



# Annual Report FY25



## Youth Service Bureau

Of Illinois Valley

Helping young people & families succeed by serving them in their home, school, and community since 1976

# Program

## Foster Care

In FY25, our foster care program supported 1,164 children and their families across the region. We were honored to receive recognition from the DCFS Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council (SWFCAC) for our 2025 Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan. This award affirms our commitment to engaging foster parents as true partners in shaping the support and services that strengthen families.

## Hispanic Services

The Hispanic Services Program supports the well-being of Spanish-speaking children and families by ensuring access to vital services. The team provides clients information and referrals in their native language and links them to services.

All staff are certified interpreters through the DuPage Federation on Human Service Reform, providing direct services in Spanish to make community resources more accessible and easier to navigate.

## Juvenile Justice

Our Juvenile Justice programs provide intensive services and creates an alternative to incarceration. This 46 young people and their families found support through our Redeploy/Second Chance program. Behind that number are stories of resilient youth who are attending therapy, completing community service, staying in school, and choosing a better path forward.

We're proud that 85% of participants successfully completed their probation and court requirements. This is a credit to their hard work and the support system around them.

# Highlights

## Solutions Counseling

The Solutions Counseling group is made up of highly qualified therapists specializing in working with adults, couples, children, and families. Each therapist holds a Master's degree and licensing.

They provide trauma informed treatment for a large array of mental health conditions in Princeton, Peru, Ottawa, and Mendota. Most major insurance payments are accepted and YSB offers a sliding fee scale for those without insurance.

## Intact Family Services

When a report is made to DCFS, they investigate and determine what is in the child's best interest. Families may be offered Intact Family Services to help address challenges and keep children safely at home. Those who accept this opportunity work with a case manager and receive support tailored to their needs.

Families who participate in this voluntary program overwhelmingly report what a positive difference it makes. "I am a single mother of two.... I greatly appreciate all they have done for me. I wouldn't change a thing about this program."

## Homeless Youth Services

The Homeless Youth Program provides services that connect unhoused youth with caring outreach workers who build relationships and make connections that prioritize their safety and well-being. In FY25 100% of clients successfully achieved independence at the close of their cases.

Young people ages 16-23 who are living in unstable and non-traditional living arrangements are eligible for services.

# Program Highlights

## Ladd Afterschool

Since 2004, the Ladd Afterschool Program has provided a safe and nurturing place for children to learn, grow, and play at the end of each school day.

## Hope House

Hope House provides a safe place for parents to have supervised visits with their children.

This past year, after years apart, Jilly\* was hesitant to see her dad again. With consistent, playful visits at Hope House, she grew happy and comfortable, reconnecting with her dad and extended family. The case closed successfully with unsupervised visits.

## Parenting Program

The Parenting Program offers 12-week classes built on an evidence-based curriculum that helps caregivers navigate common parenting challenges with confidence. This year, our team led 7 sessions serving 176 parents, with more than 95% successfully completing the program. For many participants, the tools and strategies they gained have been truly life-changing.

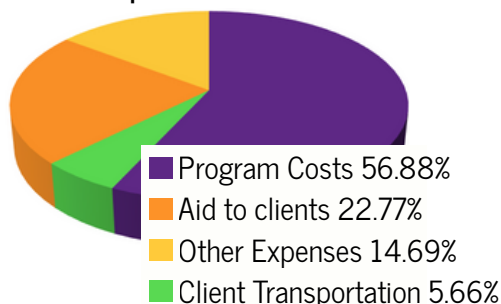
## Runaway & Homeless Youth

RHY provides 24 hour crisis intervention to youth who have run away or been locked out of their homes due to family conflict in LaSalle, Putnam, Bureau, Stark, and Marshall counties.

