

ST. CLOUD CHILDREN'S HOME

1726 Seventh Avenue South

St. Cloud, MN 56301

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School Philosophy

Most students attending school at the St. Cloud Children's Home (SCCH) have been placed as a result of emotional and behavioral challenges they experience. Consequently, in addition to providing a well-rounded academic curriculum that allows the student the opportunity to progress toward a goal of graduation from their home school, another primary focus of the school program is to identify interfering behaviors that may occur in an instructional setting and teach the skills necessary to assist students in making better decisions. In order for students to experience success, we believe each student must recognize the need to learn new skills, be willing to make changes and eventually self-monitor their behavior, and finally, to become a positive self-advocate for their own unique learner qualities and needs. This is accomplished by teachers and students working together in a cooperative manner to set goals and objectives. Once goals and objectives are achieved, students have begun to equip themselves with skills needed for a successful return to a more traditional school setting.

School Program Goals

1. To improve a student's academic skills and study habits through a learning environment in which students experience success.
2. To model and reinforce appropriate social and learning behaviors.
3. To recognize student strengths and capitalize on appropriate choices.
4. To provide appropriate, respectful teaching interactions and consistent consequences when students display inappropriate behaviors.
5. To empower students with the skills necessary to return to a traditional school setting at the time of their discharge from the SCCH.

Programs Available

There are seven educational programs operated by District 742 serving students in grades 1 through 12 that are affiliated with the St. Cloud Children's Home. Two programs serve students placed in the Residential Treatment Program at the SCCH. Three additional programs serve students receiving Day Treatment services. Finally, there is a Day School program and the Youth Learning Center.

The Residential Treatment and Day Treatment programs, serving students from many school districts, are programs operated by Catholic Charities for which the St. Cloud Area School District #742 vends educational services. The Day School and Youth Learning Center programs are day programs operated by the St. Cloud Area School District #742 in collaboration with Catholic Charities, and are for District 742 resident students only.

Residential Programs

The Residential Treatment program at the SCCH consists of approximately 55 students between the ages of 8 and 18. Younger students, in grades 2 through 6, attend school at

the Behavior Learning Program classroom currently located at Oak Hill Community School. Students who do not require the level of support provided in the Behavior Learning Program classroom attend mainstream classes at Oak Hill on a part time or full time basis. Older students in grades 7 through 12 attend school on a full time basis on-site at the SCCH. Students enrolled in the Short-term Assessment Unit of the SCCH are usually in our school for approximately 30 days. As a result, academic instruction in basic skill areas such as Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics is individualized and self-paced through the use of interactive, web-based multimedia programs such as *SkillsTutor*. Students placed in the Short-term Assessment Unit also attend elective classes at the SCCH. Students placed in the Secure Unit of the SCCH are provided educational services in their cottage setting by licensed teachers. Generally, about 70% of residential students at the SCCH receive special education services in addition to their general education instruction. Special education services provided students are embedded into instruction received by students in their mainstream classroom setting at the SCCH.

Day Treatment

There are three Day Treatment programs at the SCCH (Senior High for grades 9-12, Middle Level for grades 7-8, and Elementary for grades 1-6) that are provided with academic programming by District 742 staff. Catholic Charities staff provides educationally-related services. The Senior High and Middle Level school programs, serving approximately 8-10 students each, are designed to closely approximate the structure of traditional community junior and senior high schools. Day treatment students in grades 9-12 receive four core academic classes and three hours daily of educationally-related classes (coping skills, social skills, and anger management skills). Day treatment students in grades 7-8 receive three core academic classes and three hours daily of educationally-related classes. The Elementary Program, serving approximately 8-10 students, is based on a self-contained special classroom model that focuses upon positive recognition of student strengths, utilizes immediate feedback and positive teaching interactions to build social skills and strengthen competency in academic and interpersonal areas. Elementary students receive approximately 3 hours daily of both academic and educationally-related classes.

Practically all students attending Day Treatment programs have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), although an IEP is not required to enroll in the Day Treatment program. When an individual student is identified as needing Day Treatment services, the referring agency and/or the resident school IEP Team, in conjunction with Catholic Charities Day Treatment program staff, develop an educational and clinical/family service plan. They also identify funding responsibilities to support and implement the service plan.

