



Creating lifelong connections for youth.

## Menu of Services

Project LIFE is built on the Virginia Practice Model, which emphasizes children's rights to permanency, and federal requirements for the provision of opportunities to develop adult living skills. This program will ensure older youth and local staff and other professionals are receiving the support needed for an integrated approach to youth permanency and preparation for adulthood.

### Services for Professionals and Adult Stakeholders

All services are designed to support the delivery of foster care services for older youth in accordance with VDSS Guidance Section 14 Achieving Permanency for Older Youth.

- **Orientation to Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA)**  
This orientation is for LDSS staff and contracted private providers who conduct IL assessments and provides an initial orientation for users to the CLSA web technology and the array of related resources available for workers in using assessment findings to develop customized service and transition plans. This orientation and is

recommended as an informational foundation before or at the beginning of IL Assessment and Transition Plan Coaching (described below).

- **Orientation to Transition Planning**  
This orientation is for LDSS staff responsible for developing services and transition plans with youth and is designed as an orientation to policy requirements and to help workers develop greater understanding of the elements of the transition plan template and numerous resources available for IL skills development. Attendees will receive the Social Worker Guide to Transitional Living Planning with Youth that contains step-by-step guidance and helpful examples. This orientation is recommended as an informational foundation before or at the beginning of IL Assessment and Transition Plan Coaching (described below).
- **Family Services Specialist Guide to Preparing Older Youth in Care for Adulthood**  
This Guide is designed for use by LDSS staff responsible for conducting IL assessments and service and transition plans. It contains



## Creating lifelong connections for youth.

strategies for engaging youth, building a team, and integrating IL assessment findings into the service and transition plan as well as step-by-step guidance on each element of the plan, and lists of numerous best practice resources for preparing older youth in care for adulthood.

### Informational Sessions

Project LIFE IL Consultants will continue to offer informational sessions on the following topics:

- **Independent Living Services/ETV**  
Presentation focuses on the basics of the Independent Living Program, including the purpose and goals, the purpose of the IL assessment and service and transition living planning process, the difference between basic IL funding and the Educational Training Voucher (ETV), the IL services contract with youth age 18 and older, and guidelines for resuming services for youth who leave and wish to return to foster care.
- **Permanency**  
Presentation provides an overview of permanency, its meaning, importance, and related policy requirements, strategies for engaging youth, use of search technologies, and use of Permanency Pacts. This is a basic, introductory overview; more in-depth

technical assistance is provided within the context of IL Assessment and Transition Plan Coaching.

- **National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)**  
Presentation focuses on why the information is being collected, how to complete the survey, strategies for locating and engaging youth in the data collection process, the relationship between NYTD and principles of Virginia's Practice Model, and how to enter NYTD-related data into OASIS.

### Other Learning Opportunities

Knowledge of permanency best practices is critical in work with older youth in foster care. Project LIFE will be offering several opportunities for LDSS staff, private providers, and related stakeholders, such as resource parents, to learn more about these important topics and implications for practice with older youth.

### Regional and Local Support

Project LIFE will continue to provide support to regional IL Committees and coalitions, LDSSs, and private providers in providing IL services to youth and strengthening practices in serving older youth.



## Creating lifelong connections for youth.

### Learning Opportunities for Youth

The following services are offered to youth in foster care, ages 14-21.

- **Statewide Youth Conferences**  
Project LIFE offers two statewide youth conferences each year. The conferences focus on leadership development, advocacy, public speaking, and permanency.
- **Regional Youth Events**  
Regional activities will be held regularly throughout the state to include topics like community engagement, advocacy, and youth-adult partnerships. Project LIFE will also work with IL coordinators in each region to plan and implement the events that are tailored to regional needs and priorities.
- **Youth Network**  
The Youth Network is a core group of youth that can be identified to serve on workgroups/committees that need meaningful youth input. Youth will have opportunities to come together to network with others, offer input on local and state policies, and share their concerns about youth in foster care.
- **Speakers Bureau**  
The Speaker's Bureau is a trained team of youth in foster care and foster care alumni, who make presentations to targeted audiences throughout Virginia. These youth advocate for themselves and others by sharing their experiences.
- **IL Transition Planning**  
A standardized, interactive presentation designed to assist youth to i) understand his/her responsibility for developing and achieving a plan; ii) develop personal goals; iii) identify his/her strengths, interests and needs; and iv) use these goals, strengths and interests to design services, use networks, and access services and resources to meet his or her needs. (Refer to VDSS Policy on Foster Care, Section 11. Serving Older Youth)
- ***Guide for Older Youth in and Aging Out of Foster Care in Virginia***  
Designed as a tool for older youth in care, the Guide provides information and strategies for engaging youth in their IL assessment and transition living planning process, building their team, developing life skills, and building connections that will last. The Guide supports implementation of DSS Policy on Serving Older Youth with particular focus on supporting youth-driven approaches.



Creating lifelong connections for youth.

For more information on any of the services listed, please contact a Project LIFE staff person:

Talia Brown  
Project Manager  
804.239.1044  
[tabrown@umfs.org](mailto:tabrown@umfs.org)

Devitta Jones  
Youth Network Coordinator  
757.490.9791  
[dejones@umfs.org](mailto:dejones@umfs.org)

Sophia Booker  
Youth Network Coordinator  
804.353.4461 x1504  
[sbooker@umfs.org](mailto:sbooker@umfs.org)

Marianna Langenbeck  
Social Media Contractor  
800.292.0305  
[mlangenbeck@umfs.org](mailto:mlangenbeck@umfs.org)

Caroline Davis  
Project Coordinator  
804.239.1066  
[cdavis@umfs.org](mailto:cdavis@umfs.org)

George Mack  
Independent Living Consultant  
804.366.9250  
[gmack@umfs.org](mailto:gmack@umfs.org)

Willie Duty  
Independent Living Consultant  
540.905.5299  
[wduty@umfs.org](mailto:wduty@umfs.org)