



212 West Main Street Suite 309, Salisbury MD | www.fenixyouthproject.org

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the Rights of Passage Host Home Program!

Rights of Passage Host Home, a program of Fenix Youth Project, is a community and volunteer-based response to youth homelessness. All youth who participate in this program are unaccompanied youth and matched with hosts.

Hosts in the Rights of Passage Host Home Program are adults who open their homes to young people who are looking for short-term resources and support. We ask hosts to provide food and shelter for up to 6 months.

Rights of Passage Host Home will succeed only because of the involvement and support from the community. The program and the people behind it have a deep commitment to our communities, our youth, and social change – not just through the sharing of resources, but through a transformative and intimate process of sharing our homes and our lives. We are thrilled to invite you into this partnership.

We know from research that youth experiencing homelessness are best supported when they are able to remain in the communities where they are comfortable, have friends, attend school, and go to work. For this reason, the goal of the program is to recruit, screen, and provide support to volunteers who are willing to open their homes to young people ages 16 through 24 in their own communities who are experiencing homelessness or have unstable housing.

Being a host is a powerful and unique experience, and far from being easy. The commitment you are willing to make in order to be a host volunteer is an intense one, as is that of a youth who is moving into a host home. In turn, it will hopefully prove to be a gratifying and empowering experience for all involved.

Rights of Passage Host Home is committed to keeping you informed, being clear about expectations, being upfront and honest about decisions made regarding your application, listening to your concerns and feedback, respecting your input, finding the best match for you and your youth, and providing ongoing support and training.

Please read carefully the information included in this packet. There is an application form, eligibility requirements, and questions to ponder before getting started. Once we receive the returned packet from you, we will read your application, start the background checks, and set up a time for an initial interview. Two representatives of the program will screen applicants and do the initial interview.

Again, thank you so much for wanting to be a part of this program. It is only through the generosity, spirit of solidarity, and commitment of people like you that we are able to offer safe and affirming homes to youth.



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APPLICATION & TRAINING OVERVIEW

1. Potential host home applicants attend an informational meeting
2. Applicants fill out the required forms, scan and email them to brandy@fenixyouthproject.org or mail them to:

Fenix Youth Project Inc., 212 West Main Suite 309 Salisbury, MD
3. Fenix Youth Project Inc. performs background checks and sends reference requests
4. Applicants attend 16 hours of training
 - Positive Youth Development [Online]
<https://www.pyd101.net/d101.net/>
5. Applicants have a home interview with staff and youth
6. Applicants are chosen as hosts
7. Hosts are matched with youth
 - *Youth review host files, including the host letter to youth participants.*
 - *Meeting of youth with potential hosts (with a case manager and program manager)*
 - *Release of Liability waivers signed*
 - *Review goals, expectations, etc.*
 - *Youth moves in*
 - *The matching process for the short term is truncated and youth may move in the same night as the initial meeting*
8. Host home manager provides support to hosts
9. Hosts attend ongoing support training
 - *Monthly support group (hosts and HHP manager, 1 – 2 hours)*
 - *Training as part of the support group 3-4 times a year (attending 2 pieces of training is required)*
10. Youth attend social activities and meet with a Youth Housing Advocate
 - *Planned for youth, extended family, and friends*



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ELIGIBILITY AND EXPECTATIONS FOR HOSTS

All applicants must:

1. Have an extra bedroom (providing privacy) for the youth
2. Be at least 25 years old (Under 25 but over 21 will be considered)
3. Have lived in the Lower Eastern Shore area for at least a year
4. Live in either Wicomico, Worcester, or Somerset County
5. Complete the application form, providing any relevant information
6. Have renter/homeowner's insurance, providing a file copy if requested
7. Provide three references
8. Authorize and pass background checks which include:
 - Public Records (i.e. arrest reports)
 - Sterling Volunteers
9. Complete the initial training session (16 hours)
10. Complete a question-and-answer meeting with the program manager and staff member.

