

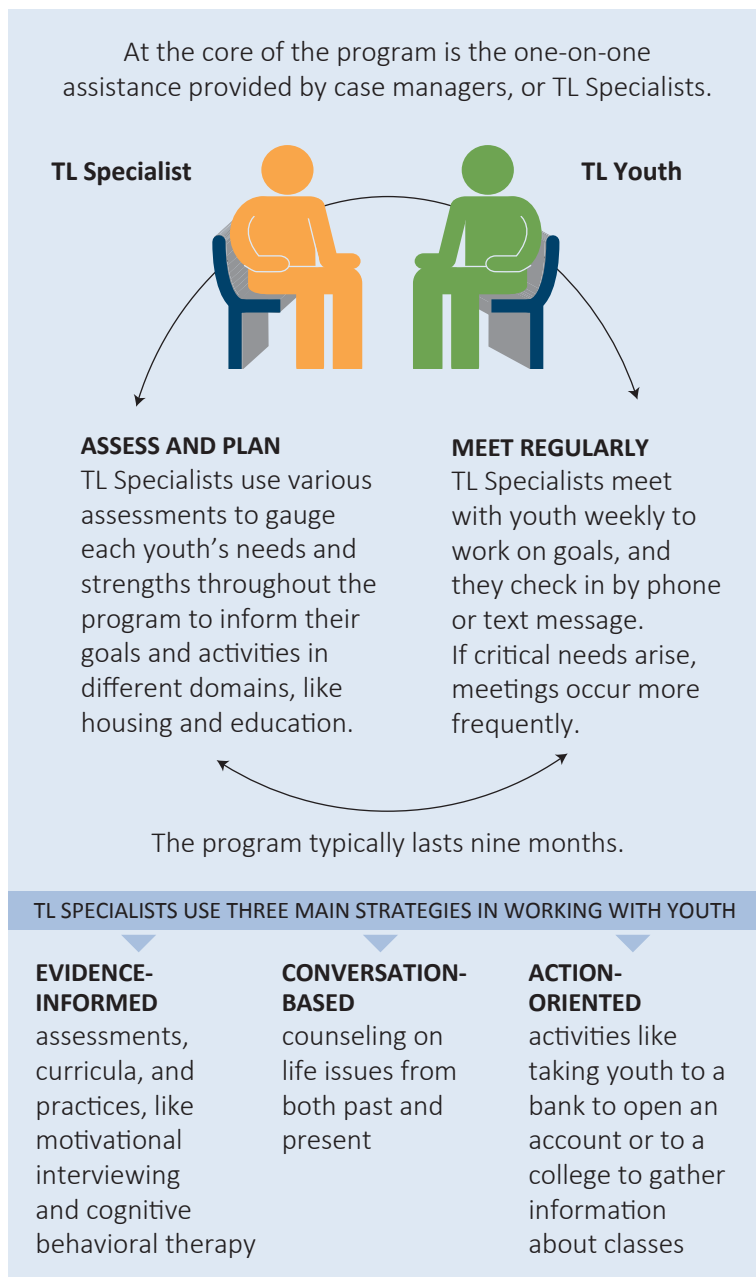
Transitional Living

Easing the transition to adulthood for vulnerable young people

An MDRC evaluation of the YVLifeSet program operated by the nonprofit Youth Villages found that the program improved earnings, housing stability, and mental health among young adults who had been in foster care or juvenile justice custody in Tennessee.

How YVLifeSet Works

YVLifeSet, formerly known as the Transitional Living (TL) program, provides intensive individualized and clinically focused case management, support, and counseling to youth in their homes and communities. A look at some key services offered during the study period between 2010 and 2012, according to MDRC's implementation findings:



TL Specialists work with others inside and outside of Youth Villages to maximize the benefits for youth.

CLINICAL OVERSIGHT

TL Specialists receive guidance from supervisory staff to ensure sound clinical practices.

All treatment plans are reviewed by clinically licensed staff.

SERVICE COORDINATION

TL Specialists coordinate with community providers working with youth — foster care case workers, for example.

