



Fostering Resilience Project

FR1ENDS of the
CH1LDREN
Los Angeles

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Message from the Executive Director



Over the past year many have begun to plumb the depths of our country's policies and practices and the impact they've had on the lives of Black Americans, especially Black men. We are beginning to see how accumulated disadvantage undermines our ability to build strong individuals, families, communities, and society. And while the disproportionate representation of Black Americans with adverse health outcomes, justice system involvement, viable pathways to employment and stable housing is well documented, we don't often connect these issues to the most vulnerable subset of Black Americans - Black boys in foster care.

Research shows that Black male children in foster care after age 12 are less likely to be adopted or reunified, and as a result, are more likely to age out of the system at higher rates than any other foster youth. This isn't the ideal setting for boys to become men. Their transition out of foster care has been shown to coincide with higher rates of unemployment, justice contact and poor health outcomes, and homelessness. Even more troubling, like many jurisdictions around the country, Los Angeles County sees significant racial disproportionality at every level of child welfare involvement. Black children are nearly twice as likely as white children to be referred to child protective services, experience maltreatment, and enter foster care. Since 1999, 45% of all Black children born in LA County have been referred to child protective services by age 18. In 2018, while Black children comprised only 7% of the total Los Angeles County child population, they accounted for 24% of children in foster care.

There wasn't any great wisdom that brought all our steering committee, funders, and implementation partners together. It was just our love of children. We all recognize the inherent need we all have for connection and belonging. The race of the 300 boys we will serve over the next three years is not political, a decoy, or a diversion, but a diagnostic tool. In my humble opinion serving those who have been left out well can help us to understand the ways in which we need to modify our pedagogy, our priorities, our systems of care, as well as our collective relationships to each other to create a more participatory democracy. Every child is worthy and deserves it. There's much we can do now and there's plenty of work yet to be done. We have the honor to spend the next three years watching these boys grow and become more resilient. If we are lucky, they will give us a chance to walk alongside them as they become men.

Thomas Lee

Executive Director

Friends of the Children – Los Angeles

Fostering Resilience Project (FRP) Lead

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS:

Center for
Strategic
Partnerships

CEO
Chief Executive Office
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HOLLY J. MITCHELL
LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERVISOR 2ND DISTRICT

Hilton CONRAD N. HILTON
FOUNDATION



wdacs
workforce development
aging & community services



emerge

SHOES 4 GRADES
mentoring program

The
**ENLIGHTENED
MENTOR**

Executive Summary

The Fostering Resilience Project (FRP) is a partnership between the Los Angeles County Department of Child and Family Services, Los Angeles County CEO, My Brother's Keeper (MBK), Friends of the Children – Los Angeles (Friends LA) and number of community based organizations to positively impact the lives of 300 Black male youth and young adults in foster care (ages 12-20) over the next three years.

FRP Steering Committee Members:

- Alliance for Children's Rights
- California Community Foundation
- Casey Family Programs
- The Change Reaction
- Good+ Foundation
- LA County Children's Commission
- LA County Department of Racial Equity
- LA County Department of Children and Family Services
- LA County Department of Mental Health
- LA County Youth Commission
- Liberty Hill Foundation
- UCLA Pritzker Center for Strengthening Children and Families

Research shows that Black male youth in foster care after age 12 are less likely to be adopted or reunified.

The number of Black males aging out of foster care has been shown to coincide with higher rates of unemployment, contact with justice systems, and poor health outcomes.

FRP establishes a shared vision that promotes resiliency and racial equity by pairing professional mentors with Black male youth with the greatest needs.

