



Creating lifelong connections for youth.

Independent Living Fact Sheet

Independent Living Services - Services and supports that are designed with and provided to youth.

Each youth in foster care, ages 14-21, is eligible for independent living services through the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS). These services are available regardless of a youth's goal or placement.

Services offered include:

- Life skills training/workshops
- Independent Living Needs Assessment (Casey Life Skills)
- Mentoring
- Academic support
- Career preparation
- Employment programs and/or vocational training
- Supervised independent living
- Housing education and home management training
- Educational financial assistance
- Budget and financial management training
- Health education and risk prevention

- Family support and healthy marriage education
- Room and board financial assistance

Independent Living Skills - Skills Youth develops to achieve self-sufficiency and interdependence

Foster Care Goals:

- *Permanency Goal* - Return home, adoption, placement with relatives
- *Permanent Foster Care* - Given when a permanency goal is no longer an option and youth has established a significant relationship with a foster parent
- *Another Planned Permanency Living Arrangement* - Given when a child is growing up with significant physical, developmental, or emotional limitations that would require him/her to live in a supported group or long-term secure setting.

Independent Living Stipend - The standard statewide payment for independent living arrangements is a maximum of \$644.00 per month. Payments are intended to assist the youth in covering the costs of rent, utilities, household



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equipment, food, clothing, personal care items, insurance, recreation and transportation. For the youth over age 18, the IL stipend may be used to support the youth in enabling him or her to remain in the foster parent's home.

Independent Living Contract - A signed agreement between a youth, his/her social worker and other parties such as foster parents, counselors and other supportive adults involved in the youth's life. The contract outlines responsibilities of each party to help with the youth's successful transition to adulthood. When a youth turns 18, the youth and social worker write an IL contract to continue IL services. If a youth lives in an independent living arrangement before turning 18, an IL contract may be used.

Supervised Independent Living - A youth who lives in an apartment setting and is continuing to develop independent living skills.

Independent Living Arrangement - A physical place where the older youth resides. It may or may not have 24-hour adult supervision.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact a Project LIFE staff person:

Talia Brown
Project Manager
804.239.1044
tabrown@umfs.org

Sophia Booker
Youth Network Coordinator
804.353.4461 x1504
sbooker@umfs.org

Caroline Davis
Project Coordinator
804.353.4461 x1606
cdavis@umfs.org

Willie Duty
Independent Living Consultant
540.798.9908
wduty@umfs.org

Devitta Jones
Youth Network Coordinator
757.490.9791
dejones@umfs.org

George Mack
Independent Living Consultant
804.366.9250
gmack@umfs.org