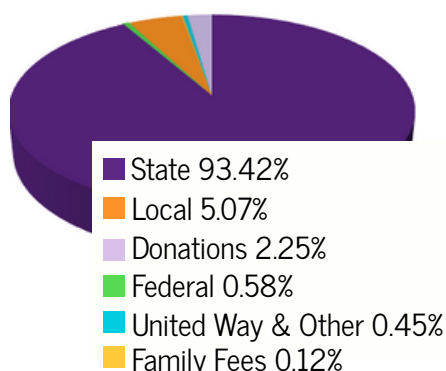
In addition it provides family centered casework to any youth age 11-17, and their family, residing in those counties.

# Program Numbers

FY25 Expenses



FY25 Revenues



## Clients Served

(includes youth & families)

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Foster Care            | 3009        |
| Intact Family Services | 498         |
| Juvenile Justice       | 110         |
| Treatment              | 362         |
| Hispanic Services      | 1748        |
| RHY/HY/Crisis          | 269         |
| Ladd After School      | 16          |
| Hope House             | 20          |
| Parenting              | 309         |
| SOC/IPS                | 21          |
| <b>Total:</b>          | <b>6362</b> |

While the majority of our revenue comes from our contracts with the state, those funds pay for our basic operating costs.

The portion that comes from donations supports the Compassion in Action fund which meets urgent needs of our clients in crisis, subsidizes counseling for those who need it, and provides much needed 'extras' for the kids in our care.

Your generosity makes a meaningful impact!

This important work is done by over 175 dedicated YSB Team members.



This year, YSB received a generous \$400,000 donation from an anonymous benefactor who asked that it be used to directly benefit the children we serve.

This gift inspired the creation of the **Bright Future Fund**, a resource that allows us to take bold steps and make lasting impacts in the lives of kids.

The fund's first project was the **My Choice Back-to-School Gift Card** initiative. Every child in foster care enrolled in school (kindergarten and older) received a gift card to purchase items that support their comfort, confidence, and independence.

For children and teens in foster care, disrupted stability and limited autonomy are daily challenges. Having the freedom to choose, even something as simple as clothing or school supplies, goes far beyond material needs. It supports self-expression, confidence, and identity, while offering a sense of normalcy during difficult times. When young people make their own choices, they feel seen, valued, and respected.

We are excited to build on this momentum and use the **Bright Future Fund** to create even more meaningful opportunities for the children in our care in the years ahead.

When we first created the Compassion in Action Fund, the goal was to provide “extras” that brighten a child’s day, things like sports fees, special outings, or items that bring joy.



Over the past year, however, the fund has become an essential lifeline for families facing significant hardships

Donations have helped cover housing assistance, utility bills, and transportation needs (from bus passes and bicycles to car repairs) ensuring children remain safe, stable, and connected to school and community.

While the needs we are meeting may look different than we first imagined, the heart of the Compassion in Action Fund remains the same: helping children and families feel supported when it matters most.

Thanks to the generosity of donors like you we can step in quickly when families face urgent challenges, bringing both relief and hope.

Your donation online at [www.ysbiv.org](http://www.ysbiv.org) or by mail will ensure that assistance is there when it’s needed.

# Painting a Brighter Future



Troy\* was on probation from the beginning of 2023 through the end of 2025 for possession of firearms and ammunition. When he first joined the program, he was hesitant and unsure about participating. Over time, though, as he worked closely with his therapist and case manager, he began to embrace the process. Troy's mindset shifted, and he started attending **Redeploy** consistently.

Because he followed his court order so diligently, Troy was released early from both the program and probation. Even more impressively, during this time, he accomplished a lot: he graduated high school, secured a job, bought a car and a jet ski, and is in a relationship. Troy's progress shows how commitment, support, and determination can lead to meaningful change.

A parent who worked with our **Intact Family Services** after a DCFS referral had this to say about the experience...

“

Sometimes in life you get thrown a curveball, luckily our family was blessed with meeting Amy! She made this difficult time so much easier, we are grateful for her guidance, care, and understanding. She really was, and is great to work with. So please tell her thank you for her time and caring help she is great. Every person who I have been in contact with from the beginning has been great also!

”

\*Names have been changed to protect privacy



# Wellness Safety & Hope

Mr. B got off to a rough start when he was referred to the **Parenting Plus Program**. Mrs. Elaine and her team persevered though and didn't give up on him! At his graduation he had much to say about the difference they've made in his life.

