



WEST VIRGINIA

Child Care
ASSOCIATION



For the hundreds of older youth transitioning into adulthood from West Virginia's system of care, the pathway is often challenging, the odds great, and the reality sometimes frightening. Many have been diagnosed with serious mental illness, have substance addictions, and have experienced multiple traumatic events during their lifetime. Often, as they age out of the system, these youths find themselves homeless and jobless. Historically, they are provided services based on their chronological age versus trauma-informed, flexible support and services appropriate for their developmental age.

To best serve our youth, developmental stages, trauma impact, intellectual disability, mental health needs, as well as the impact of disabilities or handicapping conditions and childhood experiences should be carefully considered. Support and housing must take into consideration the impact of trauma, developmental versus chronological age and the full transition to adulthood continuum must be trauma informed.

ASSISTING TRANSITION

Transform & Strengthen West Virginia's system of care to improve outcomes for older youth transitioning to adulthood by developing a comprehensive, collaborative service model.

Recommendations for Older Youth Transitioning to Adulthood Service Model Development:

- Transition to Independence services and programs be provided by licensed agencies with the proven ability, experience, training and well-being standards that provide quality programming for transitional living supports, services, housing and treatment provisions and connections.
- Follow a developed set of unified standards for all providers. By establishing clearly defined standards, the model will be easy for youth and young adults to understand, navigate and access, regardless of the provider they choose.
- Utilization, monitoring and oversight of Chafee Funds be thoroughly reevaluated to support a model that maximizes funding and encourages value-based outcomes. The model should include evidenced-based best practices of crisis services, social support, life skills training and in-vivo experiences, transition facilitation, financial literacy, job coaching and support, and developmentally appropriate accountability.
- Include the following components: Crisis Prevention and Support, Education, Employment and Training Support, Financial Literacy, Housing Support, Life Skills Training & Support, and Medical & Mental Health Support.
- Provide Transition Coaching and Life Coaching, regardless of custody or FC-18 agreement, for all youth that have been in an out-of-home-care setting at any time within two years of turning 18, up to the age of 22. Access should be available with any Transitional Living provider in addition to BCF staff.
- Implement Future/Transition Plan development, including Life Skills Assessment and Training, by approved Transitional Living Transition and Life Coaches, via contract, for all youth age 14 and up in designated catchment areas.
- Ensure youth are discharged from care with safe and stable housing options available to them.
- Designate a specified time period for Transition and Life Coaches to follow-up with all aging out youth in contractually designated catchment areas in order to further coach, maintain connections, and link to available services, housing and supports, as well as collect National Youth in Transition Database information for WV DHHR BCF.
- Fund providers with a reliable reimbursement methodology that allows flexible and stable funding that will provide secure, safe, and affordable housing for youth transitioning into their first apartment/home.

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