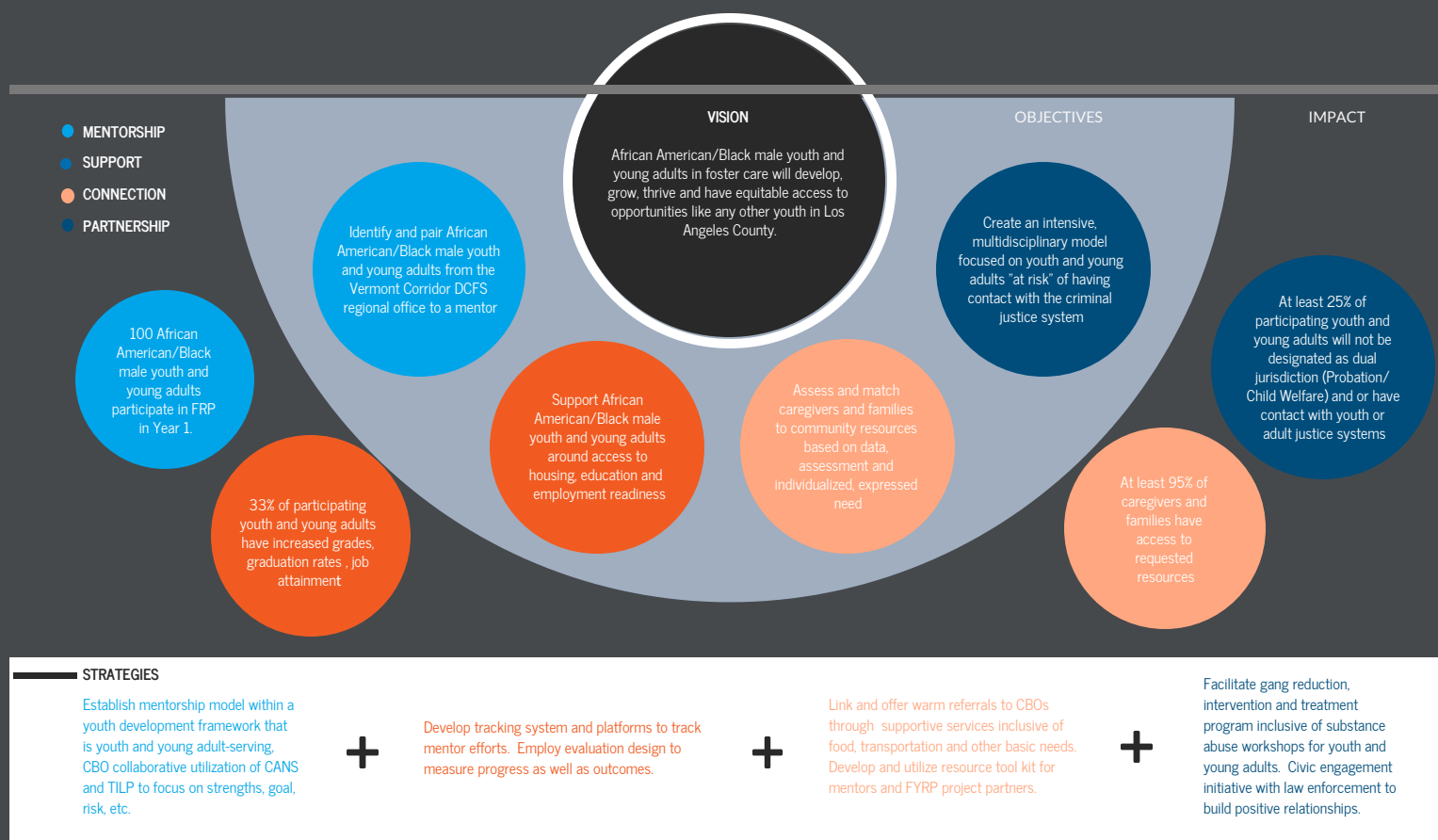
Through the leadership of Friends LA, FRP provides mentoring services through partnership mentoring organizations that provide community and cultural support, and by mentoring youth on independent living skills, employment, housing, and well-being.



FRP THEORY OF CHANGE

THE CHALLENGE

African American/Black children are over-represented in foster care nearly seven times the rate of White children in Los Angeles County. Additionally, 45% of African American/Black children are reported to DCFS by their 18th birthday. Disparity follows African American/Black, male youth and young adults as they progress through the child welfare system and crossover to juvenile justice and the adult criminal justice system at higher rates.



For more information, please contact
(213) 207-6927 or
fosteringresiliency@friendsla.org

Approach

Studies have shown that youth and young adults need support from at least one adult acting as a navigator to help them successfully transition from adolescence into adulthood. Historically, the youth and young adults in FRP's target population are left on their own to navigate short-term, low- impact services that are based on outputs rather than outcomes. If we don't provide safe, positive mentoring support to children, they will find mentors on their own. Through FRP, mentoring support and life skills training will be provided to youth with an array of innovative programs and support to counteract the effects of trauma and promote resilience through the four R's: Reflect, Regulate, Relate and Repair.

