



The Credible Messenger Initiative

Request for Proposals

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Questions:

Credible Messenger Initiative

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Application Process

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I. Executive Summary

A. Purpose

This Request for Proposals (RFP) announces funding availability to provide services for DYRS's *Credible Messenger Initiative*. The *Credible Messenger Initiative* represents DYRS's new approach to community engagement on behalf of youth committed to the agency. The *Credible Messenger Initiative* will solely serve youth and families under DYRS supervision by providing the following services: (a) Transformative Mentoring; (b) Family Engagement Specialist; (c) Restorative Justice; (d) Economic Opportunities; and (e) Neighborhood-Based Programming. Through this RFP, DYRS will contract with up to 6 organizations to provide these services to DYRS youth and families in neighborhoods most impacted by youth crime and incarceration. It is anticipated that the program will be implemented in a two phase approach. DYRS will identify 3 to 4 grantees to begin programming in FY 2016 (through September 30, 2016) and the other 3 to 4 grantees will begin programming in FY 2017 (October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017).

II. Background

A. The Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS)

The Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) is responsible for the supervision, custody, and care of young people charged with a delinquent act in the District of Columbia in one of the following circumstances: (1) Detained in a DYRS facility while awaiting adjudication; (2) Committed to DYRS by a DC Family Court judge following adjudication. Youth can possibly be committed to DYRS' up until the age of 21. The agency provides comprehensive support services to committed youth, both in its secure facilities and within the community, and is designed to help young people get on the right track and successfully transition into adulthood. To help prepare youth to succeed, all aspects of DYRS culture—from staff training, to youth programs, to the agency's accountability mechanisms—are infused with the principles of Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Positive Youth Justice (PYJ). PYJ applies positive youth development theories in a juvenile justice setting and uses a strengths-based approach to serving youth.

B. The DYRS Approach: The Answer is in the Community

While DYRS has been a model for a Positive Youth Justice (PYJ) approach to juvenile justice reform for some time, the agency has recently embarked on a mission to deepen community engagement and invest in building community capacity for juvenile justice reform. DYRS recognizes that young people and families live in neighborhoods that are unique ecosystems, each with its own set of institutions, faith and community-based organizations, and social networks. While DYRS is committed to provide youth with the best possible services during their commitment, DYRS is also aware that a young person's time with the agency represents only a brief period of their lives. Young people's families, peers, neighbors, and local neighborhood institutions represent a far greater and sustainable influence that predates and will outlive their time with DYRS. Therefore, DYRS acknowledges that whatever challenges young people are facing, *the answer is in the community*.

C. The DYRS Approach: Justice Reinvestment

Furthermore, DYRS recognizes that criminal and juvenile justice investments in prisons, jails, and secure residential facilities also represent disinvestments in the communities most impacted by crime and incarceration. From "million dollar blocks" named for the expense of incarcerating adults from just one city block, to the steadily increasing costs of detaining juvenile delinquents, governments are spending inordinate sums on the most restrictive and least cost-effective mechanisms for public safety. Dollars spent on detaining young people represent dollars not spent on resources that build

community capacity- investments in local neighborhood initiatives that stimulate youth and family engagement in positive community supports. In recent years, the concept of “justice reinvestment” has emerged as a strategy to redirect resources spent on incarceration back into the communities most impacted. Sadly, most justice reinvestment efforts have fallen short of redistributing resources at the grassroots neighborhood level, instead diverting them to bolster law enforcement or social services. Believing that *the answer is in the community*, DYRS seeks to practice true justice reinvestment by investing directly in growing the human resources in the neighborhoods where the majority of its young people reside. The *Credible Messenger Initiative* will provide a direct investment in building the capacity of these communities to serve and support youth by creating employment for individuals who live, work, and worship in the same neighborhoods as the youth and families they serve.

III. The Credible Messenger Initiative

The *Credible Messenger Initiative* is DYRS’s most comprehensive attempt to invest in the human resources of the neighborhoods most impacted by youth delinquency and incarceration. Credible Messengers are community members who share similar lived experiences with the youth and families served by DYRS. They preach the message that life transformation is possible because they themselves have overcome similar challenges faced by youth and families. They are credible messengers to DYRS youth and families because they themselves have experienced and overcome various challenges, including involvement with the justice system, live in the same neighborhoods, have a unique ability to build Community Foundation relationships, and share similar ethnic and racial backgrounds as those they mentor. Credible Messengers serve in a variety of capacities to coach, guide, mentor, and advocate for youth and families in both group and individual settings.

A. Credible Messengers: A Short History

The concept of the Credible Messenger is nothing new. The idea that individuals with shared lived experiences are uniquely suited to teach, support and guide others through similar challenges predates modern social sciences. The concept of the Credible Messenger can be found across ancient faith traditions and numerous indigenous and tribal cultural practices. The Credible Messenger concept appears as a strategy to address modern American social ills in movements like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Wounded Veterans¹, and Peer Navigators in the Behavioral Health field.²

When it comes to criminal and juvenile justice, the concept of the Credible Messenger first appeared in the writings of former Black Panther Eddie Ellis while incarcerated in Green Haven prison in New York in the 1980s. Ellis and his fellow prisoners foresaw the role that returning citizens would play in reaching young people in the communities disproportionately represented in the justice system. In the 1990s, faith and community-led movements in several major urban centers tapped into the power of the Credible Messenger as a strategy to engage youth at high risk of incarceration. The Ten Point Coalition in Boston, the Alliance of Concerned Men in Washington DC, Friends of Island Academy in New York City, and The Mentoring Center in Oakland, CA, to name a few, all mobilized credible messengers to engage the hardest to reach young people. These movements were a response by African-American and Latino community leaders to save youth from the family breakdown and street violence caused by the crack cocaine epidemic. They were also a counter response to the equally

¹ *Chapter 1: Pencil on street corners. (Wars & Scars: The Story of Compassion & Service for our Nation's Disabled Veterans: A History of the Disabled American Veterans). (2008). DAV Magazine.*

² *Linkins, K., Brya, J., Bess, G., Meyers, J., Goldberg, S., & Dall, A. (2013). Peer Models and Usage in California Behavioral Health and Primary Care Settings*

destructive tough-on-crime policies engendered in response, and the inability of traditional social service providers to engage the young people labeled “super-predators” by some of the nation’s foremost social scientists. What these movements shared was a core belief that men and women from the same communities – especially those who themselves had experienced crime, gangs, marginalization and incarceration – could indeed get through to young people that everyone else had given up on. The Mentoring Center in Oakland, CA led the way in promoting the model of Transformative Mentoring, which differed from traditional assistance-based mentoring in that it was designed to transform the thinking, attitudes, and behaviors of young people already deeply involved in street life.

By the turn of the century, philanthropic organizations, research institutions and government agencies were beginning to take the concept of the Credible Messenger seriously. In 1998, Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), with support from the Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the Ford Foundation, invested in a 10-city research demonstration called the National Faith-Based Initiative (NFBI).³ Based on the work of the Ten Point Coalition in Boston, the initiative mobilized churches in communities with high rates of youth crime and violence to engage and mentor young people at high risk for incarceration. That initiative was followed by Ready 4 Work in 2005, a subsequent P/PV research demonstration that combined job training with mentoring for youth and adults returning to the community after incarceration.⁴ Groups like Exodus Transitional Community in New York and East of the River Clergy, Police, Community Partnership in Washington, DC demonstrated that matching youth with mentors greatly improved employment outcomes and modeled the practice of recruiting successful formerly incarcerated men and women as mentors. At the same time, public health approaches to gun violence began to make use of the Credible Messenger concept by mobilizing former gang members, many of them also returning citizens, to serve as violence interrupters. Ceasefire Initiatives in Boston and Chicago demonstrated measurable results in reducing homicides and shootings by deploying credible messengers to intervene after shootings to prevent retaliatory violence. The initiative has subsequently been replicated successfully in urban neighborhoods plagued by gun violence and is credited with further reductions in homicides and shootings. In 2007, the Office of Neighborhood Safety was created in Richmond, CA to address gun violence. A mentoring component called Operation Peacemaker Fellowship was added to the Ceasefire strategy to provide intensive credible messenger mentoring for gang members who had already been arrested on gun charges. A 2015 evaluation demonstrated dramatic reductions in shootings and homicides for Richmond as a whole, reduced recidivism, and improved life outcomes for the gang members who participated.⁵ By 2010, local government agencies were beginning to make large-scale investments in Credible Messenger mentoring. In 2011, the NYC Department of Probation received a \$10 million investment from Bloomberg Philanthropies to invest in Credible Messenger mentoring for high-risk young people, ages 16 to 24, on probation. The ARCHES Transformative Mentoring Intervention, launched in 2012, provided grants to 19 community-based organizations to hire Credible Messengers to provide group-based mentoring to young people in the neighborhoods with the highest number of youth on

³ Bauldry, S., & Hartmann, T. A. (2004). *The Promise and Challenge of Mentoring High-risk Youth: Findings from the National Faith-Based Initiative*. Public/Private Ventures.

⁴ Baldry, S., & McClanahan, W. (2008). *Ready 4 Work: Final Research Report (Rep.)*. Philadelphia, NY: Public/Private Ventures.

⁵ Wolf, A. M., Del Prado Lippman, A., Glesmann, C., & Castro, E. (2015). *Process evaluation for the Office of Neighborhood Safety*. Oakland, CA: National Council on Crime and Delinquency

probation.⁶ Preliminary evaluation results show that ARCHES participants were 50% less likely to be re-arrested on felony charges than their counterparts who did not participate. Three years later, the ARCHES model was expanded to serve youth at the public housing complexes with the highest rates of gun violence. In 2013, the NYC Department of Probation also invested in Credible Messengers for the family members of juveniles on Probation via the Parent Support Program (PSP), an initiative contracted out to community-based organizations (CBOs) to employ Family Engagement Specialists for parents navigating the juvenile justice system.

The District of Columbia has certainly demonstrated its commitment and its awareness of the value of investing in natural community resources. Over the years, various community-based organizations have positively impacted the lives of young people and their families through the engagement efforts of committed, passionate persons with shared lived experiences. The District has supported similar efforts in the past and realizes the potential for greater success. In addition to those organizations already named, Peaceholics, Parklands Community Center, Ceasefire D.C., and Culbreth and Culbreth Mentoring among others have laid the foundation and set the precedent for cultivating the need for community reinvestment and on-going community connectivity.

The common theme of these Credible Messenger initiatives is a core belief that individuals from the same communities, with the same lived experience as those they serve, are uniquely positioned to engage those young people and family members often considered the hardest to reach. The Credible Messenger model then fits uniquely with DYRS's belief that *the answer is in the community*.

