

Independent Living

Franklin County DSS

No More YAC?

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That's the rumor. When 3 of our local IL youth attended the Youth Advisory Council weekend in January they were informed that there would be no more YAC meetings due to budget cuts. The youth advisory council is an opportunity for Virginia foster care youth to increase their IL skills, meet other foster care youth statewide, and

have an impact on foster care policy. In the past, the YAC has advocated for increases in the IL stipend, more frequent worker visits, the opt-in program, and an increase in clothing money to name a few. The YAC has been successful in recent foster care policy changes. Youth are encouraged to write

letters of support for the YAC program. If you are interested in writing a letter of support please send it to Patti Von Preysing and she will forward it to the state office.

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Section 8 No Longer Taking Applications

STEP, Inc. is the local agency that administers the Section 8 Housing Assistance Program in Franklin County. Section 8 assists low income individuals and families with obtaining housing. There are apartment complexes that are Section 8 and there are Section 8 vouchers. This allows an individual or family to pay rent based on income. The government

supplements the rest of the rent through the Section 8 program. Section 8 is a federal program, so the program exists in all locations. In the past there have been very long waiting lists for Section 8 funding. We were notified by STEP, Inc. this week that Section 8 applications will not be taken for 4 YEARS! There is such a long waiting list, that the program will be working with current

recipients and pending applicants, but will not accept new applications until 2013.

Tips for Avoiding Pregnancy

When it comes to pregnancy -- why it happens and how to prevent it -- teens get loads of advice from adults, but they aren't often asked to offer their own... so we asked teens from all over the country what *they* would say to other teens about sex, relationships, and avoiding teen pregnancy. As many of you have made clear, the teen years shouldn't be about pregnancy, parenting, midnight feedings, and changing dirty diapers. We hope you find these ideas useful -- and that you might see your own ideas and opinions reflected in them.

- Thinking "it won't happen to me" is stupid; if you don't protect yourself, it probably will. Sex is serious. Make a plan.
- Just because you think "everyone is doing it," doesn't mean they are. Some are, some aren't -- and some are lying.
- There are a lot of good reasons to say "no, not yet." Protecting your

feelings is one of them.

- You're in charge of your own life -- don't let anyone pressure you into having sex.
- You can always say "no" -- even if you've said "yes" before.
- Carrying a condom is just being smart -- it doesn't mean you're pushy or easy.
- If you think birth control "ruins the mood," consider what a pregnancy test will do to it.
- If you're drunk or high, you can't make good decisions about sex. Don't do something you might not remember or might really regret.
- Sex won't make him yours, and a baby won't make him stay.
- Not ready to be

FACT: Most teens say it is not embarrassing to be a virgin.

someone's father? It's simple: *Use protection every time or don't have sex.*

The decision about whether and when to have sex is major and it's definitely not an easy call. Should you wait for the "perfect person"? Just get it over with? Can you stop once you've started? Believe it or not, when it comes to sex, plenty more people are worrying about the same issues as you. So how do *you* decide? Visit our **Abstinence and Contraception** sections to get some information that might help you make the best decision for you.

<http://www.stayteen.org/get-informed/tips.aspx>

Dating Responsibility

I have the responsibility to:

Determine my limits and values

Respect the limits of others

Communicate clearly and honestly

Not violate the limits of others

Ask for help when I need it

Be considerate

Check my actions and decisions to determine whether they are good or

bad for me

Set high goals for myself

From the Domestic Violence Advocacy Program of Family Resources, Inc.

There are rights and responsibilities to dating—make sure you and your partner know them!

What You Should Know before Renting

After dozens upon dozens of calls that I have made to the different places that I had an interest in while looking for an apartment I devised a system of questions that determined whether or not I wanted to take the time to look at the apartment.

1. Availability

When you call a business that owns apartments or an apartment complex office it is best to cut to the chase and ask if they have anything available. If you are on a strict time frame and they reply no you can politely end the phone call. If their reply is yes then you can move on to the other questions.

2. Vacancy Rate

If you are flexible in your moving time preference you can ask them if they will have something available in the near future or how often they have something vacant. This may also give you an idea that of how often people are leaving, if the complex is small, like if it has 4 apartments you may take into consideration if people aren't renting, if it has 30 that factor could mean nothing as far as the quality of the place.

