

R-Place Parent Handbook

Rooted in Resilience

A Family's Guide to the Seasons of Growth

R-Place



Penn
Highlands
Healthcare

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Welcome to R-Place: A Season of Growth

Dear Resident and Family,

On behalf of the entire team at R-Place, welcome. We want to start by acknowledging the courage it took to reach this moment. Choosing a residential program is rarely an easy decision, but it is often the most profound act of love a family can perform.

At R-Place, we view your child's journey not as a "repair," but as a season of growth. We believe every adolescent is like a flower that has been struggling to bloom because the "soil" of their environment—the stress, the trauma, or the internal struggles—has become too heavy. You have brought them to our garden, and we are honored to help them flourish.

What to expect on their 90-day Growth Journey

Growth cannot be rushed; it happens in stages. Our 90-day program is designed to mirror the natural rhythm of a garden:

- **Phase 1: Preparing the Soil (Days 1–30)** Just as a seed needs the right environment to take root, the first month is about safety and stabilization. We clear away the "weeds" of crisis and focus on grounding your child. This is a time of assessment, where we learn exactly what nutrients and care your child needs to feel safe enough to begin growing again.
- **Phase 2: Strengthening the Stem (Days 31–60)** Growth is often invisible at first, happening beneath the surface. During this middle phase, the work becomes more intensive. Through therapy and skill-building, your child develops internal strength (their "stem") to stand tall against the wind. This is where they learn the coping mechanisms and resilience needed to support the bloom to come.
- **Phase 3: Reaching for the Sunlight (Days 61–90)** In the final month, we focus on the "bloom" and the transition home. We work on mastery—practicing how to stay strong and vibrant even when the weather changes. We prepare the family for the "replanting" process, ensuring that the home environment is ready to sustain the growth that has started here.

Our Partnership in the Garden

A flower does not grow in isolation. It needs the sun, the rain, and the gardener. At R-Place, we are the gardeners, but you are the sun. Your involvement in family therapy and your constant support is the light that guides your child forward. We are in this partnership together, working toward the same goal: a healthy, vibrant future for your family.

A Note to Our Newest Resident

To our new resident: It's okay if you feel like you're in the dark right now. Every seed starts in the dark before it finds the light. R-Place is a safe place for you to rest, to strengthen your roots, and eventually, to show the world the unique beauty you have to offer. You don't have to bloom all at once—you just must keep growing.

Thank you for choosing R-Place. Let's begin this season of growth together.

With warmth and hope,

The Leadership Team at R-Place
Rooted in Hope. Growing in Strength.

The Mission Statement

The mission of the program is to help Residents improve their capacity for self-regulation and facilitate a successful transition into the community.

What does R-Place mean?

R-Place is grounded in the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics. The 6 Rs of the Neurosequential Model reflects how to meet the residents where they are:

- Relational-Building trust and creating change through relationships
- Relevant-Program is developmentally matched to the individual's need
- Repetitive-The brain needs to experience new things repeatedly to fully grasp and integrate
- Rewarding-Make is FUN
- Rhythmic-Resonant with neural patterns
- Respectful-Of the Child, family, and Culture.

Highlights

- 22 private rooms
- Ages 8-18, male or female
- Length of stay is up to 90 days
- Program focuses on top down and bottom-up therapeutic approaches
- Focus on family, individual therapy and therapeutic dosing
- Multi-disciplinary team
- Focus on building the patients therapeutic web to support a successful discharge into the resident's home environment.

At R-Place, we support youth ages 8–18 who are navigating the lasting effects of early trauma and adversity. We understand that these experiences often make it difficult to manage emotions, succeed in school, or build steady relationships. By providing a nurturing, relationship-based environment, we help our residents regain their footing. Our goal is to help them regulate their emotions and learn to trust in the care and guidance of adults once again.

Your Treatment Team: The Gardeners of R-Place

Building a healthy environment for your child requires a variety of specialists. Use this sheet to keep track of the individuals dedicated to your family's journey.

The Clinical Team: Tend to the roots and internal growth.

- Primary Therapist: _____
 - Role: Your main point of contact for clinical progress and weekly family therapy.
- Psychiatrist: _____
 - Role: Manages medication and the biological aspects of mental health.

The Medical and Wellness Team: Provide the nutrients and physical care.

- Nursing Director: _____
 - Role: Oversees daily health, vitals, and medication administration.
- Social Services: _____
 - Role: Coordinates outside appointments and physical wellness check-ups, : Handles the “logistics” of growth—insurance, discharge planning, and community resources.

