

# New Pathways for Youth's Research-Informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program



# Table of Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ABOUT US</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>COMMUNITY NEED</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>OUR INNOVATIVE SOLUTION</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>OUR CALL TO ACTION</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>25</b>

# Executive Summary

32 YEARS OF BEING UNSTOPPABLE FOR YOUTH

New Pathways for Youth (NPFY) curated the following White Paper with the purpose of providing our community, clients, collaborators, sponsors, stakeholders, and funders with a comprehensive report detailing in-depth:

1. The purpose and mission of our organization,
2. The community need we seek to address,
3. The innovative solution we have designed,
4. The community impact of our solution, and
5. The call for actions to support our endeavors.



**AT NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH, WE ARE AWAKENING THE FULL HUMAN POTENTIAL TO BRING ABOUT INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION. WE ARE A YOUTH-FOCUSED ORGANIZATION FOR ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING POVERTY AND FOUR TIMES THE ADVERSITY OF THEIR PEERS. UNLIKE OTHER YOUTH AGENCIES, NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH PROVIDES A HOLISTIC, RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAM FEATURING CASE MANAGEMENT AND ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING WITHIN SAFE SPACES AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES.**

1989

**TEEN RETREAT:** NPFY holds our first 10 day intensive retreat for teens and hosts 40 teens and mentors.

1995

**NPFY HEADQUARTERS:** A local grantor funds the purchase of NPFY's headquarters at 10th St. and Pierce St. in the Phoenix Garfield neighborhood.

2008-2012

**EXPANDED SERVICES:** NPFY acquires two mentoring programs and doubles our services to include more ages.

2013

**COMPREHENSIVE MODEL:** NPFY integrates all offerings to develop a comprehensive program model for all youth served.

2016

**IMPACT:** NPFY develops proof of concept for our Transformative Mentoring Program and reveals significant neighborhood impact.

2018

**SCALABILITY:** NPFY refines the Holistic Youth Transformation Program model for scalability and replicability to other high risk neighborhoods in Phoenix.

2019

**CELEBRATING 30 YEARS:** NPFY celebrates 30 years of creating breakthroughs and transformations for youth experiencing poverty and adversity in Maricopa County.

2020

**NEW HOME:** NPFY relocates to a building at 9th St. and Jefferson that is twice the size of our original headquarters.

2021-2024

**EXPANDING COMMUNITY IMPRINT:** NPFY plans to increase the number of youth we serve by 100 new youth each year (600 added participants total).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# About Us

PREVENTION ★ INTERVENTION ★ TRANSFORMATION

Founded in 1989, New Pathways for Youth was created by a small group of concerned Phoenix residents to disrupt the generational poverty and adversity experienced by youth in low-income neighborhoods with an elevated prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) indicators. Over 30 years later, we maintain our founders' vision of awakening the full human potential to bring about individual and community transformation.

**The mission of New Pathways for Youth is to guide youth (ages 12-21) as they discover renewed outlooks on life and realize unwritten possibilities for their futures.** Through our sole initiative, the research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program, New Pathways for Youth integrates six distinct program features: 1) 1:1 Mentoring in Connected Communities of Youth and Mentors; 2) Evidence-Based Personal Development and Life Skill Workshops/Retreats; 3) Goal Setting Projects; 4) Mentor Coaching and Support; 5) Parent Workshops and Referrals; and 6) Workforce Development/College and Career Planning Sessions.

Since inception, New Pathways for Youth has transformed the lives of more than 7,000 youth, with more than 95% graduating high school and pursuing post-secondary education (a figure that far outpaces the 55% national graduation rate of youth experiencing ACEs).

Demonstrating the high quality of our organization, New Pathways for Youth and our leaders have been recognized with the Out-of-School Time Program Award of Excellence from the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence, Most Admired Leader Acknowledgment from the Phoenix Business Journal, and Excellence in Mentoring Award Finalist from MENTOR: The National Mentorship Partnership.

# Our Values

## Relationships

- Relationships create possibilities and opportunities. We nurture relationships with our youth, mentors, partners, colleagues, and each other for the advancement of good.

## Well-Being

- When all people have the knowledge and skills to rise, entire communities are lifted. We care about and promote the safety, health, and equality of those we serve, including ourselves, youth, mentors, and stakeholders.

## Impact

- Transforming lives is our purpose. We learn and apply research, data, and experience to reach intended short- and long-term results for our youth and mentors.

## Intentionality

- We are disciplined in our pursuit of results so that all youth can be their best selves. We focus our energies and resources on strategies and relationships that have the greatest impact.

## Responsibility

- We are entrusted to create good for our community and honor our words with accountability for decisions and results.

## Integrity

- We model the teachings of our program. We act with honest, care, commitment, and courage for our mission and community.

## Purpose

- We believe everyone has assets to share. By sharing, advancing, and challenging our ideas, talents, and skills, we guide innovation and the creation of more good.

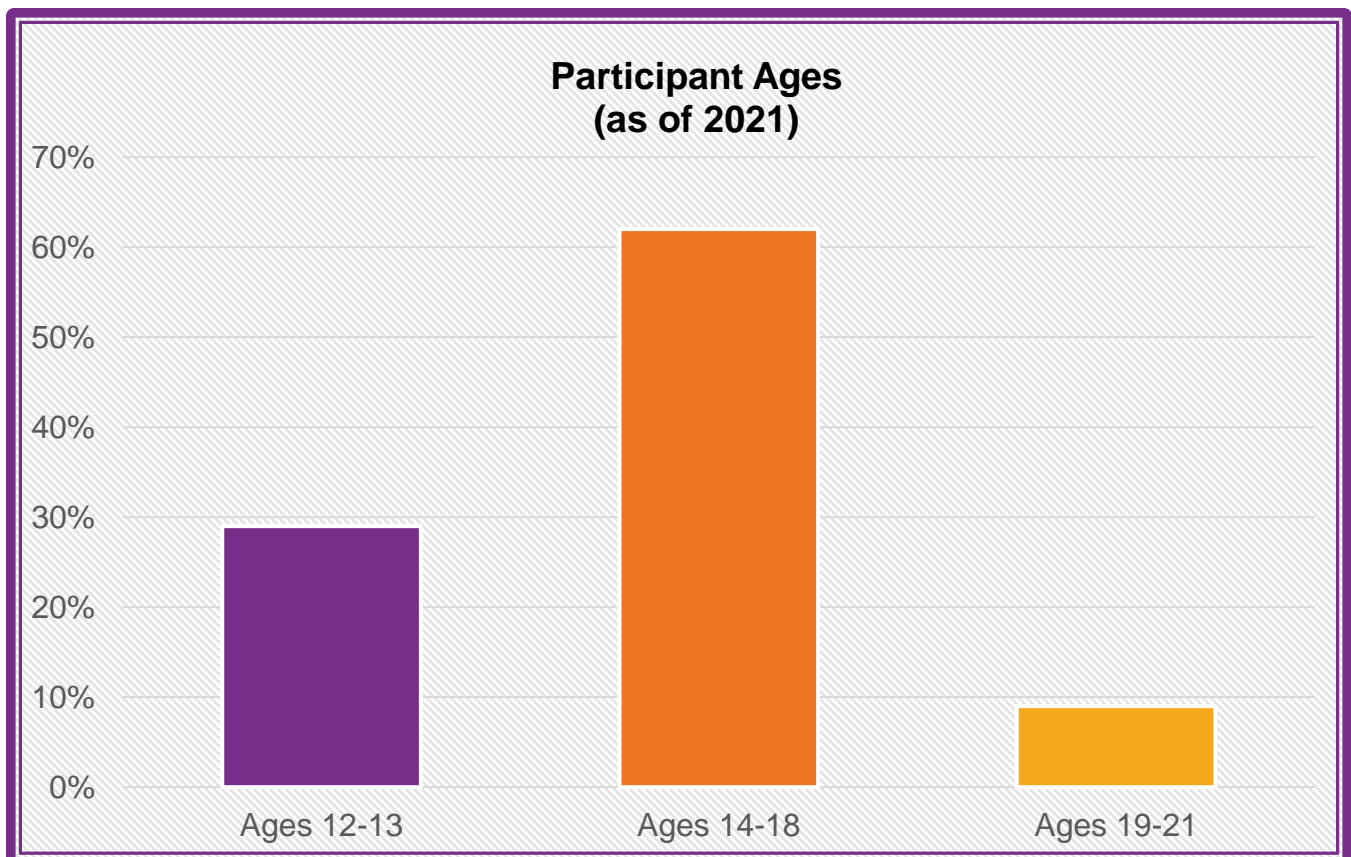
## Inclusion

- We treat everyone with respect and dignity. We build community by listening for possibility and including diverse perspectives, ideas, knowledge, and people.

