

Frequently Asked **Questions**

Q: Are there eligibility requirements to participate in Extended Foster Care?

A: Yes. To be eligible for Extended Foster Care, you must be:

- Enrolled in a secondary educational program or a program leading to an equivalent credential; or
- Enrolled in an institution that provides post-secondary or vocational education; or
- Participating in a program or activity designed to promote employment or remove barriers to employment; or
- Employed at least 80 hours per month; or
- Incapable of these educational or employment activities due to a medical condition.

Q: Do I have to participate in the LifeSet program to participate in Extended Foster Care?

A: Yes. All participants in Extended Foster Care must participate in the services offered through LifeSet. However, once you have completed the LifeSet program, you may continue in Extended Foster Care until you reach the age of 21 or decide to leave care.

Q: I need housing. Does this program help me find an apartment?

A: Yes. The Extended Foster Care program will assist you in finding the best type of housing to meet your needs. In many circumstances, the program also provides some funding toward types of housing.

Q: Where do I meet my specialist?

A: Wherever you like. Your specialist must meet with you at least once a month where you live, but the rest of your weekly meetups can be in the community at places and times convenient for you.

Q: Is there any cost to me?

A: No. Extended Foster Care is free to participants and is a voluntary program.

The Gift of a **Good Start**

Sometimes the first steps are the most critical. At the edge of adulthood, choices about education, employment, relationships and health can be overwhelming. LifeSet™ is a proven method for helping new adults get it right. Begun by Youth Villages in 1999, LifeSet has given more than 11,000 young people the support they need to realize their own amazing potential.

We believe in the potential of every single young person to become an incredible adult.



For additional questions, please contact our Program Supervisor:

Shannon Catanzaro

Child Welfare Manager
Transitioning Youth
Louisiana Department of
Children & Family Services
(985) 867-6830
Shannon.Catanzaro.DCFS@la.gov

Get Ready. Get Set. For **Life.**

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services now offers **Extended Foster Care**

featuring LifeSet™, a program that helps young people leaving state care become independent adults.



Is Extended Foster Care **right for me?**

Extended Foster Care (EFC) helps young people get a good start on becoming successful, independent adults. EFC is voluntary and allows young adults to drive their own plan. The program may be right for you if you are:

- 18 to 21 years old
- Aging out or have aged out of care
- Lacking significant family support
- In need of stable housing
- Experiencing mental health issues
- Facing an especially challenging time in your life and want support

How does LifeSet **work?**

LifeSet, a program by Youth Villages, works both with and for you. What you get from the program depends on you.

- **The organization matches you with a LifeSet specialist.**
- **You and your specialist meet once a week wherever it's convenient for you – or even more often if you need extra support.**
- **A LifeSet specialist is available to you 24/7 by phone and can provide face-to-face support as needed.**
- **Most young people are in the LifeSet program for about seven to nine months, but it's based on your needs.**
- **Your LifeSet specialist works with you to help you identify and accomplish your goals.**

How can LifeSet **help me?**

LifeSet specialists are here to give you the support you need to reach your goals. Typically, young adults ask us to help them:

- **Obtain a high school diploma or GED**
- **Resolve family or relationship conflict; form healthy relationships or reconnect with family program**
- **Find, apply and enroll in college or a job training program**
- **Write a resume and learn skills to get a job**
- **Learn parenting skills**
- **Obtain or continue health care coverage and medication**
- **Obtain a Social Security card, driver's license/ permit or birth certificate**
- **Learn budgeting and responsible use of banking and credit services**
- **Find and maintain employment**
- **Learn time management and scheduling skills**
- **Establish support network**
- **Attend court dates and assist with basic legal matters**
- **Find and maintain affordable and stable housing**
- **Access community resources**



Jonathan's Story: Ready for the future, thanks to **LifeSet**

When Jonathan was 3 years old, he and his father left their native Haiti. Placed into foster care at age 12 due to abuse, he quickly learned to be independent. After being placed in seven foster homes, he finally aged out when he turned 18. Although he had a job and an apartment, things began unraveling soon, and Jonathan lost his home and income. Homeless and with nowhere else to turn, he searched online for "helping foster youth" and found LifeSet.

He enrolled in the LifeSet program and was matched with a specialist who is helping him work on achieving his goals. For a time, he lived in his grandmother's tiny apartment in a complex for the elderly. She was suffering from Alzheimer's, and Jonathan became her primary caretaker. When she died, he lost his beloved relative and was homeless again.

His LifeSet specialist met with Jonathan regularly, arranging for safe housing and helping him enroll in college. He is studying operations management at a local university, holds a job and is working hard on his academics. Jonathan is happy to be back to pursuing his life goals and makes time for volunteering, working out and doing outdoor activities whenever he can.

There are many challenges ahead, but LifeSet is giving Jonathan the support he needs to become a productive, independent adult.

