

Services To Youth

One-to-One Links: Connecting through Mentoring A National Program Initiative (in Partnership with NCMM) - Service Delivery Model

Situation: Failing schools, escalating crime and incarceration are expunging the life out of our communities. According to *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, one-third of Black males born today will spend time in prison. Our schools are failing and statistics prove that failing schools are the pipeline to prison. There is no opportunity for our youth if they're in a school system that is not serving them well. *The Washington Post* reports that 48 percent of all Black children live without fathers in their home. And the deterioration in our communities continues:

- Of all Black fourth-graders in the nation, 58% are functionally illiterate.
- In some cities, 80% of our boys drop out before finishing high school.
- Every day 1,000 Black children are arrested.
- Nearly 7% of Black babies are born to girls under the age of 18.
- 1 in every 8 African-American males ages 25-29 is incarcerated.
- The number one cause of death for our boys is homicide.

Vision: The Links, Inc. through a partnership with the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT (NCMM) is sending out a call to action to secure our vulnerable youth. The call is being sent out to every able Black adult to put a guiding hand on a vulnerable young person's shoulder and help guide that youngster to wholeness and self-sufficiency. Linking arms, in a an effort to open the pathways to happiness, wholeness and high achievement for our struggling children. Connecting mentors with youth who need their time and compassion. Together, through collaboration with the NCMM and other partner organizations, the Links, Inc. will become a partner of the largest mentoring movement in the history of our nation. This vision will be sustained by a continuing commitment to work together to solve the escalating crisis among our youth.

Mission: to create a highly visible and effective national mentoring movement targeting the African American community. The goal is to recruit one million mentors for youth who have been identified as being at-risk and in need of mentorship. One-to-One Links: Connecting through Mentoring, will partner with the National Cares Mentoring Movement (NCMM) to provide a range of innovative, substantive and sustainable programs and resources to actively mentor children and young adults in our communities nationwide by:.

- Filling the pipeline of local mentoring organizations with caring black men and women
- Communicating to our at-risk youngsters that the adults in their community love and value them and want them to succeed
- Increasing literacy, a passion for learning and high education achievement
- Increasing high school graduation rates among black students by 10% annually

- Ending violence in the black community and the over-incarceration of our young males and females

Input/Resources	*Activities	Participants	1 - 2 Year Outcomes (Goal)
Assess the specific needs of the community targeting at-risk youth and young adults.	Complete mentoring needs assessment Set an annual mentor recruitment goal	United Way School District/educators Drug and Alcohol Prevention Organizations School drop-out prevention organizations Teen pregnancy prevention organizations City officials/crime statistics	Establish a baseline for future program evaluation
Form a steering committee of committed people in the community	Recruit stakeholders Serve as a local point of contact for NCMM Serve as a voice/advocate for mentoring in the community	Local Links Chapter Mayor Religious Leaders Concerned Citizens Community Activists Educators Corp& Business Representatives Judicial Representatives	Steering Community formed and operating within NCMM guidelines Increased interest in and support of the mentoring as a means to address the problems in the community Community specific mentoring model implemented
Set up a mentoring CIRCLE	Host mentor recruitment	Local Links Chapter	Mentoring CIRCLE infrastructure adopted

<p>infrastructure</p>	<p>gatherings</p> <p>Lead on-the-ground mentor recruitment efforts</p> <p>Work with committed community leaders to strengthen public education and turn underserved schools into top-tier, safe learning environments</p>	<p>100 Black Men YWCA Girl Scouts NAACP UNCF Nat'l Institute for Literacy Operation Hope MAD DADs National CASA Children's Defense Fund Big Brothers Big Sisters Banking on our Future Local School Districts Local Mentoring Organizations Neighborhood groups Greek organizations Professional orgs. Faith based orgs.</p>	<p>which addresses the specific needs of the community</p> <p>Kickoff Mentoring Circle Rally completed</p> <p>Mentors identified and assigned to a Mentoring Circle.</p> <p>75% of the identified at-risk youth and young adults paired with a mentor.</p>
<p>Form partnerships with existing mentoring organizations</p>	<p>Form an on-going relationship and system of communication with local mentoring organizations</p> <p>Share best practices</p>	<p>On-line Mentoring Registry</p> <p>Mentoring Organizations</p> <p>Local Mentoring Resources</p>	<p>Committed collaboration of local mentoring organizations and the institutions/organizations within the community who have access to large pools of mentors —religious institutions, community organizations, corporations, small businesses, police departments, and professional networks.</p> <p>Focus and commitment of program stakeholders to devote human and financial resources to take action to save our young people.</p>
<p>Identify funding to support mentoring initiatives</p>	<p>Research grants</p> <p>Research corporate donors</p>	<p>The Links, Incorporated Faith Based Organizations 21st Century Foundation</p>	<p>Increased funding and support of mentoring activities.</p>

	Fundraising Activities	Local Mentoring Organizations United Way	
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Resources:

National Cares Mentoring Movement www.caresmentoring.com

Foundations for Successful Youth Mentoring www.nifl.gov/nifl/cares/mentor.guide

Mentor: Expanding the world of quality mentoring www.mentoring.org

The Mentoring Group www.mentoringgroup.com

National Mentoring Center www.nwrel.org/mentor/index.php

Mentoring Students www.communityforyouth.org

Youth Mentoring Connection www.youthmentoring.org

Friends for Youth – Transforming lives through the power of mentoring www.friendsforyouth.org

Youth at Risk www.TheLinkNM.org

Youth Mentoring www.BeAChampion.org

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July 2008



DRAFT

One-to-One Links: Connecting through Mentoring 2007 – 2009 Overview and Workplan

Background Information

The challenges facing African American youth have hit sobering proportions. From poor literacy and staggering school dropout rates, to violence and teen pregnancy, our communities are in crisis. We are losing our youth to HIV/AIDS, to drug and alcohol abuse to gang activity, to the correctional system to brutality at the hands of one another.

The statistics shared by ESSENCE CARES, highlight the realities of the most vulnerable members of our community*:

- Of all Black fourth-graders in the nation, 58 percent are functionally illiterate
- In some cities, 80 percent of African American boys drop out before finishing high school
- Every day, 1,000 Black children are arrested
- Nearly 7 percent of Black babies are born to girls under the age of 18
- 1 in every 8 African-American males age 25-29 is incarcerated
- The number one cause of death for African American boys is homicide

*Source: The California Mentor Foundation Summer 1999 Study

In searching for solutions for how we can reach our youngest citizens, the California Mentor Foundation (CMF) challenges us to consider that *“mentoring is proven to be a simple approach for a range of complex issues.”*

According to *The Harvard Mentoring Project*, studies have shown that mentoring is a highly effective strategy for preventing addressing many of the key problems facing young people today. Referencing a landmark study conducted by Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), 1000 young people on the waiting list of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America were randomly assigned to two groups.

Members of one group were assigned a mentor; members of the other group remained on the waiting list. Comparing the two groups 18 months later, the children with mentors were: 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs; 27% less likely to begin using alcohol; 53% less likely to skip school; and 33% less likely to engage in violence. P/PV also found that young people with mentors: felt more competent about their ability to do well in school; reported more positive relationships with friends and parents; had better attitudes toward school and the future; and had better attitudes toward their family and communities.*

From: The Harvard Mentoring Project Overview, Harvard School of Public Health, Center for Health Communication

The Opportunity

The Links, Incorporated is pleased to partner with The NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT.

The mission of the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT is: *“to create a highly visible and effective national mentoring campaign targeting the African-American Community”*.**

The goals of the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT are**:

- To mobilize millions of African-American men and women who are committed to mentoring young people, and pair them with mentoring organizations desperately needing to increase their pool of Black volunteers
- To communicate to our young people in crisis that the Black community loves and values them and is committed to helping them
- To increase the high school graduation rate among Black students by 10 percent each year
- To end violence in Black communities and the over incarceration of our young people

The Links, Incorporated will serve as an active member of the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL, joining leaders from the following organizations: 100 Black Men of America, Inc., National Urban League, and the YWCA.

As a member of the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL, The Links, Incorporated is asked to become a strong advocate and national spokesperson for mentoring in the African American Community.

The NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL asks The Links, Incorporated to**:

1. Encourage local affiliate support and participation where local CARES Circles are forming
2. Speak positive messages about the potential of Black youth to the media and community
3. Support the National Urban League's and other advocacy organization's youth-oriented public policy initiatives
4. Make a yearly contribution (\$15,000) to sustain the National Cares Mentoring Movement office and outreach

Source: National Cares Mentoring Movement Overview

The Approach

The **GOAL** of *One-to-One Links: Connecting through Mentoring* is to provide a comprehensive approach for how The Links, Incorporated will contribute to mentoring African American Youth.

One-to-One Links complements the vision of the National Services to Youth Facet: Links seizing the opportunity to help our youth achieve.”

One-to-One Links will begin with our partnership with the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL. The focus of *One-to-One Links* for 2007-2009 is to support the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT, through our participation on the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL.

It is our intent to actively collaborate with our partner organizations on the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL to get feedback on progress and approaches, share best practices, enhance the efforts of this program, and seek funding opportunities as available.

Moving forward, the **MISSION** of *One-to-One Links* will be to continue to provide a range of innovative, substantive and sustainable guidelines and resources to chapters to help actively mentor children and young adults in our communities nationwide.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Organizational Awareness

Kick-off/launch *One-to-One Links* campaign with all members:

- Publish letter from Link Gwendolyn Lee to membership regarding *One-to-One Links Campaign*:
 - Importance of mentoring/experience participating in NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT meetings/activities (i.e. Oprah)
 - Commitment to serve of NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL
 - FAQs – what does our participation mean?
 - What we are asking chapters/members to do
 - Where to go for more information and help
- Launch *One-to-One Links* link on National website
 - Link to NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT website for mentoring information, resources and tools
 - Spotlight for chapter progress/mentoring success stories

Success Indicators:

To create knowledge baseline for The Links, Incorporated approach to mentoring, and gain commitment of chapters and individual members for supporting the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT.

By Q1 2008, all Links members should be aware of the *One-to-One Links* campaign.

Mentoring should be a focus at 2008 Seattle Assembly (i.e. Executive presentation or workshop)

Next Steps:

- Draft letter/FAQs to Link Gwen by 15 December
- Research Pacific Northwest Mentoring Agencies re: Seattle Assembly by 15 December

- One-to-One Links website launched by 15 January (link to NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT website for collateral, tools and more information)

Objective 2: Encourage Local and Affiliate Support for Local CARES Circles

Currently, two fully established and operating CARES Mentoring Circles exist in Atlanta, GA and Chicago IL.

CARES Circles are forming in the following locations: Detroit, MI; Cincinnati, OH; Houston, TX; Los Angeles, CA; Jacksonville, FL; Miami/Broward County, FL; St. Louis, MO; Wichita, KS; Cincinnati, OH; New York City, NY; Montgomery, AL; Washington, DC; Raleigh, NC; Savannah, GA; Baltimore, MD; Indianapolis, IN; Charlotte, NC; Sacramento, CA; Hartford, CA.

The Links, Incorporated will:

- Engage local chapters to actively support the CARES Circles forming in: Detroit, MI; Cincinnati, OH; Savannah, GA, Baltimore, MD; Indianapolis, IN, Charlotte, NC; Sacramento, CA; Hartford, CT and Houston, TX
- Encourage local chapter support for CARES Circles forming in all targeted cities

Success Indicators:

Local Links chapters actively supporting CARES Circles in the nine targeted cities.

Next Steps:

- Capture best practices from established CARES Mentoring Circles in Atlanta and Chicago re: local support needed
- Draft Links CARES Mentoring Circles Support Plan with NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT office
- Connect Links chapters in Chicago and Atlanta metro areas to the CARES Mentoring Circles, if not already involved
- Contact presidents of local Links chapters in the metro areas of the following cities: Detroit, Cincinnati, Savannah, Baltimore, Indianapolis, Charlotte, Sacramento, Hartford and Houston to discuss the CARES Mentoring Circles developing in their areas and how they can help

- Follow up with targeted chapters for feedback, best practices and success stories as they help with the formation of CARES Mentoring Circles in their areas

Objective 3: Speak Positive Messages about the Potential of Black Youth

The Links, Incorporated will use public speaking opportunities to speak positive messages about the potential of African American youth and how mentoring can help.

Success Indicators:

The Links, Incorporated and its membership are recognized as national and local advocates for mentoring African American Youth.

Next Steps:

- Connect membership of The Links, Incorporated to the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT website/office for marketing and PR materials, including:
 - Printed collateral materials
 - Tools and templates
 - Articles in national and regional publications
 - News releases, talk show information, speaking engagements and transcripts

Objective 4: Support Advocacy Organization's Youth-Oriented Policy Initiatives

The Links, Incorporated will support the National Urban League and other advocacy organizations in their youth-oriented policy initiatives.

Success Indicators:

TBD

Next Steps:

- TBD

Objective 5: Make a Yearly Contribution to NATIONAL CARES

As a member of the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL, The Links, Incorporated will make a yearly contribution to sustain the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT office and outreach.

Success Indicators:

The Links, Incorporated will make an annual contribution of \$15,000 to the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT.

Objective 6: Create a Long-Term Mentoring Plan

Following the initial phase of participating as a member of the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL, The Links, Incorporated will evaluate our involvement and outreach. Our intent is to follow up by creating a long-term plan for how our organization can continue to support the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT and impact African American Youth through mentoring.

Success Indicators:

The Links, Incorporated will create a long-term mentoring plan to incorporate into our service programming initiatives by Q4 2009.

As you know, the current challenges facing young people in our communities are truly overwhelming. Consider just a few statistics:

- Of all Black fourth-graders in the nation, 58 percent are functionally illiterate
- In some cities, 80 percent of African American boys drop out before finishing high school
- Every day, 1,000 Black children are arrested
- Nearly 7 percent of Black babies are born to girls under the age of 18
- 1 in every 8 African-American males age 25-29 is incarcerated
- The number one cause of death for African American boys is homicide

*Source: The California Mentor Foundation Summer 1999 Study

As sobering as these numbers are, this represents only a fraction of what many African American youth face on a daily basis. In searching for solutions for how we can best help our youngest citizens, the California Mentor Foundation (CMF) challenges us to consider that *"mentoring is proven to be a simple approach for a range of complex issues."*

With that context in mind, it is clear The Links, Incorporated has a strong role to play in helping to ensure mentoring is a viable option for reaching our children and young adults.

Our Focus

Of course mentoring is not new to The Links, Incorporated. We already have many examples of successful mentoring efforts in our organization's 60+ year history.

Programs such as Project LEAD: High Expectations, The Single-Gender school initiatives in the Atlanta Area, The Achievers Program of Southern California and Metro-Manhattan all illustrate that The Links, Incorporated has responded to the call for mentors in our communities.

With the focus of mentoring in the African American community gaining more visibility across the nation, we have an opportunity to continue to show leadership in working with our young people. In an effort to focus our efforts moving forward, please allow us to introduce you to *One-to-One LINKS: Connecting through Mentoring*: a comprehensive approach illustrating how The Links, Incorporated will contribute to mentoring African American Youth.

Our Partnership with National Cares

Earlier this year, we announced our partnership with the **NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT** (also known as ESSENCE CARES). The mission of the **NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT** is *"to create a highly visible and effective national mentoring campaign targeting the African-American Community."*

As National President, it has been my pleasure to represent you, my Sister Links, as a representative on the **NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL**, joining leaders from 100 Black Men of America, Inc., National Urban League, and the YWCA.

What We Are Asked To Do

The **NATIONAL CARES MENTORING COUNCIL** asks The Links, Incorporated to support mentoring *CARES Circles* developing across the country. These informal networks connect willing mentors with trusted mentoring organizations.

Currently, there are two fully established and operating CARES Mentoring Circles in Atlanta and Chicago. CARES Circles are forming in the following locations: *Detroit, MI; Cincinnati, OH; Houston, TX; Los Angeles, CA; Jacksonville, FL; Miami/Broward County, FL; St. Louis, MO; Wichita, KS; New York City, NY; Montgomery, AL; Washington, DC; Raleigh, NC; Savannah, GA; Baltimore, MD; Indianapolis, IN; Charlotte, NC; Sacramento, CA; Hartford, CA.*

Link Sisters, we encourage all of you to support the CARES Mentoring Circles forming in your respective chapter communities. Many of you have already connected to CARES Circles forming in your cities, and we thank you for your support.

How Can You Help?

Enclosed you will find a tool kit providing more information on the **NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT** and how to develop local CARES Circles.

Plans for local CARES Circles are already underway in many of our cities. We will reach out directly to many of you to share contacts and information to help support the CARES Circles which are currently forming, and to ask for your leadership and assistance in cities which need our help.

In the coming months we will launch the *One-to-One LINKS: Connecting through Mentoring* section on our national website. Here we'll provide more details on the NATIONAL CARES MENTORING MOVEMENT, and updates on the progress of local CARES Circles.

We'll also keep you up to date on the work we are doing, including highlighting examples of current mentoring efforts in our chapters across the country.

Stay tuned!

Next Steps

We have an exciting Mentoring Workshop planned for you at the Seattle National Assembly where we will continue to share exciting information about our work. We look forward to you joining us.

Please visit the Essence Cares website for more information on Mentoring: <http://www.essence.com/essence/emf/essencecares/>. You'll find a wealth of information about the National Cares Mentoring Movement, sample mentoring success stories, and links for how to get involved with local mentoring opportunities.