LOOKING AHEAD

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY & DEFINING YOUR FUTURE

THE TJJD YOUTH HANDBOOK

Be in the right place at the right time.

Follow directions.

Participate in activities.

Respect others.

Accept consequences.

The young men and women on the front cover of this book are real TJJD youth. They have all finished TJJD and returned to their communities. Work hard and you too might make the cover of the next youth handbook as a success story!

This is a quick reference guide only. You have access to full TJJD policies which explain in detail the topics in this book. Important policies should be posted on your dorm.

TJJD PUBLICATION #CCG – 001 TJJD YOUTH HANDBOOK JANUARY 2016

MY INFORMATION

Here is a place for you to write down important information about yourself. You should use a pencil since some of the information may change during your stay in TJJD.

My Name:

My TJJD ID Number:

Facility Phone Number:

My TJJD Address:

My Case Manager's Name:

Sentenced Offender: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Offense Severity: ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

My Parole Officer:

My Educational Goal:

My Required Specialized Treatment Programs:

MLOS/MPC Date:

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Intake, Assessment & Orientation:
(first 4 – 6 weeks)

Ron Jackson State Juvenile
Correctional Complex
P.O. Box 1267
Brownwood, TX 76804

325-641-4200 phone
325-646-7704 fax

24-Hour Abuse Reporting Hotline:
(Office of Inspector General)

(866) 477-8354

Independent Ombudsman for TJJD:
(Free Call from TJJD Blue Phones)

(855) 468-7330

TJJD Austin Office
Mailing Address:

Texas Juvenile Justice Department
P.O. Box 12757
Austin, TX 78711

Grievance Coordinator, Youth	512-490-7235
TJJD Release Review Panel	512-490-7101
Sentenced Offender Department	512-490-7031
Sex Offender Registration	512-490-7289
State Operated Programs & Services	512-490-7172

You will always be allowed to use a phone at TJJD if you need to call the Abuse Reporting Hotline or the Independent Ombudsman.

WHAT'S INSIDE MY HANDBOOK?

My Daily Life at TJJD	1
My Basic Rights	13
My Parents' Bill of Rights	15
Basic Things TJJD Expects of Me	17
Moving Through TJJD	18
My Minimum Length of Stay	22
My Treatment Program	25
My Education	30
Positive Behavior Incentives	40
Changing Bad Behavior	44
Security and Control	46
My Custody & Supervision Rating	49
Rule Violations	51
Consequences for Violating Rules	56
Due Process Hearings	60
Appealing Consequences	62
Zero Tolerance for Sexual Abuse	63
Making a Complaint	67
The Independent Ombudsman	70
Moving to Medium Security	71
Release & Discharge (Non-Sentenced Offenders)	73
Release & Discharge (Sentenced Offenders)	77
My Parole – Going Home	81
Independent Living	85
My Juvenile Records	87
My Guide to TJJD Words & Acronyms	91
Conclusion	94

Chapel at the Giddings State School in Giddings, Texas

- **This handbook will help you understand what your life will be like while you are at the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD).**
- **This handbook will help you understand the rules and your rights.**
- **You may be given additional rules and information for the program where you live.**
- **If you have questions, TJJD staff are here to help you.**
- **Keep this handbook in a safe place so you can refer to it when necessary.**
- **You will be informed if any information or rules in this book change.**

INTRODUCTION

Hi. My name is Jason. You probably feel exactly like I did when I was committed to TJJD – that this is the last place you want to be. When I was first placed in TJJD, I was unsure of what I had gotten into and wondered how was I going to get myself out of the mess I created. I wondered whether the bad choices I made would lead me to a dead end, and I felt discouraged. I let my family down and, worst of all, let myself down. I knew that I had potential to succeed and was disappointed in myself and angry at the world. Later on, I would learn my sadness was also for my victims and the pain I had caused them. You could say that when I got to TJJD, everything that was broken in my life hit me all at once. I spent three years in TJJD for Aggravated Robbery. In that time, I successfully completed the Capital and Serious Violent Offender Treatment Program and made a step to change my life around.

Like me, you have also been committed to TJJD because a juvenile court judge ruled that you are delinquent of a felony offense. You may have a long history of getting in trouble or you may have done something very serious, or both. Either way, TJJD is here to help you understand some important things – that what you did hurt others, why you may be acting out, and most of all, how you can move forward so that you can live a successful, law-abiding life.

Getting sent to TJJD is serious. Only about three out of every 100 youth who get in trouble with the law in Texas go to TJJD. Though this is serious, there is one thing you need to appreciate – you did not get sent to TDCJ (the Texas Department of Criminal Justice – adult prison). Instead, the juvenile court judge found something in you worth giving you a chance at TJJD. You'll find that a lot of the staff members feel the same way about you. They are not here to judge, blame, or punish you. Yes, you will have to follow rules, but staff members are here to help you.

If I could change what I did to erase the hurt I caused, I would do it in a heartbeat. However, I would not change the lessons I learned in TJJD and the direction my life is going.

Like everything else you do, TJJD will be what you decide to make it. Instead of looking at being here as punishment, try to think of it as an opportunity. As you move through the treatment program, you will learn some interesting things about yourself. You will also meet new people who have had similar experiences. Since you have to be at TJJD anyway, you should try to make the best of your time. The choice is yours. You can make some life-changing decisions for the better starting right now. All of the possibilities in life are still open to you. The only difference is, now you have the programs, resources, and individuals who can help you figure out what you need to do to make your dreams come true.

Back to those feelings I told you about when I first arrived at TJJD. I know you're probably feeling the same way. That's OK. They are normal. I also know that there's not much I can say that will change your mind right now. It's a journey that you will have to take for yourself. Just know, from someone who made it through the toughest part, it will get better; you will get better; and you have a lot of reasons to look ahead.

The administrators at TJJD wrote this book – *Looking Ahead* – to answer some of your basic questions. They got help from TJJD youth like me to keep things in perspective. There is a lot of information about TJJD in this book. If at any time you don't understand something, just ask a staff member or your peers.

Starting right now, let's look ahead together to the day you can go home a better person – able to succeed in your community without breaking any laws. It can happen. I'm living proof.

Best wishes,

Jason

Jason

MY DAILY LIFE AT TJJD

Facility Intake and Orientation

When you arrive at a new TJJD facility, you go through intake and orientation for that facility. This is where staff help you understand the rules, your responsibilities, and the privileges for your new facility. Some things are the same at all TJJD facilities, but other things can be a little different. This is why you should pay attention at each intake and orientation, even if you think you know the rules and how things work.

When you first get to your new facility, you will learn about:

(1) goals and services at the facility; (2) the rules of conduct and possible consequences; (3) all of the different buildings at the facility; (4) what staff to talk to when you are experiencing different issues; and (5) the daily activities.

You also receive your clothing and personal hygiene items. After you get settled, you will have an orientation that covers:

(1) this youth handbook; (2) meeting the campus staff; (3) all rules and consequences; (4) the requirements for you to complete your treatment and go home; (5) using the telephone; (6) getting your mail; (7) visitation; (8) your trust fund and personal money; (9) your rights; (10) how to make a complaint and solve problems you might be having; (11) religious activities on campus; (12) going to school or work; (13) physical education; (14) your daily schedule; (15) the cafeteria rules; (16) campus security and searches; (17) medical and dental care; (18) understanding your treatment stages; (19) keeping track of your clothing and personal property; (20) what to do in case of a fire or emergency; (21) your housekeeping duties; (22) how to practice good hygiene; (23) drug testing; (24) a tour of the campus; (25) a video about Zero Tolerance and Breaking the Silence and (26) how to use the "hotline" for any emergency or serious complaint needing immediate attention.

Schedule

Each TJJD facility has its own schedule. At secure facilities, your day will last about 16 hours from the time you wake up until the time you go to sleep. There will be different schedules for weekdays, weekends, and holidays, but you will always be busy with many different activities.

Living at a TJJD Facility

Secure facilities have the highest level of supervision in TJJD. Your living environment will be very structured to keep you safe and out of trouble. You will spend most of your time with your dorm group, except in school, where you will be in class with youth from other dorms. Dorm groups have about 12 to 18 youth in them.

Not all TJJD facilities are alike. In almost all secure facilities you will have your own room. In community programs such as “halfway houses” you share with just a few other youth. On most dorms, there is a case manager’s office, a group area, a laundry area, and a place for showers, sinks, and toilets. You are expected to keep your personal area clean and help keep the common areas tidy. Staff will explain your duties to you.

Daily Dorm Shift Logs

There are three shifts of staff members every day. One group of staff works in the morning, another works in the afternoon and evening, and the third group works overnight. After each shift, staff on your dorm must fill out a record so that the next group of staff know about everything that happened earlier in the day. The shift log keeps track of your medical needs, your overall attitude and behavior, and whether or not you are on restriction of any kind.

Personal Items

TJJD gives you all the basics. You are also allowed some personal items like books, including religious books, religious articles used in worship, and family photographs. Staff on your dorm will tell you what you are allowed to have.

Contraband

Contraband is anything you are not allowed to have. If what you have is not allowed on campus, it is contraband. If what you have is allowed on campus, but is not assigned to you or you have too much of something you aren't supposed to have – it is also contraband. Here are some examples of contraband: drugs, alcohol, unauthorized prescription drugs or medication, drug paraphernalia (anything you can use to use, make or hide drugs), items that can be used as or made into weapons, sexually explicit pictures, gambling supplies, things for making tattoos, cell phones, and cigarettes. Your personal area will be searched routinely and all contraband that is discovered will be seized. You can be charged with a new crime for having drugs or weapons. Having less dangerous contraband may mean you lose privileges.

Personal Hygiene

TJJD will give you soap, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant, and shaving products. If you show good progress in treatment and behavior, you can earn the privilege of purchasing personal hygiene items that are not state-issued, including make-up for girls.

TJJD will also help you practice personal hygiene skills such as regular showers and good dental care. Your dorm will visit a barber or hair stylist who comes to campus to cut your hair. You will also be given clean bedding and sheets.

Dress Code and Appearance

TJJD provides all of your clothes and shoes. You may get special clothes for community service events, to play sports, or to work. You get clean underwear and socks every day and clean outer clothing at least three times a week.

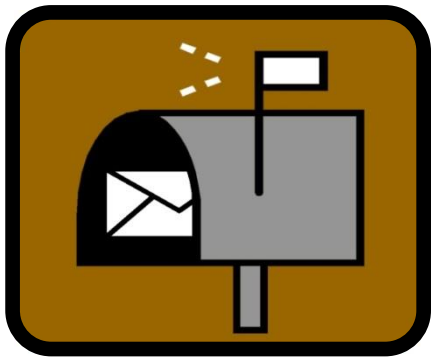
You must follow the TJJD dress code:

- You will wear only clothing and shoes that are provided by TJJD or purchased through TJJD as an earned privilege.

- Clothing will be clean, fit properly, and appropriate for the activity.
- Underwear must be worn and must be covered by your outer clothing. Girls will wear bras during non-sleeping hours.
- Shoes or acceptable footwear must be worn that are appropriate to the activity.
- You will not wear earrings or other body piercing items.
- Your hair must be worn in a standard style, neatly cut, clean, and well groomed.
- Boys must be clean-shaven.

Staff will tell you more about dress code rules at your facility. You will typically wear khaki or blue pants or jeans, a colored shirt, and tennis shoes. After you make progress in treatment and behavior, you may earn the privilege to wear non-state issued clothing and shoes.

Mail



You can receive mail. TJJD staff will not read or censor your mail, but will inspect it to ensure no contraband is included. Staff can only open and inspect your mail when you are present. If contraband is discovered, it will be seized. Additionally, whoever sent the contraband may face criminal charges.

There is no limit on the number of letters you can get. TJJD will pay for you to mail three letters a week. If you want to send more letters, you have to buy the stamps. If you are sending letters to your attorney or the courts about your case, TJJD will pay to mail them no matter how many you need to send.

Parents Who Do Not Speak English

If your parents do not speak English, TJJD can have information translated for them. Most information in print and on TJJD's website is already available in Spanish. TJJD can make arrangements to translate material to other languages if needed. Tell TJJD staff if your parents do not speak English.

Keeping in Touch

Texas law makes it illegal for TJJD to tell most people you are here because your information is confidential. However, you and your family are welcome to tell anyone you wish. People will only be able to find out your facility from you or your parents. Be sure to give your friends and contacts your current address. Also, if your parents move, make sure your case manager knows.

Email, Instant Messages, Use of the Internet

You won't get to use the internet except sometimes for school projects. You will never be allowed to get on sites like Facebook, MySpace, or Twitter while you are at TJJD. You will also not have email or instant messaging.

TJJD youth use computers for school work and industry certifications.

Phone Use

You will be able to use the telephone. However, you are only allowed to make calls with staff permission and during times you are not busy with activities such as school or group work. The exception is if you need to call the TJJD abuse hotline. You do not have to have staff permission to call the hotline.

Staff will give you permission to call your parents, guardians, family members, and other approved responsible adults. You are given some free long distance phone minutes each month at TJJD's expense. The agency does this to encourage you to seek family involvement in your treatment program. Eligible youth may buy extra phone minutes or make collect calls to those on an approved list. In emergencies, TJJD will help you contact your family.

Phone calls (other than to your lawyer) may be recorded and checked for illegal activities. If you abuse phone privileges, TJJD may not let you use the phones.

Visitation

Regular visitation happens at least on the weekends. Sometimes, your facility might have visitation on a day during the week, too. If there is an emergency, your parents can make special arrangements to visit you.

All visitors must go through a criminal record check and if approved they are placed on your approved visitor list. You are allowed to spend time with your family and others who have been approved for visitation because it is important to your success. Your parents will get a copy of your facility's visitation rules and a visitor's application. Other family members and people who want to visit you can get a visitor's application by contacting your case manager or family liaison. A visitor's application may also be downloaded from the TJJD website. Visitation may be suspended for someone for breaking the rules. If there is an emergency on campus, visitation could be suspended for everyone until it is safe.

If your family can't afford to visit you, TJJD community resource councils may be able to help. Your parents should contact your facility's community relations

coordinator to find out details. The council may help pay for gas, motels, and bus tickets.

You are allowed visits from your attorney and personal pastor any day of the week as long as you aren't in school or treatment groups. Please be sure to tell your case manager who they are so they can be entered as an approved visitor in the visitor tracker system.

You also have the right to refuse visitors.

These people are not allowed to visit you:

- former or current TJJD youth, unless they are your immediate family;
- a parent who had their parental rights terminated (if you are under 18);
- anyone who the court says can't contact you;
- any former or current TJJD employee, unless they are immediate family;
- anyone who is a safety and security risk, or will mess up your treatment program; and
- any victims of your crime who are under 18, unless the manager of institutional clinical services approves them to visit you.

School

TJJD facilities have fully accredited schools on campus. That means all credits you earn in TJJD will count when you go home. You can also earn your GED and get your high school diploma in TJJD. Plus, you can take college courses and earn industry certifications in different programs like horticulture, welding, food handling, auto mechanics, and computer programming. Each facility has different programs. Staff will tell you what is available to you. (see the section in this book called MY EDUCATION for more information)

"Do activities, any activity that will keep you out of trouble. I used to be in security 24-7 but now I do everything I can and I'm staying out of trouble. I do student council, welding, choir and every sport they have." – Youth N.D. (Giddings State School)

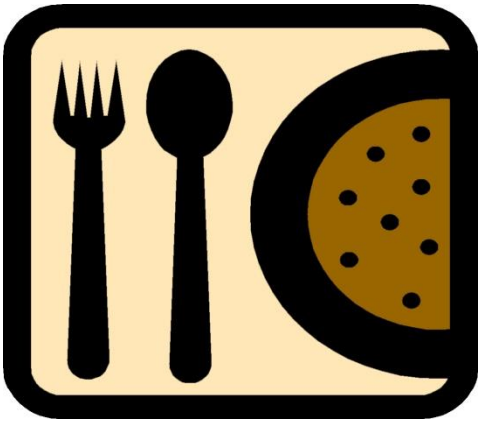
During orientation, you will take tests to help TJJD figure out where you are in school and whether you should be in special education.

