



CENTER FOR YOUTH & FAMILY ADVOCACY



Prospectus

"It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken men" - Frederick Douglass

2023

www.cyfadvocacy.org

Letter from the CEO

The story is all too familiar ...

A young child found himself involved in the juvenile legal system as a result of systemic failures—lack of stable needs and relationships, inadequate educational and therapeutic supports, and lack of meaningful pro-social resources to cultivate and nurture his worth and power. In the juvenile legal system, the child found himself inadequately represented by counsel with specialized knowledge of juvenile law. That failure sealed his fate and, as an adult, without meaningful mitigation or intervention, the young man found himself sentenced to more than a decade in the penitentiary even though no person was seriously injured in his first adult criminal offense.

... We had to take action: CYFA was born.

We created CYFA to ensure all children and youth have resources and opportunities to thrive. CYFA's programming is focused on promotion, prevention, and intervention, and it is tailored to meet the unique needs of the communities it serves. We are excited to invite you to partner in our vision of radical systemic transformation through collective impact, restorative practices, education, and advocacy. Please consider partnering with CYFA to support and invest in the community you live or do business. CYFA is a 501(c)(3) organization, and donations are tax deductible in accordance with federal law.

In Service,

Devanshi Patel
Chief Executive Officer

Our Team

CYFA centers racial and social justice and equity directly in its programming and services. CYFA's leadership understands that embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion intentionally makes space for positive outcomes within CYFA's organizational structure and in the communities we serve. CYFA's leadership team includes:



Devanshi Patel
Chief Executive
Officer



Molly Newton
Chief Operations
Officer



William Turner
Chief Information
and Technology Officer



Gregory Baldwin
Director of Restorative
Practices



Society's toughest social challenges are best addressed through meaningful cross-sector collaboration. CYFA's BuildStrong Initiative is a complex, adaptive system that focuses on transforming systems, empowering children, youth and families, and sustaining healthy communities. The BuildStrong Initiative provides a framework for CYFA's programming:



Promoting Empathy
through Equitable
Resolution



Youth Peer
Court



Legal Advocacy
Workshops



Guiding Personal
Success



Relax Relate
Restore



Campaign to
Amplify Racial
Equity



Integrated Model of
Partnership to Achieve
Community-Based
Transformation

CYFA's Mission, Vision, and Approach are operationalized through its BuildStrong Initiative.

Mission

Transform systems and empower children and youth to create and achieve successful outcomes for self, family, and community.

Vision

Radical systemic transformation so all children and youth have resources and opportunities to thrive.

Approach

Systemic transformation through collective impact, restorative practices, education, and advocacy.

Collective Impact



IMPACT utilizes the collective impact model to create sustainable public-private coalitions focused on addressing the complex, adaptive issues of youth opportunity and community safety.

IMPACT focuses on changing systems and structures to improve community outcomes at scale (and not discrete programmatic interventions). Most recently, CYFA utilized IMPACT to develop a comprehensive Children & Youth Master Plan for the City of Danville.

The power of collective impact initiatives lies in the alignment of process through five conditions: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support organizations.

Restorative Practices



Restorative practice promotes a community culture of investing in self and others. CYFA's restorative programming includes PEER, YPC, and RRR.

Approximately 3,000 youth were involved in Virginia's juvenile legal system in 2021.

Source: Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission Report No. 558 (2021).



PEER is a youth-led, community- and equity-based restorative justice diversion program that utilizes a traditional restorative conferencing model.



YPC is a youth-led, community- and equity-based restorative practice diversion program focused on empowering youth through a service-learning opportunity.



Restorative justice is a community-based approach to addressing harm. CYFA's innovative restorative justice diversion programs - PEER and YPC- employ community-based promotion, prevention, early-intervention, and intervention programming and provide trauma-informed accountability, promote meaningful victim-centered engagement, and promote community safety through meaningful reintegration. PEER

and YPC empower youth to resolve disputes in a peer-to-peer setting supported by trained restorative practice professionals. The programs reimagine community safety and provide opportunity to law enforcement, schools, and community members to refer matters involving conduct that would otherwise lead to criminal charges to CYFA (i.e., outside of the court system for community-based resolution using restorative justice).

PEER and YPC have been implemented in the City of Danville, the City of Falls Church, and the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center. PEER and YPC will be implemented in Arlington County in 2023.



RRR provides a restorative, conversational space to process lived experiences related to current global, national, and local affairs.

Restorative practice focuses on preventing harm. RRR provides participants an opportunity to relax in an intimate setting, relate with others through free expression, and restore well-being and healing through a facilitated, reflective circle process. RRR creates space for powerful relational experiences that support the cultivation of new, constructive ideas to address the events around us. RRR builds and strengthen relationships and community bonds through courageous conversations that promote understanding. Through these critical, equity-focused conversations, participants have an opportunity to be curious and heal in relation to one another.

RRR is currently available in Arlington County. It will be operationalized in the City of Falls Church in 2023.



Restorative practices focus on relationship building and healing, and community circles have the power to dismantle systems of oppression through intentional exploration of multiple viewpoints.

Education

Nelson Mandela once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Education has the power to change mental models regarding how a commitment to community-(re)building can shape how we achieve public safety. CYFA’s educational programming includes GPS and CARE:



GPS provides children and youth asset-based opportunities to reach their full potential and experience optimal well-being.



The pandemic has taken a profound toll on Virginia’s fourth- and eighth-grade student learning with reading and mathematics scores decreasing from 2019 to 2022.

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (October 2022).

Education inequity impacts not only the student but also the local, regional, state, and national economies. GPS supports intellectual curiosity and allows children and youth to learn without limits. Through case management and coordination, GPS ensures that all children and youth have the opportunity to succeed and contribute their gifts to the world.



CARE helps participants understand the impact of racism through curated, self-paced lesson plans.

Disrupting structural, institutional, interpersonal, and individual racism requires concerted intent and effort. CARE helps participants understand the historical impact of racism, normalize conversations about race and racism, and engage in actions to eliminate systemic racism and structural oppression to create healthier communities for children, youth, and families. CARE is designed to allow participants to engage individually in reflective study or create groups to challenge one another.



Advocacy



LAW supports professionals in and adjacent to the legal field and the community through continued educational opportunities.

The divide between legal needs and available services is known as the “justice gap,” and it is felt most acutely by our most vulnerable populations. Not all youth involved in Virginia’s juvenile legal system have qualified legal representation at each stage of the legal process. LAW provides specialized training in nuanced areas of the law because quality legal representation should be a fundamental right. LAW also has programming for young people to understand their legal rights so that they can vigilantly protect them in the community.

It’s Happening Here...It’s Happening Now

JOIN OUR COALITION

When you support CYFA’s BuildStrong Initiative, you join a movement focused on building safe and healthy communities so all children, youth, and families can thrive. Your support is critical to ensuring CYFA’s programming is offered at no cost to any child, youth, or family. Every gift counts - please join one of our circles: Ambassador Circle (\$25,000 to \$10,000), Partner Circle (\$7,500 to \$2,500), Champion Circle (\$1,500 to \$500), and Supporter Circle (\$250 to \$50).

Youth opportunity and community safety are not future goals to be achieved by future generations; their realization begins today. We thank you for your generous support.





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