



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SUCCESS SERVICES (YESS)

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

YESS CDP 2023-2026

...files
Yes: Youth Helping Youth to become more
and connected. #YESS4YOUTH #FriendsOfY
#FosterStrong #FostercareMonth



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Message from our President & CEO	3
Priorities and Strategies	4
<i>Priority 1:</i> YESS Programs	5
<i>Priority 2:</i> Acquisition and Rehabilitation of Affordable Housing for Clients	8
<i>Priority 3:</i> YESS Staff Workforce and Operational Development	9
<i>Priority 4:</i> Communications and Public Relations	10
<i>Priority 5:</i> Fundraising, Development, and Donor Engagement	11

Youth Empowerment Success Services (YESS) mission is to reduce youth homelessness among young adults between the ages 18-24 in the Metro Atlanta area by providing them with affordable and stable housing, practical life skills, and an identifiable support system to propel them toward their future goals.

Since 2016, YESS has provided homeless youth ages 18-24 with transitional and rapid rehousing services to assist with securing safe and stable housing and the opportunity to build economic stability over the course of a 12-month period. YESS provides short-term housing in apartment communities in Metro Atlanta, individualized life coach services, individual and group life skills workshops, and financial support for essentials.

YESS created a continuum of support for this vulnerable population that finds themselves homeless within one year of aging out of foster care or leaving a shelter.

The goal is to provide impact in four areas; stable housing, life skills development, stable employment, and connecting youth to at least one caring adult. Since the agency's inception, YESS has served nearly 164 young adults in foster care through our Youth Quest Independent Living Program (ILP) and 178 youth through our homeless youth services. We have successfully assisted 80% of transition-aged foster youth with life coaching, housing, and employment support through our program.

The Youth Empowerment Success Services Comprehensive Development Plan (YESS CDP) is a set of five integrated and interrelated priorities to provide affordable and stable housing, practical life skills, and an identifiable support system to propel youth ages 18-24 toward their future goals by 2026.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

Since 2016, YESS has been able to make a difference in over 200 lives. I am inspired by our staff, partners and donors who have demonstrated resilience and a dedication to the youth and young adults we serve.

Despite facing numerous obstacles that magnified and exposed racial and economic inequities leading to youth homelessness – there was an unwavering commitment to our mission to lead positive systemic change that increased housing options for our clients.

I invite you to learn more about our commitment to advancing our strategies as we prepare for our 10th anniversary by reimagining a more equitable housing model through the priorities featured in our Comprehensive Development Plan (2023-2026).

Thank you for inspiring us and for joining us in building YESS together.



“As we provide this three-year comprehensive development plan, it is imperative that YESS stakeholders know how seriously we take our commitment to providing youth and young adults with stable housing, life skills, and the support system they need to thrive!”

Ebony Harris, President & CEO

Youth Empowerment Success Services (YESS)

PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

There are 6 Priorities, 12 strategies, and 46 goals in total. While they are all important and interrelated, some will be more relevant based on the current needs of our clients and urgent fundraising priorities. This section identifies the specific Priorities, Strategies and Goals that demonstrate how they align with the YESS mission.

1 YESS PROGRAMS

Strategy 1: YESS Housing Program Transitional and Rapid Rehousing

Strategy 2: Independent Living Program

Strategy 3: Rebound Support Services and Life Skills Coaching

Strategy 4: Financial Education and Workforce Development

Strategy 5: Emergency Assistance and Client Financial Support

2 ACQUISITION AND REHABILITATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR CLIENTS

Strategy 6: Acquire and/or rehabilitate apartment complex (10+ units)

3 YESS STAFF WORKFORCE AND OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategy 7: Strengthen staff retention and professional development

Strategy 8: Embracing diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging efforts

Strategy 9: Increase staff capacity

Strategy 10: Enhance organizational capacity and development

4 COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Strategy 11: Increase community presence

5 FUNDRAISING, DEVELOPMENT AND DONOR ENGAGEMENT

Strategy 12: Increase fundraising and development efforts

PRIORITY 1: YESS PROGRAMS

YESS HOUSING PROGRAM - TRANSITIONAL AND RAPID REHOUSING

STRATEGY 1.1: There is a need for housing options in DeKalb, Fulton, and Clayton Counties and provides a continuum of Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Rehousing Services and Homeless Prevention services for homeless youth.

