



Our Mission

To provide a safe, nurturing, and therapeutic environment within the community that allows children to learn and develop the life skills necessary to return to their families and become productive members of the community.

Our Vision

Children should have the opportunity to “inherit tomorrow” by developing the skills necessary to function in a family or independently in the community.

Our Core Values

- Children are our top priority.
- Children deserve the opportunity to develop life skills in a safe, therapeutic environment within their home community.
- Children are responsible for their own behavior.
- We will advocate for children in all aspects of their lives.
- We will partner with others to provide optimal services to children.
- We will always look for ways to improve our services to children and their families.
- We, at Hillcrest Washington Youth Home, Inc. can provide no greater service than to be appropriate role models for the children we serve.



SOFT

Strengthening Our Family Ties



Hillcrest Washington Youth Home, Inc.
2700 W. Indiana Avenue
Evansville, IN 47712
Phone 812.428.0698 • Fax 812.429.9655
www.hillcrestyouthhome.org

What is the SOFT Program?

Strengthening our Family Ties (SOFT) is a family educational program that offers a child and his family training sessions on a variety of life topics. The program assists participants in strengthening their relationships with one another and promotes building positive relationships between families, local service agencies, case managers or others involved in the child's care.

Who Attends and Is There a Fee?

Individuals who participate in the SOFT program include current and former Hillcrest residents and families. The program is offered at no charge to children and families.

When Do the Trainings Occur?

One evening a month from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., educational training sessions take place at Hillcrest. Topics in the training sessions include, but are not limited to:

- Adolescent Development
- Conflict Resolution/Anger Management
- Goals and Objectives
- Community Support Systems
- Communication
- Back-to-School Information
- Drugs and Alcohol Use
- Recreation and Community Involvement
- Mental Health Issues

Handouts are provided after each training session to provide the participants with additional information on how to apply the skills they learned to their everyday lives. The staff at

Hillcrest is also open to develop topics that are requested by participants.

Program Goals and Objectives

The goal of the SOFT program is to increase and enhance skills that allow the family to develop positive behaviors and self-sufficiency when they are provided with community-based and natural support systems.

Other important goals of the program are to educate families about Hillcrest, the process they are currently involved in, and the expectations of the families. At Hillcrest, we strive to create an environment where the families have a voice and feel satisfied with the services that they are receiving.

The SOFT program works on accomplishing these goals with the participants through the following objectives:

- Enhancing the parenting skills and practices of the families to meet the needs of the children.
- Providing realistic support and assistance to the children and families as requested by the families.
- Offering a supportive relationship to the children and families and child by Hillcrest staff prior to and throughout the discharge process.
- Decreasing the interventions of other agencies with the children and families, such as the Department of Child Services, the court system and law enforcement.

- Stressing the importance of maintaining and/or improving the child's educational and/or employment status and performance.
- Updating and informing families of opportunities in the community such as employment, recreation, education and financial support.

Why is SOFT Important?

Recent trends in residential care show that:

- Time in residential stay is becoming shorter and shorter.
- Children who do well in out-of-home placements do so primarily because steady relationships have transcended the placement. This happens when a child has one steady adult figure that he can rely on during and after placement.

A fundamental element of the SOFT program is to establish and enhance a child's ability to develop relationships. Research has shown that if a relationship, mutual trust, and support can be built with a child and his family, that the family is on course to make the child's transition to home, community and school a success while significantly decreasing the risk of the child needing further placements outside of the family.

For more information about the SOFT program, please contact Hillcrest at 812.428.0698.