

# 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 has been designed 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 adulthood. We understand that 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 recognize that young adults who have left our programs over the years continue to request support from the agency; we serve those needs through our AfterCare Services program.

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

- Client 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?

Crossnore continues to 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 (client and/or legal guardian) to make the decision as to which program they would like to be admitted.

Age alone is not a qualifier for admission into the residential portion of this program. Some of the competencies assessed for during the application process are: willingness to work towards independence, reasonable 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 youth as they transition through the program. Clients 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. The agency will also be partnering with LYFT Learning to bring our students an exciting psychoeducational program through the Life Skills Reimagined program, which will commence January, 2022.

#### **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 client'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 client. The program is designed to follow a continuum so clients can receive on-going support that builds or titrates depending on each client'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. In Winston-Salem, Reynolds Cottage transitioned from Residential to YIL in March of 2021. Also, in Winston-Salem, Tise Cottage is ready to go and should be open for young adults in early 2022. In Winston-Salem we have one off-campus apartment, providing a continuum of care to independence, with potentially more to come. On our Avery campus, Matthews Cottage is currently transitioning to the YIL program and will be open for referrals in early 2022. We will continue to assess the demand for YIL expansion in our various regions.

#### **7. What will the YIL supervision structure look like?**

A YIL Coordinator or Case Manager will provide a combination of direct care, staff supervision, community networking, and psychoeducational training. At least one of these positions is hired in each of the three regions: Winston-Salem (Triad), Avery (Mountain), and Hendersonville (Western).

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

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

The Winston-Salem region has been up and running since March of 2021 with Tise Cottage opening in early 2022. The Avery region has hired a YIL Coordinator and is actively hiring two RAs for Matthews Cottage. The Hendersonville region has had a YIL Coordinator since April of 2021, who is actively networking and engaging with the community and providing virtual programming to our YIL clients.

## 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.

A completed Crossnore Referral Screening form with clinical documents is submitted to the Referrals & Admissions Team. Once all the documents are received they are reviewed for eligibility criteria. If the youth meets eligibility, the Referrals and Admissions team will send an application & reference forms for completion and schedule the youth for an interview with the YIL committee. The Referrals & Admissions team will notify the applicant of the program decision.

You can contact Referrals and Admissions at 1-866-892-6213 or email [referrals@crossnore.org](mailto: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 a referral. You can also visit our website at [www.crossnore.org](http://www.crossnore.org).

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

If you would like to learn more about this program you can visit our website at [www.crossnore.org](http://www.crossnore.org) or reach out to our Referrals and Admissions team at 1-866-892-6212. Depending on your question or unique circumstance you may be directed to a YIL staff member for assistance.

### YOUTH INDEPENDENT LIVING CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

