sessions.

You will be offered the opportunity to learn:

- About your son's sexual offense problem.
- His sexual offense cycle.
- His relapse prevention plan.
- The work he is doing on group therapy.
- How to support him and his success in treatment.
- Family dynamics as related to sexual offending behavior including:
 - ◇ Family safety
 - ◇ Parenting styles
 - ◇ Your lifestyle
 - ◇ Personal and family relationships
 - ◇ Community support and involvement

INDIVIDUAL THERAPY

- Individual sessions occur, a minimum, of every other week.
- Individual therapy can help your son:
 - ◇ Problem-solve relationship conflicts.
 - ◇ Talk about family issues.
 - ◇ Explore thoughts and feelings of their own trauma.
 - ◇ Talk about specific issues important to him.
 - ◇ Develop individualized treatment goals.

Therapists are on campus and available for crisis intervention.

ACTIVITY THERAPY

- Provided at least twice a week.
- Residents from your son's unit work together to improve:
 - ◇ Social skills
 - ◇ Cooperative effort
 - ◇ Teamwork
 - ◇ Self-esteem
 - ◇ Life skills
 - ◇ Problem solving skills

AFTERCARE THERAPY

Aftercare therapy will be offered to your son and family for approximately two months to help support his transition back into the community.

VISITATION

Bethany encourages parents and guardians to visit their son on a regular basis. It has been our experience that residents are most successful in treatment when they have family that is actively involved. The residential program does not have set visiting days and times. All visits are arranged individually through your son's therapist. Visits will not be permitted unless they have been pre-arranged at least 48 hours prior to the visit.

All visitation plans begin with only parents or guardians visiting on Bethany's campus for approximately two hours. Parents are encouraged to ask their son about his progress in treatment and to enjoy casual, leisure-time activities with him.

Examples include:

- Taking a walk around campus
- Playing cards or table games
- Working on a craft together
- Having a picnic
- Playing pool, foosball, or table tennis (if resident is a high enough level to use the recreation room)
- Simply talking

After two or three months, parents may request that other adult relatives or family friends be included in the visits. This must be approved by your son's therapist and all visits must be scheduled in advance.

As your son progresses in treatment, visitation plans may include short, off-campus visits in the Grand Rapids area, home visits for the day, and eventually, overnight visits.

If your son has older siblings who were not victims of his offenses, they may be included in family therapy and visitation. Younger siblings are generally not involved in visiting or family therapy until the later stages of treatment. All visitors must be approved by the therapist and planned in advance.



VISITATION RULES:

- Your son must be within your sight at all times.
- If you bring a snack, all food not eaten must be taken with you when you leave campus.
- Visits may occur in the recreation room, outdoors, or in meeting rooms specified by staff.
- Family visits will not be permitted on the unit or in the gym.
- No alcohol, illegal drugs or firearms on campus.
- No pets or animals permitted on campus.
- Physical discipline of your son is not permitted. Please talk with Bethany staff if a conflict should arise during a visit.
- No smoking.
- When visiting your son, you are responsible for directly supervising him at all times.
- No ongoing interaction is permitted with any resident but your own son.
- Photos or video recording of other residents is not permitted.

GIVING GIFTS AND MONEY

- Families are encouraged to bring gifts for holidays and birthdays.
- Please do not give your son spending money. He receives a weekly allowance and may do extra chores to earn additional money.
- Bethany is not responsible for personal belongings.
- Please inform Bethany staff when you bring items for your son.

TELEPHONE CALLS

- Each resident may talk with their immediate family twice weekly. Phone calls will increase according to the level system.
- Each call is limited to 15 minutes.
- Your son may not have phone contact with anyone whom he has sexually abused.
- Family phone calls may be limited or supervised for therapeutic reasons.
- Extended family members and friends must have prior permission from the therapist in order to have phone contact.
- Additional phone calls are permitted for emergencies, special occasions, or to discuss a particular issue. Parents should contact Bethany staff prior to talking with their son.
- As your son progresses in treatment, he may earn the opportunity to make telephone calls to friends.
- All phone calls must be before 10:00 p.m.

