

VDSS - Youth Services (Independent Living) Highlights - December 2024

Drive To Thrive is Here!

**** It was brought to our attention that BL 877 has not been opened in LASER. VDSS Finance hopes to have this matter resolved shortly****

During this time, please ensure that your Local Finance Department has established BL 877 in your finance systems.

Virginia's Statewide Driver's Licensing Program, named by SPEAKOUT, has begun. Please refer to the attached FUSION-Broadcast for detail information. Complete Drive To Thrive Guidebook will be posted by the end of November. If you have any questions in the interim, contact Transportation Specialist - Avis Thomas - avis.thomas9@dss.virginia.gov

****Ensure that Transition Plans and Life Skill Assessments are current prior to submitting D2T requests****

NYTD 19-Year-Olds Cohort 5A

19-Year-Old Period a survey list is available in [SafeMeasures](#). ALL NYTD surveys in OPEN cases MUST be entered in OASIS by **September 15, 2024**. ALL CLOSED cases MUST be entered in Oasis by **March 14, 2025**. NYTD Forms can be located in English and Spanish on FUSION - [Services for Older Youth](#)
SURVEYS CAN (AND SHOULD) BE ENTERED PRIOR TO THE YOUTHS 19th BIRTHDAY.



Youth Services Fall 2024 Check-Ins

Last Check-In for the year! Participate in a 30-minute open discussion with the VDSS Youth Services team and hear independent Living Services updates. *Bring your questions!?!?! Click on link to join the meeting [VDSS Statewide Youth Services Check-ins w/ Project Life](#).*

Registration not required.

2nd Tuesday's - Join Us! 3:30pm - 4:00pm
December 10th

2nd Quarter Chafee & ETV Reports and MYR Forms

2nd quarter reports and Mid-Year Review forms are due BY **December 13th**. Email Reports/Form to va.ilp@dss.virginia.gov.

SNAP That!

SNAP That! is a VDSS initiative to provide information about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to youth who are transitioning out of foster care.

[Food Connections - Virginia Department of Social Services](#)

Ongoing Youth Services Projects

FYI Work Group – Monthly meetings with representatives from LDSS, PHAs, Supportive Services, Youth, VDSS, Community Supporters.

Sub-workgroups

- PHAs
- PCWAs
- Supportive Services

If you are interested in participating in a sub-workgroup, contact

Gwen.Castillo@dss.virginia.gov

FAFSA Released

FSS/ILCs should assist all ETV eligible youth in updating their FAFSA form.

Any current high school student on track to graduate this school year should also complete the FAFSA Application at this time.

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

ATTN. YOUNG ADULTS 18-26:

WERE YOU ADOPTED OR TURNED 18 WHILE IN FOSTER CARE?

VDSS is hosting a Photo Listing Focus Group, and they want to hear from YOU! Eligible participants can receive a \$75 VISA gift card.

For more information or to register, contact Chris Claiborne at c.claiborne@dss.virginia.gov or (804) 726-7531.

📅 December 19, 2024
6-8 pm



PLEASE SHARE!

FYI Housing Voucher Survey

VDSS is partnering with [Guidehouse](#), an independent consulting firm, to collect feedback on the [Foster Youth to Independence \(FYI\)](#) initiative in Virginia. This survey will be used to better understand FYI experiences of youth aging out of foster care services, FYI stakeholders' participation across Virginia, and challenges and successes with implementing the program. Your responses are greatly appreciated.

Who should take this survey?

You should take this survey if you are involved in FYI in Virginia, have been involved, or would like to be involved, and fall into one of these groups:

- Youth over 18 and have aged out of foster care in Virginia
- Case management and/or supportive services in Virginia to youth who have aged out of foster care
- Public housing authority staff in Virginia
- LDSS staff in Virginia

The survey will remain open through **Friday, December 20th.**

· **Click this link to take the survey:** [Take the Survey](#)

· **Or copy and paste this URL into your internet browser:**

<https://forms.office.com/r/azW16m9Swh>

If you have any questions or experience any difficulty taking this survey, please contact Nina Trouvé at ntrouve@guidehouse.com, or VDSS at va.ilp@dss.virginia.gov.

[SPEAKOUT – The Power of Permanent Connections for Youth in Foster Care – Video](#)

Virginia's Youth Advisory Board, SPEAKOUT hosted an enlightening and impactful virtual event focused on the critical importance of permanent connections for youth in foster care.

Permanent connections provide a sense of belonging and security, helping youth to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. Youth who have strong, stable connections are better equipped to handle life's challenges and build self-confidence. Professionals, foster parents and community partners all play a pivotal role in fostering these life-changing relationships.

YouTube Link - <https://youtu.be/09B30nLKXps>

[SPEAKOUT is growing!](#)

VDSS – Youth Advisory Board has only few spots left. Looking for additional representation in the **Eastern** Region.

Send an interest email to:

SPEAKOUT@dss.virginia.gov for more information/application or visit [Foster My Future - SPEAKOUT](#)

[Project LIFE](#)

View and SHARE the Project Life Newsletter [PLIFE latest Newsletter](#) for Youth Activities in your Region!

See PLIFE newsletter for IL workshop registration information in all 5 Regions!

[IL Coordinator's Meetings](#)

[Central Region-ILCC](#)

[Jan14th](#)

Contact tmurphy@umfs.org for more info.

[Project LIFE FALL 25 Youth Conference](#)

Another awesome, powerful, impactful, Youth Conference

Special Thanks to Project LIFE Staff for a well-planned thought-out event.

Extra Thanks to all the LDSS staff that sacrificed an entire weekend to support youth in FC. (**Albemarle, Alexandria, Henrico, Petersburg, Richmond City, Roanoke**)

It means more than you will ever know to the youth to have the support of caseworkers.