The above criteria need to be successfully completed in order for an applicant to be qualified as a host. Applicants need to demonstrate a strong commitment to work with youth to build a healthy and trusting relationship, and the ability to provide a safe, decent, sanitary, stable, and supportive environment and consistently demonstrate skills necessary to meet program objectives.

All applicants must be willing to adhere to all program rules and emergency procedures. They must report any changes in family composition and changes in the legal status of any household members to the program manager. If selected, applicants and others in the household must be willing to ask for assistance in difficult situations. Applicants and members of the household must not have sexual contact or any other sexual activity with or around the youth placed in their home.

Participation of applicants may be terminated at any point in the process if the program manager and/or supervisor feels the applicant is unable/not ready to host in this program.



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QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

What are the rules of your home?

Think about sharing your living space with youth you don't know very well. Think about the rules and expectations that will be important for that person to know (i.e. no guests after 8 pm). The youth moving in will also have rules of their own (i.e. knock before you enter).

What are your expectations of the youth while they live with you?

The Rights of Passage Host Home Program is an opportunity for the youth to live in a stable environment while they work on self-determined goals (i.e. attending/finishing high school, getting their GED, securing a job, learning a skill or trade, paying rent). The youth and their case manager will develop a plan with clear goals and keep the hosts updated as necessary. What expectations do you have for sharing your home with a youth who has different political or religious ideologies than you? If the youth is school-aged, do you have an expectation that they should be attending classes?

What is your financial commitment to this youth?

You will be responsible for providing food for this youth for the duration of their stay. Expect your utility and groceries bills to go up. Aside from food and safe home, you will not be responsible for other expenses. The case manager and program manager will work with you on setting appropriate boundaries around expenses.

Is your living space ready for a young person?

The youth must have their own room or private space. That room/space should be clean when the youth moves in. Make sure that your smoke alarms work and that you have accessible fire extinguishers. If you have alcohol in the house, it should be kept in a safe place where the youth is less likely to have access to it.

Are you open to sharing your home with an LGBTQ youth?

You would need to get acquainted with LGBTQ youth issues and explore your own feelings about sexual orientation and gender identity and learn to be able to talk about and deal with those issues. Understanding the experiences of others with whom we don't share identity takes work. Identifying as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual does not guarantee an awareness of trans issues. We ask that everyone, regardless of how they identify, do their own individual work around queer, trans, and non-binary issues.



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Have you explored (personally or otherwise) issues such as white privilege and racism? The majority of hosts in existing host home programs are white, whereas many of the youth experiencing homelessness in Maryland are people of color. If you are white, it is extremely important that you become more aware of race, racism, and white privilege and the implications of living with that privilege. Talking about this will be part of the training.

Are you willing to put in some time to create a nurturing relationship with a youth? Developing a trusting relationship with youth may take some time and hard work. This may require you to be an active participant in that young person's life (i.e. driving him/her places, helping with schoolwork, meeting with case managers).

Are you capable of living with a youth who may be working through difficult issues? You need to be conscious that the young people who participate in the host home program will come from all sorts of backgrounds and have lived through all sorts of experiences. Some have been abused, some are in recovery for substance use or disordered eating, and some have never had a healthy adult–youth relationship. These issues will also be discussed during the training.



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HOST VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Date of Application: _____

Name Of Applicant (Last, First, Middle Initial)	Gender Identity	Birth Date mm/dd/yyyy
Co-Applicant (Last, First, Middle Initial)	Gender Identity	Birth Date mm/dd/yyyy
Relationship of Co-Applicants:		

Street Address _____

City _____ County _____ Zip Code _____

Applicant Contact Information:

Co Applicant Contact Information:

Applicant cell phone: _____

Applicant cell phone: _____

Applicant work Phone: _____

Applicant work Phone: _____

Applicant email: _____

Applicant email: _____

What is the best way to contact you?

What is the best way to contact you?

