EDUCATION DURING COVID—19

St. Louis Center was challenged in March of 2020—how to continue to educate the 24 school age residents without exposing them to the COVID—19 virus. The schools shut down, and these students, who thrive on schedules and routines—suddenly had neither. Staff had to adapt to not only providing care and assistance to the youth, but also helping them continue with their education.

The first thing that needed to be done was to calm down the anxiety that this change caused in many of the residents. A call went out on Facebook for weighted blankets as part of a calming plan, and our donors stepped up—donating enough weighted blankets for every resident to have one. Craft supplies and kits followed, as we struggled for ways to provide stimulation for the residents.

Work within the school system continued, and many of the residents switched to online learning. Some of the residents were not able to tolerate sitting in front of a screen for any period of time, and the schools sent home work packets for them. The social services department has been working hard to provide all the "Zoom" sessions requested.

Weighted blankets were quick to arrive thanks to generous donors.

We then ran into a problem with the supply of electronic devices, and other school supplies needed to provide online learning for all 24 residents. This problem was solved when we received a grant from James R. and Anita Horne Jenkins Family Foundation and the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan to support the Education Program.

We certainly hope that the residents will be able to return to school soon, as nothing replaces the classroom education that they receive. Until it is safe to do so, we will continue to provide education to the residents to ensure they flourish in all areas of their lives.

Activitiy kits were assembled for students using grant funds.

"Even in the midst of a pandemic, these residents were able to graduate from school. We are so proud of them."

-Deana Fisher, SLC COO

Ray

Kayla

Matthew

Danny