Getting into career and technology classes depends on your age, grade, treatment progress, and risk to safety and security. TJJD does not discriminate when it decides who gets into these classes. Plus, TJJD will try to make sure if you don't speak English that you can still be in all programs.

Student Council

TJJD has a student council at every facility. The student council is made up of youth who represent their peers. The student council can, as a group, bring up concerns with management, suggest ways to improve the campus, recommend new programs, and communicate ideas.

Food and Nutrition



You get three meals and a snack every day at TJJD. The food you eat will be part of a well-balanced diet and will be prepared in a sanitary way. If your doctor says so, you will get a medical diet. You can also get a religious diet if your religion requires it.

Every year, TJJD sends out a survey about the food in facilities and halfway houses so that youth can give opinions. You might be selected to participate in the survey. If so, be sure to do it because your opinions count.

Medical Care

You will get appropriate and timely medical care in TJJD facilities. The facilities have medical clinics on campus called infirmaries. You will get a physical, dental, mental health, alcohol and other drug, and other laboratory evaluations when you first get to TJJD. You will also get any shots you need, including hepatitis B, and possibly a flu vaccine. You will get medical attention if you need it for anything the doctors find.

Making a Sick Call Request

You can make a sick call request to see a nurse Monday through Friday. If it's an emergency or you need immediate medical attention, you'll get help no matter what time or day it is. If you are sick, request to see a nurse by submitting a Sick Call Request form. Staff at your facility will explain how to do this. You'll then get an appointment with a nurse within 24 hours during weekdays and the next workday if on a weekend or holiday. If you get injured or are too sick to wait, tell staff. If an emergency happens the campus can't handle, you'll go to the emergency room.

If you are prescribed medication, you will receive it in pill line, before meals and/or at bedtime, as ordered by the medical provider. You should always take your medication as ordered and tell the nurse if you have a problem or are not feeling well. Also, never take someone else's pills for any reason. This is very dangerous. Report to staff immediately if another youth asks or tells you to give them your medication.

Money

You can't have cash in a TJJD facility because you do not need it. Instead, you will have a trust fund set up for money you might earn or get as a gift. Cash is contraband. Your parents have been told how to send money to your trust fund.

"Get a job during your stay, the pay is horrible, but when I got out after 3 years I had over $2,000.00 to get started on." – Youth H.H. (Corpus Christi Parole)

Campus Jobs

TJJD facilities have campus work programs so you can experience the responsibility and rewards of having a job. Campus jobs usually pay between $0.50 and $2.00 an hour. Because there are more youth than paying jobs on campus, they are considered privileges. If you want one of these jobs, make sure you have a good behavior record and that you are actively participating in school and in your treatment program.

A volunteer at a halfway house helps youth with homework.

Family and Volunteer Activities

TJJD is fortunate to have thousands of caring volunteers across the state who give their time and talent to help you and your family. Volunteers help pay for travel for parents who can't afford to visit. They set up family involvement days and give special treats to you on holidays and birthdays. TJJD volunteers want to help you keep connected with your family. Your facility has a person called a community relations coordinator who is in charge of volunteers at your campus and a person who is the family liaison. Both of them can help your family with questions or problems. You will meet the volunteers if they mentor or tutor you, or help you with spiritual guidance. Mentors are volunteers who build a friendship with you and offer encouragement and a listening ear. Tutors help you with reading, homework, or prepare for a GED test. If you would like a mentor or a tutor, please ask your community relations coordinator.

Religious Services

TJJD allows you equal opportunity to practice your preferred religion. You will be asked to declare a religious preference when you first get to TJJD. If you are

younger than 18, your parents must approve your religious preference. Your chaplain can help you with religious counseling, worship, and learning more about spiritual beliefs. If you ever want to change to a different religion, the chaplain will talk with you (and your parents, if you are younger than 18) to determine how sincere you are about practicing a new faith. You also have the right to not declare a religious preference or practice any faith at all.

TJJD will allow you to participate in religious services, ceremonies and other customs when they are not a threat to safety. You will usually be allowed to have a few religious items in your room (or sleeping area), such as a Bible, a rosary, and devotional materials. Your chaplain can help you get these things so you can practice your religion in your room. In order to keep everyone safe, some religious items are not allowed in your room though, like candles or incense. But you may be able to use these things during a religious service that your chaplain provides.

The primary role of your facility chaplain is to protect your religious freedoms; provide you with rites, rituals, and practices, and help you clarify your values. You can ask to speak with your chaplain using a conference request form.

Pregnancy

All girls who come into TJJD will receive a pregnancy test. If you are pregnant, you will receive all of the necessary medical, safety and nutritional needs during and after your pregnancy. A girl who gives birth to her child while in custody will not be allowed to provide infant care while in a TJJD secure facility. The TJJD youth and child will be placed into a mother-baby contract program for the provision of infant care or (if eligible) the infant will be placed with a family member until the youth is released. The intake staff member conducting your orientation will provide you with more information if you are pregnant.

"While you are in TJJD don't worry about what people say and think about you. Do what you gotta do to better YOU." – Youth J.G. (Houston Parole)

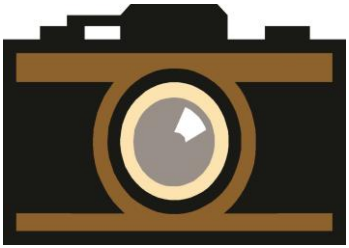
Zero Tolerance for Sexual Abuse

The Texas Legislature and TJJD Board have adopted a zero-tolerance policy regarding the sexual abuse, including consensual sexual contact, of a youth in the custody of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. Any such violation must be reported to: 1-866-477-8354. Additionally, the zero-tolerance policy also applies as part of TJJD's efforts to comply with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).

Victims' Services

TJJD makes sure your victims' legal rights are protected. They are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. Your victims can send information to TJJD which will be used to help in your treatment program. Victims have the right to be notified when you are released, however, TJJD will not give any victim your physical address when you are placed on parole. If you are a sex offender who has to register, your address will be on the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Sex Offender Public Website.

News Media



TJJD often gets requests from reporters to cover stories on campus. You might see a news crew at your campus every now and then. You do not have to worry about your picture being taken, or information about you being published, without your permission. Any person allowed to bring a camera on TJJD property knows they must keep your identity confidential. You will never be required to participate in a media project. However, if you want to allow your picture to be taken or give an interview, you will need to complete a TJJD form to waive your confidentiality. If you are 18 or older, you can fill out the form yourself. If not, your parents have to sign it. It explains the things you should think about before waiving your confidentiality.

"TJJD can be the beginning of something good. You gotta make up your mind to be positive!" – Youth D.P.

MY BASIC RIGHTS

Just because you are at TJJD doesn't mean you lose all of your rights. At TJJD, you have the basic rights listed here. Just like in your hometown, there are some limits to your rights, but only as a last resort. TJJD can limit your rights to make sure everyone is safe and to make sure you are getting the best treatment. If you think TJJD has violated your rights or you have been treated unfairly, you can take action to fix it. You can also get help from staff to do this. These are your basic rights:

1. Right to Equal Treatment – You have the right to be free from discrimination.

2. Right of Free Speech & Expression – You can express yourself if it isn't disruptive or unsafe.

3. Right of Religious Freedom – You and your parents (if you are under 18) can decide whether or not you participate in religious activities of your choice.

4. Right to Personal Possessions – You can keep and use personal possessions that are safe and don't disrupt programs or promote bad behavior.

5. Right to Receive Visitors – You can receive visitors, including private in-person communication with parents.

6. Right of Access to Mail & Telephone – You can freely send and receive letters in the mail except if they are a security risk. You will have access to phones as much as possible.

7. Right to Earnings & Monetary Gifts – You have the right to your money. TJJD may limit the amount of cash you can have on you but can't take it from your trust fund without your permission.

8. Right to Protection from Physical & Psychological Harm – You have the right to be protected from harm and to get healthy food, clothing, and shelter.

9. Right to Medical & Dental Care – You will get basic and necessary medical and dental care, both routine and emergency.

10. Right of Access to Attorneys – You can talk with your attorney in private.

11. Right to be Informed – TJJD will tell you about all policies, procedures, and rules affecting you at TJJD.

12. Right to Accuracy & Fairness – Decisions about you will be fair and correct.

13. Right to Confidentiality of Records – You have the right to confidentiality of your records. They will not be released except to those authorized by law.

14. Right to File Grievances & Appeal Decisions – You have the right to have your complaints resolved quickly and fairly.

Girls at the Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional Complex in Brownwood, Texas.

MY PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

We talked about your rights. Now let's look at the rights your parents have. Many parents, youth, advocacy groups, and staff wrote this *Parents' Bill of Rights*:

"It's healthy to keep in contact with your family. They can help you get through this." – Youth B.M. (Gainesville State School)

Parents are partners with correctional staff, educators, and treatment providers in their child's rehabilitation and shall be encouraged and assisted to actively participate in the design and implementation of their child's treatment, from intake through discharge. Parents of children[1] who have been committed to the care, custody, or control of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department have the following rights:

1. As a parent, you have the right to know that you and your child will be treated fairly regardless of race, religion, national origin, language, economic status, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or age and that each child will be treated as an individual.

2. As a parent, you have the right to expect TJJD to provide a safe, secure, and sanitary environment for your child.

3. As a parent, you have the right not to be judged, blamed or labeled because of your child's incarceration.

---

[1] *Children who are under the age of 18 years or are over 18 years and have signed a release of confidentiality authorizing TJJD to share confidential information with their parents. This includes guardians ad litem and Child Protective Service conservators.*

4. As a parent, you have the right to be a vocal and active advocate on behalf of your child.

5. As a parent, you have the right to be an active participant when decisions are made about your child.

6. As a parent, you have the right to be informed about matters related to your child's welfare.

7. As a parent, you have the right to access your child's records.

8. As a parent, you have the right to meaningful participation in your child's treatment, including medical treatment, behavioral health treatment, and education.

9. As a parent, you have the right to communicate with your child, including visitation, telephone, and mail.

10. As a parent, you have the right to be assured that all TJJD staff are professional, courteous, and respectful.

11. As a parent, you have the right to know that TJJD will take immediate corrective action to protect the rights of parents and youth.

12. As a parent, you have the right to meaningful participation in your child's transition planning – from intake through community reentry, and eventual discharge.

BASIC THINGS TJJD EXPECTS OF ME

As you begin your treatment and rehabilitation program, you will learn that there are five basic expectations at TJJD for all staff and youth.

Rule:	Example:
Be in the right place at the right time	On time for routine events and activities; in assigned area; follows movement procedures, etc.
Follow directions	Does what is asked by staff, follows code of conduct, attends to standard hygiene, chores and dress code requirements, etc.
Participate in activities	Attends and appropriately participates in all required or assigned activities – education, group, recreation, structured activity, etc.
Respect others	Demonstrates appropriate social skills such as asking permission, greeting others, taking turns, and is courteous, etc.
Accept consequences	Addresses and works to understand his/her behavior through check-ins, admits mistakes and attempts to make amends, serves restrictions, etc.

In addition to these expectations, TJJD policy lists rule violations – specific things you cannot do. (see the section in this book called RULE VIOLATIONS).

Each dorm in TJJD can have its own Code of Conduct. These codes, written by youth and staff, focus on things everyone must do to respect each other while living together in a healthy community setting. You will be given copies of any rules that are specific to your facility or dorm.

MOVING THROUGH TJJD

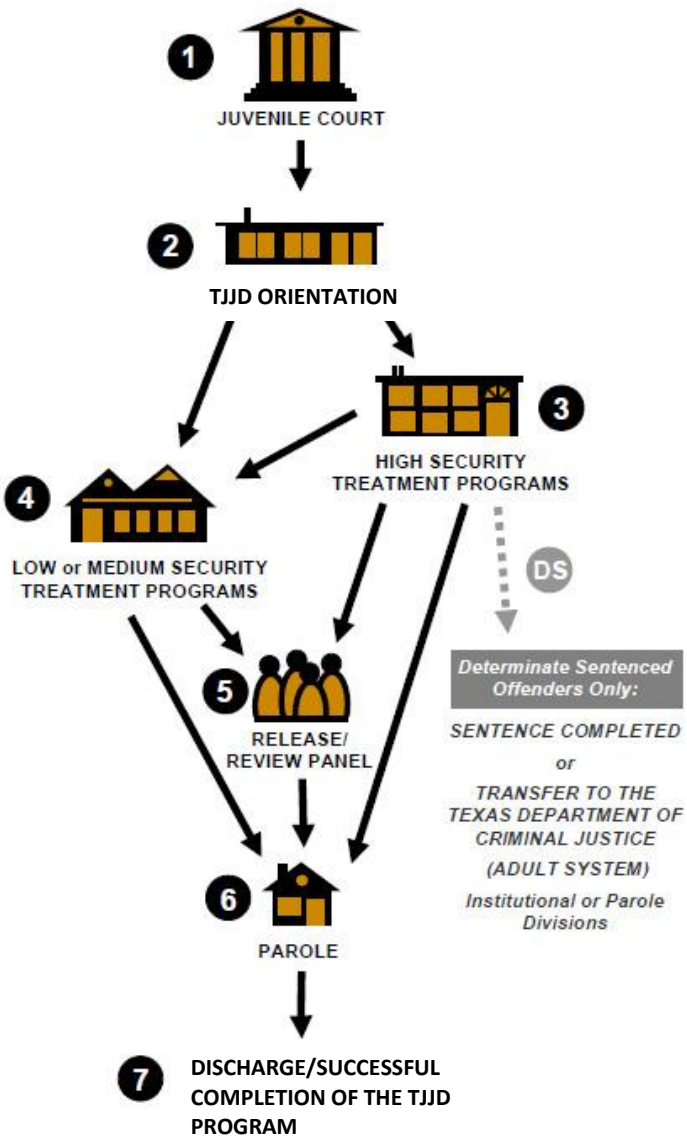
TJJD is the State Juvenile Corrections Agency

TJJD is the most serious place a juvenile offender can go in Texas. The only thing more serious for a young offender in Texas is to be certified as an adult by the court and sent to the adult system. Now that you are at TJJD, you are in the care and custody of the state. TJJD has programs throughout Texas. Some of them are high security, which means they are surrounded by fences. Others are medium or low security and do not have a fence. Everyone has a slightly different journey through TJJD. That is because your treatment program will be customized to meet your needs and abilities. This section explains a typical way you might go through the system. (See chart on next page.)

1. The Juvenile Court

The decision to send you to TJJD was made by the juvenile court judge who handled your case. Most youth who are sent to TJJD are given an ***indeterminate sentence***, which means they are not given a specific number of years they will be in TJJD. For them, TJJD determines a minimum length of stay, which is the minimum time a youth must spend in TJJD before going on parole. This minimum length of stay is between nine and 24 months and is based on the severity of your offense and the risk you pose to the public. You are eligible for release once you have finished your minimum length of stay *and* have made treatment progress. Just completing your minimum length of stay is not a guarantee of release. Once sent to TJJD, you could remain here until you turn 19 years old. This is why it is important for you to participate in treatment and to stay out of trouble.