Email or phone

Email or phone

What school district do you reside in? _____

How long have you lived in Maryland? **Applicant ->** _____ Years _____ Months

Co-Applicant -> _____ Years _____ Months

In what other states have you lived in the past 10 years?

Applicant -> _____



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Co-Applicant -> _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Please list all additional adults (other than applicants) and children in your home.

Name (First, Last)	Relationship to Applicant	Gender identity	Birthdate mm/dd/yyyy

HOUSING INFORMATION

Please check all of the following categories that apply to your home.

_____ Owned _____ Rented _____ Single Family House _____ Mobile Home

_____ Multi – Unit _____ Basement Unit _____ Second Floor Unit _____ Apartment/Condo

How long have you lived in your current home? _____ Years _____ Months

Do you have homeowner's or renter's insurance:

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is the name of your insurance company and your policy number?

Are you able to provide an extra bedroom/private space for a youth?



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- Yes
- No

Are you planning to move within the next year?

- Yes
- No

How much notice would you need for a youth to move in? _____

Between what hours can the Program Manager contact you about a potential move-in?

All hosts entering the program start with a short term (1 day to 3 months). After hosting short term hosts can determine if they'd prefer to stay in short term or host in long term (about a year). We ask that hosts who provide short term be able to host 3-4 youth a year.

Do you prefer short or long term? (Check all that apply)

- Long term (average stay is about a year)
- Short term (urgent housing need, from 1 day to 3 months)

REFERENCES:

List 2 references who have known you at least 1 year and 1 reference who has known you at least 5 years. If you are applying with another person, your reference should know both of you and how you function as a family.

Name of Reference	Email	Relationship



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APPLICANT QUESTIONS

Are you currently licensed as a foster parent (not a requirement for the Rights of Passage Host Home Program)?

- Yes
- No

If yes, with what county/agency? _____

Do you have a current MD driver's license?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your driver's license number? _____

What is your car insurance company? _____

Are you bilingual or multilingual?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what languages do you speak? _____

To the extent that you are comfortable doing so, please describe how you self-identify (i.e. gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, class):



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**How would you characterize your comfort level with people of any race, ethnicity, or social class?
(Please circle a number below; 1 = not comfortable at all; 5 =completely comfortable)**

1 2 3 4 5

How easy is it for you to talk about issues of race, ethnicity, and social class and privilege?(1 = not easy at all; 5 = extremely easy)

1 2 3 4 5

How would you characterize your comfort level with your sexual orientation and gender identity? (1 = not comfortable at all; 5 = completely comfortable)

1 2 3 4 5

How easy is it for you to talk about sexual orientation and gender identity issues? (1 = not easy at all; 5 = extremely easy)

1 2 3 4 5



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EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

Please provide your employment history for the past 5 years, starting with your most current job. If you are not currently working, what is your source of income? _____

Most Current Job:

Occupation	
Place of Employment	
City, State	
Phone Number	
Employment Period	

Occupation	
Place of Employment	
City, State	
Phone Number	
Employment Period	

Occupation	
Place of Employment	
City, State	
Phone Number	



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Employment Period	
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Have you ever been arrested by any law enforcement officer?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever been charged with any offense even if dismissed?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever been convicted of any offense?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever been charged with or convicted of an offense against a youth/minor?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever abused, neglected, or molested any child?

- Yes
- No

If you checked yes to any of the above, please explain the circumstances and dates:

Do you smoke?

- Yes
- No

If yes, do you smoke in your home?

- Yes
- No

Do you drink alcohol?



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- Yes
- No

Do you have concerns about your drinking?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain why you are concerned:

Have you ever used illegal drugs?

- Yes
- No

If yes, do you currently use illegal drugs?

- Yes
- No



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4. Please write about your strengths, skills and any other relevant information that you would like to share:

5. Please describe all physical and/or mental health problems or concerns in your family that could affect someone living in your home

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the facts contained in my application to the Rights of Passage Host Home Program are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant Signature

Date