B. The DYRS Credible Messenger Initiative

DYRS seeks to build on the history of the Credible Messenger movement through the implementation of the DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative*. The Credible Messenger Initiative is DYRS' contribution to Safer Stronger DC and is aimed to serve DYRS youth and families of DYRS youth. By providing DYRS youth and families with such a robust service, our vision is that their growth and productivity will impact their success and stability in their communities. The Credible Messenger Initiative will be composed of the following program approaches:

- **Transformative Mentoring:** individuals who are credible messengers to DYRS youth by virtue of shared lived experiences, especially former justice system involvement, will mentor young people. Credible Messenger mentors will facilitate group sessions for youth using a cognitive-behavioral therapy⁷ curriculum appropriate for justice-involved youth. Credible Messenger mentors will also interface with DYRS Case Workers and other agency staff to maximize youth engagement.
- **Family Engagement Specialists:** individuals who are credible messengers to DYRS parents by virtue of shared lived experiences, especially having had a child in the juvenile justice system, will serve as peer coaches for the family members of youth committed to DYRS. Family Engagement Specialists will provide one-on-one support to family members to help them navigate the juvenile justice system, and will also facilitate supportive group programming to

⁶ *The original concept paper for the ARCHES Transformative Mentoring Intervention can be found at http://www.nyc.gov/html/prob/downloads/pdf/arches_nycha_concept_paper.pdf*

⁷ Cognitive behavioral therapy is a form of psychotherapy that identifies negative thinking and negative behaviors triggered in challenging situations and helps individuals explore ways to think about these situations more clearly and respond more effectively. *Cognitive behavioral therapy (2016)*, retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/cognitive-behavioral-therapy/home/ovc-20186868>.

build community among the families of system-involved youth. Family Engagement Specialists will also interface with DYRS Case Workers and other agency staff to maximize family engagement.

- **Restorative Justice:** Credible Messenger mentors and Family Engagement Specialists will be trained to facilitate Restorative Justice Practices for DYRS youth and families at the neighborhood level. DYRS is committed to improving the long-term safety of neighborhoods across the district and thus will invest time, training, and resources in equipping community stakeholders to serve as peacekeepers, conflict mediators, and community builders for DYRS youth and families. DYRS recognizes that neighborhood conflict and youthful misbehavior are inevitable, but believes that by equipping credible messengers to address these issues with DYRS youth and families using circle practice and other Restorative Justice modalities, less of these incidents will require the formal attention of the justice system.
- **Economic Opportunities:** Credible Messenger mentors and Family Engagement Specialists will serve as facilitators of economic opportunity for youth and families in DYRS custody. Recognizing that poverty and lack of economic security is a key driver of crime and delinquency, the *Credible Messenger Initiative* will develop creative ways for youth and families to generate income. The *Credible Messenger Initiative* will include job training and placement, but will also incorporate innovative strategies such as entrepreneurship training, business development, and career mentoring to ensure that youth and families involved with DYRS have a pathway to economic security.
- **Neighborhood-based Programming:** establishing this programming at the neighborhood level is central to the DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative*. Recognizing the unique character of neighborhoods in the District of Columbia, DYRS will collaborate with local community organizations to deliver services in multiple locations where DYRS youth and families reside. Transformative mentoring groups, family support programming, Restorative Justice circles, economic opportunities, and other positive youth justice programs will be offered in neighborhood locations, reducing the need for DYRS youth and families travel to receive services. These satellites, where DYRS staff will co-locate, will serve as centers where DYRS youth and families can connect to networks of positive support. Multiple CBOs will also be invited to provide programming in these neighborhood satellites that is open to all youth and families.

C. Integrated Partnership with DYRS

The *Credible Messenger Initiative* represents an intentional effort on the part of DYRS to integrate community engagement into all facets of its programming for DYRS youth and families. DYRS recognizes that gaps currently exist between different aspects of its operations and envisions Credible Messengers as the relational glue that will maximize youth, family, and community engagement with DYRS personnel, programming, and services. DYRS also acknowledges that the agency already employs personnel who are Credible Messengers to DYRS youth and families and are uniquely positioned to serve as connectors. Some of the areas where DYRS envisions Credible Messengers serving as bridges to connect gaps are as follows:

- **The Facility – Community Gap:** DYRS personnel, especially Youth Development Representatives (YDRs) working in facilities, identify a gap that occurs when DYRS youth transition from facility placement to community supervision. The intensive relationships developed between YDRs and youth while they are in placement at DYRS secure facilities drop

off when they transition to community supervision. Credible Messengers, both those employed as YDRs and those hired by providers, will help bridge the relationship gap by forming ongoing supportive relationships that are maintained during a young person's transition to community supervision.

- **The Case Management – Service Provision Gap:** DYRS personnel have identified gaps in referrals to services once DYRS youth are on community supervision. Case Workers have expressed frustration with challenges to connecting youth to effective services. Credible Messengers will work closely with Case Managers to help facilitate youth engagement with services and will also play a role in bridging the relationship gap between Case Workers and Service Providers.
- **The Agency – Neighborhood Gap:** DYRS also recognizes that its most robust programming, which takes place at New Beginnings Youth Development Center (Laurel, MD), the Youth Services Center (1000 Mt. Olivet Road, NE), and the Achievement Centers (450 H Street, NW, and 2101 Martin Luther King Avenue, SE) are distant from the neighborhoods where most DYRS youth and families reside. As part of its move to intentionally relocate programming in the most impacted communities of the District, Credible Messengers will play a key role in brokering connections at the local neighborhood level.

Closing these gaps will require a different way of thinking about programming. If DYRS truly believes that *the answer is in the community*, the *Credible Messenger Initiative* cannot be merely another contracted service provision in which each provider works in isolation to manage their individual program outcomes. Providers will be expected to form a Learning Community with DYRS staff and other interested parties to continually explore ways to share best practices, identify challenges, develop strategy modifications, and come up with new innovations. DYRS covets the wisdom and insight of Credible Messengers as they are frequently closest to the action, and believes that participants in this initiative will help close the feedback loop needed to ensure that DYRS youth and families are truly benefiting from DYRS programming. For that reason, partnering organizations in the *Credible Messenger Initiative* will be expected to participate in the following activities to help close these gaps:

- **Project Management Meetings:** Leadership members of each grantee organization selected to be Credible Messenger providers will be expected to participate in regular (monthly) Project Management meetings to review program implementation progress, consider data trends, reflect on successes and challenges, and share information in ways that lead to continuous initiative improvement.
- **Learning Community Meetings:** DYRS will also facilitate regular Learning Community meetings that will bring together providers, DYRS staff, and representatives from other areas relevant to youth (education, courts, workforce, safety, health) to share information that will benefit youth and families. These learning community meetings will provide a forum in which Credible Messengers can develop collaborations with other services and programs available in the District of Columbia.
- **Credible Messenger Summits:** DYRS also expects to host periodic Credible Messenger summits bringing together the broader Credible Messenger community for shared learning, information exchange, and knowledge transfer. These large events will further develop the Credible Messenger movement and will provide opportunities for DYRS and providers to exchange knowledge, information and strategies with the broader juvenile justice reform movement. Providers will have the opportunity to showcase successful strategies, learn from Credible

Messenger movements in other cities, and contribute to the ongoing national conversation about Credible Messenger mentoring.

D. Credible Messenger Mentor Selection and Development

Awardees are expected to hire 2 to 4 mentors that will co-facilitate mentoring groups, provide one-on-one support to youth, and participate in trainings and community building opportunities. DYRS will provide support and guidance to awardees throughout the mentor selection and hiring process and shall be an active participant in interviews and mentor selection⁸. Additionally, DYRS is committed to investing in the overall development of all Credible Messengers participating in the initiative. While Credible Messenger initiatives have produced great results for youth and families served, there is widespread agreement that failure to invest in the personal and professional development of Credible Messengers can threaten the sustainability of this movement. As part of its commitment to the growth, healing, and restoration of those impacted by the justice system, DYRS plans to invest heavily in the continuous development of this valuable human resource.

In addition to the support, supervision, and coaching expected from providers, DYRS will ensure the ongoing development of Credible Messengers through a combination of skill-based training, cohort-based support around personal growth and inner healing, and general professional development. Providers will be expected to ensure that Credible Messengers hired by the initiative participate in these DYRS-run sessions as part of their paid employment duties. DYRS in turn will ensure that funding for hiring Credible Messengers is sufficient to cover the hours spent by Credible Messengers in DYRS-sponsored development and training.

Credible Messengers will participate in one or more of the following developmental processes:

- **Skills-Based Training:** DYRS will provide skills-based training for working with youth and families in the justice system. These trainings will include mentoring orientations, group facilitation skills, positive youth development, cognitive-behavioral processes, curriculum development, family engagement, Restorative Justice, and other topics relevant to working with system-involved youth and families.
- **Personal Growth:** All Credible Messengers will be expected to participate in a cohort-based support group that facilitates the process of trauma recovery, ongoing personal transformation, and inner healing. Facilitated by Credible Messengers who are “elders,” the group will facilitate a parallel process in which the healers address their own wounds, even as they seek to heal others.
- **Professional Development:** As part of its investment in this valuable human resource, DYRS will provide Credible Messengers with access to relevant DYRS staff trainings, adult education opportunities, and general professional skills trainings that help increase their soft skills, marketability, and opportunities for career advancement in the field of Credible Messenger mentoring and beyond.

⁸ DYRS shall provide grantees with Standard Operating Procedures that outline hiring criteria and screening procedures.

E. Evaluation

The DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative* will likely be the District's most comprehensive investment in the field thus far. In order to properly document the lessons learned and evaluate its effectiveness, DYRS will engage with a qualified research entity to conduct a formative evaluation that examines both process and outcomes of the *Credible Messenger Initiative*. DYRS rejects the notion that systems should require providers to limit themselves to rigid evidence-based interventions at the expense of cultural specificity, attention to context, and continued innovation and flexibility. Therefore, DYRS intends to treat the *Credible Messenger Initiative* as an evidence-generating initiative that will contribute to an understanding of how home grown, culturally relevant, community-specific interventions can produce quantifiable results for youth and families in the justice system. DYRS will ensure that the research entity selected for the evaluation will work in a collaborative and participatory way with providers, allowing for flexibility, innovation, and nuance in the development of a documented program model. The evaluation will require providers to grant the researchers access to staff, participants, group activities and other events relevant to the initiative.

F. Documentation

As a means to capture and communicate the incredible work happening through the DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative*, DYRS will contract with a qualified videographer and filmmaker to document the project. Recognizing that there are elements of a story that are better told through stories and images than numbers and outcomes, DYRS will seek to tell the story of the initiative through a documentary filmmaking process that allows Credible Messengers, young people, and their families to express what is happening in their own words. Documenting the initiative is already underway with footage of the recent Covenant of Peace weekend retreat developed into a 7-minute short film. DYRS expects that the final documentary film, along with short clips produced on a regular basis, will help generate additional enthusiasm, support, and resources for the *Credible Messenger Initiative* that will benefit all parties involved. DYRS will expect providers to grant the filmmakers access to interview and film staff, participants, group activities and other events relevant to the initiative.

IV. Program Overview

A. Transformative Mentoring

Transformative Mentoring for youth in the juvenile justice system is a transformative process through which Credible Messengers – individuals from similar backgrounds, many of whom were themselves justice-involved – engage DYRS youth in structured and intentional relationships that help them change the attitudes, beliefs and actions that have led to their involvement in delinquency, criminal activity, and justice system involvement. The DYRS Transformative Mentoring approach is based on mentoring programs originally developed by the Mentoring Center in Oakland, California, and implemented on large scale in New York City by the Department of Probation through the ARCHES Transformative Mentoring Intervention. It is grounded in positive youth development and uses evidence-based strategies employing cognitive behavioral principles. Transformative Mentoring is primarily a group-based process that brings together DYRS youth and adult mentors in a community setting using a structured curriculum through which mentors guide youth through the transformation of thoughts and behaviors.

