

Parent Handbook

Therapeutic Residential &
Day School



Heartspring



Mission:

Heartspring is a place of possibility for kids the world underestimates. We assess, diagnose, treat, educate, and inspire children with neurodevelopmental needs.

Vision:

Every child realizes their full potential.

Values:

Excellence, Celebration, Leadership, Service, Possibility,
Integrity



Preparing for enrollment and the admissions process

The Admissions Process

Greetings!

Your child has been accepted for enrollment at Heartspring. We are looking forward to working with you in creating a successful transition for you and your child.

The enrollment date has been set (or you will be notified of an official date soon) and therefore you are receiving this Parent Handbook.

Your immediate next steps are:

- 1) *Complete the enrollment paperwork. Within this Parent Handbook, we have included a required packet of enrollment paperwork to complete.*

The sooner we are able to receive the completed paperwork, the better we are able to prepare. Please note, all enrollment paperwork needs to be completed and returned to the Admissions Department five (5) days prior to the enrollment date.

You may fax the paperwork to us at 316-634-8891, email it to admissions@heartspring.org, or mail to:

Heartspring, Inc.
Attn: Admissions
8700 East 29th Street North
Wichita, KS 67226

- 2) *Participate in our Intake Meeting.*

This Intake Meeting is held approximately 10-14 days prior to enrollment day. We begin this meeting by discussing the top three reasons for placement at Heartspring Therapeutic School, and what is preventing him/her to successfully accessing educational services and/or the community in the least-restrictive environment. (This document is called the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) document and is also reviewed annually at the IEP).

Parents, the referring school or agency, and anyone else who knows the child well should participate via our virtual meeting option, or conference call. These meetings typically last about two hours.

Heartspring will have many of your child's new team members present in this meeting. This typically includes the teacher, behavior specialist/BCBA, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, registered nurse, and a supervisor from your child's group home. Someone from the Admissions Team will be facilitating the meeting.

We are looking forward to your arrival and are happy to help in any way we can to make this a good experience for you and your family. Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

Preparing for the Move

The Admissions Team will be your point of contact to facilitate a smooth transition for your family and child. As you prepare travel arrangements for you and your child, please provide details to the Admissions Team as they become available. A child who is unable to travel to Heartspring with parents via conventional methods, i.e commercial airline or car, may need assistance to arrive safely.

Details to be shared with the Admissions Team may include:

- Arrival (airline, flight number, arrival date and time)
- Hotel (name of hotel, check in and check out information)
- Transportation in Wichita – rental car, taxi, Uber, etc.

For children who may need additional support for travel, i.e additional staff, med flights or other needs, please contact your school/funding agency or Heartspring's Admissions Team for information on alternatives. Heartspring staff members are unable to assist as escorts in transporting a student here for enrollment.

If you would like to ship some of your child's items prior to your arrival, please send them to:

Heartspring, Inc.
Attn: Student's Name
8700 East 29th Street North
Wichita, KS 67226

Suggested Packing List for Your Child

Please label all personal items with your child's initials. A waterproof Sharpie works great, or you may prefer to use wear/wash-proof stick-on labels. (Label resources: www.labeldaddy.com or www.dinkleboo.com)

Clothing Articles	Shoes, Personal Hygiene, Other
Underwear (and bras if applicable)	Athletic shoes & 1 pair of nice/casual/dress shoes
Socks	Flip-flops/sandals
Pajamas	1 pair of winter boots
Robe	2 swimming suits (1 for home, 1 for classroom)
House shoes (slippers, crocs, etc.)	Jackets, coats
Jeans and/or sweatpants	Winter hat, scarf, gloves
One nice outfit for special occasions, pictures, performances, etc.	Backpack
Shorts	Beach towel (1-2)
Short-sleeve shirts	Water-proof electric razor
Long-sleeve shirts	2 Toothbrushes (1 for home, 1 for classroom)
Sweaters, sweatshirts	Optional: undershirts, dress, belt, etc.

Note: You may provide seasonal clothing at enrollment and "off-season" clothes at a later time.

As you are packing, please complete the INVENTORY SHEET found in the Enrollment Paperwork Packet. This will simplify the move-in process on enrollment day.

Heartspring provides the following items:

- XL Twin bed and mattress
- Dirty clothes hamper
- Shower tote with basic hygiene products:
 - Deodorant
 - Shampoo and/or conditioner
 - Body Wash
 - Lotion
 - Toothpaste
 - Nail clippers, toothbrush, dental floss, bath sponge

(If you prefer specific brands, you will be responsible for providing these items. You may bring these when you visit or order/ship these.)

Heartspring can also provide sheets, mattress pad cover, towels, and a comforter. These items will be clean, but may not be brand new. *(If you would like Heartspring to provide these items, please let us know prior to enrollment.)*

Additional items parents may provide if desired:

- Hat(s)
- Hairdryer
- Curtains (and spring rod) – see window dimensions below
- 10"x10" fabric storage bins/cubbies (for closets to keep underwear/socks in, or for toys)
- Rug(s) – **Please make sure these are machine washable.**
- Furniture such as a chair, desk, nightstand, etc.
- Electronics such as a computer, radio, TV (max size is 40 inch), DVD player, etc. (If you choose to provide a TV, please note: there is no cable provided in the bedrooms. Parents are responsible for ordering and paying for this separately and when appropriate. For the safety of our students, smart/Wi-Fi-enabled TV's will be approved on a case-by-case basis.)
- Posters, decorative self-stick appliqués
- Family photos (Decorating resource – www.zazzle.com – personalized self-stick appliqués)
- Toys, stuffed animals
- Comfy blankets
- Rain gear
- If "bean bags" or other furniture is provided - please be sure it's made of machine-washable fabric if your child is not toilet trained, or consider vinyl or wipe-off materials.
- Anything else to make your child feel comfortable

Bedroom Information and Dimensions:

- Group Homes 1-5: 9 x 17.5 feet
- Group Homes 1-5 *window size:* 39"W x 55"L
- Group Home 6: 9 x 13.6 feet
- Group Home 6 *window size:* 70"W x 55"L
- Group Home 10: 8 x 17.5 feet
- Group Home 10 *window size:* 40"W x 56"L

*** Heartspring is not responsible for the damage or loss of personal property. Parents may want to secure homeowners' insurance to cover these items. ***

What to Expect on Enrollment Day

In order to establish a consistent routine from the start, **we prefer that the child arrives as close to 9 a.m. as possible on the enrollment day.** The child and family will arrive at the **Heartspring School entrance** to be greeted by an Admissions Department representative, and other team members, as needed.

We take an individualized approach for the child to begin their day. This may include a tour with parents, or having the child stay in the classroom (and tour separately), while parents attend meetings.

For parents who are unable to accompany their child to Heartspring for the enrollment day (if a transport company is being utilized, for example), the Admissions Department will work with parents to be sure all arrangements have been made prior, such as receiving shipments of clothing/personal items, getting paperwork completed, etc.

Parents may stay on campus until approximately 4 p.m. on the enrollment day. **Please note: The agenda for the enrollment day is an individualized discussion and it's not always best for families to stay this long. There are various reasons why a shorter enrollment day may be ideal.**

Sample Enrollment Day Schedule	
9 a.m.	Arrive at Heartspring School entrance. Child & parents may tour the campus together. Then child will go to his/her permanent classroom.
10 a.m.	Parents meet with an Admissions Department representative to complete/review all enrollment paperwork and do Parent Orientation.
10:30 a.m.	Parents meet with nurse to go over medical paperwork, provide medications, discuss any other medical needs/questions, etc.
11 a.m.	Parents meet with Behavioral Services team member and go over what the days will look like from a BCBA or Certified Autism Specialist perspective, and camera consent if applicable.
12 – 1:30 p.m.	Begin move-in process in the Group Home Lunch Break Continue move-in.
2:15 p.m.	Parents meet with School Psychologist to discuss IEP addendum/changes and approve/sign.
2:30 p.m.	Team meeting to learn how the child's first day has gone. Discuss any other questions, as needed.
3 p.m.	Continue unpacking (and decorating, if desired) in the Group Home.
4 p.m.	Parents say "good-bye" to their child. We recommend you use dinner time as a natural transition.



