

# CEDARS

Here for kids. Here for families.



6601 Pioneers Blvd. Ste. 1  
Lincoln, NE 68506  
402-434-5437 CEDARSkids.org

## **PIONEERS CENTER EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter is designed to serve children ages 12 through 18 years of age, who do not have immediate access to a safe or more appropriate living arrangement. The center can provide care for up to 23 total youth at one time.

CEDARS Pioneers Center offers a safe environment where qualified and dedicated professionals are available 24 hours a day to meet the physical, developmental, and emotional needs of youth. Services are provided within a secure building that is specifically designed to ensure maximum supervision for youth in care. The program is intended to support youth and their families and move them toward a successful placement in their home or to an alternative safe placement.

CEDARS Pioneers Center is staffed by highly trained professionals that utilize the practices of Trauma-Informed Care, verbal de-escalation. CEDARS Behavior Management model is based upon the Restorative Approach, which is based on attachment theory and the principles of restorative justice. This includes practical strategies for: responding to behaviors with concrete learning and restorative tasks; interacting with youth in an attuned manner; understanding the adaptive role of behavior and using that understanding to create change; defining the role of the clinician within the team; designing unit structure and programming to promote healing relationships; teaching children that effective action is possible and that problems within relationships can be solved; individualizing treatment and examining the role of consistency; and structuring and strengthening self-aware teams consisting of staff who care for themselves and each other. When a child is dysregulated (experiencing a crisis or escalated), staff focus on grounding and calming, rather than discussing consequences. When the child has been regulated or returned to the program, staff then discuss what happened during the crisis to process with the youth and work with the youth to determine an appropriate consequence, such as restricting privileges, replacing or repaying for broken items, or having a discussion between youth who were involved in an altercation in an attempt to make amends. CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter does not utilize restrictive behavior management techniques.

CEDARS mission is to help children and youth achieve safety, stability, and enduring family relationships. CEDARS is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

## **SERVICES**

CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter serves youth who are state wards or involved with the juvenile justice system, youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or youth experiencing a crisis at home due to mental or behavioral health issues, school truancy, or other factors that threaten the preservation of stability of the youth in the family home.

CEDARS utilizes a positive youth development approach, with a strengths-based, family-centered focus. During their stay, youth are required to attend school or participate in an alternative education program (such as online learning through their home school), unless they have graduated from high

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school or obtained their GED. CEDARS works diligently with each youth's home school to maximize attendance and develop strong educational goals and will provide transportation to and from school, if needed, within a 25-mile radius of our facility. Youth participate in development activities designed to help them build character, competence, confidence, compassion, and connections. Individualized service plans are developed and implemented by the staff team, youth, parents/legal guardians and other service providers. These plans help to meet a youth's specific needs and facilitate their movement to a more appropriate level of care. Consistent, individual support is provided throughout the youth's stay, and staff are available to provide support to youth during their transition to a long-term care setting. Staff are diligent in ensuring youth's mental health, medical, dental, and vision needs are met.

CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter also offers Crisis Stabilization programming for youth in need of more intensive support. Crisis Stabilization is aimed at returning families to a pre-crisis level of functioning and incorporates a therapeutic approach to care.

## LOCATION AND STAFFING

CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter is located at the back half of CEDARS Administrative offices at 6601 Pioneers Blvd in Lincoln, Nebraska. CEDARS Pioneers Center Emergency Shelter consists of an upper level and a lower level. Programming is divided into four separate "tracks", referred to as Balance, Courage, Momentum, and Resilience. Each track of programming has been tailored to meet the supervision and support needs of youth at different stages of their journey.

The Emergency Shelter team consists of a Service Director, Program Director, multiple Assistant Program Directors, two Case Managers, an Admissions Coordinator, and many direct care staff responsible for ongoing care and supervision of youth being served in Emergency Shelter. The Program Director oversees the Assistant Program Directors and the Service Director oversees the Program Director, with supervision of direct care staff falling to Assistant Program Directors. All Emergency Shelter staff are age 21 or over and have been provided with the required education and training to effectively meet the needs of youth in care, per licensing, contractual, and accreditation requirements. Emergency Shelter staff ensure youth have all of the necessities of daily living, provide transportation to and from school, appointments, employment, and/or other activities as appropriate to the individual youth.

CEDARS Emergency Shelter has a formalized "Normalcy Plan" to ensure that youth in congregate care settings have opportunities to engage in activities just as any teenager would. This includes formal and informal relationships and agreements with many community organizations and partners, as well as routinized access to community-based resources such as the YMCA and other recreational options, public libraries, life skills training (including training on budgeting/money management, meal planning and nutrition education) primarily through CEDARS Life Quest, and access as desired to cultural and religious activities.