

Mastering the art of independent living: A new approach for young adults

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Imagine waking up as a young adult in Boulder, Colorado. The morning sun bursts through your apartment windows, and paints the sandstone Flatirons in hues of pink and orange. A fresh mountain breeze brings a rosy glow to your cheeks as you set out to begin your morning; stopping at your favorite café on your way to school or work, saying hello to some acquaintances, and enjoying the warmth of a new day.

Now imagine doing this while being a client in a transition program. Do the images gel? They can, due to the innovative therapeutic approach used by Living Well Transitions. Based in Boulder, Living Well Transitions is a private therapeutic and life-skills support

program helping young adults to succeed in their transition to responsible adulthood by utilizing an "independent living" model.

Managing the responsibilities of adult life takes time, practice, and support. When these responsibilities are coupled with the challenges posed by learning disabilities, social anxiety, chronic impulsivity, or symptoms related to psychological disorders, they can seem overwhelming. However, the maintenance of these responsibilities is also fundamental to fostering self-esteem, an increased sense of agency, and ultimately to one's creation of a successful and fulfilling life.

The independent living approach offers several distinct advantages over traditional residential programs. By living in their

own apartments, clients learn firsthand how to manage the daily tasks of adult life — paying bills, budgeting, cooking and cleaning — all with the ongoing support of a clinical team. This



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enables clients to meet the challenges required of them, without becoming overwhelmed, while developing self-confidence in their ability to manage adult life.

Another benefit of independent living relates to the ability to create an environment of personal safety and respect. Free from pressure to conform to a dominant social culture, Living Well Transitions' clients have more control of who they bring in to their environment and when. For individuals who have had negative social experiences in peer groups, this level of freedom and control is personally liberating and anxiety reducing.

Living Well Transitions begins by customizing a transition plan for each client. These plans are overseen by a clinical team consisting of Master's level mental health professionals and graduate level interns working towards advanced degrees in counseling. Living Well's therapeutic expertise, coupled with the independent-living program design, delivers highly advanced supportive services to young adults struggling with even the most challenging of behavioral

and emotional difficulties.

By using the community as the primary therapeutic milieu, clients get real-life feedback and support regarding the challenges of successful independent living. The Living Well clinical team provides frequent, need-specific assistance, promoting both client safety and success as they progress towards increased independence and responsibility. By living in their own apartment, clients are afforded the unique opportunity to develop self-confidence in their ability to navigate the adult world.

Counselors help clients find and maintain jobs, support their success in school, and provide ongoing therapeutic feedback to foster increased awareness, compassion and appropriate action. The momentum that develops as clients begin to manage their adult life with increased success perpetuates their desire to demonstrate to the world their ability to succeed.

Many young adults struggling with emotional, psychological or learning challenges find it difficult to envision a fulfilling life. The intensity with which their challenges manifest often obscures the opportunities and possibilities that are available. Through fostering increased awareness and independence, Living Well Transitions helps clients to approach their lives with clarity, dignity and respect.

Living Well Transitions
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LIVING WELL TRANSITIONS supports independent living for young adults. To learn more about us, visit us at www.livingwelltransitions.com or call us at 303-245-1020.

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