

## Clinical Program Information

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The clinical program at Calo is based on the premise that profound change happens through healthy, trusting relationships with others. The process of building these relationships requires repetitive, relevant, realistic, rewarding, relational experiences. Over time, and with a combination of playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy, the child begins to experience life in a more positive way. They develop a new lens through which to view themselves and to release themselves from the bonds of deeply rooted shame and negative core beliefs. This is a journey that takes time and will likely involve many peaks and valleys along the way. Progress is not linear, and this can be frustrating and disheartening at times. However, with alignment between your family, your child and your Calo team, profound change is possible.

### **Individual Therapy:**

Once enrolled at Calo, your child will begin receiving weekly individual therapy sessions with their primary therapist. The first session will happen within the first week of enrollment. Individual therapy sessions are typically 50 minutes in duration and focus on the individual needs of your child. Building a trusting relationship with your child will take time, perhaps several weeks at the start of their therapy experience at Calo. However, once the therapeutic connection is made, a foundation of safety is in place that allows the child to explore issues of emotion regulation, self-concept, attachment and trauma. There will be situations, experiences and therapeutic challenges that may create a “break” in this relationship; that is a good thing! With a strong connection in relationship, it is safe to experience a “break” and then move through a healthy experience of “repair.” Through repetitive experiences of “connection, break, repair” the child learns that challenges in relationships are safe and do not mean the relationship is lost. Indeed, relationships that successfully navigate this process are stronger and healthier for it!

### **Family Therapy:**

Once enrolled at Calo, you and your child will begin receiving weekly family therapy sessions with your primary therapist, preferably via Skype. The first session will happen within the first two weeks of enrollment. Family therapy sessions are typically 50 minutes in duration and focus on the family system. This is a time for you to learn new ways of interacting with your child that are relationally based. In the beginning of your time at Calo, your family sessions will not include your child. After 4-6 sessions consisting of exploring your family system, relational dynamics and providing you with psychoeducation about attachment and attachment healing, your child will then join the family therapy sessions. Research consistently shows that successful outcomes in attachment treatment are highly correlated to parental engagement and alignment in therapy. Our therapists will walk your journey with you and your child utilizing their therapeutic knowledge to join with you and help guide you along the way.

### **Therapist Led Groups:**

Each of our therapists facilitate three 50-minute therapeutic groups per week. One group consists of the students who are assigned to that therapist’s caseload (the primary therapist), one group consists of the team of students living in the home where the therapist’s office is located (the point-therapist), and one

group is a “specialized” group that covers a specific area of need for the students assigned to that group (e.g., grief and loss, healthy relationships, mindfulness, trauma, etc.). Group interaction can be a powerful tool in the therapeutic process. This is the place where our students learning how to effectively interact with others, communicate clearly, give and receive feedback from others, and give and receive empathy from others. As you may imagine, letting go of the “façade” that our students often show others is quite a challenge. However, for many students this may happen for the first time in a group experience with their peers. Our therapists build on these experiences in individual and family therapy sessions as well.

### **Parent/Family Visits:**

We encourage parents to visit students every 4-6 weeks. These visits must be intentional and planned with your primary therapist so that they are therapeutically valuable time with your child. Your first visit will be a two-day (Friday-Saturday), highly structured, on campus event. You will be provided with a schedule for your time on campus and will likely include a family therapy session. Subsequent visits may include time on campus, off campus, and eventually overnights in the local vicinity; these will be determined through consultation and collaboration between you and your primary therapist. After a succession of successful local area visits, home visits will be explored. It is important to understand that home visits are most helpful to the therapeutic process if they are actually “at home” and resemble “normal” family life as closely as possible. At times, families want to use their home visits for family vacations and, while this is “time together” it does not allow your family to practice new ways of relating in the home environment and with typical every day stressors and tasks.

### **Contact With Your Child:**

Written contact with your child can begin right away. You will receive a login for our secure site “Family Bridge” and this will give you the ability to send letters via Family Bridge. Messages sent through this site are printed daily by our Clinical Administrative Assistant and given to your child’s therapist for review and delivery to your child. You can also send letters via USPS to your child at: 130 Calo Lane, Lake Ozark, MO 65049. Your child will not have access to e-mail; however, they are encouraged to write letters to you which we will then send for them via USPS.

Telephone contact with your child will initially occur once a week during the last 10-15 minutes of your scheduled family therapy session; this is not a therapeutic interaction, it is a social one. Once family therapy progresses to the point that your child participates in the therapy process with you, your social call will be moved to one evening per week based on the team home to which your child is assigned. This will be addressed with you and scheduled by your therapist when the time comes and is typically 4-6 weeks after enrollment.

### **Parent Seminars and Retreats:**

Three times per year, Calo offers a ½ day parent seminar on campus. The topics for the seminars are based on an aspect of attachment-based therapy and relational dynamics. They are largely psychoeducational in nature and provide an opportunity for parents to meet and interact with other parents of Calo students. Our parents find these seminars to be quite helpful and the interactions with other parents build hope, community, acceptance and understanding. Parents often attend these seminars in conjunction with a visit with their child. There is no additional cost to you to attend these seminars.

Twice per year, we also offer 1 ½ day intensive therapeutic retreats. These retreats are built around a therapeutic theme and involve activities and learning in parent-only groups and parent-child groups. Members of our Calo team from every department join our clinical team, parents and students at an off campus site where we stay overnight and work to facilitate connection and strengthen the relational bonds you are developing with your kids in your weekly therapy sessions. These are intense, emotional, fun, connective, highly productive, relational experiences that can, and often do, move therapy forward by leaps and bounds. There is no additional cost to you to attend these retreats.