

## Independent Living Program - Advocates for Children

**Organization:** Advocates for Children - Catersville, GA

**URL:** <https://advochild.org>

**Program Name:** Flowering Branch Children's Shelter/ Independent Living Program

**Funding:** RHY/Independent Living

**Curricula used:** Love Notes 2.1

**Curricula benefits:** Love Notes is well organized and makes it easy for the facilitator to have a guide for addressing important topics. The material is realistic according to the youth and meets them where they are with life skills connected to building healthy relationships.

**Target Audience:** The youth that are served at Flowering Branch Children's Shelter, in the Independent Living Program are seeking shelter for a variety of reasons. They may be vulnerable and traumatized youth who may be homeless, aging out of the foster care system.

**Audience Demographics:** The youth in the Independent Living Program range from 14-18. There are both males and females, some youth that identify as LGBTQ, and a wide range of ethnicities and all vulnerable and experiencing trauma.

**Class size:** Class size range from 6-8 youth

**Location of instruction:** Classes are held at the Flowering Branch Children's Shelter.

**Length of instruction  
(number of sessions and  
hours per session):**

Classes meet Sundays for 60 minutes at least twice a month until all 13 lessons are delivered. Other life skills are also taught on some Sundays (cooking car maintenance, etc).

**Instructor Training  
Protocol:**

The facilitator uses the Instructor Manual for preparation and reference during delivery. The power points in particular are helpful for staying on track and coincide with the instructor manual. The activity cards are a convenient and sustainable resource. The youth enjoy the activities as it makes the information relatable and applicable. An example is the "Red Flag Warning" activity in the Dangerous Love lesson about dating violence. The trusted adult activity at the end of every lesson is used to help youth understand that they are in a safe place and the adults are there to hear them. The student workbooks are used by each student in the Independent Living Program. It is used to make the learning personal and for reflection on what they learned. It is also an opportunity for facilitator, Human Service Professional (Shelter Case Manager) to identify needs that should be addressed.

**Utilization of teacher and  
student materials:**

**Program Recruitment  
Process:**

**Incentives to teachers  
and students:**

Incentives are given for those in the Independent Living Program - certificate upon completion which can be included on their work resume.

**Tips:**

Tips for those who are starting to use Love Notes are:

1. Review the lessons several times before classes so you know the material and can keep the class engaging.
2. Be aware of the youth's individual needs and what they've been through.
3. Be sensitive.