Studies have shown that youth and young adults need support from at least one adult acting as a navigator to help them successfully transition from adolescence into adulthood. Historically, the youth and young adults in FRP's target population are left on their own to navigate short-term, low- impact services that are based on outputs rather than outcomes. Through FRP, services will be provided to youth and young adults through individuals who will serve as navigators and mentors, advancing innovative programs and strengthening support systems for youth and young adults in becoming self-sufficient.



FRP's efforts will focus on Black youth and young adults in foster care in South Los Angeles, which is home to one of the County's largest concentration of Black male youth and young adults in foster care. Black male youth and young adults in South Los Angeles are also disproportionately represented in youth arrest, school suspensions and expulsions, as well as residing in one of the County's most underserved urban communities. All these factors further justify the need for more intentional and concentrated efforts and resources aimed at Black male youth and young adults in foster care.

Thanks to the leadership at the Vermont Corridor Regional DCFS Office, their site serves as starting point for the pilot. The Vermont Corridor Office serves approximately 800 Black male youth each year from 0 – 18. FRP's efforts will focus on youth and young adults involved with AB 12, or Extended Foster Care

FRP's efforts will focus on youth and young adults eligible for AB 12, or Extended Foster Care.

FRP STRATEGY ROADMAP 2021



Goals: 35 new mentees enrolled (50 total); at least 20 mentors on boarded and matched

Benchmarks:

- APR 2021: 5 mentees enrolled (40 total); 15 mentors
- May 2021: 10 mentees enrolled (75 total); 18 mentors
- Jun 2021: 15 mentees enrolled (50 total); 20 mentors

Goals: 25 new mentees enrolled (100 total); Sustain 75% of mentee participation through Dec. 2021.
*Mentee enrollment and mentor onboarding TBD based on FRP planning

Benchmarks:

- Oct 2021: Successful transition/closure of mentees; newly enrolled mentee assignment to open capacity of mentors; 15 mentees enrolled (90 total)
- Nov 2021: 10 mentees enrolled (100 total)
- Dec 2021: Completion of annual report and research finding



Goals: 15 mentees enrolled; at least 4 mentors on boarded

Benchmarks:

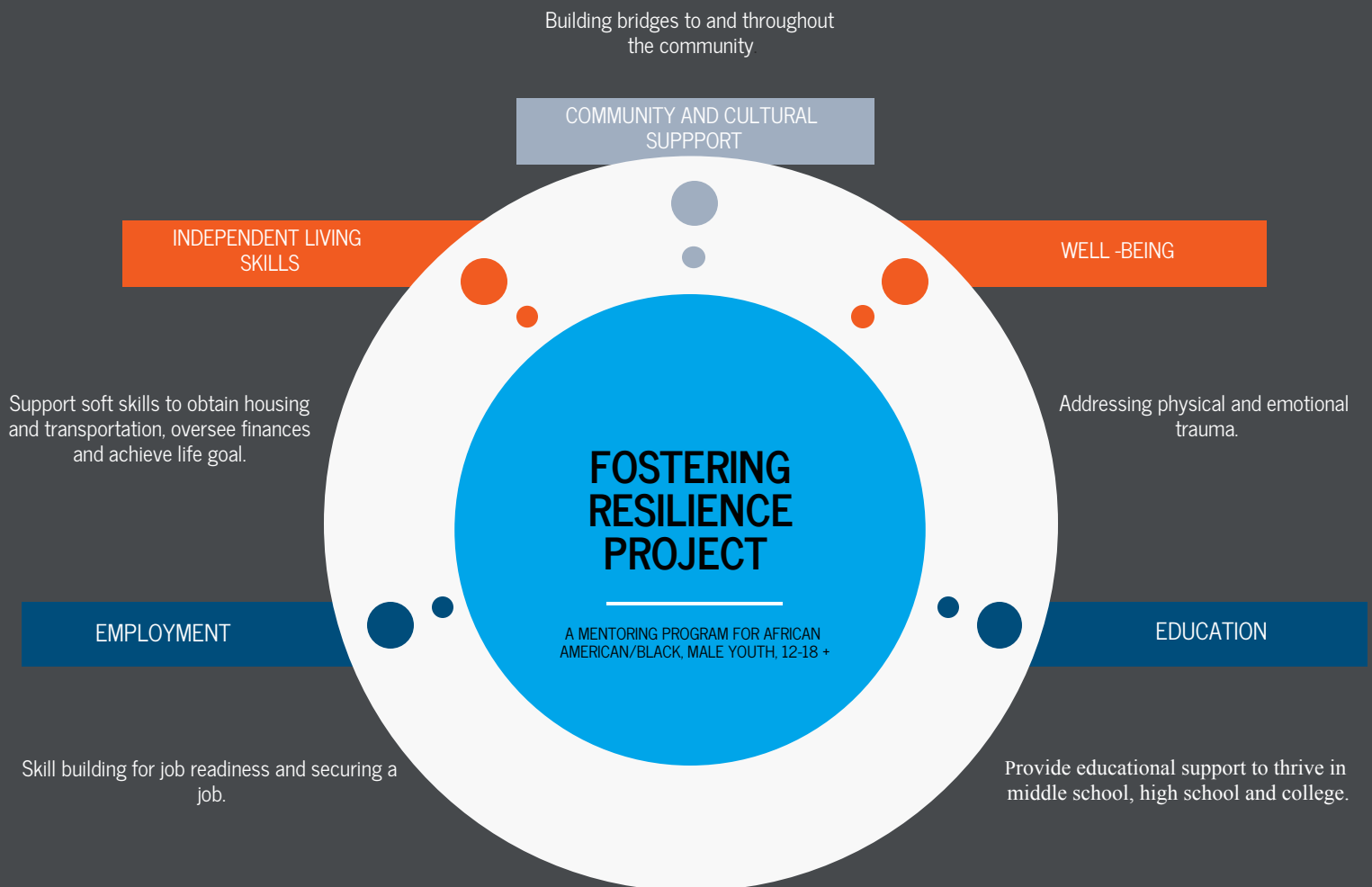
- Jan 2021: —
- Feb 2021: —
- Mar 2021: Launch with 15 mentees enrolled; 12 - 14 mentors onboarded