Activities: Grow presence with eligible clients and housing partners in Clayton County and BoS areas; Secure housing funding; Increase referrals from Clayton CoC. Secure funding to provide RRH/ESFP services in Clayton. Establish Transitional Housing in Clayton Co. locations; Include Clayton youth in YHDP funding requests; Become Clayton's preferred provider for joint transition housing/RRH funding for young adults.

Outputs: Scale the number of Clayton County youth from 0 to 20 annually through the Emergency Food & Shelter Program; Scale the number of youth served from 0 to 10 annually through the Transitional Rapid Rehousing Program in Clayton County and BoS.

Y1: Identify funding opportunities and housing partners that support DeKalb, Fulton, and Clayton County homeless youth; Identify BoS expansion opportunities.

Y2 - Y3: Increase the # of homeless youth in Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing by 10-15%; Increase the # housing inventory leads by 10%-15%.

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

STRATEGY 1.2: Clients need to obtain jobs that lead to careers that will provide a livable wage and increase employment stability for six months or more.

Activity: Track employment time and average wages of clients. Increase client participation in the Rent Savings program—the average savings is \$200 per youth; Create direct connections for young people to be linked to livable wage jobs.

Outputs: Ensure 75% of youth in Tier 1 maintain jobs for 180 days or more; Ensure youth 80% entering Tier 2 are in jobs paying a livable wage and maintain employment for six months or more; Ensure youth transitioning out of Tier 3 with at least two months of rent saved.

Y1: Create a tracking system to track the length of employment and wages and increase clients saving (create a baseline by Q2). Ensure youth 80% entering Tier 2 are in jobs paying a livable wage and maintain employment for six months or more. Ensure 80% youth transitioning out of Tier 3 with at least two months of rent saved.

Y2-Y3: Ensure youth 80%-85% entering Tier 2 are in jobs paying a livable wage and maintain employment for six months or more. Ensure 85% of youth transitioning out of Tier 3 with at least two months of rent saved. Evaluate the performance measures from the PBP and establish YESS internal performance measures; increase PBP to at least an "A" or "B" level by the end of Year 2/3.

STRATEGY 1.3: Young Adults transitioning from the YESS Youth Quest ILP program must secure stable housing for 6-12 months before exiting the program (between ages 20-20.5).

Activity: Assess youth every 90 days to track clients' matriculation process through the three program tiers; Assist youth with signing a lease in their names within 180 days of turning 21; Ensure youth are stably employed by 19 1/2 years old. For youth to leave the program, stable housing and employment are required.

Outputs: Increase youth participation in rent savings and IDA assets-based for education, housing, or entrepreneurship. Create more partnerships and housing partners.

Y1: Assist 80% of youth transitioning from the YESS Youth QUEST ILP program with securing stable housing 6-12 months before exiting the program (between ages 20-20.5). Re-training of ILP staff on the program fundamentals and milestone tracking to include regular ISP reviews.

Y2: Increase youth savings from \$200 - \$1,000 by the time they transition into Tier 2 of the ILP Program.

Y3: Life Coaches and Transition Support Coaches to help Tier 1 and 2 clients with monitoring and managing real-time budgeting, maintaining employment, and saving at least 30% of their income monthly since youth do not pay for their housing and utilities in Tier 1 and 2 programs.

STRATEGY 1.4: Increase employment and savings for youth in all YESS housing programs to increase the likelihood of exiting into stable housing. Increase employment connections and clients' financial literacy and capacity to save.

