



Children's Service
Society of Wisconsin™

A member of Children's Hospital and Health System.

What is Independent Living Skills?

Children's Service Society of Wisconsin has developed a comprehensive Independent Living Skills program to assist teens in successfully transitioning from foster care or other out-of-home care settings into adulthood and independent living. Our staff understands that this transition is seldom an easy task. It requires skills, maturity, planning and support.

Our ILS service delivery model is based on the belief that teens will experience a more successful transition if they have built and maintained positive, supportive relationships with adult caregivers or other adults during their time in out-of-home care placement. Our ILS curriculum focuses on strengthening relationship development and supportive connections between teens and their caregivers, as well as teaching traditional ILS skills. The ILS curriculum is group based and the teen's parent, caregiver and other natural supports will be required to attend the ILS program with the youth.

Our ILS program model consists of three components:

1. Skill Building Curriculum. Using the Ansel Casey Life Skills Assessment and Learning Plan, the program offers curriculum across nine domains (skill clusters) identified by Casey Family Programs. ILS training and services are individualized to teens in the program, because the specific independent living skills need of each youth may differ tremendously. The youth's caregiver plays an important role in partnering with our staff provide individualized support and guidance.
2. Parent-Youth Relationship Building. The program includes a strong relationship building component for teens and their caretakers using the Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth group-based curriculum. Strengthening Families has been scientifically evaluated and proven effective in improving parenting skills and enhancing child-parent relations for youth ages 10 and older.
3. Service-Learning. Service-learning is an approach to youth engagement and education that integrates meaningful service to others with intentional learning and personal development. Service-learning activities occur within the youth's local community and are designed by program staff in partnership with organizations and other agencies within the community. Teens incorporate 20 hours of required service-learning into their ILS program, and their caregiver is encouraged to participate in service learning activities with them.

Program outcomes

Anticipated outcomes for the program are that the teen will:

- Demonstrate increased knowledge in life skills.
- Report a strengthened, supportive relationship with an adult family member or other significant adult in his or her life.
- Develop at least one new connection to a supportive adult.
- Show an increased connection to his or her community.

Referral Process

Referrals can be made by calling your local Children's Service Society of Wisconsin office. ILS programs operate throughout the year based on referrals and group size.

Our agency

This mission of Children's Service Society is to build, sustain and enhance a nurturing environment for children. Children's Service Society is committed to creating quality programs and services for children, youth and their families by offering programs in three core service areas: out-of-home care, child and family counseling and prevention services. Children's Service Society is a member of Children's Hospital and Health System.