

Care First Jails Last

Vamsey & Ricardo
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INTRODUCTIONS

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CURYJ
unlocks
the
leadership of
young
people to
dream
beyond bars.



CONTEXT - CRIMINALIZING THE POOR

After taking race, gender, sexual orientation & identity into account, we find that **POVERTY** is the strongest predictor of incarceration

Homelessness & Foster Care

Youth who have been homeless and/or have been in the foster care system have higher rates of incarceration



Mother unemployed by age of 3

Mother/guardian unemployed by age 3 of the youth increases chances of youth incarceration



Enrollment in Preschool

Youth who do not attend preschool are much more likely to be incarcerated



Employment

Lack of access to meaningful employment forces many of our youth in the underground street economy



School &/or Housing Instability

The more times a young person moves from their home or school, the greater their chance of being incarcerated



Access to Good Schools

3rd grade math proficiency is one of the strongest predictors of success in high school

Systems meant to support our families continue to retraumatize them

CURYJ'S APPROACH

Community Building

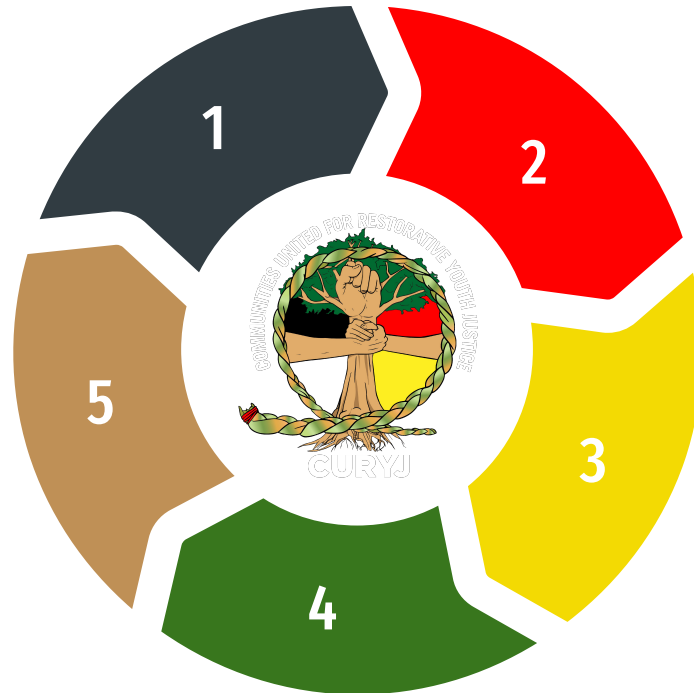
- Community & Cultural Events
- Violence Interruption
- Murals & Art Justice
- Recreation

Policy

- Reforming local & State laws - drivers of incarceration & systemic inequity

Financial Stability

- Opportunities for youth to earn \$
- Rental assistance
- Reocation



Leadership Development

- Youth-led Community Organizing
- DBB & H4J

Youth & Family Supports

- Participatory Defense
- Financial Supports
- Life Coaching
- Mental Health Supports



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Social Justice Positive Youth Development - Oppression has been normalized by focusing on developmental approaches that emphasize individual differences as a result of ability, motivation, and ambition, while simultaneously deemphasizing the importance of historical colonialization and the historical development of structural inequalities within communities and society (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002 ; Adams-Wiggins & Taylor-García, 2020).

- Homies 4 Justice
- Dream Beyond Bars
- Youth Leadership Institute





COMMUNITY HEALING

- **Violence Interruption** – responding to gun violence, mitigating retaliation, resources & support
- **Life Coaching** – intensive care management to high needs young people & adults
- **Economic Opportunities** – all youth/adults are paid for their time, including: program participation (\$25 per hour, hitting goals, and supporting with events last year, \$600,000 paid directly to youth and families
- **Culturally Rooted Healing** – Indigenous & African Ancestral practices – sweat ceremonies, limpias, African drumming
- **Culturally Rooted Events** – Town Nights, community healing cultural events, murals & art justice
- **Embedding in schools** – Fremont High School Care Team (VI + LC)
- **Recreation Activities** - Hikes, Great America, San Diego, Atlanta, Tahoe, Ntl Parks
- **Mental Health Destigmatization**
- **Participatory Defense**



Town Nights

in the Fruitvale



FAMILY FUN NIGHT

FREE
EVENT!!!

FRIDAY,
JULY 1ST
5PM-9PM

JOSIE DE LA CRUZ
PARK

1637 FRUITVALE AVE
OAKLAND

With a Special
Appearance
by:

Oakland **A's** Legend Vida Blue

DJ Prime Frequency • Live Performers • Pinky la Payasita •
Vendor Market • Kid Crafts • Face Painting • Bounce House & more!

*If you can't make this event, join us on one of the
next 2 Fridays!*



GIVEAWAYS
& PRIZES

FAMILY
FRIENDLY



- Community Healing Pics



ORGANIZING & POLICY

Focusing on State & Local policies that free our people & tackle systemic drivers of incarceration

- **Fair Chance Housing** - landlords not allowed to conduct background checks, Oakland & Alameda
- **Coalition for Family Unity** – visitation rights for incarcerated individuals
- **Ending Endless Probation**
- **Ending Involuntary Servitude**
- **Prop 57** – ending direct file for youth as young as 14 into the adult system
- **Defund OPD** – Divest & invest in communities
- **MACRO**





IMPACT

- External Evaluator: **83% improvement in leadership skills, 94% improvement in healing, and 90% increase in sense of connectedness for youth with violent charges (metrics that youth created)**
- In the area of the Fruitvale CURYJ directly staffed with violence interrupters there were **12 total shooting incidents** (2 fatal and 10 non-fatal) from January-April 2023 **compared to 21 incidents** (5 fatal and 14 non-fatal) from January-April 2022.
- Initial crime data analysis indicates that in the **48 hours following** the start time of the 2021 Town Nights events (6pm-all weekend), there were **14 shootings with injury compared to 41 shootings** with injury during the same days and hours in 2020: potentially a 66% reduction. During the exact hours the events took place the reduction was 90% compared to the same hours in 2020.
- \$600,000 went back directly in the pockets of our youth & families



DVP BUDGET CUTS

Oakland is facing a record deficit and the mayor is proposing nearly 6 million dollars in cuts to Oakland's Department of Violence Prevention (DVP)

CBO's are shouldering the entire burden with:

- 22% reduction in all DVP contracts (affecting 20+ CBOs)
- Elimination of Neighborhood Action Team strategy (NACT 1.8 million dollars total), which includes services like:
 - Recreation
 - Peace vigils
 - Community events
 - Cultural healing activities

This will cripple CBOs' ability to provide culturally relevant violence prevention and public health services, while undoing much of the violence prevention progress that has been made

CURYJ is facing **\$600,000+ cuts in its DVP contracts**, including the total elimination of their NACT contract. This will severely impact CURYJ's ability to provide: Life Coaching, Violence Interruption, Cultural healing and recreation events,, school intervention support to Oakland's highest needs young people