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Volunteer:

- Organize a food, diaper or clothing drive
- Organize a fundraiser
- Become a mentor
- Perform maintenance work on program facilities
- Sew curtains for the shelter
- Put together pantry bags
- Share a hobby or activity with our youth
- Sort clothing donations
- Prepare dinner for group night
- Assist with child care at the Maternity Group Home on Wednesday evenings

Contact Stacy DeMuth
sdemuth@yesomaha.org
402.345.5187 x 107

Donate:

- Clothing (infant to young adult)
- Infant and toddler supplies (diapers, bottles, etc.)
- Non-perishable food items (juice boxes, granola bars, pop-top cans of fruit or soup, cereal, etc.)
- Undergarments for young men and women
- Board and outdoor games

Visit our website to see an up-to-date wish list:

www.yesomaha.org

To make a monetary donation, visit our website or contact Stacy DeMuth at sdemuth@yesomaha.org

Calendar:

October:

- 10/21/11 - A Day in the Life of a Homeless Youth -community members will be invited on a guided tour of a typical day in the life of one of our youth
- Drop-In Center Halloween Party

November:

- National Homeless Youth Awareness Month -stay tuned for more details about activities

Our mission:

To serve homeless and at-risk youth by providing critically-needed resources which empower them to become self-sufficient

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Follow YES:



www.yesomaha.org



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@YESomaha

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outside in

YES newsletter • October 2011

Erica got pregnant when she was 16 years old. After years of abuse and abandonment by family and boyfriends, Erica and her daughter became homeless. She was referred to the YES maternity group home (MGH) by her advocate at the domestic violence shelter she had been staying at. Erica lived at MGH from September 2009 to April 2010.

While living at MGH, Erica completed her GED and found a job.

Since completing the program, she has enrolled in cosmetology school, which she will graduate from in April 2012.

A walk in her shoes - former YES youth gives back

Last month, Erica visited the YES administrative office, with a passionate idea to host a fundraiser to give back to MGH. Erica is planning a fashion show called "A Walk in My Shoes" to raise money to give back to YES.

"MGH is very dear to me because it saved my life," says Erica. "I did not have a support system and had no idea how to be a parent. My case manager at MGH provided me with the support and resources I needed to become successful."

Erica plans to hold "A Walk in My Shoes" on Dec. 5 at her church. She is asking other YES youth to participate in the fashion show and to step up and share their stories.

"This program gave me hope," Erica says. "I want to give back and show these girls the love and support I received while in and after the program. I want to give them the hope that got me through yesterday and brought me to where I am today."



Food Drive



Due to severe shortages at local food banks, YES is running low on supplies for pantry bags. YES currently distributes 75-100 bags of food per week and needs various food items to keep up with the high demand. Clean out your pantries, buy a few extra items at the grocery store, or consider making a donation to help our youth stay nourished.

Items needed:

- canned goods
- cereal
- mac and cheese
- pasta
- soup
- crackers/chips

For more information, contact Cindy Goodin
cgoodin@yesomaha.org
402.345.5187 x 106

For most teenagers, turning 19 years old is an occasion to celebrate. In Nebraska, 19 is the age of “freedom,” when youth become adults, and are no longer legally bound to their parents.

For foster children, turning 19 years old is a bittersweet event. Rather than celebrating the milestone of reaching adulthood, many of these youth are too busy worrying about what they are going to do next. Becoming an adult means they have “aged out” of foster care, losing their support from the state.

This celebration mixed with harsh reality will be experienced by nearly 300 youth in Omaha this year, according to Project Everlast’s website.

A study released by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago gives a snapshot of former foster children at age 24:

- Only 6 percent of these youth finished a two- or four-year college degree
- Fewer than half of these youth are employed
- Nearly 40 percent of these youth have been homeless or have “couch-surfed” since leaving foster care
- Nearly 60 percent of the young men in this category have been convicted of a crime

With the assistance of Project Everlast, a \$95,000 grant from the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, YES is expanding its Transitional Living Program (TLP) to accommodate youth who are making the transition from foster care to adult independence.

YES is leasing two three-bedroom homes from Omaha 100, which



\$95,000 grant adds six new beds to transitional living

will house six new beds, doubling the size of the current TLP capacity. The expansion increases total independent living capacity (between TLP and the maternity group home) to 17 beds.

Our transitional living program provides the resources homeless and at-risk youth need to become independent and self-sufficient

“Although systems have improved for those aging out of foster care, becoming an adult continues to be just as difficult for many of these youth,” says Cindy Goodin, YES program director. “I am so proud that YES now has programs to help these young people transition from dependency to becoming self-sufficient.”

On Sept. 1, representatives from Mutual of Omaha’s Great Plains Division Office volunteered their

time at one of the new homes for Mutual of Omaha’s National Month of Caring.

Kathy Vaske, Mutual of Omaha, coordinated her office’s participation in National Month of Caring and hand-picked YES as their partner organization.

“YES is a great organization and the associates of Mutual of Omaha’s Great Plains Division Office are proud and honored to be part of this transitional living program,” says Vaske.

When they arrived on site, the home was completely empty. By the time the volunteers unloaded all of the items from seven different vehicles, the home was fully furnished with living room and bedroom furniture, dishes, small appliances, bedding and more.

Youth will occupy the new TLP homes beginning in October. Youth in these homes will have a higher level of independence than those at the other TLP sites.

Dance for a Chance raises \$25,000

Ten local celebrities took the stage at YES’ third annual Dance for a Chance, a competition similar to the television show “Dancing with the Stars.”

Dance for a Chance was held on Saturday, Aug. 27, at Skutt Catholic High School.

Local celebrities worked with professional dance instructors and choreographed a 90-second routine that was performed in front of celebrity judges and an audience of nearly 300 people.



Prior to the competition, dancers were encouraged to ask their friends and families to support them with votes, at \$5 per vote, to help raise funds and awareness about the event.

YES was able to raise nearly \$25,000 through votes, ticket sales, silent auction and raffle.

“As nerve-racking as this was, I would not hesitate to do it again,”

said Kerri Peterson, celebrity dancer and executive director of Live Well Omaha. “What an incredible cause.”

Dancers had a shot at two different trophies. The Dance for a Chance trophy was awarded to the dancer who raised the most money through votes. This year’s winner was Kayla Thomas from The Morning Blend, with 160 votes.

A second trophy, titled the “most Bahe-some dancer” award, was given to the dancer with the performance most loved by the judges and audience. The award is named after Nick Bahe, previous Dance for a Chance champion. This year’s recipient was Mike Harris, science teacher at Skutt Catholic High School.

“Dance for a Chance is more than a fundraiser for YES,” said Stacy DeMuth, YES director of development. “It’s a chance to share our mission with the community.”

