



FAIRFAX COUNTY
Foster Care & Adoption

Fairfax County Department of Family Services

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

The Independent Living Program provides services to older teens (between 16 and 21 years old) who are preparing to transition from foster care into the community. Youth served may live in foster

homes, group homes or therapeutic residential facilities. The community plays an important role in supporting the efforts of the Independent Living Program and to the success of the youth as members of the community.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

Become a Mentor Home Provider

Open your home to a youth who is preparing for independence. While the teen lives with you – and pays their own room and board – you teach them the skills needed to achieve self-sufficiency. You are also asked to assist the teen in developing a plan for attaining their life goals. Many teens benefit from a continued, positive and permanent relationship with their mentor after they transition out of foster care.

Become a Fairfax Families4Kids Mentor

Provide mentoring to youths ages 10 - 18 who are in foster care and have a need for a stable, caring adult in their lives. The mentor helps by serving as a dependable, trusted friend, role model, advisor, motivator, coach and active listener; helps create a network of support for the youth; provides academic assistance; advocates for the youth; works with the child as they transition from placement to placement; provides a stress-free relationship with fun activities; and provides new experiences and learning opportunities.

Sponsor a High School Teen

Help a teen who is completing high school by making a contribution toward prom clothing and tickets; class trips; graduation events and expenses; senior class pictures; school rings and school supplies; yearbooks; gift certificates for clothing and haircuts, eyeglasses or contacts, sports equipment, musical instruments, bicycles; or gift cards for the annual Fairfax County Department of Family Services' Foster Care Graduation Event.

Sponsor a College Bound Teen

Help a teen who is preparing for college by making a contribution toward college application fees, books and supplies; toiletries; telephone calling cards; dorm essentials; care packages; gas or public transportation fare cards; and other gift cards. Teens also need assistance with completing applications, financial aid forms, visits to college campuses, and a place to go "home" to during school breaks.

Sponsor a Teen Transitioning Out of Foster Care

Make contributions toward: new household items; small appliances; truck rentals to move their belongings; car repairs and maintenance; and gift cards to purchase clothing, haircuts, groceries, gas, public transportation fare cards and furniture.

Sponsor a Pregnant Teen or Teen Mother

Make a contribution toward: baby care items; car seats; furniture; diapers; safety gates; children's clothing; books; and other reading materials about fetal development, child development and parenting.

Lead a Workshop

Share your lifelong knowledge and skills with teens. Life Skills Groups meet each month to teach teens about money management, time management, budgeting, personal safety, household maintenance, automobile maintenance, communication skills, dating violence, healthy eating and cooking, anger management, college preparation, the legal system, their rights and responsibilities, career exploration and job readiness.

ADDITIONAL WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Provide tutoring assistance, SAT or GED test preparation.
- Provide a job shadowing experience to help them learn about the work environment.
- Help teens learn about computers and commonly used computer software applications.
- Conduct a tour of a community facility, business or factory.
- Provide space for meetings, trainings, special events.
- Provide storage space for donated items and training supplies.
- Provide employment or volunteer opportunities.
- Donate tickets to events and activities such as sports, entertainment, social functions, arts and cultural, bowling, skating, fairs, festivals, movies, museums, parks and recreation centers.
- Donate advertising space in newspapers, newsletters, on the radio and television.
- Donate items for life books – cameras, film, scrapbooks and supplies, film processing and tools.
- Donate food/snacks for training events.
- Volunteer your time at a special event, training, career fair or other group event.
- Help the youth celebrate a birthday or holiday by donating gifts or gift cards.

WHEN MAKING A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

The check should be made out to: **Fairfax County Department of Family Services.**

On the memo portion of the check, please write: **Independent Living Contribution Account.**

Checks can be mailed to: **Fairfax County Department of Family Services
Attn: Foster Care and Adoption, Independent Living Program
12011 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the Independent Living Program coordinator at 703-324-7726; TTY 703-222-9452.



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Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. To request this information in an alternate format, call 703-324-7726; TTY 703-222-9452.

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