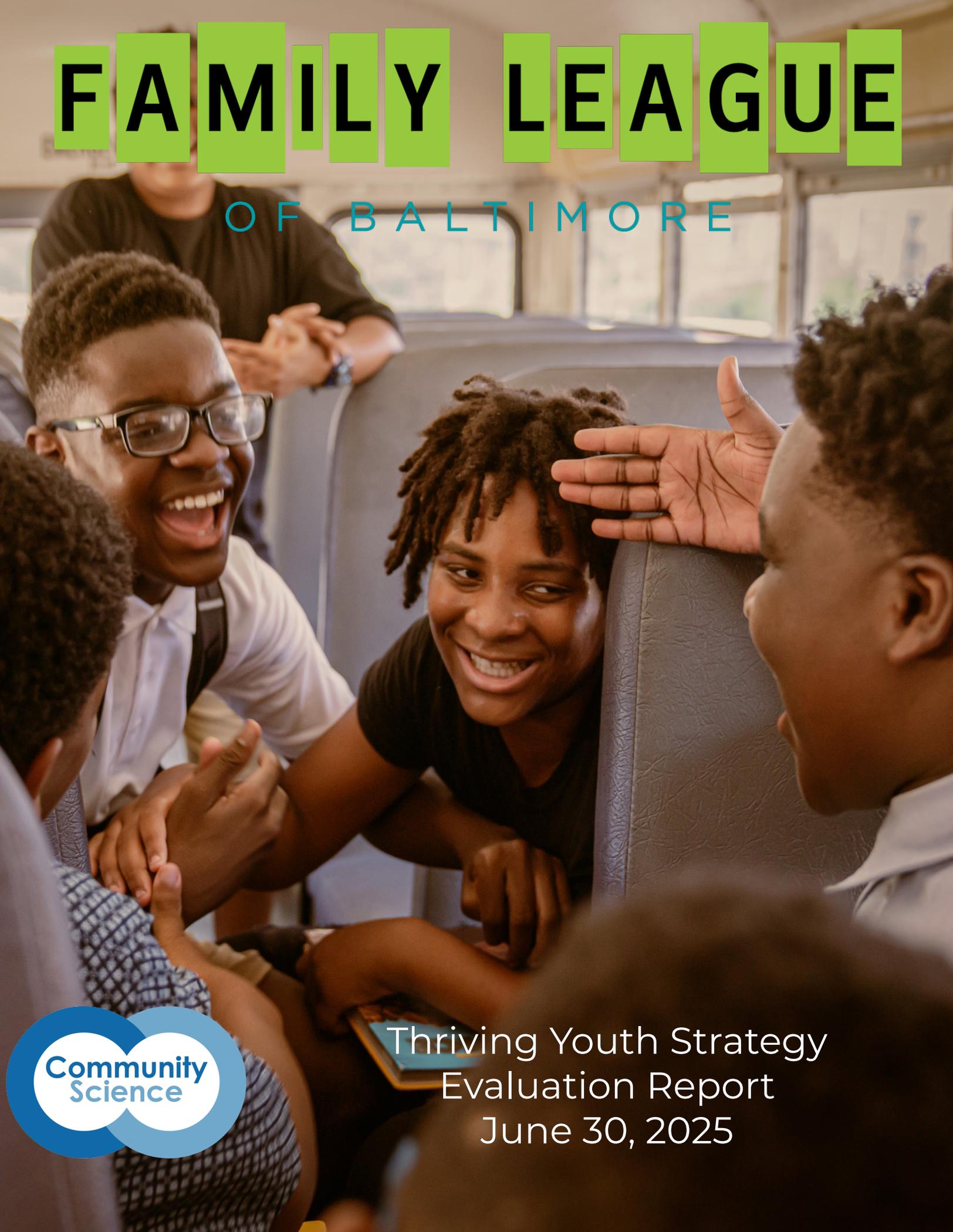


# FAMILY LEAGUE

OF BALTIMORE



Thriving Youth Strategy  
Evaluation Report  
June 30, 2025

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Family League of Baltimore for their leadership and deep commitment to advancing equitable outcomes for youth and families in Baltimore. We are especially grateful to Jessica Tartanian, Rennett Bennett, Melissa Moore, Fiyinfolu Atanda, and Kayla Hollings for their ongoing support, guidance, and collaboration throughout this evaluation of the Thriving Youth Strategy.

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This work was carried out by a core team at Community Science, including Brandi Gilbert, PhD (Project Director); Carlos Anguiano, PhD (Deputy Project Director); and Dontarious Cowans, MA.

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# Executive Summary

## Family League of Baltimore's Thriving Youth Strategy

The Thriving Youth Strategy, launched by Family League of Baltimore, is a citywide effort to reduce youth involvement in the justice system and improve long-term outcomes for young people ages 11–17. The Strategy prioritizes early intervention, mentorship, and holistic, trauma-informed support to help youth overcome systemic barriers and build pathways to success. Aligned with Baltimore's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan and Mayor Brandon Scott's Prioritizing Our Youth Initiative, the Strategy reflects Family League's commitment to racial equity and community-driven solutions.

Currently implemented through four grantee organizations — Baltimore Brothers, the Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement (MOAAME), New Vision Youth Services (NVYS), and The Choice Program at UMBC — the Strategy provides mentoring, education advocacy, workforce development, and barrier removal services to youth at risk of or already involved in the justice system. Collectively, these organizations support more than 1,300 youth across 79 schools, with a strong emphasis on building trusting relationships, re-engaging youth in school and work, and providing meaningful alternatives to street involvement.

## Evaluation Approach

To assess the impact, effectiveness, and areas for continuing to strengthen the Thriving Youth Strategy, Family League partnered with Community Science to conduct a comprehensive mixed-methods evaluation from 2021 to 2025. The evaluation included:

- A review of grantee documents and program materials;
- 16 stakeholder interviews and 3 youth focus groups, engaging a combined total of 52 participants including youth, program staff, mentors, organizational leaders, and external partners;
- Surveys completed by 20 parents and caregivers; and
- Analysis of secondary data provided by grantees on youth enrollment, program participation, and key outcome indicators.

This evaluation sought to understand the Strategy's reach, implementation quality, and its contributions to reducing recidivism, reconnecting youth to education and employment, and supporting positive youth development.

## Key Findings

### 1. Relationship-driven Engagement Fuels Participation

Youth participation and retention were strongest in programs that fostered consistent, trusting relationships between mentors and youth. Credible mentors — often with shared lived experiences — provided consistent support, accountability, and role modeling. Youth described these mentors as life-changing influences who encouraged goal setting, personal growth, and long-term engagement.

### 2. Holistic Support Removes Barriers and Builds Stability

Grantees addressed overlapping challenges faced by youth, such as housing instability, trauma, and family responsibilities. Wraparound supports, including mental health resources, transportation assistance, and family engagement, were critical to maintaining youth participation and promoting academic and workforce success.

### 3. Restorative Justice Provides Meaningful Alternatives

Restorative practices such as mediation circles, goal setting, and mentorship discussions created opportunities for youth to repair harm, build accountability, and avoid deeper involvement in the justice system. Youth were more likely to benefit from these practices when they felt emotionally ready and supported by consistent adult relationships.

#### 4. Workforce and Education Pathways Create Real Change

Youth who had access to paid work, stipends, academic advocacy, and career development opportunities were more likely to reconnect with school or work and reduce reliance on informal, high-risk street activities such as squeegeeing. Programs that combined job readiness training with mentorship and supportive services showed the greatest success in sustaining positive outcomes.

#### 5. Parents Reported High Satisfaction and Positive Youth Growth

Parents and caregivers observed improvements in their children's confidence, responsibility, and motivation, attributing these changes to trusted mentors and the program's supportive structure. Parents emphasized the value of open communication with staff and recognized the program as providing opportunities not otherwise available to their children.

### How Strategy Translates into Results

These findings demonstrate how the Strategy's relationship-centered, trauma-informed, and opportunity-driven approach has translated into tangible results for youth across Baltimore. Program data from 2021 to 2025 shows measurable progress in key areas that reflect both individual and community-level impact.

#### Outcomes Highlights

- More than 1,300 youth served, the majority of whom are African American males ages 15–17, across 79 schools;
- High rates of community support plan completion, particularly when youth co-created plans with mentors;
- Increased use of restorative justice practices and diversion pathways, reducing formal justice system involvement;
- Reconnection to school and employment, with the greatest success seen in programs offering paid opportunities and individualized supports;
- Reduction in street-based work, including squeegeeing, among youth provided with real economic alternatives; and
- High levels of satisfaction among youth and parents, with mentorship cited as the most influential factor in engagement and positive development.

#### Challenges and Lessons Learned

Despite strong results, systemic barriers such as financial hardship, housing instability, and transportation challenges continue to impact youth engagement and program outcomes. Youth disengagement often reflects unmet needs rather than unwillingness to participate. Programs that respond with empathy, flexibility, and practical supports are better equipped to foster long-term change. While data collection practices varied across programs, the evaluation provided a valuable opportunity to revisit and strengthen shared measurement strategies, supporting more consistent tracking of progress moving forward.

### Recommendations for Strengthening and Scaling the Thriving Youth Strategy

Building on the promising results of the Thriving Youth Strategy to date, the following recommendations are offered as considerations for Family League of Baltimore as it looks to strengthen, sustain, and scale this work. These recommendations reflect insights from youth, grantee organizations, and community stakeholders, and are intended to support continuous improvement and the long-term success of the Strategy.

**1. Expand Youth-centered, Trauma-informed Programming.** Grantees and youth emphasized the need to broaden programming to reach more young people, particularly those over 18 years old who continue to face barriers to education, employment, and stability. This includes expanding prevention efforts in schools and communities, integrating leadership development and peer mentorship, and embedding trauma-informed approaches that meet youth where they are.

**2. Invest in Staff Development, Retention, and Well-being.** Consistent, trusted mentors are central to youth engagement and success. To reduce burnout and turnover, grantee organizations recommended increasing investments in competitive wages, professional development, and wellness supports for staff, particularly those with lived experience who serve as credible mentors.

**3. Strengthen Academic, Workforce, and Economic Pathways.** Youth need real alternatives to risky environments, including paid work, job training, and academic advocacy. Expanding stipends, internships, entrepreneurial opportunities, and wraparound educational supports will help youth build the skills, confidence, and resources needed to pursue long-term stability.

