Baldwin Youth Services
Intervention Center

Baldwin Youth Services is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) agency. The Intervention Center is licensed by the Alabama State Department of Human Resources and has been in operation since 1987. The Intervention Center provides 10 days of shelter care for children (infancy through 17 years) who are dependent or have been adjudicated as a Child In Need of Supervision. Referrals may be received from any county DHR office or the Baldwin County court and Baldwin County Juvenile Probation Officers.

The Center will work with DHR, when possible, to keep the child longer than 10 days to allow for a psychological evaluation and MAT assessment to be completed for making appropriate referrals to meet the child’s needs; however, the structure of the program is not conducive for long-term care.

The Baldwin County Board of Education provides an on-site teacher. Children referred are to remain enrolled in their present school, as the on-site teacher will coordinate with the child’s school regarding the child’s course of studies and will fax the attendance and grades to the child’s school.

Children who are accepted into the Intervention Center should be brought wearing an appropriate outfit for going out into the community. The children dress in Baldwin Youth Services’ uniform during placement but wear their street clothes during any outing. The Center does not have room to store the child’s other clothing or belongings. The child’s medications must be delivered with the child’s name on the prescription bottle, and all medications may only be given as directed on the bottle.

Social workers are notified if the child becomes ill or is about to run out of medication. The social worker is responsible for transporting the child to the doctor. (As a non-profit agency, staff is kept to the minimum allowed by licensure, so there is not extra staff to transport children for appointments.)

Each child has a separate bedroom with private bath unless there are 2 siblings of the same sex. Each child may make one phone call per night as allowed by the social worker.

The Intervention Center is located at 22096 Pine Street (P.O. Box 1135) Robertsdale, Alabama 36567. The telephone number 251-947-5149. The center is open every day except New Years, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. A staff member is available twenty-four hours each day for referrals.

The Center cannot accept any child who has been adjudicated delinquent or is actively suicidal. The Center will not accept a child who has head or body lice.
In 1975 Juvenile Judge Telfair Mashburn and Juvenile Probation Officer Jean White expressed a growing concern about Baldwin County juveniles in need of placement outside of their own home. There was no place to keep the children within the county, so they were being placed in facilities located all over the state. The county needed to find some way to help the children stay within the community. Many times the children were coming from abusive homes and were running away to get away from the abuse; however, the children often had to be housed in facilities with children who had committed criminal acts. The children were being separated from any type of family, friends, and community support. Due to these circumstances, the court felt the children were being victimized again, this time by the court system meant to protect them.

With the help of Judge Mashburn, Juvenile Probation Officer Jean White, and prominent members of the community, including Mrs. Janice Hendrickson, Baldwin Youth Services was incorporated on January 8, 1976, and established as a private, non-profit organization.

In 1977, BYS opened a group home for male juveniles by leasing an old church building in Bon Secour. The White Battey Group Home for Boys was opened in October 1978, in a custom built home in Robertsdale, capable of serving 10 males. The Phyliss S. Nesbit Group Home for Girls was added in January 1985, in Silverhill, capable of serving 6 females, with a length of stay averaging between three and six months but can range up to one year. Land has been purchased to build a new Girls Home in Silverhill that will house up to 16 girls. The Boys Home and the Girls home are licensed by the Department of Youth Services.

All of the children at both group homes are placed by the Baldwin County Juvenile Judge due to CHINS (Children In Need of Supervision) petitions filed by the children’s legal guardian. A child who commits a criminal act has a delinquency petition filed against him/her, whereas a child who has not committed a criminal act but has done such things as running away from home, disrespecting parents, skipping school, defying authority, etc., may have a CHINS petition filed on him/her.

The Intervention Center in Robertsdale is the newest addition and has been serving children since July 1987. It is licensed by the Department of Human Resources. The Center is capable of serving 16 children, ranging in age from infants through age 17. Most of the children served range in age from 12 to 17.

DHR social workers form Baldwin, Mobile, and surrounding counties may make placement requests to the Intervention Center for children who have come into their custody because of abuse or neglect. DHR uses the Intervention Center as a temporary shelter until a relative, foster or group home, or treatment facility placement can be secured. Sometimes DHR will ask for a weekend or overnight placement to “time-out” a foster child who is at risk of disrupting his/her foster or relative home placement.

Juvenile Probation Officers may make placement at the Intervention Center for up to three days. These children are on informal or formal probation due to non-criminal, unacceptable behaviors which resulted in a CHINS petition being filed. Placement may be made pending adjudication of a misdemeanor crime but not for a felony. Once the Juvenile Judge adjudicates a child as delinquent due to criminal activity, the child can no longer be considered for placement. Any child placed by his/her probation officer is on strict room restriction for the 72 hours he/she is in placement.
The child does not have contact with the other youth in the facility, eats alone, and has no telephone, radio or television privileges. The only reading material in his/her room is a Bible.

Parents may place children when they feel the child’s behaviors at home warrant getting the child’s attention. The cost is $40.00 per night, with a sliding fee scale available for those who cannot afford to pay the full rate. While at the Intervention Center, the child is on the same room restriction as a child placed by a probation officer. The child is educated about what consequences will follow if the parents decide to file a CHINS petition due to continuing unacceptable behavior by the child, what being on probation entails, and options available to the Judge if the child violates probation.

Mrs. Janice Hendrickson is the Coordinator for both group homes and the Intervention Center. She is a Juvenile Probation Officer, which places her in a unique situation to recommend children before the JPO system who may benefit from the services of Baldwin Youth Services. The Program Director is Sue Joy. The Center has around-the-clock, awake staff working in shifts. The telephone number for the Intervention Center is 947-5149.

The Intervention Center is not a lock-up facility, but there are alarms on the windows and doors to alert staff should a child decide to “get a breath of fresh air” without permission.

The children at the Boys Home and Girls Home attend Robertsdale High School or Central Baldwin Middle School. The Board of Education provides a teacher and teacher’s aide and 10 computers for the school operated on the premises at the Intervention Center.

Free Parent and Child Training (PACT) classes are conducted on Monday nights by Dr. Larry Faison through a grant obtained from the Children’s Trust Fund. The classes are open to any parent who wants to attend, even if they do not have a child placed with Baldwin Youth Services.