



MILESTONE TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM EXPANSION

BACKGROUND

The Salt Lake County Youth Services Milestone Transitional Living Program (TLP) assists in ending the cycle of homelessness and dependency by helping young adults become self-sufficient through access to safe housing, stable employment and connections to ongoing support and resources. Milestone TLP serves up to 19 young adults at a time ages 18 to 21 who are experiencing homelessness in Salt Lake County.

IMPACT

The United States Inter-agency Council on Homelessness notes, "People experiencing chronic homelessness cost the public between \$30,000 and \$50,000 per person per year through their repeated use of emergency rooms, hospitals, jails, psychiatric centers, detox, and other crisis services." For young adults experiencing homelessness, the financial burden to the public is no different but the personal cost is vast. None of these facilities are designed as long-term solutions for a youth experiencing homelessness, resulting in deeply detrimental emotional and physical trauma.

More than 120 youth "age out" of foster care in Utah every year (the majority of which are in the Salt Lake Region), meaning they are no longer in state custody and are at higher risk for homelessness and other negative outcomes.

YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE:



Within 2 years,
34% are
incarcerated or
experiencing
homelessness

50% have
higher rates of
mental illness
than their
peers



74% of youth
who age
out live in
poverty

Youth involved
in child welfare
services are 3-5
times more likely
to commit suicide



Youth Services has worked to address these issues by providing transitional housing for vulnerable youth. Since opening Milestone in 2012, 250 young adults have benefited. In 2021, Milestone TLP served 42 young adults from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. Milestone TLP is pleased to report, 19 of the 23 (82%) of the young adults that exited our program were positive exits (defined as housed and employed or in school) and 21 of the 23 (92%) were safely housed at exit. To teach budgeting and saving skills, the Milestone program has participants pay monthly program fees. Upon exiting the program, the funds are returned to them as they transition into stable housing. Frequently, these funds are used as a down payment for their first apartment. In August 2020, Salt Lake County Youth Services' Milestone TLP expanded its fifteen-bed program with the opening of a new four-bedroom house in partnership with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and now serves nineteen young adults.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Additional safe housing programs are needed for vulnerable youth leaving foster care, those rescued from trafficking, refugee orphans and other traumatized youth that are at-risk during this transitional period. Youth Services has limited capacity and funding that reaches only a small number of these youth through its Milestone program.

Salt Lake Rotary is willing to raise funds to purchase and renovate 2 five-plex properties in the community which would house an additional 16 young adults at a time (25 youth per year) and an office for staff. Salt Lake Rotary estimates the fundraising for this project will take approximately two years with the goal of raising \$3.5 million. Rotary Club would like to donate land to Salt Lake County Youth Services into perpetuity. If the program were to be suspended, go outside the scope of intended use, or the land sold, Rotary would want the land/proceeds returned to invest in another project benefiting the community.



The five-plex will include 4 apartment units housing up to 8 young adults; 2 in each apartment which will have a kitchen, bathroom, living area, a laundry area and 2 bedrooms with a locked door so each young adult has their own safe space (trauma-informed best practice). Space will be available for staff at each location. One five-plex will be for individuals who identify as females and the other five-plex for individuals who identify as males.

There will be common area outside to support the program participants' needs and where they can go for recreational activities. In each five-plex one two-bedroom unit will have as an office for case managers, a therapist office, a kitchen (life skills groups) and an open space for the purpose of running groups or to be used as a gathering place. The outdoor space will ideally have a BBQ area, meditation space and activity area. This space will be set up to have outdoor activities and provide a safe place for young adults to enjoy the outdoors.

“

Milestone has allowed me to be myself and gave me the resources to be successful.

– Milestone Participant

PARTNER ROLES – SALT LAKE COUNTY YOUTH SERVICES AND SALT LAKE ROTARY



Rotary
Salt Lake City
Rotary Club 24



Youth Services will provide funds in the annual budget for all Milestone TLP staff including a program director, case managers, a therapist and residential house managers. Milestone TLP staff will engage community partners to support the young adults with resources and services to create stable and consistent partnerships and maintain relationships.

Milestone TLP fully embraces the Trauma Informed Care model of community services and is in regular contact with law enforcement, health providers, mental health providers, social services, substance use treatment, education, employment, and welfare agencies. A significant amount of inter-agency contact occurs when staff refer youth to partnering agencies for service and vice versa.

Youth are referred to Milestone TLP by Volunteers of America, Youth Services Basic Center Program (BCP), WorkForce Services, McKinney-Vento Liaisons, Division of Child and Family Services after-care case workers, Asian Association, Milestone TLP website, word of mouth, and other community partners. Salt Lake County Youth Services Milestone TLP will oversee the placement of young adults in the housing facilities. The Milestone team is dedicated and vested in the success of youth. Case managers have caseloads that allow them to spend the necessary time with each client to help them meet their needs through evidence-based practices and collaborative case management. Referrals will be made for young adults to access medical, dental, mental health or substance abuse treatment as needed. Youth Services has a “no wrong door” approach and works to ensure youth are connected with appropriate services and resources. Milestone TLP staff work in collaboration with the Youth Services BCP to ensure all interested and eligible 16 and 17-year-old homeless youth are referred to Milestone TLP for development of safe placement options and support and can be placed in the Milestone TLP if appropriate.