# Community Need

## YOUTH EXPERIENCING POVERTY AND ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

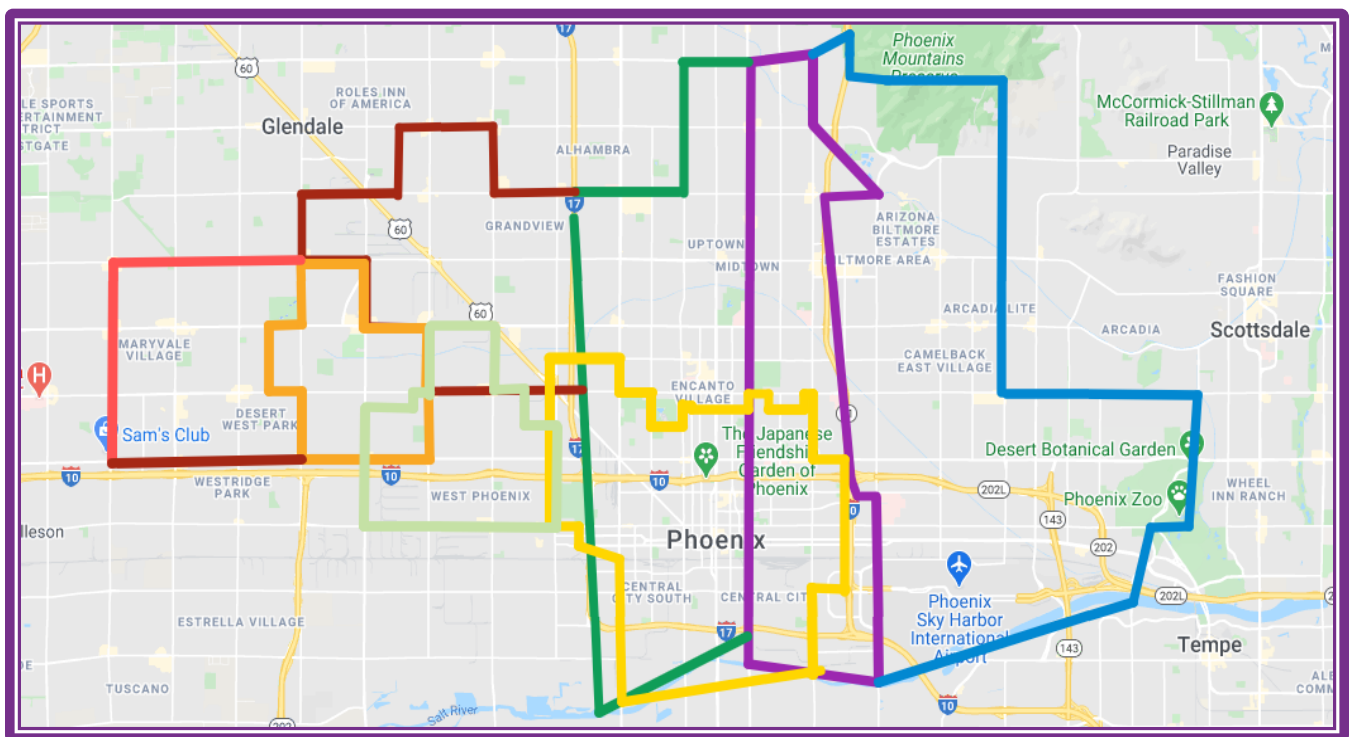
Each year, New Pathways for Youth serves between 400-450 youth often considered “too” at-risk for other agencies due to the intensity of the challenges they face. Several partner organizations assist us in identifying and referring youth who would most benefit from our services, including numerous Title I schools and agencies serving low-income populations. Ages 12-21, these youth come from a wide range of diverse and intersecting identities, demographics, and backgrounds. The difficult circumstances and systematic barriers to success impacting our youth daily interrupt their sense of individual worth and potential, disconnecting them from the truth that the future holds unlimited possibilities for each of us, no matter our backgrounds. New Pathways for Youth’s research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program reconnects participants to that truth, and through each research-based element of our program, youth renew their belief in and ability to generate remarkable outcomes.



## POVERTY

**100% OF NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS LIVE IN POVERTY AND RESIDE IN PHOENIX NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE THE AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR IS UNDER \$23,800.**

According to U.S. Census 2019 estimates, there are approximately 129,000 children (ages 0-18) in Maricopa County who are living in poverty.<sup>1</sup> This figure does not account for the roughly 76,000 impoverished young adults (ages 19-21) in Maricopa<sup>2</sup> that have aged out of most support services and are vulnerable in relation to a host of wider social determinants of health.<sup>3</sup> Headquartered at the heart of Central Phoenix, New Pathways for Youth participants reside in low-income and high-risk neighborhoods including Garfield, Maryvale, and Eastlake Park/Booker T. Washington. Our research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program has a long history in Garfield, where 57.8% of children live below the federal poverty line,<sup>4</sup> and recently began outreach in Maryvale in September 2020, where 53% of youth live below the poverty level.<sup>5</sup> New Pathways for Youth specifically targets youth who live below the poverty line in these neighborhoods. Following an assessment of neighborhoods with similar youth demographics as Garfield and Maryvale, New Pathways for Youth has selected Phoenix's Eastlake Park/Booker T. Washington neighborhood as the site for outreach expansion in 2021, which will aim to enroll 100 new and unduplicated youth who are experiencing poverty and Adverse Childhood Experiences in our Holistic Youth Transformation Program. The following map represents New Pathways for Youth's current service areas, as defined by the school district boundaries of our partner referral agencies and schools:



## ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

**100% OF NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS HAVE EXPERIENCED A MINIMUM OF THREE TO FOUR ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES).**

According to the Arizona Adverse Childhood Experiences Consortium, ACEs constitute any childhood trauma before the age of 18, including: physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse; household alcohol and drug use; incarcerated household member(s); someone in the household who is/was depressed, mentally ill, institutionalized, or suicidal; mother who is/was treated violently; one or no parent; and emotional or physical neglect.<sup>6</sup> As reported by Dr. Robert Block, former president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, ACEs are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our society.<sup>7</sup>

Decades of research, beginning with the CDC-Kaiser Permanente ACEs Study, has produced irrefutable evidence that the number of ACEs one is exposed to is of direct negative correlation to youth development, quality of life, education attainment, health outcomes, employment rates, and poverty throughout life.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, studies have found that the unmitigated effects of ACEs ultimately increase one's chances of an early death impacted by social isolation, disease, and disability.<sup>8</sup> In addition to long-term and far-reaching disparities caused by ACEs, these challenges interrupt a youth's sense of potential, disconnecting them from the reality of their inherent, immeasurable value and unlimited future.

