



## Advocates for Children

### **Guidelines for Groups: Flowering Branch Children's Shelter**

Thank you for your group's interest in visiting Flowering Branch Children's Shelter. The care and support of people in our community are important assets for the well-being of the young people who live in this very special place! This information is designed to help make your visit a good experience for your group and for the residents of Flowering Branch.

Flowering Branch Children's Shelter is the temporary home for up to six boys and six girls at a time. The residents are usually between the ages of 10 and (up to) 18 years old, and they come for a variety of reasons. Most basically they need a safe, structured environment while longer-term living arrangements are being made for them. Flowering Branch might be a young person's home for a few days or a few years, depending on his or her situation. While at Flowering Branch, residents are busy attending public school, doing homework, and participating in group activities designed to strengthen a variety of skills. Therefore, it is important that groups are put into place with the intention of making this a mutually beneficial relationship and ultimately schedule their visits well in advance. Consider coming at times when the residents' schedules have more flexibility—for example, holidays, weekend days, and during the summer. Please understand that these guidelines are put in place to keep our residents, staff and volunteers safe. We love our volunteer groups and the relationships that are made are extremely important to us.

#### **Guidelines for Group Visits:**

- Groups who wish to visit Flowering Branch can schedule their visit through the Volunteer Coordinator by calling 770.387.1143 or emailing [Kaylee@advochild.org](mailto:Kaylee@advochild.org).
- All volunteers who **interact with the residents** must complete the background screening process and have it on file with the Volunteer Coordinator (i.e. mentors, after school tutoring, group projects while the residents are home, cooking a meal with the residents). Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to set up the screening process.
- Groups of young people visiting Flowering Branch should be 15 years old and above due to the age of our residents.
- It is especially important that youth visiting the shelter have a very clear understanding of the right of confidentiality of the residents of Flowering Branch. Adult leaders should stress to their groups that they may not share with others who they might have recognized or known as a resident at the shelter.

- Groups should be no larger than 10 people, including adults who are coming with groups of young people.
- Please have planned activities when you come that will encourage interaction between your group and the residents.
- No group visits on school nights.
- The young people who live at Flowering Branch are, understandably, sensitive to being viewed as being different from other young people. They have enjoyed opportunities to join with other groups in off-site activities with which they can appropriately participate (for example, bowling, skating, going to the movies, etc.). The staff of Flowering Branch will be present on all outside group activities.

***\*Groups of any age and number who would like to have a tour of our facility when the residents are not home are welcome to schedule a visit by calling the Volunteer Coordinator at 770.387.1143.***

Thank you again for wanting to be a part of Flowering Branch Children's Shelter. If you would like clarification about any of these guidelines, please call us. We look forward to having you visit!

**Kaylee Klewein, Volunteer Coordinator**  
**Advocates for Children**