

# Young Adults and Supportive Housing



## DEFINING SUCCESS

Supportive Housing for Young  
Adults at  
**Lantern Community Services**

# The Lantern Group

## Lantern Community Services



**The Lantern Group, established in 1997, is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to strengthening New York City communities by providing permanent affordable supportive housing.**



**13 buildings completed or in construction: 1, 028 units**

**3 buildings in pre-development: 331 units**

# Supportive Housing For Young Adults



## **Schafer Hall (2001)**

### **Mixed Population Model:**

- 25 Young Adults aged out of foster care
- 30 Families
- 36 Single Adults



# Supportive Housing For Young Adults



## Jasper Hall (2008)

### Mixed Population Model:

- 31 Families
- 22 Young Adults (17 units for youth aging out)



# Supportive Housing For Young Adults



## **Vicinitas Hall (2011)**

### **Single Population Model:**

- 67 Young Adults (total)
  - 41 Young Adults Aged out of Foster Care
  - 26 Young Adults from the Community

# Supportive Housing for Young Adults



Although housing is permanent, the ultimate goal of Lantern's young adult programs is to gain the basic skills necessary to transition into adulthood and move into independent housing.

## GOALS FOR YOUNG ADULT TENANTS

Housing Stability

Develop "Life Skills" and Soft Skills

Progress to Greater Independence



# Supportive Housing for Young Adults



## **Conflicts and Contradictions in Young Adult Housing**

Housing is Permanent

Funding is to “transition” young adults towards permanence

# Lantern Community Services



**COMMUNITY**

**&**

**ENVIRONMENT**



# Supportive Community



## **Supportive Housing as a Positive Community**

Young adults who have been homeless or raised in foster care settings may never have felt part of a larger community. The supportive housing community is a departure from the restrictive world of group homes and juvenile detention or the unstructured life of homelessness.

### **ELEMENTS OF LANTERN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

**Diversity**

**Safe, Beautiful and Clean**

**Inclusive and Accepting**

**Stable**

# Diverse Community



## **The Significance of Diversity**

Affirms the value of difference

Promotes acceptance and respect for others

Respects the high percentage of LGBT young adults who age out of foster care and/or are homeless

Teaches young adults how to get along with a variety of people

# Beautiful Community



## **Importance of Supportive Housing Environment**

Communicates respect; you deserve to live in this environment.

Young adults will internalize the norms of the supportive housing community.

Bring it forward: Young adults grow to desire a clean, safe and beautiful environment.

“I can’t go back to living like I did.”

# Safe Environment



## **Developing New Norms**

Many aging out young adults come from environments characterized by fighting and bullying.

In Lantern supportive housing, young adults experience a tolerant, safe environment that most will eventually internalize as normative.

When they move out of supportive housing, young adults retain the new norms.

“I can’t go back to my old neighborhood.”

# Inclusive and Non-Judgmental Culture



## **The Importance of Acceptance**

Enables young adults to comfortably define their identities

Many young adults come from environments where LGBT youths may have been harassed or abused; the supportive housing community must not tolerate harassment, bullying or abuse.

Vicinitas Hall: 30% of tenants LGBT upon move-in; five months later, an additional 20%, who were not open about their sexuality, felt comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation.

# Lantern Community Services



# SERVICES

# Supportive Services



## **Dual Role of Case Managers**

### **First Role: Traditional Case Management**

Case managers assist with Individual Service Plans that set goals around:

- Life skills
- Housing stability
- Financial management and budgeting
- Education/Employment



# Supportive Services



## **Dual Role of Case Managers**

### **Second Role: Case Manager as Role Model**

- Demonstrate constructive behavior
- Conflict de-escalation and resolution
- Effective communication skills
- Problem-solving

All young adults experience difficulties and make mistakes as they transition into adulthood. Lantern case managers model problem-solving skills and help the young adults find solutions to stumbling blocks.

# Supportive Services



## **Life Skills Necessary to Transition to Independent Living**

- Financial Management – Budgeting, Banking, and Saving
- Obtain medical insurance
- Navigate systems
- Access benefits, including emergency support for food
- Locate and utilize community supports
- Apply for educational or employment opportunities

# Supportive Services



## **Life Skills Necessary to Transition to Independent Living (cont'd)**

- Ability to cook, clean, shop, do laundry
- Pay rent and utility bills
- Maintain healthy relationships
- Address physical and/or mental health needs

# Lantern Community Services



## **CORE PRINCIPLES**

# Core Principles



Set attainable, incremental goals

Strengths-based approach

Creative methods of engagement

Focus on the individual interests, needs and abilities

Recognize significance of interruptions to childhood and adolescent developmental milestones

Revise service plans as goals are met

Model behavior that promotes self-sufficiency