

VDSS - Youth Services (Independent Living)

Highlights – February 2023

FY 2024 Funding Package is now Available!!

FY 2024 Funding package can be accessed now on [FUSION – Services for Older Youth Page](#). Funding information has not yet been posted on the Child Welfare Funding Application and Reporting Page at this time.

Funding Applications are due no later than **Tuesday March 7, 2023**. Please submit early as possible to allow the Youth Services team adequate time to calculate funding requests and prepare funding letters.

Thanks!

FY23 TOTAL ALLOCATIONS - Reminder

For FY 2023 local agencies received their **TOTAL** Basic ILP (BL-862) and ETV (BL-861) allocations at the beginning of this fiscal year in June 2022.



We **strongly** encourage agencies that do not anticipate using all of their remaining Chafee and/or ETV funds by the end of the fiscal year (May 2023) to return any portion funds as soon as possible. Returning funds sooner than later allows VDSS to provide financial support to youth in localities that could benefit from additional funds.

Any LDSS in need of additional Chafee (ILP) (BL862) or ETV (BL861) funds can send a brief justification to Letha.Moore-Jones@ds.virginia.gov, who will provide you with approval to submit a LASER BRS request. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

JOIN US! Youth Services Team CHECK-INS

Come participate in a 30-minute open discussion with the Youth Services team about 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.

Tuesday, March 7, 2022 @ 3:30pm

Tuesday, April 4, 2022 @ 3:30pm

Tuesday, May 2, 2022 @ 3:30pm

What's New!

Lacey Kangas – lacey.kangas9@dss.virginia.gov - ETV Administrative Assistant – Lacey will be working in partnership with our ETV Specialist, Brooke Newman. Lacey will focus on direct contact with ETV eligible youth and assisting youth in navigating eligible education services. Also, growing a collaboration with Great Expectations Coaches throughout the state.



La Tika Jeffery – latika.jeffery9@dss.virginia.gov - Youth Development Specialist / SPEAKOUT Liaison. La Tika will be transitioning into Chauncey Strong's former position as Chauncey continues to provide training, support and promoting the Youth Welfare Approach. La Tika will be working with Virginia's Youth Advisory Board and focusing on strengthening and growing the Board through recruitment efforts.

Please welcome our new Youth Services Team Members!!!

OLD VDSS ETV email address



For those LDSS that may still have the old VDSS ETV email address. The old VDSS ETV email address has been discontinued. Please refrain from using that email address and send all Youth Services correspondence such as; Quarterly Reports, Mid-Year Reviews, Funding Applications to the va.ilp@dss.virginia.gov

Life Skills Assessments and Transition Plans

SafeMeasures reports a decline in Life Skills Assessment and Transition Plan compliance. Timely completion of these tools helps to building youth adult partnerships and establishes engagement around the Youth's needs and priorities.

Does your LDSS need training on to increase your localities life skills assessments and transition plan completion rates? Connect with your **Project LIFE** regional consultant to schedule a training for your area. gmack@umfs.org



VDSS and Child Trends Adoption Study

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) needs your help with an important study we are carrying out in partnership with Child Trends, a national non-profit research organization. This phase of the study focuses on learning about the experiences of young adults who have experienced disconnection from their adoptive families, including their experiences with post-adoption services that were helpful and/or unhelpful, as well as services they couldn't access that could have helped.

The interviews will last roughly 1 hour, and young adults will receive a \$100 dollar Visa gift card to thank them for their participation.



Please help recruit young adults who are eligible for this study by sharing the attached flyer to eligible young adults. See attachments for additional information and language.

Thank you very much in advance! If you have any questions about the study, or about the eligibility criteria, feel free to contact Child Trends at

VDSSsurvey@childtrends.org

Education Stability Trainings

Virtual Education Stability trainings have been broken into a two-part series. Content in Part 1 (general education), Part 2 (special education). **Registration is live.** These trainings are **free** and open to all school staff, **all LDSS-Family Services Workers**, LCPAs, and anyone interested in supporting students in foster care. **ALL Foster Care and Educational Stability Liaisons are strongly encouraged to attend.** Feel free to invite your supervisors, school counselors, school social workers, and anyone who works with foster care (administrative assistants, case managers, or your backups), as well as local or community partners.

Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 1:00 pm- 3:00 pm • Part 1 • virtual • [register now!](#)

Friday, March 24, 2023 at 10:00 am - 12:00 pm • Part 2 • virtual • [register now!](#)



Youth Exit Surveys

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) developed the Youth Exit Survey to learn more about young people's experiences in foster care. [This survey offers an opportunity for young adults \(ages 18+\) to voice their perspectives and provide valuable information](#) to policymakers and stakeholders to [help improve Virginia's foster care system](#). Participation in the survey come with a \$20.00 incentive, provided directly from VDSS.

Please continue to encourage youth participation. See attached PDF for information about the Youth Exit Survey



Project LIFE

Exciting events are happening this month. Get your youth involved. View and SHARE the Project Life February Newsletter. [PLIFE latest Newsletter.](#)

Contact your **Project LIFE** Regional Consultant for any Independent Living training and/or group ideas or needs! - <https://www.vaprojectlife.org/our-people/>

Project LIFE is hiring for an IL Consultant in the Piedmont and Western Regions. For more details view the December Newsletter or view the job post [here](#).

Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative - Authentic Youth Engagement Video

Corey and Kristopher's Story

Addresses the importance of transparency, honesty, and respect in building mutual trust. A case manager's commitment to being genuine and transparent helped a youth overcome years of distrust stemming from earlier traumatic experiences in foster care.

<https://youtu.be/VgwJbmAs7ok>



On **March 14th at 6:30 p.m.** for a live webinar event where Ashley Rhodes-Courter, author of Three Little Words and Three More Words, will share how her young life in foster care has helped shaped who she is today. Ashley is a social worker, advocate, foster parent, and executive whose combination of lived experienced and professional experience give her a unique expertise on how to improve outcomes for children and families.

Please feel free to share this no-cost event with others in your community.

[**Register Here!**](#)

Join Us As We Welcome
Ashley Rhodes-Courter
Author of Three Little Words and Three More Words

Advocate, Author, Former Foster Youth

March 14, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Click here to register or scan QR code

DEPAUL
COMMUNITY RESOURCES