3. Size

Usually one of the first questions you will be asked about the apartment is what size, 1 bedroom or 2 bedroom, you are looking for, and if they are not the ones asking make sure to inquire about the size of the apartment. When you are looking for a one bedroom or even a studio there is no point in hearing about a place that only has 2 bedroom or 3 bedroom apartments unless their prices are reasonably similar to what you have budgeted.

4. Price

Now you may have intended on getting a one bedroom apartment and all that a place has is a two bedroom available. Inquire about price, on multiple occasions I have

seen a 2 bedroom only slightly higher in price or lower when compared to similar one bedrooms in the area, even if it isn't a 1 more bedroom like you intended in having. When the price is out of your price range or you don't meet the income requirements there is no point in setting up an appointment to see the apartment.

5. Requirements

Many landlords and real estate companies have certain requirements that some one must meet. If you have ever been to collections make sure that you come out and say it. Your honesty will be valued and if that is something that the apartment owners are concerned with they will do a background check and find out about it anyway. Income requirements are very common, some places want you to make 2 or 3 times as much as the rent, usually they look at gross income so the amount that you make before taxes is what will be considered. If you are not the only person that is going to be on the lease generally places want all individuals to meet the requirements on their own unless the two people are "legally" married.

6. Fees

Once you have established that you will not only be able to afford the apartment that you are considering renting but you will also meet the income requirements that the place has for you, you should inquire about the fees of the application. Some places will deduct the money that you paid towards your application fee but most places offer it non refundable. If you are renting the apartment with a family member, boyfriend or girlfriend, friend or long time partner you will likely have to fill out an application per person, unless the applicants are legally married, wanting to be on the lease. The fee

for the applications will be minimal to the chunk of change that you will have to put down if you are approved for the apartment.

7. Deposit and First and Last Month's Rent

When you rent a place you will have to pay for the first months rent before you can move in, some places require you to pay last month's rent as well and in addition to paying rent up-front you will also have to pay for a deposit. Be sure to inquire if they want first and last month's rent and what is the cost of the deposit. It will be likely that you have saved up quite a bit of money to go towards your apartment's deposit. The cost of the deposit for an apartment will vary but I have never heard of them being less than half than of the cost of rent. It is best to budget the same amount of money that you budgeted for the rent, the cost of the deposit is usually the same as the cost of rent. You may have to pay an extra deposit if you have a pet.

8. Pets

This might be the first question that you asked if you have a pet that you can not part with, but if you are thinking about getting a pet you should ask if the apartment that you are inquiring about allows them. Some apartments have restrictions on the size of pet that you can have and others say no pets, not even a fish tank. Depending on how soon you want a pet will be a good reason to find out the leases that are offered.

9. Lease

If you plan to stay in a place for a limited amount of time or you don't want to risk having to stay at a place for more than 6

Franklin County DSS

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Ingredients:

- 1 small can jalapeno peppers
- 1 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1/2 pound ground pork
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 small package sliced Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 small can spicy tomato sauce
- 1 packet meatloaf seasoning mix
- 1 medium onion, chopped

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine ground pork and ground beef.
2. Add the chopped onion and green pepper to the mixture.
3. Mix the meatloaf seasoning mix as directed on package, add to meat mixture.
4. Place 1/2 of the mixture into a loaf pan.
5. Clean seeds from jalapeno peppers, place 3 or 4 on top of the meat, then top with Monterey Jack cheese. Place remaining meatloaf mixture on top of the cheese.
6. Bake in 350F oven for 1 1/4 hours. Pour tomato sauce over the top, then bake 15 minutes longer.

www.franklincountyva.gov/ss-independent-living

Dating Bill of Rights

Dating Bill of Rights I have a right to:

Ask for a date

Refuse a date

Suggest activities

Refuse any activities, even if my date is excited about them

Have my own feelings and be able to express them

Say, "I think my friend is wrong and his actions are inappropriate"

Tell someone not to interrupt me

Have my limits and values respected

Tell my partner when I need affection

Refuse affection

Be heard

Refuse to lend money

Refuse sex any time, for any reason

Have friends and space aside from my partner