MAIL

- Each resident has the right to send and receive private, unopened mail.
- This right may be restricted for legal or therapeutic reasons. Personal mail is monitored by the therapist.
- Mail will also be restricted if your son is writing or receiving mail that is sexual, violent, or threatening.
- Bethany supplies all stamps and envelopes.
- Residents may not write to someone whom they have sexually abused.
- Residents will be asked to open packages in the presence of staff.



EDUCATION

Your son will be enrolled in school through the Grand Rapids Public Schools system. He will begin in an on-campus classroom at the beginning of his placement. He can later be transferred to an off-campus school as he shows consistent progress in treatment.

The on-campus classrooms are divided into two grade levels: middle school and high school. All classes are taught by state-certified GRPS teachers. Classes are based on the GRPS curriculum and high school students will earn credit toward their graduation requirements. These credits will transfer to other Michigan schools when he completes his treatment at Bethany. We also offer a summer school program through GRPS where residents earn additional high school credits. There is also a computer laboratory available.

A copy of your son's report card will be mailed to you. You are encouraged to attend parent/teacher conferences during the school year.

The residential program offers tutoring services for students who need extra assistance in completing their school work or have fallen behind in certain subjects. If any special needs are identified, your son will be scheduled for weekly tutoring sessions to help support his academic progress.

MEDICAL CARE

Your son will receive an annual physical exam, dental exams every six months, and other medical care as needed. Eye exams are scheduled when recommended by the pediatrician or when a problem is observed with his vision. You will be notified of any significant medical problems or if any major procedure is recommended for your son. In emergency situations, we will have your son treated immediately and will notify you as soon as possible.

As a parent, you will continue to be responsible for payment of medical, dental, and optical care for your son. If you have private health insurance that covers your son, please provide us with a copy of your insurance card at the time your son is admitted to Bethany. Your insurance company can then be billed directly for most appointments. However, you still will need to pay any deductibles or co-pays that your insurance plan requires and pay for medical services not covered by insurance.

As an additional service to our residents, Bethany contracts with a psychiatrist for assessments and evaluations. If your son is taking medication for emotional or behavioral concerns, the psychiatrist will schedule monthly appointments with your son and his therapist to ensure that the medication is continuing to benefit your son. Written permission from a parent or guardian is required before giving a youth any medication prescribed by the psychiatrist. You will be informed about the purpose and side-effects of all new medication.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Bethany supports the right of each parent to choose the religion in which their son will participate or that he not participate in any religious activities. Parents are welcome to provide religious material of their choice to their son. You may also have a representative of your faith provide religious training for your son on Bethany's campus. As with other visits, we ask that specific days and times be pre-arranged.

Bethany employs a chaplain who is available to meet with your son individually and offers a group Bible study on a regular basis. Your son has the opportunity to attend a weekly worship service. Initially, this may be a chapel service on Bethany's campus. After a short assessment period, he may attend a community church with other residents and staff. Occasionally special outings are organized, such as work projects at a local inner-city mission, in which your son may participate. You will be asked to sign a consent form giving permission for your son to be involved in these religious activities.

The residential program offers an opportunity for youth to participate in prayer at mealtime. Although all residents are present during this time, participating in prayer is completely voluntary. Residents lead the prayer themselves and are free to offer whatever type of prayer they choose. Those who do not participate are simply asked to sit quietly during the prayer.