Goals: Sustain 85% of mentee participation through September 2021; 2 mentors onboarded; 25 new mentees enrolled (75 total)

Benchmarks:

- Jul 2021: 5 mentees enrolled (55 total)
- Aug 2021: 10 mentees enrolled (65 total); 1 mentor onboarded
- Sep 2021: 10 mentees enrolled (75 total); 1 mentor onboarded

FRP MENTORING SERVICES



Program Structure

Identifying and serving Black male youth and young adults in foster care at the earliest possible point in the continuum of care anchors the FRP's goals, objectives, and activities. Implementation of the FRP will involve a variety of activities that will be executed in phases. Specifically, the FRP will entail: Partnering with DCFS' Vermont Corridor Regional Office and Friends of the Children - Los Angeles to identify each Black male youth in care at that office. Assessing each young person and their family to determine the array and degree of services needed and identify a navigator to guide the youth or young adult and their family while under the supervision of DCFS. Utilizing the assessment to assign youth or young adult and their family to partnering with community providers who will in turn carry out service provision and play the navigation role. Emphasis will be placed on mentoring and life skills training (inclusive of educational and vocational supports). Building community infrastructure and resources to prevent Black male youth and young adults in care from initial contact with the juvenile justice system, resulting in learnings and the identification of promising practices. Ensuring that Black males are fully integrated into youth justice offramps being implemented by County agencies (Youth Diversion & Development) as well as the Los Angeles County Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Initiative.



Program Structure (cont...)

The assessment of youth, young adults and their families is a critical component of the FRP. Program elements will be informed by the strengths-based assessment and its indication around the youth's risks, needs, and interests. Program elements will include the following:

- Youth development and social support such as connections to culturally affirming and supportive mentors, peer support groups, community leadership and organizing opportunities, and enrichment programs (i.e. cooking, music, arts, sports).
- Strengths-based services that affirm youth, young adults and their family's race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, and culture so that young people feel welcome and supported.
- Health and healing support such as physical health services, mental health services, substance abuse services, trauma screening and referrals to reverse the negative effects of trauma.
- Education and employment support such as dropout prevention, school reintegration, tutoring, educational rights advocacy, job training, job placement, and skill-building to link youth to school and jobs.