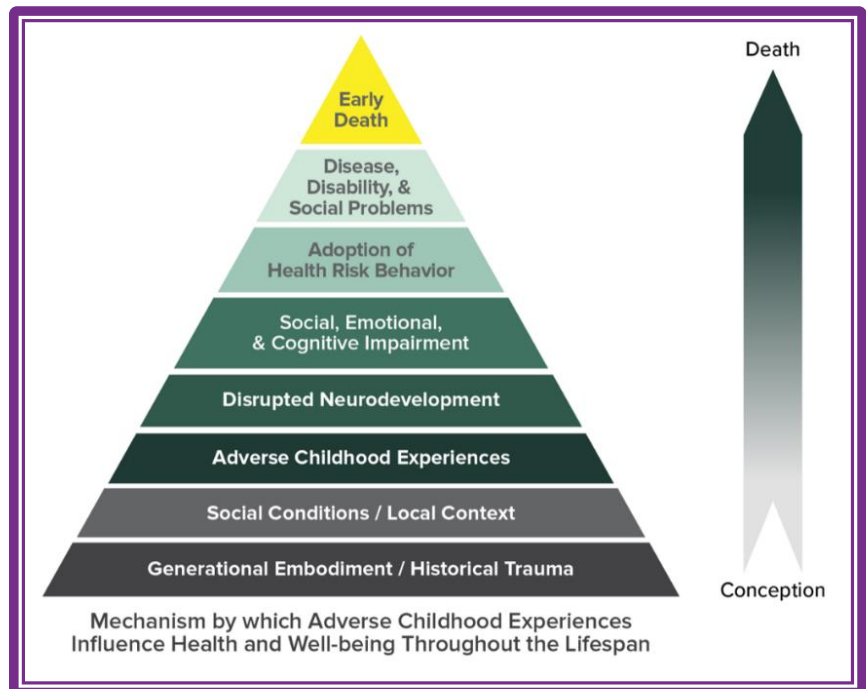


Image Source: Center for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html>

New Pathways for Youth's research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program serves youth who have experienced, at minimum, three to four ACEs. Evidencing the extreme adversity threatening the youth New Pathways for Youth serves, stories and experiences recounted privately by our youth to mentors, staff, and case managers commonly paint a disturbing picture of prevalent abuse, trauma, and toxic stress.



## RACE

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**NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS OVERWHELMINGLY REPRESENT COMMUNITIES OF COLOR (63% HISPANIC/LATINO, 10% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN, 19% MULTIPLE, 6% WHITE, AND 2% OTHER).**

Across fields of research and practices, the insidious consequences of racism have been well-documented, with race identified as one of the core social determinants of health negatively impacting the health and well-being of children, adolescents, emerging adults, and their families.<sup>9</sup> As defined by the World Health Organization, social determinants of health include “conditions in which people are born, live, work, and age.”<sup>10</sup> Though grassroots to systematic work for racial equity has been underway for decades, research consistently indicates that racist implicit and explicit biases, institutional structures, and interpersonal relationships continue to devastate communities of color in far-reaching and long-lasting ways.<sup>9</sup> One such example is the “enrichment gap,” which mirrors the well-documented academic “achievement gap” experienced by students of color – whereby white students significantly outperform their Black and Latino/a peers.<sup>11</sup> According to a new analysis from the University of Washington, the success of students of color is dually suppressed by their disproportionate lack of access to out-of-school enrichment opportunities that help: 1) Boost student academic achievement, attainment, and social behaviors, 2) Increase disadvantaged students’ cultural capital, 3) Improve students’ critical thinking; and 4) Increase social tolerance and inclusion.<sup>12</sup>

At New Pathways for Youth, we prioritize creating a safe, inclusive, and equitable space that enables employees, volunteer mentors, and youth of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds to thrive and transform. All staff and mentors participate in recurring meetings and exercises to understand and address the impact of intersectional identities, privileges, and oppressions on their lives and the powerful interactions they have with New Pathways for Youth participants (who are 94% non-white). These ongoing trainings are intended to proactively eradicate systemic racism on an internal organizational level, helping facilitate reflection, growth, and transformation in those implementing our research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program. We equip staff and mentors to address the intersectionality of our participants’ lives, identities, and lived experiences by increasing their capacity for anti-racism informed empathy. Through this essential top-down approach, New Pathways for Youth mitigates the negative influence of internalized and structural racism on our service delivery, ensuring that the Holistic Youth Transformation Program equitably serves youth of color. Additionally, New Pathways for Youth’s 100% free services eliminate the out-of-school-time enrichment gap for our participants, empowering youth of color to unlock their full potential, defy historical achievement gaps, and attain the greatest possible academic, professional, and personal outcomes.

### NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS: 62% FEMALE AND 38% MALE.

Another recognized social determinant of health, gender, bears a significant influence on adolescent development, resources, opportunities, and eventually, long-term health. According to a 2017 study in the *Journal of Adolescent Health* (JAH), negative gender expectations and beliefs can have severe consequences for all youth.<sup>13</sup> Research found that girls unequipped to counter gender norms are at increased risk of school drop-out, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and diseases, physical and sexual violence, anxiety and depression, and more.<sup>14</sup> Adjacently, boys are more prone to both inflict and experience violence, die from unintentional injuries, attempt or complete suicide, struggle with substance abuse and addiction, as well as other negative consequences.<sup>14</sup>

Understanding the key social constructs of gender norms, roles, expectations, and beliefs is crucial to the personal development and life skills of our young women and men. Results from New Pathways for Youth's 2016 evaluation found that participating boys were achieving greater program outcomes than girls, with 2017 evaluation results showing that this disparity grew in the second year. While the majority of participants were female, male participants consistently obtained the most significant program outcomes. Recognizing this trend, New Pathways for Youth debuted Gender-Specific Personal Development/Life Skill (PDLS) Sessions in 2016 (described more on page 13). Our staff and mentors lead girls through several activity guides prepared by One Circle Foundation's "Girls Circle" model, the first gender-responsive model in America proven to reduce delinquency in girls and to be listed in SAMHA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, New Pathways for Youth engages male participants in One Circle Foundation's "Council for Boys and Young Men," a strengths-based group approach to promoting safe, healthy, and diverse identities which allow them to grow as respectful leaders and connected allies in their communities.<sup>16</sup>

New Pathways for Youth integrates gender-based relational theory, resiliency practices, and skills training to increase positive connections, personal and collective strengths, and competence in youth. By promoting an emotionally supportive setting within which youth can develop caring relationships and use authentic voices, the Girls Circle and Boys Council curriculum helps counteract gender-based social and interpersonal forces that impeding youths' growth and development. Through empathetically examining cultural expectations of girls and boys in a safe space, New Pathways for Youth enables youth to gain greater awareness of their life options and to strengthen their abilities to make choices consistent with their values, interests, and talents.

# Our Innovative Solution

## NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH'S RESEARCH-INFORMED HOLISTIC YOUTH TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM

### Six Elements, One Program

New Pathways for Youth's founding imperative, to mitigate the insidious impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences and poverty on youth in Maricopa County, is accomplished through our sole initiative, the research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program, which offers six distinct program elements to holistically meet the needs of our youth.

