

## Covenant House Wellness Policy

Covenant House provides comprehensive residential and supportive services to homeless, runaway, and at-risk youth (ages 16-22). Covenant House believes that in order for our young adults to progress and live healthy productive lives, we must focus on their holistic wellness as human beings; mind, body and spirit. We aim to focus on improving and balancing the six dimensions of wellness<sup>1</sup>. These are listed below, as well as how Covenant House implements them on a daily basis.

- **Social Wellness** is the process of creating and maintain healthy relationships
  - Covenant House aims to promote healthy relationships between co-workers, residents, and volunteers. All of Covenant House’s job descriptions include the following:
    - Initiate and maintain positive, professional, and mentoring relationships with youth and staff in accordance with the Covenant House Mission, Principles, and Core Values.
    - Promote a peaceful, healing environment by utilizing the principles and practices of trauma-informed care and positive youth development in all aspects of work and youth engagement, including crisis prevention, intervention, and de-escalation.
    - Ensure that Covenant House New Orleans is a welcoming, inclusive, safe, and secure “homelike” environment for youth receiving services.
- **Physical Wellness** is the process of having a flexible, aerobically fit body.
  - Covenant House has an onsite health clinic to address immediate needs of residents.
  - Covenant House provides space and time for residents to exercise and play. These include an onsite basketball court, playground for toddlers, treadmill and Total Gym, close proximity to Armstrong Park, weekly yoga sessions, fitness classes every other week, and occasional field trips to various entities promoting physical activities.
  - Covenant House promotes physical wellness through nutrition education and promotion, while providing healthy food and beverage options.
  - Covenant House has staff and volunteers who teach life skills involving cooking nutritional meals so that residents are well prepared upon entering independent living.
  - Covenant House has an onsite herb garden to incorporate into everyday meals.
  - Covenant House provides three healthy meals per day, 365 days per year. All meals use USDA recipes and follow daily and weekly nutritional guidelines.
  - Covenant House provides hygienic materials to all residents (e.g. soap, shampoo, sanitary products, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> Bill Hettler, MD, co-founder, National Wellness Institute, 1976

- **Emotional Wellness** is the process of creating and maintaining a positive realistic self-concept and enthusiasm about life.
  - Covenant House employs two full-time wellness social workers who provide one-on-one counseling as well as group sessions. Activities include but are not limited to: music therapy, art therapy, group drum sessions, and games.
  - Covenant House provides psycho-social health assessments to all residents through a licensed clinical psychologist.
  
- **Occupational Wellness** is the process of making and maintaining choices that are meaningful and contributes to your personal growth as well as work.
  - Through our Life Skills curriculum, Covenant House staff provide instruction on navigating daily life and making smart choices.
  - Covenant House’s job readiness classes cover a variety of topics that help residents learn how to not only maintain employment, but also advance in the workplace. These include attendance and punctuality, teamwork and communication, accepting and following direction, creativity / problem solving, accountability and responsibility, adaptability, honesty / integrity, taking initiative / self-motivation, eagerness to grow and learn, and professionalism.
  
- **Intellectual Wellness** is the process of using your mind to create a greater understanding of yourself and the universe.
  - Covenant House provides educational materials and resources to assist residents in growing their intellectual capabilities and interests.
  - Covenant House provides access to computers, conducts TABE testing, coordinates and refers individuals to outside GED programs, colleges, and technical career learning centers.
  
- **Spiritual Wellness** is the process of “experiencing life” while seeking meaning and purpose in human existence. Spirituality allows one to have consistency between values and behaviors.
  - Covenant House’s mission is imbedded with the teachings of Jesus Christ to provide unconditional respect and love to those that society has cast away.
  - Covenant House has an onsite chapel to provide a safe, quiet space to meditate or pray.
  - Covenant House provides transportation for residents seeking to attend spiritual sessions for all faiths.