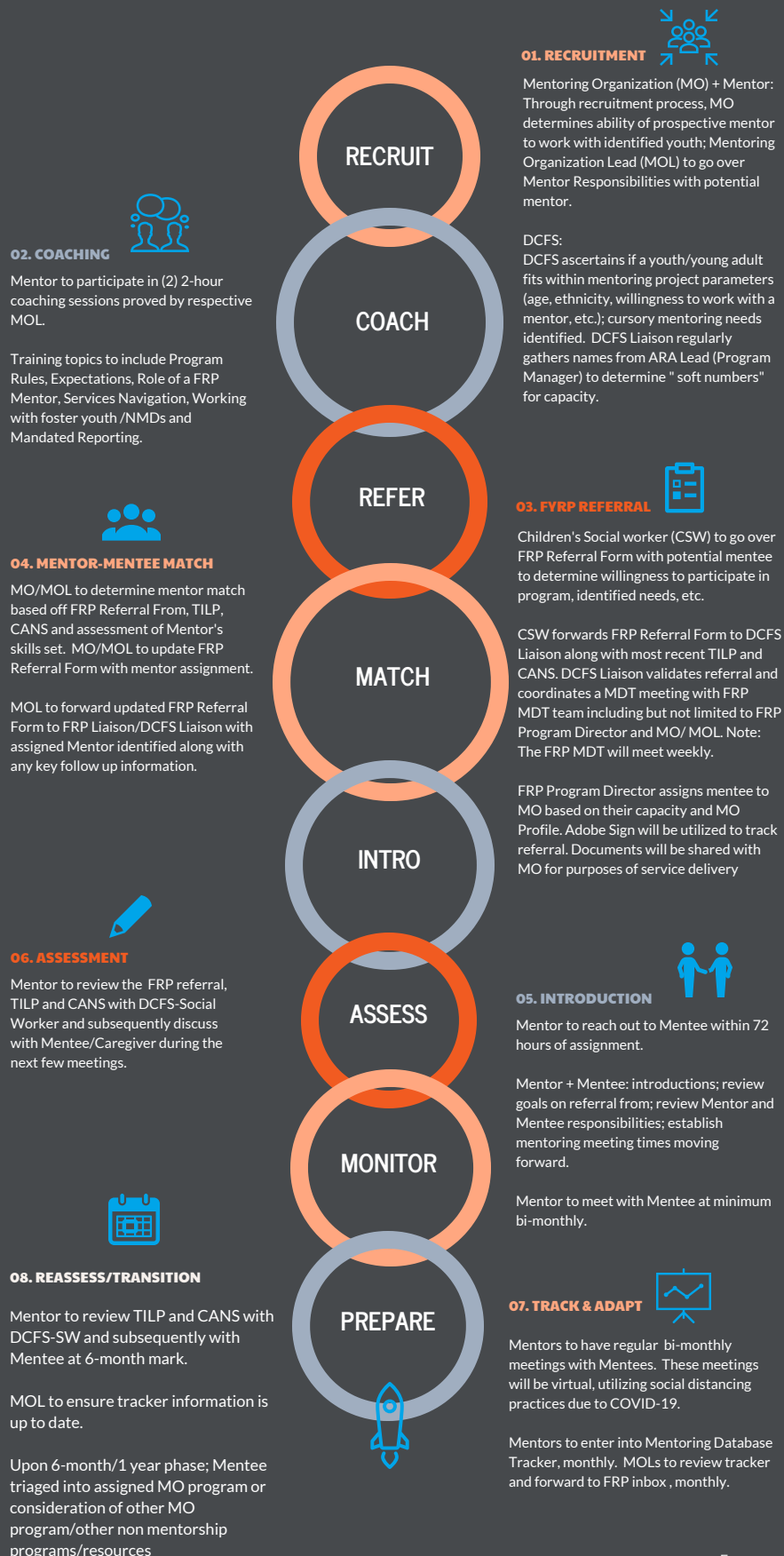
Family engagement and support such as youth-family mediation, peer support programs for parents, participatory defense for parents to advocate for their children in court, counseling, and parenting classes to engage parents in the healing process for their children.

Community engagement and inclusion of mentors or staff with lived experience of the justice system as credible messengers to maximize the development of culturally responsive positive relationships between youth and the adults around them.

Resources for transportation, food, and critical documents to address barriers to participation and increase the chance that youth will attend programming. Services and supports will continue while the youth or young adult remains in foster care with emphasis on building strong relationships between youth, mentors and family.

Services and supports will continue while the youth or young adult remains in foster care with emphasis on building strong relationships between youth, mentors and family. The Los Angeles County Workforce Development and Community Services has also agreed to coordinate employment development and career exposure opportunities for youth or young adults in the program.

