

# Sunnybrook Awarded Two Grants by MDCPS to Launch Statewide Programs for Foster Youth

*Sunnybrook set to launch groundbreaking initiatives to help foster youth gain vital life skills, including driver's ed and programs for independent living.*

RIDGELAND, MS, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sunnybrook Children's Home is proud to announce the award of two significant contracts by the [Mississippi Department of Child Protective Services](#) (MDCPS) aimed at empowering foster youth across the state. These contracts are set to launch groundbreaking initiatives designed to help young people in foster care gain vital life skills, including the ability to obtain their driver's license and prepare for independent living.



Sunnybrook Children's Home

The Transportation and Driving Pilot Program, the first of its kind in Mississippi, will assist foster youth aged 15 and older in securing their learner's permit and driver's license. This statewide initiative will provide driver's education classes at various locations across Mississippi, strategically scheduled during school vacation and holiday breaks in alignment with local school district calendars.

The need for such a program is evident, as currently, less than 5% of foster youth nationwide have obtained their driver's license. The Transportation and Driving Program aims to significantly increase this percentage, empowering young people with the ability to access greater opportunities for education, employment, and personal independence.

"This initiative represents a transformative opportunity for foster youth, providing them with a

critical life skill that will help open doors and pave the way to a brighter future,” said Myrle Grate, Sunnybrook Executive Director. “We are grateful to MDCPS for their partnership in launching this important program.”

In addition, Sunnybrook Children’s Home has been awarded a second contract to expand its [Supervised Independent Living Program \(SIL\)](#), a statewide initiative focused on serving youth over the age of 18 who are exiting the foster care system. This program will support residents as they transition out of foster care, offering them the tools and training needed to navigate adulthood with confidence and success.

Through the Supervised Independent Living Program, youth will have access to essential resources such as money management, time management, social skills training, job readiness, and practical life skills, including driving education. The program is designed to ensure that foster youth can build a strong foundation for independence, positioning them to thrive as they transition out of MDCPS custody.

“At Sunnybrook, we believe in the potential of every young person, and through the expansion of our Supervised Independent Living Program, we will be able to offer crucial support to help foster youth make the transition to adulthood successfully,” said Grate. “With these two programs, we are laying the groundwork for long-term success and empowering foster youth with the tools they need to thrive.”



Sunnybrook Executive Director, Myrle Grate, shakes hands with Devon Loggins, CPS Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Support, After Being Awarded the Transportation & Driving Pilot Program Grant for Foster Youth



Mississippi Department of Child Protective Services

These programs underscore Sunnybrook's ongoing commitment to serving foster youth across Mississippi and reflect the state's dedication to improving outcomes for this vulnerable population. Both contracts represent a vital step forward in offering the support foster youth need to succeed in their personal and professional lives.

For more information about the Transportation and Driving Pilot Program or Supervised Independent Living Program grants at Sunnybrook Children's Home, please visit [www.sunnybrookms.org](http://www.sunnybrookms.org) or contact Ron Veazey at (601) 540-4253 or [rveazey@sunnybrookms.org](mailto:rveazey@sunnybrookms.org).

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