



# 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. Prior to the expansion, the Milestone TLP served up to 19 young adults at a time ages 18 to 21 who are experiencing homelessness in Salt Lake County. With this expansion, Milestone TLP will have an additional 18 beds to serve up to 37 young adults at a time.

## 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 100 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

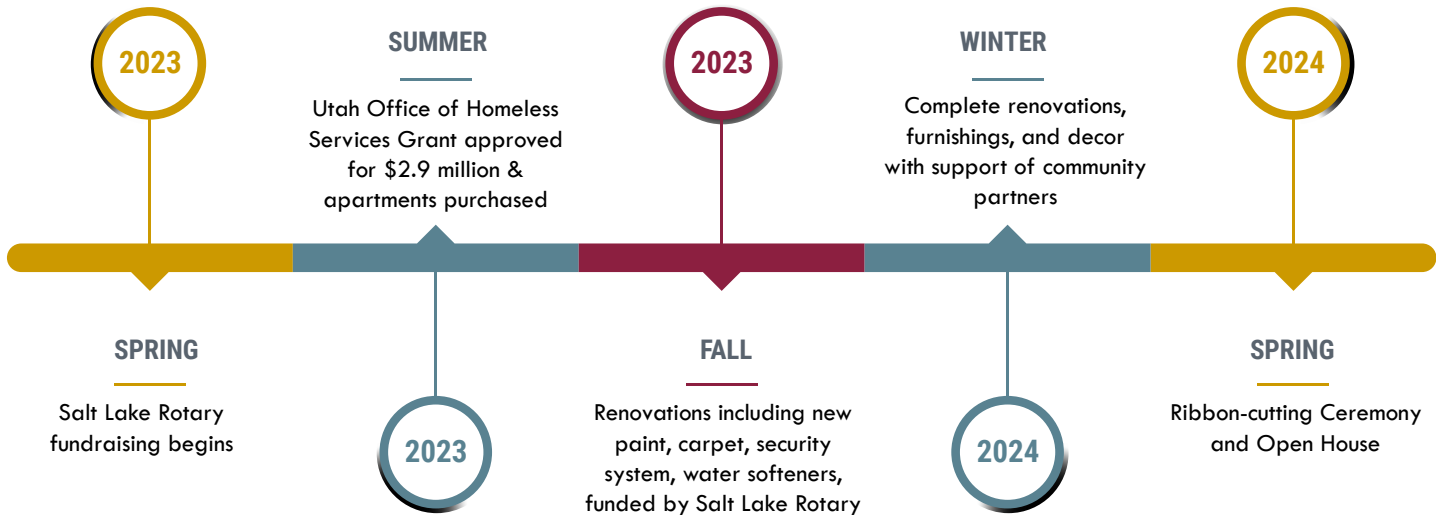
Youth involved  
in child welfare  
services are 3-5  
times more likely  
to commit suicide



Youth Services has worked to address these issues by providing transitional housing for vulnerable youth. Since opening Milestone in 2012, more than 300 young adults have benefited. In 2023, Milestone TLP served 39 young adults from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. Milestone TLP is pleased to report, 16 of the 20 young adults (80%) that exited our program were positive exits (defined as housed and employed or in school). 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 to serve 19 young adults.

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

Salt Lake Rotary began fundraising in March of 2023, and raised over \$250,000 from private donors. In August 2023, they secured a 2.9 million dollar grant through the Utah Office of Homeless Services. These funds were used to purchase and renovate an eight-unit apartment complex in Millcreek. Salt Lake Rotary and Salt Lake County signed a 50-year agreement without any fees associated with use of the building. These units will house an additional 18 young adults at a time (25 youth per year), an on-site house manager, and an office for staff. The office space allows for 2 case managers, the program manager, and a therapist. Having staff on-site ensures the best support for the young adults in the program.



Built in 2020, each unit has 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a laundry room, and a spacious kitchen that will be used as the young adults practice their life skills during their time in the Milestone TLP. There is a common area outside the apartments to support the participants and provides a quiet and calm safe space.



2020 Milestone house backyard fence “We Take Pride in Our Community” joint service project with the SLCo Youth Action Board

Youth Services is providing funds in the annual budget for operational costs and Milestone TLP staff including a case manager, a therapist and a residential house manager. Milestone TLP staff are engaging with community partners to support the young adults with resources and services to create stable and consistent partnerships and maintain relationships.



**Rotary**  
Salt Lake City  
Rotary Club 24



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

– Milestone Participant

The 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 oversees 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 are 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.

Milestone provides:

#### **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.

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*At first, I was a statistic. Being a female homeless youth, Milestone was a steppingstone in defying that statistics. 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

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