Innovatively leveraging individual and community strengths to manifest change in the lives of youth, New Pathways for Youth has built and maintained strong collaborations with local businesses such as DPR Construction and Fry's Groceries to provide workforce development programming, internship experiences, and employment opportunities. We also partner with other Valley nonprofit organizations, city governments, and businesses, including Phoenix College, Association of Charter Schools, Native American Connections, and One-N-Ten. Title I schools complete New Pathways for Youth's holistic collaboration model and currently include: Alhambra High, Camelback High, Central High, Isaac Elementary, Maryvale High, North High, Phoenix Elementary, Phoenix Union High, and Trevor Browne High. These relationships create a robust community pipeline that effectively 1) Targets the youth who have the most to benefit from our Holistic Youth Transformation Program, and 2) Refers community members to become long-term volunteer mentors.

Inspired by educator Ruby Payne's work, which states that only the integration of education, employment, and relationships can break the cycle of poverty, New Pathways for Youth's research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program elements are depicted to the right and detailed subsequently.

1:1 MENTORING IN  
CONNECTED  
COMMUNITIES OF  
YOUTH &  
MENTORS

PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT/  
LIFE SKILL  
RETREATS,  
SESSIONS, &  
WORKSHOPS

WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT/  
COLLEGE &  
CAREER PLANNING  
SESSIONS

ASPIRATIONAL  
SMART GOAL  
SETTING  
PROJECTS

MENTOR  
COACHING &  
SUPPORT

PARENT  
WORKSHOPS &  
REFERRALS

## 1:1 MENTORING IN CONNECTED COMMUNITIES OF YOUTH AND MENTORS

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As supported by evidence, New Pathways for Youth believes that a caring, stable adult mentor can be a fundamental intervention that proves instrumental in reversing the toxic effects of the adversities our youth have experienced. Through life-changing mentor relationships, lasting a minimum of two years, youth develop life skills, acquire and effectively apply knowledge, and identify, address, and cope with ACEs. Our 1:1 mentoring model includes a connected community of other mentors and youth, enabling our youth to develop a sense of trust and cooperation. New Pathways for Youth’s community-rooted approach to mentoring builds youths’ sense of belonging, exposes youth to a network of support and nurturing adults, and fosters self-accountability. Additionally, mentors are instrumental to delivering youth case management through tailored plans intentionally designed to provide the most effective support for youth to realize and actualize their full potential. New Pathways for Youth case management includes individualized action planning to meet short- and long-term goals, as well as connections to critical resources for personal well-being, ongoing development, and daily necessities that support the youth’s entire family.

Each New Pathways for Youth participant takes root in and is supported by an entire community, tapping into healthier, more conscious ways of thinking, maintaining relationships, and taking transformative steps alone and with the support of their mentors. When youth experience the support and personal development that our program offers, they feel unstoppable – and that spirit extends beyond the self to impact their family, community, and the world around them. Upon discovering that the greatest youth outcomes were consistently achieved during the second year of participating in the research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program, New Pathways for Youth increased the required length of mentor commitments from one to two years in 2019, a change supported by research indicating that the longer a mentoring relationship lasts, the greater the value for youth.<sup>17</sup> Mentor-mentee matches work together over the course of the Holistic Youth Transformation Program, often continuing their relationship post program-graduation, with the average relationship lasting over four years, according to alumni reports.

*Learn about Richie and Felix’s powerful 3+ yearlong relationship on the following page.*



**“AT 15, HE WAS ANGRY, NO RELIABLE SUPPORTS IN HIS LIFE. HE WAS MOST AT-RISK. NOW HE BELIEVES IN HIS ABILITY TO GRADUATE, GO TO COLLEGE, GET A CAR AND A JOB, FINANCIALLY SUPPORT HIMSELF. HE’S LEARNED HOW TO TRUST.” – RICHIE (MENTOR), FELIX (MENTEE)**

# MEET A MATCH: RICHIE & FELIX

*This true story was shared at New Pathways for Youth's 2016 Annual Breakfast fundraiser.*

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**Richie:** “I know tough, but I have never known ‘Felix’ tough. He’s the toughest person I’ve ever met. I’ve experienced five Adverse Childhood Experiences of my own, including a brother who committed suicide and a severely abusive stepdad. I also know how to support youth who have been through the same. But I have never known ‘Felix’ tough. Felix never had a relationship with his mother. He never got to meet his dad. His whole life, he’s lived in a small two-bedroom home with between 12 and 15 people living inside of it at a time. Felix has never had a bed of his own. Felix has never had a shelf of his own... There was no one in his life to help him feel that way, or to share with him a sense of belonging.”

**Felix:** “I thought I’d belonged once. I thought I felt connection. I spent a lot of time in the streets... because I didn’t really have anything else to do... Then the gangs welcomed me. They made me feel included for the first time. There is something to know: people don’t join gangs to scare people. They join gangs to feel safe, because they have felt scared and alone their whole lives.”

**Richie:** “Last night, two years ago to the day, Felix and I went shopping to buy some clothes so he could sit at a table of New Pathways for Youth supporters... Earlier that evening, unknown to myself, Felix got a call from two of his closest friends, also part of that gang. And they asked him to go hang out at the park in his neighborhood. But Felix said that he couldn’t go because he was getting together with his mentor that night. So as Felix and I were shopping and prepping for the breakfast that next morning, at the park his two friends were pitted against one another to fight, and in fear (I presume), one of those friends – just 15 years old – pulled out a knife, and stabbed the other. And that young man, Felix’s best friend, he died. And the 15-year-old went right to prison, where he sits right now. So, Felix’s name was immediately thrown into the investigation because of the high likelihood that he would have been there, and he assures me that, had it not been for New Pathways for Youth, he absolutely would have been.”

**Felix:** “It all still feels so surreal. I feel stuck between two worlds. I have left all those so-called friends and I am learning to trust the inclusion that New Pathways gives me.”

**Richie:** “New Pathways for Youth is not just a nice thing to have.”

**Felix:** “It is a necessity. I’d be dead or in prison without it.”

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT/LIFE SKILL (PDLS) RETREATS, SESSIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

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Unlike other youth mentoring initiatives, New Pathways for Youth’s Holistic Youth Transformation Program uniquely features free, mentor-led Personal Development/Life Skill (PDLS) Retreats, Sessions, and Workshops that connect youth to holistic support systems. PDLS programming provides a framework for youth to cope with adversity, build trust in a caring adult, and improve school attendance/performance. Situated within the context of strong, supportive, and secure mentor relationships with adult role models, PDLS Retreats, Sessions, and Workshops engage youth in new ways of thinking, renewing their innate capacity to build life skills, achieve college and career success, and disrupt self-defeating patterns. “Life Skill” curriculum is distinctly and intentionally crafted by Second Step School Connect, a national leader in whole-child, social-emotional learning curricula, to guide youth in developing fundamental skills for success, such as communication and conflict resolution. “Personal Development” curriculum is developed by New Pathways for Youth’s well-qualified staff to go deeper, empowering youth to manifest transformative, life-evolving breakthroughs.

Working to disrupt the destructive path of childhood adversity and poverty, the overarching goals of PDLS Retreats, Sessions, and Workshops are to: 1) Maintain safe spaces for youth to learn, grow, and thrive, 2) Provide healthy food to eliminate the influence of childhood hunger on personal development and life skills, and 3) Empower youth with the knowledge, resources, and tools to manifest the successful futures of their dreams. By engaging youth in evidenced-based programming, youth lessen, or altogether eliminate, self-defeating thoughts and develop the skills to set and obtain goals that will empower them to ultimately end the cycle of poverty.

Aiming to provide a comprehensive and relevant array of personal development/life skill resources for our youth, New Pathways for Youth also facilitates Gender-Specific PDLS Sessions to address the impact of gender norms, stereotypes, and barriers. Mentoring programs that help youth “reject negative messages and stereotypes about their abilities, capitalize on preexisting assets and resources, and develop a positive identity hold the potential to narrow disparities across a variety of domains.”<sup>18</sup> Through participation in at least one of three 12-week Gender-Specific PDLS Sessions, boys and girls are equipped to identify and overcome both internal and external gender-based suppressions of protective factors, positive relationships, academic success, and overall personal development and life skills.

