

## YOUTH STORY

## You Helped Frankie Find Support and Healing to Move Forward

The transition from adolescence to adulthood can be hard, often filled with curveballs, hardship, and lessons learned. The young people we serve at YouthCare are on that same journey, going through the same trials and tribulations as their peers. But for young people experiencing homelessness, a traditional support system—parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents— isn't always available, which can deepen the trauma.

Frankie, a young woman who radiates warmth, feels lucky to have had that caring support from her dad. Frankie's dad raised her, and they were inseparable. When he suddenly passed away two years ago, Frankie didn't know how she would survive. With no family or relatives to take her in, her world flipped upside down, and she sank into a depression. She bounced from home to home, losing trust she'd ever gain stability.

One Friday afternoon, Frankie sat at a park bench outside of school. She was turning eighteen in two days. As her head swirled with worries about where she was going to live, she remembered something her dad would tell her when she was little.

***"Don't ever give up," said Frankie. "If dad were here, he would tell me that."***

Those words encouraged her to seek help from her school counselor, who gave her the number for YouthCare. Frankie met with Noel, a YouthCare case manager, who helped her find housing at Catalyst, one of YouthCare's community living programs.

Catalyst provided a pathway back to stability. Frankie was thankful to have a routine: chores after dinner, weekly game nights, and check-ins with a mental health therapist every Thursday. Frankie grew to appreciate those Thursdays the most.

All too often, the young people we meet have endured profound loss and are struggling with their mental health. **A recent study by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago found that 35% of young people experiencing homelessness have lost a parent or guardian.** But asking for help can be hard. The stigma of being both homeless and needing mental health care can be a barrier for youth in getting the services they need.



***At Catalyst, Frankie received consistent, caring support and found additional resources for her mental health care. Outside of her Thursday appointments, she participated in weekly homework assignments focused on wellness and goal-setting for the future.***

Staff marveled at Frankie's positive changes with each passing day. She earned her GED, and it wasn't long before she began searching for her first job. She wanted to save up for an apartment so she could have a space to call her own. With help from Noel, Frankie applied for a handful of positions—she crossed her fingers for a job in health or fitness, a budding passion. Frankie jumped up and down with excitement when she received a call back to interview for a front desk position at a local gym!

A few days before her interview, staff helped Frankie find clothes at YouthCare's Basement Boutique, a shop where young people can access clothing, shoes, and other necessities. Dressed in emerald green, her dad's favorite color, Frankie entered her interview with confidence. Noel beamed when Frankie received a second call later that day with news that she got the job.

***"I think my dad would have been proud," Frankie said. "He always cheered me on."***

Too many young people come to YouthCare with their own version of Frankie's story. Each of them deserves a pathway back to stability: a stable home, consistent support, and access to therapeutic services necessary to heal. Like Frankie, they can imagine new possibilities and change the course of their own story through encouragement and healing.

# YOUTH CARE

Homeless youth ➤ Off the streets ➤ Preparing for life

2500 NE 54th St., Seattle, WA 98105

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Donate today.

## Help homeless youth feel excited for their first day back to school.

Your donation of school supplies helps youth experiencing homelessness feel prepared for their first day. The joy of a new pair of sneakers or the relief of having enough school supplies gives youth the confidence to concentrate on their futures—something they all deserve.

### You can help by donating or organizing a drive for the following items:

- Backpacks & messenger bags
- Alarm clocks
- Day planners
- Scientific & graphing calculators
- Hygiene items (deodorant, razors, ethnic haircare)
- Gift cards (Amazon, VISA, Fred Meyer, Safeway, Target)
- Art & school supplies
- Non-perishable food & snacks
- New underwear
- Reusable water bottles

For more, visit [youthcare.org/what-we-need-now](https://youthcare.org/what-we-need-now)

Donations can be delivered Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm to 2500 NE 54th St., Seattle, WA 98105. You can also make a gift online at [youthcare.org](https://youthcare.org), or visit our website to purchase items from YouthCare's online wish list on Amazon.com. For more information, contact us at (206) 204-1404 or [donations@youthcare.org](mailto:donations@youthcare.org).



Big News! YouthCare Opens James Place Studios

On July 1st, YouthCare opened a new independent living program: James Place Studios at YouthCare! These thirteen brand new efficiency studios located in the heart of Fremont are now home to young people who have transitioned from homelessness and are pursuing their education and career pathways while building a community of support.

Safe and consistent housing is a critical step to achieving long-term stability. We're so grateful to our community, who helped us turn empty rooms into dignified spaces where young people can plan for their futures and thrive.

You helped us beat our goal of \$18,000 to ready each apartment with furniture, appliances, bedding, and a stocked kitchen!

SPECIAL THANKS

to volunteer groups Zulilly, Bellevue College, KPMG, Brand Verity, and Google for dedicating a full day to assembling furniture for each unit! We couldn't have done it without you!



Did you know?

Of the 1,100+ homeless youth and young adults in King County, approximately...

1/2 EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Yet there are no inpatient mental health or substance use disorder programs specifically available for young adults ages 18-24 in Washington.

1/3 HAVE BEEN IN FOSTER CARE

Many young people perceive their entry into foster care as the beginning of their experience with homelessness.

Advocacy Corner

YouthCare advocates at the federal, state, and local level for budget matters and public policies that impact youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. This has been an exciting year for YouthCare's advocacy efforts. Here's an update on some of our key successes:

FEDERAL

YouthCare's CEO, Melinda Giovengo, was invited to provide testimony to the United States House Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Human Services regarding the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). RHYA is the only federal funding uniquely tailored to the developmental needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Keep your eyes peeled for ways to support RHYA's reauthorization!



STATE



Housing and homelessness advocates had a lot to celebrate this legislative session. Two of YouthCare's longtime policy priorities were successfully signed into law: eliminating the use of detention for youth who commit non-criminal offenses, and creating a legal pathway for youth to stay in under-18 shelters if they have no safe or stable place to go. Additionally, legislators made historic investments in Washington State's Housing Trust Fund and passed modest progressive revenue reforms.

KING COUNTY

YouthCare joined other youth providers to successfully advocate that funding generated through Sound Transit's Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account goes toward improving the educational outcomes for foster, homeless, and juvenile justice-involved youth.



SEATTLE



YouthCare participated in a broad coalition of advocates to pass an annual inflation adjustment for human service providers supported by the City. Each year, inflation rises, yet city contracts that fund human services do not. As a result, providers stretch their budgets thin just to keep the doors open and the lights on. The passage of an annual inflation adjustment will give human service agencies the opportunity to stabilize their budgets so they can keep up with the costs of doing business while compensating staff with the wages they deserve.

Save the date!

FOR YOUTHCARE'S 35TH ANNUAL LUNCHEON!

Friday, March 27, 2020 at The Westin Seattle.

For information about sponsorship or hosting a table, please contact Gabbi at gabbi.sawrey@youthcare.org



Stay in touch!

VISIT YOUTHCARE.ORG

to learn more and get involved:

- Donate
- Volunteer
- Advocate

Reach us at info@youthcare.org