Activity: Increase employment and savings for youth in the ILP program to increase the likelihood of youth exiting ILP into stable housing. Increase employment connections and clients' financial literacy and capacity to save.

Outputs: 80% of youth exiting the TH will transition into stable housing

Y1: Ensure at least 90% of Rebound Support services clients show a 20% increase from the pre and post of Rentwise. At least 80% of RSS actively save via YESS in-house saving program; 90% of the TH is complete Rentwise; 20% of the TH clients will actively save via the YESS rent-saving program

Y2 - Y3: 90% of the TH complete Rentwise; 50%-80% of the TH clients will actively save via the YESS rent-saving program

REBOUND SUPPORT SERVICES AND LIFE SKILLS COACHING

STRATEGY 1.5: There is a need to ensure youth served are provided with basic, intermediate, and advanced life skills services for young adults in all programs.

Activity: Implement the phases of Life skills orientation (basic), ongoing (intermediate), and advanced life skills curricula across all programs.

Output: Youth demonstrate housing stability. With the average length of stay in ILP increasing annually. Youth in RRH/TH will maintain housing for at least 6-12 months upon program exit.

Y1-Y3: At least 75% of ILP youth will enter Tier 3 at least six months before their 21st birthday. 50%-70% TH/RRH will maintain housing for 6-12 months after exiting the program.

STRATEGY 1.6: Some government-funding housing vouchers and post-secondary and technical college programs require a high school diploma or GED. Thirty percent (30%) of YESS youth experience barriers to employment and housing because they have indicated that they do not have a GED during intake. DFCS funding does not cover GED tutors; therefore, YESS has to rely on other sources of support to provide test prep courses.

Activity: Establish YESS GED Tutoring Program to help clients prepare for the GED test through in-person and online tutoring support in all four subjects. Encourage and support youth to complete post-secondary education.

Output: By providing 1:1 and small group tutoring, YESS can help youth earn their GED, leading to higher-paying jobs and stable housing.

Y1: Relaunch the YESS GED Tutoring Program and hire 2-3 GED tutors

Y2: YESS GED Tutoring Program helps at least eight youth obtain their GED by the end of 2024.

Y3: Evaluate the YESS GED Tutoring Program; At least 20 youth will obtain their GED by the end of the first 24 months of the program relaunch

FINANCIAL EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY 1.7: Increase employment and savings for youth across all programs to increase the likelihood of youth exiting TH into stable housing. Increase employment connections and clients' financial literacy and capacity to save.

Activity: Increase employment and savings for youth in the all-housing (ILP/TH) programs to increase the likelihood of youth exiting TH/ILP into stable housing; Increase employment connections, financial literacy, and capacity to save.

Output: 80% of youth exiting the TH will transition into stable housing. 60% of youth participating in RBS(Joint TH/RRH and RBS) services actively save via the YESS savings program.

Y1: Ensure at least 90% of Rebound Support services clients show a 20% increase from the pre and post of Rentwise. At least 80% of RBS actively save via YESS in-house saving program; 90% of the TH is complete Rentwise; 20% of the TH clients will actively save via the YESS rent-saving program.

Y2-Y3: 90% of the TH complete Rentwise. 50%-80% of the TH clients will actively save via the YESS rent-saving program

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND CLIENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

STRATEGY 1.8 Providing clients with Direct Cash/Funds Transfer (DCT DFT) Assistance is necessary to empower them with the skills, opportunity and means to support their independent financial decisions.

Activity: Research Point Source Youth and other youth service providers that provide DCT

Output: Apply for DCT funding and incorporate DCT and financial literacy into existing programming.

Y1: Secure Year 1 of funding to establish DCT funding into the YESS service offering to assist youth economic stability.

Y2: Create a baseline of youth expenditures; Look for ways to sustain the DCT program for Y2-3

Y3: Fully sustain the DCT program with \$125,000 annually in private funding to serve at least 50 clients with \$2,500 per year in direct cash transfers.