**“SHE MADE HONOR ROLL FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THE END OF HER SOPHOMORE YEAR! COUNTLESS CONVERSATIONS AND WORKSHOPS HAVE HELPED HER BELIEVE SHE CAN ACHIEVE HER GOALS! SHE INSPIRES ME TO DO BETTER MYSELF.” – ANGELINA (MENTOR), ADRIAN (MENTEE)**



## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT/COLLEGE AND CAREER PLANNING (WDCCP) SESSIONS

Centered around scholarship obtainment, financial aid, and college applications, Workforce Development/College and Career Planning Sessions support youth by increasing their ability to graduate high school, create a plan for post-secondary and/or career obtainment, and prepare to enter college and the workforce. By participating in evidenced-based, mentor-led WDCCP Sessions (recently fortified with youth technology assistance), New Pathways for Youth participants lessen, or altogether eliminate, self-defeating thoughts and develop the skills to set and obtain goals that will empower them to ultimately end the cycle of poverty.

**70% OF NEW PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS WILL BE THE FIRST IN THEIR FAMILIES TO GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL AND/OR PURSUE POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES.**

Through our WDCCP Sessions, New Pathways for Youth provides workforce development opportunities, including matching youth and their mentors with professional liaisons in specific industries to help them learn additional job skills and coaching. WDCCP Sessions also connect youth to internship and employment opportunities with local businesses. Additionally, WDCCP Sessions include individualized case planning to support youth with their academics, including connecting youth, families, and mentors to resources like technology devices and assistance. This feature of WDCCP Sessions gives youth the guidance and tools to fully unlock virtual learning and professional development.

Each WDCCP Session is rooted in the personal development curriculum created by New Pathways for Youth and life skills curriculum crafted by Second Step School Connect. Topics covered in WDCCP Sessions include: Resume and cover letter development; Job applications and interviews; Preparation and study techniques for SAT/ACT tests; Navigating college applications; Creating personal statements; Owning your experience/story; Finding and applying for financial aid and scholarships; Understanding and completing the FAFSA; Exploring different types of careers and jobs to determine interest; Understanding similarities and differences between high school and college; and Discovering types of postsecondary education/career tracks.

**“LUIS KNEW HE WANTED TO EXPLORE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND HIS CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES BUT DIDN’T KNOW HOW. THROUGH THE SUPPORT OF THE PROGRAM, HIS GRADES HAVE IMPROVED, HE IS NOW ACTING RESPONSIBLE WITH HIS DECISION MAKING, AND IS TAKING STEPS TO ACHIEVE HIS FULL POTENTIAL.” – BEAU (MENTOR), LUIS (MENTEE)**



# MEET A MENTEE: JENNIFER

*The following is an abridged version of a true story shared by an alumni mentee at New Pathways for Youth's 2016 Annual Breakfast.*

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“My journey has not been easy. My parents’ highest level of education was seventh grade. I am the first in my family to graduate high school... and my parents are undocumented immigrants. I remember the night of the flashing red and blue lights... the constant questioning of the officer... the tears rolling down my mother’s face, the confusion in my sister’s eyes. That was the night my life changed. I was 16 years old... my mother was detained at an immigration detention center... and I, as the oldest of five siblings, became their mother figure. But two constants stood for me: one, my belief that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible; and two, my New Pathways for Youth mentor, Priscilla.



*Jennifer and Priscilla at Jennifer's high school graduation in 2015.*

To be honest, the idea of a mentor scared me. I was scared that this person was going to judge me. All these years later, I realized that my mentor and the support of this program closed the opportunity gap for me. It's given me an advantage... having someone willing to listen, provide advice... help me focus on my goals, [and] share the accomplishments of coming into adulthood. It meant I had the life skills needed to support my family... while keeping focus on my grades and community service. It meant having someone prepare me... to navigate letters of recommendation, standardized tests, financial aid... I had the ability... to apply to college. It meant not getting lost in a school setting, as a poor kid of color from a bad neighborhood, but learning to become a competitive student. It meant having the support and courage to lead a protest... covered by national news, that would eventually lead to my mother’s release.

New Pathways for Youth and Priscilla prepared me... I am proud to tell you that I stand here... on my spring break from my freshman year at the University of Southern California on a full scholarship studying biomedical engineering. And yes, I am a first-generation Chicana student on a pre-med track. I am breaking the cycle of poverty and violence I knew growing up, thanks to NPFY and my mentor, Priscilla. She was present in the most challenging times... and continues to be part of the most rewarding yet. I am extremely excited for my future. I am your future workforce community leader.”

**\*\*2019 UPDATE:** “Today, I speak to you as a graduate of USC... I went to college because of New Pathways. And I stayed in college because of New Pathways. The lessons I learned in this building helped me reframe what success looked like, it helped me understand that connecting to our inner voice and listening to it matters most. I learned what joy feels like, I learned that being yourself is ok, and joy, to me, it looks like helping others... Thanks to New Pathways, I know what success means for me and I know how that looks, and I know that with hard work, anything is possible.”



## ASPIRATIONAL “SMART” GOAL SETTING PROJECTS

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The ability to independently define attainable life goals is a requirement to achieving success and self-efficacy in nearly any area of life. According to an empirical study by University of Illinois researchers, goal setting in adolescence and young adulthood is a significant precursor to adult wellbeing.<sup>19</sup> Yet for most at-risk youth, this vital and comprehensive skill set is typically underdeveloped. Researchers of a study produced by the Journal of Educational Psychology found that delinquent and at-risk populations of youth have fewer goals, set fewer challenging goals, have lower commitment to their goals, and exhibit lower levels of academic and self-regulatory efficacy than their non-at-risk peers.<sup>20</sup> Becoming a responsible decision-maker in emerging adulthood is difficult for most youth, but is disproportionately challenging for disadvantaged, underserved adolescents that are ill-equipped with the thought processes and coping mechanisms to define aspirations and develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound) goals.<sup>21</sup>



**“HE HAD DROPPED OUT HIS JUNIOR YEAR, MOST OF HIS FAMILY WAS IN JAIL, HE WAS A ‘POTHEAD,’ AND HAD A BAD GROUP OF FRIENDS. I PUSHED HIM, HE NEEDED CARE AND GUIDANCE ... HE GRADUATED AS VALEDICTORIAN OF HIS CLASS.” – WENDELL (MENTOR), MARK (MENTEE)**

As part of New Pathways for Youth’s research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program, mentors and youth are required to participate in monthly goal-setting projects designed to further develop personal benchmarks, decision-making, and time-management skills that support them in achieving college and career attainment. Staff and mentors work alongside youth to help them iterate and progress towards their own self-defined SMART life goals, with special attention given to academic and professional development unique to this age group. New Pathways for Youth’s Goal Setting Projects are built around the concepts of “Tube” versus “Aspirational” goals. A Tube goal operates upon a foundational belief in a deficiency that needs to be fixed, leaving no room for variance and relying on a strict pass/fail mentality. Conversely, Aspirational goals are desired states, rather mere close-ended metrics, and connect to belonging, meaning, and community contribution. Flexible by nature, Aspirational goals are holistic and journey-focused, enabling youth to overcome breakdowns in areas of their lives, build and foster new competencies, and enhance learning and growth. When youth are empowered to apply a strengths-based approach to setting goals, they become more resilient and capable in the face of strife. By guiding youth through the process of monitoring goal progress and encouraging youth to keep track of their success, New Pathways for Youth’s recurring goal setting projects prepare youth to become self-reliant adults. With the support and guidance of their mentor, step by step, week by week, our youth are creating new pathways that lead to the futures they want.