The Academic and Milieu Team: Provide the structure and sunlight.

- Director of Education: _____
 - Role: Manages the on-site school and coordinates with your home school district.
- Teacher: _____
 - Role: Maintains a sense of normalcy and preparing the “seedling” for their eventual return to their home environment.
- Program Manager: _____
 - Role: Oversees the residential counselors who support your child 24/7 on the unit.

Important Contact Information

General Program Line: 814-375-6280

Communication Expectations

- Family Therapy: Sessions are held weekly via Telehealth/phone.
- Urgent Matters: If there is a medical or safety concern, the Nursing Station or Administrator on Duty will contact you immediately, regardless of the hour.

Communication and Visitation

“WHO TO CALL” DIRECTORY:

Department / Role	Name of Contact	Phone / Extension	When to Contact Them
Primary Therapist	Breanna	Ext 6124	Clinical updates, family therapy, & progress questions.
Nurse Station	Nursing Team	Ext 6280	Medication changes, physical health, or minor injuries.
Social Services	Katelyn	Ext 6258	Insurance, discharge planning, & resource and service coordination
Unit Manager	Nicole	Ext 3935	Questions about daily behavior, peer issues, or floor staff.
Education	Tash or Nick	Ext 5894	Grades, IEP meetings, and school credits.
Education Coordinator	Andrea	814-319-5385	CASSP Meetings, IEP, ISPT, School District co-ordination

Clear boundaries and expectations help manage the “distance” parents feel during residential care.

Contact Information

For any questions or concerns please contact the general line at 814-375-6280 and use one of the extensions listed above.

Visitation Policy

- Visiting hours will take place on Sunday from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM.
- Visitors are required to have identification prior to entering unit.
- Visitors under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.
- There is a limit of 2 visitors per resident at one time.
- Visitors will be wanded prior to entering the unit and will need to leave their belongings in a locker at security.
- Only individuals who you have signed consent for will be able to access the unit which is completed by you at admission.
- Off unit visiting is approved through a physician order.

Mail and Packages

To mail items please send them addressed to:

PRFT

Penn Highlands DuBois

535 Sunflower Drive

DuBois, PA 15801

Phone Call Schedule

To contact a resident, please call **814-375-6280**. All incoming and outgoing calls are facilitated by staff and transferred to the resident phone. Please note that calls are not permitted during school or group therapy hours; any missed calls will be returned during the resident's next scheduled free time.

Day	School/Group Hours (No Calls)	Scheduled Free Time (Best for Calls)
Monday – Friday	8:30 AM – 3:00 PM	4:30 PM – 5:30 PM And 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Saturday	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (Group)	8:00 AM – 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Sunday	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (Group)	8:00 AM – 10:00 AM And 3:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Important Reminders for Families

- Staff Assistance**

For the privacy and safety of all residents, a staff member must initiate the call and transfer it to the resident handset.

- Wait Times**

If the resident is in a therapy session, school, or a meal when you call, staff will take a message, and the call will be returned as soon as they reach their next free-time block.

- Confidentiality**

To protect the “Bloom” of all our residents, please avoid asking about other youth on the unit during your calls.

Therapeutic Process

Daily Schedule

NO SCHOOL Schedule	
7:00 - 7:30	Wake Up/Morning Hygiene
7:30 - 8:00	Rules + Daily Intention Group w/ Breakfast (Therapy I/BHA)
8:00 - 8:30	Morning Walk (Therpay I/BHA)
8:30 - 9:00	Prep/Leave for Activity/Free Time
9:00 - 10:00	Regulation Skills Group Or Leave Activity (Therpay I)
10:00 - 11:00	DBT/CBT/ACT Group (Therpay II)
11:00 - 12:00	Therapy Homework/Journaling/Topic of Choice Group (Therapy I/BHA)
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch (Therapy I/BHA)
12:30 - 1:00	Chores (Therapy I/BHA)
1:00 - 2:00	Psychoeducation/Social Skills Group (Therpay II)
2:00 - 3:00	Quiet Time/Shaving (Therapy I/BHA)
3:00 - 4:00	Nursing Group (NURSE)
4:00 - 4:30	Dinner (Therapy I/BHA)
4:30 - 5:00	Reflection Group (Therapy I/BHA)
5:00 - 6:30	COMMUNITY OUTING/Movie/Activity of Choice (Therapy I/BHA)
6:30 - 7:00	Snack/Time Free Time/Homework
7:00 - 8:30	Showers/Movie/Therapy Homework (Therapy I/BHA)
8:30 - 9:00	Evening Hygiene/Prep for Bed - 9:30 BED (Therapy I/BHA)
	Quiet Time IN Room/Lights Out - 9:00