**4. Align Data Collection and Strengthen Measurement Practices.** The evaluation highlighted the need for a shared, streamlined measurement framework that reflects program realities and strategic goals. Co-developing consistent, practical data collection tools with grantees will reduce reporting burdens, strengthen the ability to track progress, and support continuous learning across the Strategy.

**5. Deepen Cross-sector Partnerships for Holistic Support.** Youth success depends on coordinated support beyond individual programs. Expanding partnerships with schools, employers, housing providers, and legal services will build a more comprehensive ecosystem of care, ensuring that young people can access the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

**6. Secure Long-term, Flexible Funding to Sustain Impact.** Sustained investment is essential to program stability, staff retention, and scaling of effective practices. Grantees called for multi-year, flexible funding that enables them to invest in staff, expand reach, and maintain high-quality implementation — particularly as the Strategy grows to serve more youth.

**7. Support Responsible Replication and Continuous Learning.** As interest grows in replicating the model, expansion efforts must be accompanied by technical assistance, staffing resources, and infrastructure to maintain fidelity and impact. Ongoing evaluation, peer learning, and youth feedback mechanisms will be essential to ensuring quality and effectiveness as the Strategy evolves.

## Conclusion

The Thriving Youth Strategy lifts up evidence that when youth-serving programs are grounded in relationships, equity, and opportunity, they can disrupt cycles of juvenile recidivism and help young people build pathways to stability and success. Continued investment, collaboration, and a commitment to scaling what works will be essential to expanding the Strategy's impact. Through mentorship, restorative practices, and real opportunities, Baltimore's youth are not only staying engaged — they are envisioning brighter, more promising futures.

## Introduction

Family League of Baltimore (Family League) was established in 1991 and serves as the designated Local Management Board for Baltimore City, Maryland, working to improve the outcomes of children, youth, and families through coordinated, data-driven strategies. As a trusted convener and funder, Family League aligns public and private resources to support programs that are responsive to community needs and rooted in evidence-based practices.

With a firm commitment to racial equity, Family League applies an equity lens to all aspects of its work, from grantmaking and program oversight to organizational culture and systems change. Family League’s work seeks to dismantle systemic barriers that limit the possibilities for children, families, and communities. Family League focuses on four priority areas: Cradle to Career Education, Healthy Families, Economically Secure Families, and Safe and Thriving Families.

Through its roles in programming, coalition building, and public advocacy, Family League supports data-informed, community-driven solutions that foster sustainable improvements across Baltimore. Its efforts are especially focused on advancing equitable access to opportunity for historically marginalized populations, ensuring that race and geographic location do not determine life outcomes.

## Thriving Youth Strategy

Launched in 2021, the Thriving Youth Strategy (the Strategy) is a cornerstone of Family League’s youth development and public safety efforts. It is aimed at preventing and reducing juvenile justice system involvement and addressing the diverse needs of Baltimore’s youth. The Strategy focuses on youth ages 11–17 who are at risk of, or have already experienced, justice system involvement due to systemic barriers such as generational trauma, housing instability, and limited access to education and employment. The Strategy is aligned with the city of Baltimore’s *Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan*<sup>1</sup> and Mayor Brandon Scott’s *Prioritizing Our Youth Initiative*.<sup>2</sup> It emphasizes early intervention, holistic support, and trauma-informed care that interrupt cycles of system involvement and promote long-term well-being.

Currently, the Thriving Youth Strategy is being implemented with four funded grantees: Baltimore Brothers, the Mayor’s Office of African American Male Engagement (MOAAME), New Vision Youth Services (NVYS), and the Choice Program at University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). These organizations provide community-based programming, re-entry planning, mentorship, and barrier removal supports. In addition, they deliver services that help youth reconnect with education, employment, and stable support systems, while also addressing immediate safety and basic needs. By investing in youth-centered solutions and supporting coordinated citywide efforts, the Strategy contributes to reducing recidivism, increasing positive youth engagement, and building safer, more equitable communities across Baltimore.

## About the Thriving Youth Strategy Grantee Organizations

Each grantee in the Thriving Youth Strategy represents a diverse range of community-based and organizational models, linked to the local contexts and the needs of the Baltimore youth they serve (see Appendix A for a profile of each organization):



**Baltimore Brothers, Inc.**, founded in 2015 in response to the city’s call for healing and equity, is a community-based organization dedicated to reducing violence and exploitation among youth ages 11–17 and their families in Baltimore’s underserved communities, particularly those affected by violence and systemic inequities.



**The Mayor’s Office of African American Male Engagement (MOAAME)**<sup>3</sup> was established in 2018 to address the systemic challenges faced by African American males in Baltimore. As both a frontline service provider and a driver of policy change, MOAAME delivers mentorship, professional development, economic opportunity, and advocacy to empower Black boys and men across the city.

1 City of Baltimore. (2021). *Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan*. <https://mayor.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/Comprehensive%20Violence%20Prevention%20Plan%20-%20Final.pdf>

2 City of Baltimore. (2022). *Prioritizing Our Youth*. Mayor Brandon M. Scott’s Engagement Strategy. <https://mayor.baltimorecity.gov/prioritizing-our-youth>

3 The Mayor’s Office of African American Male Engagement (MOAAME) and New Vision Youth Services (NVYS) share a strong, collaborative partnership focused on supporting and empowering youth in Baltimore City. Through shared engagement strategies, both organizations frequently serve the same youth population. Throughout this report MOAAME and NVYS data are combined due to the high level of collaboration between the organizations, including shared participants and coordinated mentoring efforts. In the appendix there is a separate breakdown of the NVYS stakeholders.

**NEW VISION  
YOUTH SERVICES**



**New Vision Youth Services (NVYS)** was founded in 2005 to address the needs of high-risk youth in Baltimore. The organization’s vision is to create an alternative youth culture, through mentorship, restorative practices, and life skills training.

**The Choice Program at UMBC** was established in 1987 to reduce the involvement of Black and Latinx youth in Maryland’s juvenile justice system. Initially focused on monitoring, the program evolved into a mentoring model emphasizing human connection and support over surveillance.

## Shift in Programming to Meet Youth Needs

Although originally launched in 2020, Family League had to quickly pivot to provide grantee support to meet the needs of youth and families due to the shutdowns and social distancing requirements of the COVID-19 pandemic. This shift disrupted traditional relationship building and limited access to youth-serving organizations in Baltimore. Throughout the implementation of the Thriving Youth Strategy in 2021, several key adaptations were needed to better meet the evolving needs of youth that grantees serve. One of the most significant shifts was the deepening of mentorship models. All grantees recognized mentorship not only as a tool for engagement, but as a pathway to fostering identity, building purpose, and overall reducing youth recidivism. In response, some grantees began hiring alumni as peer mentors, creating a leadership pathway, and strengthening buy-in with youth participants.

Additionally, a couple of grantee organizations reframed youth behavior, particularly disengagement or resistance, as a reflection of unmet emotional and social needs. This led to the integration of trauma-informed practices, flexible expectations, and mental health support. Relationship-based engagement became more central, with a focus on trust, frequent check-ins, and consistent adult presence. Most organizations also began working around prevention, seeking to expand programming into schools and communities before justice system involvement occurs. To sustain this work, continued investments in staff development, retention, and professional growth are critical areas for ongoing investment. These shifts collectively reflect a move toward holistic, proactive, and youth-centered models of engagement.

## Purpose of the Evaluation

This report presents a comprehensive evaluation of the Thriving Youth Strategy, documenting its progress, lessons learned, and measurable outcomes since inception. It draws upon qualitative and quantitative data to assess the Strategy’s effectiveness in reducing juvenile recidivism, reconnecting youth to education and employment, and supporting holistic well-being.

To support this evaluation, Family League partnered with Community Science to assess the Strategy and develop recommendations to guide the next steps. The three key goals of the evaluation were to:

- Assess the impact and efficacy of the five-year investment in the Strategy to inform future funding opportunities.
- Enable the Family League to share key findings with the local community and state-level agencies, contributing to broader discussions on the role of diversion and mentoring programs.
- Develop evaluation products that provide an evidence-based basis for program improvement and advocacy, and highlight the impact of these programs on youth, families, and communities.

The evaluation also sought to examine a range of outcomes related to reducing juvenile recidivism through the Strategy, including:

- Retention of participants in programs and effective service delivery;
- Increased referrals to additional support programs;
- Development and completion of youth community support plans;
- Reduction of barriers to youth engagement and process;
- Decrease in squeegeeing<sup>4</sup> activity;
- Maintenance and re-establishment of connections to work and school;

<sup>4</sup> Squeegeeing refers to the practice where primarily young people approach vehicles at busy intersections offering to clean windshields in exchange for cash.

- Increased use of restorative justice as an alternative to formal juvenile justice involvement; and
- High levels of youth satisfaction with program services and engagement opportunities.

These findings intend to help the Family League and its grantees refine strategies, scale what works, and advocate for sustained investment in effective youth development approaches.

## Methods

Community Science used a mixed-methods approach to assess the implementation, effectiveness, and impact of the Thriving Youth Strategy – through document review, stakeholder interviews, youth focus groups, parent surveys, and secondary data analysis. This approach integrated qualitative and quantitative methods to capture both measurable outcomes of the Strategy and the contextual, lived experiences of youth, families, and grantee staff. The evaluation was designed to answer questions about grantee’s reach, youth outcomes and partnership effectiveness, and system-level contributions toward reducing juvenile justice involvement.

### Document Review

To assess how well implementation aligned with the Strategy’ goals, Community Science conducted a document review, examining materials such as grantees’ websites, grant applications, quarterly reports, and outreach content to understand each grantee’s model, community engagement strategies, and capacity to address youth needs. This approach allowed the evaluation team to contextualize findings and strengthen interpretations of the qualitative and quantitative data by drawing on public-facing and internal documents.

### Stakeholder Interviews and Youth Focus Groups

Community Science collaborated with the Family League and grantees to coordinate outreach and data collection for semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Between March and April 2025, the evaluation team conducted 19 sessions – 16 interviews and 3 focus groups – engaging a total of 52 individuals. The team conducted focus groups with current youth participants, while the interviews included past youth participants, grantee organization leadership, mentors, and external partners. Most sessions were held in person at grantee sites and lasted 60–90 minutes; only two were conducted virtually. See Exhibits 1 and 2 for a summary of interview and focus group participation.