Some courts send youth to TJJD with specific sentences. These are called ***determinate sentences*** because the time that must be served was determined in advance by the court. Determinate sentences can be for up to 40 years. These longer sentences are for youth who have committed the most serious offenses. If you have a determinate sentence, the court probably sent you to TJJD instead of adult prison because the judge believes you might benefit from treatment. Determinate sentenced youth are given a chance at treatment in TJJD. If a determinate sentenced youth is successful in TJJD treatment, he or she can often serve the balance of his or her court-mandated sentence on adult parole rather than in adult prison.



This chart shows how you can move through TJJD.

2. Orientation and Assessment

The first place you go in TJJD is an orientation and assessment unit. It is at the Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional Complex in Brownwood, Texas.

During orientation and assessment, staff will work with you to figure out your strengths and needs so that we know the best way to help. Your medical, emotional, educational, and psychological needs will be evaluated. And, TJJD will determine your risk to break the law and to commit very serious offenses.

Some of these tests will be performed by medical staff and some will be questionnaires you complete, but others will be through interviews. You will be asked questions about yourself and your family that may be hard or embarrassing

to answer. Be honest. Staff are not here to judge you. They need to know this information to help you.

3. Placement in a High Security Facility

Most youth go to one of TJJD's secure institutions for most of their time in TJJD. Some youth go to private, contracted facilities or directly to medium security facilities or halfway houses. You are placed according to your treatment needs and as close to home as possible. At high security settings, you participate in individual counseling, group sessions, and school. You will also have the chance to earn privileges and participate in different skill building groups. If your treatment needs change you may be transferred to a different facility.

4. Placement in a Low or Medium Security Facility

TJJD operates several halfway houses and contracts with other organizations to provide low to medium security treatment facilities. Typically, these facilities provide you a chance to make a gradual transition back into the community. If you excel in treatment and don't need to stay in a high security facility, you can be moved to a medium restriction facility before your minimum length of stay is complete. For many youth, transitioning home through a medium restriction facility is also part of the overall treatment program after completion of the minimum length of stay. Talk with your case manager about the expectations for you.

DS. Determinate Sentenced Offenders Only

Youth who are committed to TJJD with determinate (or specific) sentences by the courts will ultimately transfer to the adult system – the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) – if they are unable to complete their sentences before they turn 19. Depending on progress in treatment, they may be able to serve the TDCJ portion of their sentences (if any) on adult parole rather than in prison. Only a judge, not TJJD, can send a youth to prison.

5. Release Review Panel

If you have served your minimum time at TJJD and have not already been released on parole, your case is assigned to a release review panel within 30 days. This panel, which is made up of three members, determines whether you should be released based on your behavior, academic achievement, and your

response to treatment. The panel can order your release and if they do, your treatment team will decide if you go home or to a halfway house. However, if it decides you need further treatment, it can extend your stay in TJJD.

6. Parole

Most youth are assigned to serve some time on parole upon release from TJJD facilities. Parole officers help you make the transition back home in a structured way. Usually, you live at home while on parole and report to your parole officer until you are discharged from TJJD. If your home is not approved, or you will be living on your own upon release, be sure to read the chapter in this book about TJJD's Independent Living Program.

7. Discharge/Successful Completion of the TJJD Program

It is TJJD's hope that you will leave with a fresh outlook and a sound plan for future success. Your chances for success depend on you seeking a good education, having career goals, applying what you learn in treatment and following through with your plans. Even after you leave, TJJD educational liaisons can help you apply to college or trade school and help you apply for financial aid.

Youth with therapy dog at McFadden Ranch in Roanoke, Texas

MY MINIMUM LENGTH OF STAY

If you are sent to TJJD without a specific sentence, or determinate sentence set by the court, you are committed to TJJD until your 19th birthday and TJJD will determine your minimum length of stay – the minimum time you must spend in a TJJD facility. TJJD has a formula to determine your minimum length of stay based on the severity of your committing offense and other risks you might pose. This section will help you determine your minimum length of stay. If you have any questions about determining your minimum length of stay, be sure to ask a TJJD staff member for help.

Note: If you are a determinate sentenced offender, this section does not apply to you because your court has set a specific sentence for you to serve. Instead of a minimum length of stay, you have a minimum period of confinement, which is the time you must spend in a secure facility before being paroled. This amount of time is set in state law: 10 years for capital murder; three years for an aggravated controlled substance felony or a first degree felony; two years for a second degree felony; and one year for a third degree felony.

Severity Rating

The first part of determining your minimum length of stay is figuring out your severity rating – High, Moderate, or Low. This is based on your committing offense.

If you used a weapon or committed a sexual felony or a felony against a person, your rating is:

High – Capital Offense, All 1st Degree Felonies, 2nd Degree Murder, Manslaughter, or Sexual Assault

Moderate – All Other 2nd Degree Felonies, All 3rd Degree and State Jail Felonies

If you did not use a weapon or commit a sexual felony or a felony against a person, your rating is:

Moderate – 1st Degree Felonies

Low – 2nd Degree, 3rd Degree, and State Jail Felonies

Assessment Rating

The second part of determining your minimum length of stay is figuring out your assessment rating – High, Medium, or Low. This is based on your risk to the community as shown by your prior offense(s) and referral history. This part is a bit harder than figuring out your severity rating. You have to answer the questions below and add up the values next to your answers to get your score.

ASSESSMENT FACTORS		Answer	Value	Score
1.	Number of felony and/or misdemeanor arrests or referrals to juvenile court	☐ 1	0	
		☐ 2	1	
		☐ 3	2	
		☐ 4	3	
		☐ 5	4	
		☐ 6 or more	5	
2.	Number of felony arrests or referrals for offenses against person	☐ 0	0	
		☐ 1	1	
		☐ 2 or more	2	
3.	Number of felony and/or misdemeanor convictions or adjudications	☐ 1	0	
		☐ 2	1	
		☐ 3	2	
		☐ 4 or more	3	
4.	Age at commitment	☐ 17	0	
		☐ 16	1	
		☐ 15	2	
		☐ 10 - 14	3	
5.	Any residential placements prior to TJJD commitment	☐ No	0	
		☐ Yes	1	
			Total Score →	

If your total score is 0 to 5, you are **Low**.

If your total score is 6 to 11, you are **Medium**.

If your total score is 12 or more, you are **High**.

Putting It Together

Now that you have determined your severity rating and your assessment rating, you can figure out your minimum length of stay. First, find the column with your Severity Rating. Then go down to the row that matches up to your Assessment Rating. The number of months in the box is your minimum length of stay.

ASSESSMENT RATING	SEVERITY RATING: High	SEVERITY RATING: Moderate	SEVERITY RATING: Low
High	24 months	15 months	12 months
Medium	18 months	12 months	9 months
Low	15 months	12 months	9 months

For example, if your assessment rating is low, but your severity rating is high, your minimum length of stay would be 15 months.

"Just behave yourself. It's stupid to turn a nine month minimum into two years." – Youth R.G.

MY TREATMENT PROGRAM

TJJD's treatment program helps you take a look what got you into trouble in your community and what help you will need to stay out of trouble when you go home. You will have chances to work with staff, mentors, family members, and kids your age to learn new skills. You will also be able to improve your relationships with others.

Your Case Manager

Your case manager (sometimes called case worker) is one of the most important people assigned to help you in TJJD. He or she:

- will explain the treatment program, including your required specialized treatment, to you;
- will help you plan your treatment;
- will keep an eye on your progress and help keep you on track;
- will be the main TJJD contact with your parents or guardians to keep them informed about you;
- will encourage your family to be involved in your treatment;
- will provide group and individual counseling; and
- will help you decide the best way for you to be successful at home.

Family Involvement

We want your family to be a part of your treatment. All high-restriction facilities have a family liaison and activities for families. Visits and letters are also welcomed. Your parents will receive a written report about your progress at least every 90 days.

Risk Factors & Protective Factors

The TJJD program takes into account your risk factors and your protective factors. Your risk factors are all of the things in your life that contribute to your negative thinking and actions. Your protective factors are the things that will help you succeed. While you will do a lot of things with your peers, no two treatment programs are the same because you have your own set of risk and protective

factors. You will have your own treatment plan, called an “ICP” or individual case plan.

One of the first things you will do in treatment is work with your case manager and psychologists to determine your biggest risk and protective factors. This is a big part of your treatment plan. Hopefully you will be able to decrease your risk factors (the negative parts of your life) and add protective factors (the things you have going for you).

Here are some examples of things that are risk factors:

- Having negative and/or dangerous attitudes, values, and beliefs
- Not having positive role models
- Spending time with negative or criminal people
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs
- Personality traits that make you want to be involved in criminal activity
- Rebellious, defiant, and/or law-breaking behavior
- Difficulties between and among family members
- Low academic or vocational success
- Poor use of free time

If some of the things listed above do not apply to you, they might be protective factors since they are working in your favor. Like, if you do not abuse drugs, that is a protective factor.

Orientation

During orientation you get tested for and asked about mental health problems, education, what you want to do as a career, medical needs and whether or not you need special treatment for things like a drug habit.

Thinking for a Change (T4C)

“Thinking for a Change” (T4C) is a special program that will help you learn good behavior. You will hear about “thinking reports” which are used to work through daily problems you might have on your dorm, in the cafeteria, school, or anywhere else on campus.

General Rehabilitation Program

Everyone learns “Thinking for a Change” (T4C). All youth also participate in the general part of the treatment program including: education, workforce development, and a case plan of rehabilitation designed specifically for you.

At last three times a week, you will go to skills groups to help you with your risk factors and to get better at the skills you need to live successfully in your community. In some of these groups you will talk about skills. In others, you will practice the skills. Examples include: communicating, managing emotions, understanding alcohol and drug addiction, problem solving, family living, and making wise choices.

Required Supplemental Groups

In addition to skills groups, you may have to go to required supplemental groups in specialized areas. These groups happen as much as four times a week and will help you with things like anger management, alcohol and drug issues, mental health support, recovery from trauma, and psycho-sexual problems.

Specialized Treatment – Intensive Services

The next level of treatment for some youth is specialized treatment. Not all youth need specialized treatment at an intensive level. However, if you have a serious need in one of the specialized areas, you will probably be in one of the programs on a specialty dorm. They are treatment for capital and serious violent offenders, alcohol and other drug treatment, mental health, and sexual behavior. In these

intensive programs, you get treatment from specially trained or licensed staff and participate in a program that is more intense than the general treatment program.

Education, Vocational Training & Workforce Development

The educational part of your treatment program helps you work toward earning your high school diploma or GED. TJJD's workforce development programs help you learn things you can use to get a good job. You will be in school for a big part of your day at TJJD. Classes are accelerated to help you catch up to your proper grade level more quickly than in public school. Also, TJJD school is year-round. (See the section in this book called MY EDUCATION.)

Leisure Skills Building Groups

Leisure skills groups are a lot of fun. They include: money management, guitar lessons, yoga, painting, sculpting, quilt making, talent shows, and much more. These groups help you get interested in doing positive things with your free time. You have to be on your best behavior to be in most of them. Did you know that if you do something positive for fun, you probably won't stay in trouble? This is true at TJJD and at home. If you have ideas for leisure skills groups, tell your case manager or student council representative.

Yoga classes at the McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Complex in Mart, Texas

Multi-Disciplinary Team and Case Planning

Every month, all types of staff will meet with you to talk about your treatment program. This group of people is called a multi-disciplinary team, or MDT. Your MDT will be at least your case manager, a teacher, and a juvenile correctional officer (JCO) who knows you. Your parents are also invited to the meetings. The MDT checks on your progress and decides how to help you stay on track. The MDT can change your case plan and decide your stage in the rehabilitation program. You are a big part of the MDT. Each of these staff will meet with you monthly; however, they will meet with you as a group at least once every 90 days. Your case manager will help you be ready for the meetings.

Stages of the TJJD Program

Your progress through the TJJD program has five stages, ending with Youth Empowerment Status (YES). Your stage shows what you are currently working on. Once you meet the requirements of the stage, you go on to the next one. The stages help you:

- increase understanding of your risk and protective factors and how they relate to success in the community;
- develop a community reintegration plan, which is a plan to go home, stay out of trouble, and do something constructive;
- engage your family in your treatment; and
- understand how your committing offense was related to risk factors, including their underlying attitudes, values and beliefs.

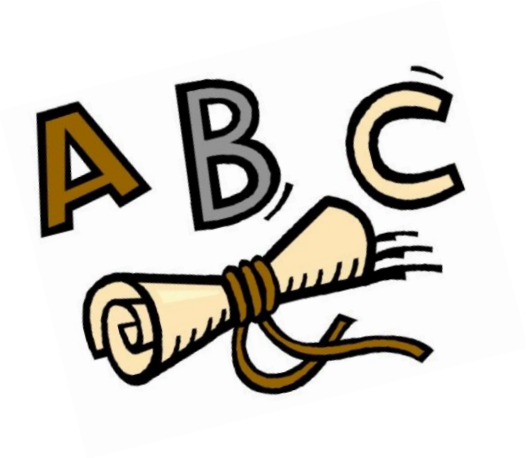
To move to a higher stage, you also have to do your case plan goals, participate in groups and school, and apply what you have learned about behavior into your daily living. Your case manager will help you with what you have to do.

Program Completion

When you reach (and stay at) YES Stage and you meet all of the other requirements explained to you, you will have successfully completed the program. This is an important step in getting released from a secure facility. You will also have to complete your minimum length of stay and have your release approved. If you do not reach the YES stage and you don't have a determinate sentence (set by the court), you may still be able to be released after finishing your minimum length of stay. In that case, the TJJD Release Review Panel decides whether you have to stay in TJJD and get more treatment. It is best to

work as hard as you can at treatment and stay out of trouble, not only to help yourself, but also because it makes getting released easier.

MY EDUCATION



Education is one of the few things in this world that can't be taken from you, stolen, repossessed, lost, or misplaced. And, it is the best way to improve yourself and reach your dreams. It is also a powerful protective factor. If your hero is a basketball player, recording artist, actor, famous politician, business executive, community leader, religious guide, or your parents or mentors – they all had to learn how to do what they do and they had to practice. That's education.

Most TJJD youth are five years behind in school. A lot of TJJD youth have already dropped out or given up and think they can never catch up so why bother? The answer is simple – you can catch up and TJJD will help. You don't have to be perfect and you don't have to do it all at once, but you can do it. Forget about everyone else. Don't worry about impressing anyone or being embarrassed by setbacks. This is just about you and your choice to work hard and do it. Education is about progress not perfection. Decide to compete with yourself. If you do a little bit better today than you did yesterday, you have succeeded. Knowledge is power and freedom and TJJD can help you get your GED or diploma if you want.

"You should take advantage of the educational opportunity, especially the vocational programs. I got two certifications – one in welding and one in mill and cabinet." – Youth R.H. (Abilene Parole)

You'll be better at some subjects than others. Everyone has different strengths and interests. TJJD will help you in those areas where you need extra help to complete the requirements for your GED and diploma. Then, think about getting an industry certification or going to college or trade school. You can earn certifications while in TJJD and start taking college courses. The more credits and credentials you earn with education, the more money you will make for the rest of your life. If you use this time in TJJD to improve yourself, you won't have served time for your offenses, it will have served you.

