



## Brighter Transition Youth Treatment Center and Falls Academy

Located in Sioux Falls, SD, Brighter Transition Youth Treatment Center serves low to moderate at-risk youth from the Department of Corrections preparing to reintegrate into the community. Falls Academy is a Qualified Residential Treatment program (QRTP) that serves male and female youth in an intensive group care setting. Students at Falls Academy are placed by both the Department of Corrections and the Department of Social Services.

These programs provide medical, clinical, and vocational planning services for youth facing behavioral, emotional and community issues who require intensive treatment in a short-term residential setting. Students have access to a fully- accredited on- campus school for grades 9-12. In addition to education services, they provide group and individual based therapy services, daily community meeting and life skills programing, and community-based activities.



When looking at our campus, the positive impact that Ukeru has on our students, staff, and environment is evident. With minimizing use of restraint, we are able to provide our students a safe, comforting, and supportive environment leading to growth, skills development, and healing. Our students feel safer and our staff feel more prepared to address behavior with a trauma-informed approach!

**Lauren Lippert**

*Director of Case Management*



## Looking for Solutions

Prior to adopting Ukeru, Brighter Transition was looking to reduce their use of restrictive practices and incorporate more preventive strategies. With staff safety top-of-mind, they knew that it was essential for them to invest in an evidenced-based program that would better protect their staff and students.

Looking to address these challenges, they began engaging in conversations with the Ukeru team, where they learned of the Grafton Story. They discovered that they were in a similar place that Ukeru's parent company, Grafton Integrated Health Network, once was prior to inventing Ukeru. This inspired them to create change within their own organization.

## Working with Ukeru

Brighter Transition began working with Ukeru in early 2020 and fully implemented the program in three months, during a pandemic. To assist with the implementation process, they had a Champions Day to introduce Ukeru to their students after all of their staff had been trained. Now, it is embedded in their processes to orient youth on Ukeru upon their arrival.

To support the effort, they generated full buy-in amongst their leadership team and communicated to staff the importance of a trauma-informed approach and its potential for improving student outcomes and staff well-being. This strong foundation of champions amongst their leadership team certainly contributed to their continued success.

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Ukeru has been a great addition to the trauma-informed services provided on our campus. The reduction of physical restraints by using Ukeru allows staff and students to maintain therapeutic relationships, even during moments of emotional dysregulation. We have seen the benefits of this non-violent intervention in several areas; however, the improved physical and psychological safety of our staff and students is undeniable.

**Jenna Tweedy**  
*Associate Director*

75%

**Staff injury  
reduction**

64%

**Restraint  
reduction**

50%

**Challenging behavior  
reduction**

## Results

Through their hard work and dedication they have achieved remarkable results. **Staff feel better equipped to work with their students and appreciate having an additional tool to keep them safe.** By providing an alternative to restrictive practices, they have seen a significant reduction in staff injuries. Because staff feel confident using Ukeru, it has also led to a reduction of challenging behaviors, due to students being able to work through their emotions. In addition, Ukeru has helped transform their culture into one that is comforting and supportive. This in turn has created a safer environment for all.