PRIORITY 2: ACQUISITION AND REHABILITATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR CLIENTS

STRATEGY 2.1: YESS leases/rents properties and needs more governance over the stability and inventory of housing.

New investment groups are purchasing apartment complexes and may not want to house our clients. Clients are faced with having to move to yet another housing option. There is an urgent need for affordable permanent housing options for young adults in Metro Atlanta. The housing costs for YESS client rental assistance and utilization exceed \$500,000 annually.

Activity: YESS wants to acquire properties/housing to offer a stable housing solution for youth. YESS to conduct a housing cost analysis to determine the financial resources needed to for acquisition, rehabilitate, or build new construction for permanent housing

Outputs: YESS wants to acquire properties/housing to offer stable housing solutions for clients. The acquisition of apartment complex(s) is needed to transition from rental costs to ownership of the unit(s)

Y1: Research alternative and creative housing options for young people (i.e., tiny homes, purchasing property to rehab, new construction); Work with real estate partners and HUD funders to determine the cost to transition from paying rental assistance to the acquisition or build new construction of an apartment complex

Y2: Launch Capital Campaign for \$1 Million

Y3: Phase I of the acquisition or new construction of the apartment complex (10-20 units)

PRIORITY 3: YESS STAFF WORKFORCE AND OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY 3.1: The annual cost for repairs and maintenance to the ILP and TH programs unit is over \$100,000.

Apartment complex maintenance schedules are slow to repair; therefore, YESS has to send a separate contractor to make the repairs. Larger damages need to be contracted out. All units must be up to standards because DFCS conducts frequent and impromptu site visits.

Activity To manage the facilities' operations, YESS will need to create a dashboard to track the facilities' work order requests and schedule the repairs on a timely basis. Hire a facilities manager that completes repairs in-house.

Outputs: YESS will have a designed process for facilities management

Y1: Evaluate the existing operational needs for Facilities Management; Research best operational processes to manage facilities requests (Asana, additional software, etc.)

Y2: Hire a part-time Facilities Manager for routine maintenance; Develop Facilities Management operational processes.

Y3: Facilities Manager and staff to receive certification from the Georgia Center for Nonprofits

STRATEGY 3.2: Ongoing training is needed to engage YESS Staff and Board in equity and inclusion efforts.

Activity: Ensure all YESS staff and board receive ongoing DEIB training

Outputs: Ensure all staff and board are trained by True Colors International DEIB Training and evaluate the effectiveness of DEIB efforts

Y1: Begin tracking DEIB efforts to prepare YESS to submit data for research for the True Colors DEIB Assessment Tool; Update the Board Manual to include DEIB efforts;

Y2: Third-party evaluation of staff and client DEIB efforts

Y3: Annual DEIB training; Annual True Colors Evaluation of YESS DEIB client & staff efforts

STRATEGY 3.3: Youth have expressed the need for someone with lived experiences to help them navigate their journey. There is a need to recruit staff with lived experiences and create a compensation model for staff living onsite at the apartment complex with the youth.

Activity: Youth will be assigned a Youth Empowerment Peer Advocate (YEPA) and a Life Support Team composed of a Life Coach and a Transitional Support Worker to work individually with the youth to meet their ILP goals. Our focus is to provide a “bridge” of intensive services and “connect” them with the necessary resources to obtain the skills necessary for living independently within and beyond DFCS/ILP.

Outputs: Create a comprehensive recruitment and funding model for the YEPA (staff with lived experience) that includes a housing model for the ILP and Rebound Support programs; 80% of youth will have an assigned YEPA

Y1: Consult with finance, legal, and insurance to determine the compensation model and benefits of hiring staff with lived experiences to live on-site with the youth

Y2-Y3: Leverage YHDP funding for the pilot year of YEPA to recruit staff with lived experiences; 3 YEPA by end of Y3.