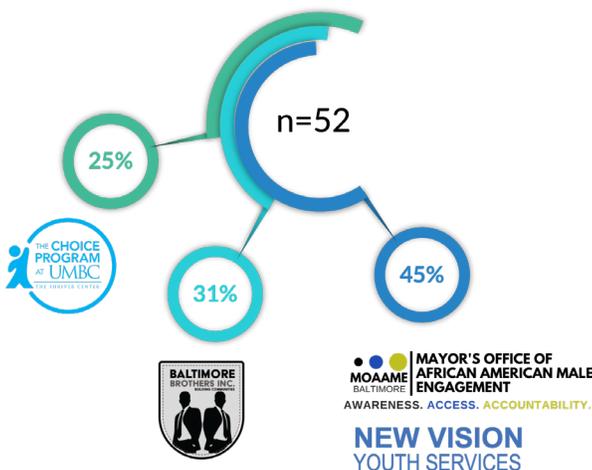


Exhibit 1. Interview and Focus Group Participation by Grantee

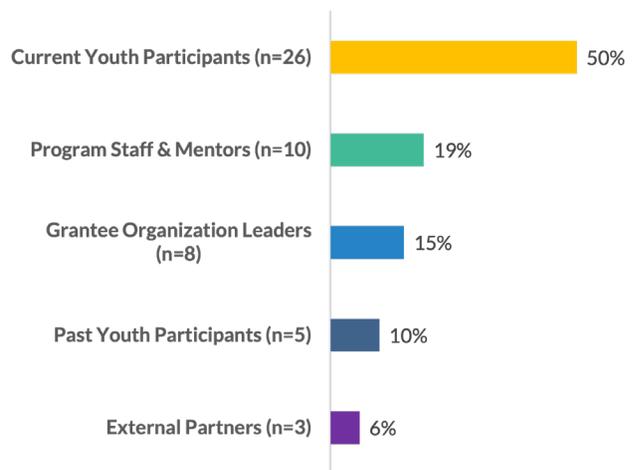


Exhibit 2. Composition of Interviews and Focus Groups n=52

## Interviews

Of the 19 data collection sessions, the team conducted 16 interviews (one-on-one and small groups) with 26 adult stakeholders, including grantee organization leaders, staff, mentors, and external partners. These interviews explored stakeholder perspectives on youth engagement, program implementation, outcomes, and opportunities for improvement. Sessions were audio-recorded with participants' consent and professionally transcribed for analysis. Thematic analysis was used to identify key patterns aligned with the evaluation's programmatic goals.

## Focus Groups

Focus groups served as the primary method of data collection with youth participants. The team conducted three focus groups with 26 young people, ages 11–17, across the three grantee organizations. The majority of participants were Black/African American males, with smaller representation from other racial groups and females — which mirrors the population of those served by the Strategy. See Exhibit 3, 4, and 5 for a detailed breakdown of focus group participants.

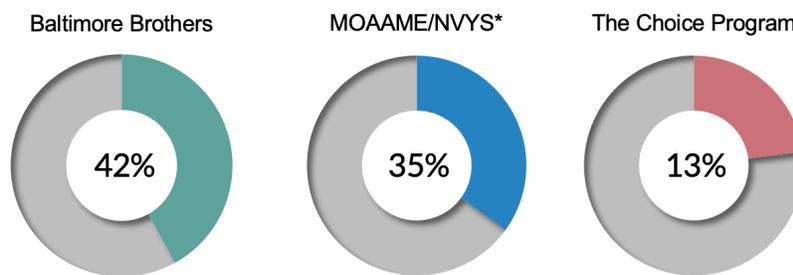


Exhibit 3. Youth Focus Group Program of Participation Breakdown

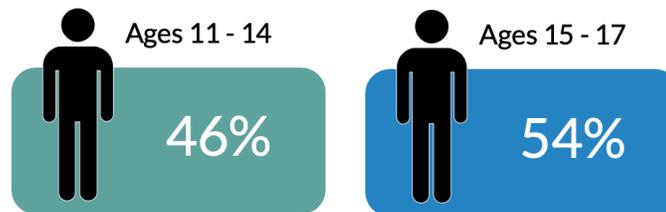


Exhibit 4. Youth Focus Group Age Breakdown

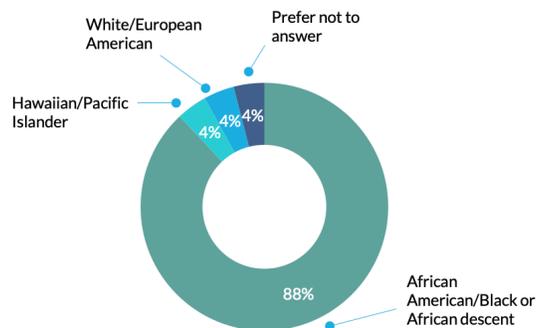


Exhibit 5. Youth Focus Group Race and Ethnicity Breakdown

Youth focus groups were designed with a youth-centered approach that prioritized trust, comfort, and authentic engagement. The evaluation team created a safe and affirming environment where participants felt respected and heard. Sessions incorporated rapport-building strategies — such as fidget toys and interactive warm-up activities. They also included comfort-

enhancing techniques like scenario-based questions, informal language, and a strengths-based tone. As a token of appreciation for their time and insights, each youth participant received a \$30 Visa gift card at the conclusion of the focus group.

All interviews and focus group sessions were recorded with participants' consent, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed by the evaluation team using thematic analysis. We applied both deductive codes from the evaluation framework and inductive codes that emerged from participant responses.<sup>5</sup> Core themes included trust building, trauma-informed care, mentorship, and systems navigation. Coding was conducted systematically, and frequency tables were used to highlight patterns across stakeholders. To enhance analytic depth, we tracked the frequency of codes mentioned, counting each occurrence even if repeated by the same individual. This approach allowed for a richer understanding of which codes carried the most weight or significance across the dataset.<sup>6,7</sup> While participant-level counts indicated how widespread a theme was, frequency of counts offer insight into what mattered most to stakeholders. This method helped ensure that the findings were grounded in the voices of participants while aligned with the strategic objectives of the Thriving Youth Strategy.

## Parent Survey

To incorporate parent and caregiver insights, Community Science collaborated with grantees to administer a brief electronic survey in March 2025. The survey was co-developed with the Family League team to align with key learning goals. Parents who completed the survey received a \$20 Visa gift card for their participation. The survey was programmed using Qualtrics and administered via a QR code to parents or caregivers whose child was currently enrolled in one of the four community-based programs. See Exhibit 6 for a summary of parent participation.

The survey consisted of seven questions, three open ended and four closed ended. The open ended questions asked:

- Would you recommend the program to other parents or caregivers?
- What did you like most/least about your child's experience in the program?
- How, if at all, have you been involved in the program?

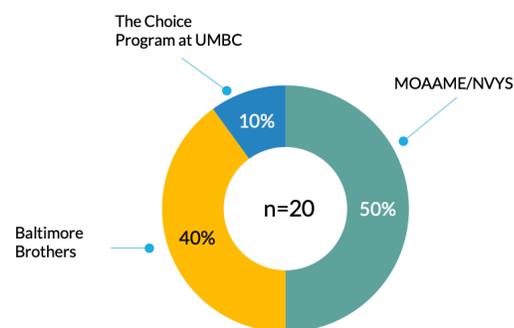


Exhibit 6. Summary of Parent Participation

Note: During the data collection day, not all parents were present or available to complete the survey. As a result, the response count is lower than the total number of youth participants in the focus groups.

## Secondary Data

Community Science also conducted a secondary data analysis using administrative data provided by the Family League, covering 2021 through 2025, using standardized performance measures reported by Thriving Youth program grantees. These measures provided insight into service delivery and participant outcomes across multiple sites. Data was collected using a structured framework that defined specific key indicators aligned with the evaluation. These performance measures were categorized into three core domains:

- What and How Much We Do
  - Number of new youth participants enrolled in community-based support
  - Total number of youth participants served during the reporting period
- How Well We Do It
  - Percentage of youth who created a community support plan within 90 days of enrollment
  - Percentage of youth re-engaged in school or employed at discharge
  - Percentage of youth served by restorative justice practices (e.g., youth courts, mediation circles)
- Is Anyone Better Off?

5 Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2024). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (5th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

6 Namey, E., Guest, G., Thairu, L., & Johnson, L. (2008). Data reduction techniques for large qualitative data sets. In G. Guest & K. M. MacQueen (Eds.), Handbook for Team-based Qualitative Research (pp. 137–161). AltaMira Press.

7 Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). Applied Thematic Analysis. Sage.

- Percentage of youth who completed their community support plan by end of services
- Percentage of youth served by alternatives to formal justice processing
- Percentage of youth who maintained or gained connection to work or school at discharge

Community Science conducted a descriptive analysis to examine service quality, effectiveness of early interventions, and youth progress throughout the program. By integrating performance data with qualitative insights and thematic coding, we could cross-check the findings and assess the consistency of program delivery and outcomes.

It is important to acknowledge that differences in data collected across years and among grantees limited our ability to make direct year-to-year or grantee-to-grantee comparisons. As a result, our analysis focused on reporting the frequency and percentage of participants using the data available from each grantee, and adapting calculations, to include the maximum amount of data. All quantitative data were entered and cleaned using IBM SPSS Statistics to ensure accuracy and consistency in our descriptive analysis. This analysis only includes youth ages 11–17.

## Findings

Across Baltimore, grantees enrolled a high volume of youth in community-based supports, maintaining services through school partnerships, outreach, and referrals. The findings are divided into three main sections that correspond with the evaluation central performance areas. Each section addresses a specific aspect of program performance and outcomes, including:

- **What and How Much We Do.** This section presents data on program reach and includes a quantitative breakdown and highlights trends in participation. It also examines how well programs engaged and retained youth, focusing on the quality of relationships, mentorships, and factors that drive ongoing participation.
- **How Well We Do It.** This section assesses the effectiveness of program implementation, including community plan development, and details how programs supported youth in regaining connections to school and work, life skills, and alternatives to justice system involvement.
- **Is Anyone Better Off?** This section focuses on outcomes for youth, such as completion of support plans, reduced risky behavior, maintaining school and work engagement, as well as positive change among participants.
- **Lessons Learned.** This section synthesizes key insights from the evaluation, highlighting what worked well and what challenges remain.

### What and How Much We Do: Understanding the Reach of the Strategy

Baltimore Brothers, Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement, New Vision Youth Services, and The Choice Program enrolled and supported a diverse group of young people, with a strong emphasis on building and sustaining engagement over time. Programs that centered youth voice, provided emotional connection, and responded to individual needs saw higher levels of ongoing participation. Peer influence also played a critical role, with youth drawing motivation from others who successfully navigated similar challenges. Collectively, these strategies reflect a relational, responsive approach to youth engagement that goes beyond service delivery to create lasting impact.

#### Number of New Youth Enrolled and Total Youth Served

The Thriving Youth Strategy served 1,324 participants between June 30, 2020 to July 1, 2025 across 79 schools in Baltimore. Although the Strategy focused primarily on ages 11–17, this total includes 407 youth ages 18–25. The majority of the participants were African American (93%), and male (85%). The majority of youth served was primarily ages 15-17 (42%) but also supported youth ages 18 - 25, suggesting a need to expand services to young people of the age of 18. This suggests a need to expand services to young people over the age of 18. In 2024 and 2025, three of the four grantees reported lower new enrollment, however, the total number of youth participants served remained consistent, suggesting that during those years more students returned from previous years. Students who consistently engaged in the program for multiple years demonstrated lower recidivism compared to those only attending one year. See Appendix 1 for new youth and total served by year and grantee.

Source of referral to the program was reported for only 67% (N = 1,003) of the sample. Most of the youth participants were

referred by community organizations (29%), Baltimore City Public Schools (10%), self-referral (11%), and the Department of Juvenile Justice (8%).

## Program Engagement and Youth Retention

Youth engagement and retention were driven by strong, trust-based relationships. Insights from grantee leaders and staff, as well as youth, revealed that connection, consistency, and care were central to keeping youth involved. This section highlights four key factors that sustained participation across grantee organizations: 1) youths stayed engaged when mentors were relatable, accessible, and fostered accountability; 2) regular check-ins, follow-through, and availability built emotional safety; 3) authentic care and respect helped youth feel seen and supported; and 4) programs that adapted to youth needs and created a sense of community kept participants engaged over time. Youth engagement and retention were driven by strong, trust-based relationships. Insights from grantee leaders and staff, as well as youth, revealed that connection, consistency, and care were central to keeping youth involved. This section highlights four key factors that sustained participation across grantee organizations: 1) youth stayed engaged when mentors were relatable, accessible, and fostered accountability; 2) regular check-ins, follow-through, and availability built emotional safety; 3) authentic care and respect helped youth feel seen and supported; and 4) programs that adapted to youth needs and created a sense of community kept participants engaged over time.

See Exhibit 7 for list of the most prominent qualitative themes that arose during the data analysis related to program engagement and youth retention.

**Mentorship Through Connection.** Youth engagement was the strongest when mentorship was rooted in personal connection, lived experience, and sense of belonging (N = 39, 26%). Baltimore Brothers, MOAAME, and NVYS consistently emphasized being accessible beyond scheduled hours, incorporating youth into personal and community life, and fostering trust through real-life relatability. In the Choice Program, youth also emphasized how routine conversations with mentors helped foster accountability and belief in their own goals. As one youth shared:

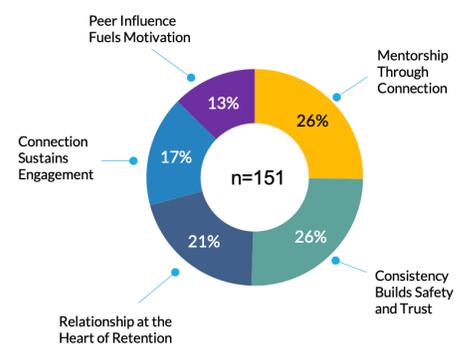


Exhibit 7. Key Themes Regarding Program Engagement and Youth Retention

*“They motivate us to accomplish our goals. When we first join, we make a goal chart. They don’t let us forget about what we said we’d do.” (Youth Participant)*

External partners also emphasized the importance of sustained, meaningful relationships and viewed credible mentors as trusted adults who served as a bridge to keeping young people engaged.

*“Youth value having a supportive adult who’s not a teacher or parent, someone to talk to regularly.” (External Partner)*

*“What sustains engagement is relationship building and our holistic approach. Staff and mentors connect with youth, siblings, parents, and school staff.” (External Partner)*

**Consistency Builds Safety and Trust.** Across programs, consistent presence, communication, and follow-up from mentors and staff were repeatedly stated as the foundation of youth engagement and emotional safety (N = 35, 23%). Staff and mentors described a wide range of practices that helped build consistency, including home visits, academic tracking, goal setting routines, and 24/7 availability. Youth were more likely to stay connected when they knew someone would check-in, show up, and stick with them through setbacks.<sup>8</sup> This level of consistency helped build good habits, trust, and the belief that change was possible. Many interview and focus group participants discussed how this support created a structured, safe space where youth could focus on growth and stability.

8 Jones, K. V., Gowdy, G., & Griffith, A. N. (2024). Why not all three? Combining the Keller, Rhodes, and Spencer models two decades later to equitably support the health and well-being of minoritized youth in mentoring programs. *Youth, 4*(3), 1348-1363.

*“Consistency is critical. A lot of these young men have been let down repeatedly, so when they see we’re there for them ... they begin to trust us.” (Grantee Organization Leader)*

*“They don’t just call, they show up. You can reach them anytime. It’s their personal number, not some office line.” (Past Youth Participant)*

*“They congratulate us when we’re doing well, something not many people do.” (Youth Participant)*

**Relationships at the Heart of Retention.** Continued participation was often fueled by young people’s strong emotional bonds with mentors (N = 32, 21%). Youth emphasized that authentic care, accessibility, and accountability from staff and mentors made them feel seen and supported in ways they weren’t used to in other programs. Several grantee organization leaders and mentors reported that youth engagement increased when mentors acted as role models, making young people feel respected, seen, and supported in meaningful ways. Across all grantee organizations, youth stated that their relationship with their mentor was the primary reason for continued participation in the program. Youth also reported that they felt emotionally connected to program staff (e.g., mentors, staff, leadership) because of the consistent structure they provided.

*“Being transparent and honest [when asked what drives youth engagement and retention]. These kids have been lied to so much that they struggle to trust.” (Mentor)*

*“Our mentors and program staff act as surrogate parents, big brothers, and big sisters. Without these relationships, youth won’t engage, no matter what services are available to them.” (Grantee Organization Leader)*

*“Once you put your trust in them, they’ve got you. They helped me get a job, my license, and now I can take care of my family.” (Past Youth Participant)*

**Connection Sustains Engagement.** Program staff reported that youth were most engaged when they had strong, personal bonds with mentors who listened and responded with flexibility (N = 25, 17%). Staff also reported that meaningful engagement began with emotional rapport, and youth confirmed they stayed involved in the program because they felt cared for, understood, and supported – sometimes for the first time in their lives. Baltimore Brothers, MOAAME, NVYS, and The Choice Program prioritized relational consistency, adapted to individual needs including family support, and creating spaces that felt like community. These efforts built the kind of safety and connection that kept youth engaged overtime. Below are example quotes:

*“Even when someone comes in moody or hesitant, the staff and mentors take the time to connect with them.” (Past Youth Participant)*

*“Real change happens through relationships ... people trust people.” (External Partner)*

*“We learn about needs through ongoing conversations, not just forms.” (Mentor)*

At Baltimore Brothers, for instance, youth engagement begins with trust and staff do more than provide services, they build real relationships rooted in care and presence. Whether it’s checking in, or simply listening, these everyday acts of support help youth feel safe, valued, and seen.

**“They Care” — Baltimore Brothers — Theme: Relationship Drives Engagement**

Many youth shared that Baltimore Brothers was the first place they truly felt seen, heard, and supported. At the heart of its engagement strategy is connection built through empathy, consistency, and trust. Mentors and staff described their roles as deeply relational. One mentor shared, *“We act as a service bridge. When youth start falling off, we investigate why and try to address it.”* Another staff member reflected, *“Many youth in the city deal with pain and trauma, and I play more of a motherly role.”*

These relationships began with emotional presence, checking in, listening without judgement, and responding to what youth were actually experiencing. This everyday care created a space where youth felt safe, respected, and valued. One youth participant recalled, *“They helped me get into a tutoring program after school, and one of the mentors gave me a ride when my mom couldn’t.”* Small but meaningful acts such as offering a ride, showing up when they needed them most, and listening to them made a big difference. It’s not rules or requirements that bring youth back, it’s relationships. As one youth simply put it: *“They care.”*

**Peer Influence Fuels Motivation.** Lastly, peer mentorship, shared lived experiences, and social reinforcement played a key role in youth motivation across the Thriving Youth programs (N = 20, 13%). Youth were more likely to engage when supported by trusted peers, while older youth often transitioned into mentor roles, modeling positive change. Seeing peers succeed inspired youth to believe in their own potential. Grantees stated that one effective strategy for increasing youth retention was sharing peer transformation stories and expanding peer mentoring roles. As represented in the following quotes, peer influence was critical component of program engagement and retention:

*“My brother was in the program, and he doesn’t squeegee anymore, he works for Baltimore City Department of Public Works.”* (Youth Participant)

*“Credible mentors who’ve been incarcerated share the reality of it, debunking the glorification of prison life.”* (Mentor)

*“We’re launching the Be More Shine Platform to showcase success stories and raise support.”* (Grantee Organization Leader)

## Parent and Caregiver Perspective: Trust, Impact, and Opportunities for Growth

Parents and caregivers shared positive feedback about their children’s experiences in the program, reporting high levels of satisfaction with the services provided and impact on their children’s development. Most respondents indicated they learned about the program through personal referrals, such as friends, family members, or trusted community members. This highlights the importance of community trust and word-of-mouth networks in reaching families and encouraging enrollment.