## MENTOR COACHING AND SUPPORT

Working to ensure that our volunteer mentors are acutely equipped, qualified, and dedicated to engage in long-term, transformative mentor relationships, New Pathways for Youth requires mentors to meet the following criteria prior to being matched with mentees: (1) Be ages 21 years or older; (2) Maintain a current Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card; (3) Sign a two-year agreement committing to the Transformative Mentoring Program; and (4) Complete New Pathways for Youth's concentrated mentor training intensive.



During our initial mentor training, New Pathways for Youth's staff help mentors navigate the complex and challenging situations of their youth-mentees. This orientation also creates opportunities for mentors to identify the influences of their own personal traumas, privileges, and prejudices. Facilitating ongoing reflection about the many experiences, perceptions, and protections shaping our adult mentors is critical to increasing the quality of their mentoring relationships. According to research produced by the American Journal of Community Psychology, mentors without adequate understandings of power, privilege, and oppression are more likely to perpetuate harmful practices that could lead to poor youth outcomes or premature relationship termination.<sup>18</sup>

Striving to proactively meet the diverse needs of all our youth, New Pathways for Youth staff and volunteer mentors routinely participate in ongoing trainings, curriculum, and exercises designed to increase their capacity to compassionately understand and support every youth through each stage of their transformation. Through pre-match and ongoing training, coaching, and support, our mentors are given the tools they need to make a difference for their youth. New mentor trainings occur quarterly and include 12-15 hours of evidence-based material, including specific content for digital and virtual opportunities to build meaningful relationships with youth. Mentors and youth both participate in an intensive retreat at the beginning of each match and continue to participate in all program elements, including monthly workshops and events. Following their onboarding training and match retreat, mentors participate in monthly coaching and support sessions.

**“HER MIND WAS CLOSED, SHE WASN'T RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS, AND HER SENIOR YEAR WAS FILLED WITH UNCERTAINTIES. SHE'S NOW A FRESHMAN AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY ON A FULL-RIDE SCHOLARSHIP!” – JANEY (MENTOR), ANAHI (MENTEE)**



## PARENT WORKSHOPS AND REFERRALS



Programs seeking to mitigate the negative impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences must tactically work to involve the parents of youth, especially considering that most ACEs are directly caused or influenced by caregiving adults. Parents of at-risk youth are typically ill-equipped to function as active participants in their children's change, growth, and development, simply because they have been absent-mindedly excluded from the enrichment program models engaging their youth.

Low-income youth with heightened exposure to ACEs are less likely to have positive and affirming relationships with their caregivers than their peers, yet simultaneously stand to benefit the most from the buffering effect of positive parent-child relationships.<sup>22</sup> As a 2010 study in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* reported, positive parent-child relationships have the capacity to diminish the negative impacts of poverty and minority statuses, facilitate intellectual, social, and emotional development, and increase the academic and postsecondary outcomes of youth.<sup>23</sup>



In order to truly break the cycle of poverty and violence in our community, New Pathways for Youth delivers a continuum of comprehensive support services to both youth and caregivers, providing a bridge between the program and home environment. Recognizing that youth who have positive parent relationships achieve the greatest program outcomes, New Pathways for Youth prioritizes providing parents and caregivers of participating youth with access to a variety of evidence-based workshops, sessions, and referrals designed to complement youth programming and improve family functioning.

**“HE COULDN’T COMMUNICATE HIS FEELINGS, YET HE WANTED TO BE SUCCESSFUL... IN SCHOOL, WITH HIS FAMILY, IN LIFE. TODAY, HE IS NOT ONLY CLOSE WITH HIS DAD, BUT WON A SCHOLARSHIP FOR HIS PASSION AND GROWTH!” – BRI (MENTOR), FRANCISCO (MENTEE)**



# MEET A MATCH: MICHELLE & CHRISTY

*The following is a true story shared at New Pathways for Youth's 2018 Annual Breakfast.*

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**MICHELLE:** “When my mentor and I were first matched, just over a year ago, she took me to the Japanese Garden...There was a circle of people drumming and chanting and suddenly, my mentor jumps in the middle of the circle and starts dancing... She didn't care what she looked like and clearly didn't care what anyone thought. I wondered what I had gotten myself into. My mentor happens to be the CEO of New Pathways for Youth, so I didn't think I'd have much luck asking for a new mentor...”

**CHRISTY:** “...Being playful and being carefree? Those aren't things that come easy for me... and that day I wanted to model for Michelle what it looks like to set down the shame and the fear that lives beneath my tough exterior. I wanted her to see what it feels like being comfortable being uncomfortable and to know in that place of vulnerability is where our greatest connections and joys in life exists. Those are not easy lessons for me or for Michelle. For Michelle, she's learned that tough exterior as well... her parents went to prison when she was just three years old... and she is being raised by an elderly grandmother... So, it wasn't a huge surprise last year when no one noticed that Michelle had over 40 absences and tardies from school. That the C's on her report card were not a matter of skill, were not a matter of effort, but that the activities she was involved in were headed down a very destructive path.

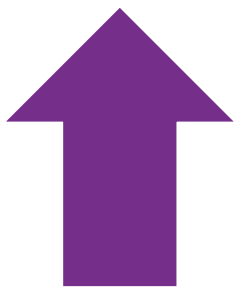
We had been at a New Pathways for Youth workshop... and she had been engaged and laughing, connecting. She had planned the steps for her future of going to college. And as we were driving home... the look on her face was... one of uncertainty, one of fear, and one of isolation. In that moment, I knew that what I had a profound commitment... to making sure she knows she matters... mentoring Michelle has changed me as the CEO of New Pathways for Youth and just as a person, in general. I know the value that our program drives for our kids in helping them attain the education and employment goals that they have in life. I also know the power of these relationships with their mentors and connecting them with possibilities they didn't even know exist. But I now know something way more powerful: at New Pathways, we make sure every kid knows they matter. And for the most of them, this is the first time ever. As a kid that grew up without that myself, I can tell you it is the thing that matters most. And as CEO, I can tell you there is absolutely no metric on any auditor's assessment that will ever truly measure that. It begins with me. But in truth? It begins with Michelle. I want to thank you for helping me grow and for letting me in and for continuing to do so despite how hard that is for you.”

**MICHELLE:** “I give Christy a hard time for her stupid dancing, but that moment was... That moment was life-changing for me. Seeing her be free and not caring what other people think... made me know that it is possible. And I want to be just like that. She has taught me to care about myself by being the first person to truly care about me.”

# Community Impact

## TRANSFORMATIVE YOUTH OUTCOMES

New Pathways for Youth is extremely proud of our work and the life-changing, life-long influence we have in our community's youth. Most recently, we were thrilled to discover that the research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program achieved the greatest youth outcomes in the history of our organization. Results from our 2019-20 program evaluation showed that 52% of youth decreased delinquent behaviors, 70% increased protective factors, and 53% had improved family functioning.



### Protective Factors

- Social, emotional, and leadership skills.
- Goal-setting and decision-making skills.
- Self-confidence and belief in future.
- Academic performance and educational attainment.
- Family functioning and willingness to change.
- Access to academic and job opportunities.