RECORDS AND REPORTS

A file will be kept containing information about your son's placement at Bethany. All records are kept confidential. This file will include:

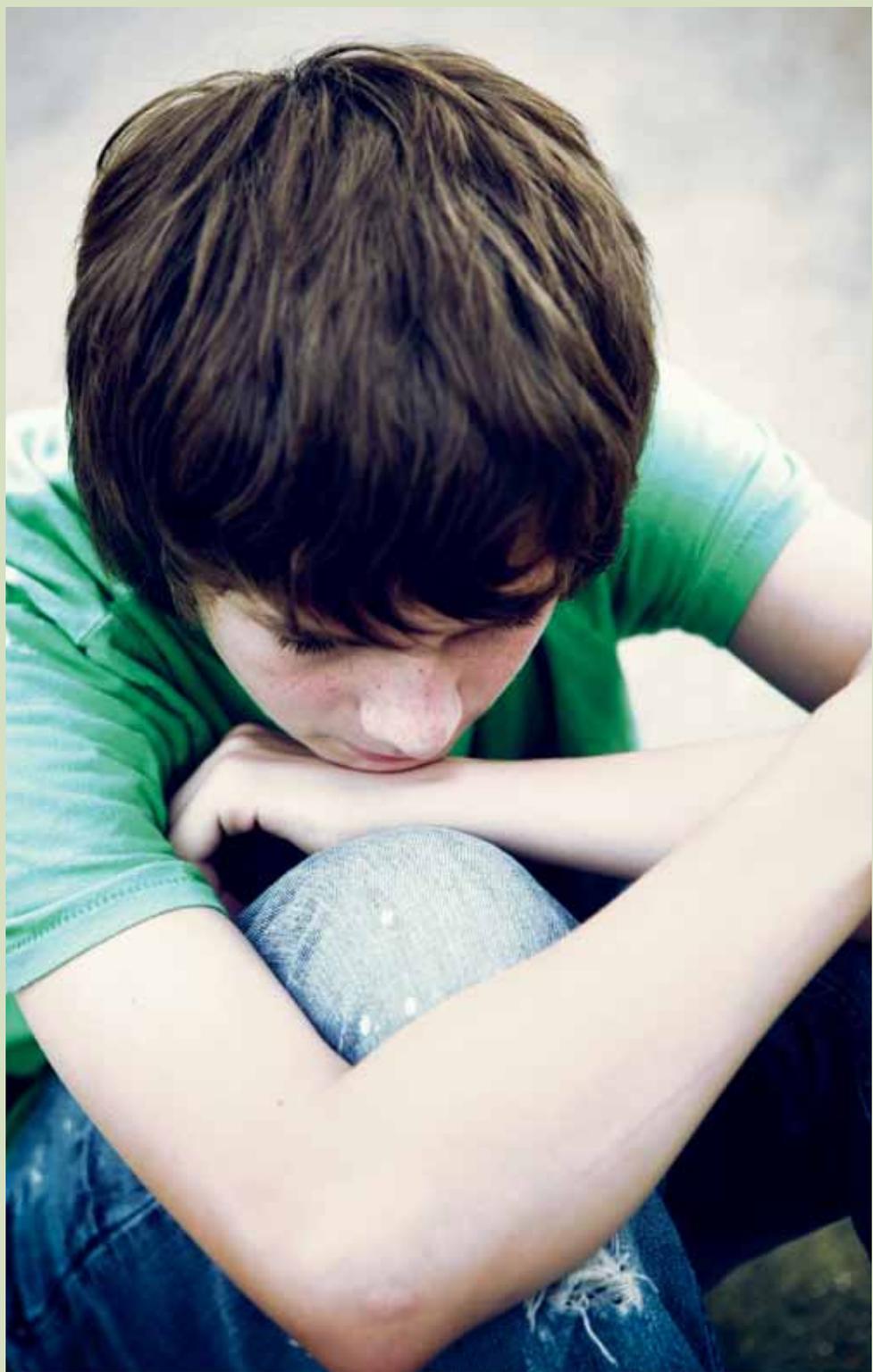
- Biographical information
- Educational information
- Medical information
- Copies of letters to and from treatment personnel
- Court orders and legal information
- Psychological testing reports
- Clinical progress reports
- Reports from other agencies describing your son's history, previous treatment services and legal involvement.

All of Bethany's clinical reports are routinely submitted to the resident's referring casemanagers for consideration in further treatment planning.

