

Frequently Asked Questions

Will I still be able to talk to my friends/family?

Yes, you will be able to stay in contact with friends/family approved by your guardian. You will not be allowed to keep your cell phone on your person during your stay at the Ark, to ensure confidentiality of all our youth, for safety, and to ensure the focus is on you and your needs.

What if I live outside of Kalamazoo County?

Any youth in Michigan is eligible to stay if transportation can be coordinated.

Will I be expected to participate in religious activities?

No, the Ark has no religious requirements. While we are a faith-based organization, we serve all regardless of religious affiliation. Youth have to opportunity to participate in a weekly Bible study facilitated by Youth for Christ.

Is the Ark safe for LGBT+ youth?

Yes! The Ark is a safe space for LGBT+ youth and is open to all orientations and identities.

Can my parents send me even if I don't want to go?

No, the Ark is a voluntary program. Both the youth and the guardian must consent to participation.

What if I have food allergies?

Our staff are trained in food safety and are able to make reasonable accommodations for food allergies. If you have allergies, be sure to let us know during the intake process.

What does a typical day in the shelter look like?

Your day will consist of group activities that aim to increase your coping skills, community awareness activities, time for exercise, arts & crafts, and if you are attending school virtually, time is also set aside to work on homework. You will receive three meals a day as well as snacks, and you are asked to assist in the daily chores.

What types of chores am I expected to do?

Chore assignments are rotated amongst all youth. Some of these chores include wiping down countertops, sweeping, mopping, putting dishes away, putting away leftovers,

What should I bring with me to the Ark?

It is recommended that you bring at least four complete outfits (we do have washing/drying facilities), school materials, 14 days' worth of medication PROPERLY LABELED AND STORED, and your health insurance card (so a copy can be made). Items such as hygiene products are available upon request.

What items should I NOT bring to the Ark?

To keep all of our youth safe, there are certain items we do not allow in the shelter. These items include aerosol cans, cameras, mp3 players, skateboards, any kind of weapon, and any type of illegal substances or associated items (i.e., lighters, matches, vapes).

There are some items that, upon bringing in, will need to be stored away from the youth, so that users can be properly monitored. These items include nail polish, curling irons or hair straighteners, perfume, and razors for shaving.