FRP PROCESS



For more information, please call (213) 207-6927

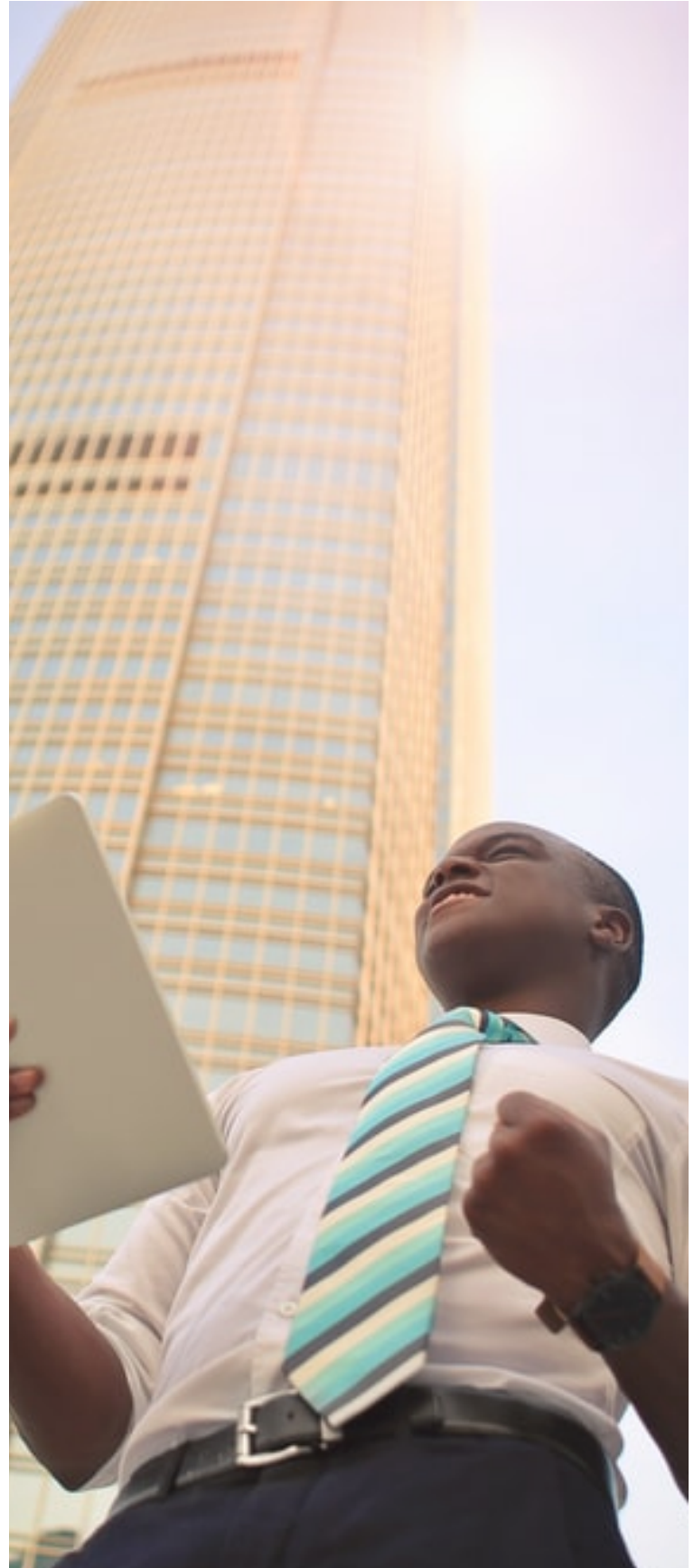
To submit a referral, please email
fosteringresiliency@friendsla.org

Program Governance

Over the course of the last year, staff from DCFS, Center for Strategic Partnership (CSP), Friends of the Children - Los Angeles, Los Angeles County My Brother's Keeper (MBK), and Liberty Hill Foundation have convened several community partners to participate in planning and design meetings that resulted in this concept design. This cross-sector collaborative established a shared vision, one that seeks to serve Black male youth and young adults in foster care from cradle to career in the long-term, starting first with the selected age cohort of youth and young adults. Meetings identified key partners, activities, measures of success and other considerations.

To ensure the ability of the Fostering Resilience Project to carry out its goals, we formed a cross-sector collaborative of public and private agencies to guide the development and implementation of this effort. A Steering Committee co-led by DCFS and Friends LA, and comprised of representatives from philanthropy, MBK, CSP, and community partners will provide implementation oversight.