Youth can access other supports.

EDUCATION AND CAREER SUPPORT

Youth who require more support to find postsecondary training or job opportunities can work with staff dedicated to those areas.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

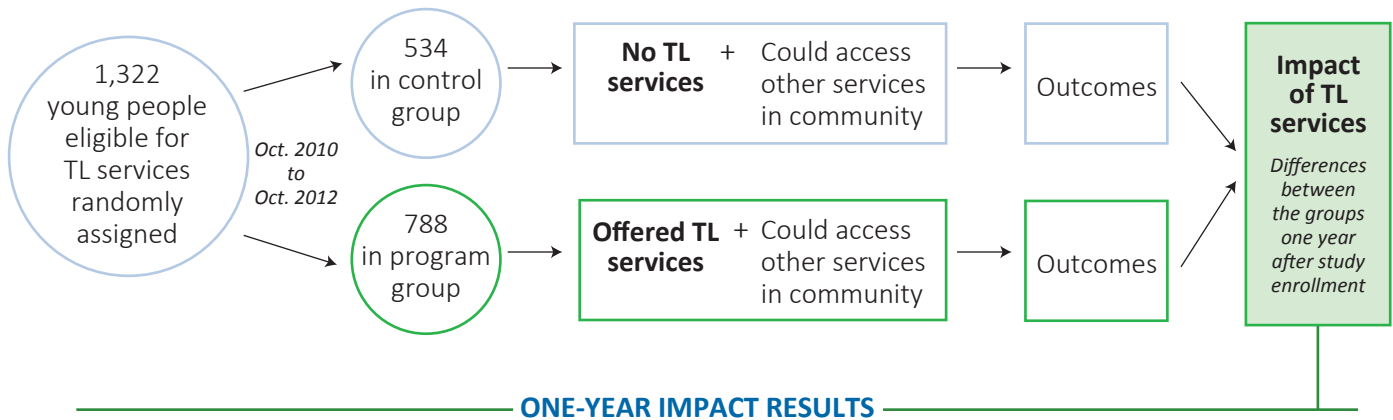
Youth can access flexible funds for expenses such as clothing for a job interview or an apartment application fee.

PEER SUPPORT

Youth are encouraged to attend monthly group meetings with other participants.

Findings from MDRC's Evaluation of YVLifeSet

The study sample includes more than 1,300 young people ages 18 to 24 who were living across Tennessee and had left foster care or juvenile justice custody as teenagers or were aging out at age 18. The evaluation is the largest experimental test of services for this population of youth, who often experience poor outcomes as adults.



The program produced impacts on a range of outcomes in three of six domains that it was designed to affect.

Employment and earnings	Housing stability and economic well-being	Health and safety	Education	Social support	Criminal involvement
<p>17% ▲ Earnings from formal work</p> <p>7% ▲ Employment</p> <p><i>Notable given the national decline in youth employment at the time of the study</i></p>	<p>22% ▼ Homelessness</p> <p>13% ▼ Number of hardships, like lack of food</p> <p><i>Notable given TL does not offer housing or substantial financial support</i></p>	<p>13% ▼ Mental health problems</p> <p>30% ▼ Violent relationships</p>	<p>So far, no statistically significant impacts on:</p> <p>Receipt of high school diploma or equivalent certification or other training</p>	<p>Measures like closeness to, or contact with, a caring adult</p>	<p>Criminal behavior or contact with the criminal justice system</p>
<p>While modest in size, the impacts are very meaningful because no other programs for this highly vulnerable population have been shown to be effective in improving their well-being across a wide range of outcomes in a large-scale, rigorous study. Future analysis will determine whether other impacts emerge.</p>					

Next Steps

Two-year impact findings and a benefit-cost analysis will be released in late spring of 2016.

MDRC is exploring the possibility of testing the program in other contexts, since foster care policies vary from state to state.



MDRC's evaluation of YVLifeSet, formerly known as the Transitional Living program, is funded by The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

For more information, visit www.mdrc.org/project/youth-villages-transitional-living-program-evaluation