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**Los Angeles, Illinois, Washington D.C. and Louisiana
awarded \$10 million to launch program for transition-age foster youth**
Public-private partnerships fuel drive to help U.S. foster youth transition to adulthood

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (Oct. 23, 2018) – Youth Villages is awarding \$10 million in grants to four jurisdictions to expand services for transition-age foster youth through implementation of its YVLifeSet model.

Funding will go to the [Child and Family Service Agency in the District of Columbia](#); the [Illinois Department of Children and Family Services](#); the [Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services](#); and the [Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services](#).

The agencies participated in a competitive grant-making process and will receive the funds over three years to implement the model.

The funding comes by way of a national effort by [Youth Villages](#), a national nonprofit organization, to expand effective services for transition-age foster youth across the country. The funds will serve as a match to local public and philanthropic funds, allowing the jurisdictions to expand their investment in older foster youth.

“We are honored to be partnering with some of the country’s most dynamic child welfare leaders and forward-looking agencies to support transition-age foster youth across this country,” said Youth Villages CEO Patrick Lawler. “Together we can demonstrate that with the right support these resilient young people can achieve their goals and become successful adults.”

While many youth who emancipate from state care are resilient and capable, statistics show that without help, they are more likely than their peers to be homeless, unemployed or incarcerated. These young adults are more likely to have significant mental and/or behavioral health issues than other young adults. Many will face challenges with relationships, family planning and achieving stability.

“Many of our young people in Illinois are reaching adulthood in foster care without the family support other young people have on what is always a complex journey to adulthood, even in the best of circumstances,” said B.J. Walker, director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. “We are delighted at the chance to work with Youth Villages, which has the experience and expertise to fill this need for young people in foster care with a nationally proven program that allows the youth take the driver's seat on their journey.”

The community-based YVLifeSet program pairs young people with specialists who are trained in navigating the complexities of transitioning to adulthood and in directly delivering clinical interventions. Specialists have small caseloads and meet with young people at the location of the youth’s choosing, face-to-face weekly, helping them set and achieve their goals around housing, transportation, education, employment, health and relationships through experiential learning.

“YVLifeSet is a comprehensive, youth-driven services delivery model that perfectly aligns with our efforts to truly engage our transition-aged youth,” said Bobby Cagle, director of Los Angeles County’s DCFS. “The youth voice is essential to identifying underlying needs, establishing stability, achieving individual goals, and promoting permanency. We are grateful for this opportunity.”

Since 1999, Youth Villages has helped more than 13,000 young people through YVLifeSet, one of the largest models helping former foster youth in the country. YVLifeSet also is one of the only interventions for former foster youth that has shown positive impacts across many areas of a young person’s life in a [large, randomized controlled trial](#). The trial, conducted by national social research firm MDRC, showed that the model decreased homelessness, increased economic well-being, increased mental health and decreased domestic or partner violence.

“While we believe that our services for older youth are generally strong, youth who ‘age-out’ of the foster care system still struggle, and we hope that through this program, we will make improvements to better serve them,” said Brenda Donald, director of D.C. CFSA. “Youth Villages’ demonstrated expertise and skill will be wonderful additions to our array and will strengthen our practice, not only for the youth in this initial three-year project, but for years to come.”

Youth Villages will train DC CFSA and Louisiana DCFS staff in the YVLifeSet model, and in Illinois and LA County, Youth Villages will train local private providers selected by the jurisdictions. Youth Villages provides administrative, clinical and research support to jurisdictions and implementing providers who use the YVLifeSet model. The organization also provides YVLifeSet through direct services in Georgia, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon and Tennessee.

“The YVLifeSet program will help ease the move to independent adulthood for our youth transitioning out of foster care and those at risk of aging out,” said Louisiana DCFS Secretary Marketa Garner Walters. “YVLifeSet has a powerful track record of working with youth in other states, and we’re excited to implement the program as part of Louisiana’s efforts to extend foster care through age 21.”

Last spring, Youth Villages announced grants to [New Yorkers for Children](#), on behalf of the [New York City Administration for Children’s Services](#), and [Allegheny County Department of Human Services](#) in Pennsylvania for the program. In Pittsburgh, [Pressley Ridge](#) began helping its first young people through the program in January. In New York City, [Children’s Aid Society](#) launched in April and [The New York Foundling](#) will start YVLifeSet in the spring of 2019. [Connecticut’s Department of Children and Families](#) will begin implementing the program through private providers this spring following a competitive procurement process that will be initiated this month. YVLifeSet is also offered through public-private partnerships by the [Accelerator YMCA](#) in Seattle, Washington, and [Turning Points for Children](#) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The grants are part of Youth Villages’ initiative to help ensure all of the 20,000 young people who age out of foster care every year in the United States have access to effective services by 2028. To do this, the organization is expanding its direct services and partnering with high-performing public agencies and nonprofits across the country.

To launch the model through partnerships in new jurisdictions, Youth Villages makes competitive matching grants that vary based on the scope of the projects. Grant-making for YVLifeSet is a continuing process as Youth Villages works to reach more former foster youth across the country. Public agencies interested in applying for funding can find more information at www.partnerwithyv.org.

About Youth Villages

Youth Villages is a national leader in children's mental and behavioral health bringing help and hope to more than 27,000 children, families and young people across the United States this year. The organization offers a continuum of evidence- and research-based programs, including residential treatment, foster care, adoption, crisis services and its two national models: YVIntercept, which offers intensive in-home services, and YVLifeSet™, which gives former foster youth a good start on successful adulthood. The organization has been recognized by the Harvard Business School and U.S. News & World Report, and was identified by The White House as one of the nation's most promising results-oriented nonprofit organizations. Learn more at www.youthvillages.org.