

VISTA MARIA

Independent Living/Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care

STUDENT HANDBOOK





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WELCOME

MISSION:

We foster restorative relationships and deliver innovative care, treatment, and education so that vulnerable youth and families believe in their worth, heal and build the skills for success.

VISION:

All children, families and communities achieve success through continuous learning and relationships that promote personal, professional and family well-being.

CORE VALUES:

INDIVIDUAL WORTH

ONE'S OWN WORTH AS A PERSON

RECONCILIATION

RESTORATION OF RELATIONSHIPS

MERCY

LOVE THAT PARDONS

ZEAL

LOVE AND KINDNESS IN ACTION



This book is for youth entering the General Independent Living Program. This book explains the rights and responsibilities of young people and the services that the Vista Maria program provides.

Our boundless belief in every person's worth propels us to action, pursuing new ways to serve our community.

Vista Maria will never stop—because every young person deserves to start.

VISTA MARIA

WELCOME



PERSON & FAMILY CENTERED PLANNING:

At Vista Maria, we're unwavering in our mission to help each young person heal and embrace their self-worth. Each young person will have a tailored program that is specific to their needs. Each plan is based on the goals that the young person will set.

Relationships are a key to a young person's well-being. Learning skills to improve communication and cooperation helps build strong relationships. A structured model is used in order to aid in the facilitation of relationship-building.

The counseling model includes:

- *"Psycho-education": learning about difficulties and solutions.*
- *Parenting skills and Permanency Planning: focuses on building relationships that provide support, security, and cooperation.*
- *"Affective" means emotional skills to reduce stress. These are also called "coping skills".*
- *"Cognitive" (thinking) skills help people reduce stress. This also helps develop decision-making and self-control.*
- *Trauma and stress processing happens in counseling sessions. That is a safe place to talk-out issues.*
- *"In day-to-day living", young people and family members are supported in being successful where there were problems before treatment services. "One day at a time".*
- *Communication and family sessions strengthen relationships and support.*
- *Effective life skills help young people take care of themselves and be safe and protected. This includes using community resources. This is about having a healthy and happy life.*

Your IL Caseworker will talk more with you about how these can benefit you. At Vista Maria, we use recognized, effective service and treatment methods (such as Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Cohen, Mannarino, and Deblinger, 2006, 2012).

At Vista Maria, we also use methods to help people maintain self-control and safety. This includes when people are under high levels of stress. Young people learn how to be calm and helpful when other people are in a crisis. Your worker will provide calm support and crisis intervention when needed.



VISTA MARIA



WELCOME

YOUNG PEOPLE SERVED BY THIS PROGRAM:

General Independent Living is a program where older teens and young adults live in a home-like environment that is approved by their IL Caseworker. Placement in Independent Living is an acceptable living arrangement for certain youth if they are 17.5 years or older. Prior to placement in Independent Living, the youth must be adequately prepared and assessed for independent living skills. The IL Caseworker helps the young person develop goals, life skills, and make positive adjustments to school and/or employment.



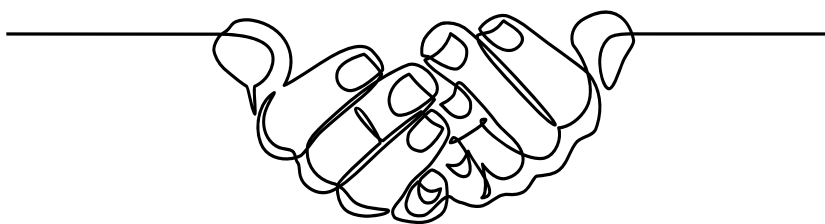
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PROGRAMS

PROGRAM STATEMENT:

The General Independent Living Program is designed to provide young people who are 17.5 years old or older the opportunity to make a successful transition from a residential placement or foster care to self-sufficiency in a community setting. The Department of Human Services, Probate Court, Circuit Court, and other Vista Maria Programs make the majority of referrals to IL. Many of the young people have little or no contact with family and have limited supports within the community. Additionally, some young people are pregnant and/or new parents. Financial support for a young person is derived from state monies as managed by the DHS contract or the courts. The young person in IL receives money every two weeks to provide for his or her needs. All young people are expected to be gainfully employed, in school or both.



Client Eligibility:

IL accepts referrals for young people interested in entering a community-based living arrangement and developing important life skills.