More specifically, the Steering Committee will: Assist in the selection of funded partnerships and service providers; Work with administrative lead to develop a database/tracking system for community partners to effectively manage and communicate with members of the steering committee; Review and analyze effort to ensure model fidelity and make course corrections; Plan the expansion of effort to other DCFS regional offices.



Program Implementation



Implementation of the Fostering Resilience Project will involve a variety of activities that will be executed in phases. Phase I will focus on the following: :

- Friends LA in tandem with guidance from the Steering Committee will establish systems for referrals, enrollment, curriculum, evaluation, and resource development.
- Agreements developed between DCFS and Friends LA.
- Identify community organizations who will provide qualitative services to youth.
- Friends LA will sub-grant with selected providers for their mentoring services, life-skills, educational support, workforce development services.

The 3 Mentoring Orgs

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The FRP partnered with a collection of community-based, mentoring organizations that provide African American/Black male youth and young adults with mentors who can develop an emotional bond with the mentee through a culturally competency experience, and can provide support, guidance, and opportunities to help youth confidently strive after their hopes and dreams.

SHOES 4 GRADES⁺
mentoring program

Shoes 4 Grades has one mission: to improve students' grades by encouraging children to excel in school, to enjoy the learning experience, and to become life-long learners.

**The
ENLIGHTENED
MENTOR**

The Enlightened Mentor Project helps at-risk youth in under-resourced communities in the greater L.A. area develop the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to create superior academic, career and life outcomes for themselves and the communities in which they live.

emerge

EMERGE mentors foster youth, using Hip Hop to guide academic and personal growth. Their education units and programs are called "Ciphers" because Hip Hop artists use this tool to communicate, exchange ideas, and sharpen their skills.

2021-2022

COSTS	AMOUNT (in USD)
Personnel	\$84,424
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director (@ .15 FTE) Program Director (@ .5 FTE) Taxes and Benefits (@ 25%) 	\$24,727 \$41,212 \$16,485
Non Personnel	\$88,892
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Materials Staff Training and Supplies Accounting and Finances Credit Card, Banking and Payroll Travel and Meeting Costs Data and Evaluation Professional Services 	\$1,500 \$2,500 \$3,000 \$1,392 \$1,500 \$35,000 \$44,000
Sub-Contractor	\$400,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-Based Mentoring 	\$400,000
Overhead/ Administration (@ 10%)	\$57,132
Total Budget	\$628,447

Operating Budget (cont...)

2022-2023

COSTS	AMOUNT (in USD)
Personnel	<u>\$84,424</u>
• Executive Director (@ .15 FTE)	\$25,050
• Program Director (@ .5 FTE)	\$42,448
• Taxes and Benefits (@ 25%)	\$16,875
Non Personnel	<u>\$91,892</u>
• Marketing Materials	\$1,500
• Staff Training and Supplies	\$2,500
• Accounting and Finances	\$3,000
• Credit Card, Banking and Payroll	\$1,392
• Travel and Meeting Costs	\$1,500
• Data and Evaluation	\$36,000
• Professional Services	\$46,000
Sub-Contractor	<u>\$400,000</u>
• Community-Based Mentoring	\$400,000
Overhead/ Administration (@ 10%)	<u>\$57,432</u>
Total Budget	<u>\$631,747</u>

'21 - '23 Budget

COSTS	AMOUNT (in USD)
Personnel	<u>\$164,847</u>
• Executive Director (@ .15 FTE)	\$49,777
• Program Director (@ .5 FTE)	\$83,660
• Taxes and Benefits (@ 25%)	\$33,360
Non Personnel	<u>\$91,892</u>
• Marketing Materials	\$3,000
• Staff Training and Supplies	\$5,000
• Accounting and Finances	\$6,000
• Credit Card, Banking and Payroll	\$2,784
• Travel and Meeting Costs	\$3,000
• Data and Evaluation	\$71,000
• Professional Services	\$90,000
Sub-Contractor	<u>\$800,000</u>
• Community-Based Mentoring	\$800,000
Overhead/ Administration (@ 10%)	<u>\$114,563</u>
Total Budget	<u>\$1,260,194</u>

Who's Up Next?!



Since the launch of the FRP, we have field a number of requests to broaden our work and build-out a Fostering Resilience Initiative for Black Girls. We relish this request as it is a part of our long-term plan to support and scale our work to more children across the county.

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