All DYRS youth on community supervision will be eligible for participation in Transformative Mentoring, though the initiative will target DYRS youth who are transitioning home from placement in secure facilities, and those who are beginning their commitment with DYRS. Case Workers will assign youth to Transformative Mentoring groups based on their neighborhood of residence. Youth in placement may begin to participate in facility-based Transformative Mentoring Groups with Credible Messengers prior to their release to prepare them to engage in similar groups when they return to the community.

The core components of the Transformative Mentoring intervention include:

- **Mentoring Groups:** A group process that encourages the development of a positive peer culture in which participants, with the support of Credible Messenger Mentors, become an important support system for one another;
- **Cognitive Behavioral Processes:** A curriculum based on cognitive-behavioral therapy principles that is designed to engage young people in the process of examining their attitudes, actions, and beliefs;
- **Credible Messenger Mentors:** Paid mentors who facilitate the group process, and are also available for intensive support, advice, guidance and crisis response on a one-on-one basis;
- **Positive Youth Development:** Incorporation of positive youth development values, principles and practices, especially the practice of facilitating youth ownership and leadership of the group process;
- **Restorative Justice:** The use of circle practice in a Restorative Justice modality that creates safe spaces, builds community, and establishes opportunities to deal with community conflict in a restorative setting;
- **Family Meals:** A hot, healthy meal served at every group that encourages youth and mentors to eat together in a family-style setting;

In each Transformative Mentoring group, a team of paid mentors will deliver a cognitive behavioral curriculum for youth assigned to the Credible Messenger Initiative twice a week. The anticipated length of stay for each participant is 6-12 months and is based on progress outcomes. While every effort will be made to begin groups with a cohort of young people, participants would be admitted to the program on an on-going/rolling basis.

The DYRS Transformative Mentoring Intervention will use a curriculum grounded in the evidence-based principles of motivational interviewing, the stages of change, and cognitive-behavioral approaches. The curriculum, based on the principles of the DYRS Covenant of Peace program, will include group modules, community service projects, and educational experiences based on the following pillars from the Covenant of Peace:

- My Life Matters
- The Act of Forgiveness
- My Word is My Bond
- My Family is My All
- The Impact of Absence
- The Power of the Tongue
- What does Love look like

DYRS, in conjunction with a competent training and technical assistance provider, will generate a starter-kit of group modules for the Transformative Mentoring intervention along these themes. Each group module will include elements of effective group practice using both Restorative Justice practices that build community and cognitive-behavioral principles that guide youth through the process of reflecting on their own actions, attitudes, and beliefs. However, the DYRS Transformative Mentoring Approach will also

encourage Credible Messengers, many of whom are already master facilitators, to submit group workshops under these themes for inclusion in the curriculum. During each theme, mentors will prepare their own workshop for their group using the principles learned in training, and modeled by expert facilitators. Similarly, as a developmental activity, mentors will help youth prepare peer-led workshops, and plan community service and outreach activities, based on these themes. As part of its commitment to grow culturally relevant, community-generated curriculum for the field of transformative mentoring, DYRS and the training and technical assistance provider will curate an ever-growing master archive of workshops on these themes that meet evidence-based standards. To ensure quality control, a DYRS specialist will review lesson plans submitted for inclusion in the master archive and provide feedback and support for curricula that require further development. Providers will agree to share and exchange workshops that meet the standards of inclusion in the database. A sample curriculum schedule is as follows:

Sample Transformative Mentoring Curriculum

My Life Matters
Session I: Why My Life Matters (DYRS-developed, mentor-facilitated)
Session II: Identifying My Strengths (DYRS-developed, mentor-facilitated)
Session III: My Future Matters (DYRS-developed, mentor-facilitated)
Session IV: My Past Matters (DYRS-developed, mentor-facilitated)
Session V: Black Lives Matters Today (Mentor-developed, mentor-facilitated)
Session VI: Celebrating Black Lives (Museum of African-American History & Culture)
Session VII: Youth Lives Matters (prepared & facilitated by youth)
Session VIII: Celebrating Our Lives (youth organized community celebration)

In addition to twice weekly group sessions, mentors will be required to meet one-on-one with youth participants, assisting them with enrollment in other services, attending Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings⁹, and responding to crisis situations. Mentors would also be available by phone for support, advice and guidance.

Transformative Mentoring is designed with the assumption that participant attendance will likely be irregular at first, and that some participants may continue to display negative attitudes and behaviors during the initial phases of engagement. There should be no expulsion or rejection of participants who engage in negative behavior. Instead, a Restorative Justice approach that balances community

⁹ In Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings, the youth, his/her parents and family members, other support persons in the youth’s life, service providers, community representatives, and the caseworker come together every 90 days to create a plan for every youth committed to DYRS. The meeting is a sharing of all information which relates to the youth, including but not limited to; education, safety, functioning of the family, strengths, challenges, placement, goals, and mental health treatment. The goal is to reach consensus on decisions regarding the youth. TDM allows everyone involved to have a voice and understand the basis for decisions.

accountability and support should be employed to continually engage young people who are struggling to adhere to community norms. Recognizing that sustained engagement takes time, DYRS will not penalize providers for youth whose attendance is irregular. However, DYRS expects providers to collaborate with DYRS to aggressively outreach and re-engage participants with attendance lapses.

The mentoring process would be resourced to provide support to the participating youth. It is expected that a hot, healthy meal would be served at each group session in a family-style atmosphere. In addition, participating young adults would receive travel support, stipends and other rewards at predetermined intervals during their participation in the group process.

B. Family Engagement Specialists

Family Engagement Specialists is programmatic approach that mobilizes parents/caregivers of system-involved youth to serve as “peer coaches” for family members of youth currently going through the juvenile justice system. Family Engagement Specialists are Credible Messengers to the family members of DYRS youth as they have experienced the challenges of navigating the juvenile justice system on behalf of their own children, and have dealt with similar challenges raising adolescents. Peer Coaching has been embraced in the behavioral health field as a strategy to encourage engagement and compliance with treatment, especially among those struggling with mental health issues. As with Credible Messenger Mentoring, juvenile justice systems have been slower to embrace the Peer Coach model, largely due to the long history of stigmatizing the parents of system-involved youth as unable to control their children, dysfunctional, or uncaring. A 2012 Report *Families Unlocking Futures: Solutions to the Crisis in Juvenile Justice* by Justice 4 Families challenged the notion that families were uninterested in being involved in their child’s juvenile justice experience, and highlighted barriers to family engagement that had more to do with system practices.¹⁰ Across the nation, family-led movements have gained ground in establishing peer support for parents in juvenile justice systems. In 2013, the NYC Department of Probation invested resources in contracting CBOs across the city to provide Family Engagement Specialists for youth on Probation, based on a model developed by Community Connections for Youth (CCFY) in the Bronx, NY. At DYRS, a monthly Family Support Group has already developed a strong supportive network among family members of system-involved youth, and is ripe to grow into a full-fledged Family Engagement Specialists program.

In the DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative*, family members of DYRS-committed youth would have access to a Family Engagement Specialist whose primary role would be to support parents/caregivers. Providers would hire one or more Family Engagement Specialists who would work in tandem with the team of Credible Messenger Mentors. As mentors engage young people, Family Engagement Specialists would similarly engage parents/caregivers as a means of supporting the entire family. Family Engagement Specialists would be voluntarily for the family members of DYRS youth. However, research shows that youth whose parents are actively engaged in supportive programming for their children have better outcomes in the juvenile justice system. Family Engagement Specialists, by virtue of their shared experiences with impacted family members, would seek to motivate parents/caregivers to engage at a deeper level with DYRS and accompanying services. Family Engagement Specialists would carry the following responsibilities:

- **One-on-One Support:** Family Engagement Specialists would serve as a listening ear and a sounding board for family members who are frustrated, tired, and overwhelmed by the process of dealing with a child’s involvement in the juvenile justice system;
- **Support Groups:** Family Engagement Specialists would facilitate support groups for family

¹⁰ Justice 4 Families, “*Families Unlocking Futures: Solutions to the Crisis in Juvenile Justice*” (2012)

members of DYRS youth in community settings that allow parents/caregivers to develop networks of relational support.

- **DYRS Engagement:** Family Engagement Specialists would collaborate with Case Workers to help family members engage more meaningfully with DYRS, accompanying parents/caregivers to Team Decision Making Meetings, and helping family members give greater input into their child’s Success Plan
- **System Navigation:** Family Engagement Specialists would support family members in navigating various elements of the systems in which their children are involved. This would not be limited to engagement with DYRS, but would include the court system, the school system, the mental health system, the social service system, and other systems that the families of system-involved youth frequently must navigate.
- **Neighborhood Connections:** Family Engagement Specialists would also help family members engage more meaningfully with informal supports in their home communities, including faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations, employment networks, and other networks of community support from which parents/caregivers often isolate when a child is involved in the juvenile justice system.
- **Family Strengthening Programming:** Family Engagement Specialists may also facilitate family strengthening programming that brings youth and parents/caregivers together to work on their relationship. There are evidence-based initiatives like the *Strengthening Families Program (SFP)* that can be peer-facilitated in a group setting and more easily adapted to the local cultural context than some of the more rigid evidence-based family treatment modalities.
- **Restorative Justice:** Family Engagement Specialists would also be trained in Restorative Justice and would help family members engage with peacekeeping circles, victim-offender mediation, and conflict resolution.
- **Crisis Support:** Family Engagement Specialists will also be available on weekends and evenings to support parents/caregivers via telephone or in person when they are faced with crisis situations involving their children.

Providers would be expected to hire a combination of full-time and part-time Family Engagement Specialists who would work in tandem with Credible Messenger Mentors to engage the entire family. DYRS encourages providers to jointly engage youth and parents/caregivers whenever possible, but understands that there will be youth whose parents do not engage and parents whose youth do not engage with the *Credible Messenger Initiative*.

As with Mentors, DYRS intends to invest equally in the development of these Credible Messengers to families by providing ongoing skills-based training, support with personal growth and healing, and professional development opportunities. DYRS envisions a progressive process where Family Engagement Specialists are able to use the skills they develop in this initiative to secure additional economic opportunities in the growing field of Peer Support, thus paving the way for other parents/caregivers to step into Family Engagement Specialist Roles.

C. Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior. Restorative Justice is not so much a programmatic approach, but a philosophical framework, which has

been proposed as an alternative to the current way of thinking about crime and criminal justice. Restorative Justice emphasizes the ways in which crime harms relationships in the context of community and gives priority to repairing the harm done to victims and communities, and offender accountability is defined in terms of assuming responsibility and taking action to repair harm. The Ottawa, Ontario Church Council on Justice and Corrections calls Restorative Justice “a new paradigm for doing justice that starts at the grassroots with ordinary members of the community as well as victims and offenders, inclusive of all whose lives are affected by wrongdoing.”¹¹

DYRS is committed to improving the long-term safety of neighborhoods across the district and thus will invest time, training, and resources in equipping community stakeholders to serve as peacekeepers, conflict mediators, and community builders. DYRS recognizes that neighborhood conflict and youthful misbehavior are inevitable, but believes that by equipping credible messengers to address these issues using circle practice and other Restorative Justice modalities, less of these incidents will require the formal attention of the justice system. Credible Messenger mentors and Family Engagement Specialists will be trained to facilitate Restorative Justice practices at the neighborhood level.

