

## **DHS receives grant to assist foster youth**

Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) received nearly \$1 million as one of three sites selected nationally to implement YVLifeSet, an evidence-informed program developed by Tennessee-based Youth Villages to assist young adults ages 17 to 22 who have been in foster care or out-of-home placement and are eligible for Independent Living (IL) services.

YVLifeSet is a voluntary program that partners eligible youth with a specialist who will meet with them in their community and work with them on goals identified by the youth, often related to education, housing, employment, mental health and healthy relationships. YVLifeSet specialists meet with the 8-10 young adults on their caseload at least once per week to help them enhance their independent living skills, strengthen their natural support network, and accomplish the youth's identified goals. The program, locally administered by Pressley Ridge, was launched on January 2, 2018, and joins a continuum of IL services that includes the [412 Youth Zone](#) and the Independent Living program. Youth Villages will serve as a partner in Allegheny County's administration of the program, providing training, clinical supervision, post-discharge data collection and technical assistance.

"Allegheny County has seen great outcomes from our current Independent Living offerings, which are working well for most eligible young adults," said Courtney Lewis, program implementation specialist in the Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF). "We applied to bring YVLifeSet here specifically to target the subset of youth who are currently not engaging in services, for whatever reason, but could use this more intensive support to help them bridge the transition to adulthood. National research shows this is a critical time for young people who have touched our systems, and we think YVLifeSet can help this small group that could fall through the cracks."

This grant funding was provided by Youth Villages by way of Blue Meridian Partners, a national funding collaboration that invests in nonprofits that are making a positive impact on economically disadvantaged children and youth. Local foundations, including The Pittsburgh Foundation, are also supporting the startup of the program.

To learn more about YVLifeSet, please contact Courtney Lewis at (412) 350-4556 or [Courtney.Lewis@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Courtney.Lewis@alleghenycounty.us).