

2/19/2021

Dear members of the Appropriations Committee,

This is part of my testimony in support of the Governor's budget which preserves and expands funding for the Homeless Youth line item.

Back in late 2017, I graduated high school with the best feeling ever until I was not able to stay no longer with my father. We got into a big disagreement and he ask me to leave. I did not have any choice but to start making phone calls for help or my next step. I dialed 211 and got connected to a case manager. I was able to be connected to a shelter, Project Return. I was told I could stay there until my next step. I was able to continue to work my job at Home Depot. I was really happy and I they helped me get settled and meet my roommate. Project Return and I talked about my next steps which was helping me find my apartment and all the good stuff that I am now getting from The Connection, which is funded through this line item.

I was connected to the Start Program. After I met with Ms. Andrea my Case Manager, we started doing little meetings at her office and phone call, life skills, budget, and school career because at the time I only had a high school diploma. Ms. Andrea and the Connection got me a studio apartment for me to live. They also help me with all my furniture, when my CNA job didn't have cases for me and the distance was too far for me to get there, they help me pay my light bills, got me a bus pass, train passes for me to get to work, gave me a brand-new laptop and kept me going until now.

Now I have moved to a new apartment, thanks to the help of my caseworker, Andrea. She helped me fill out all these sections 8 packages. When we finally got one that accepted my application, we had to hurry up and fill everything they needed so I will not lose that section 8 voucher. Documents that take months to do, we did it at a short period of time that's how well Ms. Andrea made sure we got everything submitted. Beside all the documents we did, I did volunteer to do a few community activities with The Connections too. I did gain a-lot of life skills with Ms. Andrea. She listened to me when I needed to talk. I tried my best to keep up with all the goals I set up for myself. I started doing dental assistant online for career I want to work in.

Thank you for reading my story and for your support to homeless youth in CT.

Sincerely,

Isabelle Monnexant (Bridgeport, CT)