



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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County Receives Grant to Assist Foster Youth Transitioning to Adulthood

PITTSBURGH – County Executive Rich Fitzgerald announced today that the county has received a \$968,750 grant from Youth Villages to be utilized by the Department of Human Services (DHS) to assist youth who have been in foster care transitioning to adulthood. YouthVillages is a national non-profit committed to assisting emotionally and behaviorally troubled children and their families. The funding will be used to implement a new program, YVLifeSet, targeting youth who have been in foster care and are eligible for the department's Independent Living (IL) services.

"We are grateful for the support of Youth Villages and thank them for this funding that will allow us to better serve these youth," said Fitzgerald. "We are very proud of the work done by Human Services on a daily basis, and look forward to what they will be able to do with this funding and the YVLifeSet program in our community."

DHS was chosen to partner with Youth Villages through a competitive grant process. The funding from Youth Villages will be distributed over a three-year period, with a goal of rolling out YVLifeSet in January 2018. YVLifeSet will join a continuum of services for youth in the county who have been in foster care or another out-of-home placement that also includes the 412 Youth Zone and the Independent Living program.

The grant is part of a Youth Villages initiative to make effective services available to each of the 23,000 young people who age out of foster care each year in the United States. To do this, the organization is partnering with high-performing public agencies and nonprofits across the country. To startup services, Youth Villages makes matching grants that vary based on the scope of the projects.

The funding from Youth Villages comes by way of Blue Meridian Partners, a national funding collaboration that invest in nonprofits, like Youth Villages, which are making a positive impact on economically disadvantaged children and youth. IL services are available to youth who, since turning 14, have spent at least one month in foster care or another placement outside of their home. The new program, YVLifeSet, brings an opportunity for support and guidance to the youth in their communities to help as they transition to adulthood. Youth Villages will serve as a partner in the administration of the program.

YVLifeSet is an evidence-informed program designed to assist young adults 17 to 22 by partnering them with a specialist who will meet with them in their community and work with them to find available housing and job-training programs, mental health services, or other supports they need to live independently.

"Making the transition to independent living is a particularly vulnerable time for youth and it's crucial to have good supports in place. The YVLifeSet model has proven effective in other jurisdictions, and we thank Youth Villages for the opportunity to offer it to those we are serving in Allegheny County," said Marc Cherna, DHS Director.

"We're pleased to have Allegheny County DHS as our partner in YVLifeSet. I've been impressed with the passion Marc Cherna and his leadership team have for helping former foster youth. The county's most vulnerable young people will have a greater chance for long-term adult success through this important partnership," said Patrick Lawler, Youth Villages CEO.

A Request for Proposals seeking a provider to administer the program has been issued. Details can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.

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