the children's village®

Summer 2025

NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE

With caps high in the air, Greenburgh Eleven graduates celebrate. Read more on page 4

A Vision for Housing Justice:

CV's groundbreaking partnership to end the foster care-to-homelessness pipeline.

Learn more on page 2

A Foster Story Full of Heart:

After 13 years in foster care, Korah finds a loving mother and a place to call home.

Meet Korah on page 4

A Vision for Housing Justice: Youth-Led Report Launches at The Eliza

On a bright April morning, a meaningful event unfolded in the heart of Inwood at The Eliza—The Children's Village's newest deeply affordable and beautiful development. Hosted by The Children's Village in partnership with youth advocates and affordable housing developers, the gathering marked the launch of *Housing Justice for Young People Aging Out of Foster Care in New York City*—a bold, youth-driven plan to end the foster care-to-homelessness pipeline.

More than just a report, the five-year plan outlines a path to create 800 dedicated housing units for young adults transitioning out of foster care. Supported by the Hilton Foundation and coauthored by The Center for Fair Futures, HR&A Advisors, and Good River Partners, the report is grounded in data, policy analysis, and most importantly, the voices of young people who have lived through the system.

Each year, hundreds of young people in New York leave foster care with limited support and few housing options. New York has one of the most competitive housing markets in the country—alone. The young leaders who helped shape this report know that reality all too well. Their lived experiences not only informed the findings, they drove the vision. These advocates made it clear: true housing justice offers choice, dignity, and opportunity.

They called attention to long-standing inequities, noting that 85% of affordable housing is still concentrated in the most heavily burdened communities. Instead, they championed a new model— one that places youth in safe, integrated communities with access to strong schools, reliable transportation, and economic opportunity.

Because at the heart of this work there is a simple truth: where you live shapes your future.

The Children's Village is actively working to support young people as they transition out of foster care by building beautiful, affordable homes located in desirable areas.

Because at the heart of this work there is a simple truth: where you live shapes your future. And for New York's foster youth, that future should be one of hope, stability, and new possibilities.

Celebrating Milestones and Empowering Futures

Across The Children's Village community, this graduation season was filled with joy and reminders of how much our young people can achieve. From high school seniors at Greenburgh Eleven to peer leaders in our Teen Choice program, every cap tossed in the air represented success and transformation.

At our Dobbs Ferry campus, **Greenburgh Eleven** students crossed the stage, cheered on by families, staff, and supporters. "Today is about moving on to actual life," said Jack, a graduating senior and proud scholarship recipient headed to Onondaga Community College. "Although it might be difficult, there is always a light at the end of the tunnel."

His classmate Jaidyn shared, "Before CV, I wasn't really focused. But since I came here, I stayed motivated. I want to change lives—I want to help make sure everyone is prepared for life."

A rising senior, David, who helped with the ceremony, added: "Being involved this year means I'm going to be in the robe next year. I'm excited to be the next, better version of myself."

The celebration was made even more special with a scholarship fund created by Morgan Stanley Fund Services. CV Board member Yvette-Michelle Wynn shared, "It was awarded to a graduating senior, affirming our firm's commitment to empowering the next generation.

Our **Teen Choice** program, which provides consent and healthy relationship education in 35+ NYC schools, also celebrated student success. Marvin, Brooklyn Academy's valedictorian, reflected, "Teen Choice opened up new opportunities, helped me explore the city, and taught me how to support others."

Cici, a peer leader from the High School of Fashion Industries, shared, "Teen Choice helped me feel like I belonged and gave me confidence to help others. I've made connections with the Choice Pantry and will continue to give back. I'll be attending FIT and studying in Florence, Italy next year."

This season of achievement also extended to our **Family Foster Care (FFC)** program, which celebrated 31 graduates from middle school to college. For a program serving just over 250 young people, this is an extraordinary milestone. Highlights include five college graduates and high school seniors heading to schools like Lehman College, UC Riverside, and UConn.

We're proud of every one of our graduates—and grateful to all who help make their journeys possible.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2025!

A Proud Grad!

Greenburgh Eleven Graduation Ceremony

Ashanti, Teen Choice Participant

Marvin, Teen Choice Participant

A Foster Story Full of Heart

Korah celebrates his birthday at home with his family.

Paulina McConnaughey, a devoted mother from Yonkers, was at the heart of a touching Mother's Day celebration at The Children's Village. She spoke with deep affection and pride about her journey as a foster mother to 16-year-old Korah, who had been in foster care since he was three.

"I don't have an empty nest in my house. I have life, I have love," Paulina shared, her voice filled with emotion. "I have a wonderful son here, and our family has become a happier family and a happier home."

Korah, who was equally filled with excitement, added his own thoughts, his gratitude overflowing. "The whole experience changed me in a way. Each day was a new lesson."

He gave flowers to his foster mom and said, "These flowers are for all mothers, especially my foster mother Paulina and all other foster mothers."

Both Paulina and Korah had powerful messages to share with others — especially to foster children and those considering becoming foster parents.

"Stay strong and follow the good guidance that is provided," Korah advised.

Paulina's words were filled with encouragement: "Please do it because you can make a difference in a person's life."

It was a day of reflection, love, and connection, showing the power of family—whether by birth or through fostering—and how one's heart can change and grow with the love shared between them.

