

## THE NEED: SHELTER FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Contrary to popular belief, homeless people don't exist only in urban areas. The Iowa Institute for Community Alliances report *Iowans Experiencing Homelessness 2014* indicates there were 16,238 Iowans who were reported as homeless during 2012 and 19,786 Iowans were reported at risk of becoming homeless during the year.

Our programs focus on helping homeless youth and single parents live independently and become self-sufficient. Case management services are provided to help them set and achieve their educational, vocational, and personal living goals.

The Transitional Living Program (TLP) works to eliminate homelessness among youth and pregnant or parenting young adults in central Iowa. Our programs are often a last resort for runaway and homeless youth and pregnant or parenting young adults who may have exhausted community resources, family, and friends.

The majority of youth we serve are non-system involved, meaning they are not placed or directly supported by any governmental payment agency. Some have been labeled "disconnected" youth, and are aging out of placement with no housing options.

## WHAT IS THE TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM?

Youth & Shelter Services designed its Transitional Living Program to provide the option of monitored self-sufficient living for homeless youth 17 to 21 years old who cannot live safely with a parent or relative and have no other stable living arrangement.

Participants live in cluster or scattered site transitional living arrangements and are monitored by a case manager for up to 18 months. The program emphasizes living skills such as budgeting, problem solving, running a household, and seeking and maintaining employment.

Residents must be willing to participate in an educational program and/or maintain a job, agree to save a portion of their salary, participate in an appropriate level of counseling, and abstain from chemical use/abuse.

## Youth & Shelter Services

### Transitional Living Programs

#### TRANSITIONAL LIVING HOMES & APARTMENTS

Homes and apartments serve as residences for a unique transitional living program targeting homeless older teens and pregnant young women, ages 17-24. The program focuses on helping non-system involved young mothers and fathers to become independent and self-sufficient. Participants may stay for up to 24 months.

*"Getting my life back on track by finishing high school is the best thing that ever happened to me."* -Jon, TLP participant, age 17

#### PHILOSOPHY & APPROACH

Lighthouse staff members and personnel from cooperating agencies in the community work with homeless pregnant young women to help them meet their prenatal nutritional and health needs. Staff members work with young parents to build stronger parenting skills that meet their children's developmental, intellectual, and day care needs. Staff also refer clients to other community resources.

A case manager develops strategies to assist each participant in meeting his/her specific goals and needs. The participants must complete or further their education or maintain regular employment; and put a portion of their salary into a savings account.

*"Being able to earn my own money and take care of my baby is the best feeling I've had in years."* -Tara, SAL participant, age 18

#### HOUSING

All scattered-site apartments and TLP homes (under six residents) are monitored through unannounced staff visits. There are no live-in or overnight staff. This requires youth to be highly motivated and responsible.

#### SMOKING & ALCOHOL

There is no smoking or drinking alcohol or possession of nicotine, alcohol or drugs on YSS property and in YSS facilities, including TLP homes and apartments. YSS hires only smoke-free staff.

#### APARTMENT/TLP REFERRALS:

Referrals may be made by any concerned persons, by other agencies, or by self-referral. For more information, please contact:

**Lighthouse/TLP Program Coordinator:**  
515-233-2250 or hmetheny@yss.ames.ia.us  
Family Life Center  
125 South 3rd Street, Ames, IA 50010

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For more information, visit  
our website at  
[www.yss.org](http://www.yss.org) and click on  
Programs