How Much Money Will I Make? *(Average Salaries Based on Education Level)*	
Some High School	**$24,724**
High School Graduate (Diploma or GED)	**$35,053**
Some College	**$40,687**
Associate's Degree	**$42,024**
Bachelor's Degree	**$62,597**
Master's Degree	**$75,555**
Doctoral Degree	**$114,219**
Professional Degree (Examples: Medical Doctor, Lawyer, Veterinarian, Pharmacist)	**$139,908**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2013 Annual Social and Economic Supplement	

TJJD's Accelerated Learning Program

In your TJJD school, you will learn your basics like reading and math faster than you would in a public school so that you can catch up to your peers. Also, the

things you will be learning at TJJD are the same things students your age are learning at most schools in Texas. This way, when you get out of TJJD, you can go back to your school and not be lost. You can earn your diploma and/or a GED in TJJD.

Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions (PBIS)

PBIS will be important to you for many reasons. The most obvious is that it will provide you with many tools and strategies to learn new skills. Teachers on your campus will model and demonstrate what appropriate behaviors look like on your campus. Every TJJD school follows five basic rules:

- Be in the right place at the right time
- Follow directions
- Participate in activities
- Respect others
- Accept consequences

At your home campus, you will see a rule matrix that describes what the behavior expectation is in any area of the school for each of these rules. PBIS impacts your release, and it's important for you to understand how. One significant difference between TJJD schools and other schools in Texas is a law that requires all TJJD students who struggle with reading to be placed in a reading program that is designed to close the gaps in each student's reading skills. This law can be found in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 30.106 and states that TJJD schools must *provide at least 60 minutes per school day of individualized reading instruction to each student in a commission educational program who exhibits deficits in reading.*

Here's what that looks like:

If you have to be removed from school to security more than three days in a 6 month period, you haven't demonstrated successful management of your own behavior. If you miss school more than 10% of the time because you've had to be removed from school (or you're being removed consistently for time-out) or you've refused to go to school, then you won't meet the PBIS requirements necessary to be released to parole. Whenever your appointed time comes due for the Release Review Panel, your school principal will review your behavioral information for the prior 6 months. If your behavior warranted your removal to

security from school more than three days in that 6 month period, you aren't eligible for release. There's still hope, though. If your principal could see a clear pattern of improvement, or maybe your principal knows that you'll be able to get it under control at transition, he/she can recommend this decision to your MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team). If your MDT disagrees, then the decision will go to the Special Services Committee (SSC) at your campus.

If the PBIS form is signed by your principal, MDT, or SSC, saying that you did not participate appropriately in school during your stay, you will not be released. This law makes your decision to manage your behavior positively and appropriately an important thing in working your way home. The staff at your home campus will work with you daily to help you get there, but the choice is yours.

TJJD Reading Program

Every student in a TJJD school receives 60 minutes of vocabulary strategies that will help strengthen their reading skills in the form of content vocabulary work in each class they take. For instance, in Biology, you'll do 10-15 minutes of science vocabulary every day, in Algebra, you'll do 10-15 minutes of math vocabulary every day, etc…This is a great way for all students to improve their reading skills, TABE scores, and prepare for important assessments such as TAKS, STAAR, End of Course exams, or the GED exams.

This law also states, *"Because learning and behavior are inextricably linked, and learning and improved behavior correlate with decreased recidivism rates, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department shall not only fulfill the commission's duties under state and federal law to provide general and special educational services to students in commission educational programs but also shall implement a comprehensive plan to improve the reading skills and behavior of those students."* Thus, reading improvement and positive behavioral supports share a common consequence for non-participation*: "A student in a (TJJD) educational program who exhibits deficits in reading on the assessments adopted under Subsection (b)(1) must also participate in reading instruction to the extent required by this section and by commission rule before the student may be released on parole."*

If you are placed in the reading program, your teacher, the Lead Reading Teacher at your campus, and your principal, will review your progress in the program prior to your release. In order to meet the requirements to be eligible for

release, you'll need to score the equivalent to the grade you should be in. If you're 16 and should be in 10th grade, for instance, your TABE reading score would need to be a 10.0. You can also meet the requirements for release if you manage your behavior appropriately. If you're in the class at least 90% of the time, meaning you don't have to be removed from school for disciplinary reasons or because you refuse to come to class or refuse to take the assessments or do your class work, you'll meet the legal requirements for release. You can also meet the requirements for release if you work hard in class and show improvement.

It's really pretty easy to qualify for release: try hard, manage your behavior, and do your work. Not doing these things carries a heavy penalty: not being able to go home. If your TABE scores are sufficient to not place you in the reading program, you don't have to worry about this release requirement. And remember that if your scores do qualify you for the reading program, your teacher will support your efforts to improve and give you a variety of assessments to measure that improvement.

Earning Your GED

The GED (General Educational Development) tests let people who aren't going to do a formal high school program prove they know the same things as someone who did.

Almost a million people take the GED tests each year. GED graduates include: Chris Rock, Wendy's fast food chain founder Dave Thomas, Jessica Simpson, LL Cool J, Mark Wahlberg, Danica Patrick, John Travolta, an Olympic gold medalist, a state governor, a space shuttle astronaut, a federal judge, and 15.4 million others.

There are five tests you have to pass to earn a GED: Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Writing Skills, and Interpreting Literature and the Arts (reading). TJJD pays for you to take the GED tests while you are here. Finishing all of the tests takes about seven hours, but you don't have to take them all at once. If you don't pass a test, you can re-take it until you do, as long as the test series stays the same.

While in TJJD, you can take classes that will help you prepare to take the GED tests. Once you have your GED, don't stop improving! Finish your high school diploma, get an industry certification, or go to college or trade school.

Earning Your High School Diploma

If you ever wanted to do something for yourself in life, earning your high school diploma should be top on your list. TJJD knows you can do it and will help you make it happen. The chart on the next page shows you the classes you have to take to earn the diploma. Each course you pass earns you a credit. If the class is just one semester, you earn a half credit.

High School Diploma (Minimum High School Program)		**22 Credits Required**
These are the classes you have to take to earn a high school diploma in Texas. These requirements are set by the Texas Education Agency, not TJJD. All of the credits you earn in TJJD will count toward your high school diploma whether you finish at TJJD or not. TJJD has a school schedule similar to most high schools in Texas, so if you leave TJJD before you earn your diploma, you will be able to fit in at the school in your home community.		
English	**4 Credits**	English I, II, III and English IV or allowable substitute
Math	**3 Credits**	Algebra I, Geometry, and third math credit (Math Models, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus)
Science	**2 Credits**	Biology, Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC) or Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. (Youth who do not take IPC take Chemistry or Physics as their second science credit and the other as their science elective)
Social Studies	**3 Credits**	U.S. History Studies Since

		1877 (one credit), U.S. Government (one-half credit), Economics with Emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and Its Benefits (one-half credit). The final credit may be selected from the following: World History Studies (one credit), World Geography Studies (one credit).
Academic Elective	**1 Credit**	Must be from World History, World Geography, or any approved science course from the State Board of Education (Instead of taking IPC for a science credit, students may take Physics and Chemistry separately and count them as the second science credit and this elective credit)
Physical Education (P.E.)	**1 Credits (not more than 2)**	Must include .5 credits of Foundations of Personal Fitness class (PE 1A)
Speech	**.5 Credit**	Must consist of Communication Applications course
Fine Arts	**1 Credit**	Can be any approved fine arts course
Electives	**6.5 Credits**	Can be any approved

		electives

These requirements are adopted by the Texas Education Agency and are subject to change. Your high school counselor will help you enroll in the courses you need to earn a high school diploma.

Career and Technology Courses – Career Academies and Earning an Industry Certification

Many youth enjoy taking Career and Technology courses. These classes give you hands-on experience like welding, cabinetry, home construction, auto mechanics, auto paint and body repair, horticulture, safe food handling, computer programming, and many others. Not only can some of these classes count toward your high school diploma, many also give you a chance to earn an industry certification. One TJJD graduate, who earned an advanced welding certification in TJJD, made more than $80,000 a year at a welding job in Houston when he went back home. Some TJJD campuses offer Career Academies where students who've graduated can concentrate on vocational careers that align with 16 national career clusters. Career Academy students also have the opportunity to keep up their reading and math skills and participate in vocationally focused career enhancement activities on selected Saturdays each month.

Taking College Courses at TJJD

TJJD offers dual credit college courses at its secure facilities so you can earn high school credit and college credit at the same time for the same class. This gives you a head start on earning an associate's or bachelor's degree.

Athletics

Youth who do well in school and treatment can play sports at TJJD. If you meet the requirements to do off-campus activities, you might even play in games away from your facility. The Giddings and Gainesville State Schools are part of the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools, or TAPPS, league for football, basketball, and track.

Education Help After Release

TJJD is so committed to seeing that you get a good education, there are people whose job it is just to help you with educational opportunities and problems back in your home community. These people are called TJJD education liaisons and they work in TJJD offices. The liaisons will help you enroll in high school, college, or trade school, or help you with GED preparation. They will help you fill out financial aid forms and apply for scholarships. They will also give you advice and answers to your questions to help make going to school less stressful or intimidating.

How to Pay for College or Trade School

Do not let concerns about getting money for college or trade school discourage you from going after your dreams. There are many ways to pay for school and

your education liaison can help you find them. Just because you have been committed to TJJD, you are not guaranteed any money for college or trade school. However, TJJD staff will help you look for financial aid in as many places as possible. Here are some of the ways you can get money:

1. FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) – This is the financial aid form you have to fill out to get student loans or grants from the federal government. It is the first place you must try to get money. The school you want to go to will use this form to decide if you are eligible for financial aid. If you get a grant, you don't have to pay it back. If you get a loan, you do have to pay it back, but not until you are done with school.

2. Private Scholarships – These are scholarships given by people or groups based on a variety of different things. Often, you will have to fill out the forms and meet the requirements of the group or individual in order to qualify for their scholarships. These awards can range from a few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars.

3. The John C. Wende Trust Fund – This fund gives money to eligible students to go to more school after earning a GED or diploma. To qualify, you have to be an orphan, which means you have at least one parent who: died, had parental rights terminated, or completely abandoned you. In the past you had to have lived at the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center. Now that Corsicana is not a placement option, you have to be in an independent living program, foster care, or other TJJD placement because you do not have a safe, approved home. Not every student is eligible for these funds. Your educational liaison can help you learn if you are eligible and if funds are available. The money from this fund can be used to pay for tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing and food.

4. TJJD Parole Youth – While on TJJD Parole, TJJD can help you with a limited amount of college or trade school money. There are many rules that come with getting this help and it is considered "a last resort" source of funding if you can't get money anywhere else.

TJJD graduates participate in a ceremony to get their diplomas and GED certificates.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INCENTIVES

Your treatment and rehabilitation program lets you earn privileges based on two things: how well you follow the five basic rules in TJJD (see the section in this book called BASIC THINGS TJJD EXPECTS OF ME) and how far along you are in your treatment stages. (see the section called MY TREATMENT PROGRAM)

TJJD set up this system to teach you responsibility for your choices by rewarding you for positive

behavior and giving you consequences for negative behavior. You will get daily and weekly ratings.

Privileges & Incentives

Each facility develops its own set of privileges and incentives. A lot of this depends on what they have to offer locally. You will get a list of the privileges at your facility. TJJD youth and parents helped make these lists, so you know there are some good things you can earn.

In addition to earning better privileges by getting to a higher stage and behaving, you can earn some small but meaningful rewards almost every day. Many facilities award some form of “tokens” which can used to “purchase” incentive items through their Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) systems. Examples of such items are travel-sized hygiene supplies, use of a particular game during structured activity time, an additional phone call, a later bed time, etc.

How staff “rate” your performance

Determining your privileges is not just about your actual behavior, but also how well you are expected to behave. As you move further along in treatment, you are expected to behave better. Think about when you play a video game. As you move to a higher level, the game usually gets harder. This is how the game increases your skill at playing. It works the same way with improving your positive behavior skills.

You will be rated by the assigned JCO on each shift reflecting how you perform throughout the day relative to the “5 rules.” Three times a day, the JCO’s on your dorm will fill out a form on how you are doing. The JCO can also fill out another form if they want to put down more information to share with the other staff about your behavior. The ratings the JCO’s write down will be based on the table below.

CODE:	Means:
D = Does Not Meet expectations	Lacks or not attempting to use or develop skills; Refuses or does not participate in behavioral interventions; Fails time-outs; Disruptive to activity/routine or other youths efforts at skill development
M = Meets expectations	Identifies or attempts skill use with some struggle; Requires assistance to participate in or comply with behavioral interventions; Completes time outs with a few reminders; Requires prompts to participate in activity/routine. – OR –
	Developing skill; attempts skill use with little struggle; Responds to or participates with behavioral interventions; Completes time outs with few reminders; Participates in activity/routine with few reminders.
E = Exceeds Expectations	Practicing learned skills; Generally uses skills; Responds positively to behavioral interventions; Effectively uses time outs; Participates in activity/routine with few reminders – OR –
	Demonstrating consistent use of learned skills; Requires few if any behavioral interventions; Assists staff when asked; Participates positively in activity/routine.

The JCO will indicate if you gained any additional privileges by circling the "+" symbol. The staff indicates if you lost one or more privileges (related to a behavior problem, security referrals or negative observation report, for example) by circling the "–" symbol. If you lose all of your privileges at any point during the day, the JCO places an "X" in the "Loss of All Privileges" grid for that day. If you received any privileges for the day, the JCO places a check mark in that day.

Code(circle):	Comment:	Staff:
D M E Privileges: **+ -**	_____ _____	

Here are some examples of how you can show positive behavior during your day and earn higher scores:

1) **Morning/Evening Routine** – respond positively to staff and participate in the daily routines of waking up, getting dressed, getting ready for the day, taking showers, straightening your personal area, getting ready for bed, and going to bed at the proper time.

2) **Chores/Housekeeping** – respond positively to staff and do all of your dorm chores and housekeeping duties.

3) **Hygiene/Dress Code** – respond positively to expectations of maintaining proper hygiene and dress code at all times.

4) **Meals** – conduct yourself well during meals in the dining hall.

5) **School** – conduct yourself well in your classrooms, the school building and in physical education classes, including participating in class discussions and doing your assignments.

6) **Structured Activity Time** – conduct yourself well during structured activity time on your dorm.

7) **Groups** – conduct yourself well and participate in groups.

8) **Recreation** – respond positively to staff and participate in recreation and leisure skill building activities.

9) **Movement** – respond positively to staff and conduct yourself well during movement in the dorm and on campus.

On the night before your Multi-Disciplinary Team meets, the staff will review your behavior and make sure all forms are filled out. They will discuss this form with you during your MDT meeting. These forms are very important because they let your JCO staff know if you are ready to be promoted to the next stage!

For Stage 1 – 3 to promote to next Stage:

- *Maintains assigned Stage privileges for 21 of the last 28 days; and*
- *No rule violations in last 30 days proven true in Level II Hearing, unless waived by the Chief Local Authority (CLA).*

For Stage 4 to promote to YES and to retain on YES-Active:

- *Maintains assigned Stage privileges for 21 of the last 28 days; and*
- *No rule violations in last 60 days proven true in Level II Hearing, unless waived by the CLA.*

CHANGING BAD BEHAVIOR

If you show bad behavior that doesn't live up to the five basic TJJD rules or the Code of Conduct on your dorm, staff will try to work with you to help you pay attention to your thoughts and feelings, recognize how those thoughts and feelings could get you into trouble, and use new ways of thinking to make positive decisions. When working through problems, staff can use:

1) **Verbal Prompts** – staff will tell you of the rule you are breaking and then help you choose a positive course of action.

2) **Discussion Away from the Group** – staff will take you aside to discuss the problem. This gives you a way to cool off away from your peers and allows you to talk about the problem with staff in private.

3) **"Check-ins" with Peer Group** – staff will lead a "check-in" with you in a group with your peers. There, everyone will be able to talk about the problem. The entire group will learn from your "check-in" just like you will learn from "check-ins" for your peers.

