



Our Mission

The challenges confronting young women today are greater than ever. Low self-esteem. Substance use. Sexual abuse. Aggression. Teenage pregnancy. Since 1996, it has been the mission of Forest Ridge Youth Services to ensure young women maximize their potential through character development, academic achievement and improved physical and mental health through gender-responsive interventions in a safe and secure setting conducive to personal growth.

WHAT MAKES FOREST RIDGE UNIQUE?

- **Experience** – Forest Ridge was founded in 1983 and has been providing gender-responsive services to adolescent females since 1996.
- **Safe Environment** – The Forest Ridge program provides safety with a staff-secure environment. Harassment and bullying are not tolerated at Forest Ridge. Defiant behavior is interrupted at the earliest stage of the cycle using the Seven Levels of Intervention
- **Emotional Support** – Students learn to give and receive help through relational skill building, staff role modeling and by supporting each other in a caring and helpful manner.
- **Location** – Located in a rural setting, students are able to make changes to the way they think, feel and interact with the world away from the stresses of their complicated lives.

Forest Ridge

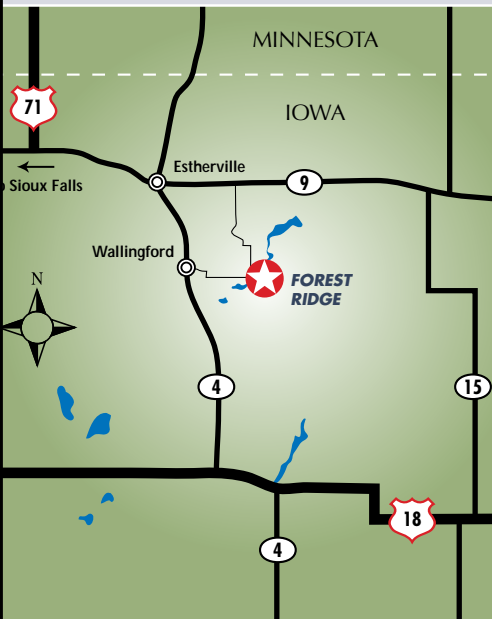
A PLACE FOR GROWTH

Located in rural NW Iowa, Forest Ridge Youth Services is a residential treatment facility with gender-specific programming for a maximum of 121 at-risk young women ages 13 to 18.

The Center, located on 21 wooded acres near Wallingford, IA, is home to the Crystal, Eagle, Oak and Anita Cottages, as well as to the administrative and admissions offices. Seton and Parks Halls are located on a three-acre campus just south of Estherville, IA.

Forest Ridge School, located on a third campus in Gruver, IA, features nine classrooms, a computer lab, art and music departments, a gymnasium, library, nursing department, cafeteria and food service preparation facility, as well as mental health and substance abuse treatment departments.

Forest Ridge staff includes licensed teachers, licensed independent social workers, licensed substance abuse counselors, registered nurses and counselors with human service and social work degrees.



Our facilities are located in Emmet County, Iowa approximately 90 miles east of Sioux Falls, South Dakota; 211 miles west of Minneapolis, Minnesota; and 180 miles northwest of Des Moines Iowa.



Our Students

EVERY GIRL HAS HER OWN STORY

Forest Ridge accepts female adolescents who have significant patterns of unresolved emotional and behavioral issues, including:

- Females ages 13-18 with a primary need for behavioral treatment
- Learned negative behavior patterns which victimize others
- Low degree of empathy for others and poor means-to-end reasoning
- High degree of impulsivity and problems with emotion management and/or aggression
- Significant problems handling responsibility and denial or justification of negative behavior
- Lack of self-discipline and history of non-compliant behaviors
- History of responding to life stressors by thrill-seeking, negative associations and/or aggression
- False or genuine pride in anti-social values and behaviors
- Low self-esteem, poor social skills and/or functioning below capacity
- History of sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse
- History of self-harming behaviors
- Diagnoses include Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Depression, PTSD and/or Substance Abuse
- Use of psychotropic medication(s) for treatment of ADD/ADHD and/or depression
- Eating disorders (though not in need of inpatient treatment)
- Victim of domestic violence and/or family dysfunction

Those students who qualify for admission are most amenable to our socially interactive environment.

