



Foster Youth to Independence

Program provides housing assistance and support to youth aging out of foster care

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that more than 20,000 young people age out of foster care each year. The National Center for Housing and Child Welfare estimates that about 25 percent of these young people experience homelessness within four years of leaving foster care; an even higher number are precariously housed.

Meeting the Needs of Kent County Foster Youth

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission is partnering with the Kent County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the West Michigan Partnership for Children, the Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness and the Continuum of Care initiative to administer a Foster Youth to Independence program in Kent County.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) is a collaborative effort to prevent and end homelessness among youth who have a current or prior history of involvement with child welfare agencies.

Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Services

- A HUD FYI Voucher provided through the Housing Choice Voucher program provides up to 36 months of rental housing subsidy.
- Supportive services* include:
 - Information/counseling on basic life skills such as money management, meeting nutritional needs, and how to access health care and mental health support
 - Job search preparation
 - Educational and career advancement counseling
 - Counseling regarding finding and maintaining rental housing

* *Engagement in supportive services is optional*

Foster Youth to Independence Eligibility Criteria

- Youth must be between the ages of 18 and 24
- Youth must have left foster care or will leave foster care within 90 days in accordance with a transition plan described in Section 475(5)(H) of the Social Security Act
- Youth must be experiencing homelessness or be at risk of experiencing homelessness

To refer an eligible youth for services, please contact:

Paige Putans, Kent County DHHS

Phone: (616) 265-0144

Email: PutansP@michigan.gov



**GRAND RAPIDS
HOUSING COMMISSION**

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