General information about the Heartspring School



School Calendar

July 2025-June 2026

■ Offices Closed

July 2025

4 Independence Day

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2026

1 New Year's Day
19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2025

11 Regular School Year Begins

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2026

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

September 2025

1 Labor Day

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

March 2026

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

October 2025

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2026

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

November 2025

27 Thanksgiving

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2026

22 Regular School Year Ends
25 Memorial Day
26 Summer School Session Begins (Ends August 7)

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

December 2025

24 Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June 2026

SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Heartspring School Leadership and Team Members

The Heartspring School Leadership Team consists of:

- Superintendent – Dr. Mike Bonner
- Director of Admissions - Cara Rapp
- Special Education – Jennifer Daugherty
- Residential Services Director – Riccardo Harris
- Student Enrichment Director – Darrell Daugherty
- Nursing Director – Erin Ludwig
- Residential Services Managers – Tara Dockter, Rachel Willard-Waterhouse
- Interdisciplinary Therapies Manager – Ashly Elliott, CCC-SLP
- Behavior Services Manager – Hannah Harvey

Your child’s team consists of:

- Classroom Staff (Certified Special Education Teachers and Paraeducators)
- A Behavioral Services team member (Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA))
- Speech Language Pathologist (as per IEP)
- Occupational Therapist (as per IEP)
- Physical Therapist (as per IEP)
- Medical Team Member (M.D-Psychiatrist, Neurologist, Pediatrician, APRN, RN)
- Residential Staff (Home Supervisor (HS), Home Assistant Supervisor (HAS), Direct Support Professional (DSP))

Hiring and Training of Heartspring Staff

To be employed at Heartspring, all employees must pass several pre-employment requirements. In addition to a successful interview, they must also pass the following background checks:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Kansas Bureau of Investigation
- Registered sex offender registry
- Kansas Department of Children and Families
- A minimum of two references

At Heartspring we hold our staff to the highest standards of care in the industry and therefore they are required to participate in an extensive orientation and training class. Comprehensive training modules include, but are not limited to:

- Student Rights
- Dignity & Respect of Students
- Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation Training
- Policies and Procedures
- Implementing Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- Data Collection and Reporting

- Emergency Safety Intervention Training, utilizing Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NCI)
- Medical Orientation, including CPR and First Aid
- Driver's Safety Training
- Speech & Communication Overview
- Accident Prevention
- Environmental Observations

Instructional Design, Delivery, and Curriculum

Classrooms

We have the capacity for up to 10 special education classrooms. Each classroom is staffed by a certified special education teacher. The average class size is eight students, depending on the student's age, abilities, needs, and classroom management considerations. The therapeutic school provides Student Enrichment Programs including but not limited to the Heartspring Vocational Training Program, Adaptive Physical Education (APE), Art, and Music.

The specific number of paraeducators in each classroom is determined by the clinical and/or educational needs of each student and/or the overall environment.

- This is done via completing a Clinical Staffing Tier Assessment by the Behavior or Autism Specialist/BCBA on the student's team.
- There are times when a classroom could be staffed at (or near) a 1:1 staff/student ratio for a period of time to provide additional direct instructional supports, behavioral accommodations, etc.
- There may also be circumstances when the Heartspring team might recommend the classroom be staffed with one (or more) staff member(s) fewer than the number of students. (Example: seven staff with eight students)
- The overall goal is to provide greater opportunities to increase independence whenever possible.

The Comprehensive Intake Report

During the first 60-days of enrollment, team members will be assessing your child in all domains and then writing a comprehensive Intake Report. This report will provide current information, and a baseline, for the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Heartspring School complies with all state and federal guidelines related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004. Heartspring staff will work with you and your school district in developing an IEP on an annual basis that:

- Describes your child's current level of educational performance
- Identifies specific goals and objectives
- Lists special education and related services necessary to support the child
- Itemizes special considerations and conditions for implementation of the IEP

This annual meeting will also discuss transitioning from Heartspring and what your child must learn, when discussing success in this next environment. This environment may be the family home and local school district, an adult setting, a less intensive residential school program, or other, as appropriate.

Parent training(s) are recommended by your child's IEP team members. Specific training will be based on your needs/requests and will be individualized to your child.

Parental rights are not compromised by placing a child at Heartspring. The parent has the right to contact their school district and call for an IEP meeting at any time to discuss the nature or intent of the child's services or program implementation.

Curriculum

The Heartspring classroom curriculum addresses three distinct domains of study for your child. These three domains are:

- 1. Standards Based Academics**
- 2. Heartspring Vocational Training Program**
- 3. Transition Life Skills and Career (TLC) Program**

1. Standards Based Academics

Heartspring utilizes standards-based curriculum to deliver specialized instruction in all academic areas. Heartspring curriculum aligns to content area standards, specifically the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards approved by the Kansas State Department of Education. Standards based curriculum is available for all skill levels, including students who are performing at grade level and those with the most significant cognitive delays. Evidence based instructional materials and intervention programs may include, but are not limited to:

- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys (English Language Arts)
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt GO Math
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt HSP Science
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Social Studies
- Unique Learning Systems and News-2-You
- Lexia Reading
- ableNet Math and MEville to WEville Literacy Program
- AGS and Pacemaker textbook programs for ELA, math, science and social studies

LEAs are encouraged to provide the standards-based core/general education or alternate curriculum used by that LEA if they require that curriculum to be delivered at Heartspring.

2. Heartspring Vocational Training Program

Heartspring offers the vocational training program for students of transition age, those 14 years and older. This program is designed to prepare all Heartspring students with skills that could lead to employment opportunities. Classroom teachers provide pre-vocational skill training to build prerequisite skills for the vocational training program. Upon enrollment in the program, students receive introductory, technical, and application level instruction following the Kansas Career Pathways model. This instruction occurs in the Vocational Training classroom and through school based and community-based training opportunities. Specific program outcomes and individual skills checklists are measured for each student in each course. The goal of the program is that every Heartspring student has a minimum of one repeatable skill that they can use to become employed as an adult. Current course offerings include: Clerical Skills, Domestic Skills, Food Service, Landscape and Gardening, Packaging and Assembly, Warehouse and Stocking as well as school

based and community-based internships for each course.

3. Transition Life Skills and Career (TLC) Program

The Transition Life Skills and Career (TLC) Program at Heartspring is an opportunity for extended learning for students who need specialized instruction past the 12th grade. These students require further instruction to learn skills for greater independence in adulthood. Each student's IEP team has determined that the student would benefit from extended learning and continued instruction on IEP goals and transition skills in order to achieve their post-secondary goals. Evidence based instructional materials and intervention programs are provided through the Unique Learning System.

Additional Program Components

Social Emotional Character Development

Kansas is the first state to develop Social Emotional Character Development (SECD) standards. These standards are designed to help keep children safe and successful while developing their academic and life skills. The purpose of the SECD Development Standards is to provide a framework for integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) with character development so that students will learn, practice and model essential personal life habits that contribute to academic, vocational and personal success. What we know about the culture of autism tells us that students on the autism spectrum have difficulty with attention, communication, social interactions, self-regulation and other social emotional skills. Therefore, we provide need explicit instruction of social and behavioral skills.

Heartspring utilizes curriculum specifically designed for students with autism to teach these standards. Teaching materials are differentiated to accommodate all levels of learners while teaching social and behavioral skills. The curriculum is taught directly and proactively so that students can learn skills outside of situations that cause them stress or trigger maladaptive behaviors. The social skills, coping skills and calming strategies students learn can then be incorporated into their daily lives.

Individual Plan of Study

The Kansas State Board of Education has set an Individual Plan of Study (IPS) for every student beginning in the middle grades as one of their State Student Success Outcomes to help students plan for success after high school. An (IPS) is both the actual product a student develops and a process the school implements to guide students in developing their unique IPS. The foundational elements of the individual plan of study are the career interests identified through a career interest survey or assessment. Other parts of the IPS include graduation requirements, projected coursework for the student's educational and career goals, and developmentally-appropriate, work-based learning experiences. An IPS is developed cooperatively with the student, the Heartspring team, and family members. The student's teacher sends the plan electronically to be reviewed at least twice annually and is revised as needed.

Paraeducator Rotation

For the best interest of your child, each classroom has a system in place for paraeducator (para) rotation. It is important to decrease a child's dependency on any one adult. Therefore, your child

will receive the level of instruction that he/she needs to gain skills and independence, but this instruction may not always be delivered by the same staff member.

Student Schedules

An individualized schedule will be designed for your child. This schedule reflects the daily instructional program and activities, and includes references to your child's IEP goals and objectives. Upon enrollment, a copy of your child's initial schedule will be provided to you. Please contact your child's teacher for an updated schedule, as appropriate.

Teaching Strategies

A variety of research-based and evidence-based practices are utilized to deliver instruction at the Heartspring Therapeutic School.