WEEKEND	
7:00 - 8:00	Morning Me Time
8:00 - 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 - 9:00	Field Day Activity
9:00 - 10:30	Skills Group
10:30 - 11:00	Outing/Activity Review
11:00 - 11:30	Prep Time
11:30 - 12:00	Lunch
12:30 - 3:00	Planned Activity On Unit Off Unit
3:00 - 4:00	Me Time _ Unwind
4:00 - 4:30	Dinner
4:30 - 5:30	Recreational Group
5:30 - 6:30	Reflection/Goal Setting
6:30 - 7:30	Unit Game/Activity
7:30 - 8:30	Relax And Unwind
8:30 - 9:00	Bedtime Routine
9:00	Bed Time

Family Therapy Expectations

In R-Place, the parent is not a bystander but an active co-therapist. The goal of treatment is not just to "fix" the child, but to heal the family system so the "bloom" can be sustained once the resident returns home.

With a minimum of one hour per week of family therapy, the parent role is defined by three key pillars:

The Collaborative Partner (The "Gardener")

The parent provides the historical context the clinical team needs. Since the resident is in a "greenhouse" (R-Place), the parent helps the team understand the "natural soil" of the home environment. This is done by sharing triggers, successful past interventions, and family dynamics that influence the resident's behavior.

The Active Learner (Skill Acquisition)

The weekly session is a "lab" where parents learn the same dialectical or behavioral skills the resident is practicing on the unit. This is achieved by practicing de-escalation techniques, validating communication, and learning the specific "clinical language" (e.g., "I-statements" or "sensory grounding") used at R-Place.

The Bridge to Reintegration (Generalization)

Parents act as the primary support for "Budding" behaviors. During weekly sessions and eventual passes, parents provide the safe space for the resident to test their new regulation skills outside of staff supervision by providing honest feedback to the therapist about how the resident handled stressors during the session or visit.

Accountability and Support

The one-hour weekly commitment ensures that the parent and child are "growing" at the same pace. It prevents the "re-entry shock" that occurs when a child changes significantly in treatment while the home environment remains the same.

The R-Place Phase Program

To help you understand your child's journey at R-Place, we use the metaphor of a flower growing from a seed to a full bloom. This helps us see that healing isn't just about "fixing" a behavior; it's about a natural process of growth and resilience.

The Seed (Stability)

When your child first arrives, they are like a seed. They might have a "hard shell" as a way to protect themselves from past hurt or stress. Our first job is to provide the safe, consistent "soil" they need to feel secure enough to open up.

The Sprout (Learning Skills)

As they start to feel safe, they begin to "sprout." You will see them learning new ways to handle big emotions and interact with others. This is the stage where they are building the strength (the stem) to handle the "wind and rain" of life's challenges.

The Bud (Testing Growth)

Before a flower fully opens, it forms a bud. This represents your child practicing their new skills in the community—like on our family entertainment outings. It's a time to test their growth in the real world while we are still there to support them.

The Bloom (Home & Future)

The goal is the "bloom"—when your child is ready to take what they've learned and thrive back in their natural environment at home.

Your Role as the "Gardener"

You are the most important part of this process. By joining our weekly family sessions for at least one hour, you are helping us tend to the environment your child will return to. Together, we make sure the "soil" at home is just as supportive as the "soil" here, ensuring their growth lasts a lifetime.

Stage	Plant Growth	RTF Clinical Phase
Phase1	Seed in Soil	Admission/Intake
Phase 2	Germination	Breakthrough/Early Therapy
Phase 3	Sprouting	Skill Building/Active Treatment
Phase 4	Budding	Community Integration/Outings
Phase 5	Blooming	Discharge/Success

Logistics and Policies

Packing List

Please follow the below list to reduce "contraband" issues at intake and ensures your child has everything they need for comfort.

