The Link's Youth Programming

Housing and Homeless Youth Services

The Link offers a continuum of programs for youth and young families who are experiencing homelessness which include a Street Outreach Program, a Drop-In Center (C.O.R.E.) and seven housing programs. The Link's Street Outreach Program and C.O.R.E. Drop-In Center help to identify at-risk and homeless youth and assist them with any current crisis or immediate needs; C.O.R.E. also provides on-going services to help youth move out of crisis. The Link operates seven housing programs across the Twin Cities Metro Area (with a total of 188 units) for youth and young families who are homeless. One of these housing programs (Project Live Out Loud) is culturally specific to youth who identify as LGBTQ, and The Young Families Program includes housing and services designed specifically to serve young parents and their children. All of The Link's housing programs provide a safe and stable place for youth to live, along with the support and services they need to achieve their goals and transition out of homelessness.

Contact: James Lewis, Housing and Homeless Services Division Director, jlewis@thelinkmn.org or (612) 287-1642

Juvenile Justice

The Link has six programs that provide support to young people who are at-risk or who are currently involved in the juvenile justice system. These programs provide an alternative response to the juvenile justice system for youth with the understanding that if young people have their basic needs met, positive support and access to services to help them with the hardships they experience, they will be less likely to be involved in criminal activity. School Matters specifically helps youth who have been truant get back into school, stay in school, and helps prevents them from dropping out. The Juvenile Supervision Center (JSC) provides a safe place for law enforcement to drop off youth who have committed low level or status offenses, or who have been sexually exploited, in order to receive supportive services. The Evening Reporting Centers (ERCs) and P.O.W.E.R. Program provide supportive services and case management for youth who have committed higher level offense and are referred through Hennepin County Probation. A culturally specific program for African American parents of youth who are in the JSC or School Matters Program is also available to provide support, assistance with basic needs, and parenting skills education.

Contact: Kate Tobin, Juvenile Justice Division Director, ktobin@thelinkmn.org or (612) 767-4471

Safe Harbor

The Link's Safe Harbor Programs operate in partnership with the state of Minnesota's No Wrong Door Response for Sexually Exploited Youth, which was created in response to Minnesota's Safe Harbor Law. The Link provides a continuum of services for sexually exploited youth that includes the West Metro Regional Navigator Program, which provides a first point of contact; crisis intervention and on-going mobile services; the Passageways Emergency Shelter and Housing Program, which provide a safe place for victims of trafficking between the ages of 13 and 24 to live while receiving specialized services; mental health therapy and family reunification counseling; and aftercare services. All of our Safe Harbor programs are specifically designed to help youth heal from the trauma of being sex trafficked, and support them in achieving the positive goals they have for themselves and their future.

Contact: Quisha Stewart, Safe Harbor Division Director, qstewart@thelinkmn.org or (952) 885-4454
MAKE AN IMPACT

Shop and make a difference. Add The Link as your Amazon Smile charity or check out our urgent needs wishlist at www.thelinkmn.org/volunteer.

Support youth and families in The Link programming through a financial contribution. Visit www.thelinkmn.org/donate to learn more.

Volunteer: Each month The Link hosts volunteer opportunities that are perfect for individuals, groups or organization. Visit www.thelinkmn.org for upcoming opportunities and to find resources for hosting donations drives to supply basic need items to youth in our programs.

Connect with The Link on social media @thelinkmn on Facebook and twitter to learn more about programs, urgent needs and success stories.

Join us at one of our events! Learn more about upcoming events at thelinkmn.org/events.
There is a way out of sexual exploitation.
For help, call or text 612-232-5428 / thelinkmn.org

SIGNS YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW MAY NEED HELP:

- Someone is physically, sexually or emotionally hurting you.
- You don’t have control of your ID, money or other things that are important to you.
- Someone put a tattoo on you with his or her name, a barcode or something else you may not have chose.
- You are doing things or being asked or forced to do things you don’t want to do.
- Your boyfriend, girlfriend or finance is a lot older than you.
- You are posting ads on-line—or someone is posting ads for you online.
- You have friends or family members that are in “the life” or “lifestyle”.
- You are feeling sad, mad, stressed out and/or nervous a lot.
- You don’t feel safe.

YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT NO MATTER WHAT HAS HAPPENED OR WHAT YOU THINK YOU HAVE DONE OR NOT DONE YOU ARE PRICELESS!

If you or someone you know has had any of the following things happen it may mean that are a victim of sexual exploitation or trafficking—the good thing is that there is help if you want it! Just text or call 612-232-5428 anytime and someone from The Link will be there to help you!
The Link's Support for Youth who have been Exploited or Trafficked

(AKA IN THE LIFE OR LIFESTYLE)

The Link is a youth and adult led organization meaning that all of the following programs have been co-designed, created and continue to be overseen by a group of youth who have experienced sexual exploitation and trafficking.

STREET OUTREACH
The Link’s Street Outreach Program provides outreach into the street areas and community locations where at risk and trafficked youth tend to congregate/hang out. The Street Outreach Workers provide a way to build trusting relationships with youth, help them with any immediate and basic needs as well as connections to longer term services. To learn more about our street outreach program contact Cora Burns at 612-232-1672.

WEST METRO REGIONAL NAVIGATOR PROGRAM
The West Metro Regional Navigator takes crisis calls and referrals of youth under the age of 24 who are victims of sex trafficking. This program at The Link provides a 24/7 response for sex-trafficked youth for Hennepin, Scott and Carver counties and provides each youth with an individualized safety and needs assessment plan, mobile case management and connections with the variety of services they need. This program also provides training and technical assistance across the west metro region on the issue of minor sex trafficking. To get connected with our Regional Navigator Program contact 612-232-5428.

PASSAGEWAYS EMERGENCY SHELTER & HOUSING PROGRAM
Passageways Shelter and Housing Program provides emergency shelter beds for youth ages 13 to 17 and housing for youth ages 16 to 24 who have been victims of sex trafficking (can also providing housing for parenting youth with children). Passageways is inclusive of all gender identities and can serve parenting youth with one child. The Passageways program also provides a variety of on-site services specific to sexual exploitation that include case management, mental health therapy, education programming, life skills training, a survivor mentor program, health care services and positive youth development activities. To find out if there is an opening at Passageways and to get into the program please call or text The Link's Regional Navigator at 612-232-5428 (anytime 24/7).

AFTERCARE PROGRAM
The Link offers mobile case management, crisis intervention and support to youth who have been in one of our programs for sexually exploited and trafficked youth through our After Care Program. To find out more about this program contact Kelly Engebretson at 612-227-3364.

CAREER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
The Link offers part time employment to exploited or trafficked youth who have been in our programs through our Survivor Advisory Committee and our new Career & Leadership Development Program.

These programs offer youth opportunities to learn skills to secure and maintain employment, build their career and leadership skills and increase their income.

To find out more about this program visit www.thelinkmn.org or contact Beth Holger-Ambrose at 612-636-4260 or bholger-ambrose@thelinkmn.org.