The young person must be motivated to become independent and have demonstrated the following prior to acceptance into IL:

- A. Regular attendance during the most recent semester of school.**
- B. Positive adjustment to the residential or foster care placement for the previous six months.**
- C. No active use of drugs or alcohol. Young person with substance abuse histories must be substance free upon entry.**
- D. Willingness to abide by rules of the IL program and to participate actively in developing a mutually agreed upon Independent Living Contract.**

Soon after the young person enters the program, the IL Caseworker and treatment team (including the young person and referring worker and possibly involved family members and other significant persons in the young person's life) will provide input to develop a treatment plan. The young person (with input from others on the treatment team) will identify the goals toward which they will work. Specific action steps and target dates for completion, where applicable, will be identified for each goal.

As part of the overall assessment process, IL clients are assessed using or the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment, identifying their current independent living skills. If other assessments or services are needed, this will be discussed with each young person.

IL supervision of young people consists of a minimum of monthly face-to-face contact by their IL Caseworker, in the home, and another face-to-face contact, which may be outside of the home. During these visits, the staff ensures that the young person is fulfilling the

educational and employment requirements and living in an approved setting. Examples of suitable housing for young people include rental apartments, flats, and houses which they inhabit alone or that they share with other responsible individuals. Occasionally, a young person may reside in housing provided by a college or university, by Job Corps, or by another jobs training program. Staff also teaches the young person money management (i.e. budgeting skills, banking skills, and shopping skills) and other life skills. The IL Caseworker also makes contact with employers and assists the young person in learning daily living skills. The IL Caseworker will ask about the young person's health and safety, and make sure the place where the young person is living is healthy and safe. Assistance with coordinating sibling visitations (if applicable) will also be provided.

Your IL Caseworker is there to help and support you. Please ask questions and ask for the assistance that you need toward becoming successfully independent as a young adult.

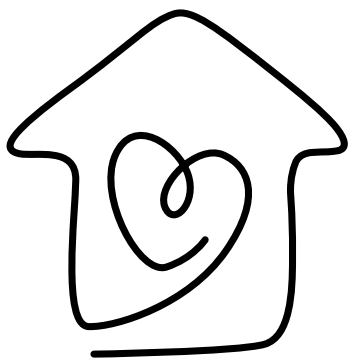
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PROGRAMS

INDEPENDENT LIVING PLUS:

The ILP Program is a limited intervention designed to provide youth with the opportunity to make a successful transition from a residential placement or foster care to self-sufficiency in a community setting. ILP is a program that provides staff supported housing and services for youth ages 16 through 19 who, because of their individual needs and assessment, are not initially appropriate for General Independent Living (IL). Each youth in ILP receives money every two weeks to provide for his or her needs. All youth are expected to be gainfully employed and/or in school.

ILP cannot be used as a long-term placement option, but should be a transitional, temporary intervention. ILP serves to meet the youth's specific independent living needs and goals until he/she is able to step down to IL. The duration of the ILP Program will vary as determined by the youth's assessment of needs and strengths. The ILP placement will not last longer than twelve months of initial intake without an approved exception request from the referral source, (i.e. DHHS/CMO), and cannot extend past the youth's twentieth birthday.



GENERAL INDEPENDENT LIVING:

The General Independent Living Program is designed to provide young people who are 16 years old or older the opportunity to make a successful transition from a residential placement or foster care to self-sufficiency in a community setting. The young person in IL receives money every two weeks to provide for his or her needs. All young people are expected to be gainfully employed, in school or both.

The young person must be motivated to become independent and have demonstrated the following prior to acceptance into IL:

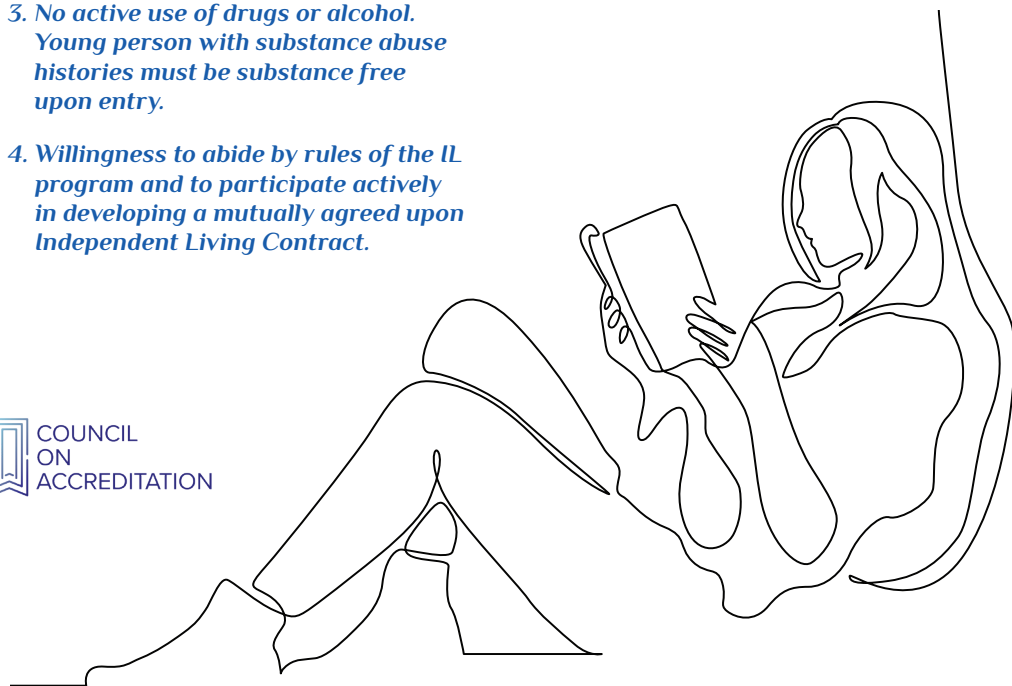
- 1. Regular attendance during the most recent semester of school.*
- 2. Positive adjustment to the residential or foster care placement for the previous six months.*
- 3. No active use of drugs or alcohol. Young person with substance abuse histories must be substance free upon entry.*
- 4. Willingness to abide by rules of the IL program and to participate actively in developing a mutually agreed upon Independent Living Contract.*



YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTARY FOSTER CARE:

An extension of Foster Care beyond the age of 18 until the age of 21. Independent Living Services are provided without court jurisdiction and is considered voluntary. To qualify for services youth must be:

- 1. Actively completing their HS diploma or GED or enrolled in College at least part time.*
- 2. Employed at least 80 hours per month.*
- 3. Volunteering for a community organization at least 80 hours a month.*
- 4. Incapable of participating in the activities above due to a documented medical condition.*
- 5. Completing a combination of the above requirements at the same time.*



SERVICES

SERVICES OFFERED:

Important parts of Community Based Services include Individual Work and Case Management Services.

Individual work is a very important part of the program. A skilled and qualified professional is available to help the young person work through issues related to stress, emotional and mental health, behavior, and life skills development, and follow-up on any matters requiring one-on-one support.

Young people will make the most progress with the help of their family and other adults who are important to them.

“Case Management Services” are available to young people in community based programs. Staff will work with the young person to assess and develop life skills. The Caseworker is responsible for service coordination with schools and other community resources.

Psychiatric and other mental health support is available as needed. The psychiatrist is available for appointments and prescribing medications. There may be times that psychiatrist support is provided from the local community.

HEALTH CARE:

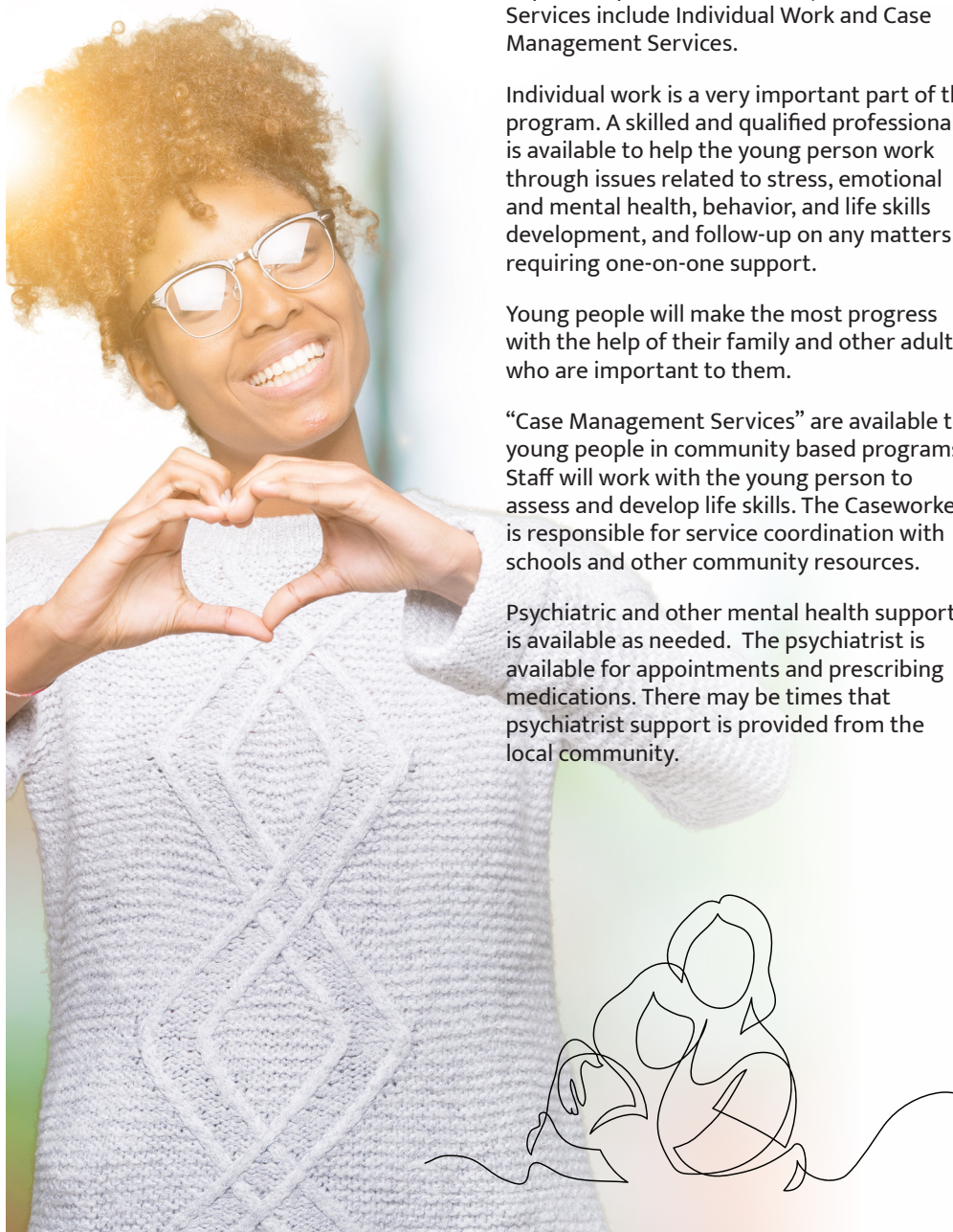
Each young person will have physical and dental examinations and treatments as needed while receiving services from Vista Maria. If we do not get a copy of a recent physical or dental examination, a physical or dental exam will be scheduled and completed. The IL Caseworker will work with the youth in gathering information about the young person's health conditions and any medications or treatments that are recommended and/or provided. Any youth 18 or older has the right to waive their physical or dental; however, keeping up with medical and dental examinations is strongly encouraged.

