

WHAT IS LEAD?

Youth Villages' LEAD program provides clinical evaluations and case coordination services for children involved in the mental health, child welfare or juvenile justice systems and their families. The program seeks to **link** families to resources that will **engage** with them from day one, while **assessing** their needs and **directing** them to the appropriate program.

Youth involved in mental health, child welfare or juvenile justice systems are referred to LEAD for a Comprehensive Clinical Assessment (CCA) or Enhanced Trauma Assessment. The CCA is completed with the youth and their legal guardian, along with collaboration from other involved key players. The youth and legal guardian complete the CCA with a Youth Villages licensed clinician. The CCA includes a biopsychosocial diagnostic and risk assessments. Recommendations are communicated based on the results of the CCA. The LEAD coordinator collaborates with the family and key players to make appropriate referrals based on the recommendations. The coordinator follows through to help ensure the youth is linked with the provider who will be providing the recommended service.

Youth Villages' decision matrices and risk assessments help determine which children could safely be helped in the community and which could not.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR LEAD?

- Children and youth ages 4 to 21
- Youth with behavioral or emotional disorders or those who have experienced trauma disorders
- Youth who have a history with mental health, child welfare or juvenile justice systems

POST-ASSESSMENT/POTENTIAL SERVICES AFTER EVALUATION

The assessor recommends the appropriate community-based service to help the child and family. The assessor will make any referrals to the provider on behalf of the youth and family. Youth Villages then sets up an appointment between the chosen provider and the family. If the assessment determines an out-of-home placement is warranted, the team begins the process of requesting authorization and admission into the service. LEAD Coordination referrals are handled in-house, if recommended by the assessor. A LEAD Coordinator is assigned to assist the youth, family and custodial agency for an average of nine months to ensure treatment linkage, engagement and stability.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR FAMILIES

Youth Villages' mission is to help children and families live successfully. The goal of this program is to address children's needs while focusing on decreasing costs and achieving better outcomes such as: reducing substance use, decreasing out-of-home placements, decreasing arrests and recidivism and increasing school performance. This delivers a seamless system of care across services.

Steps to measuring success:

- Provide consistent service connectedness
- Direct high-quality, community-based services to youth and families
- Reduce utilization of crisis services
- Reduce or avoid placement disruptions
- Improve caregiver engagement





“Buncombe County’s partnership with **Youth Villages** allows our **Child Protective Services social workers** to quickly link children and their families to holistic and comprehensive assessments of their **well-being needs**. Youth Villages has been flexible and creative in growing their program, so the children and families we serve are able to access evidence-informed therapies or enhanced services to meet their trauma-related and mental health needs. Youth Villages exceptionally provides output data to support timeliness of assessments and outcome data related to recommended services.”

— Rebecca Smith,
Director of Social Work, Buncombe County Department
of Health and Human Services

“As Chief Court Counselor of District 28, Division of Juvenile Justice, I would like to highlight and recognize Youth Villages’ immeasurable efforts in providing services to court-involved youth. **The LEAD program is a vital resource in our community**, assessing and referring juveniles to the appropriate services. We have been partners for over five years. **I consider LEAD as one of our greatest assets**, and I strongly believe in this program. **Youth Villages truly has a passion for working with families and improving the lives of those they serve**. I look forward to our continued partnership in serving families in this district”.

— Sylvia Clement,
Chief Court Counselor of District 28

OUTCOMES

Over the past two years, **Youth Villages** has assessed more than 1,000 children and their families.

Due to a combination of accurate systemic assessment and timely linkage to outcome-based services, **LEAD** saw great success.

95%

Youth who remained in their homes and communities

75%

Of 44 total youth who needed out-of-home placement were able to be served in the least restrictive setting

LEARN MORE: YouthVillages.org

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Youth Villages is a national leader in children’s mental and behavioral health, committed to building strong families, delivering effective services and significantly improving outcomes for children, families and young people involved in child welfare and juvenile justice systems across the country. Founded in 1986, the organization’s 3,300 employees help more than 30,000 children annually in 23 states and the District of Columbia. Youth Villages has been recognized by the Harvard Business School and U.S. News & World Report and was identified by The White House as one of the nation’s most promising results-oriented nonprofit organizations.

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