When asked what they valued most about their child’s participation, parents consistently emphasized personal growth and behavioral improvements. Many described how their children had developed greater responsibility, demonstrated more respectful behavior at home and in school, and showed increased motivation. Parents attributed these changes to their child’s connection with positive adult role models in the program. These observations align closely with the program’s emphasis on mentorship, structured engagement opportunities, and relationship building as core strategies for youth development. Parents also highlighted the value of clear and open communication with staff, such as being kept informed about upcoming engagement activities and opportunities to provide feedback. Many expressed gratitude for the ways in which the program created meaningful opportunities for their children, opportunities that they felt would not be otherwise available.

When asked about areas for improvement, many parents expressed gratitude for the impact of the program on their child’s confidence, awareness, and positive outlook. One parent suggested increasing the frequency of program sessions. Overall, the parent and caregiver feedback affirmed that the program is meeting critical needs for youth and families in Baltimore. It also reinforced the value of community-based, relationship-centered approaches in reducing juvenile recidivism.

## How Well We Do It: Understanding Program Effectiveness

This section highlights how grantee organizations implemented the Thriving Youth Strategy, with a focus on how well they supported youth in achieving personal, academic, and workforce goals. Drawing on grantee organizations’ staff and youth insights, the findings highlight strategies that foster accountability, stability, and long-term engagement through youth-centered, relationship-driven approaches. This section illustrates key factors that contributed to effective programming and sustained impact: 1) youth engagement increased when community support plans were co-developed; 2) grantees supported youth re-entry in school and employment by combining advocacy, workforce preparation, and wraparound services; 3) life skills, job readiness training, and education advocacy helped youth manage overlapping demands at school, work, and home; and 4) success in restorative justice models depended on youth readiness, consistent outreach, and environments that supported behavior change.

### Co-created Community Support Plans Foster Ownership and Engagement

Community support plans<sup>9</sup> played a vital role in increasing youth engagement, accountability, and long-term goal-setting. When youth co-developed their plans — whether focused on academic, personal, or professional goals — they were more likely to take ownership of their progress. Mentors emphasized the importance of shifting from doing things for youth to guiding them through the process. This collaborative approach builds trust, promotes independence, and transforms support from a one-sided effort into a shared journey.

Mentors used structured tools such as SMART goals, milestone tracking, and goal charts to make goals feel tangible and achievable. Regular check-ins helped youth stay focused and allowed plans to be adjusted as needed. Youth appreciated this ongoing support and described it as empowering. As one mentor shared:

*“We’ve shifted from fixing everything for youth to guiding them, so they initiate actions themselves. Our goal is to set them up for independence.” (Mentor)*

Both staff and youth noted that having goals written down helped clarify direction, break larger ambitions into actionable steps, and increase follow-through.

*“Youth often have ideas but need guidance to clarify or break goals down into achievable steps.” (External Partner)*

*“My plan is to be in a different place next year.” (Youth Participant)*

The number of youth participants who created a community support plan increased across programs over time, though data gaps remain. In 2024, Baltimore Brothers and NVYS reported that more than 70% of youth created a plan, while the Choice Program reported 44%. By January 2025, the Choice Program and NVYS reported that 80% or more of youth had created a plan. However, Baltimore Brothers did not have enough data in 2025 to calculate this percentage at the time of this report’s data collection, which is part of their ongoing reporting. See Appendix B: Exhibit 2 for the number and percentage of youth who created a community support plan and plan details.

### Re-engagement in School and Work Through Holistic Support

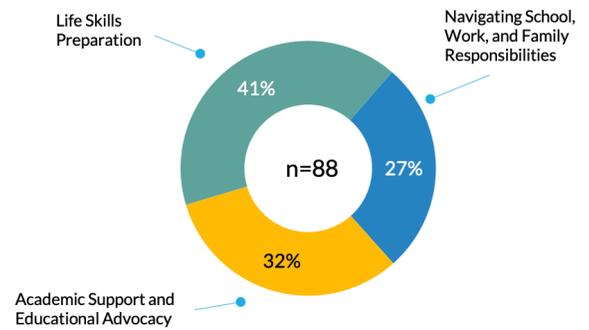
As part of Family League’s Thriving Youth Strategy, grantee organizations aimed to re-engage disconnected youth in school and support their transition into the workforce. From 2021–2025, outcomes varied across organizations and years, reflecting differences in program scale, implementation conditions, and youth needs (see Appendix B: Exhibit 2 for details).

Due to missing data from 2021-2022 and early 2025, this analysis focused exclusively on 2024 data. Re-engagement rates in school or employment varied across programs. In 2024, MOAAME reported a re-engagement rate of 74%, New Vision Youth Services reported 54%, Baltimore Brothers reported 11%, and The Choice Program reported 2%. These variations reflect differences in program model, intensity of support, and the specific needs of the youth served.

<sup>9</sup>While referred to collectively in this report as “Community Support Plans,” it is important to note that organizations use different names and formats for these tools. For example, MOAAME refers to them as “Personal Growth Plans,” while Baltimore Brothers, the Choice Program, and NVYS use “Community Support Plan.” Despite naming differences, the tools serve a similar purpose in supporting youth development.

To better understand how grantees supported re-engagement, three key life skills and workforce preparation; academic support and advocacy; and navigating school, work, and family responsibilities. These themes (see Exhibit 8) highlight the multi-dimensional support that made re-engagement possible and sustainable.

**Life Skills and Workforce Preparation.** Youth participants consistently valued the program’s role in teaching practical life and job readiness skills, such as resume building, money management, and job interview preparation (N = 36, 41%). These supports offered clear pathways to alternatives to street-based work and mentors supported youth emotionally and practically, through life coaching and helping navigate or transition into adulthood. Grantee organization leaders stated that preparing youth for professional environments and teaching real-world skills was critical to providing alternatives to street involvement. Grantees also provided training in conflict resolution, time management, and workplace expectations. Youth, mentors, and organizational leaders shared the following insights about the value of life skills and workforce preparation:



**Exhibit 8. Key Themes Regarding Youth Re-engagement in School and Work**

*“Fun activities help, but also focusing on life skills, such as conflict resolution, literacy, and everyday skills they may not learn at home.” (Mentor)*

*“We build self-efficacy by helping youth identify resources, apply for things themselves, and advocate constructively for themselves.” (Grantee Organization Leader)*

*“We sit down and learn how to apply ourselves, how to be noticeable for jobs, how to speak, dress, and conduct ourselves professionally.” (Past Youth Participant)*

**Academic Support and Educational Advocacy.** Academic support was consistently described as a critical function of youth-serving programs (N = 28, 32%). Staff and mentors provided tailored assistance such as tutoring referrals, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) authorized school coordination,<sup>10</sup> and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation. Youth participants and staff alike emphasized that educational advocacy extends beyond homework help, it involves tracking performance, communicating with schools, and reinforcing the value of education even when it’s not immediately relevant to a youth’s goal. In some cases, mentors served as a liaison directly communicating with teachers and counselors to support youth. See below for example quotes:

*“If they are school age, they must be engaged in school. We have FERPA waivers to communicate with schools about attendance, behavior, and performance.” (Mentor)*

*“We work closely with schools to track attendance and academic performance. If a student is struggling, we step in immediately.” (Grantee Organization Leader)*

*“They called my school, talked to my teacher, and helped me stay on track.” (Youth Participant)*

**Navigating School, Work, and Family Responsibilities.** Grantee organization staff and external partners reported that many youth participants struggled with individual challenges, and also caregiving roles, or basic unmet needs like transportation or childcare (N = 24, 27%). Youth often faced complex, overlapping responsibilities, such as school demands, caregiving duties, employment needs, and home instability. Mentors and staff highlighted that without addressing these competing pressures, academic or workforce progress was difficult to sustain. Programs reported that the flexible support, transportation, wraparound family services, and emotional support they provided helped youth maintain their school or work connection.

<sup>10</sup> FERPA-authorized school coordination refers to the sharing of student education records with appropriate consent or legal authorization under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to support coordination between schools and external programs or agencies.

*"If a youth is struggling, we check in and hold them accountable. We also help them access alternative education options if traditional school isn't working." (Mentor)*

*"We also work with their families because if the home environment doesn't improve, it's hard for the youth to stay on the right path." (Grantee Organization Leader)*

## Restorative Justice and Juvenile Diversion

Youth success in diversion and restorative justice programs depends on both their readiness to engage and the stability of their environment.<sup>11</sup> Trauma, mistrust, and life stressors often impact youth participation, even when services are available. Mentors stressed the need for patience, outreach, and supportive structures that go beyond punishment. Restorative practices like mediation, goal setting, and reflection helped youth build accountability and repair relationships, offering meaningful alternatives to juvenile justice system involvement.

Two key themes emerged regarding restorative justice and juvenile diversion: youth readiness shapes program impact (N = 24, 60%) and restorative practices foster accountability (N = 16, 40%).

Across grantees, staff reported using restorative justice practices, such as youth court, mediation, and restorative circles, to provide community-based alternatives that promote accountability and healing while reducing justice system involvement. Baltimore Brothers delivered restorative justice services to all youth participants in 2023 and 2024. The Choice program served all youth in 2023 and 90% in 2024 through restorative justice services. NVYS reported that about half of the youth participating in 2024 and a third in 2025 participated in restorative justice services. See Exhibit 6 for the number and percentage of youth served through restorative justice by grantee and year.

**Youth Readiness Shapes Program Impact.** The effectiveness of juvenile diversion and restorative justice programs is closely tied to a youth's individual readiness to engage with services (N = 24, 60%). Staff and youth described a continuum of readiness influenced by trauma, instability, trust, and motivation. While programs offer high-quality support, including alternative to arrests, these efforts were less impactful when youth were not emotionally prepared to participate. Both staff and youth stated that restorative and diversion strategies only work when the environment supports behavior change. Mentors emphasized that readiness must be met with sustained outreach and participant accountability, rather than assuming immediate youth reform. Below represents sample quotes:

*"It's a long-term process. It may not prevent all arrests, but it can break the cycle of back-to-back incidents." (Mentor)*

*"It's really about how much you want it. They open the door, and you just have to walk through it." (Past Youth Participant)*

*"Some want to do it right and just need support. Others aren't ready, and we help them meet legal requirements." (Mentor)*

Mentors emphasized building trust, maintaining consistent outreach, and meeting youth where they were created conditions for growth.

<sup>11</sup> McMickens, C. L., Jackson, N., Williams, K., Reese, L., Hardeman, L. S., & Vinson, S. Y. (2024). Justice-involved youth: Support for community and family interventions. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics*, 33(4), 557-571.