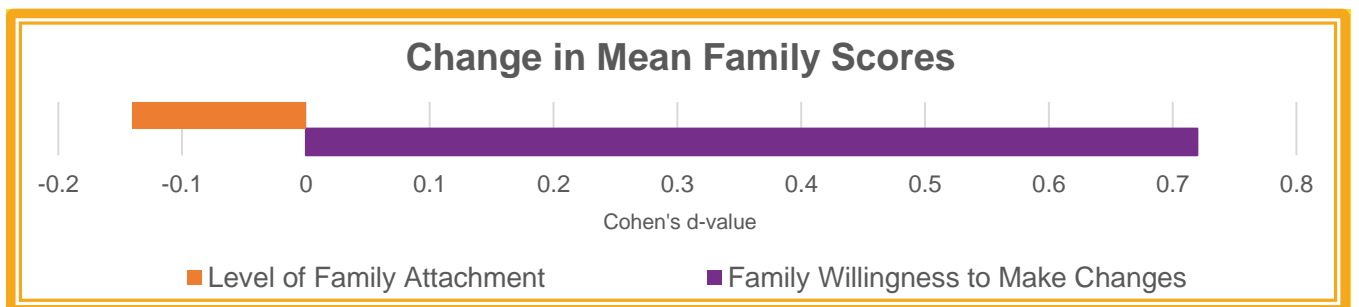
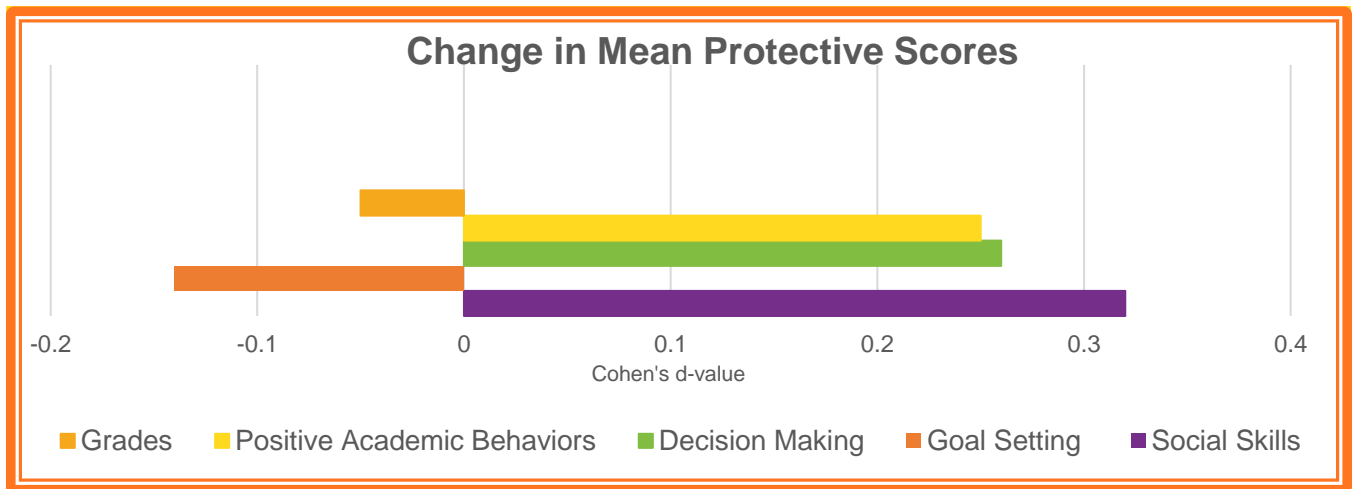
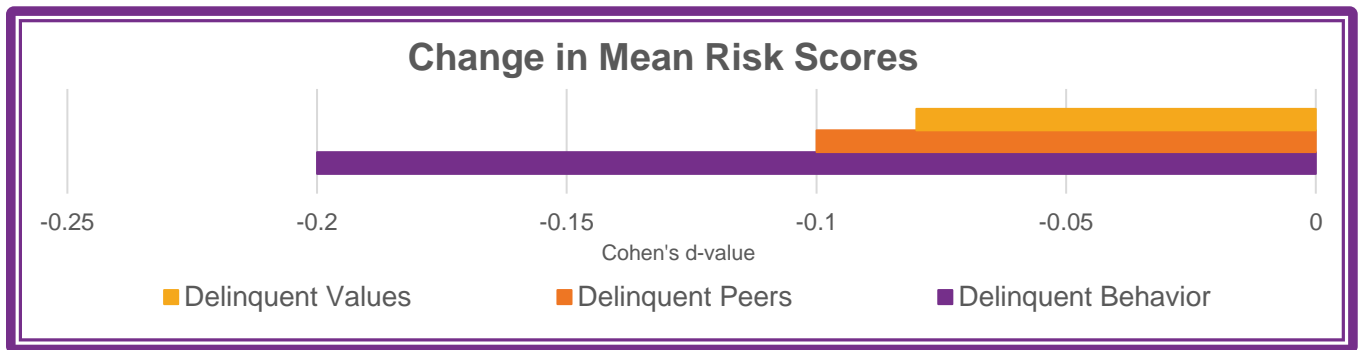
### Risk Factors

- Delinquent values and behavior.
- Hunger, malnourishment, and food insecurity.
- Belief in confidence-defeating negative gender stereotypes.
- Family conflict and unwillingness to change.
- Poor academic performance and school attendance.
- Systemic barriers to job/education attainment.

All aspects of New Pathways for Youth's Holistic Youth Transformation Program are anchored in intentional, evidence-based tools and practices. Annual pre-and-post surveys measure effectiveness, focusing on attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of youth. New Pathways for Youth utilizes standardized program evaluations to measure the achievements of youth in the Research-Informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program, involving both youth and mentors. The New Pathways for Youth Assessment was adapted from the Rochester Evaluation of Asset Development for Youth (READY) tool, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Core Measures and is administered as a pretest and annually thereafter as a post-test. We conduct a third-party outcome evaluation to analyze results using Cohen's d-values.

