



YOUNG WOMEN'S  
FREEDOM CENTER

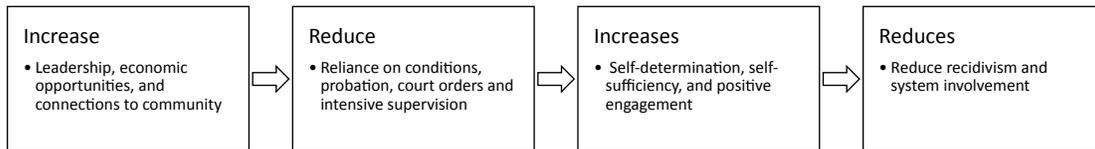
The Center for Young Women's Development

**Jessica Nowlan, Executive Director**

## **25 Years of Learning**

- Young women (youth) are experts in their own lives
- Personal is political
- Whole Selves, whole communities and culturally relevant
- Leadership and economic opportunities
- Healing Centered





**25 year's providing peer based re-entry services for system involved women and girls**

## Strategies for Engagement

- Listen to young person and family about wants, needs, and what is important to them
- Provide connections to community and or resources that are not court ordered or "enforcement" focused
- Be open to ideas, ideals, and values that may not be your own and that are driven by youth and their families
- Build trust and have faith with community partners



## Opportunities for Practice



- Partnerships between community organizations, probation/ courts, and youth that are not court ordered – Young Women’s Freedom Center, CURYJ
- Home based housing options identified by young person and with support from families, friends, community
- Move to release from probation and court orders as soon as possible



**Marlene Sanchez, Associate Director**

**The mission** of CURYJ is to interrupt the cycles of violence and poverty by motivating and empowering young people that have been impacted directly and indirectly by the criminal justice system to make positive changes in their lives and prepare them to become the community leaders of today.

#### Values:

- Those directly impacted by the system need to be at the forefront of policy change
- CURYJ holds a strong stance against the adultification of youth
- La Cultura Cura- Our culture is our healing and recovery
- Restorative Justice



## CURYJ History

- 2009:** Began organizing and building relationships
- 2010:** Co-founded Stop the Injunctions Coalition in response to proposed gang injunction
- 2011:** CURYJ and members of the Stop Injunction Coalition organized legal defense for individuals listed in the gang injunction, provided hours of leadership development and organizing skills
- 2012:** First legislative bill sponsored by CURYJ
- 2013:** Soft launch of CURYJ social enterprise "La Cultura Cura Cultural Arts Café"
- 2014:** First Reclaiming Cinco de Mayo inside Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center
- 2015:** Executive Director George Galvis gets appointed to the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Commission
- Oakland became the first city in the nation to defeat a gang injunction, all cases dismissed
  - CURYJ organized state-wide town hall to dismantle Prop 21
  - AB 256 sponsored by CURYJ get signed into law. Existing law makes it a misdemeanor for a person to willfully destroy or conceal any evidence, this bill expands it to include digital material like smartphone video or evidence of the like
- 2016:** CURYJ expands and brings on new staff and board members and triples budget
- 2017:** ...



## Our Programs

- Culturally rooted healing circles
- Life coaching
- Homies 4 Justice
- Aztlan Beatification Movement
- Community Building Events
- La Cultura Cura Arts Cafe



## Solutions from the Ground

- Community solutions are real solutions!
- Building people power translates to real transformation
- Inside out strategy
- Focus on the whole person
- Justice reinvestment
- Policy work that is driven by those directly impacted

## Policy Recommendations:

- Hold police accountable
- Reduce probation terms
- No out of state placement
- build up opportunities and resources in the community





**Jennifer Rodriguez, Executive Director**

A large graphic with a light-colored brick wall background. At the top, the word "Why?" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. To the left of "Why?" are three circular icons: a house, a brain, and a heart. To the right of "Why?" is a large, solid heart. Below the text, a diverse group of children of various ages and ethnicities are standing in a line. In the bottom right corner of the graphic, the QPI logo is visible.

**Why?**

To ensure **EXCELLENT, DEVELOPMENTALLY INFORMED PARENTING** for our children

**QPI**  
QUALITY PARENTING INITIATIVE



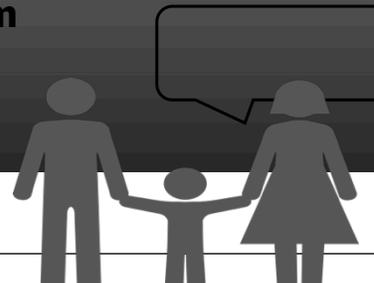
# What?

- System change approach to strengthening foster care by refocusing on excellent parenting for all youth as primary reform
- Reform based on child and adolescent development research and knowledge of those directly impacted/in field
- Emphasizes systemic policy, practice and agency culture changes that support excellent parenting and eliminate barriers to meeting children's needs



# How?

- **RECOGNIZE** that resource families and social workers/probation officers are professional partners
- **LISTEN** to those who do the work
- **RESPOND** and **ALIGN** system



- More quality families
- More effective birth parent/foster parent/case manager teams
- Better decision making
- Changed policies
- Higher skill levels
- Better team work

**results.**

### Improved Parenting for Children



## Engaging Youth And Families After Placement: What Have We Learned?

- Policies and practices must include resource families as respected, valued partners (requires culture change)
- Address agency barriers to sharing info with families
- Address issues around normalcy and licensing/investigations up front
- Create opportunities for cross & joint training/relationship building
- Ensure agency policies and practices that support co-parenting with birth families



## QPI Values in Practice...the FL CHANCE Model

- Citrus Helping Adolescents Negatively impacted by Commercial Exploitation (CHANCE)
- Pilot began 2013 developed by Citrus Health Network in partnership with FL DCF and Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc., with research being conducted by the University of South Florida.
- Specially trained therapeutic foster families are intervention for youth with a specialized program/service design
- <http://www.citrushealth.org/CHANCE>