DYRS draws on wisdom from the Restorative Justice Community Hubs paradigm in Chicago, IL, which define Restorative Justice Hubs as “a community led Restorative Justice approach to youth crime and conflict.” Restorative Justice Hubs are safe spaces in the community where youth are welcomed and supported in building healthy relationships, expressing themselves, addressing trauma, and developing necessary skills and competencies.”¹² The activities of the Restorative Justice Hubs are grounded in five research-based pillars (or principles) which are essential in reducing youth violence and holistically supporting young people:

1. A welcoming and hospitable place (Johnston, Nicholson, Collins, & Holmer, 2005)¹³
2. The accompaniment of youth in their journey (Grossman & Bulle, 2006)¹⁴
3. Relationship building with youth and families (Connell, Dishion, Yasui, & Kavanagh, 2007)¹⁵
4. Relentless engagement of organizations and resources for the youth and families (Anderson-Butcher & Ashton, 2004)¹⁶
5. Supporting collaboration and learning with other RJ Hubs (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004)¹⁷

¹¹ <http://www.nij.gov/topics/courts/restorative-justice/pages/definitions1.aspx>

¹² <http://rjhubs.org/about/>

¹³ Heather Johnston Nicholson, Collins, C., & Heidi Holmer. (2004). *Youth as People: The Protective Aspects of Youth Development in After-School Settings*. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591, 55–71.

¹⁴ Grossman, J. B., & Bulle, M. J. (2006). *Review of what youth programs do to increase the connectedness of youth to adults*. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 39, 788-799.

¹⁵ Connell A, Dishion T, Yasui M, Kavanagh K. *An adaptive approach to family intervention: Linking engagement in family-centered intervention to reductions in adolescent problem behavior*. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. 2007;75:568–579.

¹⁶ Anderson-Butcher, D., Ashton, D. (2004). *Innovative models of collaboration to serve children, youths, families, and communities*. *Children and Schools*, 26(1), 39-53.

¹⁷ Sabol WJ, Coulton CJ, Korbin JE. *Building community capacity for violence prevention*. *J Interpers Violence*. 2004; 19(3):322–340

The Restorative Justice component of the DYRS Credible Messenger Initiative should be thought of as a philosophy and practice infused throughout the different aspects of the *Credible Messenger Initiative*. Credible Messengers will be trained in the following elements of Restorative Justice and coached to integrate these practices into all aspects of programming:

- **Peacekeeping Circles:** Credible Messengers will be trained in circle practice both as a method for facilitating groups with young people, and for community building at large. Credible Messengers will serve as ambassadors of DYRS’s Restorative Justice approach to introduce more neighborhood stakeholders to alternatives to more punitive forms of crime control.
- **Restorative Community Conferencing:** when DYRS youth are involved in behaviors that cause harm in the community, Credible Messengers will be equipped to facilitate restorative community conferences with offenders and victims. Credible Messengers will utilize these strategies in ways that avoid overreliance on the justice system to handle neighborhood conflict.
- **Covenant of Peace:** Credible Messengers will build on the Covenant of Peace, through which committed youth have signed a pledge to abstain from and speak against senseless acts of violence. Recognizing that neighborhood rivalries run deep and there are long histories of antagonism among groups of young people, Credible Messengers will continually explore safe opportunities to heal and resolve the conflict between young people in the District.
- **Violence Interruption:** recognizing that stubborn pockets of violence remain in some DC neighborhoods, and the DYRS youth are often in the center of these conflicts, Credible Messengers will maintain a network of information sharing and communication to coordinate responses to retaliatory violence.

With the help of a competent training and technical assistance provider, DYRS will arrange to ensure that Credible Messengers receive thorough introductory training on Restorative Justice practices and that they are equipped with continued refresher/booster sessions to strengthen their practice.

D. Economic Opportunities

DYRS is committed to Mayor Muriel Bowser’s pledge to create “Pathways to the Middle Class” for Washingtonians. DYRS recognizes that many of the participants in the *Credible Messenger Initiative* may face additional barriers in achieving economic security as a direct result of their involvement in the justice system. A 2006 Report by the Justice Policy Institute summarized several ways that incarcerating young people reduces their prospects of success in the labor market:¹⁸

- A National Bureau of Economic Research study found that jailing youth (ages 16-25) reduced work time over the next decade by 25-30 percent.¹⁹
- A Princeton University study showed that young people incarcerated in a youth facility experienced three weeks less work a year, compared with youth who had no history of incarceration. The disparity was more severe (5 weeks less work) among African-American youth who had been

¹⁸ Barry Holman and Jason Zeidenberg, *“The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities,”* (Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute, 2006).

¹⁹ Freeman, R.B. (1991), *Crime and the Employment Disadvantage of Youth*, Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research

incarcerated.²⁰

- At the neighborhood level, another National Bureau of Economic Research study found that “areas with the most rapidly rising rates of incarceration are areas in which youths, particularly African-American youths, have had the worst earnings and employment experience.”²¹

Similarly, the family members of youth in the juvenile justice system often face collateral economic and employment consequences. A national survey of families impacted by the juvenile justice system²² found that:

- Half of the family members of system-involved youth lived on incomes of \$25,000 or less.
- Nearly two-thirds of parents surveyed reported that they had to take time off from work without pay to attend court dates for a child in the juvenile justice system.
- One in three families reported having to choose between paying for basic necessities and court-related payments.

A 2010 report by the Pew Charitable Community Foundations found that incarceration reduces earning, limits upwards mobility, and also impacts the economic prospects of family members and children of the incarcerated.²³ While the challenge of economic mobility for youth, families and mentors impacted by the justice system is an issue far beyond the scope of DYRS alone, DYRS intends to build economic opportunities into its *Credible Messenger Initiative* in the following ways:

- **Career Networking:** DYRS values development of skills that lead to long-term career success and encourages providers to develop strategies that maximize the social capital of young people by connecting them relationally to individuals who are successful in careers in which they have an interest. DYRS supports a model in which Credible Messenger Mentors and Family Engagement Specialists develop structured and intentional ways to build relational connections with successful individuals who can serve as career mentors for youth.
- **Entrepreneurship Support:** DYRS recognizes that many young people gravitate away from traditional labor force jobs, but are excited and energized by the prospect of developing their own businesses. Furthermore, DYRS recognizes that successful entrepreneurs in highly impacted communities, especially those who themselves been justice involved, are often the most willing to provide economic opportunities for those that traditional employers reject. Therefore, DYRS supports exposure to entrepreneurial projects and connection of youth and families to entrepreneurial opportunities.
- **Built-In Peer Mentoring Opportunities:** By hiring Credible Messengers, providers will already be investing in the economic opportunity of individuals from the communities impacted by the justice system. However, DYRS also encourages providers to build in opportunities for DYRS youth served by the initiative to move into entry-level positions as part-time peer mentors as the initiative progresses. Similarly, DYRS encourages providers to build in part-time Family Engagement Specialist positions for family members successfully served by the initiative. While the Credible

²⁰ Western, Bruce and Beckett, Katherine (1999), “How Unregulated Is the U.S. Labor Market?: The Penal System as a Labor Market Institution,” *The American Journal of Sociology*, 104: 1030-1060

²¹ Freeman, R.B. and Rodgers, W.M. (1999), *Area Economic Conditions and the Labor Market Outcomes of Young Men in the 1990s Expansion*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

²² *Justice 4 Families, “Families Unlocking Futures: Solutions to the Crisis in Juvenile Justice” (2012)*

²³ *The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010. Collateral Costs: Incarceration’s Effect on Economic Mobility. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts.*

Messenger cannot employ every young person and family member served, DYRS expects to see providers cultivate a path to employment in the field of Credible Messenger mentoring and Family Engagement Specialist for those individuals who sense a calling to do this work.

In selecting providers for the *Credible Messenger Initiative*, DYRS will be evaluating the ability of applicants to support and encourage non-traditional approaches to developing economic opportunity among youth and families, especially those that facilitate collaboration, network building, and resource sharing across organizations and neighborhoods.

E. Neighborhood-Based Programming

Reaffirming that *the answer is in the community*, DYRS seeks to intentionally focus its efforts in the neighborhoods where young people, families, and Credible Messengers spend most of their time. DYRS recognizes that currently its most robust programming takes place at locations (New Beginnings, Youth Service Center, Achievement Centers) that are distant from the neighborhoods where most youth and families reside. Thus, DYRS is seeking to create satellite locations in collaboration with local organizations that deliver services in the neighborhoods where our youth and families reside.

Transformative mentoring groups, family support programming, Restorative Justice circles, economic opportunities, and other positive youth justice programs will be offered in neighborhood locations, reducing the need for youth and families travel to receive services. These satellites, where DYRS staff will co-locate, will serve as centers where youth and families can connect to networks of positive support. Multiple community-based organizations will also be invited to provide programming in these neighborhood satellite locations in support of the effort to reach youth and families where they reside.

DYRS is undergoing a data-driven analysis to map where committed youth and families reside, and also, to pinpoint where the “hot spots” of youth crime and delinquency most regularly occur. DYRS will develop a strategy to locate services in these areas by placing key staff at these locations and establishing the presence of Credible Messengers in these places. DYRS envisions that these satellite locations will provide the following opportunities for youth and families:

- **Access to DYRS Staff:** DYRS will strategically locate key staff in satellite locations who will conduct individual appointments, TDM meetings, case conferencing, and other key functions directly in the neighborhood. Locating DYRS staff in the communities where youth and families reside will also increase connectivity and engagement.
- **Transformative Mentoring Groups:** DYRS expects that providers will offer some of the Transformative Mentoring Groups in these satellite locations when appropriate. Providers in the same neighborhood may also run groups out of their own locations, but will be expected to have their Credible Messengers maintain a presence at DYRS satellite offices.
- **Family Strengthening Programming:** DYRS expects that Family Engagement Specialists will facilitate in and encourage parents to participate in Family Support Group Programming at satellite locations when appropriate. Family Engagement Specialists will maintain a presence at satellite locations in order to connect with family members.
- **Restorative Justice & Peacekeeping Circles:** The neighborhood satellite offices will also provide a benefit for the broader community not limited to those committed to DYRS. DYRS will encourage Credible Messengers trained in Restorative Justice to make conflict resolution opportunities available to young people and families in the neighborhood, especially in cases where successful victim-offender mediation or conflict resolution could preempt a case formally making its way to DYRS.

- **Economic Opportunities:** DYRS expects that its satellite offices will be hubs of economic opportunity, with career networking, entrepreneurship support, and other economic opportunities taking place at these satellites.
- **Positive Youth Development Activities:** DYRS expects that various service providers will utilize these satellites as places to engage youth, making the satellites a one-stop shop of sorts where youth and families can access programs and services.
- **Emerging CBO Capacity Building:** DYRS also recognizes that there are many emerging grassroots CBOs that would benefit greatly from paid opportunities to work with youth, as well as from organizational capacity building support. DYRS is exploring ways to involve emerging CBOs at the satellites in ways that will further grow community capacity.