4) **Thinking Reports** – staff use this to help you or your group pay attention to thoughts and feelings and how they get you into trouble. You also talk about new thinking that can keep you out of trouble.

5) **Time-Outs** – staff will ask you to take a time out from the regular activity and tell you to sit or stand away from others for up to 15 minutes to collect your thoughts and cool off.

6) **Cooling Off Periods** – this is where you or staff can ask that you have a time out in a separate room away from your peers to cool off.

7) **Scheduled Behavior Groups** – staff will have regular behavior groups with you and your peers almost every day. Each behavior group lasts about an hour and talks about positive and negative behavior.

8) **Unscheduled Behavior Groups** – staff may call unscheduled behavior groups to address problems right away.

9) **Security Referrals** – if you are behaving in a threatening way or you are very disruptive, you might get referred to the security unit. You will

stay there until you can successfully return to your regular program. The security unit has individual, locked high-security rooms. You can also refer yourself to security if you feel you can't control your behavior, but staff will first talk with you to see if they can help you regain control.

10) **Redirect Program** - if you have made certain serious rule violations, the Redirect Program will give you intensive intervention in a secure, structured place. Admission to Redirect requires a Level II hearing. If you are admitted, you will have a personalized success plan.

11) **Stage Demotion** - if you commit a major rule violation that is proven through a Level II due process hearing, you may be lowered one or more stages in your rehabilitation program.

12) **Phoenix Program** - you may be transferred to a high restriction facility and placed in the Phoenix program if you are found to have engaged in certain aggressive behavior. For more information on the Phoenix Program, see page 56 for what actions could admit you to this program.

Meeting with your peers in a group setting is a common way to address good and bad behavior.

SECURITY AND CONTROL

Security and control are important to keep you and your peers safe. To do this, staff may conduct searches and use force if needed. You may also be temporarily separated from your peers and regular program.

"Try to stick with the positive peers and they'll help you stay out of trouble." – Youth A.G. (Dallas Parole)

Room Search

This is when staff search your living area. It is better if you are there, but staff can do it while you are gone. These searches can be unannounced.

Strip Search

Staff can ask for this type of search if they think you may have contraband and when you are coming back from visitation or an off-campus activity. This search must be in private because you have to take off your clothes. The staff member who is doing the search has to be trained and a member of the same sex.

Body Cavity Search

Staff can request this type of search if they think you probably have contraband hidden within your body parts. The search must be approved by the superintendent. It must happen in private. And, the people doing the search have to be medical staff who do not work at your facility.

Use of K-9s (Dogs) to Conduct Searches

Specially trained dogs (K-9s) are used to detect contraband and illegal narcotics, and may be at work on your campus for routine, random, or requested searches.

The dogs can search anywhere on TJJD property, including your dorm and personal area. The dogs are not aggressive or trained to attack, but they are working so you should not try to pet them.

Drug Testing

You may be tested for drugs and alcohol. These tests may happen regularly, randomly, or if staff think you have been using drugs or alcohol. It is a major rule violation if you refuse to take a drug test or if you test positive for drugs.

Use of Force

Staff may use force to control you for any of these reasons:

- To protect you or others from harm
- To prevent property damage
- To keep you from escaping or attempting to escape
- To move you to security or within the unit, to a cooling off room, or to an alternative education classroom
- To search you if you are reasonably believed to be in possession of a weapon, controlled substance, or other item that endangers security
- To remove you from a dangerous situation
- To administer medical treatment when the failure to do so would have serious health implications for you

Staff must use force as a last resort and only the amount of necessary force. Use of force just to punish you is not allowed. Staff may use three types of force:

Physical Restraint – Staff may hold you to keep you from moving or to guide you when they are walking with you to another location.

Mechanical Restraint (such as handcuffs) – Staff may use this when you cannot control yourself or when you are being taken to another location.

OC Pepper Spray – Staff may use this when physical force might harm you or the staff, if you have a weapon, or if several youth are involved.

On November 1, 1996, TJJD approved the use of Oleoresin Capsicum Spray (also known as pepper aerosol, pepper spray, or OC spray) in secure institutional facilities. Pepper spray will be used in situations where your behavior has justified force to be used and then only as a last resort after other attempts to stop the behavior are ineffective or impractical. Pepper spray will only be deployed by staff who are specially trained in the use of this agent and in the proper decontamination of individuals exposed to it. If you have any known respiratory problems, diseases, or other ailments that would make exposure to pepper spray dangerous, please tell your case manager or the facility medical staff right away.

"Work on your Stages and you'll go home. Time in security is wasted time." – Youth B.L. (Evins Regional Juvenile Center)

Security Unit

TJJD operates security programs at its high restriction facilities in order to temporarily remove youth who engage in certain dangerous or disruptive behaviors from the general campus population. You cannot be sent to security for punishment or as a convenience for staff. If you are sent to security, you are still given all of your basic rights and, in most cases, you cannot be kept in security for more than 24 hours, unless you continue to break the rules. You have the right to appeal any admission to security.

You can be sent to security when you commit any major rule violation or a minor rule violation when your behavior is so disruptive that it is necessary to refer you to security. Here are some reasons you might get sent to security:

- You are a serious and continuing escape risk
- You are a serious and immediate physical danger to others
- It is necessary to prevent substantial damage to property

- It is necessary to control behavior that disrupts programming so badly that it can't continue
- You are likely to interfere with a pending or ongoing investigation

You will be released from security when your behavior no longer warrants being there. Every 24 hours, staff will decide whether you should stay in security. After five days, staff from TJJD Central Office have to approve you staying in security.

TJJD narcotics K-9s are not aggressive or trained to attack.

MY CUSTODY & SUPERVISION RATING

Your custody and supervision rating (CSR) tells staff how likely you are to harm yourself or others or to try to escape from TJJD. It is also used to determine whether you are eligible to participate in off-campus activities like community

service projects or athletic events. Depending on your behavior while you are at TJJD, your CSR may be lowered or raised.

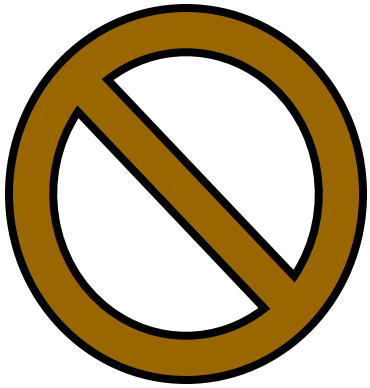
Your CSR looks at your behavior, your past and recent histories, and the length of time you have been at TJJD compared to how much time you are required to be at TJJD. You will have a CSR rating of high, medium, or low risk.

HIGH RISK	A high risk CSR means you cannot leave your TJJD campus, except for medical or emergency reasons. You will be under constant supervision of TJJD staff.
MEDIUM RISK	A medium risk CSR means you may be allowed to leave your TJJD campus under rules set by TJJD staff. You will be under constant supervision of TJJD staff.
LOW RISK	A low risk CSR means you may be allowed to leave your TJJD campus under rules set by TJJD staff. You may or may not be under direct supervision of TJJD staff.

Here are some of the big things that will make your CSR risk score higher:

- You have not yet served at least half of your stay at TJJD
- You have a high severity and assessment rating (see the section in this book called MY MINIMUM LENGTH OF STAY to figure out your ratings)
- You have a determinate sentence
- You have recently attempted to escape from TJJD
- You have recently attempted suicide
- You were recently found in possession of a weapon or drugs in TJJD
- You recently assaulted staff or peers or destroyed property in TJJD

RULE VIOLATIONS



In addition to your basic expectations (see the section in this book called BASIC THINGS TJJD EXPECTS OF ME), there are many other rules. All of the rules are important, but some violations of these rules are more serious than others. This is why they are listed as major and minor rule violations. If you commit any of them, no matter how serious, you could be disciplined. You can also be disciplined if you just try to break the rules or help someone else break them. Your disciplinary consequence depends on the rule violation you committed.

You have due process rights before being disciplined. You also have the right to appeal, which means you can ask that any decision about you be changed if you do not agree with it. It doesn't mean it will be changed, just that someone else will look at it to decide if you deserved to be disciplined and if the consequence was fair. The rule violations listed here are from the General Administrative Policy.

Remember – if you do something that is against the law, you could be charged with a crime. TJJD staff members report criminal activity to the Office of the Inspector General. These investigators are real police officers and can arrest you and charge you with a crime.

Major Rule Violations

(1) **Assault - Unauthorized Physical Contact with Staff or Another Youth (No Injury) –** This is when you make unauthorized physical contact with someone else, like pushing, poking, and grabbing. The other person doesn't have to be injured for it to still be assault.

(2) **Assault Causing Bodily Injury to Staff or Another Youth –** This is when you do something on purpose, or because you were reckless, that causes someone else to get hurt.

(3) **Attempted Escape –** This is when you try to escape from TJJD while in a facility or at an off-campus activity.

(4) **Chunking Bodily Fluids –** This is throwing your blood, seminal or vaginal fluid, spit, urine, or feces at someone to harass them.

(5) **Distribution of Prohibited Substances –** This is selling or giving away anything you are not allowed to have in TJJD.

(6) **Escape –** This is leaving, or being gone from, a TJJD facility without permission.

(7) **Extortion or Blackmail –** This is demanding or getting favors, money, or anything else from someone in return for protecting them, not harming them, or not turning them in.

(8) **Fighting (With or Without Bodily Injury) –** This is getting in a physical fight with someone else.

(9) **Fleeing Apprehension –** This is disrupting your dorm, campus, classroom, or other operations by running from staff or refusing to come to them when called.

(10) **Two or More Failures to Comply with Written, Reasonable Request** – This applies to youth in a medium restriction facility that repeatedly don't do what they are asked by staff after it is put in writing.

(11) **Misuse of Medication –** This is using medicine in a way that is different from the doctor's instructions, including: taking someone else's medicine or pretending to take your medicine when you really don't.

(12) **Participating in a Major Disruption of Facility Operations –** This is when you and at least two other youth do something on purpose that threatens other people or property and results in a major disruption of facility operations.

(13) **Possession of Prohibited Items –** This is when you have any of these things that you aren't supposed to have:

(A) cell phone;
(B) matches or lighters;

(C) jewelry, unless you have permission;
(D) cash or other form of money unless you have permission;
(E) pornography;
(F) anything used for tattooing or body piercing;
(G) cleaning supplies when you aren't cleaning; or
(H) anything else that you use in a way that is dangerous.

(14) **Possession of a Weapon –** This is when you have anything you can use as a weapon.

(15) **Possession or Use of Prohibited Substances and Paraphernalia –** This is when you have any unauthorized substance, like: drugs, alcohol, tobacco, prescription medication that isn't yours, or anything that you can use to make a prohibited substance.

(16) **Refusing a Drug Screen –** This is when you refuse to take a drug test or you tamper with your urine sample.

(17) **Refusing a Search –** This is when you refuse to submit to a search of you or your personal area.

(18) **Sexual Misconduct –** This is doing any of these things on purpose:

(A) causing contact, including penetration (however slight), between the penis and the vagina or anus; between the mouth and penis, vagina or anus; or penetration (however slight) of the anal or genital opening of someone else with your hand, finger or other object;
(B) touching or fondling, either directly or through clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of another person;
(C) kissing for sexual stimulation;
(D) exposing your anus, buttocks, breasts, or genitals to someone;
(E) masturbating openly and obviously.

(19) **Stealing –** This is taking something from someone else without permission. (Major rule violation = property is worth $100 or more.)

(20) **Tampering with Safety Equipment –** This is messing with, damaging, or blocking anything used for safety or security, like:

locks, fire alarms or extinguishers, cameras, radios, phones (during an emergency), handcuffs, or shackles.

(21) **Tattooing/Body Piercing –** This is tattooing or piercing yourself or someone else.

(22) **Threatening Another with a Weapon –** This is threatening someone with something that can injure them.

(23) **Vandalism –** This is a major rule violation if you cause $100 or more in property damage on purpose.

(24) **Violation of Any Law –** This is breaking any law.

Minor Rule Violations.

(1) **Breaching Group Confidentiality –** This is talking to someone outside the group about something that was said or happened in group.

(2) **Disruption of Program –** This is when you do something that purposely messes up a scheduled activity, like being loud without permission, cussing, being disrespectful, refusing to participate in a scheduled activity, or breaking the activity rules.

(3) **Failure to Abide by Dress Code –** This is when you are not wearing your clothes right or presenting yourself according to the rules.

(4) **Failure to do Proper Housekeeping –** This is not doing all of your chores properly or keeping your dorm or personal area messy.

"Don't join a gang. You'll be a follower and that will lead to no place but trouble and more time. If you get 'put down' you ain't going home soon. They (the gang members) don't want you to go home." – Youth R.E. (Odessa Parole)

(5) **Gang Activity –** This is doing anything that promotes a gang, like tagging, throwing signs, writing gang symbols on your things, or having gang-related items in your possession.

(6) **Gambling or Possession of Gambling Paraphernalia –** This is betting on anything or having things that can be used for gambling.

(7) **Horseplay –** This is wrestling or roughhousing with someone where no one gets upset or injured, otherwise it would be assault.

(8) **Improper Use of Telephone/Mail/Computer –** This is using the mail, a computer, or phone for communication that is against the rules or to inappropriately access information.

(9) **Lending/Borrowing/Trading Items –** This is giving to, borrowing from, or trading with another youth anything without staff permission.

(10) **Lying/Falsifying Documentation/Cheating –** This is lying or withholding information from staff, falsifying a document, or cheating on an assignment or test.

(11) **Possession of an Unauthorized Item –** this is having something you aren't supposed to have. This does not include personal letters or photographs or items that would constitute a major rule violation.

(12) **Refusal to Follow Staff Verbal Instructions –** This is when you don't do what staff says.

(13) **Stealing –** This is taking property from someone else without permission. (Minor rule violation = property worth less than $100.)

(14) **Threatening Others –** This is making verbal or physical threats toward someone else.

(15) **Undesignated Area –** This is being somewhere without permission.

(16) **Vandalism –** This is a minor rule violation if you cause less than $100 in property damage on purpose.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING RULES

The TJJD discipline system is set up to teach you accountability for bad behavior. Discipline is firm, but fair. TJJD uses only the least amount of discipline needed to correct your behavior and ensure safety.

"Treat staff the way you want to be treated. Treat them with respect and they'll treat you with respect." – Youth T.S.

Here are some of the things TJJD looks at when deciding on discipline:

1. How serious was the rule you broke?
2. Has your behavior been good or bad in the past?
3. Were you justified in what you did?

The following rules apply regarding discipline:

1. You will not be subjected to humiliation or mental abuse.
2. Corporal punishment (a staff member hitting a youth) is prohibited.
3. Purposeless or degrading work is prohibited.
4. Only staff, not other youth, can impose discipline.
5. You can only be disciplined for your own actions.
6. You cannot be denied: meals or snacks; sleep; exercise; mail; visitation or phone calls with parents, attorneys, religious counselors or ministers; legal help; or medical attention.

What happens to you as a consequence for bad behavior also depends on where you are. If you are in a high security facility, discipline is different from a medium security facility.

Consequences for High Restriction Facilities

Major Disciplinary Consequences (requires you to get a Level II due process hearing)

(A) **Placement in the Phoenix Program** – You may be placed in the Phoenix program when you are found to have engaged in certain aggressive behavior.

(B) **Major Suspension of Privileges –** If this happens, you lose all privileges for 30 days. This can be used for major rule violations or minor rule violations where you got sent to security.

(C) **Loss of Transition Eligibility** – If you haven't finished your minimum length of stay, this consequence makes you serve another month in high restriction before you can go to a medium restriction facility. This can only be issued if it is proven through a Level II hearing that you committed assault causing bodily injury or certain sexual misconduct.

(D) **Stage Demotion** – You will be lowered by one or more stages if it is proven through a Level II due process hearing that you committed a major rule violation.

Minor Disciplinary Consequences

(A) **Suspension of Privileges by Multi-Disciplinary Team –** This is where you can lose one or more privileges for up to 14 days or have your privileges adjusted to a lower stage. This consequence can be for major or minor rule violations.

(B) **On-Site Suspension of Privileges –** This is where you lose one privilege for up to seven days or all privileges for up to three days. This consequence can be issued by a staff member who supervises you after witnessing any violation.

Consequences for Medium Restriction Facilities

Major Consequences (requires you to get a Level II due process hearing)

(A) **Disciplinary Transfer –** This is when you get sent back to a high restriction facility for committing a major rule violation.

(B) **Major Suspension of Privileges –** This is where you lose all privileges for 30 days.

(C) **Placement in the Phoenix Program** – You may be transferred to a high restriction facility and placed in the Phoenix program when you are found to have engaged in certain aggressive behavior.

(E) **Stage Demotion** – You will be lowered one or more stages if it is proven through a Level II due process hearing that you committed a major rule violation.

Minor Consequences

(A) **Privilege Suspension –** You lose one or more privileges for no more than 14 days.

(B) **Community Service Hours –** You have to do an extra 40 hours of community service.

(C) **Trust Fund Restriction –** You are not allowed to access your trust funds for up to seven days.

(D) **Facility Restriction –** You can't participate in any activity away from your facility for up to 48 hours unless it is an approved constructive activity.

Phoenix Program

The Phoenix program is located at the McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility in Mart, Texas. It is an independent program that is located in one building of that facility. To qualify for placement in the Phoenix program, staff must prove in a hearing that the youth committed one of the following rule violations:

- Assault Causing Moderate or Serious Bodily Injury to Another Youth
- Assault Causing Substantial Bodily Injury to Staff

- Chunking Bodily Fluids at Staff
- Fighting Causing Moderate or Serious Bodily Injury to Another Youth
- Any other major rule violation when the entire incident justifies the placement in the program and the placement is directed by the executive director or designee.
- Assault causing bodily injury on three separate occasions within a 90-day period.

Youth who commit these violations will be reviewed by a committee. The committee will decide which youth are placed in the treatment program. Placement in the Phoenix program will result in returning to the lowest stage. It could also mean a longer stay in TJJD. While in the Phoenix program, youth will focus on ways to keep away from forceful behavior and learn skills that will help them manage their anger better. Once a youth graduates from Phoenix, he will be sent to another high restriction facility in TJJD and can begin again making progress in stages.

If you stay out of trouble, you don't have to worry about losing any privileges like playing sports.

DUE PROCESS HEARINGS

Even though you are in TJJD, you still have a right to due process. That means before TJJD can give you consequences for rule violations, you get to have a fair hearing. This section of your handbook tells you about the different kinds of due process hearings in TJJD. For more information, read the TJJD General Administrative Policy or ask staff to explain it to you.

Level I Hearing

This kind of hearing is used if TJJD wants to revoke your parole. If your parole officer or other staff think you violated your parole conditions, they may want to send you back to a secure facility. If so, you get to have a Level I Hearing. Because it is very serious, you are represented by a defense attorney, even if you can't afford one. A TJJD attorney serves as the hearing officer, or decision-maker. Staff must prove it is more likely than not you committed a parole violation and that your parole can and should be revoked.

Level II Hearing

This kind of hearing is used when you are facing a major disciplinary consequence. An advocate helps you at the hearing. An advocate is someone who is on your side and has been trained to help youth in hearings. You can pick your own advocate or let TJJD pick one. A TJJD staff member who does not supervise you and who was not involved in the alleged incident is the hearing manager, or decision-maker. Staff have to prove it is more likely than not you committed a rule violation.

Level III Hearing

In high-restriction facilities, you get a Level III Hearing to figure out if you should be admitted to or kept in security longer. For this hearing, staff have to decide if they think you committed a rule violation and if they are allowed to put you in security or keep you there because of your behavior. You get a chance to tell

your side if you want. You also get to have an advocate to help you make your case if your hearing is about keeping you in security longer. In medium-restriction facilities, or at home on parole, you get a Level III Hearing if you face a minor disciplinary consequence. Staff look at all of the facts and then decide if there is reason to believe you committed a rule violation. If they think you did, then they have to decide the consequence you should get. You don't get an advocate, but you do get to speak on your own behalf.

Informal Discussion

This is like a Level III Hearing, but it's not a hearing and it's for youth in high-restriction facilities only. If you misbehave on the dorm but don't go to security, staff can give you a minor disciplinary consequence after they talk with you about your behavior. You can tell your side during the informal discussion.

Level IV Hearing

In medium-restriction facilities or at home on parole, the Level IV Hearing is used to decide if you need to stay in detention or jail while you wait for another hearing. If you are waiting for a Level I Hearing about revoking your parole, you'll get help from a defense attorney. If you are waiting for a Level II Hearing, you get help from an advocate. If you are an institutional status youth at a high or medium restriction facility, you get a Level IV Hearing to decide if you stay in security while you wait for a court hearing or trial. You get help from an advocate.

At a TJJD hearing, you have the right to:

- **REMAIN SILENT**
- **BE ASSISTED BY AN ADVOCATE (OR ATTORNEY)**
- **CROSS EXAMINE WITNESSES**
- **CONTEST EVIDENCE**
- **CALL WITNESSES ON YOUR BEHALF**
- **PRESENT EVIDENCE ON YOUR BEHALF**
- **AN APPEAL FROM THE RESULTS**

APPEALING CONSEQUENCES

An appeal is the proper way to disagree with a decision about you. It is also the way you ask that the decision get changed. In other words, if you don't think a consequence you got was fair, you can appeal it.

For minor consequences TJJD automatically looks at decisions about you to make sure everything is OK. Here is what happens:

1) All minor disciplinary consequences issued by staff, other than your multi-disciplinary team, are reviewed by your case manager or dorm supervisor within one day.

2) All minor consequences issued by your multi-disciplinary team are reviewed by your facility superintendent or his or her staff. They can change consequences they think are too harsh.

If you disagree with decisions by staff members, you can appeal them right away to your facility superintendent or parole supervisor or their staff if you say:

(A) you did not commit the rule violation; or
(B) the discipline was inappropriate; or
(C) there were extenuating circumstances to the violation.

For major consequences, after you have had a Level I or Level II hearing, staff will remind you about your right to appeal and tell you how to appeal if you want.

"Know your rights and how to enforce them. Understand the grievance system because problems can be resolved." – Youth N.D. (Tyler Parole)

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual contact in TJJD between two people is prohibited – period. There is no such thing as a consensual sexual relationship at TJJD – not between youth – not between staff and youth. Fortunately, sexual abuse and assault are rare in TJJD but because they are serious, it's important for you to know what to do if it happens to you or someone else.

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) & Other Rules

You will learn about the Prison Rape Elimination Act while you are in TJJD. Often, people call it by its initials – PREA – pronounced pree'-uh. It is a federal law that helps officials detect, prevent, and respond to rape or sexual abuse against people who are in prisons or juvenile correctional facilities. TJJD Policy (GAP.380.9337) sets the rules for reporting and investigating allegations of sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual assault. Other state laws make it a crime to sexually abuse children and people in custody.

What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse in TJJD is any sexual contact, indecent exposure, voyeurism, or sexual harassment. This can be from an adult or youth. It may be a sudden sexual attack, or you may be tricked or lured into becoming sexually active with someone over a period of time. If you aren't sure if something is sexual abuse, it's better to report it just in case. If your gut tells you something isn't right, it probably isn't.

Sexual contact is touching your genitals or groin area, anus or buttocks, breasts, inner thighs or any other part of your body in a sexual manner either directly, through clothing, or with an object.

Indecent exposure is someone showing you their genitals, buttocks, or breasts.

Voyeurism is an invasion of your privacy by a staff member or another youth. An example would be someone peering at you in the shower or making you expose yourself when it is not related to official duties.

Sexual harassment is repeated, unwanted comments or behaviors of a sexual nature toward you. This includes threats, extortion, bribery, demeaning or derogatory remarks, or profane or obscene language or gestures.

Sexual Abuse Myths	Reality
It could never happen to me.	Anybody can be raped or molested.
A rapist or child molester is easy to spot in a crowd.	A rapist or child molester can look like anyone else and can be male or female.
If you do not “fight back” it is not really rape.	Some survivors “freeze.” Deciding to be still or to pretend to “go along” with a rapist or child molester is another way to fight back and is not the same as giving consent.
Only rapists and child molesters get raped in prison.	Non-violent, first-time offenders, youth, and inmates who are gay or transgender are targeted most often. People who are physically small or have a mental illness are also targeted.
It’s just part of the punishment.	Prisoner rape violates your constitutional rights. No one deserves to be raped or molested.
I felt a sexual response, so it wasn’t really rape or molestation.	It is normal to experience some physical response like feelings of arousal, even orgasm, during a sexual assault. A sexual response does not mean you wanted or liked the sexual assault. Your body is designed to respond to touch.
It’s too embarrassing for me to tell.	Staff are sensitive to the embarrassment that can come from sexual assault and are trained to help you. You can call the TJJD Abuse Hotline to report it.
It was probably my fault anyway. I don’t want anyone to get in trouble.	Sexual abuse is never your fault. You are not responsible for the behavior of the offender or the consequences he or she will face.
I’ve been a victim of sexual abuse before. This is normal.	It is not normal to be sexually abused. You should report the abuse or assault and expect TJJD to take action to keep others from being abused.
They won’t believe me anyway.	When you report a sexual abuse or assault, it must be investigated by trained law enforcement officers. They are trained to find evidence that can help prove what happened.

Some of the information in this box comes from the report *Hope for Healing: Information for Survivors of Sexual Assault in Detention*, Just Detention International, www.justdetention.org

What do I do if I have been abused?

Report it: If you have been sexually abused, sexually harassed or sexually assaulted, report it as soon as you can to the TJJD Abuse Hotline at 866-477-8354. You should also tell staff at your facility who you trust. Even if time has passed because you felt embarrassed or scared, you should still report it.

Preserve evidence: If the sexual assault has just happened and you have reported it, do not brush your teeth, change clothes, take a shower, or eat or drink anything. TJJD staff will get you to a doctor or nurse to examine you and preserve any evidence that may still be on or in your body.

Be safe: Reporting sexual assault or abuse is the fastest way TJJD can put a stop to it so that you are safe and can begin to heal. It is a traumatic experience, but one from which you can recover with the right counseling and help. TJJD will protect you and get you the help you need. Victims of sexual assault who waited to tell often wish they said something sooner. Also, most abusers don't have just one target. By reporting sexual abuse, you will be keeping others safe.

Keep Healthy Boundaries

You can reduce your risk of being sexually abused or assaulted by keeping healthy boundaries. Some sexual predators are good at what is called "grooming." This is where they try to break down normal, healthy boundaries so they can take advantage of you.

- Don't ask for or accept favors or gifts that are against the rules.
- Do not have inappropriate conversations with other youth or staff.
- Avoid anyone who is overly complimentary of you, tries to get you alone, or wants to share inappropriate secrets.
- Report anyone who threatens you.
- Report anyone who has a pattern of touching you too much (like hugging, hand holding, or pretending to accidentally brush up against you).
- Report anyone who develops a pattern of looking at you in a way that causes you to feel uncomfortable.

TJJD abuse hotline poster displayed in dorms throughout the state.

The Texas Legislature has adopted a zero-tolerance policy regarding the sexual abuse, including consensual sexual contact, of a child in the custody of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. Any such violation must be reported. You'll see these posters around campus reminding you of the hotline number to call in case you need to report sexual abuse or sexual harassment:

866-477-8354

MAKING A COMPLAINT

Tell:

a case manager, JCO, campus administrator, teacher, nurse, youth rights specialist, youth care investigator, inspector general, the ombudsman, a volunteer, your parents, any trusted adult

Call:

the TJJD Hotline at 866-477-8354 (answered 24-hours-a-day)
the ombudsman at (855) 468-7330

Write:

a grievance (complaint) or a letter to a TJJD official including the inspector general or ombudsman

What Can I Complain About?

You have the right to complain about anything.

Who is Here to Help Me?

The most important thing is to tell a trusted adult about any problems you are having, especially if you are being abused by another youth or TJJD staff. Any TJJD staff member or volunteer can get your complaint to the right person.

Youth Rights Specialists
These TJJD employees are in charge of the youth grievance system. They make sure your grievances are answered.

Administrative Investigators
These TJJD employees investigate non-criminal allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or policy violations by staff against youth within TJJD.

Office of Inspector General
These law enforcement officers investigate criminal acts committed by TJJD staff or youth and can file criminal charges against either.

Office of the Independent Ombudsman
These independent monitors focus on problems that affect the whole TJJD system. Staff can also help you resolve problems you may be having.

Parents
Remember, your parents can help you too. They have the right to be involved in your treatment and can advocate on your behalf.

Advocacy Groups
They help individual youth with problems and speak to lawmakers to make wide-ranging changes in the whole juvenile justice system.

Disability Rights Texas
This group has special access to TJJD to help youth with disabilities solve problems they may be having.

Conference Request System

Youth assigned to residential facilities may submit a written request for a conference with any staff member assigned to his/her facility as an informal means of addressing issues or concerns.

Writing a Grievance

Each dorm has a youth who serves as the grievance clerk. You can write a grievance for any problem you are having. If someone is abusing you, you need to report it in person so TJJD can stop it right away!

1. **First, you need to ask the dorm grievance clerk for a grievance form. Almost anybody on your dorm can tell you who this is.**

2. **Next, write down what's wrong and how you want TJJD to fix it.**

3. **Tear off the yellow page and keep it. That's your copy.**

4. Fold up the white page and drop it in a locked grievance box located on your campus. You don't have to explain or show your grievance to anyone before you put it in the box.

5. TJJD will tell you in writing within about three weeks if we can fix the problem the way you want or in another way.

6. If you don't like the answer you get to your grievance, you can ask us to get someone else to look at it again. That's called an appeal, and you have a right to appeal a decision.

Remember – never lie! Don't make up something to get someone in trouble. Making false reports or lying to investigators are crimes too. TJJD takes seriously every allegation of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Therefore, it is important that any report you make of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation be truthful. Texas law provides that it is a felony offense to knowingly make an untrue report of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

What if Someone Threatens Me About Making a Complaint?

It takes courage to report abuse or wrongdoing, especially if you are embarrassed or afraid you'll make things worse on yourself. If someone is causing you harm because you have reported a problem - that is called retaliation. Anyone who retaliates against you, even TJJD staff, will be in serious trouble. Be sure to report retaliation just like you would anything else.

Can I Help Another Youth or Get Help Making a Complaint?

Yes. You can get help from whomever you feel most comfortable, including your peers.

THE INDEPENDENT OMBUDSMAN

What is the Independent Ombudsman?

The Independent Ombudsman is a state agency created to protect your rights while in TJJD. The Independent Ombudsman's Office is not a part of TJJD, they report directly to the Office of the Governor.

What does the Independent Ombudsman do?

- Inspect all TJJD facilities to make sure that your rights are protected.
- Talk with the youth in TJJD to find out about life in TJJD. If you see them on your campus, go meet them and tell them how you are doing.
- Look into your complaints. If you filed a complaint with the TJJD grievance system and the problem does not get resolved, call or write to them.

If you have concerns about your health or safety, contact the OIO immediately.

(855) 468-7330

Send mail to:

The Office of the Independent Ombudsman for TJJD
Braker H Complex
11209 Metric Blvd.
Austin, TX 78758

MOVING TO MEDIUM SECURITY

You may not have to serve all of your minimum length of stay at a high security facility. You might qualify to spend some time at a medium security facility, depending on your offense, progress, and behavior. To get an early move (transition) to a medium security facility, you have to meet all of the requirements in this chart:

Criteria for Early Transition to Medium Security	
1	Youth with a low severity committing offense must finish six months of the minimum length of stay (MLOS) in high restriction. Youth with a moderate severity committing offense must finish nine months of the MLOS in high restriction. Youth with a high severity committing offense must finish all but 6 months of the MLOS in high restriction. Sentenced offenders are not eligible for early transition.
2	Have no major rule violations confirmed through a Level II hearing within 60 days prior to the exit review or during the approval process for youth committing offenses of low or moderate severity; or within 120 days prior to the exit review approval process for youth with committing offenses of high severity.
3	Completion of the Rehabilitation Program requirements and be on at least Stage 4.
4	Participation in, or completion of, assigned specialized treatment programs or curriculum.
5	Completion of a draft community reintegration plan, to be finalized at the medium restriction facility, that includes minimizing risk factors for re-offending.
6	Completion of a criminal street gang intervention program, if required by court.

Whenever you leave a high security facility, there are many things to think about. TJJD will help you with things you may have to do like enrolling in school and registering as a sex offender (if that is required of you). Sometimes, TJJD also has to tell your victims you are getting out. If you are not in the U.S. legally, TJJD will have to tell federal officials you are being released from a high security facility.

Halfway Houses

Halfway houses are the medium security facilities TJJD operates. They are located in some of the larger cities in Texas. Up to 23 youth live in each halfway house. Youth in halfway houses usually spend their days going to school or work or doing community service and volunteering. Evenings are spent participating in small group activities where youth can practice skills, do homework, and do chores. A halfway house teaches you to live in the community responsibly.

Not all TJJD youth go to halfway houses, but most do. Youth who are assigned to halfway houses are usually those who have excelled in treatment and don't need to be in high security to finish their time or they may be youth who have no home to go to. They also may be youth who need extra support to practice the new skills they have learned before going home. Ask your case manager if a halfway house might be an option for you. If you do not have a safe home to go to, you may be also able to complete your parole in a halfway house.

Special Community-Based Residential Programs

The agency also contracts with a number of companies to operate smaller facilities. Usually, these facilities serve specific needs, such as:

- Mother-baby programs
- Young boys under the age of 13 who require sexual behavior treatment
- Vocational
- Specialized treatment
- Family style housing

RELEASE & DISCHARGE

(NON-SENTENCED OFFENDERS)

Note: If you have a determinate sentence, you need to read the chapter called Release and Discharge (Sentenced Offenders), since this chapter will not apply to you.

Release means you go home from a TJJD facility or program, but you are still under supervision (on parole). **Discharge** means you are finished with TJJD completely. Working hard in your treatment and in school, and staying out of trouble, will help you earn release and discharge the fastest.

This chart shows what you have to do to get released from a secure facility if you are not a sentenced offender.

Finishing the Program

1. Finish your minimum length of stay (9 – 24 months).

2. Have no major rule violations 30 days before your exit interview with your Special Services Committee (SSC) or during your release approval process.

3. Be participating in, or have completed, any specialized treatment program you were assigned.

4. Be on the highest stage in your rehabilitation (usually youth empowerment status – YES stage), which shows you:
   - are participating in school and workforce programs
   - are participating in skills development groups
   - are showing positive skills you learned at TJJD
   - have finished a community re-integration plan

5. Your community re-integration plan should show:
   - you understand your risk and protective factors
   - you will keep developing skills to reduce your risk factors and increase protective factors
   - you have goals and a plan to achieve them
   - you know what will get in the way of your success and you have a plan to deal with it

6. Participate in any required rehabilitation programming which may include:
   - a reading improvement program
   - a positive behavioral interventions and supports system
   - completion of at least 12 hours of a gang intervention program, if required by court

If your severity rating (see the section in this book called MY MINIMUM LENGTH OF STAY) is Low or Moderate, your treatment team of TJJD staff members must meet at least 30 days before your minimum length of stay ends to decide if you can be released. If your severity rating is High, the team meets at least 90 days before your minimum length of stay ends.

If your treatment team decides you are ready for release, your case goes to a TJJD administrator to get approved. If approved, you go on parole on or shortly after the day your minimum length of stays ends.

If your treatment team or the administrator decides you aren't ready for release because you haven't finished the program, your case goes to the TJJD Release Review Panel.

"Make yourself a goal, whether it be to get out to your family or to get out for yourself. No matter what happens, you keep that goal. DON'T give up hope!" – Youth M.M. (Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional Facility)

Release Review Panel

If you complete your minimum length of stay but haven't been released, the Release Review Panel looks at your case to decide if you should be released or discharged or given more time in treatment.

If the Panel decides you should be released or discharged, TJJD must release you from a secure facility within 15 days. Your treatment team will decide if you go to a halfway house or to your home. However, the Panel may extend your stay if it decides you need more rehabilitation and that a residential placement is the best place for it. If the Panel extends your time, you will get a written report telling you how much more time the panel gave you and why it decided to extend your stay.

Evidence Used by the Release Review Panel

The Panel may review any information about your rehabilitation.

You, your parents or guardians, your victims, or any advocate you choose may send information in writing to the Panel.

Your parent or guardian, victim, or advocate may make a written request for personal communication with the Panel.

The Panel may interview you or anyone else about your treatment. You can refuse to speak to the Panel and it will not be held against you.

The Panel may consider rule violations you committed only if they were proven in a Level I or Level II hearing.

Appealing the Release Review Panel Decision

If you don't like the decision of the Release Review Panel, you can appeal. This means you want the Panel to change its mind. You, your parent or guardian, your advocate, your victim, a TJJD employee, an employee of a TJJD contractor, or a TJJD volunteer may submit a *request for reconsideration* of the Panel's decision. This will start your appeal. The *request for reconsideration* must be in writing and you need to make sure the Panel gets it within 15 days after it made the decision you don't like (usually that your time was extended). You can get help from any TJJD staff member or advocate if you want to write a *request for reconsideration*.

Reconsidering a Release or Discharge Order

If the Panel decides to release you from a secure facility, your facility administrator (usually the superintendent) or contract care staff may ask the Panel to reconsider your release or discharge. This is kind of like the staff appealing to have you stay in TJJD. But, they can only do this if new information comes to light or you are accused of a new major rule violation. So, if your case goes to the Release Review Panel, it is very important that you stay on your best behavior.

Discharge from TJJD for Non-Sentenced (Indeterminate) Offenders

There are several ways you can be discharged from TJJD:

1. Discharge for Successful Completion of Parole

If you have never been a high severity offender, you can be discharged when you: finish your parole, comply with your parole conditions, have no pending charges, do 60 hours of community service, and do 40 hours of constructive activities every week for a month. This includes time at work, school, treatment or counseling, community service, job hunting, or taking care of a child.

2. Direct Discharge from Residential Placement by Release Review Panel

The Release Review Panel may discharge you if it decides you don't need any more rehabilitation or that TJJD is not the best place for you anymore.

3. Discharge Because of Age

If you have not already been discharged, you will be the day before you turn 19.

4. Discharge for Special Circumstances

Military Service: If you don't have a high severity committing offense, TJJD may discharge you before you finish parole so you can join the military.

Out of State Parole: If you are on parole in another state, you may be discharged if the other state

requests it and it's approved by TJJD or the courts.

Mental Health: If you have finished your length of stay but can't progress in the program because of mental illness or Intellectual or Developmental Disability, there are special ways you can be discharged.

RELEASE & DISCHARGE

(SENTENCED OFFENDERS)

Note: If you have an indeterminate sentence, you need to read the chapter called Release and Discharge (Non-Sentenced Offenders), since this chapter doesn't apply to you.

Release means you go home from a TJJD facility or program, but you are still under supervision (on TJJD parole). **Discharge** means you are finished with TJJD completely, but you still might have to serve time in the adult system.

Length of Sentence

This is the number of years the judge or jury gave you for your offense. You have to serve all of it through some kind of supervision, starting at a TJJD high restriction facility. After that, your time could be a combination of TJJD parole, adult parole, or adult prison. Remember you are different from other TJJD youth and the stakes are higher. You can be sent to prison if you don't do your treatment or your behavior is bad.

Minimum Period of Confinement (MPC)

Non-sentenced offenders have minimum lengths of stay. As a sentenced offender you have a minimum period of confinement (MPC). This is the time, set by state law, you have to serve in a high restriction facility: 10 years for capital murder; three years for an aggravated controlled substance felony or a 1st degree felony; two years for a 2nd degree felony; and one year for a 3rd degree felony.

You get credit for your time in detention. For example, if you have a three year MPC and you did four months in detention before TJJD, then your MPC in TJJD is two years, 8 months (three years minus the four months you already served).

What If I Cannot Finish My MPC Before I Turn 19?

If you can't finish your MPC before you turn 19, then you have to go to court so the judge can decide whether to transfer you to adult parole or send you to prison for the rest of your sentence.

What If My MPC is Longer than My Sentence?

You can be released to parole nine months before your sentence is complete as long as: (1) your minimum period of confinement is the same or longer than your actual sentence, and (2) you meet all other criteria for release. If your sentence is longer than your minimum period of confinement, you must serve your entire minimum period of confinement before you are eligible for parole.

Youth Committed to TJJD for Capital Murder

By law, the MPC for capital murder is 10 years unless your sentence is shorter. Since you have to be ten years old before you can go to TJJD and you have to be discharged by 19, you can't do a 10-year MPC while at TJJD. However, it's possible your judge will waive your MPC and let you transfer from TJJD to adult parole instead of going to adult prison. This is why it's critical you behave and work hard in treatment and school.

Sentenced Offender Reviews

Your treatment progress gets reviewed by your Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) every 30 days just like all other youth. Because you are a sentenced offender, the Special Services Committee (SSC) also reviews your progress: 6 months after your admission; at the end of your MPC; when you turn 18; and when you turn 18½ if you are still in high restriction. The SSC can also look at your progress whenever they want.

Avoiding Transfer to TDCJ-ID (Prison)

To keep from going to prison, you need to know what not to do. Here is a chart that shows what has to happen to get sent to TDCJ-ID. Participate in treatment, keep out of trouble, and don't do the things in this chart:

What Qualifies Me for Transfer to TDCJ-ID (Prison)?

1. You are 16 years old or older.

2. You have been in TJJD 6 months or longer.

3. You meet any one of these items:
   - You are responsible for chronic disruption; or
   - You commit one felony or Class A misdemeanor while at TJJD; or
   - You have three or more major rule violations (confirmed by a Level I or Level II hearing); or
   - You fail to progress in treatment because you don't follow your ICP (individual case plan);
   - You have your TJJD parole revoked; or
   - You are adjudicated or convicted of a new offense while on parole.

4. You do not respond to alternative interventions to correct your behavior or motivate you to participate in treatment.

5. The welfare of the community requires you to be transferred to prison.

Getting a "Red Packet" (Being Recommended for Prison)

TJJD wants you to change, but if you are disruptive, aggressive, assaultive, or won't work on your case plan, you are showing that you would rather be in prison. If TJJD decides you meet criteria for possible transfer to prison, staff will do a "red packet" on you. The "red packet" goes to TJJD Austin Office to get approved. If it's approved, you go back to court for a transfer hearing. Your judge will decide whether to transfer you from TJJD to prison.

Getting a "Black Packet" (Being Recommended for Parole)

If staff think you should be released on parole, they will put together a "black packet" on you. If you meet all of the things you need for parole, the earliest TJJD can send a "black packet" to the Austin Office for your release is 90 days before your MPC is up if you are going on TJJD parole. If you are going on TDCJ parole, your "black packet" can be sent 150 days before you finish your MPC. Be patient though. It takes time to put together all of your parole conditions and take care of the legal notifications about your release.

What Do I Have to Do to Get Released on Parole?

1. Complete your MPC.

2. Earn and be Active on YES Stage in the program.

3. Complete all of the specialized treatment that is required of you.

4. Have no major rule violations (confirmed by a Level I or Level II hearing) within 90 days of your review for release or during the release process.

5. Completion of/or participation in any statutorily required programming (reading program, gang intervention, etc.).

If you are under 19, you get released to TJJD parole and then put on TDCJ parole to finish your sentence. If you haven't been released from TJJD or sent to prison before you are 19, you go on TDCJ parole right before your 19th birthday. If you are released on parole, you must follow the rules and conditions. Violating parole could land you in prison and you'll lose credit for time you spent on parole.

Completing Your Sentence

Once you finish all of your sentence (including credit for the time you spent in detention), you get discharged. You may be in TJJD, on parole, or in prison at the time, depending on your treatment progress and sentence length.

Things to Remember

As a sentenced offender, even if you are discharged from TJJD, you can't seal your records like others who committed crimes as juveniles. If you are convicted of another crime as an adult, the case for which you received a juvenile sentence can be "used against you" in the punishment phase of your trial. In fact, you'll likely get a much higher sentence because of the offense you are here for now. This could include a life sentence. Although legally you are not considered to have been "convicted of a felony" because you were a juvenile at the time of the offense, you may still experience difficulty in the community because of the seriousness of your offense. That is why it is important to get all the help you can with your treatment, education, vocational training, and job skills while you are in TJJD.

"TJJD is a chance. They are preparing you for the free. Once you get to be 18, there are no more chances, so you better do good here." – Youth J.M. (San Antonio Parole)

MY PAROLE – GOING HOME

TJJD wants you to go home with a new outlook and attitude and the skills you need to be successful. It may seem far away, but you'll be going home before you know it. That's why your choices now are important. Follow instructions, behave, do well in school, and be active in treatment. Doing these things will mean you spend less time locked up. Once you have finished your minimum length of stay and have progressed through treatment, you qualify for release on parole or to go to a halfway house or other less restrictive community-based program. Almost all TJJD youth go home on parole. This is perhaps the most important time you'll spend under TJJD supervision because it's where you get to apply everything you've learned.

Your Parole Officer

Your parole officer is assigned to you early so he or she can help you make plans to go home. Within 60 days of your commitment to TJJD, your parole officer will visit your home. After talking with your parents, your parole officer will suggest the best place for you to go after release. During the last 90 days you are in a secure facility, you get to meet your parole officer. He or she will help you make your community re-integration plan. It lists your goals and how to achieve them and the things you need to stay away from to stay out of trouble. Your parole officer will also help you get set up in your community after release.

Reporting to your Parole Officer

While on parole, you report to your parole officer regularly. Your parole officer may also visit you at school, work, home, or a community service site. Think of your parole officer as a person to turn to for help. You should always be honest and admit when you are having problems. He or she can help you fix small setbacks before they get out of hand. At first, you usually have to report to your parole officer more often until you show you are doing well. Your parole officer sets your schedule.

Electronic Monitoring

Youth committed for a felony against a person or a high severity offense are placed on electronic monitoring (EM) when they are transitioned or released from a high restriction facility. Any other youth may be placed on EM upon release or transition from a high restriction facility with approval from the senior director of state programs and facilities or his/her designee. Youth will remain on EM until the 30-day parole re-assessment or completion of the first 30 days in a medium restriction facility.

The Department of Sentenced Offender Disposition

TJJD has a department in Central Office just for sentenced offender issues. These staff members help your case management staff make decisions about you. They can also answer questions for you and your parents or guardians.