- Structured Teaching is utilized by our teachers and residential staff to deliver quality instruction and best practices.
- Visual schedules and work systems are used to support your child's learning needs. These are used consistently to support independence in making transitions and completing assigned work.
- Social stories, power cards, or other visuals, are written as needed to assist your child with changes in his/her environment.
- The classrooms are structured physically so that each area of the room is clearly defined.
- Materials are visually organized in a top to bottom or left to right sequence.
- A visual schedule is used throughout the day to help your child understand expectations and what comes next.
- A structured work system is used in the school to support your child during direct instruction, independent work, group times, and community-based instruction. The work system is used to visually/physically indicate how much work, what work, when the work is finished, and what comes next. This visual system facilitates task completion during independent work times within the classroom setting.
- Choice boards and/or a communication book/device will be used as appropriate, so that your child can choose a preferred activity for break time. Opportunities for structured leisure are provided throughout the day.

Speech and Occupational Therapies

In Heartspring's Therapeutic School, we embed therapy into every aspect of the child's life. From sunrise to sundown, our students have natural and planned speech and occupational therapy opportunities with both trained professionals and individuals in the community. Our speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and assistants (SLPAs), as well as our occupational therapists (OTs), work alternate hours in order to be available in both the group homes and classrooms throughout the seven-day week, in order to provide consistency for programming across all environments.

Heartspring therapists train the paraeducators on each student's goals and plans. This means our students work on their skills not only with one of the therapists or assistants, but throughout the day in the classroom and at home with all direct care staff. Our therapists also work together on interdisciplinary teams for unique group activities to target a variety of skills.

Students may receive direct and/or indirect therapy services. The therapies a student receives and the number of minutes per week are tailored to each individual student and driven by the IEP.

Direct Therapy

Students work one-on-one or in small groups with a therapist or assistant. Direct therapy opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- One-on-one therapy sessions led by a speech-language or occupational therapist
- Small group therapy sessions with other students
- Large groups, such as cooking and art groups
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) System instruction

Indirect Therapy

Indirect therapy opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Therapist-led training sessions for paraeducators
- AAC device updates and maintenance
- Creating visual supports
- Collaboration with the student's team for ongoing needs across environments
- Observations of students in the environment
- Goals & programming worked on daily in the home and classroom environments by the paraeducator staff.

A Note from the Speech Department

There has been controversy in the media around two communication treatment approaches: Facilitated Communication (FC) and Rapid Prompting Method (RPM). These two are similar treatment approaches. FC involves a therapist or facilitator providing physical support by touching or holding the communicator's hand, arm, or shoulder while a message is typed on a letter board or keyboard. RPM involves a facilitator holding and moving the letter board while the communicator is asked to point to letters and spell words.

The Speech Therapy Team at the Heartspring Therapeutic School have researched these two methods, and two attended a lecture about the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)'s position statement on RPM and FC. (ASHA is the governing organization for speech-language pathologists). It is important to note that ASHA rarely releases position statements regarding treatment methods. In fact, they have only released three – two of which were regarding RPM and FC. Prior to the release of their position statement, an ASHA committee conducted an extensive research review regarding the evidence base for these treatment methods.

Facilitated Communication

ASHA released the following statement in regard to FC:

"It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) that Facilitated Communication (FC) is a discredited technique that should not be used."

Heartspring Therapeutic School will not be implementing Facilitated Communication as a therapeutic approach to communication, due to the strong position statement released by ASHA, citing the discreditation of FC.

Rapid Prompting Method

ASHA released the following statement in regard to RPM:

"It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) that use of the Rapid Prompting Method (RPM) is not recommended because of prompt dependency and the lack of scientific validity. Furthermore, information obtained through the use of RPM should not be assumed to be the communication of the person with a disability."

Heartspring Therapeutic School has two primary concerns regarding RPM. First, RPM is not an evidence-based practice, as there is no scientific research available to indicate that this method is effective. While there have been anecdotal accounts to support its effects, there is more compelling scientific evidence to support that the RPM messages are actually messages produced by the facilitator, not the individual with a disability/communicator. This evidence comes from multiple double-blind studies that have been completed. In these studies, the facilitator and the communicator are both shown different pictures, but they are not able to see each other's picture. Then, when asked to indicate what they saw, the message produced was the item that was seen by the facilitator, not the communicator. This would indicate that the facilitator has more control and input into the message than the communicator.

Second, we are concerned that within the technique described there is no procedure to fade prompting (i.e., prompting is part of the protocol) with RPM, which creates prompt dependency from the communicator. Because communication with RPM is facilitator-dependent, it denies the individual the right of communication. One of Heartspring's primary goals with our students is to teach communicative independence as much as possible. We do this through a prompting hierarchy with the end goal of fading the prompt so that the individual may be more independent in their communication.

Due to the current information available, and the position statement from ASHA, Heartspring Therapeutic School will not utilize the Rapid Prompting Method (RPM).

We are always willing to look into and research new treatment methods; however, Heartspring's therapeutic model supports only using evidence-based practices so that we can provide the best interventions for our students. If you have questions regarding these, or other, methodologies, please follow up with your child's speech-language pathologist.

An Integrated Approach to Service Delivery

Related services will be provided to your child, within the environment(s) where the skills he or she needs to learn will be naturally utilized. Traditional "pull-out" therapy may be utilized for your child, if the IEP identifies that it is needed. For example, if a student needs to work on using utensils while eating, the occupational therapist (OT) may work with your child in the cafeteria during lunchtime, in the group home during dinnertime, or in the classroom during snack time.

All related service providers attempt to incorporate the salient instructional components of other domains when providing therapy. For example, if the speech-language pathologist (SLP) is working with the student on communication skills for a snack routine, the SLP will support the work of the OT by helping the student with their utensil use as well.

Community-Based Instruction

Community-based instruction is the practice of teaching functional life skills within the natural community environment in which the need for the skills will most likely occur. When it is appropriate, your child will have opportunities to leave the campus to practice vocational, recreation/leisure, and general community-functioning skills.

The School Day

The Heartspring Therapeutic School operates Monday - Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:25 p.m.

The School Year

School is in session 52 weeks per year. Calendars for each school year are produced and distributed to parents. Some families may choose to bring their child home for a few days or up to two weeks at a time for a winter or summer break.

You may want to talk to your child's team for recommendations regarding his/her return home during one or both of these times, to practice generalizing skills from Heartspring, to the family home. Dependent on staff availability, Heartspring may be able to assist in transportation arrangements to/from the airport in Wichita. This will be dependent on numerous factors and may be limited to certain dates or times of the day. Heartspring is unable to provide staff escort services to/from home and Heartspring.

If your child's team has any travel and/or other safety concerns, then the recommendation may be for your child to remain on the Heartspring campus. If this occurs, then your child will attend school, following the Heartspring School Calendar.

Complaint Procedure

If you have concerns about your experience at Heartspring, there are multiple ways to contact us. You may contact the front desk at 316-634-8710 and ask to be directed to a member of your child's team, a Department Director, the Superintendent, and/or the Chief Compliance Officer. A written complaint can be emailed to complaints@heartspring.org. We take all concerns and complaints seriously. Our complete Complaint Policy, including our External Complaint Form, can be found in the Policies Section of our website.

Residential Services

Group Homes

The Heartspring Therapeutic School has nine group homes. There are seven on-campus homes and two off-campus homes. All new students begin in a home that is on-campus. It is very rare for two students to share a bedroom; however, if appropriate, this may be considered.

- Six of the on-campus group homes (G1 - G6) have the capacity to house eight students, each in private bedrooms.
- One on-campus group home (G10) has the capacity to house 12 students, each in private bedrooms.
- The off-campus group homes (G8, G9) have the capacity to house four students in private bedrooms.

Each group home is staffed by a Home Supervisor, two Home Assistant Supervisors, and additional residential paraeducators. Staffing ratios in the group homes are similar to the classrooms and are appropriately staffed to meet the needs of all students. There may be occasional times when 1:1 staffing might be provided. However, this is not ongoing and based on various factors, therefore this is not always provided.

Student Schedules

An individualized schedule will be designed for your child in the group home. This schedule reflects the daily instructional program and activities, and includes references to your child's IEP goals and objectives. Your child will also learn daily living skills in the home and be required to complete household chores. Please contact your child's Home Supervisor for an updated schedule, as appropriate.

Student Moves

The Heartspring School Leadership Team regularly looks at the placement of each student served. As some students transition out of Heartspring and new students enroll, the dynamics and needs of the students in a particular classroom and/or group home can change. Therefore, it may be necessary to occasionally move a student from one home or classroom to another. This is due to many various factors and decisions are not made lightly. Input from your child's team is considered and parental input is welcome. The Heartspring School Leadership Team will consider this input, but decisions will be based on the overall best interests of all Heartspring students.