**“You Can’t Force Readiness” – MOAAME & NVYS Vignette – Theme: Readiness Shape Program Impact**

In restorative justice work, success often hinges not on the resources offered, but on whether a young person is ready to receive them. For youth navigating trauma, instability, and survival, readiness isn’t a switch, it’s a process. *“You have to want to do the work,”* said a credible mentor with NVYS. *“Communication with your children is everything. If you’re not connected, you won’t know what they’re going through.”* One youth who entered MOAAME through the squeegee program shared, *“Some days, I just don’t want to be around people, but I still come in. I have a few go-to people for support.”* Even with programming available, internal and external stressors often shaped engagement. Mentors emphasized the role of consistent outreach. *“Many of them grow up in a four- or five-block radius and never see beyond it,”* said one mentor. *“Their environments normalize negative experiences.”* For these youth, participation is not only about showing up — it’s about rebuilding belief in something different. *“Youth may have appointments for services, but they encounter roadblocks,”* noted a MOAAME leader. *“That’s why our navigators accompany them to ensure they receive the services they need.”* It’s not enough to assume readiness — staff must create conditions where youth can begin to trust again. Readiness isn’t linear. *“Some youth take feedback personally and step away for a while,”* said a MOAAME mentor. *“But they usually return ... they come back and say, ‘Thank you for saying that.’”* The door stays open, and growth comes in its own time.

**Restorative Practices Foster Accountability (N = 16, 40%).** Staff, mentors, and youth described restorative approaches that allow for progression over time such as mediation circles, apology letters, mentorship discussions, and tiered support. These practices were especially effective when coupled with emotional support and consistent check-ins. Grantees reported significant success in helping youth take ownership of their actions, repair harm, and strengthen relationships. Rather than punishment, youth were engaged in structural processes, such as goal setting, conflict resolution, and service-based reflection, that build trust and promote behavioral change. See below for example quotes:

*“Youth write apology letters, have real conversations about choices, and participation in mediation with families and peers.”* (Grantee Organization Leader)

*“It gives us structure and alternatives.”* (Youth Participant)

*“We address conflicts among youth and help them resolve issues constructively.”* (Mentor)

## Is Anyone Better Off?

This section explores what makes the Thriving Youth Strategy effective in helping youth build positive pathways through consistent mentorship and real opportunities for education and employment. Drawing from grantee data and youth perspectives, we highlight key factors that contributed to program impact: 1) youth were more likely to complete their support plan when given clear structure and consistent encouragement; 2) ongoing support helped youth navigate setbacks and stay focused on progress; 3) diversion programs helped shift youth away from risky environments toward long-term growth; 4) systemic barriers affected youths ability to full engage in diversion pathways; 5) some youth turned to squeegeeing to meet basic needs; 6) participation increased when programs provided job placements, stipends, and access to career pathways; and 7) programs that responded with empathy, structure, and consistent support promoted sustained engagement.

### Completion of Community Support Plans

In the previous section we discussed how youth were more likely to complete their community support plan when youth collaborated with mentors to set meaningful goals. In this section, we focus on youth who completed their plans by the time they were discharged from the program. Completion of these plans indicates successful engagement and follow-through in services.

Baltimore Brothers reported that 100% of youth completed their plans in 2022–2023, and 95% in 2024. MOAAME reported 43% of youth completing their plan in 2023, 77% in 2024, and 79% in 2025. NVYS reported 88% of youth completed their plan in 2023, 74% in 2024, and 50% in 2025. The Choice Program reported that 73% of youth completed their plan in 2022 but declined in subsequent years. Due to missing data in 2021-2022 and 2025, the total number of youth who completed their plan could not be provided. In 2024, 187 youth completed their plan across all four grantee organizations. See Appendix B: Exhibit 3 for the percentage and number of participants who completed their plan by grantee and year.

**Ongoing Support Strengthens Accountability.** Grantee organizations focused on ongoing communication, goal tracking, and regular check-ins created stronger relationships with youth, which in turn encouraged youth to complete their community support plans (N = 21, 49%). Mentors served as coaches and long-term support systems, available outside of program hours, at schools, and through home visits. Youth reported that knowing someone was consistently “checking in” helped them stay aligned and motivated to reach the goals in their plan, particularly during difficult times. See example quotes below:

*“We track their growth over time, showing them where they started and how far they have come.” (Mentors)*

*“Our mentors always ask us, ‘What is your why?’ That helps us stay focused.” (Youth Participant)*

*“I ensure that mentors complete their one-on-ones, group mentoring sessions, and other required engagements.” (Grantee Organization Leader)*

Over time, what begins as a program requirement becomes a source of motivation and ownership. Mentors helped youth stay aligned with their goals through personalized planning and steady encouragement.

**“They Don’t Let You Give Up” – The Choice Program Vignette – Theme: Ongoing Support Strengthens Accountability**

The completion of community support plans at the Choice Program isn’t just about checking off tasks, it’s a steady, relational process grounded in structure, consistency, and care. Mentors described how their ongoing presence in schools, homes, and the community helps youth stay aligned with their goals. *“We create monthly service plans with long-term goals and three short-term goals, updating them regularly,”* one job coach shared, emphasizing how structure guides both planning and follow-through. But it’s the follow-up, not just the form, that makes the biggest difference. *“We talk about school every time we meet. I ask specific questions, follow up on academic goals, and reinforce the importance of education,”* another mentor said. For youth, these consistent check-ins become a powerful motivator. *“When we first join, we make a goal chart. They don’t let us forget about what we said we’d do,”* recalled one participant. Even when youth initially resisted support, mentors stayed engaged. *“I avoided my mentor at first, but eventually gave in and found it was okay,”* one youth admitted. *“The events helped change my view.”* This persistence, showing up, often transforms the plan from a program requirement into something personal and empowering.

**Use of Alternatives to Justice System Processing**

Programs that offered paid alternatives such as job training, mentorship, and entrepreneurial support created meaningful pathways away from risky behavior, such as squeegeeing. While structural challenges persist, youth who received constant support and opportunity were more likely to create lasting change. When trusted mentors offered paid alternatives like job training or internships, youth transitioned away from risky environments toward alternatives that produce long-term success. Two themes emerged surrounding the use of alternatives to justice system processing: systemic barriers to diversion success (N = 26, 50%) and opening doors to real opportunities (N = 26, 50%).

Between 2023 and 2025, Baltimore Brothers diverted 100% of participating youth, 65 in 2023, 58 in 2024, and 23 in early 2025. The Choice Program also diverted all youth serving during that time, including 38 in 2023, 18 in 2024, and 17 in early 2025. MOAAME diverted 33 youth in 2024 and expanded to 124 in early 2025. NVYS maintained a 100% diversion rate, serving 72 youth in 2024, and 21 in early 2025. These findings reflect a strong and sustained commitment to providing trauma-informed, community-driven alternatives to formal justice processing.

**Systemic Barriers to Diversion Success.** Despite the availability of restorative justice pathways and diversion programs, youth faced systemic barriers (e.g., housing instability, lack of transportation) that limited successful engagement and follow-through (N = 26, 50%). Across grantees, staff also described challenges related to infrastructure (e.g., funding gaps, referral time), youth readiness (e.g., trauma, trust, discipline), and family instability. Mentors and staff noted that diversion only works when the environment is stable enough to support it and when youth are given equitable access to responsive, coordinated care. While programs showed impact, these barriers undermined full participation and long-term change. Representative quotes are below:

*“The system feels like it’s set up for us to fail and sometimes you have no choice.” (Youth Participant)*

*“Many youths struggle due to their economic situation. We need funding to provide them with experiences beyond their environment.” (External Partner)*

*“Access isn’t the issue, it’s follow-through. Youth may have appointments for services, but they encounter roadblocks, like offices being closed or delays in processing applications.” (Grantee Organization Leader)*

**Opening Doors to Real Opportunities: “We Hustle Because We Have To.”** Youth street work is about survival, not crime, as young people navigate limited options due to age or systemic barriers (N = 26, 50%). Staff echoed this, calling for sustained investments in youth employment, barrier reduction (e.g., age restrictions, transportation), or paid alternatives (e.g., job training, youth employment, entrepreneurial support) to divert youth from informal work to structured opportunities that align with their long-term goals. Successful diversion hinges on replacing risk-based survival strategies with meaningful economic pathways, paired with emotional support and trust building.<sup>12</sup> Some youth reported that they transitioned away from street work after engaging with mentors or being inspired by peers. See below for example quotes:

*“People just think we out there wildin’, but sometimes that’s the only way to make money when no one else is helping.” (Youth Participant)*

*“Some are selling food, and they make really good food, supporting youth who want to start a small business would be beneficial.” (Past Youth Participant)*

*“The number of youth squeegeeing has dropped significantly because the young people in our program have alternatives, and that is why they are choosing other paths.” (Grantee Organization Leader)*

## Maintained or Gained Connection to Work or School at Discharge

In the previous section, we discussed youth that re-engaged with school or obtained employment. In this section, we focus on youth that were employed or enrolled in school when they were discharged from the program. Youth were more likely to stay connected to school and work when programs provided both practical opportunities and meaningful relationships. Paid options like job placements, stipends, and trade school success supported the transition from informal work to stable pathways. When youth felt supported and respected, they were more likely to stay engaged with school and work.

The Thriving Youth Strategy supports youth in building and sustaining meaningful connections to school and work. In 2024, Baltimore Brothers reported that 97% of youth maintained or gained connection to school or work; The Choice Program reported 52%, and NVYS reported 54%. In total, 98 youth maintained or gained connection to work at time of discharge in Baltimore Brothers, the Choice Program, and NVYS. MOAAME is not included in the total for 2024 because of missing data. In 2025, The Choice Program reported 50% and NVYS reported 33%. These findings highlight the importance of continued investment in school and work pathways to support youth success.

**“Give Us Work That Respect Us.”** For diversion programs to be effective, they must offer paid, skill-building alternatives to justice system involvement that lead to long-term growth. Youth and grantee staff noted that participation increased when youth felt respected and saw tangible benefits, such as stipends, job placement, and trade school access (N = 28, 100%). Grantees also stressed the value of business and community partnerships to expand opportunities and ensure youth efforts lead to real progress. Long-term success depends on connecting youth with paid internships and workforce development opportunities that align with their personal goals. Representative quote below:

*“Provide real, guaranteed jobs, jobs we know we’re going to get, not just interviews.” (Past Youth Participant)*

<sup>12</sup> Thoars, C., & Moltow, D. (2024). Youth crime, justice, and recidivism. In *Education, Engagement, and Youth Crime: Case Studies in the Lived Experience of Education and Recidivism* (pp. 35-67). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore.