V. Program Design

A. Target Population

The DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative* will serve young people committed to DYRS and their family members/caregivers. Youth can be committed to DYRS by a Family Court judge following adjudication up until the age of 21. In FY 2014, youth committed to DYRS fit the following demographic profile:

- **Race/Ethnicity:** African-American (99%); Latino (1%); Other (0%)
- **Gender:** Male (85%); Female (15%)
- **Age:** 14 and under (13%); 15 (21%); 16 (24%); 17 (24%); 18 and older (18%)
- **Offense:** felonies (40%); misdemeanors (60%)
- **Offense Type:** violent offenses (67%); property offenses (22%); drug offenses (3%); other offenses (8%)

The majority of youth served by DYRS lives in the community and receives varying levels of community supervision. Providers are expected to serve any youth committed to DYRS who is on community supervision and who resides in the geographic area of the provider. Each provider will be responsible for assigned families who reside in the selected neighborhood. Each provider is expected to serve two distinct, but related, populations:

- **Youth:** Young people committed to DYRS custody, including youth on community supervision and youth transitioning from an alternative placement back to their home.
- **Family Members:** parents/caregivers of youth committed to DYRS custody, including the caregivers of youth on community supervision, and family members of youth in placement.

Ideally, providers will serve youth and parents/caregivers together, but DYRS recognizes that not all youth and families will be ready to engage together.

Providers are expected to serve both male and female youth together, but may also propose to provide gender-specific programming for distinct populations to meet the needs of youth.

B. Target Neighborhoods

The DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative* will serve neighborhoods where the greatest numbers of committed youth reside. DYRS expects to make up to 6 awards to providers serving the most impacted neighborhoods. Each provider will be responsible for serving youth and families in a given ward and serve the surrounding neighborhoods or geographic area. While providers may apply for more than one award

(each award is for a unique ward or geographic area), DYRS expects that providers will have deep community ties, an extensive history of serving the specific ward and surrounding neighborhoods, and physical presence for which they apply.

DYRS will select up to 6 providers for the *Credible Messenger Initiative*. Initially, three (3) awards will be made to providers that are qualified to serve the neighborhoods DYRS identifies as the priority areas for the first phase of the initiative, which begins in FY 2016 (through September 30, 2016). Priority areas are those wards in which the highest populations of DYRS adjudicated youth reside. Preference will be given to those providers serving those six neighborhoods identified as Safer Stronger DC neighborhoods by Mayor Bowser. Then, DYRS will make up to (3) three awards to providers to serve additional neighborhoods starting in FY 2017 (October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017).

C. Program Hours/Schedule

DYRS expects providers to deliver the services of the *Credible Messenger Initiative* according to a schedule that is maximally beneficial to youth and families in communities. The *Credible Messenger Initiative* is expected to serve as a complement to more structured programming (education, job training, employment services, mental health services) that typically take place between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Participants in the *Credible Messenger Initiative* are often working, in school, or enrolled in programming that meets during normal business hours. Therefore, providers must be able to deliver the services of *Credible Messenger Initiative* outside of normal business hours. The minimum level of service will consist of:

- **Transformative Mentoring Groups:** providers must be able to deliver groups a minimum of two evenings per week, with each group session lasting approximately 1.5 to 2 hours, including dinner.
- **Family Support Groups:** providers must be able to deliver Family Support Groups and other Family Support activities at least twice per month on evening and weekend hours.
- **Peacekeeping Circles:** as a Restorative Justice strategy, providers are expected to be able to facilitate peacekeeping circles on a monthly basis at minimum. Peacekeeping Circles can be used to deal with conflict and harm but can also be used as community building with the broader neighborhood.
- **Individual Youth & Family Support:** providers are expected to be able to provide one-on-one accompaniment, support, advocacy, and coaching for youth and parents as they navigate systems, programs, and services. Mentors and Parent Coaches will also need to be on call on evenings and weekends to handle crisis situations and to help mediate and resolve conflict.
- **Credible Messenger Learning Community:** providers are expected to participate in regular Project Coordinator meetings (these meetings will initially be weekly, then biweekly, then monthly) as well as regular learning community meetings to build the initiative.
- **Training & Staff Development:** providers are expected to ensure that all personnel hired for the initiative have adequate hours and availability to participate in training, professional development, and skill-building/personal growth activities.
- **Outreach & Community Engagement:** providers are expected to dedicate adequate time to conduct outreach to youth and families who are reluctant to engage or who have sporadic attendance. DYRS recognizes the value of ongoing outreach and follow-up and providers are expected to do outreach in the form of home visits, street outreach, and phone calls, as a regular part of their activity.

D. Staffing

The *Credible Messenger Initiative* aims to invest in the human resources of directly impacted communities. Providers will be expected to staff the *Credible Messenger Initiative* at the following levels:

- **Project Coordinator:** a full-time position dedicated to the *Credible Messenger Initiative*. Project Coordinators will be responsible for the management and administration of the program, the supervision of mentors and parent coaches, communication with DYRS, tracking and management of data, and coordination with the training and technical assistance provider, the evaluator, and the documentary filmmaker. Project Coordinators should have relevant experience in the field, strong management abilities, and the maturity, wisdom, and integrity to manage *Credible Messengers*.
- **Lead Transformative Mentor:** a full-time *Credible Messenger Mentor* responsible for facilitating groups, providing individual support and advocacy for youth, and leading a team of part-time mentors. Lead mentors should be deeply rooted in the communities they serve, demonstrate credibility, integrity, and leadership for youth and/or Peer Engagement Specialists, and be able to coach, guide, and support Peer Engagement Specialists as they work with youth.
- **Senior Family Engagement Specialist:** a full-time *Family Engagement Specialist* who will provide individual support to the family members of DYRS youth, facilitate support groups, and lead a team of part-time Family Engagement Specialists. Senior Parent Coaches should also be deeply rooted in the communities they serve, be able to relate to the lived experiences of family members in DYRS, and have the wisdom, maturity and integrity to lead teams of parent coaches.
- **Transformative Mentors (P/T):** providers are also expected to hire 2 part-time mentors to co-facilitate mentoring groups, provide one on one support to youth, and participate in trainings and community building opportunities. Mentors should be Credible Messengers, deeply rooted in the communities they serve and able to relate to the lived experiences of DYRS youth.
- **Family Engagement Specialist (P/T):** providers are expected to hire 2 part-time Family Engagement Specialists to support the family members of youth in DYRS. Family Engagement Specialists should also be deeply rooted in the communities they serve, be able to relate to the lived experiences of family members in DYRS, and have the wisdom, maturity and integrity to support family members. Wherever possible, DYRS encourages providers to hire parents of current or formerly DYRS-involved youth for Family Engagement Specialist positions.
- **Peer Engagement Specialist (P/T):** DYRS also encourages providers to hire current or formerly DYRS-involved youth who have demonstrated maturity, personal development, and exceptional leadership ability as part-time Peer Engagement Specialist. These Peer Mentors may be program participants who after a period of time in the program are ready to graduate into paid peer mentor roles. Providers must be able to provide the support, coaching, and mentoring for Peer Engagement Specialist as they step into those leadership roles. Note: This position will be required for providers accepted and continuing during the FY2017 fiscal year. Providers are not required to include this position in the FY16 proposal.

E. Qualifications & Eligibility

Within the structure of the DYRS *Credible Messenger Initiative*, providers will have critical roles and responsibilities in order to meet the diverse and wide array of youth and family needs. In order to guarantee that providers are able to fill these requirements and meet these needs, the following eligibility

criteria will apply to all applicants for this RFP. Documentation and information, per the Checklist and Application Narrative, will provide confirmation of these standards. Please make sure that your organization(s) meet these criteria as stated below:

1. General Eligibility Statement:

Any public or private community-based organization or institution located in the District of Columbia is eligible to apply. Non-profit and for-profit institutions are eligible, but for-profit organizations may NOT include profit in the grant application.

2. Organizational Structure and Status

- ✓ No fiscal agents or individuals will be accepted. Applicants are defined as organizations and must meet the criteria below.
- ✓ Non-profit organizations, especially grassroots faith and neighborhood-based organizations are eligible to apply. Organizations that are not grassroots community-based organizations must demonstrate neighborhood rootedness, commitment, and investment to the target neighborhoods.
- ✓ An organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply, serve as a host site, or act in any type of supervisory role in the program. Organizations that have both a 501(c)(3) and a 501(c)(4) tax status may only apply under their 501(c)(3) arm.
- ✓ Organizations must be incorporated/registered to operate in the District of Columbia.
- ✓ Organizations must have a physical location where they provide services in the neighborhood for which they are applying. This location must be within the District of Columbia.

3. Programmatic Focus and Experience

- ✓ Organizations must have experience serving at-risk and/or court-involved youth.
- ✓ Organization's primary vision and program focus must be on serving children, youth and/or families.
- ✓ Organizations must have experience working with directly impacted individuals, i.e. "Credible Messengers" in leadership roles
- ✓ Organizations must be deeply connected, rooted, and invested in the neighborhoods they serve.

4. Operations and Finance

- ✓ Organization must be in good financial standing with the DC Office of Tax and Revenue and the Internal Revenue Service, as well as follow all appropriate charitable financial reporting standards.

5. Applications

- ✓ For collaborative applications, one organization must act as the Primary Grantee. That organization must meet all criteria listed above and must accept fiduciary, reporting and programming oversight responsibility for the application and grant.
- ✓ Organizations may submit an application for more than one target neighborhood. In this case, two complete and separate application packages must be submitted.

VI. Performance Measures

A. Outcomes

The *Credible Messenger Initiative* is designed to connect young people and families to mentors and parent coaches from their own neighborhoods who will help them engage with their communities in positive, pro-social ways that lead to improvements in life outcomes and reductions in antisocial behavior and criminal activity. The *Credible Messenger Initiative*, in line with Mayor Bowser's plan for a *Safer, Stronger, DC* focuses on bringing resources and opportunities to neighborhoods afflicted by violence. In addition to individual youth and family outcomes, *Credible Messengers* trained in Restorative Justice and economic opportunity development, will help bring a greater measure of peace and security to neighborhoods with public safety challenges.

DYRS will coordinate with the selected providers to develop the mechanisms and tools that will be used to measure the following outcomes and overall impact of the *Credible Messenger Initiative*. The outcomes are as follows:

- Youth Outcomes
 - Education-related goals
 - Work-related milestones
 - Youth Engagement with services
 - Individual Success Plan goal achievement
 - Rearrests

- Credible Messenger Mentor Outcomes
 - Training Hours
 - Retention
 - Promotion
 - Engagement with mentees

B. Evaluation

As part of DYRS's commitment to generating evidence, the *Credible Messenger Initiative* will be evaluated by an independent research entity that will work closely with DYRS and providers to conduct a full evaluation. The external evaluator will periodically visit providers to observe program activities and obtain detailed data on activities within the *Credible Messenger Initiative*. Other evaluation activities may include surveys, focus groups and administrative record reviews. This is in addition to regular contact to document

the program's status, contract compliance and to follow up with participants after program completion. DYRS or its external evaluators may also conduct staff and enrollee interviews as well as obtain and analyze baseline and program-level data for evaluation purposes.

