



**TURNING  
POINTS  
FOR  
CHILDREN**  
a PHMC affiliate

**STRONGER FAMILIES, BRIGHTER FUTURES**

## *Andreia's Story*

Andreia had a rough start. Her mother had a substance abuse problem and went to jail, sending Andreia and her older siblings to kinship care. One after another her siblings left home.

Andreia felt alone and a little abandoned. After her aunt died, she entered foster care at 17. Although she had a roof overhead, Andreia still felt very alone.

“When I was moving from 17 to 18 years old, everyone around me expected me to be more mature and step into adulthood,” she said. “How can you do that when you don’t have the tools, the understanding, and no one is showing you the way or how to do it.”

Andreia’s frustration grew as she tried job hunting. She had no example to follow, and she was reluctant to ask for help.

“I started skipping school. It seemed like everything faded, and life got blurry. It was a dark time,” she said.

LifeSet—through Turning Points for Children—was offered as an option for Andreia, and she accepted. “It started out as just another program for me,” Andreia said. “When in foster care, you don’t get your hopes up for anything. For me, LifeSet was ‘I’ll believe it when I see it.’”

For Andreia, LifeSet quickly proved its worth.

“When I first started LifeSet, it wasn’t about what they said they could help me with. It was more of me getting away from the lifestyle I was living. LifeSet was a different atmosphere, and that drew me in.”



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LifeSet helped Andreia remain on track to graduate high school, which she did in 2018. She then got a job and housing and had income to support herself. “My LifeSet specialist had my best interests at heart,” Andreia said. “That led me to start doing things differently and start thinking differently.”

Andreia was discharged from LifeSet a few months after graduation. However, she never lost touch with Turning Points. She was working at a fast-food restaurant when she jumped at the opportunity to work for the nonprofit organization.

“It’s inspiring to be in this atmosphere,” said Andreia, who takes phone calls from potential LifeSet participants. “I’m the face of the LifeSet program here. I work on getting young people engaged and letting them know what we offer. I get to advertise and advocate about how great the program has been for me.”

Because of her work ethic and mindset, Andreia now works at Turning Points full-time as the LifeSet Outreach Coordinator. She credits her change to LifeSet.

“LifeSet was an outlet for me from being constantly in survival mode,” Andreia said. “They allowed me to share personal obstacles that hindered me. LifeSet is a great program that has genuine people.”

Writing Credits: LifeSet







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## *Jamyra's Story*

Jamyra was on her way to becoming just another negative statistic — a former foster child struggling to become an independent adult. But, just when the young woman needed help most, Turning Points for Children partnered with Youth Villages to bring LifeSet to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Jamyra was 14 years old when she became pregnant with her first child and dropped out of high school. By the age of 20, she had dropped out of high school, lived in foster homes and shelters, and was pregnant with her third child.

Rock bottom occurred when her two children were taken into custody after one was injured during a domestic violence incident. City social workers had doubts about Jamyra's ability to provide a safe home for her children and the court was moving toward adoption. Things looked pretty bleak by the time Jamyra started LifeSet.

But her LifeSet Specialist, Lillian Penn saw things differently. "She was a nurturing mother," Penn said. "There was never any question about her parenting." But there were lots of other questions. "When I first met her, she was unemployed, frustrated with the child welfare system, without a stable home...."

Penn was able to have the time to work deeply with Jamyra. Jamyra took quickly to the program's youth-driven model. "My first goal was housing," Jamyra said. "Then a job. Lillian helped me fill out job applications, made calls to shelters." The two met in the community: At mom's house, at the Turning Points office, at the shelter they secured for Jamyra, at Family Court. "She had a hard time speaking up for herself," Penn said. "I encouraged her to talk to her case manager, to explain some things, to build a bridge. She learned that relationships matter. I wanted her to know that she does have a voice." *And she did.*

With support and guidance from LifeSet, Jamyra was able to find stable housing and employment, and reunify with her children all in less than a year.



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## *Laniyah's Story*

At age 14, Laniyah was placed into foster care along with her eight younger siblings. Heading into young adulthood, her past trauma was something that she longed to leave behind.

Fast forward to May 2022, she was referred to LifeSet where she met her LifeSet Specialist, Ivy. Laniyah was determined to build a stable life for herself but was unsure of how to get there. She felt like she was all on her own.

Ivy immediately began breaking down barriers to help Laniyah succeed. Ivy was a great support and resource to Laniyah, from cheering her on to graduate high school to helping her think about her future. When Laniyah expressed interest in going to college, Ivy accompanied her on multiple colleges tours with her, helped her fill out applications and look for scholarships.

Laniyah is currently in her second year of college as a nursing student. She still keeps in contact with her LifeSet Specialist Ivy, who helped to guide and inspire her during a pivotal point of her life.

In 2023, Laniyah and Ivy were interviewed on CBS Philadelphia. You can watch the 3 minute segment by following the link [here](#).