COURT HEARINGS

While your son is at Bethany, a member of the treatment team will take him to any court hearings that he is required to attend. Your son's therapist will update the court by a written report or oral presentation at these hearings. Testimony will be provided about your son's overall progress in treatment, progress towards meeting your family treatment goals, and clinical recommendations for your son. You and your son will also be able to address the court during these hearings. Your son has the right to communicate privately with his attorney. The attorney may ask to speak with your son briefly at the courthouse just before the hearing.

For those youth who are required to participate in the Michigan Sex Offender Registry, Bethany personnel will routinely accompany residents to the Grand Rapids Police Department to update and verify their address as required by law.



WHEN NEW INFORMATION IS REVEALED

It is difficult for youth who have committed sexual offenses to be fully honest about their sexual behavior. At first, your son may have denied that he sexually abused anyone. Even in treatment, residents sometimes try to hide the truth about their offenses.

In the beginning stages of therapy, offenders often leave out information about additional victims, types of sexual acts, level of force used, or number of offenses. Residents are encouraged to be completely honest about all of their sexual offenses, but this may take time. As a parent, please remember that your son will likely change or add to his report a number of times before he is fully truthful. Be prepared that your son will probably share more information about his offenses during treatment.

When new victims or new information is reported, it is generally a sign of progress and motivation to stop the pattern of sexual abuse. Although it can be difficult for families, we encourage parents to remain supportive of their son as they learn the full extent of the sexual offenses. Many parents report that hearing this information from their son is one of the toughest challenges they face during treatment.

If your son reports more victims than were previously known, Bethany is required to notify Children's Protective Services of the suspected abuse. Reporting additional offenses also means that the court may choose to bring additional charges against your son. Since he is already in placement, the court may decide not to pursue any additional legal action. Despite the risk of additional charges, the treatment team believes that it is in your son's best interest to disclose all of his sexual offenses. Keeping secrets about sexual offenses only serves to keep him in his offense cycle, and therefore at higher risk to reoffend. As part of your son's treatment, he will be asked to report all of his sexual offenses to you in family therapy, and we ask that you prepare yourself for this possibility.

WHEN FAMILY MEMBERS ARE VICTIMS

Having a child commit sexual offenses against another member of the family can be extremely stressful for parents. This situation often intensifies parent's feelings of anger, guilt, sadness, confusion, and self-blame. Parents often feel like they have to choose sides and either support the offender or support the victim. Parents may also feel like they do not have enough time and energy to provide for the needs of all their children.

At times, parents may be focused on their anger toward the offender for abusing a member of his own family. At other times, parents may find themselves feeling angry, confused, or blaming themselves about why the victim did not tell them what was happening.

"If only I hadn't made him babysit so often."

"If only I had checked on them more often when they were outside."

"I should have known what was happening."

As difficult as it is, your son who committed the sexual offenses and the child in your family who was sexually abused will need your support, patience, encouragement, understanding, and help to heal from this trauma. It is very important that you also take care of yourself by finding the support and help you need as a parent. We will ask for your involvement in your son's treatment and will try to help you to better understand what has happened in your family. The treatment team may also recommend that you seek your own individual counseling if you seem to be having difficulty helping your son because of your own feelings and issues about the offenses. Bethany strongly recommends that children who are victims of sexual abuse be evaluated and counseled by a therapist trained in child sexual abuse treatment. Before your son can have contact with any child he has abused, including family members, the victim's therapist must make sure that the child is emotionally prepared for this step in treatment. Therapy sessions are typically arranged between the victim

and the offender as a first step in renewing contact. The offender's therapist, therapist of the victim, and parents all participate in these sessions, during which your son accepts responsibility for his abusive behavior and apologizes to the victim. These sessions do not take place until there has been substantial progress in treatment.

In situations where there is an abuse victim in the home, careful planning and extensive treatment must occur before the offender is authorized home visits or discharged back home.

Four major factors are considered in these decisions:

- Your son's ability to use his relapse prevention plan effectively.
- The victim's emotional readiness to be around the person who abused them.
- Your ability as a parent to supervise, support, and intervene to protect the victim and prevent further offenses.
- Current DHS policy on family reunification in child sexual abuse cases.