Student Absences (vacations and illness)

Students attending the Heartspring School receive year-round programming. Classroom and therapy programs are based on the student's needs within a structured, 52-week program. Fees charged for this structured program are based on the cost of making resources, services, and materials available, and is ongoing, regardless of whether the student is present. If your child's local school district is involved in placement at Heartspring, we may be required to provide attendance information if a student is absent for 3 or more consecutive school days.

Other Student Absences

Some families choose to withdraw their child during the school year for family vacations, medical appointments, or other events. These absences may range from two or three days to several weeks in duration. Parents wishing to do this should notify their child's team and their school district or other agencies involved with funding (if applicable). The parents are responsible for arrangements and/or transportation of the student for these non-Heartspring scheduled breaks.



Behavioral Services

Behavioral Services

The Heartspring Therapeutic School is committed to the educational, social, and personal development of every child served. Challenging and interfering behaviors impede learning in educational, social, and functional living skills that are necessary for a high quality of life. The purpose of behavior programming at Heartspring is to reduce a child's challenging behaviors by teaching replacement behaviors that are socially appropriate, while also teaching essential functional skills. Learning these new skills, while decreasing inappropriate behaviors, will help set a child up for a successful future.

Paraeducators are trained in the basics of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) which is embedded into the students' day-to-day activities and programming. Heartspring utilizes an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates recommendations from Certified Autism Specialists, Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA), Speech-Language Pathologists, and Occupational Therapists, and nursing to provide comprehensive programming.

Delivery of Services

All staff working with your child will be trained prior to enrollment based on information learned through reviewing your child's files as well as information learned from the Intake Meeting and any other relevant sources.

Statement of Philosophy

The Heartspring Therapeutic School philosophy with regards to challenging and interfering behavior is to teach the child appropriate, functionally equivalent replacement behaviors that can be generalized to new environments and people, creating long-lasting skills and development. This philosophy is built on principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). Programs begin with the most positive and least restrictive procedures possible and may become more restrictive if necessary to ensure the safety of your child and others.

All staff are trained in Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NCI) in order to maintain safety during a crisis behavior. The core philosophy of NCI training reminds us to respect the worth and dignity of all people at all times. Putting care, welfare, safety and security into action during moments of chaos and crisis can make an enormous difference in everyone's lives and help to preserve the professional bond with those that we care for.

Emergency Safety Interventions for Crisis Behaviors

The ability to prevent and/or positively manage disruptive, challenging, or aggressive behavior is essential for all staff working directly with students. Emergency Safety Interventions (ESI) including physical restraint may be implemented during times when a child is engaging in a behavior that puts him/herself or others in imminent danger and all other de-escalation attempts are unsuccessful.

Staff are required to use the least restrictive ESI possible to prevent the child from hurting him/herself or others. Heartspring will follow Kansas Emergency Safety Intervention regulations or the child's home state if those regulations are more restrictive.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Program (NCI)

This program is also referred to as CPI and is the physical management system utilized at Heartspring. NCI is a comprehensive prevention and intervention program designed to promote staff knowledge and competence in preventing, defusing, and managing emergency crisis situations. Reflecting current practices, NCI provides a continuum of interventions built upon a least restrictive philosophical approach. There is a strong focus on positive and preventative measures to reduce and eliminate the need to utilize physical restraint.

All staff working with students are trained and certified in NCI policies and practices annually. All uses of physical restraint are documented in writing and are reviewed by supervisors, ABA staff, and school administration personnel. Parents and school districts are notified within 24-48 hours per Kansas ESI regulations.

For additional details, please see the policies Emergency Safety Interventions policy found in the Policies section of this Handbook.

Psychotropic Medication

The medical staff and Certified Autism Specialist/BCBA collaborate with Heartspring's prescribing physician to monitor the use of any psychotropic medication. Any recommended changes to medication(s) are based on behavior data and in collaboration with parents.

Heartspring does not use medication as chemical restraint.

Behavior Intervention Services

Behavior intervention procedures are designed to produce long-term changes in behavior. These procedures are written in the Student Information Page (SIP), and developed to increase positive replacement behaviors and to decrease the need for challenging behaviors that directly interfere with instructional opportunities. The philosophy of Heartspring is to use the least restrictive procedures necessary to reduce challenging and interfering behaviors.

Heartspring uses evidence-based practices for behavioral services and plans are created or reviewed by a BCBA. BCBAs or Certified Autism Specialists conduct Functional Behavior Assessments as needed to determine why the behavior occurs, and to ensure appropriate function-based treatment for lasting behavior change. Most behavior services are provided indirectly in the form of staff training, modeling for staff and providing feedback, and observations of the child across environments.

Prohibited Practices at Heartspring

Heartspring implements therapeutic, evidence-based practices and does not tolerate aversive or punitive actions by staff including but not limited to: threatening, spanking, or any other techniques designed to control behavior by pain; denying meals and other basic rights such as a bed, water, clothing, shelter, toilet or shower; denying contact with persons outside of Heartspring (except in specific situations in which contact is restricted by law in cases of abuse or neglect); abusive language; bullying verbal aggression aversive conditioning; and the use of prone or supine physical restraints.

Heartspring does not tolerate any child being exploited in any way.

Heartspring takes the safety and well-being of all students very seriously. Ongoing and continual training is provided to employees at all levels of the organization to ensure that each student is

treated with dignity and respect, and that abuse, neglect, and exploitation is prevented. We have a comprehensive and thorough reporting system for any suspected concerns regarding a child's dignity and respect, and/or abuse, neglect, and exploitation. This initiates an immediate internal investigation process to ensure students are safe. Additionally, reporting to the Kansas Department for Children and Families may also occur, prompting an external investigation process as well. Parents/guardians are notified of any investigations concerning their child, including the outcome of the investigation.



Heartspring School Medical Office

Heartspring School Medical Office

The Heartspring School Medical Office provides 24-hour healthcare for all of Heartspring's residential students. Medical personnel are available on campus during daytime, evening, and weekend hours throughout the week, and are available 24-hours a day by phone. The Heartspring School Medical Office staff is also available to provide emergency care for day-only students.

Medical Office Staff:

- Nursing Director
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)
- Registered Nurses (RN)
- Certified Medication Aide (CMA)

Consulting Physicians:

- Pediatrician
- Pediatric Neurologist
- Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist
- Additional consultations and outside services are arranged by the Heartspring Medical Office in accordance with each child's medical needs.

Heartspring's Pediatrician becomes the primary care physician for residential students and is on campus at least weekly and available 24-hours a day by phone.

Costs for Services

Basic healthcare and on-campus treatment/procedures are included within Heartspring's tuition/fees. This means that parents/guardians are not charged an "office-visit" fee when their child sees any of the contracted providers mentioned above.

A copy of each child's health insurance card, prescription coverage card, and any other pertinent insurance information must be provided to the Admissions Team PRIOR to enrollment. Admissions Team personnel will then provide this information to the Heartspring Medical Office. Any delays in receiving insurance information may cause additional out-of-pocket fees for the family.

For any child who enrolls and only has a state Medicaid insurance plan - please communicate this to the Admissions Team. This will potentially cause out-of-pocket expenses.

Any off-campus medical procedures or appointments would be billed to the parent/guardian. The provider may bill insurance as appropriate. Parent/guardians would then be responsible for any additional out-of-pocket expenses, co-pays, deductibles, etc. similar to if the child were living at home. In the event that a child needs to go off-campus for an outside specialist, we would coordinate the preparations and accommodations necessary in accordance with the physician's orders. Heartspring will provide the outside physicians/specialists with the child/family's insurance information. This is done in advance whenever possible (with the exception of an emergency), so that any expected associated costs can be communicated to the parent/guardian.

For additional details, please thoroughly read the enrollment paperwork document titled "Insurance Coverage & Out of Pocket Expenses". This form must be completed as part of the Enrollment Paperwork.

Health Assessments

Upon admission to Heartspring, the Pediatrician and/or APRN will provide the initial health assessment for all residential students. This will include a comprehensive review of the student's medical history including previous documents from other health care providers, review of medications, and an initial physical exam. The medical personnel of the Heartspring School Medical Office will provide ongoing assessments on an annual basis and as needed, indicated by the individual's health plan or by signs or symptoms of illness. A copy of these assessments will be maintained in the child's medical chart.

