

Youth Independent Living FAQ

Crossnore Communities for Children is excited to build upon the years of experience the agency has had at both its Winston-Salem and Avery campuses serving youth and young adults aging out of foster care. We are excited to share about the expansion of our services for this population in all regions through the launch of our **Youth Independent Living Program**. This program is an independent living program for youth/young adults currently in foster care and/or aging out of foster care. It will include on-campus (supervised) housing as well as off-campus (unsupervised) housing, as well as other case management and skill-building components.

VISION: Support youth and young adults who are currently in or have aged out of the foster care system by offering age-appropriate, normative assistance to build skills and connections in order to increase positive life outcomes and create resiliency.

MISSION: Assist youth and young adults in independence and self-sufficiency preparation as they transition to adulthood.

1. What community need is this program responding to?

This program is being revised to meet the needs of youth/young adults who have aged out of foster care or may still be in foster care without permanency and/or natural support networks to support them as they transition into young adulthood. Youth who age out of foster care are less likely to graduate high school or attend secondary education and more likely to become substance dependent, unexpectedly pregnant and/or be convicted of a crime. As an agency, we want to support these youth to move toward more positive outcomes. We also recognized that young adults who have left our programs over the years continue to request support from the agency.

This program will support youth and young adults ages 16 to 26 who are currently in and/or have aged out of foster care.

- Youth/Young Adult Eligibility Criteria:
 - Young adults ages 16 to 26
 - Placement in foster care (16- to 17-year olds), Voluntary Placement Agreement in place (18-20) or history of placement in foster care (21-26)
 - Engaged in treatment for any mental health or substance use diagnoses
 - Does not meet DSM-V criteria for an IDD diagnosis
 - Not currently parenting (If a youth/young adult becomes pregnant or their partner becomes pregnant while in the program, we will work with the youth/young adult to determine the best long-term placement for the youth/young adult and their family post birth of the child. This program is not a maternity or parenting program and will not be a viable long term option.)

2. Will 16- to 17-year olds still be served in Residential and Foster Care? What would make a 16- or 17-year old eligible for this program versus Residential and/or Foster Care?

We will still serve 16- and 17-year olds in both our residential and foster care programs. Some 16- and 17-year olds may be appropriate for more than one program. If they qualify for more than one program and there are slots within more than one, it will be up to the consumer (youth/young adult and/or legal guardian) to make the decision as to which program they would like to be admitted.

Age alone will not qualify a 16- to 17-year old into the housing aspect of this program. They must be able to demonstrate other competencies such as independence, self-sufficiency, and appropriate maturity level.

3. What is our hope for impact in outcomes?

Our hope is that youth/young adults are able to do the following:

- Have a successful transition to adulthood by showing they have the ability to maintain safe and stable housing, achieve vocational goals, and are able to maintain safe and healthy relationships.
- Report mastery or increased competence of a skill/passion they can carry with them into adulthood (may be recreational, spiritual, etc.).
- Work through trauma symptoms and find appropriate coping skills to use as they transition to independence.

We also hope to see an overarching outcome of a decrease in the number of persons who have lived in foster care to experience homeless, incarceration, and/or teen parenting.

4. What evidence-based model has been chosen for this program?

Like all of Crossnore's programs, YIL will be grounded in The Sanctuary Model®. Additionally, the Casey Life Skills assessment and tools will be used to assess and support the youth/young adults as they transition through the program. Residents of this program will also have access to Crossnore's clinical team which is trained in various evidence based models: trauma informed cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy, 7 Challenges, EMDR, etc.

5. What will this program provide to participants?

This program is designed to meet the needs of youth/young adults ages 16 to 26. The program provides case management (medical, educational, vocational, legal, etc.), access to clinical and psychiatric services (as needed), independent living skill building, and housing. Each of these services are offered according to the youth/young adult's individual service plan as developed based on their assessment upon referral to the program. Services are tailored based on age, developmental level, educational level and/or any other special needs of the youth/young adult. The program is designed to follow a continuum so youth/young adults can receive on-going support that builds or titrates depending on each youth/young adult's journey to self-sufficiency.

6. Where will this program be housed?

The Youth Independent Living Program program will be designed specifically for the 16-26 year old population unlike the Residential program which is designed to serve 0-21. The first house in Winston-Salem to be used for this program will be Reynolds Cottage. This house is transitioning out of the Residential program and the goal will be to open as a YIL house in March 2021. We will continue to assess the demand for this program to determine if and when other houses will move into the YIL program.

7. What will the YIL supervision structure look like?

A YIL Coordinator position will be hired in each of the three regions: Winston-Salem (Triad), Avery (Mountain) and Hendersonville (Western). YIL Coordinators will be providing a combination of direct care, staff supervision, community networking, and psychoeducation training.

Resident Advisors (RAs) will be providing on-site support and supervision to residents in the housing-based portion of the program.

8. What is the timeline for opening this program in each of Crossnore's regions?

The Winston-Salem region is actively hiring staff and plans to open in March/April of 2021. The Hendersonville region is also actively hiring a coordinator and hopes to open in the second quarter of 2021. The goal will be to open in the Avery region in mid-2021.

9. What is the admissions process?

Referrals for YIL program may be made by the youth/young adult themselves or by their parent, legal guardian, custodian, Department of Social Services, Department of Public Safety Division of Juvenile Justice or a Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization.

Applicants return completed applications to the Referrals and Admissions Team. Once the application is

received and reviewed for eligibility criteria, the Referrals and Admissions team will schedule the applicant for an interview with the YIL team committee. The committee member will notify the applicant of acceptance or denial.

You can contact Referrals & Admissions at 1-866-892-6213 or email referrals@crossnore.org Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 4:00pm (emergency referrals are not received for this program) to request and/or submit an application. You can also visit our website at www.crossnore.org.

10. How can I learn more or ask more specific questions?

You can contact Referrals & Admissions at 1-866- 892-6213. If you would like to learn more about the development of this program, email Sandy Sauer, Director of Post Permanency & Adoptions at ssauer@crossnore.org. Sandy will be the supervising director for the program as it launches in the spring of 2021.

YOUTH INDEPENDENT LIVING CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