Believing that the *"the answer is in the community,"* DYRS expects that providers will work closely with DYRS and the external evaluator to help inform the development of a theory of change, a logic model, and criteria for longer-term outcomes and evaluation. DYRS recognizes that there are important metrics to measure that cannot always be reduced to quantitative measurements (e.g. the creation of hope, the experience of love) and is committed to work collaboratively with providers to find ways to measure meaningful impacts of the *Credible Messenger Initiative*.

C. Reporting

Participating organizations will be required to work closely with DYRS and the external evaluator to measure and report regularly on program outcomes. DYRS will require providers to enter general or activity notes into FAMCare to reflect each activity that is completed on behalf of the youth or in each individual session. Notes are to be entered 24 hours after face-to-face or collateral contact. DYRS requires providers to keep a Weekly Census AND enter specific information related to participant enrollment and attendance into FAMCare, including but not limited to, general notes, activity notes, outcome notes, and unusual incident reports(including, e.g., topics covered, exercises completed, where the activity occurred, and issues that arose, a template for which will be provided by DYRS). Information about mentor recruitment and retention will be recorded outside of FAMCare.

Providers will be required to maintain and submit participant-level data (reflecting youth and family attendance, outreach activities, services provided, and outcomes achieved) on a weekly basis. In addition, if selected, all providers during year one will be responsible for programming implementation reporting. For those providers not selected to continue into FY18, there will continue to be a reporting requirement on youth outcomes and participant level data.

As part of DYRS's commitment to forming a *Learning Community* that exchanges information and transfers knowledge on best practices, overcoming barriers, and developing programmatic innovations, all providers will be expected to maintain regular communication with DYRS and one another through regular meetings and gatherings of the *Credible Messenger Initiative* community. At the start of the initiative, providers may be expected to gather as frequently as weekly to ensure successful start-up and coordination of newly developed processes. These gatherings will become less frequent as the initiative matures, but providers should expect to meet with DYRS and one another on a monthly basis at minimum, along with other *Learning Community* to further the *Credible Messenger Initiative* through a collaborative approach that involves peer support among providers, and feedback between DYRS and providers on the progress of the initiative. In the event of internal or external government investigations, providers are expected to maintain transparency and cooperation with all government entities.

VII. Funding

A. Funding

Funds for this initiative are made available through District appropriations to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services. This RFP covers an initial allocation for program services in FY 2016 and FY 2017.

Budget and Budget Narrative: Applicants should provide evidence of an established accounting system with policies and procedures that reasonably assure internal controls are maintained in managing funds.

A budget template and budget narrative is required for all applicants applying for (1)FY16 and (2)FY17 and. The budget template has three separate tabs that each applicant should complete. Only costs that are allowable, allocable and reasonable to fulfill these purposes may be included in the proposed budget. In addition, certain costs shall not be allowed, including equipment costing \$500 or more and travel outside the DC metropolitan Beltway, unless otherwise approved by DYRS.

Critically, all applicants must conform to the following requirements when submitting budget and budget narrative information.

Use of funds

The acceptance of a grant from DYRS creates a legal duty on the part of the grantee to use the funds in accordance with the conditions of the grant and to account for them in accordance with applicable Federal, DC, and DYRS requirements. All DYRS grantees are required to maintain financial management systems that comply with the financial management standards in OMB Circular A-110.20-.28. Those standards require that a grantee's financial system provide for:

1. Accurate, current and complete disclosure of the financial results of the grant award;
2. Records that identify the source and application of grant funds.
3. Effective control over and accountability for all funds, property, and other assets;
4. written procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds to the recipient from DYRS/Community Foundation and the use of those funds by the grantee for program purposes, when funds are provided in advance;
5. Written procedures for determining the reasonableness, allocability and allowability of costs in accordance with Federal cost principles and the terms and conditions of the grant award; and
6. Accounting records that are supported by source documentation. No payments under a grant may be made until the Grant Agreement is signed on behalf of DYRS /Community Foundation and the grantee. In addition, appropriate reviews and approvals must be adhered to according to the Standard Operating Procedures. Grantees are expected to have in place written materials including policies, procedures and position descriptions, and implement practices that clearly identify levels of authority and provide for quality assurance in carrying out the functions and actions for which advance funds will be utilized. Additionally, the agency retains a reversionary interest in the unused balance of advance payments, in any funds improperly used, and in any unearned payments for which funds were granted, but the cost was not incurred or grantee efforts were not contributed.

B. Contracts & Terms

DYRS expects to make up to 6 awards under this solicitation. For providers selected to begin in FY16, the grant agreement will reflect an initial award period from award date to September 30, 2016. Each

provider will be eligible for up to \$45,133 in funding during this time period. DYRS may extend the period of the grant award through the next fiscal year (October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017) or successive fractions thereof, by providing written notice to a grantee before the expiration of the initial grant award period; provided that DYRS delivers preliminary written notice of its intent to extend the grant award period to the grantee at least (30) days before the grant award period expires. This preliminary notice of intent to extend the grant award period does not commit DYRS to any extension. In addition, any extension is subject to the availability of funds at the time of the exercise of the option. The grantee may waive the 30 day notice provision by providing written notice to the grant administrator prior to the expiration of the grant award period.

If the extension option is exercised, new grant agreements must be written and must specify the new grant award amount. For all providers selected to deliver services starting October 1, 2016, which includes those providers selected to begin work in phase two of the initiative and those providers who are extended for the duration of the FY 17 fiscal year, each provider will be eligible for up to \$317,492 in funding over the course of the 2017 fiscal year.

C. Cost Principles, Budget Narrative, and Payment Structure

1. Cost Principles

I. Allowable Costs

DYRS/Community Foundation will establish how certain types of costs are evaluated to determine whether and to what extent they are reimbursable. The following cost principles apply to the grantee and any sub-award made by the grantee, such as costs reimbursable to a contractor. Several general principles determine whether particular costs claimed under the grant will be reimbursed. Some key principles are listed below.

- The maximum obligation of the DYRS/Community Foundation to support the program will not exceed the amount specified in the Notification of Grant Award.
- The cost of an item claimed must be reasonable.
- The cost of an item claimed must be clearly allocable to the grant and to one or more specific objectives under a grant. That is, it must contribute to the purposes and execution of the grant project. Indirect costs are often allocable to several programs, and how the grantee determines the amount allocable to the specific grant must be detailed in the budget narrative.
- The cost of an item claimed must be consistent with any specific limitations and exclusions in the grant award.
- Each cost item must be treated consistently by the grantee within its grant and its non-grant activities and be determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- Each cost item must be adequately documented and back-up documentation must be maintained according to records policies.

Generally, allowable costs include:

- **Personnel Costs.** Salaries and wages for employees working on a DYRS grant project during the grant period are allowable if:
 - i. the total compensation is reasonable for the work performed, conforms to the amount submitted in the approved budget, and conforms to the established policy of the organization applied consistently to government and non-government activities; and
 - ii. the charges are properly documented. This documentation requirement applies to direct salary charges, as well as salaries allocated to indirect costs.
 - iii. fringe benefits computed under a formally established and consistently applied organizational policy are allowed as a direct cost if they are included in the grantee's budget schedules and narrative.
- **Travel.** Travel costs are allowable for travel inside the Beltway. In limited circumstances, DYRS may approve an exception, for example, where a grantee's attendance at an out-of-state event contributes to the purposes and goals of the grant. Travel is reimbursed at the IRS-established mileage rate or actual fares.
- **Meetings.** Certain costs for meetings and conferences that contribute to the purposes and execution of the grant project are allowable.
- **Equipment and Supplies.** Equipment and supplies that contribute to the purposes and execution of the grant project are allowable. Any purchase whose cost is \$500 or more is not allowable unless DYRS/Community Foundation has approved the item and expense in advance.
- **Consultant Services.** Grantees normally are expected to use the services of their own employees to the maximum extent in carrying out the activities supported by DYRS grants. However, where it is necessary to contract out the work for the services of an individual or group who is not an employee, the grantee must do so in accordance with its own organizational contracting procedures and the factors specified in the cost principles section. The grantee's budget and/or request for approval of a consultant contract must specify the rates for service and other consultant costs broken down by category. Contractor and consultant costs are considered "indirect" expenses in the DYRS grant application and should be included budget documents as such.
- **Audit Costs.** Audit costs related to the grant project are allowable as part of the grantee's indirect costs.

II. Unallowable Costs

These costs are unallowable (included but not limited to):

- Alcoholic beverages;
- Bad debts;
- Donations and contributions (In-kind expenses);
- Entertainment;
- Fines and penalties;
- Fundraising and investment management;

- Goods and services for personal use, such as subscriptions and memberships;
- Honoraria;
- Staff bonuses
- Lobbying; and
- Losses on another grant or contract.

2. Budget Narrative

Applicants must utilize the Credible Messenger Excel document budget template (provided) and submit a budget narrative for each of the tabs on the budget template. The budget template can be downloaded on the Community Foundation’s website. The budget narrative includes an explanation for each of the budget line items and calculations (examples are set out below). In addition, the narrative must include details regarding how the amounts were determined. Each line item needs a calculation as well as a narrative description for how it is relevant or necessary to the applicant’s completion of roles and responsibilities or other required deliverables. The Budget Narrative for each tab of the budget template should not be longer than 3 pages (2 templates and 2 narratives).

III. Direct versus Indirect Costs

The following definitions are provided as guidance in determining Direct Costs versus Indirect Costs:

- **Direct costs** are defined as costs incurred solely for program services or program administration
- **Indirect costs** are defined as costs that have been incurred for common general organizational objectives or activities and cannot be readily identified with the objectives of the grant. These include (but are not limited to) consultant time, consultant/professional fees, or contractual services for general administration or other non-program activities; costs of occupancy or utilities; staff development or training not directly related to program administration; or any other costs incurred for general organizational objectives or activities. Indirect costs must not exceed 10% of the total budgeted for direct costs.

IV. Direct Costs

V. Salaries and Wages

For each budget line, include the staff position title, the level of effort (e.g., 50% or 20 hours per week), the duration of time that the position will be filled, the base salary or wage rate for the position and how the position is relevant and necessary for this program. The grant will support salaries and wages for positions that are directly involved with program services or management. Only the level of effort (percent of time or hours per week) spent by staff directly on the program may be charged to the grant as a direct cost. This information must be included in the Excel budget template. Any salary or wage increases need to be approved by DYRS prior to increase being awarded.

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Personnel		
Payroll		
Mentors	3 positions at 15 hours per week for 52 weeks at \$10/hour	\$23,400.00
Project Coordinator	1 position at 40 hours per week for 52 weeks at \$20/hour	\$41,600.00
Total Payroll		\$65,000.00

VI. Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits are extra benefits supplanting an employee’s salary (e.g., retirement). This does not include taxes and other required components of an employee’s salary. Include one line for fringe benefits as a percentage of the budget for salaries and wages. Indicate the fringe rate percentage used. If for some reason a simple fringe rate cannot be applied, please explain the method used to derive the budget for fringe benefits.

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Total Payroll		\$65,000.00
Fringe	22% Fringe Rate	\$14,300.00
Total Personnel		\$79,300.00

VII. Travel and Transportation

Include the amount budgeted as shown, such as bus rental, Metro or taxi fares or other expenses related to travel. Vehicle leases will not be considered unless approved in advance by DYRS.