Forest Ridge does not accept young women who have a history of fire setting, are in need of a locked facility, or those who pose a significant danger to themselves, their peers or community. The facility also does not accept adolescents with a full-scale IQ of less than 70; those with an IQ between 70-85 will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Students with a learning disability are not disqualified. However, those diagnosed with mental retardation, schizoid disorder, autism, pervasive development disorder, organic mental disorders, organic brain syndrome, schizophrenia or paranoia have limited ability to participate in our program, as the symptoms associated with these conditions are expected to impair the student's ability to adapt.

Forest Ridge does not discriminate on the basis of disability.



Our Program

MEETING THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF YOUNG WOMEN

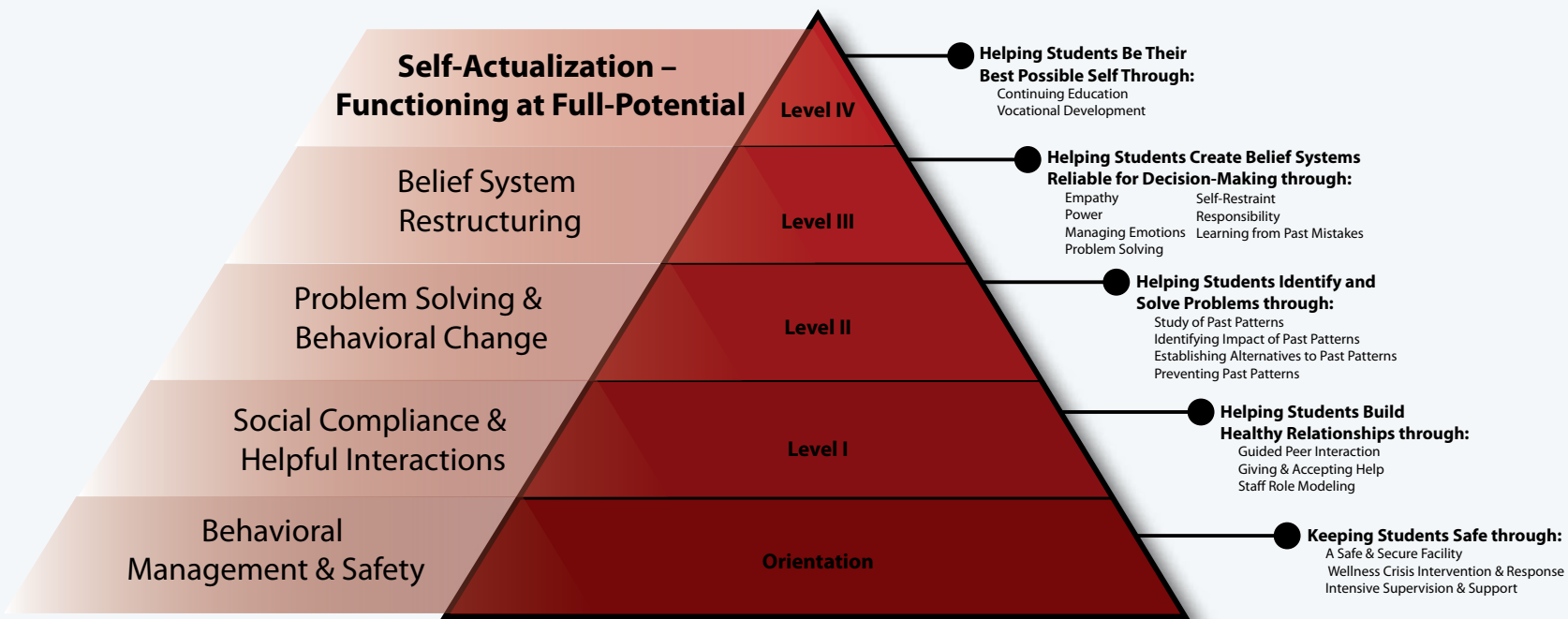
Young women want to belong. They want to have power, freedom and fun. In the face of many circumstances and influences, they often put themselves at great risk to get what they want. Helping these girls change their destructive behaviors, however, requires a rehabilitation program that is as unique as their needs.