Constructive Activity

When you are on parole, you continue treatment, do community service, work, and go to counseling or school. You have to do at least 40 hours of this constructive activity weekly. Constructive activity helps you improve your protective factors and reduce your risk factors. You will work with your parole officer to see which of the activities you are doing will count toward your 40 hours.

Youth on parole and at the Ayres Halfway House in San Antonio, Texas, help clean a neighborhood.

While on parole, you'll have to follow rules called your conditions of parole. Some of the conditions are the same for all youth. Some may be just for you. You'll get a copy of your conditions. If you break them, it could mean you have to stay on parole longer, report to your parole officer more often, or that your parole gets revoked and you go back to a secure facility.

Sentenced Offenders on Parole

If you are a sentenced offender, you may start on TJJD parole but will probably transfer to adult parole if your sentence lasts past your 19th birthday. Depending on your age, you may go directly to adult parole.

Sex Offenders on Parole

If you are a sex offender, with a registration requirement, TJJD will register you with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the local law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over your non-secure placement, prior to your release from a secure facility. You will be required to verify your registration with local law enforcement within seven days after you are released from the secure facility. You will also be required to verify with the local law enforcement agency for every status change you have for as long as you are required to register. Juvenile offender's registration requirement is for 10 years after you discharge supervision of your sex offense. Your committing court may have entered an order making your registration NON-PUBLIC, deferring your registration, or waiving your registration requirement. TJJD will comply with any court order effecting your registration requirement. If you received a deferred registration court order, you can earn the right to not have to register by successfully completing the sex offender treatment program. Since all of the rules and requirements about registering are very important and complex, TJJD has a special department just for sex offender registration. You will get help in understanding what the Texas Registration requirements are and what the consequences are for failing to comply. TJJD will help you with the whole process. Remember, not registering, if you are required to do it, is a very serious crime itself and can get you in a lot of trouble.

Parole Revocation

Serious parole violations or new crimes can get you returned to a TJJD facility. Before your parole is revoked, you will have a hearing with due process rights. (See the section in this book called DUE PROCESS HEARINGS for more information about what to expect if you face a parole revocation hearing.) Once

you return, you have to earn your release again the same way you did when you first arrived.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Sometimes TJJD youth can't go home after release – your home may not be approved, a victim may live in the house, or your parents may be in adult prison or not able or willing to take you back. TJJD Independent Living Preparation offers you a chance to learn how to take care of yourself. Some youth even get financial help from TJJD. If you have no home to go to or if your chances of success are better by living on your own, you should ask your case manager about Independent Living Preparation.

Independent Living Courses

Independent Living Preparation starts with different lessons you have to pass before you move out on your own. These lessons are called modules. After you study a module, you take a quiz to see if you understood it. The modules may change from time to time, but this list gives you an idea of what to expect:

Module 1: Job Search and Maintenance - work ethic; what I want out of a job; how to read the want ads; resumes, cover letters, telephone techniques; job applications; preparing for an interview; job interviews

Module 2: Individual Adjustment to Work – the new job; working with others; job duties; employee benefits; taxes; getting to and from work

Module 3: Money Management – bank accounts; deposits; writing checks; balancing your checkbook; using credit and debit cards; making a budget

Module 4: Consumer Awareness and Shopping – shopping for groceries and clothes; major purchases; potential scams; shopping advice; credit history

Module 5: Nutrition – making balanced meals; buying groceries; table manners; different types of restaurants

Module 6: Health, Safety, and Parenting – health insurance; AIDS/HIV; medical history; fire safety; parenting; parental rights

Module 7: Housing Search and Maintenance – locating an apartment; rental applications; deposits; leases; rights of tenants; utilities

Module 8: Community Awareness – voter registration; getting a driver's license or ID card; getting insurance; selective service registration; TJJD parole; juvenile records; enrolling in and attending college or trade school. You can also earn credit for the Independent Living modules if you have completed the DFPS preparation for adult living (PAL) course or the ACHIEVE interned based education and workforce development program. As your case manage or parole officer about these options.

While you are working on your modules, you will also need to do community service, get and keep a job, and save up the money you will need to move out.

Completing Independent Living Preparation

This chart shows you the four things you must do to complete Independent Living Preparation and be eligible for money from TJJD once you move out.

Completing Independent Living Preparation
1. You must pass all of the independent living modules with a score of 70 or above on the quizzes or have completed another approved curriculum such as DFPS's preparation for adult living (PAL).
2. You must complete at least 60 hours of community service.
3. You must maintain employment for at least 30 days.
4. You must save enough money to pay your apartment and utility deposits and your first month's rent.

Independent Living Financial Aid

If you finish Independent Living Preparation and have to live on your own, TJJD may be able to give you some money (for up to six months) until you can take care of yourself. Ask your case manager or parole officer about the rules to get financial aid.

It is important for you to know that if you get money from TJJD for rent, you are considered on intensive parole supervision. That means you have to let your case manager or parole officer in to your place to search for contraband. Also, in order to get money, you have to sign a contract with TJJD that will list all of the rules.

MY JUVENILE RECORDS

Confidentiality

State and federal laws make information about you confidential to most people outside TJJD, but the rules can be complicated. If you aren't yet 18, your parents have a lot of control over who sees your records. When you turn 18, you get some of that control.

TJJD can't release information about you to the public. Sometimes, though, people who work for the courts, police departments or other law enforcement can see your record without your permission. Some sex offenders have to register on a public database.

When you get out of TJJD, you or your family may want to see an attorney to find out what you can do to keep your record as private as possible. A lot of youth have their records sealed. That is something your lawyer can help you with.

Who has a juvenile record in Texas?

If you were arrested, taken into custody or charged with a crime offense (Class A or B misdemeanor or felony) that was committed when you were at least 10 but younger than 17, you probably have a juvenile record. You may also have one if you were charged with a Class C misdemeanor that got sent to juvenile court.

What are juvenile records?

If you were adjudicated delinquent (Class A or B misdemeanor or any felony) in Texas, you probably have a record with the local law enforcement, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), and the FBI. That record is permanent and not destroyed unless you get a court to seal it. You need a lawyer for this.

Who has access to juvenile records?

While juvenile records are generally confidential, there are some exceptions. Law enforcement, prosecutors, and other criminal justice officials in Texas and elsewhere can see your record. Also, it may be available to some people when you apply for a job, school, or professional license.

What is the automatic restriction of access to records system?

Texas has a system that limits access to your juvenile records after you turn 17 if you don't commit any more crimes after you turn 17. The system is called automatic restriction of access to records. This is not the same as having your records sealed or destroyed.

Under automatic restriction of access to records, your records stay in place, but fewer people can see them. They are available only to criminal justice agencies for things like investigating job applicants and prosecuting crimes. For all other inquiries the holder of the records has to say your records "do not exist." You can also legally deny you were ever arrested, prosecuted or adjudicated for a crime.

How do a juvenile's records become eligible for restricted access?

For restricted access, you don't have to do anything special like hiring a lawyer or going to court. It happens automatically when you turn 17 if, since your 17th birthday, you have not received deferred adjudication for or been convicted in adult court of a Class A or B misdemeanor or a felony. If you meet these requirements, you get a fresh start at age 17 without harm from a past juvenile record. But remember, this only happens if you don't commit any new crimes. If you commit a crime after turning 17, your records are taken off restricted access.

What records are not eligible for restricted access?

Juvenile records that are not eligible for restricted access are cases that were handled as determinate sentences, certified (transferred) to adult criminal court, or prosecuted in justice or municipal court.

What about sentenced offender records?

Cases handled as determinate sentences are not eligible for restricted access.

What about gang records?

Information about gang activity is maintained by DPS in a gang book. These records are exempt from restricted access because they are already limited to criminal justice agencies for criminal justice purposes.

What about sex offender records?

Sex offender registration records are not included in the restricted access system. If you are a registered juvenile sex offender, you may have a right to have your records sealed once the obligation to register expires. Also, there are other legal proceedings that may allow reconsideration of your obligation to register. Talk to your parole officer or speak to a lawyer for more information.

How does the restricted access records system benefit me?

If your records are placed on restricted access, you can deny the existence of the juvenile record and deny you were arrested, prosecuted, or adjudicated.

For example, once your juvenile records are on restricted access, you may legally answer, “No” when you are asked on an application for a job, school, or licensing, “Have you ever been arrested, convicted or adjudicated of a crime?"

It is important to understand that if you commit a crime after turning 17, your juvenile records can’t be restricted. In this case, you can’t deny the existence of your record. If you do, you may be prosecuted for perjury (not telling the truth).

What if I want to be notified when and if my records are restricted?

If you want to receive notification when and if records are on restricted access, you have to tell the TJJD Youth Records Department before you turn 21 and keep TJJD updated with your current address.

Should I try to get my records sealed or destroyed?

Having your records sealed or destroyed does offer you extra benefits and may be the preferred course of action. To have your record sealed, you have to start a formal court action and may need a lawyer. Also, if you have criminal records in a justice or municipal court, special expungement procedures apply.

Grounds at the Gainesville State School in Gainesville, Texas.

MY GUIDE TO TJJD WORDS & ACRONYMS

*When you take the first letters of the words that make up a phrase or title and put them together, you are making an acronym. For example, when you send a text and use "LOL," that is an acronym for "**L**aughing **O**ut **L**oud." TJJD uses a lot of acronyms and new words you'll get to know. Here are some that are common:*

225 – See the definition of CCF (Correctional Care Form) shown below.

ADO (Administrative Duty Officer) – This is the person in charge of your facility on weekends and holidays or when the superintendent and the assistant superintendent aren't there.

Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment – This is the specialized treatment for youth who are addicted to drugs or alcohol. This is also sometimes called chemical dependency (CD) treatment.

AMI (Alleged Mistreatment Investigation) – This is when TJJD's Office of Inspector General checks out whether a youth is being abused, neglected, or exploited.

ARD (Admission, Review, and Dismissal) – Parents, teachers, and other school staff are members of a group called an ARD committee. They have ARD meetings to make decisions about students in special education.

ART (Aggression Replacement Training) – This is a required specialized treatment program for many youth who committed violent offences or have problems with anger.

Case Manager – You will work with this person a lot. They are sometimes called case workers. They help you with your treatment program and everyday issues.

CCF (Correctional Care Form) – These forms are used to record a variety of things about you like your treatment progress and behavior. You will probably hear about a "225" a lot on the dorms. That is the form number (CCF-225) used to record major rule violations, security referrals, injuries, restraints, and other serious incidents.

CSU (Crisis Stabilization Unit) – The CSU is at Mart for boys and Ron Jackson for girls. It's for kids who need a lot of extra help because of mental illness. There are more staff and psychologists at CSU to work with the kids. There is also a psychiatrist on site every week to review medication problems. All staff have special training in how to help people with a mental illness.

CSVOTP (Capital and Serious Violent Offender Treatment Program) – This is the specialized treatment for youth who committed a capital offense or a serious violent offense.

CATE (Career and Technology Education) – A CATE class is where you learn trade skills and can earn certifications. Welding and horticulture are examples of CATE classes.

Determinate Sentencing – This is the kind of sentence where the court tells you exactly how long you have to serve (up to 40 years). It is for the most serious offenses and gives juveniles a chance to avoid going to prison by letting them go through treatment at TJJD.

DOS (Director of Security) – The director of security at a facility oversees the security unit. These are also called dorm supervisors for security.

DS (Dorm Supervisor) – A dorm supervisor oversees daily operations of dorm life and supervises JCO staff and case managers on one or more dorms.

DSO (Determinate Sentenced Offender) – A TJJD youth with a determinate sentence.

GAP (General Administrative Policies) – The General Administrative Policies are the formal rules for how TJJD has to operate. In addition to GAP, there are also operational manuals that give staff rules, but the GAP has the most weight.

GED (General Educational Development) – You can earn this certificate when you pass all of the GED tests. It's a way of finishing high school instead of earning a diploma.

ICP (Individual Case Plan) – This is the plan for your treatment and education based on your strengths and risks.

Indeterminate Sentencing – This is the kind of sentence where the court sends you to TJJD without saying how long you spend in treatment, up to your 19th birthday.

Infirmary – The on-campus medical clinic.

JCO (Juvenile Correctional Officer) – These are TJJD staff who get special training and work all over campus. They help make positive changes in youth behavior.

LCDC (Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor) – A person licensed in Texas to provide specialized treatment for alcohol and other drug dependency.

LSOTP (Licensed Sex Offender Treatment Provider) – A person licensed in Texas to provide specialized sexual behavior treatment to youth who have committed sex offenses.

MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team) – The team, made up of you, staff from your facility, and your parents, meets monthly to discuss your progress and make any needed changes.

MLOS (Minimum Length of Stay) – The minimum period of time an indeterminate sentenced youth must stay in TJJD. This is set by TJJD policy.

MCS (Manager of Institutional Clinical Services) – The manager of institutional clinical services oversees the treatment programs at a facility. This person is a psychologist.

MPC (Minimum Period of Confinement) – The minimum period of time a determinate sentenced youth must stay in TJJD before being eligible for parole. This is set in state law.

OIG (Office of the Inspector General) – This office has law enforcement officers who investigate criminal acts committed while on TJJD property and file criminal charges if needed.

OIO (Office of the Independent Ombudsman) – This office has independent monitors who focus on problems that affect the whole TJJD system. They work with TJJD staff to improve the standard of care for all youth. They also help you with complaints about TJJD.

Parole – Also called aftercare or community reentry. It's the period of TJJD supervision beginning after release from a residential program and ending with discharge.

PO (Parole Officer) – The officer assigned to a youth while he or she is on parole.

RRP (Release Review Panel or "the Panel") – The group of TJJD staff who decides whether you should be released based on your behavior and treatment progress. Your case will only go to this Panel if you haven't been released by the time your minimum length of stay is up.

SBTP (Sexual Behavior Treatment Program) – This is the specialized treatment for youth who have committed sex offenses and need intensive services.

SSC (Special Services Committee) – The committee at your facility which meets weekly to do entrance and exit assessments, release reviews for indeterminate youth, and reviews sentenced offenders for placement on TJJD parole, TDCJ parole or transfer to TDCJ-ID. The SSC is usually led by the manager of institutional clinical services and includes the dorm supervisors, principal, assistant superintendent, and others.

YRS (Youth Rights Specialist) – This person oversees the youth grievance system. They can help you make a complaint and solve problems.

CONCLUSION

We know this time away from your family and friends is difficult. TJJD staff will work hard with you to help you learn what you need in order to be successful at home, at school, and in the community. Ultimately, though, the power to change is yours. You will have to make the decision to participate in treatment and take advantage of what TJJD has to offer.

Getting sent to TJJD is your chance for a fresh start. Your judge saw something in you worth trying to reach. The prosecutor may have even recommended you go to TJJD. And, taxpayers are putting up a lot of money for you to be here. They wouldn't spend that money to help you turn your life around if they didn't care about you and believe you could do it.

There are many others who are rooting for you too – TJJD staff know you have the potential to walk out the doors and do great things in life. Your parents, volunteers, friends, brothers and sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents – all of us have someone who wants us to succeed.

Why do so many people care? First, everyone who chooses to be part of the system believes helping you is the right thing to do. Second, they know that if you learn not to harm others, it keeps communities safer.

As you progress through TJJD you will have many choices. Right now, you have to decide what you will do with this opportunity. It's about your future – about looking ahead.

TJJD Abuse Hotline

(866) 477-8354

This number is answered 24/7 by a real person. Staff must allow you to use a facility phone to call this number. This is a free call.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department

TJJD Publication: CCG – 001
TJJD Youth Handbook
January 2016