Lab Work

There is lab work required for admission into Heartspring. This will be completed as prescribed by the medical provider. All lab work is based on each individual child and often depends on prescribed medications. Whenever possible, laboratory blood draws will be performed in the Heartspring School Medical Office. This is conducted by our Heartspring licensed professionals who have experience working with individuals who have special needs. All students will be provided with support in order to have lab work drawn on campus, without the use of sedation. Lab reports will be reviewed by medical personnel and the Pediatrician or appropriate physician for follow up. Parents will be notified of any abnormal results. Parents are responsible for the cost of lab work after it has been processed through insurance.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

Vision screenings will be provided on campus annually by licensed personnel. If necessary, an advanced vision exam will be arranged by the Heartspring School Medical Office with an outside provider.

Hearing screenings will be provided on campus by our Heartspring RNs every 3 years or as needed. If necessary, a hearing evaluation will be coordinated by the Heartspring School Medical Office with a Audiologist.

Dental Cleanings & Exams

Heartspring licensing requires a current dental exam to be on file. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) defines a current dental exam as within the last six months, if sedation is not required, and within the last 12 months if sedation is required.

Dental cleanings and exams will be arranged by the Heartspring School Medical Office with a local dentist office based on the child's age, needs, insurance, etc. If sedation is needed, this would also be arranged through the Heartspring School Medical Office. For information about specific providers, please contact the Medical Office.

For additional details, please thoroughly read the enrollment paperwork document titled "Insurance Coverage & Out of Pocket Expenses". This form must be completed as part of the Enrollment Paperwork.

A medical financial assistance application can be provided at the request of the parent/guardian, for medical or dental expenses that are beyond the families means to cover. This is a needs-based application and financial information is required for this.

Immunizations

Immunization requirements and recommendations are based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the consensus of the Kansas Governor's Child Health Advisory Committee Immunization Workgroup. Students attending school in Kansas must have current immunization records upon admission to Heartspring. If necessary, the Heartspring Medical School Office can assist with providing the required immunizations.

Immunizations are offered through the Heartspring Medical Office through either the Sedgwick County Health Department, or our Medical Team. If administered through the Health Department, insurance may be billed. If through our Medical Team, we would then bill the parent/guardian.

Immunizations are required for the health and safety of everyone we serve at Heartspring. We serve a highly specialized population of individuals, sometimes with weakened immune systems, or who are susceptible to infections. Therefore, without current immunizations on file, or without a plan to become fully immunized while at Heartspring, we cannot proceed with enrollment. *If your child is not vaccinated per our policies, please ask to discuss optional measures with our Medical Team.*

Kansas requires the following immunizations:

- DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis): 5 doses required
- IPV (Polio): 4 doses
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella): 2 doses
- Varicella (Chickenpox): 2 doses
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses
- MCV4 (Meningococcal): 2 doses
- Hepatitis A: 2 doses
- *Recommended:* Human Papillomavirus (HPV), COVID-19 vaccine, Flu vaccine

Scheduling an Appointment with a Physician or Nurse Practitioner

To make an appointment, please follow the below steps:

1. Call or email your child's assigned RN.
2. Depending on the purpose of your request, the RN may recommend an appointment with either the staff Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) or medical doctor as appropriate.

Use of Medications to Alter Behavior

Behavior-modifying medications do not cure behavior problems. As with all medication, behavior-modifying medications do pose a risk for adverse side effects. All medication prescribed by Heartspring's Pediatrician or Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist will be prescribed in order that the benefit of the medication outweighs the adverse side effects. A child displaying adverse side effects from a medication will be assessed immediately by medical personnel and appropriate action will be taken.

In conjunction with pharmaceutical management of behavior, Heartspring will provide educational and psychological treatment to teach socially appropriate behaviors. This training is designed to modify behaviors and, subsequently, sometimes allow for a decrease and/or an elimination of behavior modifying medication. It is the goal of Heartspring to place each student on the lowest effective dose of behavior-modifying medication.

All medication administered at Heartspring will be prescribed by the Pediatrician, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, or by an approved consulting physician.

Medication Expenses and Pharmacy Information

If the child has insurance, that information will be provided to the contracting pharmacy. All medication must be dispensed through Heartspring's contracted pharmacy to ensure continuity of care, and to reduce the risk of medication errors. The child's parent/guardian will be financially responsible for any medications and/or copays that are not covered by insurance.

Please note: If the pharmacy does not receive timely payments, the pharmacy has the right to refuse the dispensing of medications until the balance is paid. This may result in Heartspring's inability to manage the medication needs of your child, and therefore ultimately jeopardizing the continuation of services at Heartspring.

The contracting pharmacy is:
Golden Plains Pharmacy Service
511 State Street
Augusta, KS 67010
(316) 775-5210

After enrollment, the child's parent/guardian is responsible for providing any updated information or changes regarding health insurance information, prescription coverage, etc. to the Medical Office.

Behavior-modifying medications include stimulants, antipsychotics, antidepressants, and other behavior-modifying drugs prescribed for children and adults with behavioral disorders.

Any time a behavior-modifying medication is being initiated, changed, decreased, or stopped, parents will be provided with the rationale and details regarding the medication, including dosage information, desired results, and possible adverse side effects. Parental consent will be obtained prior to implementation.

The Heartspring School Medical Office will work with the Behavior Services Department and the student's team to determine the effectiveness of the medication, based on quantitative data and medical assessments.

Medications *may* be prescribed by our staff for the purpose reducing anxiety or stress during travel or medical procedures when appropriate. The risks and benefits of this will be discussed with parents and/or guardians, prior to use.

The use of *emergency* medications for the purpose of managing difficult episodes of behavior (also known as PRN behavior medication) will be utilized at Heartspring as appropriate. Chemical restraint will not be utilized at Heartspring.

The Administration of Medications

Medications are administered per Guidelines for Medication Administration in Kansas Schools. Whenever possible, daily medications will be administered through The Heartspring School Medical Office. Medications are dispensed to Heartspring using bubble packaging. This is a packaging system that organizes all medications by day and time of dose. Medications are often administered by either a RN or CMA. Additionally, designated residential and school staff are trained to administer medications.

Non-traditional and Alternative Medical Treatments

The medical team at Heartspring does not prescribe or continue any drug, dietary supplement, purported therapeutic substance, or procedure that is not scientifically validated for the intended purpose. We will only be able to continue and prescribe evidence based approved medications. As standard procedure, the medical team reviews each student's treatments and medications to determine what we are able to continue. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the medical team.

Examples of medications/treatments that would be reviewed and likely discontinued (but ultimately on an individual basis and at the discretion of the medical team) are:

- Daily antibiotics or IV protocols for PANS/PANDAS diagnosis
- Prescribing and administration of THC/CBD/RSO supplements/oils/topicals/edibles, etc.
- Prescribing and administration of medical marijuana or cannabis including oils/topicals/edibles, etc.
- Other homeopathic treatments that may not be mentioned here

For questions about this, please contact the Admissions Department who can ensure that this is thoroughly discussed with you and the Medical Office.

Emergency Care Information

In the event that your child may experience an illness or injury that requires immediate/emergency medical treatment, Heartspring RN is on-call 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year. If a situation is emergent, staff are instructed to call 911 prior to alerting the RN on-call. If a situation does not appear to require immediate medical care, staff will notify the RN on-call for guidance. The RN on-call, will report to campus in order to provide on-site instruction for the best possible treatment and notify EMS as appropriate.

If your child is taken off-campus for a minor or major emergency, parents will be contacted by a staff member as soon as possible, following the initial treatment at the immediate/emergency care room.

In the event of a minor emergency, we typically utilize:

Hylo East
www.hyloheals.com
5838 E. Central Avenue
Wichita, KS 67208
Phone: 316-440-4595
Hours: Monday-Saturday 9 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Sunday 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.
(5.1 miles from Heartspring)

More severe emergencies and/or extended hours:

Wesley Woodlawn Hospital & ER
2610 N Woodlawn St, Wichita, KS 67220
<http://wesleymc.com/location/wesley-woodlawn-hospital>
Phone: 316-858-2610
Hours: *Open 24-hours*
(2.2 miles from Heartspring)

Closest Pharmacy:

Walgreens Store #5769
3333 East Central Ave.
Wichita, KS 67208
Phone: 316-682-2999
Store Hours: Open 24-hours
Pharmacy Hours: Monday – Friday 8 am – 1:30 pm, 2 pm – 10 pm
Saturday 9 am – 1:30 pm, 2 pm – 6 pm
Sunday 10am – 1:30 pm, 2 pm – 6 pm
(6.7 miles from Heartspring)



Nutrition, Meals, and Cafeteria

Nutrition, Meals, and Cafeteria

Heartspring's food service program participates in the Kansas State Department of Education Child Nutrition & Wellness Program and meets all standards of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA).