Specifically, several current and past youth participants stated that it was frustrating because they interviewed for jobs they didn't get. Grantee organization leadership and mentors echoed this point:

*"That's why stipends and job placement are so important. We're not just trying to keep them busy; we're trying to set them up for long-term success."* (Grantee Organization Leader)

*"We focus on employment solutions, providing temporary labor opportunities until they find stable work."* (Mentor)

## Lessons Learned

Lessons from the Thriving Youth Strategy highlight the critical role of mentorship and the importance of understanding youth behavior through a trauma-informed lens. Mentors who shared lived experience and offered consistent, compassionate support helped youth build purpose, set goals, and imagine new possibilities. At the same time, disengagement and behavioral challenges often stem from unmet needs like housing instability, food insecurity, and emotional stress. Programs that responded with empathy, structure, and individualized support were best equipped to foster long-term engagement and growth. These insights underscore the value of youth-centered approaches that prioritize trust, healing, and practical guidance.

**Mentorship Fuels Purpose and Growth (N = 26, 59%).** Across sites, mentors were seen as guides and as sources of purpose and structure for youth navigating instability. Youth responded most strongly to mentors who shared similar life experiences and led with honesty, consistency, and compassion. Programs invested in credible mentors, often past youth participants, to help youth envision new possibilities and build self-efficacy. Youth described mentors as life-changing influences who modeled accountability, helped them define personal goals, and created space for growth. Youth viewed their participation in the program as a turning point that redirected them from harmful environments toward positive futures. See below for representative quotes:

*"We even hired some of our former program participants, they go from being mentees to mentors."* (Grantee Organization Leader)

*"I want people to know this program isn't just for people in trouble. It's for people who want to grow."* (Youth Participant)

*"We don't just guide youth; we show them their way. With a strong foundation, they can build a future."* (Mentor)

Credible mentors who shared lived experiences helped youth see new possibilities for themselves. Through consistent presence, honest conversations, and real-world support, mentors built trust and modeled accountability. These relationships gave youth structure, belief, and encouragement to envision and work toward a different future.

### "Mentorship is the Key" — MOAAME & NVYS Vignette — Theme: Mentorship Fuels Purpose and Growth

Mentorship sits at the heart of the Thriving Youth Strategy, offering youth connection, accountability, and vision. *"We don't just guide youth — we show them their way,"* shared a MOAAME mentor. Youth echoed this impact, often crediting mentors as their reason for staying engaged. *"If it wasn't for [name of programmatic leader], I don't know where I'd be,"* said one participant. *"She's a real one."*

Credible messengers — mentors with shared lived experience — were especially influential. *"I became a mentor to help youth recognize their strengths and break cycles,"* said an NVYS staff member. *"Just being a consistent, caring adult makes a huge difference."* For youth who often feel unseen, mentorship becomes both anchor and catalyst. *"Younger guys in my neighborhood look up to me now,"* said a past youth participant. *"I want to be the mentor I never had,"* said one mentor.

**Behavior Reflects Unmet Needs (N = 18, 41%).** Staff, mentors, and youth consistently emphasized that disengagement, defiance, or inconsistency in participation often reflected deeper needs, not a lack of willingness. Issues such as trauma, food insecurity, housing instability, and emotional stress surfaced as significant barriers to participation in program activities. Programs stated that successful engagement required responding to these underlying conditions with empathy and practical support. Rather than interpreting behavior as resistance, mentors used it as an entry point for deeper connection and

individualized support. Programs that met youth where they were, without judgement, were best positioned to foster lasting change in youth. Representative quotes below:

*“Stress, depression, anxiety, embarrassment, and anger, youth want a break from things at home.” (Youth Participant)*

*“Many [young people] haven’t learned basic interpersonal skills or emotional skills making it hard to communicate their needs effectively”. (Mentor)*

*“When [young people] start falling off, we investigate why and try to address it. Many deal with trauma.” (Mentor)*

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The Thriving Youth Strategy demonstrates that when youth-serving organizations center trust, relationship building, and responsiveness, they can make a measurable difference in the lives of youth. Across grantee organizations, the Strategy served more than 1,300 youth across 79 schools, with targeted support for those at greater risk of justice involvement. This evaluation highlights that the most successful programs were those that created a safe, consistent environment where youth felt seen, respected, and supported both emotionally and practically. Youth engagement and retention were sustained through anchored mentorship, peer motivation, and family-informed support, while individualized community support plans and restorative justice approaches also helped youth take ownership of their growth.

Programs did more than enrolling youth, they nurtured purpose and possibility. With mentorship as a cornerstone, youth increased their self-efficacy, reconnected to school or work, and began envisioning new opportunities for their future. Youth consistently reported that their mentors were not just staff, they were life guides, role models, and trusted adults who stayed present even through setbacks. At the same time, mentors recognized that disengagement often signaled deeper struggles. Rather than penalizing youth for inconsistent participation, programs responded with flexibility, empathy, and tailored support that addressed housing instability, trauma, and caregiving responsibilities.

Diversion programs were most effective when they moved beyond punitive models to offer real economic alternatives, such as job placement, stipends, ongoing training, and trade school pathways. These opportunities gave youth the respect, income, and structure they needed to choose different paths. Still, structural barriers like poverty, delayed service access, and transportation gaps persist, signaling the need for continued investment and systemic reform.

The overall success of the Strategy can also be attributed to the different models of program implementation. For example, most if not all the youth who participated in The Choice Program were referred by court order. Whereas youth from Baltimore Brothers were recruited via word of mouth or school referral. This means youth are motivated for different reasons to engage in programming. The way mentors interacted with and engaged with youth in both programs vary, yet the outcome of positive youth-adult relationships and leveraging mentorship to catapult youth growth is consistent throughout all programs. One of the strengths of the Strategy is the diversity in which services are provided as demonstrated by the number of schools represented by these youth.

Ultimately, the Thriving Youth Strategy affirms that youth are better off when programs prioritize connection over compliance, build accountability through consistent care, and treat every youth as capable of change. By meeting youth where they are and walking alongside them, these programs are disrupting pathways to incarceration and building pathways to hope, healing, and long-term success.

## Summary of Findings by Key Outcome Areas

The Thriving Youth Strategy demonstrated impact across multiple areas critical to youth development and diversions success. Programs helped participants stay engaged, access supportive services, reconnect to school and work, and reduce risky behaviors. In doing so, they fostered trust, accountability, and satisfaction through consistent mentorship and restorative practices.

- **Retention of Participants and Effective Service Delivery.** Youth remained engaged in the program due to consistent mentorship, relational trust, and a sense of emotional safety. Programs with stable staff and predictable

structures fostered high levels of retention. Additionally, the presence of caring adults who “show up” consistently was repeatedly cited as a reason youth continued participating in program activities.

- **Increased Referrals to Supportive Programs.** Programs effectively connected youth to services beyond their immediate offerings, including legal support, education services, and mental health care. Referrals were most successful when navigators provided personalized support rather than handing out contacts.
- **Development and Completion of Community Support Plans.** Youth-created community support plans are a critical tool for goal setting and personal accountability. These plans helped youth and mentors track progress and reinforced youth agency in defining their own pathway.
- **Reduction of Barriers to Youth Engagement.** Grantee organizations addressed logistical and systemic barriers through transportation support, trauma-informed care, and flexible scheduling. Youth and staff emphasized that mental health challenges, family responsibilities, and transportation were common barriers that grantee organizations provided support for.
- **Decrease in Squeegeeing Activity.** Several grantee organization staff reported that youth voluntarily reduced or stopped squeegeeing after being offered alternative forms of employment and mentorship. This shift was linked to increased access to stipend opportunities and recognition of new pathways.
- **Reconnection to School and Work.** Programs provided academic advocacy and job readiness coaching, which helped youth return to school or work. Youth reported renewed motivation when they saw tangible progress and were supported in short-term and long-term planning.
- **Increased Use of Restorative Justice.** Youth embraced restorative justice practices when delivered through trusted relationships and structured guidance. Restorative models helped participants reflect on behavior, stay out of the juvenile justice system, and repair harm in a supportive environment.
- **High Satisfaction with Program Services and Engagement Opportunities.** Youth expressed strong satisfaction with their programs, emphasizing relational care, growth opportunities, and dignity. The most appreciated elements included being heard, respected, and given a second chance.

These outcomes reflect a comprehensive, youth-centered approach that addresses immediate needs and also builds long-term pathways to stability and success. By fostering trust, offering real alternatives, and centering youth voice, the Thriving Youth Strategy creates conditions for lasting impact in the lives of youth and their communities.

## Recommendations

As Thriving Youth grantee organizations reflect on implementation to date, several key recommendations have emerged from grantee organizations, youth, and community stakeholders. These insights highlight what is needed to sustain momentum, strengthen outcomes, and expand the impact of the model. Recommendations fall into three key categories: 1) direct partner-level adjustments and innovations; 2) broader evaluation and policy shifts; and 3) opportunities for investment, advocacy, and collaboration to ensure long-term success. While the Strategy has demonstrated strong results, its future growth depends on addressing persistent barriers, particularly around staffing, funding stability, and infrastructure to enable replication and scale.

### Building on What Works: Strengthening Youth Programs, Staffing, and Opportunities

- **Expand Youth Programming.** Grantee organizations and youth called for more holistic, youth-led, and trauma-informed programming that balances fun with structure, emphasizes prevention, and reaches youth earlier. In addition, grantees provided services to older youth ages 18–25, highlighting the need to expand target age groups. Specific suggestions included launching in more schools, integrating leadership development, and improving access to therapy.
- **Invest in Staff Development and Retention.** Grantee organizations emphasized that program success depends on consistent, supported staff. They recommended increasing investment in salaries, professional development, and well-being to reduce burnout and turnover.
- **Strengthen Academic and Career Pathways.** Continued focus on job training, academic advocacy, and paid work

was recommended to help youth build stable futures. Grantee organizations advocated for more stipend or paid opportunities, job pathways, and wraparound education services.