Day School

The Day School program at the SCCH provides an alternative educational placement opportunity for up to six District 742 students in grades 7 through 12. Almost all students enrolling in the SCCH Day School program have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), although an IEP is not required for enrollment. The intent of this program is to provide a full school day experience for students who have been determined to need a smaller school setting and a more structured, small group classroom environment than can be reasonably provided in a local community school setting. Students in the Day School

program have access to an educational program that will allow them to continue to acquire credits toward graduation at a rate consistent with their mainstream home school, and are integrated with the residential students of the SCCH while attending classes. Occasionally, students in the Day School program are using the program as a transitional setting from a more restrictive setting to another mainstream or alternative school setting. One class period each day for Day School students is a skills-building class, which is team-taught by the School Social Worker and a Special Education teacher. Here, students can focus on individual goals designed to enhance their ability to succeed in a mainstream school and other transitional settings. The smaller class size experienced by the students throughout their day allows for a behavioral focus in the classroom that is individualized for each student's needs. The goal for students in the Day School program is to successfully transition into a less restrictive community school option within 12 to 18 months. Students are recommended and referred to the Day School Program Administrator by the student's IEP team or, in the case of students not on an IEP, by an administrator or counselor in their home school building. The student's parents must also support their child's placement in the Day School program.

Youth Learning Center

The Youth Learning Center (YLC) provides an alternative educational program for up to fifteen District 742 students in grades 7, 8, and 9 who have been experiencing significant social and behavioral issues in traditional school settings. The program is designed to provide educational services and life skills training for students that can be transferred to other school, family, and community settings. YLC students can attend anywhere from one to three classes at the on-site school program for residential students at the SCCH. Remaining academic and life skills classes are taught at a site located off of the main SCCH campus. Students who enter the program for the first time are typically in the seventh or eighth grade. Ninth grade students in the program are generally finishing up their work at the YLC and in the process of transitioning to another school program. All students entering the YLC must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The goals of the program are to identify student strengths, assist the student in developing life goals, determine challenges that an individual student may face in achieving identified life goals, find and implement the resources and interventions that will enhance the student's opportunities to achieve success. The program emphasizes experiential learning opportunities, places a focus on learner strengths, and works with the student and their family to form community support networks that will assist the student to continue the realization of identified life goals after leaving the YLC. Concepts and practices from *Reclaiming Youth at Risk/Circle of Courage* form the framework for the learning environment at the YLC.

SCCH Staff and Curriculum

The teaching staff for SCCH programs currently consists of sixteen full time licensed teachers, a school social worker, a part time school program supervisor, a part time school program administrator, a part time school psychologist and speech/language pathologist. Teachers are licensed in the content areas they teach as well as in special education. Six paraprofessionals also support students at the SCCH. The on-site school program at the SCCH offers a curriculum covering all secondary grade levels (7 through 12) and includes course offerings in English, Social Studies, Math, Remedial

Reading, Science, Theatre Arts, Family and Consumer Science, Business Education, Computers, Physical Education, Transition Skills, Daily Living Skills, and Social Skills. Standard curriculum materials are supplemented with the web-based *SkillsTutor* curriculum resource. Educational programming is enhanced through a significant school investment in an *iBook Mac Lab* providing wireless access to other various web-based resources for classroom learning. Students attending the school programs at the SCCH participate in the statewide MCAs and Basic Skills Tests in Reading, Math, and Writing as they would in any other school setting. Students attending school at the SCCH have the opportunity for a full time schedule and academic credit for work completed. School hours for students are from 8:25 until 2:55. Class sizes typically range from one to eight students. The small class sizes provide an opportunity for teachers to focus on individual behavioral needs of students as well as individual academic objectives. Individualization and small group instruction are used to accommodate for different functional levels and learning styles of students. Delivery of special education services specified in a student's IEP are embedded into the delivery of mainstream content area instruction and curriculum by teachers who are licensed in both special education and a regular education content area.

Referral Process

Students are referred to the SCCH programs through county social service agencies, but many referrals come from other child placing agencies, the court system, school districts, and parents. For more school information, please contact:

SCCH School Program Administrator
St. Cloud Area School District 742
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