The Heartspring Cafeteria provides all students with nutritious and quality meals. Cafeteria staff provides breakfast, lunch, and dinner throughout the entire year. The group home staff provides meals to students on holidays.

During the school day, students eat breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria, and enjoy their evening meals in the group homes, in more of a family-style setting. During the weekend, students eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the group homes.

The cafeteria does not provide meals on evenings and weekends to students who live in the off-campus group homes. Instead, students and staff in the off-campus group homes assist in preparing meals together.

A nurse from the Heartspring Medical Team will provide the Nutrition Services Manager with a meal plan for each student. Some students who enroll at Heartspring have very unique and special dietary requirements. For any student who requires a special/modified diet, this will be done, upon receiving documentation from a licensed healthcare professional, stating the medical recommendations for such diet (this may require receipt of lab work, or other medical documentation). The nursing staff will then write a medical statement for that student and provide this to the Nutrition Services Manager.

The cafeteria is inspected by the Kansas Department of Education and the Kansas Department of Agriculture. Reviews and inspections are submitted to the state. During the review and inspection process, the state monitors for compliance regarding regulations for the food preparation, nutrition and wellness, storage and food deliveries, reputable food vendors, sanitation, and ongoing staff education.

A nurse from the Heartspring Medical Team may recommend a low-calorie diet for a student who requires weight reduction or weight maintenance. The nurse will provide the Nutrition Services Manager with a meal plan indicating the weight restriction. The cafeteria manager then makes the appropriate changes for implementation.

A sample menu plan can be provided, upon request.

United States Department of Agriculture Nondiscrimination Statement

The USDA prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call 866-632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax 202-690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339; or 800-845-6136 (Spanish).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Parent Rights and Responsibilities

Parent Rights & Responsibilities

The process of educating a child with special needs away from his or her natural home environment can be challenging for the child, the parents, and the staff. In order for the Heartspring educational experience to be as effective as possible, a solid working relationship must be developed between the child, the parents, the staff of Heartspring, the sending school district, and any other agency (if applicable). This document is designed to communicate basic expectations that are necessary for the working relationship to exist and ultimately grow. This information is intended for parents, staff, and students, as appropriate. Should you have any questions regarding any aspect of this document, please contact a member of your child's team.

Parents are expected to read the "Parent Handbook" as a part of the admission's process to better understand Heartspring's programs and services and agree to work cooperatively and positively with the Heartspring Therapeutic School.

Informational Rights

- As a parent who has placed your child at Heartspring, you have the right to information in a clear and accurate manner. This information can include:
 - Diagnosis and evaluations.
 - Treatment information and alternative treatment possibilities when requested.
 - Summary of activities.
 - Medical Services.
 - Risks associated with any treatment or activity.
 - Access to the child's permanent record during any part of the business day.
 - The option to place your own statement in the file correcting errors perceived or providing any additional information desired.
 - Copies of any part of the file, at any time, at your expense.
 - Copies of each evaluation and Individualized Educational Program (IEP), plus a summary of other activities as part of the services normally provided.
 - Notification regarding allegations of abuse and neglect involving their child, incidents of physical management, or any other significant incident involving your child.
 - Notification of who to contact for specific information about who is "next in command," and how to reach these people.
 - Opportunities to speak to team members for information related to your child's program at Heartspring.

Team Member Rights

- As a member of our child's team, you may:
 - Provide information to the team to assist in making decisions regarding services for your child.
 - Work as a member of the team to arrive at decisions for your child.
 - Have meetings called to review the progress of your child.

- Exercise final judgment in circumstances involving potential physical hazards to your child, including activities like street crossing or bicycle riding.
- Decide if your child should take part in a certain therapy or learning program.
- Refuse any experimental treatment, without any loss of services. You have the right to expect full and complete information about the treatment to allow you to make an informed judgment to give or refuse consent.
- Refuse to have your child participate in research without any loss of services. You have the right to expect full and complete information about the treatment to allow you to make an informed judgment to give or refuse consent.

Privacy and Access Rights

- You may have all information about you and your family kept private except:
 - In emergencies, where that information may be needed for the child's health and safety
 - Where the law or specific regulations require or allow specific information to be divulged
 - When you have specifically given Heartspring written permission to divulge such information
 - When your child is placed at Heartspring pursuant to a contract with your local school district, or another funding agency, requiring information to be provided to them
- You may have time alone with your child. Exceptions to this right include restrictions ordered by the court or an officer of the court.
 - You may visit your child unannounced at any location where your child is receiving services from Heartspring. Exceptions to this include restrictions ordered by the court, an officer of the court, or by the Heartspring School Leadership Team.
- For the protection of your child's privacy, as well as the privacy of other children and our staff, Heartspring prohibits any videotaping during instructional time, without a prior request submitted to Heartspring. (Instructional time includes any time spent in the classroom and group home but does not include special events, dances, graduations, etc.) Please also note: No videotaping shall occur during crisis behaviors.
 - Additionally, to ensure the privacy of all students at Heartspring, only photos/videos of your own child are to be taken.

Service Rights

- Parents may expect planned programs to be carried out regularly.
- Parents may expect a safe and clean environment for their child and to be notified of any situations in which that environment has been compromised.
- Parents may expect all staff members to be trained in the procedures needed for your child's treatment and well-being. All staff members will be appropriately certified.
- Parents may expect their child to live in as normal an atmosphere as possible commensurate with obtaining the treatment needed. Your child will be allowed as much freedom as deemed safe and appropriate.
- Parents are encouraged to request training by Heartspring staff members to implement programs for their child. If additional materials/activities are necessary, parents may be expected to cover those costs.

Appeal Process

- If parents (or school/agency) are not satisfied or have concerns with a decision for services or programming regarding their child, and every effort has been made to work with the student's team to reach a resolution, the parents (or school/agency) may formally appeal this decision.
- This appeal should be made in writing (email is acceptable) and must include a description of the concern/decision, who they have attempted to address the concern/decision with, and the resolutions offered to date. This should be submitted to the appropriate department director.
- The department director will then submit this written appeal to the School Leadership Team for review. Feedback will be provided to the parents (or school/agency) within 10 working days.
- If the concern/decision is still unsatisfactory, a further appeal may be made to the Compliance Director.

Other Privileges

- You may consult with a private physician, psychologist, speech language pathologist, educator, or other professional for a second opinion, at your own expense. You may choose to share any appropriate recommendations or second opinions to the team for review.
- You may raise questions or complaints without fear of a reprisal.
- You will be treated with respect by all of the Heartspring staff members.
- You, as the child's legal guardian, may remove your child from Heartspring at any time unless there is an order from the court or an officer of the court preventing such removal.
- You may receive an administrative review if you feel that any of your rights or the rights of your child has been violated.

Financial Responsibilities

- You have the responsibility to financially provide for your child's needs promptly and completely. This can include uncovered medical expenses such as: medications, diapers/pull-ups, medical equipment, off campus co-pays, etc.
- In situations in which personal problems affect ability to pay, you have the obligation to contact the business office immediately.
- If you request additional services or documentation beyond those mutually negotiated, you must be prepared to pay the costs of those services.
- You must submit all forms, paperwork, payments, etc. within the designated timeline(s) or inform us when you will be able to do so.
- Heartspring reserves the right to hold you financially responsible for any damages incurred by your student.

Team Member Responsibilities

You have the responsibility to be an active member of your child's team by:

- Informing Heartspring promptly of any of the following:
 - Medication changes during a home visit
 - The results of any evaluations done by non-Heartspring professionals that might influence the services your child receives. Any evaluation will be included as part of team deliberations to determine appropriate services for the child.