Designed to address the relevant and complex issues in each girl's life, the Forest Ridge program is comprehensive, gender-responsive, and holistic in approach and offers a long-term focus. Based on an understanding specifically of female development, our program:

- Addresses not only behavior but also personal histories, influences, risk factors and needs
- Provides emotional and physical safety
- Is culturally appropriate
- Is relationally based
- Provides female role models and mentors
- Addresses the abuse in girls' lives
- Is strength based, not deficit based
- Addresses sexuality, pregnancy and parenting
- Provides equitable educational opportunities
- Addresses the unique health needs of females, including nutritional concerns and regular physical activity
- Nurtures the spiritual lives of young women
- Involves girls' families

The Four-Phase Core Developmental Program

BUILDING A FOUNDATION



WE WORK TO Decrease Risk Factors

- Alcohol and drug prevention and intervention
- Critical thinking and decision making
- Interpersonal empathy and social skills

BY INCREASING Resiliency Factors

- Emotional management
- Continued accredited education
- Increased employment potential and placement
- Transitional and aftercare support services

Program Components

INTEGRAL TO THE TREATMENT PROCESS

The Forest Ridge residential program features:

- **Socially Interactive Environment** – students help each other with staff support
- **Cognitive-Behavioral Strategies** – teaching students how to develop healthy interpersonal and situational decision making skills
- **Remedial Services** – individual, group, family and crisis intervention and skill building
- **Safe Environment** – utilizing de-escalation, crisis intervention and intensive supervision and support

- On-Site Education at Forest Ridge School
- Licensed Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Program
- On-Campus Nursing Services
- Individualized Treatment Plans
- Assessment Services
- Family Involvement
- Discharge and Transition Services

- Victim-to-Survivor Group
- Courage Group
- Self-Study Groups
- Falcons Club
- Sexuality Education

- Girl Scouts C.H.O.I.C.E.S
- Activities and Leisure Services
- Community Service and Restitution Opportunities
- World of Work



ACTIVITIES AND LEISURE SERVICES

Participation in athletic activities serves a valuable purpose in the rehabilitation process. It enhances qualities such as leadership, achievement, self-esteem, hard work, self-discipline, trust and cooperative teamwork, as well as encourages fitness and good health habits.

Unfortunately, as a result of poor prior academic performance, many students have never had these positive experiences. The recreation programs at Forest Ridge, however, aim to offer these opportunities and more. Designed to compliment and support our other program components, participation in some form of planned activity - from calisthenics to team sports to Cottage Olympics - is mandatory to help students achieve and maintain a level of fitness and good health.

Forest Ridge is a member of the Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union and participates in interscholastic competition against other public high school teams in such activities as track, basketball and volleyball.

In addition to athletic opportunities, students may participate in leisure activities such as Girl Scouts, Girls Rock Weekend, Women's Issues Days, Falcon outings and special recognition assemblies on campus. Students also participate in volunteer community services projects like visiting nursing homes, assisting with after school activities for children, Adopt-a-Highway and Relay-for-Life.



Assessment Services

FIVE FOCUSES

Within 30 days of arrival at Forest Ridge, each student undergoes medical, educational, mental health, risk and needs assessments to facilitate creation of an individual treatment plan.

- **Medical:** Determines health history and current health status
- **Educational:** Determines appropriate grade level with a goal of high school graduation
- **Mental Health:** Determines the need for individual base-line mental health interventions
- **Risk:** Measures fixed, attitude and treatment factors to develop an overall analysis of the dangers a student presents to herself or her community. As students work through the program, risk levels decrease, which also diminishes the risk of re-offending after discharge
- **Needs:** Establishes a baseline of a student's needs and how those needs will be addressed in her treatment plan

In addition to these five assessments, substance abuse, psychological/psychiatric and independent living skills assessments are available on a case-by-case basis. The substance abuse assessment determines the appropriate level of substance abuse intervention, and a plan is created to address individual needs.



Learning Together

FOR CHANGE, GROWTH & SUCCESS

As designated in each individual care plan, students participate in specific remedial groups in 5-week intervals for 6 hours each week. Forest Ridge offers a wide variety of groups and classes:

- Healthy Decision-making
- Family Systems
- Change and Identity
- Self-esteem
- Relationships and Boundaries
- Grief and Loss
- Anger and Conflict Resolution
- Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
- Victim-to-Survivor
- Alternative Decision-making (to substance abuse)
- Values Clarification
- Domestic Violence
- Communication
- Thinking Errors
- Respect
- Co-dependency
- Street Law
- Resolution
- Personal Responsibility
- Thinking for a Change
- Coping and Healing
- Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (S.T.E.P.)
- Self-Identity
- Dynamics of Relationships

Forest Ridge School

A KEY PROGRAM COMPONENT

Forest Ridge School affords students the opportunity to continue their education in a safe, secure, single gender environment.