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Transportation		
Bus Rental	Field Trips (2 per month for 10 months, \$75 per trip)	\$1,500.00
Total Transportation		\$1,500.00

VIII. Office Equipment

Equipment purchases and lease payments should be included here. These requests, especially large purchases, will be scrutinized to ensure consistency with the scope of the grant. Only the portion of equipment purchases directly used to carry out the scope of work of the grant may be included as a direct cost. For example, computers to conduct FamCare reporting or financial reporting to the Community Foundation are generally allowable as a direct cost, but computers for

a central financial management system are generally not allowable (or only partially allowable) as a direct cost.

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Equipment		
Computers	1 computer for care coordinator	\$550.00
Office Equipment	Fax machine for program office	\$125.00
Furniture	Tables and chairs	\$500.00
Total Equipment		\$1,175.00

IX. Program Supplies

Include all supplies directly used for the *Credible Messenger Initiative*.

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Supplies		
Group Supplies	Pens, copy paper, highlighters, post-it board, cleaning supplies, paper plates, napkins	\$200.00
Notebooks	Journals for youth reflection (30 at \$4 per unit)	\$120.00
Total Supplies		\$320.00

X. Telecommunications

Include telecommunications costs that are solely related to program services or program administration:

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Telecommunications		
Telephones	Phone service for program office (\$50 per month for 10 months)	\$500.00
Internet	Internet access for program office (\$125 per month for 10 months)	\$1,250.00
Total Telecommunications		\$1,750.00

XI. Other Direct Costs

Include all other direct cost items in this category devoted to youth activities or parent activities (food is included as an “other direct” cost). Be sure not to include here expenses that are listed as Direct or Indirect Costs and explain all items as in the examples above.

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Other Direct Costs		
Food	Hot meals for group sessions (2 sessions per week, \$5 per meal, 10 youth per session, 104 sessions per year)	\$5,200.00
Educational Activities	Career Fair (attire, pens, flashdrive, briefcase)	\$1,000.00
Total Other Direct Costs		\$6, 200.00

XII. Indirect Costs

Indirect costs may be proposed up to 10% of total budgeted for personnel and other direct costs. Please show the indirect cost rate used.

<i>EXAMPLE</i>		
Total Personnel		\$500,000.00
Total Other Direct Costs		\$100,000.00
Total Direct Costs		\$600,000.00
Indirect Costs	10% of Direct Costs	\$60,000.00

NOTE: Applicants should be mindful of the required deliverables in the budget narrative.

Deliverables
Hire Project Coordinator
Hire Lead Mentor & Lead Parent Coach
Hire Mentors & Coaches
Complete Pre-Service Training
Hold Mentoring Groups
Hold Family Support Activities
Complete Community Improvement Project
Facilitate Peacekeeping Circles
Submit Weekly Attendance Logs & Outreach Notes
Participate in Monthly Learning Community Meetings
Participate in Citywide DYRS Events
Hire Peer Mentors
Participate in Economic Opportunities

VIII. Apply

A. Pre-Proposal Conference

Dates: July 19, 2016 and July 28, 2016

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM or 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM (Times to be confirmed at a later date)

Location: Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services

Attendance is optional, but strongly encouraged. If you plan to attend the Pre-Application Conference, DYRS requests that you RSVP in advance. Please send an e-mail to Charles Dotson (CharlesDotson@dc.gov) with the name of your organization and the number of people attending.

B. Application Due Date & Submission Process

Due Date

The Request for Proposals (RFP) must be submitted via The Community Foundation's online system by **4:00 pm, Friday, August 5, 2016**. The online system will be available beginning **Monday, July 18th at 3:00 pm**.

Faxed or hard copies will not be accepted. Incomplete or illegible proposals will not be reviewed.

Submission Instructions

System Requirements

Applicants must have a functioning Internet connection and one of the following browsers, with cookies enabled:

Internet Explorer v7 or higher
Firefox v3 or higher

Safari and Google Chrome are not compatible

Please note that all items uploaded as part of your application package must be submitted in PDF format. If you must use a document scanner to create a PDF, please ensure that the resulting file is easy to read and is not password protected.

Failure to comply with any of the guidelines will cause your application to be disqualified for review and grant award consideration.

To submit a full proposal, cut and paste the link below into your preferred web browser:

https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_966?SA=SNA&FID=35156

Online Application Process

1. **Access the application form.** Use the link listed above.
2. **Enter data.** As needed, update any organizational information in the fields provided.
3. **Upload proposal attachments.** The next page of the online application system allows you to upload the required proposal attachments.
 - a. Each required attachment must be individually uploaded into the system and properly labeled. Only one document may be uploaded for each required attachment.
 - b. Documents will only be accepted in PDF file format.
4. **Save and finish later.** At the bottom of any page of the application, you can click Save & Finish Later to save the data entered thus far and return later to complete the application prior to the submission deadline. To access your account and finish your partially completed application click here:

https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_966/?SA=AM

5. **Submit your application.** Carefully review your application for completeness. Please refer to Appendix E. Click the submit button to send your application to The Community Foundation. You will receive an email confirming receipt of your application. If you do not receive a confirmation, please check your spam filter/folder.

The online system will be available beginning Monday, July 18th and 3:00 pm.

Proposals that do not include all the elements as stated will not be considered for funding.

Proposals that are incomplete or illegible will not be reviewed or considered for funding.

C. Site Visits

As part of the selection process, DYRS expects to make site visits to conduct interviews with applications whose proposals have been scored and evaluated as highly qualified for the RFP. Site visits are not a guarantee of funding, but rather an indicator that an applicant is under consideration for an award. Site visits will be scored by an evaluation team and used to make a final determination on whether the applicant is selected to receive a contract.

DYRS shall contact applicants to schedule site visits. Applicants should plan to have key staff available for site visits and interviews during the scheduled time period.

Proposed site visits are tentatively scheduled for the week of August 22nd.

IX. Format and Content of the Proposal

Proposal Format

Please review all instructions carefully. All applications must adhere to the following format to be considered.

- Use 11-point font or higher and 1-inch margins.
- Honor the total page limit: Up to 20, 1.5-spaced pages.

***Credible Messenger Initiative
Organizational Summary
(To be completed online)***

Please provide the following information for your organization. If you are applying as a partnership, provide this information for your partnership's lead organization. This portion of the proposal should be inputted via The Community Foundation's online application system.

1. Organization name and address
2. Name of Chief Executive (Prefix, First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name, Suffix)
 - a. Title
 - b. Email
 - c. Phone
3. Name of main contact for this proposal, if other than Chief Executive
 - a. Title
 - b. Email
 - c. Phone
4. Name of Program Contact
5. Title
6. Email
7. Phone
8. Federal Tax Identification Number
9. Organization's website address
10. Organization's mission [75 word maximum]
11. Total organizational budget for current fiscal year [Round to the nearest whole dollar]
12. Fiscal period [MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY]
13. Ward where organization is located
14. Police Service Area (PSA) where organization is located
15. Program site name and address
16. Neighborhoods to be served in proposal application

C. Proposal Questions

The Program Application is a clear, concise narrative (limited to 20 pages). Requested attachments such as staff resumes or other evidentiary documents are not counted as part of the page limit. The application must address the following:

- I. Organizational Experience
 - a) Briefly describe your organization's history and mission.
 - b) Who does your organization serve?
 - c) Describe the experience of the senior leadership of your organization. Include resumes for personnel already identified to serve as program staff for the *Credible Messenger Initiative*.
 - d) Describe your organization's experience over the past five years with the specific neighborhood(s) where services will be delivered.
 - i) Please include organizational experience with neighborhood community members, knowledge of community issues, and any past services rendered to the area you are applying to service.
 - e) Demonstrate your organization's rootedness in the community you propose to serve including:
 - i) Hiring practices that reflect the local community
 - ii) Integration with formal and informal community networks
 - iii) Relationships cultivated with local community stakeholders
 - f) Describe any relevant experience that your organization and/or the senior leadership of your organization has had, within the past five years, in providing programs that demonstrate experience relating to the list below. For each program cited, provide a brief description of the services offered, dates of operation, program goals, and impact
 - i) Operation of a court-involved young adult program and/or provision of services to people involved in the justice system
 - ii) Provision of services, support, and leadership development to the families of court-involved youth
 - iii) Operation of a program that involved a group process for youth and young adults based on cognitive-behavioral interventions
 - iv) Application of the values, principles, and practices of Positive Youth Development
 - v) Provision of mentoring or coaching interventions
 - vi) Provision of Restorative Justice and peacemaking programs
 - vii) Provision of programs that facilitate economic opportunities for youth and families
 - viii) Participation in any independent evaluations or research demonstrations

II. Program Approach

Describe in detail how your organization will provide the services described in the RFP and demonstrate how the proposed approach will fulfill the goals and objectives of the program. Specifically address the following:

- a) Leadership and Staffing

- i) Describe how senior leadership will support the Project Coordinator and other personnel in carrying out the duties associated with delivering the Credible Messenger Initiative
 - ii) Describe your organization’s plan to recruit and hire Credible Messenger Mentors and Family Engagement Specialists who are culturally competent, have had first-hand knowledge of the justice system, and/or have had experience working with justice-involved youth. Specifically address any potential partnerships with other organizations to identify eligible mentors.
 - iii) Describe how Credible Messengers will be evaluated, coached, supervised, and developed throughout the course of the initiative. Describe how you will facilitate professional development opportunities for Credible Messengers both inside and outside the organization.
 - iv) Attach job descriptions for the Project Coordinator, Mentors, Parent Coaches and any other staff position relevant to this program, including qualifications that will be required.
- b) Outreach and Recruitment
- i) Describe creative ways that your organization will retain youth and family participants.
 - ii) Describe how your organization will continue to conduct outreach, follow-up, and re-engagement for youth and families who are resistant to participation, or whose attendance is inconsistent.
- c) Transformative Mentoring Approach
- i) Describe how you will facilitate mentoring relationships between Credible Messengers and youth, both at the group and individual level.
 - ii) Describe how you will use cognitive-behavioral approaches in your mentoring groups.
 - iii) Describe how you will ensure program quality for mentoring groups, curriculum facilitation, and relationship building between youth and mentors.
- d) Family Engagement Approach
- i) Describe how you will develop relationships between Family Engagement Specialists and DYRS Family Members.
 - ii) Describe how you will facilitate parent support groups and family strengthening programming for the families of DYRS youth.
 - iii) Describe how you will integrate youth and parent programming to offer support for the entire family.
- e) Restorative Justice Approach
- i) Describe how you will use Restorative Justice practices to facilitate groups for youth and families.
 - ii) Describe how you will use Restorative Justice practices for broader peace-keeping and community building efforts in the neighborhood.
 - iii) Describe how you will use Restorative Justice practices to address conflict, harm, and violence in the community.
- f) Economic Opportunities
- i) Describe the types of partnerships you will develop with employers, schools, entrepreneurs and other entities to facilitate economic opportunities. Include information on existing

partnerships and specify if existing partners are located in the neighborhood or area you are applying for.

g) Neighborhood Programming

- i) Indicate the location/neighborhood/ward where you intend to provide services under the Credible Messenger Initiative.
- ii) Describe the physical location that you intend to provide Credible Messenger related services and meetings. Please provide the physical address if possible.
- iii) Describe plans to make the program location safe for youth who may be affiliated with different neighborhoods. Please provide any relevant details around your experience with behavioral management and conflict resolution among youth.
- iv) Describe the types of neighborhood partnerships you will develop to engage young people in more locally-based youth development programming.
- v) Include linkage agreements with neighborhood-based programs that will collaborate with you to serve youth and families.

h) Integration with DYRS

- i) Describe how you will partner with DYRS staff to implement the Credible Messenger Initiative.

