Centering Community, Equity, and Lived Experience: Building the Capacity of CBOs to Improve Outcomes for System-Involved Youths

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What is a Community-Based Organization (CBO)?

Generally, a community-based organization is a:

• non-profit, non-governmental, or charitable organization
• that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community, and
• provides local services to the community or targeted population within the community.

Sources of funding commonly include federal, state and local government contracts, philanthropic foundation grants, and individual private donations.
Youth-Serving CBOs
Focused on Education, Health & Development of Youths Aged 1-25

Services often include:

- Academic Support & Pathways
- Arts & Culture
- Civic Engagement
- Employment & Professional Development
- Housing
- Leadership Development
- Pro-Social Activities
- Re-Entry
- Vocational Training

- Behavioral Health
- Cultural Identity & Practices
- Mental Health
- Mentoring / Life Coaching
- Public Benefits
- Reproductive Health
- Restorative Justice
- Substance Abuse / Dependency
- Trauma Healing Support
Constraints & Challenges to Capacity-Building

- General Lack of Community-Based Infrastructure
- Limited, Inconsistent Funding for CBOs
- Limited Understanding of/Appreciation for CBOs & Services
- Over-Reliance on Probation & Law Enforcement (funding & decision-making)
- Gov’t Distrust of CBOs & Community Members w/ Lived Experience
- Gov’t Ineffective Communication, Community Engagement, & Partnerships
- Retaliation from Gov’t Agencies (loss of contracts, referrals, access to youths)
- Probation Co-Opting Effective CBO Programs, Traditional Community Services
Needs for Building CBO Capacity

- Administrative & Technical Support
- Trainings for CBOs
- Trainings for Probation & Systems Admin
- Community Connections
- Funding & Resources
Administrative & Technical Support

- Accounting / Book-keeping
- Board Governance
- Case Management Procedures
- Confidentiality & Privacy Laws
- Data Collection & Reporting
- Evaluation of Programs
- Fundraising & Grant Writing
- Managing Government Contracts
- Records & Information Sharing
Education & Training for CBOs

- Adolescent Development
- Best Practices for Specific Populations
- Education Rights of Students
- Funding Streams for Alternative/Special Education, Mental Health, etc.
- Impacts of Incarceration/Working with Institutionalized Youths
- Navigating the Courts and JJ System
- Public Benefits & Resources
- Trauma-Informed Care & Engagement w/ Youths
- Vicarious Trauma for Staff
- Working w/ Special Needs & Disabilities
Education & Training for Probation & Systems Administrators

Same Trainings as for CBOs, plus:

- Equity (Racial, Social, Economic, etc.)
- Authentic Partnerships with Community
- Trauma-Informed Care, Communication, & Engagement
- Strengths-based Approaches to Working w/ Youths

* All trainings should involve community members w/ lived experiences
Community Connections & Relationship Building

- Access to System-Involved Youth (in facilities, on probation)
- Information & Access to Public Offices & Resources
- Networking & Relationships with Administrators, TA Providers
- Peer-to-Peer Engagement/Learning Opportunities
Funding & Resources

- Seed Funding for CBOs in Small Counties & Rural Communities
- Housing, including Transitional, Re-Entry, & Step-Downs
- Equitable Funding (allowing for competitive living wages, benefits, etc.)
- Up-Front Funding (not reimbursement or pay-for-success)
- Direct Funding (not pass-thru via government agencies)
- Funding & Referrals that are Independent of Probation
Thank You.