- Significant illnesses or injuries prior to enrolling at Heartspring or while the child is home on breaks
- Changes in family structure, such as birth of a sibling, death, divorce, remarriage or separation
- Changes in, or additions of, insurance plans each time such occurs
- Changes in residential status, which might affect the program or funding of the child. This includes:
 - Moving into another school district within the state
 - Moving to another state
- Providing information for educational services:
 - Prior to the IEP, to aid in program planning, parents shall inform and provide recommendations that contribute to the development of an optimal IEP, both to the sending school district and Heartspring. This obligation does not restrict the parent from providing information at any other time, including the IEP meeting, itself.
 - Provide the team with your ideas for transitioning the child from Heartspring to another placement. These plans may change and evolve over time, to reflect an adult placement, a return to the family home, or some other alternative.
 - You are expected to take an active role in specifying the skills your child needs to make a successful transition and to identify those deficits that will actually impede such a transition.
 - You are expected to be actively involved with your local and/or state officials in identifying specific placements that are likely to be appropriate for your child as he/she develops the skills identified above.
- Parent training(s) are recommended by your child's IEP team members. Specific training will be based on your needs/requests and will be individualized to your child.
- You are expected to implement the behavioral program developed by the team to the best of your ability when your child is with you. Where you lack the skills, training is encouraged.
- You have the responsibility to treat staff with dignity and respect. This responsibility includes:
 - Not attempting to compromise the professional integrity of a staff member by asking that person to alter a document for reasons other than accuracy.
 - Not attempting to compromise the professional integrity of the team members by asking an individual to alter the program without consulting with other team members.
 - Not telephoning multiple staff members separately in an attempt to direct the decisions of the team as a whole.
 - Communicate with team members (both verbally and in writing) in a respectful manner, which would include refraining from use of inappropriate language, name-calling, and loud tone of voice.
- You are responsible for coordinating your first visit back to the Heartspring campus, following enrollment, through the Admissions Team.
- You are responsible for understanding and following all visitation guidelines; Including complying with the 4-hour visitation time limit (M-F: 2 hours in the classroom / 2 hours in the group home. Sat/Sun: 4 hours in the group home) when staying on campus with your child. Please see the 'Visiting Your Child' section of this Handbook, as well as review the Policy: *Communication and Visitation for Parents and Family Members*. This will provide

you with specific information and will be reviewed with you by someone from the Admissions Department, or another designated Heartspring team member upon your first visit back to campus. This time limit is to maintain the integrity and consistency of our programming for all students at Heartspring.

Other responsibilities

- Concerns regarding a staff member's actions should be relayed to that staff member's supervisor or appropriate director. (Using the team email address group is not appropriate method of communicating individual staff member concerns).
- Parental input is always valued and considered; however, parents must recognize that staffing assignments and classroom/home settings are decisions comprised solely of the Heartspring team members and the School Leadership Team.
- Outside of the President and CEO, or their designee, parents, and volunteers are prohibited from utilizing Heartspring letterhead and e-mail or otherwise identifying themselves as a representative of Heartspring during any political, government, or advocacy involvement without expressed consent from the President and CEO, or their designee.
- While each parent/guardian, volunteer, guest, or vendor may determine the political candidates or issues they will personally support, each must ensure that any support they provide is done as a private citizen.
 - Any parent/guardian, volunteer, guest, or vendor who violates this policy may be asked to leave the campus grounds and be subject to restricted access to the Heartspring campus and provision of current and/or future services at Heartspring. Additionally, existing and or future relationships with Heartspring could be affected.

Camera Surveillance

- Heartspring facilities are under 24-hour audio and video surveillance. By entering Heartspring, you agree to audio and video recording. In compliance with state guidelines, security camera footage may be obtained for internal purposes only. These recordings will not be released to the public and cannot be used for the purpose of parent/district/external observations.



Communication with your child and the team

Meetings

Your child's team at Heartspring will meet regularly to discuss a variety of issues and to monitor progress. The following is an overview of the frequently occurring meetings, to ensure that your child's needs are being met and that progress is being monitored:

Student Review Meetings

- Your child's team (consisting of the Special Education Teacher, Home Supervisor and/or the Home Assistant Supervisor, Certified Autism Specialist/BCBA, SLP, OT, and RN) meets weekly, for 15 minutes, to discuss programming and implementation.
- Parents are invited to participate in this meeting, via conference call during what we refer to as "call week". This occurs **one time per month** and is on a pre-set schedule.
- Your school district (and/or any other involved funding agency) may be interested/or required in participating as well.

IEP Meetings

- **"60-Day IEP"** – Approximately 60 days after enrollment, Heartspring will facilitate an IEP meeting with parents, the local education agencies (LEA), and any other agencies involved. All of the assessments, observations, and formal reports that have been conducted within the first 60 days will be presented and discussed, in order to develop a new IEP. Following this IEP meeting, formal progress reports will be provided on a monthly basis to parents, the LEA, and any other agencies involved.
- **Annual IEP** – The annual IEP meeting will be held at least every 12 months, based on when the 60-Day IEP meeting was held. The Heartspring School will work with the parents and the LEA, and any other agencies involved, to find a mutually agreeable time for the IEP. As is required by law, written notice of when this meeting is scheduled will be provided. Following this IEP meeting, progress reports will be provided on a monthly basis to parents, the LEA, and any other agencies involved.

Behavior Intervention Plan

If major changes are necessary in the child's Behavior Intervention Plan, then a meeting with the IEP team (including parents, the LEA, and any other agencies involved) will be scheduled.

Trainings

Throughout the year, your child's team members will provide trainings to the various staff members and paraeducators who will be working with your child, in all environments and throughout all shifts.

Receiving Updates on Your Child and Contacting Team Members

Phone Calls

Communication between parents and team members is important and we want you to contact your child's team as often as needed to ensure your questions and concerns are addressed.

Members of child's team will contact you with their questions and concerns..

Things to consider:

- Parents may call and speak to any team member. It's recommended that you email the team member in advance and schedule a block of time to do this.
- If a call is not scheduled in advance, this may be limited to 10-15 minutes, or you may not be able to reach anyone due to meetings, staff trainings, working directly with the students, etc.
- Please be respectful of the team members' time. Daily communication is extremely difficult and may not be possible.
- As your child acclimates and settles into a routine, it's natural for communication between parents and team members to decrease some.
- Parents are invited to participate in a monthly 15-minute conference call with the whole team. We call this "Call Week". This is a great opportunity to proactively take part in your child's programming. (This is the Student Review Call Week, mentioned under the "Meetings" section).

Emails

For the first 60 days, you may request for a team member to send you a weekly update, providing an overview of your child's programming, activities, information regarding: food intake, sleep history, etc. (or whatever information is important to you).

If you need to communicate something to ALL team members (such as visits, programming questions, etc.), you can email the entire team by using the assigned email address provided on the TEAM contacts sheet. (In most cases this will be lastnameteam@heartspring.org)

SeeSaw App

You will receive an email with a link to the SeeSaw App for classroom updates. This is the therapeutic school's primary source of communication with the families. We will send updates and permission forms via Seesaw. Additionally, our child's teacher will post pictures, classroom work, and other updates.

Monthly Progress Reports

After the 60-day IEP meeting is held and goals are updated, you will receive monthly progress reports on all IEP goals. This information is also provided to any other schools/agencies involved in the child's placement.

Other Communication

Parents are encouraged to reach out, as questions occur. Parents will absolutely be contacted if there are any out-of-the-ordinary events, such as behaviors requiring certain intervention strategies, changes to programming/plans, changes in health/medical issues, any new

developments, etc. Often, this means you may still be hearing from a member or two of your child's team on a regular basis.

You are also invited to utilize the team email address set-up specifically for your child, in order to reach all team members involved in the programming and care of your child. However, if you have a concern regarding one specific staff member, please email the appropriate supervisor/director individually and directly.

While questions or concerns about programming and services is natural, the team members working directly with your child are here to see your child succeed. **The best interaction between all team members is mutual respect and courtesy.** Should issues arise, that have not been resolved between you and the team members, it is expected that you, or the team members will elevate the discussion to the appropriate supervisor, director, or School Leadership Team member.

If communications (verbal or written) should ever become hostile or accusatory, or either party feels intimidated or bullied, the communication will be terminated at that time. A supervisor or designated point person will then become involved. If you ever have concerns that require contacting a director or School Leadership Team member, you have every right to request this.

In extreme situations, if communication and collaboration is becoming unproductive and problematic, a single point person may be assigned and all communication will then be routed through this one individual.

If problems with collaboration, communication, and/or respect continue to occur, a meeting will be scheduled with a School Leadership Team member, as well as the school district and/or any other funding agencies. This meeting will be for the purpose of discussing appropriate solutions in order to have successful collaboration. Ultimately, if this is not achievable, Heartspring may no longer be the appropriate placement for successfully serving your child.

Contacting Your Child at Heartspring

Phone Calls

In the evening, call the Group Home Kitchen Number (found on your TEAM Contact Sheet) and state your name (and your child's name), and ask to speak to your child or the staff member working with your child. Calls should be made during a time when it's least disruptive to your child's schedule/routine. (Shortly before bedtime is often ideal.) Please check with the Home Supervisor (HS) or Home Assistant Supervisor (HAS) for specifics. These calls are limited to 15 minutes in order to cause the least disruption to your child's schedule and provide time for other parents to call their child. You may include briefly speaking to a staff member regarding:

- How the child's day has gone during the staff member's current shift
- Overview of food intake/records
- Overview of behavior trackers/totals

Video calls

Video calls are available twice a week. Please schedule this directly with the HS or HAS. Again, this is limited to 15 minutes. This is specifically for the purpose of talking with and seeing your

child. If you have questions for staff, it's recommended to call them another time, so that you do not take away time from your child.