Please Communicate Your Medical Conditions and Needs:

During the course of a young person's stay, he or she may become ill or suffer an injury, and if this occurs, the young person should tell their IL Caseworker right away.

Any youth who are experiencing medical issues and feel as though their medical need should be addressed immediately, should go to urgent care, an emergency room or if necessary, contact 911 if they are in need of emergency care. The youth should then inform their IL Caseworker. The youth should notify their IL Caseworker of any needed medical care that is not serious to warrant urgent, emergency room or ambulance response, but still needs care. Calls to the IL Caseworker or emergency on-call worker about emergency and urgent medical care should be made no matter what time or day of the week.

Educational achievement is an important part of development. All youth who have not earned a high school diploma or GED will be expected to be enrolled and attend during the academic year in an appropriate educational or vocational/technical program.



SERVICES

SPIRITUALITY/ VALUES CLARIFICATION:

Religious preference and the decision to worship shall be up to the individual young person. The Vista Maria program will support each young person in their chosen religious expression and practice.

Hours and Cost of Services:

We work on a flexible schedule. You have access to someone in the program 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for crises or other emergencies. Important contact names and numbers are at the end of this handbook.

Most services that the youth will receive will be paid for by the agency that made the referral to our programs. If the young person or their family is going to need to pay for any services provided, this information will be given to you in writing before admission.

QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS:

All professionals providing treatment services meet the educational and experience requirements set by the Vista Maria Human Resource Department and State of Michigan licensing regulations. All professionals delivering services are expected to show respect and understanding of your culture, race, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and religious preferences.



POLICY

DISCLOSURE OF ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

All Vista Maria personnel are expected to be alert to and to avoid conflicts of interest that put the persons served at risk or that interfere with services (for example, a worker knew a youth personally prior to placement).

Vista Maria works very hard to reduce conflicts and uncomfortable feelings during your time with us. We strive to develop and maintain open lines of communication and trusting relationships with all clients. If for any reason you feel there is a conflict of interest with one of our staff, please notify your IL Caseworker, or their manager/supervisor. You are encouraged to communicate concerns and suggestions, and doing this will be welcomed, never responded to with any retaliation.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

Confidentiality, Privacy, and Human Dignity Policies:

Vista Maria shall protect the young person and their family's privacy and confidentiality, and shall protect residents and their families from exploitation or any maltreatment. In the course of treatment and services, issues that are discussed are held in a confidential manner. By this, we mean that the treatment team and supervisors are aware of the information and it does not go beyond the team. Information needed for our research to evaluate programs and billing is communicated in established and legally approved ways. We also have managers and staff who read records and interview young people and families to make sure we are following all required standards and our policies, and quality services are being provided.