For more on their inspiring story, you can watch the **segment on News 12**, and to learn how you can become a foster parent, follow the link below.

Korah enjoys the action at a local youth sporting event.

Do you have extra room at your dinner table? Want to change a life? There are children in foster care who are waiting for you!

We need more families in New York City and Westchester County to provide the love and belonging that all children deserve.

To learn more about fostering, visit our website.

Empowering Bronx Youth at the Morrisania Health Fair

CV at The Morrisania Bronx Health Fair

This summer, our Teen Choice team was proud to participate in the 3rd Annual Morrisania Bronx Health Fair, connecting with families and youth to talk about healthy relationships, consent, and safe sex education.

Held at Drew Playground next to the NYC Health Department's Morrisania Clinic, the event was part of the city's HealthyNYC initiative—an ambitious, citywide effort to increase life expectancy for all New Yorkers.

Our Teen Choice program promotes education around consent and healthy relationship-building in over 35 New York City middle and high schools, with full-time educators embedded in six schools across the boroughs. Their presence at the Bronx Health Fair allowed them to meet young people where they are—out in their communities—with information that could truly make a lifechanging difference.

We recognize that a young person's health is shaped by more than individual choices — it's also impacted by generations of systemic inequities. Disinvestment in communities of color has led to neighborhoods with fewer health resources, less access to opportunity, and significantly lower life expectancies.

By taking part in community events like the Morrisania Bronx Health Fair, our staff and youth are helping to close the gap—one conversation, one resource, and one relationship at a time.

Year	Trend (2015 - 2023)	Goal
Life expectancy	81.9 → 82.6	Continued increases
Deaths due to:		
Pregnancy-associated deaths among Black people; (Deaths per 100,000 live births)	95.5 → 114.2	10% decrease
Homicide	346 → 365	30% decrease
Suicide	496 → 489	10% decrease
COVID-19	20,405 → 787	60% decrease
Drug overdose	937 → 2,724	25% decrease
Screenable cancers	5,297 → 4,060	20% decrease
Heart and diabetes-related diseases	20,706 → 19,620	5% decrease

HealthyNYC's goals for 2030

Hearts, Hope, and Chelsea Lights

Marilyn Ezzes receives the Lifetime Impact Award for her extraordinary contributions and lasting legacy.

Miguel presents Joyce Pereira of Morgan Stanley with the Corporate Award.

Joshua shares his inspiring journey of independence.

On May 1, The Children's Village hosted its annual Circle of Friends Dinner at The Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers—and what an unforgettable evening it was! With over 300 guests in attendance, the night was a beautiful celebration of community, generosity, and the shared mission of keeping children and families together. Thanks to the incredible support of our sponsors and friends, the event raised significant funds to help advance our work and deepen our impact.

The evening opened with heartfelt remarks from President and CEO Jeremy Kohomban, setting the tone for a night filled with inspiration. We were especially honored to have two remarkable young men from CV, Miguel and Joshua, serve as emcees.

During Miguel's presentation, he said, "I'm grateful to everyone at CV who believed in me. I've been exposed to opportunities I never imagined—and now I get to pay that forward."

Later in the evening, Joshua remarked on his journey, "Today, I'm living independently, juggling school and work, and I can honestly say that CV played a major role in helping me get here. CV helped me build the foundation I needed to stand on my own."

Their courage in sharing their stories and leading the evening with grace and heart reminded us all why we do this work.

Throughout the evening, we proudly honored Morgan Stanley, the volunteers of The Great Birthday Caper, and Marilyn Ezzes—three pillars of support whose contributions have made a lasting difference in our community.

A special thank you to our generous sponsors, including Morgan Stanley, Alliant Insurance Services, Mayer Brown, Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler, Quinn Emanuel, Ambac Financial Group, Debevoise & Plimpton, Lincoln IT, and Lockton Companies. Your support helps make our mission possible.

Here's to our Circle of Friends—thank you for standing with us.

Check out all the photos: Circle of Friends Dinner 2025

The Children's Village
Circle of Friends
Dinner & After Party

Save the Date
May 7, 2026

Help Us Fill 3,000 Backpacks for the New School Year!

The Children's Village has officially launched our annual School Supply Drive, with a bold goal of filling 3,000 backpacks for the young people we serve.

For many CV students, having the right supplies can be the difference between feeling left behind and stepping confidently into the school year. In a time when families across New York are facing record-high back-to-school costs, your support sends a powerful message: "We believe in your potential."

"Every young person deserves to walk into a classroom on day one feeling prepared and confident," said Jeremy Kohomban, President and CEO of The Children's Village. "When we distribute 3,000 backpacks, we're investing in 3,000 futures and sending a message that our community believes in every student's success."

You can help by:

- Shopping directly from our Amazon Registry
- Making a financial gift (just $50 provides a fully stocked backpack!)
- Hosting a school supply drive with your company, friends, or community group

Last year, generous partners like Morgan Stanley, West Monroe, and CFS led the charge by organizing supply drives and raising funds. This year, we're calling on even more companies, teams, and neighbors to step up for students.

The deadline for all contributions is August 29th to ensure on-time delivery before the school year begins.

To shop, donate, or get started on a supply drive, scan the QR code or visit: childrensvillage.org/school-supply-drive

Or contact Leydi Rodriguez, Director of Community Engagement, at lrodriguez@childrensvillage.org.