DISCHARGE PLANNING

Planning for your son to leave the residential program and return to the community is an extremely important part of the treatment process. For your son to maintain an offense-free lifestyle, he will need an effective relapse prevention plan that he can use. Bethany is committed to offering comprehensive discharge plans and transitional aftercare services to help your son adjust to living safely in a family setting. When he has successfully completed treatment and has moved back into the community, Bethany's aftercare therapist will provide counseling and consultation for approximately two months to ensure that he is adjusting adequately.

For residents who successfully complete treatment there are several options for discharge placement.

RETURNING HOME WITH PARENTS

- Consistent involvement in family therapy is necessary for the treatment team to recommend a return home. If your son has abused other children in your home, the risk for reoffense must be carefully assessed when deciding a discharge placement. Bethany always gives priority to the emotional and physical safety of the victim.

LIVING WITH A RELATIVE

- If placement with a relative is being considered, that relative also must be regularly involved in family therapy.

SPECIALIZED GROUP OR FOSTER CARE HOME

- Specialized foster care placement is often a good option for residents who continue to need a high amount of structure and more intensive treatment. Foster placement can be long-term or short-term with a plan to eventually return home.

SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING

- For residents who do not successfully complete the treatment program, options for discharge placement may include:
 - ◇ Moving to another residential treatment program
 - ◇ Placement in a locked treatment facility
 - ◇ Placement in a juvenile detention center

You will be informed if your son is having difficulty in treatment and any decision to discharge your son would involve discussion with you. Once the decision has been made for a resident to be discharged without completing treatment, the referring casemanager and county juvenile court decide on the resident's next placement.

Reasons for an unsuccessful discharge may include:

- Sexual reoffense during treatment
- Truancy from Bethany
- Persistent physical aggression toward others
- Ongoing lack of motivation and progress in treatment.



SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

At Bethany Christian Services we are dedicated to high-quality service and believe that you have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

- Bethany will not discriminate against you because of race, creed, gender, age, national origin, religion, political belief, or physical or mental limitations.
- You have the right of freedom from sexual abuse or harassment.
- You have the right to be informed about the treatment services offered at Bethany. All requests to review your son's records must be made in writing to the program director.
- All information about your son's placement and therapy is protected by federal and state law and will remain confidential.
- Bethany cannot release information concerning your son's treatment without written permission from a parent or guardian, except when laws and regulations override the confidentiality rule. If your son is a ward of the court, his referring casemanager can authorize the release of information.
- Your son will be asked to maintain confidentiality about other residents in the program. This would include discussing information with his family.

- **Confidentiality cannot be kept in the following situations:**

- ◇ Consultation with your son's referring casemanager.
- ◇ When testimony is required at court hearings.
- ◇ When a subpoena is issued by the court for your son's clinical records.
- ◇ If your son commits a crime while in placement. The victim of the crime has the right to file a complaint with the police and pursue legal charges.
- ◇ When your son is at risk to commit suicide or has attempted suicide.
- ◇ In the event of a medical emergency.
- ◇ Bethany staff has the legal responsibility to warn an individual if your son has threatened their life or to cause them harm.
- ◇ Agencies that contract with, license, or regulate Bethany Christian Services will review clinical records to ensure that quality services are provided.
- ◇ If your son truants from Bethany, a police report will be filed.

All suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported to the Department of Human Services and Children's Protective Services.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

We encourage you to discuss any actions appearing to be in violation of your rights with your son's therapist. If you are not satisfied, you have the right to report your grievance to the Director of Clinical Services, by calling 616.224.7566.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with referral questions
or to review the intake process or treatment options.
We can also provide you with alternative treatment options.

Intake Coordinator
616.224.7584

Clinical Supervisor
616.224.7569

Bethany Christian Services
Residential Treatment Program
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PO Box 294
Grand Rapids, MI 49501

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bethany.org/main/residential-program

