

STRIVE

YOUTH GUIDANCE

ABOUT THE PROGRAM...

Youth Guidance's STRIVE Program (Strategies to Rejuvenate Interest and Value in Education) is a partnership with area public schools and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The program works to integrate support systems within schools in order to help youth in care transition into adulthood and lead productive lives.

STRIVE delivers counseling and academic support to youth in care and their families that empower them to achieve social and academic success. As necessary and appropriate, youth living in subsidized guardianship and adoption situations may also participate in the program.



The STRIVE program services 7th-12th grade youth in care enrolled in Chicago Public Schools throughout the city. During the 2019-2020 school-year, the program served approximately 188 youth ages 14-21, attending Chicago area schools including:

- Bowen High School (South Chicago)
- Hyde Park Academy High School (Woodlawn)
- Austin CCA High School (Austin)
- Orr High School (Humboldt Park)
- Phillips High School (Bronzeville)
- Chicago Vocational School (Stoney Island Park)
- Proviso East and West High School (Maywood)
- Roberto Clemente High School (West Town)
- Schurz High School (Avondale)
- Thornridge High School (School District 205, Dolton)
- Hubbard High School (West Lawn)
- Bogan High School (Ashburn)

In addition to one-on-one counseling, STRIVE activities include college tours, social and educational enrichment field trips, parent and family engagement workshops, and other educational activities.



At the tender age of five, Bria became a DCFS youth in care. The years that followed were challenging, as she struggled with depression and desperately searched for her family. Bria enrolled in STRIVE during her freshman year and found a caring advocate and trusted support in her STRIVE counselor. At 16, she located her biological mother and was eager to make a connection. Her STRIVE counselor worked with DCFS to facilitate a reunion that brought healing to Bria's life and allowed her to return to the care of her mother. Tragically, her mother passed away from cancer only six months after Bria's case closed with DCFS. By working closely with her STRIVE counselor, Bria once again found the strength to face her tremendous sense of loss, maintain her grades, graduate on time and secure admission to a four-year university. STRIVE provided the continuous care Bria needed to overcome her depression and personal hardships. Today, she has graduated from a four year college with a degree in journalism. STRIVE guides youth in care on their journey, helps them stay engaged in school and gives them the tools they need to succeed.*

** Name changed for confidentiality.*

If you have a youth age 13+ attending a Chicago area school please complete the referral form (down below) or reach out to:
Davina Anderson davina.anderson@illinois.gov or **Les Illidge** les.illidge@illinois.gov.

https://youthguidance.formstack.com/forms/strive_referral