



## The Process

Once the child comes to the centre, the *Wood Street Centre* officially takes responsibility for the young person. On admission, the young person receives a nursing assessment and any required medical referrals. The young person will be under close staff supervision, especially for the first 24 hours, in order to provide the highest level of safety possible.

The initial court appearance occurs within five days. By this time, an assessment will have been conducted by the clinical staff. This assessment will provide recommendations to the court regarding the need for a possible secure-care order. The child's case worker will also develop an initial intervention plan during this period.



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A place to find balance, stabilization  
and security for children and youth  
in Nova Scotia.

### *For more information:*

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## Wood Street Centre

### **A Safe Place for Children and Youth in Crisis**

Located in Truro, Nova Scotia, the *Wood Street Centre* offers a secure and stable environment for children and youth in the care of the Minister who are in-crisis. This program is the only one of its kind east of Montreal.

### *About the Clients*

The *Wood Street Centre* provides services to young people in the care of the Minister who require secure care for their safety and well-being. Violence, abuse, addictions and suicidal thoughts will likely be common themes among the Centre's residents.

It is anticipated that the vast majority of the young people who access the program will be between the ages of 12 and 18. However, some may be younger than 12, depending on individual circumstances.

**As many as 200 young people may pass through the program each year.**

### *About the Centre*

Centre staff include a Chief of Clinical Services, supervisors, youth-care workers, clinical social workers, a nurse, administrative-support staff, and a team of specialized consultants in psychiatry, psychology and medical services.

The *Wood Street Centre* has 20 beds split between two living units, and houses two classrooms, recreational space, a family unit and clinical, administrative and meeting space.

## The program

The *Wood Street Centre* is mandated under the *Children and Family Services Act* to provide a safe and secure placement for young people who are in government care, and who, through a judicial process, have been deemed to require treatment for behavioural or emotional issues and who are unable or unwilling to consent to treatment.

This program was established to ensure the safety and security of the young person while caregivers and service providers establish a new treatment plan for when the client returns to their immediate care.

The Centre will be used only when other, less-intrusive placement options have failed or are inappropriate and not in the best interest of the child or youth.

### **Services will focus on short-term crisis diffusion and problem-solving.**

The *Wood Street Centre* offers an innovative program for children and youth in-crisis, including both short- and longer-term placements.

#### *Secure Stabilization (Short Term)*

Secure Stabilization will provide short-term residential services to young people who are experiencing severe difficulties in their existing placements, at home or in the community.

#### *Longer Term Residential Intervention*

Longer Term Residential Intervention was developed to assist young people who exhibit more complex needs, and can be provided where the Court is satisfied that the placement is justified under the legislation.

## Outcomes

Time spent at the *Wood Street Centre* is an opportunity for the client to receive crisis-intervention assistance and stabilization. As a side benefit, this also gives the client's current residential or foster home placement time to regroup after the crisis.

From a continuum-of-care perspective, it is critical that the child return to the "home" placement as soon as possible. This is where long-term change will occur.

Through care at the *Wood Street Centre*, the need for multiple placements will be reduced. The Centre will also reduce stress on residential foster care. While the young person is at the centre, they will receive balance, stabilization, security and other services as needed.

## Referrals

All referrals must go through the local child-welfare authority. The *Wood Street Centre* will only serve children and youth in the care of the Minister. If police, parents or other professionals believe there are grounds to apply for a certificate for a child who is in need of protection for abuse or neglect, they must contact the local agency. Attempts to make referrals directly to the Centre will be redirected to the local agency closest to the location of the child.

In order to ensure the necessary criteria are met before admission, a secure-care risk-conferencing process has been established that involves child-welfare caseworkers and their supervisors. The young person must also have legal representation.