

## WHO CAN BE AN INDEPENDENT LIVING PROVIDER?

- An independent living provider can be any caring and patient individual who meets the following requirements:
  - At least 25 years of age
  - No criminal history
  - No history with Child Protective Services
  - Live in or own a home with accommodating space
  - Willing to work with youth and provide support as they transition out of the foster care system



*"Independent Living has helped me so much. It has helped me make a transition from a child to an adult. It also helped me distinguish my needs from my wants."*

Leosha



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### Macomb County

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### Washtenaw County

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[www.orchards.org](http://www.orchards.org)

## INDEPENDENT LIVING



STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH  
QUALITY SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES





## WHAT IS THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM?

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Orchards Children's Services Independent Living Program is designed to meet the immediate needs of foster care youth beginning at the age of sixteen years while supporting them in their transition to independence and adulthood. Orchard's philosophy is based on a person-centered, comprehensive, team approach.

The youth, case manager, other professionals, and any individual identified as significant to the youth function as a team focused on the implementation and monitoring of individualized goals designed to meet the needs of each youth. Should a youth have special needs such as developmental disabilities and/or language barriers, external resources will be utilized to meet these needs.

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877.529.5532  
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## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR ORCHARDS INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM?

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- Adolescents and young adults beginning at the age of sixteen who are currently in the foster care system.
- Youth that demonstrate maturity in self-care and personal judgment.
- Youth must be willing to learn the skills to function independently physically, emotionally and intellectually.
- Youth must be enrolled in and regularly attending an educational or vocational program and/or maintain employment.

## HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

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- Eligible Foster Care Youth, in conjunction with the team, reside with an agency approved Independent Living Provider.
- No specific type of living arrangement is required. The living arrangement may be, for example, a single apartment, a shared apartment or home, or a rented room in a provider's home.
- The living arrangement must be:
  - Safe and Secure
  - Meet the youth's needs for personal space
  - Agreed upon between both the youth and the case manager prior to occupancy
- The program goal is to provide youth with skills to become self sufficient and there by avoid homelessness as they "age out" of the foster care system.
- Youth are taught skills that lead to increasing self reliance and self esteem such as job seeking, money management, housing, emergency and safety, relationships and health issues, educational and career planning, transportation and legal rights and responsibilities.

- Youth placed in the Independent Living Program will be receiving an independent living stipend. The case manager will work with the youth to develop a budget that will ensure the youth has adequate financial support to meet his/her housing, clothing, food and miscellaneous needs.

## WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT LIVING PROVIDER?

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- Independent Living Providers will allow the youth to live in their home while he/she is participating in the Independent Living Program.
- An Independent Living Provider does not necessarily need to reside in the home that the youth is living in if the youth is of maturity level as to the workers discretion.
- The Provider acts as a support person for the youth as they transition from the foster care system into living independently.
- Independent Living Providers will receive a portion of the youth's monthly stipend. This money is used towards the youth's rent and utilities. The amount that is paid towards the provider is agreed upon by the youth, the Independent Living Case Manager, and the Provider.
- The Independent Living Provider works with the program case manager and the youth to develop the most proactive plan for the youth's independence.

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LEARNING...

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GROWTH...

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INDEPENDENCE.

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