Items to Bring (Required/Allowed)

- Clothing: 7–10 days of comfortable, modest clothing (t-shirts, sweatshirts, jeans, leggings). No Short shorts. This will be at the discretion of staff.
- Seasonal Clothing (i.e. Snowpants, winter jacket, boots, gloves, hat)
- Bathing Suit (Full-Coverage) and Towel (the residents frequently go to the YMCA)
- Sleepwear: 2-3 sets of pajamas (must be full coverage).
- Footwear: 1 pair of sneakers, 1 pair of shower shoes/flip-flops, and 1 pair of slippers.
- Toiletries: Alcohol-free shampoo/conditioner, body wash, toothbrush, and deodorant (must be in original, clear plastic containers).
- Comfort: 1-2 soft, non-electronic items (e.g., a favorite stuffed animal or a fleece blanket without fringe), posters and pictures to hang on the wall.
- Stationery and Craft: Envelopes and stamps for letters home. Art supplies are permitted

Items to Leave at Home (Prohibited)

Safety First - To maintain a safe environment for all residents, the following items are strictly prohibited. If brought, they will be sent home with parents or locked in a secure safe until discharge.

- Electronics: Cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, or anything with internet/camera capability.
- Hygiene Items: Aerosol cans, mirrors, glass bottles, or products containing alcohol (e.g., mouthwash).
- Jewelry: Anything that is considered valuable except for religion based.
- Miscellaneous: Spiral notebooks (metal wire is a risk), energy drinks, or outside food/snacks.

Pro-Tip for Parents

Label every item of clothing with a permanent marker on the tag. Labels prevent items from getting lost.

Medical and Medication

All medications are stored in a double-locked cabinet and administered by a Registered Nurse (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). Our Staff Psychiatrist reviews all medications weekly. You will be notified of any recommended changes to your child's prescription and must provide consent before a new medication is started.

Your child will be required to have a vision, dental, and hearing test done while at R-Place. R-Place will provide transportation to and from appointments. You will be notified of the date and time of each appointment if you would like to attend.

Education

To ensure your child continues to reach the sunlight, our academic program provides a consistent 'climate' for learning. School is held Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. We proudly model our curriculum after the local DuBois School District to ensure high standards. Our education team will maintain regular contact with your child's home school, ensuring their academic growth remains steady and undisturbed during their 90-day stay.

Grievance Procedure

- Any patient, or those helping him/her, may initiate a complaint orally or in writing concerning the exercise of these rights or the quality of services and treatment at the facility. The complaint shall be presented as soon as possible to the treatment team leader or other appropriate person.
- Every patient shall have the right to the assistance of an independent person and witnesses in presenting his/her complaint.
- The treatment team leader, administrative supervisor, or their designees receiving the complaint shall investigate the complaint and make every effort to resolve it. Based upon this investigation, a decision shall be made in writing as soon as possible but within 48 hours after the filing of the complaint. Complaints shall be made by people who are not directly involved in the circumstances leading to grievance.
- The patient shall be given a copy of the complaint and final decision, and a copy shall be filed in the patient's record.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. How will I know how my child is doing?

You will have a scheduled weekly update with your child's Primary Therapist. Additionally, you will participate in Family Therapy sessions (typically once a week), where clinical progress and goals are discussed in detail. For urgent medical or safety concerns, the facility will contact you immediately.

2. What happens if my child gets homesick?

Homesickness is a very natural part of the adjustment period, especially in the first 14 days. Our staff is trained to provide "milieu support," helping your child engage in activities and build peer connections. We generally encourage parents to remain positive and "firm but loving" during phone calls to help the child settle into the routine.

3. Can I bring my child's favorite food or snacks?

To ensure the safety of all residents (including those with severe allergies) and to maintain a balanced nutritional program, outside food is generally not permitted. However, for special occasions like birthdays, please contact the Case Manager 48 hours in advance to discuss approved treats.

4. What if there is an emergency at home?

If there is a family emergency, please call the Main Facility Line and ask for the Administrator on Duty (AOD). They are available 24/7 and will coordinate the best way to inform your child and facilitate a phone call.

5. Can my child receive "care packages"?

Yes! We encourage letters and photos. You may send books (paperback only) or coloring supplies. However, all packages will be opened by staff in the presence of the child to ensure no prohibited items (like sharps or electronics) enter the unit.

6. Who supervises my child at night?

The facility is staffed 24/7. During the night, Residential Counselors perform "checks" at specific intervals (typically every 15 minutes, or more frequently if clinically indicated) to ensure every child is safe and sleeping.

A Note for Parents

It is normal to feel a mix of guilt, relief, and anxiety during this time. Remember that by choosing this level of care, you are providing your child with a safe environment to heal that a traditional home setting