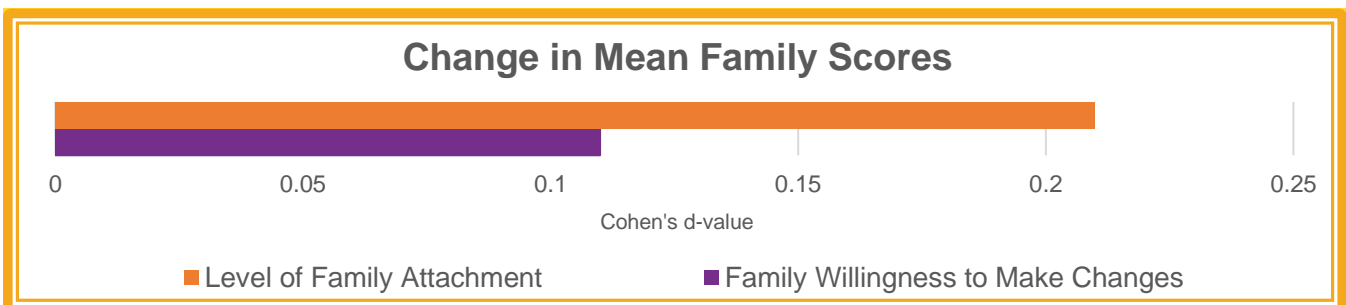
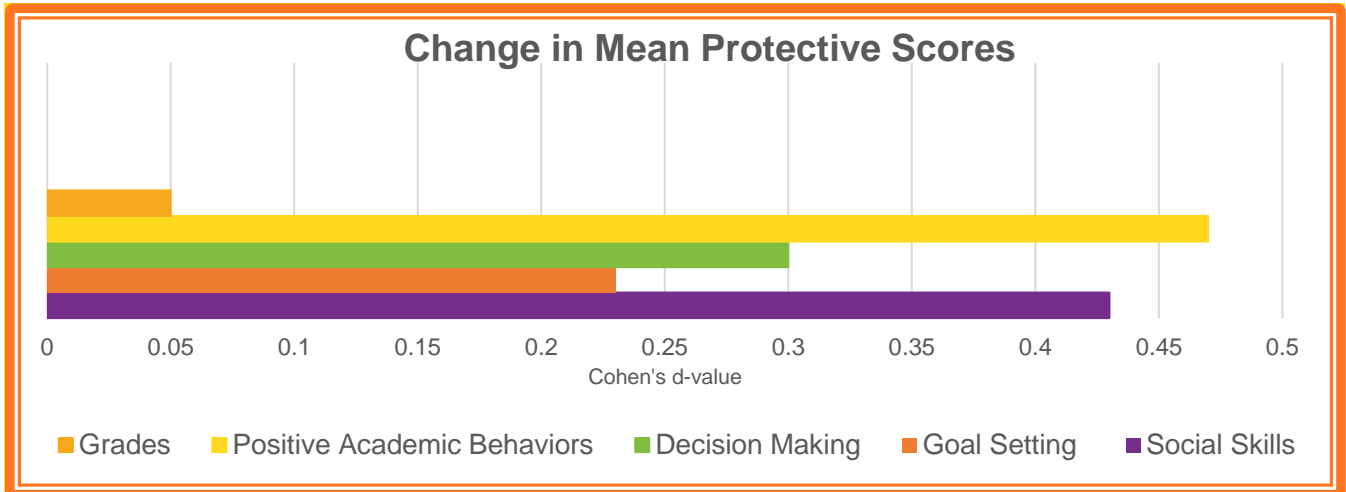
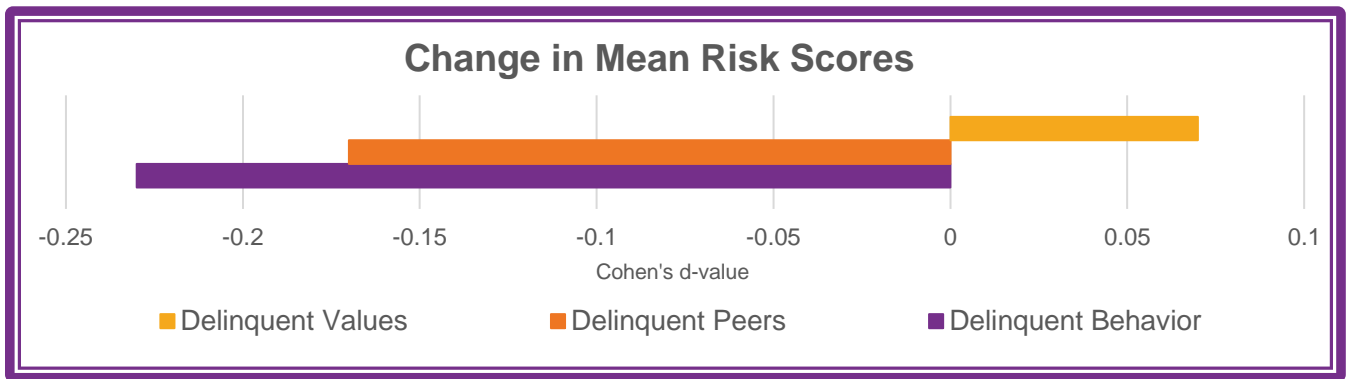
## 2019-2020 PROGRAM EVALUATION RESULTS

New Pathways for Youth's annual survey was administered to program participants at the end of the 2019-20 school year. Youth outcome evaluations measure the change in risk, protective, and family factors since the start of youths' program entry, rather than the start of the school year. Due to the atypical circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, changes to participating youths' mean risk, protective, and family factor scores were conservative compared to past years, and indicated areas that have been hindered by the difficulties of this prior year that will be focuses of our program in the coming school year, including grades, goal setting, and family attachment.



## 2018-2019 PROGRAM EVALUATION RESULTS

Because the last school year was prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program's youth outcomes were uninfluenced by the added and increased challenges of the health crisis. The negative and external factors impacting our 2019-2020 program year's evaluation results are noticeably absent in our 2018-2019 year. As such, the following evaluation results are much more representative of our typical youth outcomes, with only a minor increase in delinquent values identified, an area which received increased attention during our 2019-2020 program year. (All unsatisfactory evaluation indications are given heightened focus in the subsequent program year).



## YOUTH PROGRAM OUTCOMES

	SHORT-TERM	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
<b>HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING</b>	Reduced hunger.	Decreased food anxiety.	Decreased malnourishment and negative health outcomes.
	New and/or increased access to safe spaces with supportive, healthy adults.	Reduced feelings of stress and isolation.	Reduced risk of developing physical and mental health problems over time. <sup>24</sup>
	Decreased risky behavior (i.e., fighting, substance use).	Reduced health threats.	Increased health outcomes.
<b>ACADEMIC &amp; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	Improved perception of school and educational attainment.	Increased positive academic behaviors (i.e., attendance, studying).	Increased grade point average.
	Improved academic skills.	Successful graduation from high school.	Decreased barriers to job opportunities and career growth.
	New and/or increased access to internet-connected technologies.	Improved technological skills and applications.	Enhanced academic resources and employment marketability.
<b>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT &amp; LIFE SKILLS</b>	Improved views of their futures.	Completed enrollment in post-secondary opportunities.	Increased lifelong academic attainment and community involvement.
	Increased competency in goal setting and decision-making.	Attainment of living-wage employment.	Increased lifelong earnings, health, and social mobility.
	Increased confidence in identifying adverse gender norms and beliefs.	Reduced negative gender stereotypes about self and others.	Improved ability to overcome success-defeating gender norms and beliefs.
<b>SOCIAL &amp; EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	Reduced delinquent values and behaviors.	Improved social and leadership skills.	Increased social, emotional, and intellectual development necessary for growing and thriving in adulthood.
	Increased empathy towards self and others.	Increased willingness to implement positive life changes (parent and youth shared outcome).	Improved family relationships and attachment.
	Increased knowledge about effective parenting practices (parents-only outcome).	Reduced parent-child conflict (parents-only outcome).	Improved family functioning (parent and youth shared outcome).



# Our Call to Action

**JOIN US IN TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH**

New Pathways for Youth aims to reach more than 1,000 youth experiencing extreme poverty and adversity in Maricopa County by 2024. Pursuing this goal, New Pathways for Youth successfully relocated to a larger headquarters in 2020, an 11,000-square-foot building in Downtown Phoenix that doubled our space and will allow us to reach an additional 600 youth annually (1,000 total). Core to our expansion strategy, New Pathways for Youth will recruit 1,500 volunteer mentors, double our staff, and increase the annual offerings of all six aspects of the research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program to accommodate new youth enrollment. Our growth will focus on the key geographic communities of Garfield, Maryvale, and Eastlake Park/Booker T. Washington in order to best identify and enroll the youth who would most benefit from our services.

Recognizing that the youth we serve are from families with low incomes, New Pathways for Youth offers our services 100% free of charge. To make this a reality, our dedicated development staff members fundraise year-round, soliciting and securing community support from individual, corporate, foundation, and government sources. We are seeking both private and public support to ensure that we can reach out and engage more of the at-risk youth in community, empowering them to envision a better future. We welcome your support of our work, our outreach efforts, and all aspects of our research-informed Holistic Youth Transformation Program through volunteer involvement, in-kind donations, sponsorships, and grant funding. To answer our call to action and to receive additional information about supporting New Pathways for Youth, we invite you to contact either our President & CEO or Director of Philanthropy (contact information detailed below).

**THANK YOU FOR BEING UNSTOPPABLE FOR YOUTH!**



**Christy McClendon**

**President & CEO**

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