

CEHOP – a model for individual journeys through care

Oberstown’s CEHOP model of care takes its title from the five strands we address when working with young people here on campus – Care, Education, Health, Offending behaviour and Planning for the future.

Individual journeys through care

We begin the “journey through care” with a young person the moment we are contacted to let us know they may be coming here.

This journey doesn’t end until the day of their release and, even then, there are supports in place to assist them as they transition back into their communities.

Each young person who comes to Oberstown has their own unique circumstances, so we tailor the CEHOP programme to suit each individual. It is a fully bespoke plan.

CEHOP MODEL OF CARE



When mapping out this journey we take factors such as the young person’s age, their offence, their previous education and their care and health needs into account.

Focusing on the future

What we are always working towards is that when these young people leave us there is a better chance that they won’t be involved in offending behaviour.

Placement planning enables this journey to happen. The key people in a young person’s life, including family members, gather for a placement planning meeting every six to eight weeks to discuss goals with that young person and to review progress in all the areas covered by CEHOP.

The goals should be attainable between meetings, so the young people don’t see them as something far off and are motivated by achieving them.

CEHOP has shifted the emphasis from looking back at what the young person has done – although this is still worked on – to focusing much more on their future.

Building relationships

Within 24 hours of arriving on campus a young person will have an identified key worker – a residential social care worker who will be responsible for liaising with them and their family or guardian and the services working with them.

We want to establish a rapport both with the young person and their parents or guardians as quickly as possible. There is a placement planning meeting within 72 hours, where staff want to hear the views of the young person and the family.

We begin by calculating the date of release and start with the end in mind. Young people are here for offending behaviour, so we do have a responsibility to address this.

We also look at the risks associated with the individual young person and to try to put a plan in place to mitigate that – and that leads us to their preparation for leaving.

Preparation for leaving

We focus on all sorts of activities on campus to help in this process. School is a really important part of life here, and for some young people their interaction with education prior to coming here has been limited.

But other activities are also really important. Some of our young people have come from a chaotic lifestyle and haven't had fun the way other teenagers have, so it's important for them to have these outlets.

Allowing a young person to be a young person is part of our culture here.

All young people are entitled to visits, initially from parents or guardians, but placement planning meetings will look at who else might be appropriate.

We don't want young people to completely lose touch with their community. It's very important that we are supporting appropriate contact with family, some friends and any appropriate community-based organisations.

Success stories

What success looks like is different for every young person. For some it's that they are alive, for others it's that they are progressing with their education, and for others it's improvements in their physical or mental health.

We've seen many success stories on campus and they motivate us to work even harder.

Towards the end of a young person's sentence here we work with Le Chéile who offer mentoring to young people leaving Oberstown and their families.

We also partner with the Youth Advocacy Programme and with Empowering People in Care (Epic), in preparing young people to leave the State care system and ensuring they feel supported once they leave us.

Brian Hogan

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