Vista Maria is bound by federal and state laws that govern confidentiality. First, we MUST report, under the Child Protection Law, any suspicion or knowledge that a young person is being or has been abused or neglected, or is in danger of being abused or neglected. Secondly, we are obligated to report, under the Duty to Warn Laws, any specific plan or threat to harm another person. Serious criminal behaviors committed while in the program may also be reported to law enforcement.

During the course of treatment, young people and family members will be encouraged to take necessary steps to take responsibility for past actions. This may include you being expected and supported in communicating this to the proper authorities.





POLICY

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH YOUNG PERSON WHILE PLACED IN CARE:



1. *To know your rights and to know how to file a complaint if your rights are being violated.*
2. *To have your privacy protected. You can expect confidentiality from the adults involved in your case.*
3. *To be told why you are in placement and why you are still in placement.*
4. *To participate in programs of education, social development, recreation, and religious observance, as fitting. To receive medical, dental, vision and mental health services.*
5. *To participate and give input into the development of your case plan and to challenge any of the provisions of the case plan during case reviews, court hearings and case planning conferences.*
6. *To attend court and speak to a judge about what you want to have happen in your case.*
7. *To have freedom from physical, sexual, and verbal abuse, ill treatment, neglect, retaliation, financial or other mistreatment, abuse and shame or embarrassment. If a young person believes that such has happened, they should report it right away to one of the program workers or supervisor.*
8. *To send and receive mail to anyone (unless limited by the court or referring worker). If exceptions are necessary, the reason shall be documented in the client's record and shared with the referring agency and the family.*
9. *To have a plan for your future, including a plan for leaving the foster care system, and to be given services to help you prepare to become a successful adult.*
10. *To a nurturing/caring, safe environment including the right to adequate food, housing, clothing, medical care, and a place to keep your things and receive treatment services.*
11. *To live with caring adults who are properly trained and have received background checks and screening.*



VISTA
MARIA

POLICY

GRIEVANCE & APPEAL PROCEDURE:

You can be expected to receive services delivered with dignity and respect. At any time you believe Vista Maria staff is not treating you with dignity, respect or meeting your needs, please let us know! We believe the best and quickest way to resolve your concern is by a discussion or conversation. A referring agency, parent or young person always has the option of submitting a formal grievance. You will not be punished or get in trouble for exercising your right to submit a formal grievance. We call this “no retaliation”.

- 1. The concerned person(s) lets the appropriate staff person know of the problem (IL Caseworker or Program Supervisor) within 5 working days of its happening.*
- 2. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached or the appropriate staff person cannot be determined, the concerned party presents the problem to the appropriate Program Manager within an additional 5 working days.*
- 3. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached or the appropriate Manager cannot be determined, the concerned party should contact the Program Director within an additional 5 working days. The Program Director will reply in writing within 5 working days.*

If you still believe that your complaint has not been answered with a satisfactory response or solution, you can complain outside of Vista Maria. You may contact the Michigan Ombudsman (om-buds-man) Office, an independent state agency established by Public Act 207 of 1994. The Ombudsman investigates citizen complaints, reports findings, and helps find solutions. Contact the Office of Children’s Ombudsman at (800) 642-4326 (MICH-FAM) or (517) 373-3077.

The Ombudsman Intake Investigator will need the following information:

- *Your name, address and phone number*
- *Child(ren)’s name and date of birth*
- *Child(ren)’s county of residence*
- *Parents’ names and dates of birth*
- *Caseworker’s name(s)*
- *Names of other agency officials you have spoken to*
- *Brief description of the problem*
- *Action(s) you are requesting from Office of Children’s Ombudsman*

The Ombudsman will determine if their office has the power or right to look into your specific complaint. You will receive an acknowledgment letter from the Ombudsman providing referral information to help you in resolving your problem or a notice that your case will be looked into.

TRUANCY/RUNNING AWAY FROM PLACEMENT/PROGRAM:

You are considered truant or AWOL when you do not spend the night at your placement and you have not received approval of your worker in advance to spend the night somewhere else. If you are AWOL you will still be in the program until your case is closed by the referring worker. If you are AWOL because you’ve been arrested, you need to call your Vista Maria worker and home provider, as applicable. Being arrested does not necessarily terminate you from the program.

If a youth truants (runs away) from the program, a Vista Maria staff will telephone your parent or legal guardian, as well as contact the police and the referring worker. At these times, we are most concerned with the young person’s safety and return to the program as soon as possible. Aiding or harboring a minor who has truanted from the home of responsible parenting adults is considered a serious felony and can carry heavy penalties for anyone involved.

Often, those in General Independent Living reside in their own apartment. Should this be your type of living arrangement, it is the expectation that if you are planning on being away from your home for any lengthy period of time, you provide your IL Caseworker with the address of where you will be staying.

POLICY

WAYS TO SHARE YOUR OPINION REGARDING SERVICES:

You are important to us. Please let us know how we are doing regarding the quality of services you are receiving at any time. We constantly work to improve our programs. We are very interested in your opinion on progress toward your goals. We are also very interested in feedback from referral agencies and parents. At any time you can request a meeting or conference with the program supervisor. You can respond to our satisfaction surveys and program follow up calls. You can contact others at Vista Maria by using the agency website www.vistamaria.org.

We will also contact you after you leave our programs to ask you to provide feedback on how you are doing and your suggestions for how we can improve services. If you do not want to give feedback when you are contacted for follow-up, let us know when we contact you or notify us ahead of time in writing.



POLICY

CONDITIONS THAT MAY LEAD TO ESCALATION (PLACEMENT IN A MORE RESTRICTIVE PROGRAM):

- *Assaultive behavior toward another person, including another young person, adult or staff member*
- *Attempts to harm self*
- *Theft and/or destruction of property owned by others*
- *Possession of illegal substances*
- *Possession of weapons*
- *Continued refusal to accept help toward treatment goals and/or disrupting the treatment of other clients.*

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT:

The Agency believes that discipline and behavior management are an educational process of establishing and teaching an orderly way of life. It does not include any form of physical punishment and does not limit a youth from contact or visitation with the identified family. Community based programs such as IL do NOT use restraints or seclusion.

There are no “program general rules” regarding restrictions of privileges. IL youth will receive natural consequences for negative behaviors. For example, youth is arrested and detained, youth could be terminated from program. Use of illegal substances could also be grounds for program termination.

If a youth is experiencing emotional stress and is thinking about or doing any actions that are seriously disruptive or could harm anyone, our goal is for us to be able to talk about the situation and find solutions. We are also here to provide support and help young people and families learn and strengthen coping skills. These individual sessions are intended to provide support and find solutions.



POLICY

SMOKING/TOBACCO:

All Vista Maria facilities are tobacco-free in order to promote a healthy environment for youth, visitors, and staff/coworkers. The use of all tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, pipes and chewing tobacco) are not allowed on the property of all Vista Maria programs and facilities. If you are a current smoker and wish to quit, we will assist you finding resources. Smoking in the home, or a designated area of a provider home will be determined by the home provider.

ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED:

This includes “street drugs” or prescription medications not prescribed to the person who possesses them. The production, distribution, selling, supplying, possession, and/or use of a controlled substance are unlawful and not allowed under any circumstances. All persons on Vista Maria property or doing business with Vista Maria are expected to be sober and not under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, other than medicines prescribed by a licensed medical professional and taken following prescribed instructions. Visitors for young people considered being under the influence of alcohol or any other illicit drug may be asked to leave the facility or the grounds. An Incident Report will be completed for all such incidents and will be shared with the referring worker and family. This may be shared with law enforcement, as applicable.



WEAPONS, OTHER DANGEROUS AND/OR ILLEGAL BEHAVIORS:

Vista Maria prohibits the possession of a firearm or any other object to be used as a weapon by young people receiving Vista Maria services. Youth who wish to hunt must obtain specific permission to participate in hunting activities from their Vista Maria workers before participation.

It is expected that young people will follow the laws of their community, and not associate with dangerous persons or people involved in illegal behaviors. If you as a young person have a situation like this, immediately talk to your worker so they can help you find a solution to the problem.

Violations of these standards can lead to any of the following:

- 1. A Behavioral Contract agreed upon and signed by the IL Caseworker and the youth, describing the violation(s) of the program expectations and a specific plan to correct behaviors so that the expectation is followed.*
- 2. Report of the incident to the young person's family, referring worker, and/or police.*
- 3. A case conference with the referring worker for the purpose of identifying a more appropriate treatment facility and termination from the program.*

MAIL:

All young people within the program are able to send and receive mail. Vista Maria will not get in the way of this personal right or read a young person's mail except where there is clear and convincing evidence and reasons for such actions. This exception will be explained to the young person and family, as applicable, and documented in the young person's file. A letter or package may be opened in front of a program staff/responsible adult if there is a suspicion of contraband.

PHONE CALLS:

Telephone use to speak with the family will not be prevented unless there are specific rules or exceptions by the Court or documented in the Treatment Plan.

VEHICLE OWNERSHIP:

Licensed drivers, with permission of their referring and Vista Maria workers, may purchase and maintain vehicles. All vehicles must be properly registered, have license plates and be insured. Vista Maria employees will not co-sign a loan.



VISTA MARIA

REPORTING

INDIVIDUAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT & WHO PARTICIPATES:

There will be reports written by an IL Caseworker regarding each young person in care. We cannot write these reports without gathering enough information. The Vista Maria worker will gather information by speaking with and involving people such as the young person, referring worker, family, if applicable, the significant people you have had contact with, and reviewing information that has been written by other professionals.

Each young person's strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences shall be assessed and identified regardless of the availability of services by Vista Maria.

If Vista Maria cannot address a young person's needs, we will plan for the needs to be met by referrals to other organizations.

The reports will be an Assessment, Service Plans and a Discharge Report (Action Summary). The young person and his or her parent/guardians (if applicable) will have input into, read and sign, and receive copies of all treatment plans.

The Assessment will be used to help you, your family, others, as applicable, and the IL Caseworker to work together to develop a Treatment/Service Plan that identifies goals and action steps. This is to work toward you reaching those goals and no longer needing the services of Vista Maria.

The IL Caseworker will assist you in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services and aftercare when necessary. We will work with you to coordinate care with other professionals. The Treatment/Service Plan shall be updated based upon progress toward goals every 90 days.

While participating in services, you may have scheduled court hearings. These will be times that updates are given to your Referee/Judge regarding the progress of you and your family, as applicable. You will be informed of the court date and expected to attend with someone from the program.

At the end of services, the IL Caseworker will complete a report called a Discharge Summary (Action Summary). This includes the reason for discharge, summary of your treatment and progress at discharge, and instructions given to you about aftercare and/or community resources.

TRANSITION/PROGRAM COMPLETION & AFTERCARE:

Program completion typically occurs when youth and/or family has completed most or all of the goals developed in the Treatment Plan. There are times when it is determined that this program is not the proper match for the needs of the young person and leaving the program happens earlier than planned. You will be informed of treatment recommendations to meet your needs, as well as information about your progress and community and other services.



FOR YOUR SAFETY:

If you are in the office/facility with an IL Caseworker during an emergency, for your safety and the safety of others, please follow the Vista Maria worker's instructions.

While in your community placement, your IL Caseworker will familiarize you with "what to do and where to go" during an emergency or evacuation of the house or apartment.

INFORMATION ABOUT OUTCOMES & PERFORMANCE:

We want you to be successful in reaching your goals. Vista Maria tracks how successful you are in reaching your goals and how successful we are in helping you do this. You will be asked annually to fill out a consumer satisfaction survey. This survey helps our agency to improve our work with those for whom we are here to serve.

FOLLOW UP SURVEYS:

After you leave our services, we may contact you to ask how you are doing and ask about satisfaction with the service we provided. If you do not want to answer these questions, let the person who contacts you know that. If you are interested in seeing a copy of our evaluation results, it will be provided to you.

SUMMARY:

It is hoped that this overview of Vista Maria and the General Independent Living Program will assist you in knowing more about our services. Feel free at any time to ask any questions. We look forward to working with you.

REPORTING

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Vista Maria Worker Name: _____

Title: _____

Office/Cell Phone #: _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Office/Cell Phone #: _____

Program Manager Name: _____

Office/Cell Phone#: _____

Director Name: _____

Office/Cell Phone #: _____

Referring Worker: _____

Office phone #: _____



YAVFC FACT SHEET

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, included an option for states to receive matching federal funds to extend foster care maintenance payments, to eligible foster youth ages 18, 19, and 20. To implement this option Michigan passed the Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care Act. By enacting this legislation, youth who were in state-supervised out of home foster care at the age of 18 or older may continue to receive foster care services until age 21. These services are provided without court jurisdiction and are considered voluntary.

AGE REQUIREMENTS:

Youth must be between the ages of 18 and 21.

BENEFITS OF YAVFC:

Extending foster care to age 21 offers a safety net of supportive services and financial benefits during the critical transition to adulthood, including:

- *Extension of foster care payments*
- *Continued oversight by a caseworker for additional support*
- *Counseling services*
- *Continued healthcare coverage*
- *Training in independent living skills*
- *More time to finish high school and pursue vocational or secondary education*

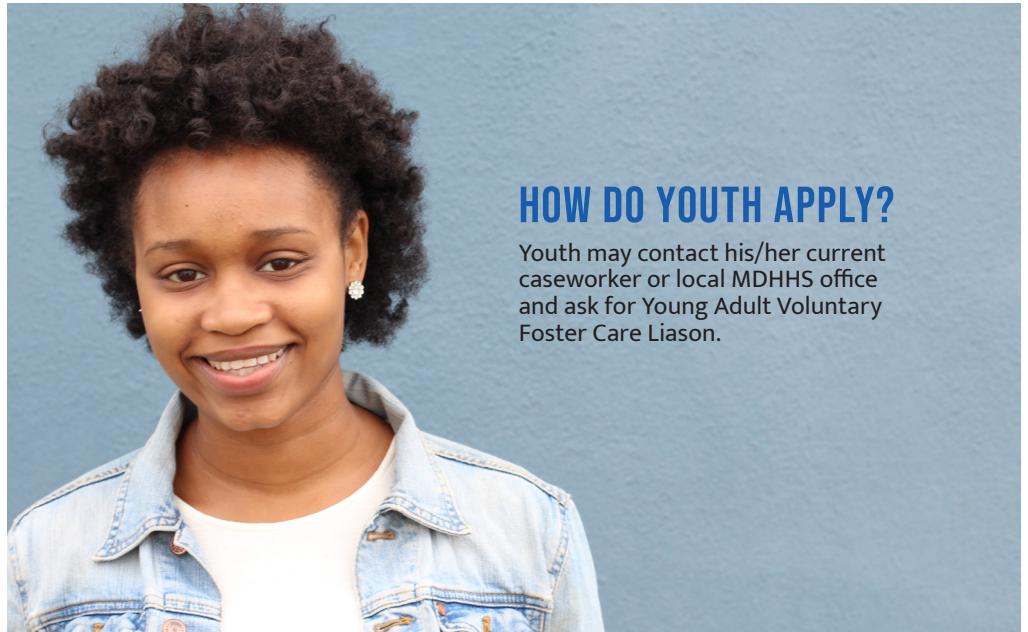
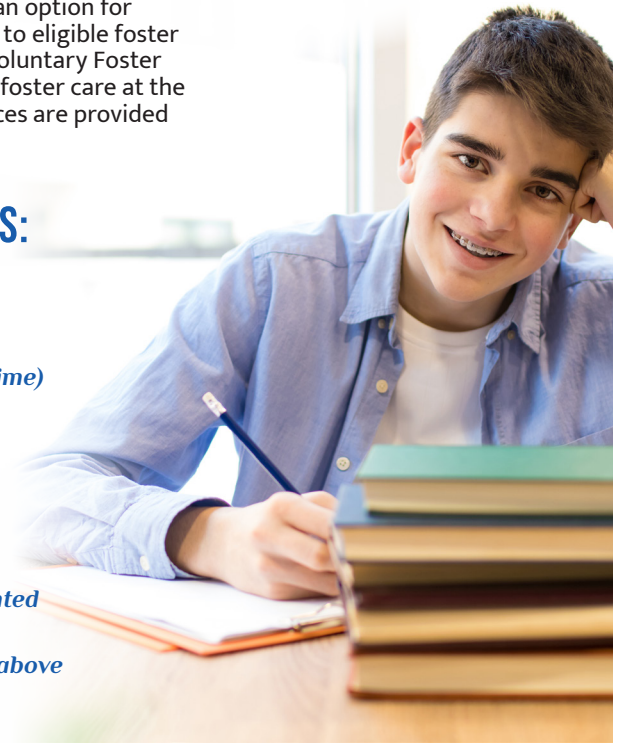
WHERE CAN YOUTH LIVE?

- *With a foster parent*
- *Rental home apartment setting with/without roommate*
- *Relative home other than parent*
- *Host home/supportive adult home*
- *College dorm*
- *Friend/partner home*

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

Youth must be:

- *Actively completing a high school diploma or GED*
- *Enrolled in college (at least part time)*
- *Employed (at least 80 hours per month)*
- *Volunteering for a community organization (at least 80 hours per month)*
- *Incapable of participation in the activities above due to a documented medical condition.*
- *Completing a combination of the above requirements at the same time*



HOW DO YOUTH APPLY?

Youth may contact his/her current caseworker or local MDHHS office and ask for Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care Liason.

VISTA MARIA GRIEVANCE FORM

I, _____ believe my rights have been violated
(Name)
and I want to share my concern.

What happened? (Please try to be as specific and detailed as possible)

When did it happen? (date and time)

Who else witnessed what happened? (First and last name)

Please describe what you want to see happen to correct this situation:

Grievance formed received by _____ Grievance formed received on _____
Date

Outcome of grievance: _____ resolved satisfactorily
_____ young person and/or parent reports that grievance was not resolved satisfactorily



YOUNG PERSON PLACING PROGRAM

Client Statement of Acknowledgement and Receipt of Handbook

I have received a copy of the Student Handbook. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to ask my worker to explain anything in the handbook that I do not understand or that I have questions.