STRATEGY 3.4: YESS needs to maximize our impact as a youth homeless service provider. A thorough review of YESS' policies, practices, and services against the nationally recognized best practices is necessary to achieve the scale and reach projected in the next three years

Activity: YESS to work with consultants and evaluators to prepare the organization for an in-depth, strengths-based review, typically taking 12-18 months

Outputs: YESS will be fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation

Y1-Y3: Housing and case management activities will lead YESS to become an accredited service provider with the Council on Accreditation by the end of 2026

PRIORITY 4: COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

STRATEGY 4.1: Marketing tools are needed to broaden branding and communications

Activity: Develop multiple marketing resources to attract new and retain partners, donor engagement, and funding opportunities

Outputs: Multi-media marketing collateral for social media, print, and web

Y1: 2022 Annual Report; YESS Stakeholder Elevator Fundraising Speech Training; Work with Jump Start to develop fundraising campaign and marketing collateral; Work with Marketing Associate to implement a marketing campaign

Y2: Build upon the marketing strategy developed by the Jump Start cohort; Annual Reports; Videos; Testimonials

Y3: YESS YouTube channel; Quarterly new video content schedule

STRATEGY 4.2: Increase visibility with corporate, foundation, government, and donor relations

Activity: Increase YESS's "Know, Like, Trust" in youth homelessness by joining committees, attending community events, and increasing social network/media engagement

Outputs: YESS to become the thought-leaders of youth homelessness in Atlanta

Y1: YESS to join the City of Atlanta Taskforce for the Homeless, TogetherGA, and other homeless providers

Y2: YESS to host/join speaking engagements on homelessness; become a guest writer in local publications highlighting youth homelessness

Y3: Host youth homeless community meetings with various partners at YESS

PRIORITY 5: FUNDRAISING, DEVELOPMENT AND DONOR ENGAGEMENT

STRATEGY 5.1: A 3-Year Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) is needed to strategically plan for the next 3 years

Activities: Develop a 3-year strategic plan in preparation for the YESS 10th Anniversary (2026)

Outputs: A Work Plan to provides short, medium, and long-term goals that are tracked on an annual basis

Y1: Measure and monitor data from the YESS 3-Year Work Plan in Asana; Board Members create engagement and fundraising goals

Y2: Hire Development Associate to manage the development portfolio; annual meeting with Board to determine yearly engagement and fundraising goals

Y3: Hire Director of Development and Development Associate (FTEs) to manage resource development operations; annual Board refresher meeting to evaluate and plan engagement and fundraising goals

STRATEGY 5.2: Grants that fund personnel, programs, and general operations require project budgets

Activities: Create a cost-analysis on personnel, programs, and general operating expenses; Identify "gaps in funding" where contracts/grants don't cover the total expenses of program-related expenses

Output: Determine personnel % of time-to-project; personnel time sheets for grant-funded positions

Y1 - Y3: Monthly Cost-Analysis reporting to inform workloads and resource development activities

STRATEGY 5.3: YESS needs a savings and investment vehicle to build cash reserves and establish an endowment fund.

Activities: The Finance, Board, and Finance Committee work together to identify the best savings and investment plans for long-term goals to fund the ongoing housing, employment, and case management needs of homeless youth.

Outputs: Develop a strategy to invest and manage accumulated reserves and establish an endowment fund

Y1: Meet with Finance, Board, and the Finance Committee to develop savings goals for the cash reserves (4-6 months)

Y2: Assessment of savings goals towards cash reserves; Meet with Finance and Board to determine next steps with selecting the type of endowments to best fit YESS's future financial needs

Y3: The finance team to form a partnership with the financial institution to begin the process of creating an endowment

*We thank you for your continued support in
our efforts to contribute to the YESS CDP*

Youth Empowerment Success Services (YESS)
1635 Phoenix Boulevard, Suite 7
College Park, GA 30349
770-217-7845

www.YESS4Youth.org
development@YESS4Youth.org

Reviewed 12/7/24