III. Administrative Requirements

- a) Demonstrate your organization's programmatic, managerial, and financial capacity to perform the services described in the Scope of Services. Specifically describe:
- b) Your organization's capacity to incorporate the proposed program into overall operations. Attach an organizational chart showing your organization and how the proposed program and program staff will relate to the overall organization.
 - i) Provide your DC business license and current Clean Hands tax form from the Office of Tax and Revenue.
 - ii) For the past three years, what was your organization's annual operating budget and number of staff?
 - iii) What is your organization's human resource management capacity, including the ability to hire and perform payroll services for part-time and contracted mentors?

IV. Financial Documentation

Please provide information on your organization's fiscal management capacity.

- a) Current organizational budget (include all revenue, expenses, actuals and variances for the reporting period specified)
- b) Most recent financial audit of the organization, conducted by a certified public accountant, indicating the period covered or pages 1 - 6 of most recent IRS Form-990 (non-profit)
- c) A list of major funders for the current fiscal year. Make sure to specify if the funding is received, committed or pending.
- d) Budget Narrative: The Budget Narrative is the funding request for providing the services described in this RFP. The budget will be reviewed and scored as it relates to the proposed program approach. It includes the following:
 - i) Application Budget Template Form

- ii) Budget Narrative (Page limit: 3 pages) Justify how requested funds would be used to deliver services. Applicants should ensure that they complete each tab of the budget template and all relevant budget narrative, consistent with the required deliverable and program design.

V. Data Collection and Outcomes Reporting

Identify your organization's ability to manage data, document progress, and report outcomes, including:

- a) Data collection systems and processes used by your organization
- b) Results of any process or outcome evaluations in which your organization participated

D. Proposal Checklist

Prior to the submission of your application, please make sure that all the required information and documentation is included. Once the application is submitted, it cannot be altered. Documents with password protections will not be reviewed. Illegible or incomplete applications will not be considered. Applicants will not be contacted to provide missing or illegible information.

- Organizational Summary (Completed Online – Required for all applications)
- Proposal Cover Letter Containing Authorized Signature(s)
- Proposal Narrative (please answer all questions in the order they are asked in the RFP; 20-page maximum; 11 point font or higher)
- One-page organizational chart
- Staff Resumes
- Job Descriptions/Profiles
- Budget (completed on Excel template found on the Community Foundation’s website)
- Budget Narrative
- Fiscal Year Financial Documentation, no older than FY2015
 - Current organizational budget (include all revenue, expenses, actuals and variances for the reporting period specified);
 - Audited Financial Statement (non-profit or for-profit); OR
 - Pages 1 - 6 of most recent IRS Form-990 (non-profit) OR
- Copy of Clean Hands Certificate with the DC Office of Tax and Revenue issued after October 1, 2014
- Copy of Certificate of Good Standing with the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs issued after October 1, 2014
- District of Columbia Basic Business (Charitable Solicitation/Charitable Exempt) License
- District of Columbia Certificate of Exemption
- Copy of currently valid Certification to Occupy – may include letter from DPR, DCPL, DCPS, MOU and/or lease agreement, etc.
- If applying with another organization: A Partnership Agreement signed by both organizations (please note that all above documents are required for both organizations)
- List of major funders for current fiscal year. Please specify whether funding is received, committed or pending.
- All other attachments requested in the narrative (PDF; Free of passwords/passcodes)

X. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

A. Evaluation Procedures

All applications accepted by the DC Community Foundation and DYRS will be reviewed to determine whether they are responsive or nonresponsive to the requirements of this RFP. Applications that the DC Community Foundation and DYRS, under the advisement of the review panel, determine to be nonresponsive or unable to meet the requirements and conditions of the grant will be rejected. DYRS will evaluate and rate all remaining applications based on the Evaluation Criteria prescribed below. DYRS reserve the right to conduct site visits, to conduct interviews, or to request that applicants make presentations, as deemed applicable and appropriate. Application scoring will be conducted by a qualified review panel. The recommendations of the review panel are advisory and not binding on DYRS. Final decisions on funding and awards vests solely with the Director of DYRS based on assessment of the recommendations of the review panel, pre-award site visit reports, and any other information deemed relevant.

B. Evaluation Criteria

Scoring will be determined through a two-part process: (1) Application Review, and (2) Finalist Interview.

Part I: Application Review

Applicants are eligible for the following points:

- **Up to 100 points**

All proposals will be scored in Part I according to the following criteria:

- Responsiveness to the questions
- Clarity of responses
- Match with best practices
- Ability to meet the needs of court-involved youth & families
- Community rootedness
- Consistency of responses throughout the application

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of three to five reviewers, composed of independent reviewers and reviewers from DYRS. The reviewers will read and score proposals based on the following point system:

- ✓ Organization Information: 20 points
- ✓ Program/Services Description: 50 points
- ✓ Administrative Functions: 20 points
- ✓ Financial Documentation (Budget and Budget Narrative): 5 points
- ✓ Data Collection and Outcomes Reporting: 5 points

After reviewers have scored all proposals, they will convene in debrief sessions led by the Community Foundation's facilitators. Reviewers will be asked to discuss their findings and, as a panel, debrief on the scores for each proposal based on its quality and the selection criteria outlined for review of the RFP.

The scores received from the review panel, as well as any bonus points (if eligible) earned will be combined. Based on these scores, the top 2 to 3 applicants for each Neighborhood will move forward to Phase II: Finalist Interview, as long as their applications received a total score of at least 65 Points in Part I: Application Review

Part II: Finalist Interviews

- **Up to an additional 50 points**

Finalists will participate in an interview process to respond to reviewer questions generated during the reviewer debrief sessions. A predetermined set of questions developed by DYRS and other questions that may arise during the interview process will be asked to gain further clarity. During the interviews, the reviewers will be looking specifically to assess:

- Leadership alignment with the vision and values of the *Credible Messenger Initiative*
- Community rootedness in the local neighborhood
- Evidence of positive youth development culture and affirmation of family leadership
- Ability to manage and develop Credible Messengers

The interviewers may include, but are not limited to, juvenile justice reform subject matter experts, youth and family advocates, organizational development specialists as well as representatives from DYRS and the Community Foundation who will make final recommendations based on the scoring in Part I and the results of the interviews in Part II. Final recommendations on selected applicants will be approved by the Community Foundation Board of Directors and DYRS.

C. Terms and Conditions

All applications will be reviewed and evaluated based on the criteria set forth in this RFP. Awards will be based on the quality of the proposed project as set forth in the application and demonstrated by site visits and interviews. Within each competition, applications will be ranked in descending order of their overall average technical scores. Awards will be made to the highest rated vendors whose applications are technically viable and whose prices do not exceed the conditions set forth in the RFP. However:

- The DC Community Foundation/DYRS reserves the right to make awards to ensure the appropriate distribution of necessary services and programs across targeted geographic areas within the District of Columbia. The DC Community Foundation/DYRS reserves the right to negotiate with any successful applicant to include additional targeted neighborhoods. If an insufficient number of acceptable applications are received for any targeted neighborhood, the DC Community Foundation/DYRS also reserve the right to negotiate with existing applicants/awardees for the inclusion of additional neighborhoods and/or reopen the competition and solicit additional applications for services in that neighborhood.
- DYRS reserves the right to conduct site visits and/or interviews and/or to request that applicants

make presentations and/or demonstrations, as is deemed applicable and appropriate.

- The DC Community Foundation/DYRS reserves the right to award less than the full amount of funding requested and to modify the allocation of funds among competitions in the best interests of the District of Columbia.
- In the case that an applicant is eligible for more than one contract award from this RFP, the DC Community Foundation/DYRS reserves the right to determine, based on the applicant's demonstrated organizational capability and the best interests of youth and families, respectively, how many and for which program(s) the applicant will be awarded contracts and at what level of services and dollar value.
- The DC Community Foundation/DYRS reserves the right, once applications have been submitted, to suggest possible collaborations between vendors and/or engage in negotiations with potential vendors before making final contract awards.

D. Notice of Awards

All applicants, whether they receive or do not receive awards, will be notified of the final award decisions for their applications. After receiving the notification letter, applicants have up to thirty (30) business days to submit a written request for their scores to the Community Foundation. Requests should be submitted by email to Manon P. Matchett, Philanthropic Services Officer at mmatchett@cfncr.org. Applicants may receive a copy of the reviewer scores and comments within fifteen (15) business days upon written request.

Credible Messenger Initiative Budget Template

Year 1 Program Budget (April 2016 - September 2016)		Rate	# of Units	Weeks	Total
Project Coordinator	Full Time		Annual	26.00	\$ -
Lead Mentor	Full Time at 40 hours per week		40	24.00	\$ -
Senior Parent Coach	Full time at 40 hours per week		40	24.00	\$ -
Mentors (PT)	2 Part Time at 20 hours per week		20	24.00	\$ -
Parent Peer Coaches (PT)	2 Part Time at 20 hours per week		20	24.00	\$ -
Peer Mentor	2 Part Time at 15 hours per week		10	0.00	\$ -
					\$ -
Fringe	Calculated at 22% for full-time staff; 10% for part-time staff				\$ -
Telephone	Cell Phone Reimbursements for Credible Messengers				\$ -
Activity Fund	Activity Fund to support social, recreational, and educational activities for youth.				\$ -
Food	Food for Groups				\$ -
Program Supplies	Supplies, Marketing, Computers				\$ -
Indirect Costs	To support administrative oversight of the project (10%)				\$ -
Total OTPS					\$ -
TOTAL COSTS					

Year 2 Program Budget (October 2016 - September 2017)		Rate	# of Units	Weeks	Total
Project Coordinator	Full Time		Annual	52.00	\$ -
Lead Mentor	Full Time at 40 hours per week		40	52.00	\$ -
Senior Parent Coach	Full time at 40 hours per week		40	52.00	\$ -
Mentors (PT)	2 Part Time at 20 hours per week		18	52.00	\$ -
Parent Peer Coaches (PT)	2 Part Time at 20 hours per week		18	52.00	\$ -
Peer Mentor	2 Part Time at 15 hours per week		10	52.00	\$ -
					\$ -
Fringe	Calculated at 22% for full-time staff; 10% for part-time staff				\$ -
Telephone	Cell Phone Reimbursements for Credible Messengers			12 months	\$ -
Activity Fund	Activity Fund to support social, recreational, and educational activities for youth.				\$ -
Food	Food for Groups			52	\$ -
Program Supplies	Supplies, Marketing, Computers				\$ -
Indirect Costs	To support administrative oversight of the project (10%)				\$ -
Total OTPS					\$ -
TOTAL COSTS					