

MEDIA ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
The Department of Human Services
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DHS and the Stoneleigh Foundation Announce Fellowship for the Educational Outcomes for Youth in Congregate Care Project

January 7th 2019, Philadelphia, PA – The Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Stoneleigh Foundation are pleased to announce the awarding of a Stoneleigh Fellowship to conduct the Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in Congregate Care Project. The Fellowship was recently awarded to Kasey Thompson.

The project will be led by DHS and will focus on identifying and developing solutions to systemic barriers that impact education for youth who are placed in congregate care. As a Stoneleigh Fellow, Thompson will work with researchers to analyze education challenges for youth currently in, or recently discharged from, a congregate care setting and to develop new strategies for youth returning from placement. Through this project, DHS will continue to work closely with its system partners, including the School District of Philadelphia, and Family Court.

The Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in Congregate Care Project furthers DHS commitment to continue reducing congregate care and ensuring quality of service. This project builds on the work of the DHS Education Support Center, which was implemented in 2010 and was also developed through a Stoneleigh Fellowship.

Education stability for children and youth in care is a priority for the department. Both research and conversations with youth who have experienced the system reflect the need to address both education quality and education stability for youth in residential placements.

Support from the Stoneleigh Foundation to strengthen the system's response to education outcomes for youth in congregate care comes at a critical time as Philadelphia DHS looks to continue enhancements of its monitoring and evaluation process for congregate care providers.

Since 2013, DHS has decreased residential placements (congregate care) by 29% for youth in the child welfare system and worked with its partners for a 47% decrease for youth in the juvenile justice system. Right now in Philadelphia 1,073 youth are in residential placements (468 delinquent and 605 dependent)

Philadelphia is below the national and Pennsylvania state averages for the number of youth in residential placements: 10.6 % of all dependent youth in the care of DHS are in residential placements; and of all Philadelphia dependent youth ages 14-21, 28% are placed in residential settings.

Statement from DHS Commissioner Cynthia F. Figueroa: We are thrilled to have the Stoneleigh Foundation's support to help us address systemic barriers to youth education stability while in residential facilities.

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Philadelphia's Department of Human Services is the county child welfare and juvenile justice agency. Our mission is to provide and promote safety, permanency, and well-being for children and youth at risk of abuse, neglect, and delinquency.

Stoneleigh Foundation The Stoneleigh Foundation was founded in 2006 by John and Chara Haas to improve the life outcomes of Philadelphia's most vulnerable youth. Stoneleigh meets its mission by awarding Fellowships to exceptional leaders who advance change in the systems that serve these young people.

Kasey Thompson has dedicated her career to improving the odds for Philadelphia youth who face multiple barriers to educational success and the transition to adulthood. She has worked as a nonprofit and educational consultant, in addition to roles at the Lenfest Foundation, United Way of Southeastern PA, and Congreso de Latinos Unidos.



If you have a question, complaint, concern, or suggestion about DHS and its operations call the Commissioner's Action Response Office (CARO) at 215-683-6000 or or dhscaro@phila.gov.

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