“ I have been in the system since I was 12 years old and this instilled my lack of trust in the government and people... Mrs. Elaine has been a woman of her word and kept her word, and now I am starting to believe in people again as well as myself.... I learned how to be a man on the streets, and now I am excited to unlearn this behavior and learn new skills to teach my son how to be a real man. When I see my son now, it heals a part of me that was hurt when I was 12 years old. ”

Sarah\* had struggled with truancy for several years, largely due to anxiety and challenges within her home environment. With the support of her **RHY** caseworker, she worked on a variety of goals to improve her well-being and succeed academically. She was connected with trauma-focused therapy to address underlying issues, engaged in parenting strategies to strengthen communication with her mother, and collaborated with her school to create a plan that supported improved attendance and academic performance. While the journey was not easy, her dedication and resilience have paid off. She is on track to graduate early in December and plans to pursue college with the goal of becoming a nurse.

# Making Connections

1.



4.



2.



6.



3.



7.

1. Ottawa HS students delivering Easter baskets they made

2. McHenry County National Night Out

3. Princeton Trivia Night

4. Showing appreciation for our partners at IDHS

5. Staff from Ottawa Savings Bank bringing Star Tree gifts

6. Rockford Ice Hogs with foster families

7. Throwing out the first pitch at the Pistol Shrimp

# Making a Difference

In FY25 the Compassion in Action Fund distributed \$24,794 to meet the needs of 83 families.



| Category               | Requests | Total     | Percentage |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Furniture & Appliances | 6        | \$ 1,489  | 6%         |
| Kids' Essentials       | 30       | \$ 3,502  | 14%        |
| Dental Care            | 2        | \$ 700    | 3%         |
| Extracurriculars       | 8        | \$ 1,567  | 6%         |
| Housing                | 13       | \$ 8,526  | 34%        |
| Other                  | 6        | \$ 2,012  | 8%         |
| Transportation         | 12       | \$ 5,855  | 24%        |
| Utilities              | 6        | \$ 1,143  | 5%         |
|                        |          |           |            |
| Total                  | 83       | \$ 24,794 | 100%       |

Donations of gifts and cash worth approximately \$96,200 at Christmas time brought joy to 975 children.



399 children in foster care were able to shop for items that would help them get off to a great start with My Choice Back to School Gift Cards

**Run Today for Tomorrow 5K** donated funds to pay for counseling and mental health care for 30 clients to help them have brighter tomorrows.



# Demonstrating Excellence

In FY25 YSB again achieved national accreditation through COA Accreditation. This honor demonstrates the implementation of best practice standards in the field of human services. A panel of professional and specially trained peer reviewers evaluated all aspects of our programs, services, management, and administration.

Our team, led by Sherri Nestmann, our Director of Quality Improvement, worked for many months to gather the data and provide the detailed information that the reviewers required.

COA Accreditation, a service of Social Current, is an objective, independent, and reliable validation of an agency's performance. The accreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of an organization's administration, management, and service delivery functions against international standards of best practice.

The standards driving accreditation ensure that services are **well-coordinated, culturally competent, evidence-based, outcomes-oriented**, and provided by a skilled and supported workforce.

COA Accreditation demonstrates accountability in the management of resources, sets standardized best practice thresholds for service and administration, and increases organizational capacity and accountability by creating a framework for ongoing quality improvement.



# Giving Today Building Tomorrow

There are many ways to make a meaningful impact on the lives of children and families served by YSB both now and in the future.

## Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

If you are age 70½ or older, you can make a gift to YSB directly from your IRA through a Qualified Charitable Distribution. A QCD counts toward your required minimum distribution, may reduce your taxable income, and provides immediate support to the youth and families we serve. To begin, simply contact your IRA administrator.

## Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs)

A Donor-Advised Fund is a simple and flexible way to give. If you have a DAF, you can recommend a grant directly to YSB, creating an immediate impact in our community. Many donors appreciate the ease and tax advantages of giving through their DAF while continuing to support the causes they value most.