All students are required to participate in some form of academic programming for the duration of their program at Forest Ridge. In session year-round, Forest Ridge School offers a flexible schedule that accommodates enrollment at any time and collaborates with and implements the curriculum and graduation requirements of the Estherville Lincoln Central School District. All courses are taught by licensed teachers.

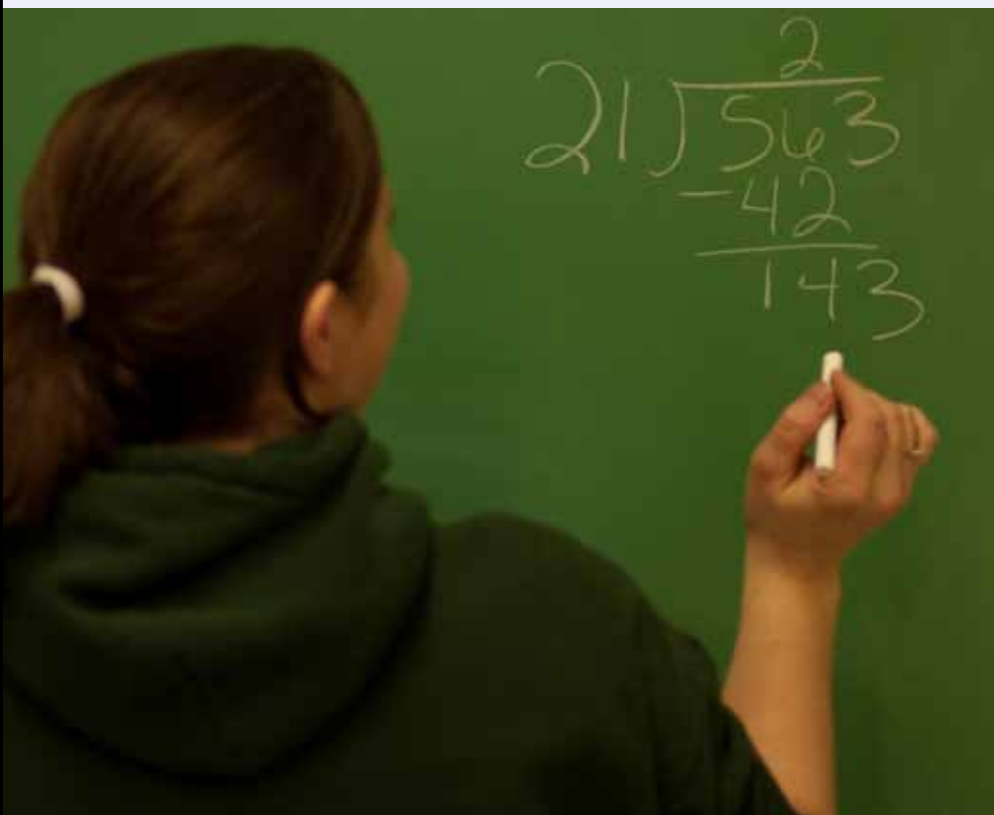
Students have access to a core curriculum of math, English, science and social studies. A variety of elective courses are also available, including chemistry, computer applications, composition, African American history, speech, economics, geography, choir, drama, art and independent living.

GED

A student may be eligible to work toward the completion of a GED equivalency degree only when achieving a high school diploma is not a realistic possibility.

Post-High School College Credits

Applicable students have the opportunity to participate in video or online classes for college credit while at Forest Ridge. They are assisted in the enrollment process, and the on-campus Forest Ridge School education staff monitors progress.





Falcons Club

LEARNING TO PROMOTE AND CONTRIBUTE TO ONGOING SUCCESS

Forest Ridge Falcons are top-level students who consistently display and practice strong, positive leadership abilities or the potential to develop these skills with direction and practice.

Falcons:

- Teach and role model for new students who are still struggling with negative behaviors
- Reflect the program's socially interactive environment
- Serve as role models and representatives to the student body
- Identify and recognize positive student behavior
- Act as trusted representatives of Forest Ridge within the community