These additional services will be provided:

LIFE SKILLS GROUPS

Milestone TLP house managers are passionate about the young adults served and provide them with the daily life skills needed as well as a monthly workshop or class as they move forward in the world. This could include budget planning and money management, cooking, study groups, healthy menu planning and grocery shopping, house cleaning and laundry, tax preparation, etc.

COUNSELING SERVICES

A skilled therapist will provide assessments, evidence-based groups, and treatment to the young adults in the program. Each participant is given a Risky Behaviors Questionnaire and ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) at assessment. These services will identify and help young adults with past or present challenges including trafficking, mental health issues, relationship issues, etc.

RELATIONSHIP GROUPS

Young adults will work with their case manager on the permanent connections they can identify in their lives within 90 days of intake. While in the program they will create and maintain contact with individuals in their lives to build permanent, healthy, interpersonal relationships with family, friends, and community.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT GROUPS

A monthly education and employment group will provide information to young people to help them with their education and employment goals. Community partners will also be utilized to present topics in these areas.

SERVICE PROJECTS

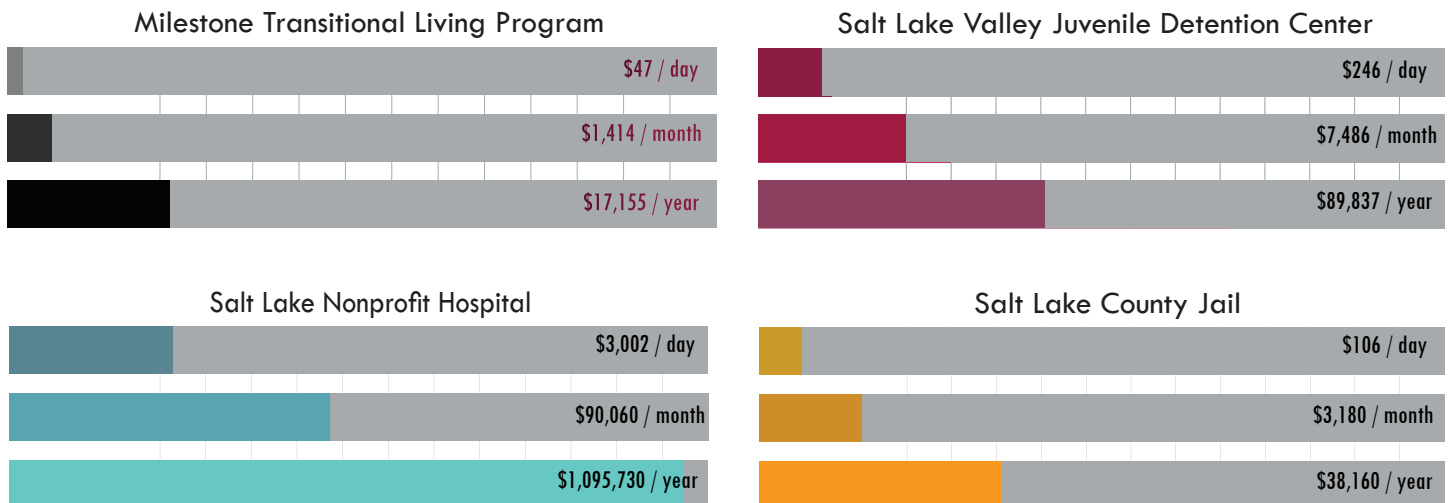
Young adults will participate in monthly volunteer service, either as a one-time service project or through ongoing community opportunities. These service opportunities are focused on helping with homelessness issues and building community.

“ At first, I was a statistic. Being a female homeless youth in the year 2021. Milestone was a steppingstone in defying that statistic. I am now a college student with a notable job, as well as starting my own small business in the span of 6 months! — Milestone Participant ”

BUDGET

Based on 2021 data, from a current facility of similar size, a total budget of \$430,138 is needed to support the Milestone program (four staff and sixteen young adults) at the two homes. As the SLC Rotary will be donating the homes, Youth Services will only need to provide the ongoing operational costs. These funds will provide computers, supplies, utilities, internet, food provisions, activities, and the maintenance needed for the two homes. Additionally, the funds will support salary and benefit costs for staff to administer the Milestone TLP program as well as other operational costs such as telephone service, travel, training, etc. Milestone TLP will serve an additional 25 participants per year with an annual total program cost of \$430,138. This is an average cost savings or \$355,138 to \$819,862 (for 25 youth) per year to the public.

COST COMPARISON FOR SALT LAKE COUNTY PER PERSON:



2020 Milestone house backyard fence "We Take Pride in Our Community" joint service project with the SLC Youth Advisory Board

SLCO.TO/MILESTONE

Mina Koplin, Milestone Program Manager - MKoplin@slco.org

Carolyn Hansen, Youth Services Director - CHansen@slco.org