Email

If your child has some typing skills, emailing can be a great way to communicate with your him/her. If you want to email with your child, please provide the child's email address to the team. Your child's team may have a recommendation about the number of emails that can be successfully exchanged, based on your child's ability, and also his/her daily schedule of activities.



Visiting Your Child

Visiting Your Child

We want your child to have a great start! For that reason, **we strongly recommend no “physical” visitations within the first 30 days.** Your partnership and collaboration with us on this recommendation is very much appreciated. During this time, your child is adjusting to and learning his/her new home and classroom environments. However, after this acclimation period, you are welcome and encouraged to visit your child on campus. In order to make your visits successful for your child and your family, the following are some guidelines that we ask all parents to follow:

You may visit your child on the Heartspring campus up to 4-hours per day. During the weekday, this is split into two separate two-hour increments. (Two hours in the classroom and another two hours in the group home). On weekends, this is a **four-hour limit** in the group home. This applies only when visiting your child on our campus; this time-limit does not apply to time spent with your child off-campus, nor does it apply to time spent in meetings or trainings.

Your first visit back to campus

- Approximately 30 days after the enrollment date, we welcome your return to the campus to visit your child.
- **This first visit back will be coordinated through the Admissions Department** to help provide you, your child, and everyone else on the team a little structure. This will also hopefully help everyone develop appropriate expectations, in order to provide the best opportunities for success.
- This first visit will lay a foundation and an understanding for you to then coordinate any additional visits directly with your child’s team members.
- **For this first visit, we ask that parents/guardians arrive on the Heartspring campus on a weekday before 1:30pm.** Specific dates will be coordinated with the Admissions Team, based on your travel schedule.
- The Admissions Department will then arrange a few key meetings with various team members to begin your visit with the chance for questions to be answered, for parent training, to discuss the best opportunities for success, etc. This will also allow for any new family members who have not previously visited to have a tour of the campus.
- If appropriate, and upon request, any materials such as visual supports, social stories and schedules may be made/presented.
- After the meetings have concluded, you will be free to visit your child in the classroom and/or group home, based on what you and your child’s team feels is best.
- If available, you will also be provided with a key-fob to use for visitation during group home hours (evenings/weekends).
- Please make plans for any siblings or other children prior to arrival, as Heartspring staff cannot be responsible for their care. They should be closely supervised while on the Heartspring campus for their own safety.

Visiting the Classroom or Group Home (Do’s & Don’ts)

- **DO:**
 - **Allow staff to run programs and follow schedules.** Your participation in these activities is encouraged and observing these programs is valuable to your understanding of the skills that your child is learning.

- If you do choose to have your child spend time doing other activities with you, rather than following his/her schedule... Please inform your child's staff member of this so that your expectations are clear.
 - **Spend your child's break with him/her.** This can be very reinforcing for your child, and will help expectations to remain clear.
 - Interact with your child during other activities, both on-campus and off-campus.
 - Respect the privacy of other students and their families.
 - Please inform the staff member if you'll be taking pictures of your child, ensure no other students are included in your pictures.
- **DON'T:**
 - Bring outside food or drinks into the classroom and home settings without first discussing this with the team or supervisor. Some students are on specialized diets due to allergies, programming, etc. Outside food/drink items can also cause unnecessary behaviors with the other students in the environment.
 - Bring peanuts or peanut products onto the campus. **The Heartspring campus is a PEANUT FREE ZONE.**
 - Take pictures/videos of other students.
 - Read or ask about other student's programs, plans, data, etc. If you do see a program being used with another student and think it might help your child, ask your child's team for more information.
 - Share personal private information about other students and families with others.
 - Take videos of your child during instructional time, without a prior request submitted to Heartspring. This is for the protection of your child's privacy, as well as the privacy of other children and our staff. (Instructional time includes any time spent in the classroom and group home but does not include special events, dances, graduations, etc.) Please also note: No videotaping shall occur during crisis behaviors.
- **Visiting Hours** (Per the Policy: *Communication and Visitation for Parents and Family Members*)
 - WEEKDAY Visits:
 - Monday through Friday, the classrooms and group homes have a combined 4-hour visitation limit
 - Visitation hours during the weekdays in the classrooms begin at 9:00 AM and run until 3:00 PM.
 - Visitation hours for the group homes begin at 3:45 PM and run until 8:00 PM.
 - This combination gives the parents up to four hours per day of visitation time with their child. If parents desire more visitation time, they can take their child off-campus. Off-campus visits will not be accompanied by Heartspring staff.
 - WEEKEND Visits:
 - There is a 4-hour limit in the homes on Saturday and Sunday visits, including holidays. This time frame usually works best if divided into two 2-hour sessions.
 - The visitation time frame will be from 9:00 AM until 8:00 PM. This will allow students and staff to complete morning or bedtime routines.

- If parents want to observe their child's morning routine or bedtime routine, please make arrangements with the team in advance.
- Times away from your child, such as team meetings, scheduled meetings with a team member, administration, or parent training time, do not count toward the visitation hours.
- Any exceptions to visiting before or after these hours, must be arranged in advance, with the team. This will ensure that *all* students are able to participate in their morning and bedtime routines with appropriate privacy, and will provide our students with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Preparing for Future Visits

- For any future visits to Heartspring, while it's not required, we do ask that you please notify your child's team of your travel plans and any specific ideas you have for that visit. Reasons for this include:
 - Your child may have some special activities already planned with peers.
 - Materials such as visual supports, social stories and schedules could be made/presented to ensure a successful visit.
 - An unexpected arrival can create unnecessary disruptions and turmoil.
 - If requesting to meet with your child's team, this should be scheduled in advance to ensure availability and to avoid other potential conflicts. You can do this by emailing your child's team email address, or any team member on your child's team.
- It is also recommended that school absences not occur during visits as this is not conducive to long term learning.

Taking Your Child Off-Campus

- Please take your child off campus only when you are comfortable.
- Heartspring staff cannot accompany you off-campus. If you are concerned about your child's behavior in the community, please meet with your child's team prior to the activity.
- In the event of an emergency; you may contact Heartspring staff. Staff may come and meet you if this still leaves adequate staff coverage for the other remaining Heartspring students.
- If your child is then escorted back to the Heartspring campus, he/she will remain on campus for the rest of the day, and possibly (if there are continued safety/behavior concerns) for the rest of that visit.
- Please note: If your child struggles off-campus with you during the overnight hours (10:00pm – 7:00am), and you choose to bring him/her back to campus, **you MUST call the Third Shift Supervisor in advance** or while making your way back to campus. By not doing this, the safety of your child, as well as our other students may be jeopardized if your unexpected arrival takes away from appropriate supervision levels.
- Take necessary materials/resources with you when you leave campus with your child. Examples may include:
 - Medications
 - Communication book/device
 - Visual supports
 - Schedule/pictures
 - Social stories
- If you plan to take your child off campus during a time where meals and/or medications may be missed (especially for an overnight or a weekend visit) – you will need to

coordinate this in advance with the team, so that the Medical Office has adequate time to prepare medications and any other necessary materials.

Emergency Procedures

- In the event of any Acts of God including but not limited to epidemics, and pandemics, Heartspring has the right to modify visitation protocols and policies.
- Heartspring parents will be notified of any alterations to the visitation schedule and/or any additional requirements/protocols.

Parent Training

In order for your child to be successful at home, we recommend parents receive training on their child's programming while visiting, and we encourage you to ask questions if you don't understand something.

Ask to meet with someone from the team to understand your child's behavioral programming, communication system, etc. Consistency is such a huge factor in the success of the students at Heartspring. We want to make sure that each aspect of your child's life (classroom, group home, and family home) has the same structure and level of support.

Other Recommendations

Families are strongly encouraged to follow the recommendations of the student's team (if applicable) when planning visits to Heartspring. There may be times when the team may recommend that visits remain on-campus for safety/behavior (or other) reasons. The team may also provide additional recommendations based on the individual student/family needs.

It is recommended that students attend school while parents visit to limit program/routine disruptions and ensure that IEP services/minutes are provided as scheduled. This is not a mandatory visitation requirement but something that should be discussed with your child's teacher.

Parents should contact their child's Local Educational Agency (LEA) to make sure that they agree on the amount of time that their child is away from Heartspring.

Please see our Policy: *Communication and Visitation for Parents and Family Members*. This will provide you with specific visitation information.