## Planned Giving

One of the most powerful ways to sustain YSB's mission is by including us in your will or estate plan. A bequest costs nothing today, yet creates a lasting legacy, ensuring that children and families continue to receive care, stability, and hope for generations to come.



Youth Service Bureau of Illinois Valley is licensed charitable organization designated as a 501 (c)3 not for profit by the Internal Revenue Service.

EIN 36-2852862



# Board of Directors

## Providing support & leadership

YSB is committed to having a Board of Directors that reflects the diversity of the communities that we serve. We are extremely grateful to these board members for lending us their time and talents.

Rici Dale  
President  
Peru, IL

William Pfalzgraf  
Vice President  
LaSalle, IL

Evelyn White-Simmons  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Ottawa, IL

Bill Truemper  
Sugar Grove, IL

Sarah Kelly  
Ottawa, IL

Travis McDonald  
Woodstock, IL

Sara Dado  
Algonquin, IL

Stephanie Ruger  
Ottawa, IL

Jason Sullivan  
Princeton, IL

Erica Ruger  
Ottawa, IL

Ed Miller  
Marseilles, IL

Officer Sherrell Woods  
Rockford, IL

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“During my career, I often worked directly with or advocated for, at risk youth. My experience was that most, if not all, were looking for someone they could trust to be their mentor. I joined the YSB Board because I knew that most of the programs serve youth in one form or another.” ~William Pfalzgraf



Dear Donors, Volunteers, Partners, and Advocates-

It is with great pleasure that I am addressing you in the 2025 Youth Service Bureau of Illinois Valley Annual Report. Serving on the board of directors has been such a rewarding experience. I am honored to be given this opportunity.

When I reflect on the past year for YSB, the theme that keeps popping up again and again is engagement. **Engagement** with clients, families and the communities in which we serve.

**Engagement** with donors, supporters, networking partners, outside resources and vendors. **Engagement** within the agency between staff, administration and the board of directors. **Engagement** with the mission, policies and fiscal responsibility. This past year, YSB focused on being present; in the community, with those we serve, with those who support us and with each other; and the outcome was tremendous.

We made community connections and widened our network, adapted and restructured some services to better align with client needs, strengthened our relationship with current donors and made connections with new donors. We filled empty board seats, revised policies and honed in on agency spending. We reduced the number of unfilled positions, strengthened staff retention and enhanced collaboration between departments. **Engagement worked.**

Thank you to each and every one of you for your support. Whether you are a generous donor, selfless volunteer, collaborating partner or fierce advocate, we appreciate all that you have done, all that you do and all that you will be doing in the future. YSB cannot do the work they do without you. We value your commitment to supporting our mission.

With much respect,

Rici Dale

YSB-IV Board President

# From the Director

The YSB team and I are grateful for the opportunity to serve our community, with a strong focus on wellness, safety, and hope. Many who come to us have endured severe trauma, felt unseen, and are uncertain about their future. They strive for what everyone deserves: positive relationships, stable housing, independence, and connection to a thriving community. Through the dedication, expertise, and compassion of our team, we help them reach these goals. As they succeed, our whole community grows stronger.

We continue to operate an effective and efficient non-profit business with the stewardship of our resources being a top priority. This year, like many other child welfare agencies, we faced a significant increase in liability insurance costs, which negatively affected our overall financial outlook. To address this, we adjusted and balanced our FY26 budget, absorbed the added expense without cutting services, and engaged local legislators and state funders in response.

Through these challenges, we continue to place the highest priority on providing the best possible services and outcomes to those served. We consistently meet and frequently exceed our regulatory requirements and have a strong internal quality improvement program.

As YSB's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary approaches, we recognize that our success is built on strong partnerships. Our best work happens through proactive collaboration with community partners to meet complex needs, and with donors whose generosity goes beyond government funding to support medical care, activities, home supplies, and holiday giving. Above all, I am proud of the YSB team, whose skill, dedication, and compassion help every person we serve thrive.

**SAM TENUTO**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR