

The Possibilities Project

Empowering Former Foster Youth



Better Housing
COALITION

WINNER **VAGHC** 2016 Virginia Governor's Housing Conference
BEST HOUSING PROGRAM or SERVICE



The Possibilities Project is a best-practice model designed for young people ages 18 to 25 who have aged out of foster care.

The Possibilities Project Initiative began with the goal of developing the best services, settings, and policies to support and lift this vulnerable population. We have launched a new research-based program to provide local young people with housing and critical trauma-informed wraparound social supports.

At the same time, we have conducted a national study with Child Trends, a nationally recognized research firm, to learn how other states are successfully addressing the challenges faced by these young people.

Why This Matters

Virginia is ranked worst of the 50 states for the rate at which teens age out of foster care without being adopted by a permanent family.

Every year, about 500 young people “age out” of Virginia’s foster care system. Often, they are sent into the world with nothing—no reliable housing, no job options, no education, no transportation, no life skills, and no supportive relationships. Like most 18-year-olds, they’re not prepared to be fully on their own. Yet their challenges are compounded by histories of abuse, abandonment, and instability.

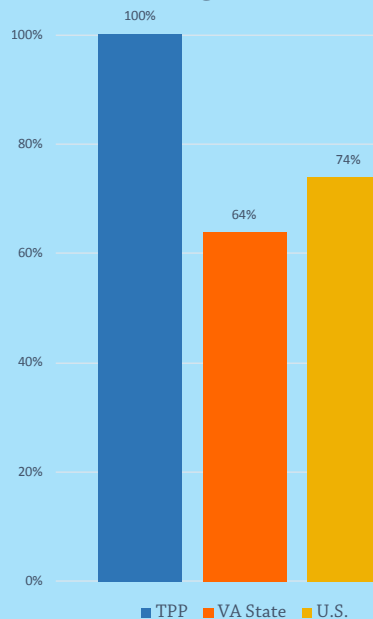
The outcomes are devastating:

- *1 in 4 will be incarcerated within 2 years*
- *1 in 5 will be homeless within 2 years*
- *Fewer than 1 in 6 graduate from high school*
- *They face higher rates of unemployment, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, domestic violence, and more.*

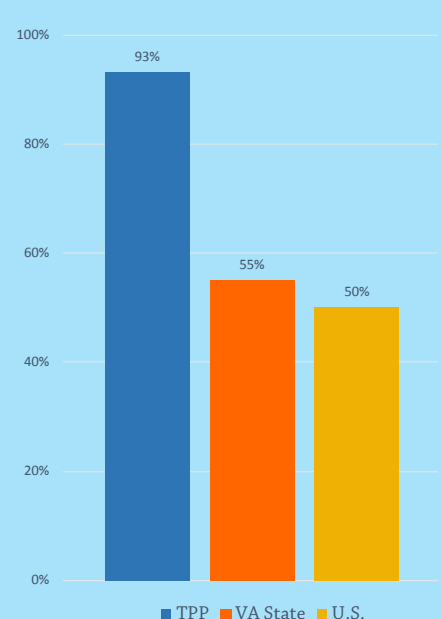
*2015 NYTD reported averages

Former foster youth who have participated in the first 18 months of the TPP program have shown substantially better outcomes thus far when compared to the Virginia State and National averages of former foster youth.*

Accessing Medical Care



Employment



Our Program

The Possibilities Project program invests in youth aging out of foster care and changes the trajectory of their lives.

We have developed an evidenced-based and trauma-informed support program to serve as a replicable model for this region, Virginia, and other states around the country. Our innovative approach empowers youth 18 to 25 who have aged out of Virginia's foster care system without being adopted. We provide these young people with critical supports and housing to assist them as they develop into independent and engaged community members.

The Possibilities Project program uniquely offers crucial services such as housing, transportation, life skills coaching, and intensive case management. We focus on six major service areas which include:

1) post-secondary education, 2) employment, 3) financial capability, 4) securing safe, stable, and affordable housing, 5) accessing and managing health and mental health care, and 6) establishing permanent relationships with supportive adults.

We believe that helping our youths reach success in those six areas will increase their ability to become thriving adults. All young people in the program will have a roommate for mutual support, accountability, and relationship building.



Our ultimate goal is to empower these vulnerable young people to achieve independence and personal success, thus transforming their lives and the communities to which they belong.

The Possibilities Project

chsva.org/possibilities



Information

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Better Housing Coalition

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Each young person is unique, with unique needs and dreams. To ensure a smooth transition, each youth is:

- Able to access a mentor as they pursue their own educational and career goals
- Offered opportunities to grow through personal discovery experiences in metro Richmond and surrounding areas
- Encouraged to engage with their community and build civic responsibility through advocacy, service, and leadership opportunities

Our Collaboration

The Possibilities Project is a collaboration between two Richmond-based nonprofits:

Children's Home Society of Virginia

A full-service adoption agency, committed to building lifelong relationships for Virginia's at-risk youth and transforming our community so that all young people are able to thrive.

Better Housing Coalition

A community development organization, founded in 1988, focused on changing lives and transforming communities through high-quality, affordable housing.