- Advancing Evaluation and Strategy
- **Center Youth and Staff Voice in Evaluation.** Staff with lived experience emphasized the need for evaluation and decision-making processes to reflect the realities of frontline work and youth context. This includes participatory data collection and co-design of metrics. For example, the Family League could support the creation of a youth advisory board that consists of current and past participants who can collaborate with evaluators to define what success looks like and how to measure it. This could also include incorporating a feedback loop where youth and staff provide input on programming and evaluation processes.
- **Expand Data on Long-term Impact.** Grantee organizations recommended tracking outcomes beyond immediate metrics, including post-program employment, housing stability, and continued school connection to demonstrate sustained success and to inform adjustments to the Strategy. For example, grantees could partner with schools and local employers to track continued education and job placement rates of past participants. Additionally, grantees could maintain contact with program alumni through periodic check-ins (e.g., calls, texts, online surveys) to collect data on employment, education, and housing outcomes.
- **Create Measurement Framework Aligned with Strategy Goals.** All grantees reported that collecting data was a challenge, primarily because the information the Family League needed to demonstrate program effectiveness did not align with grantee's current data collection process. Without alignment, data collection can become fragmented, making it difficult to compare results. A well-designed measurement framework could guide ongoing performance monitoring and continuous improvement and also provide actionable insights that drive both short-term results and long-term strategic growth. This could include incorporating grantees' existing data collection to reduce the overall burden on grantees.
- Scaling What Works with Support and Strategy
- **Secure Sustainable Funding.** Across the board, grantee organizations called for long-term investment beyond multiyear grants, which can be used to increase organization capacity and stabilize staffing, expand reach, and avoid low fidelity implementation.
- **Foster Cross-sector Partnerships.** Grantee organizations suggested deeper collaborations with schools, employers, and community organizations to connect youth to a broader ecosystem of support. Several grantee organizations emphasized the importance of housing and legal services as part of diversion and youth development.
- **Support Replication with Fidelity.** As demand grows to replicate the Thriving Youth Strategy, grantee organizations stressed that expansion must be paired with technical assistance, staffing investment, and data collection infrastructure to assess quality and impact in a more streamlined way.

The findings and recommendations of this evaluation report point to a clear path forward: when youth-centered strategies are rooted in relationships, equity, and opportunity, they reduce justice system involvement and create conditions for youth to thrive. As the Family League of Baltimore continues to invest in diversion and youth development, the Thriving Youth Strategy offers a proven model for expansion. The next phase will require deepened collaboration amongst grantee organizations, sustained funding, and a commitment to replication that maintains the heart of what works: consistent mentorship, meaningful opportunity, and belief in the potential of all youth.

## Appendices

Appendix A: Thriving Youth Grantee Profiles



## Baltimore Brothers, Inc.

Founded in 2015 in the wake of the unrest following Freddie Gray's death, Baltimore Brothers Inc. was born out of a need to reduce violence and address systemic inequities in Baltimore's underserved communities.

Initially fueled by grassroots support and community-led donations, the organization quickly evolved from a small-scale initiative into a key partner in Baltimore's violence prevention and youth development efforts. In 2017, Baltimore Brothers formalized its reach by partnering with the City of Baltimore, significantly expanding its capacity and services. Today, Baltimore Brothers provides a broad array of programs targeting youth aged 11–17 and their families, with a focus on conflict mediation, workforce development, life coaching, and leadership training. Signature offerings include the Career Launch program, a 16-week Life Skills Development course, and the L.E.A.D. Leadership Academy. Through a holistic and trauma-informed lens, the organization also offers re-entry services, behavioral health support, and housing stabilization, making it a critical force in community transformation and youth empowerment.

### Target Population:

Youth aged 11–17 and their families in Baltimore's underserved communities, particularly those affected by violence and systemic inequities.

### Core Programming:

- **Career Launch:** A workforce development program assisting youth and adults in career exploration and job preparedness.
- **Life Skills Development:** A 16-week program focusing on the soft skills necessary for maintaining employment and healthy living
- **Leadership Development (L.E.A.D.):** A leadership academy nurturing young individuals for ethical leadership roles.
- **Manhood Training:** Programs addressing the transitional period of adolescence through inspirational, physical, and social disciplines.
- **Mentorship and Life Coaching:** One-on-one support to help individuals assess their lifestyle and achieve personal goals.

### Programmatic Evolution:

Since its inception, Baltimore Brothers has evolved to address the changing needs of youth in the community. Initially funded through small donations and volunteer efforts, the organization expanded its services after entering into a memorandum of understanding with the City of Baltimore in 2017. This partnership allowed for broader outreach, including transitional employment, housing stabilization, health care, transportation assistance, substance use and behavioral health services, re-entry support, cognitive behavioral therapy, and safety planning.

### Empowering Baltimore's Future:

Baltimore Brothers Inc. continues to play a pivotal role in supporting and empowering Baltimore's youth and families through its comprehensive programs and community engagement.

### Website:

[Baltimore Brothers Inc.](https://www.baltimorebrothersinc.org/)



## The Choice Program at UMBC

Established in 1987, The Choice Program at UMBC was created to reduce the involvement of Black and Latinx youth in Maryland's juvenile justice system. Initially focused on monitoring, the program evolved into a mentoring model emphasizing human connection and support over surveillance.

Now a robust initiative under UMBC, the Choice Program offers individualized support through its Intensive Advocacy model, prepares youth for the workforce through the Choice Jobs Program and its affiliated social enterprises, and supports academic achievement with tutoring and college readiness services. In FY24 alone, the program reached nearly 600 youth and families. Committed to anti-racist, evidence-informed practices, Choice serves young people and also pushes for broader systemic reform, embodying a transformative vision of what youth justice and opportunity can truly look like.

### Target Population:

Primarily Black and Latinx youth in Maryland, particularly those involved in the youth legal system or referred by social services.

### Core Programming:

- **Intensive Advocacy:** Service Coordinators and AmeriCorps members provide critical face-to-face contact, mentoring, and advocacy to young people involved in the youth legal system.
- **Job Readiness:** Through the Choice Jobs Program, youth participate in job-readiness training, on-the-job experiences at social enterprises like the Rysing Youth Café and receive assistance transitioning into unsubsidized employment.
- **Education Support:** Throughout all programming, Choice supports participants' success in their educational goals through educational advocacy, school reengagement, and regular exposure to local college communities.

### Programmatic Evolution:

Over the years, The Choice Program has adapted to better meet the needs of youth. It has integrated anti-racist, evidence-informed approaches, focusing on strengths-based strategies and self-agency. The program has also expanded its services to include holistic case management and has become an active advocate for systemic change at state and national levels.

### Impact:

In recent reporting, FY24, the program served 568 young people and their families, with a significant focus on Black and Latinx youth who are disproportionately represented in the youth legal system.

### Redefining Youth Accountability and Support:

The Choice Program reimagines what accountability and support can look like for systems-impacted youth. With its strong university affiliation and commitment to social enterprise, it offers a replicable model for integrating mentorship, employment, and justice reform.

### Website:

[The Choice Program at UMBC](#)



**AWARENESS. ACCESS. ACCOUNTABILITY.**

## The Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement

Launched in 2018, the Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement (MOAAME) was created to directly confront the long-standing disparities

affecting African American males in Baltimore. Housed within the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, MOAAME functions both as a frontline service provider and as a driver of policy change aimed at systemic reform.

With a multifaceted approach that includes mentorship, professional development, economic opportunity, and advocacy, MOAAME equips young Black men with the tools they need to thrive in education, employment, and civic life. Notable initiatives include Connect to Success (C2S), which supports youth engaged in informal work, and Mission 186, a targeted program focusing on Baltimore's most under-resourced neighborhoods. Through these and other initiatives, MOAAME plays a strategic role in Baltimore's efforts to achieve racial equity and economic inclusion.

### Target Population:

African American males across various age groups in Baltimore, particularly those disconnected from traditional educational and employment pathways.

### Core Programming:

- **Mentorship:** Providing guidance and support to foster personal and professional growth.
- **Outreach & Engagement:** Connecting with individuals and communities to identify needs and provide resources.
- **Professional Development:** Offering training and opportunities to enhance career prospects.
- **College Readiness:** Preparing youth for higher education through various programs.
- **Economic Development:** Facilitating access to employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- **Advocacy:** Working to influence policies and practices that promote equity and opportunity.

### Signature Initiatives:

- **Connect to Success (C2S):** Supports young men engaged in informal work, providing structured job pathways and wraparound services.
- **Mission 186:** A data-driven initiative focused on reducing barriers in 186 identified census tracts with poor economic and educational outcomes.

### Advancing Equity for Black Youth in Baltimore:

MOAAME's dual identity, as both a service hub and a policy engine, makes it a powerful tool for advancing racial equity and creating lasting pathways for disconnected Black youth in Baltimore.

### Website:

[Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement \(MOAAME\)](#)

## NEW VISION YOUTH SERVICES

### New Vision Youth Services

Founded in 2005, New Vision Youth Services (NVYS) emerged as a direct response to the behavioral, academic, and emotional challenges facing high-risk youth in Baltimore City. NVYS was built with a vision of cultivating a new cultural narrative for youth, one rooted in mentorship, resilience, and proactive community engagement. Since then, it has grown into a respected service provider and education partner, recognized by the Maryland State Department of Education for its measurable impact.

Through its flagship Positive Impact Movement, NVYS delivers a range of programs including mentoring, restorative practices, life skills coaching, peer mediation, and social-emotional learning. These culturally responsive, school-integrated services empower young people to take charge of their own development while reinforcing positive behavior and academic achievement. With its strength-based and youth-centered model, NVYS continues to drive systemic improvements and community healing across Baltimore.

#### Target Population:

High-need youth in Baltimore City, particularly those struggling with behavioral and academic issues.

#### Core Programming:

- **Mentorship:** Providing one-on-one and group mentoring sessions.
- **Restorative Practices:** Implementing strategies to build community and address conflict.
- **Social-emotional Learning:** Focusing on emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills.
- **Life Skills Coaching:** Teaching practical skills for daily living and future planning.
- **Peer Mediation:** Training youth to resolve conflicts among peers.
- **Character Development:** Promoting values and ethical behavior.

#### Programmatic Evolution:

Over the years, NVYS has adapted its programs to better serve the evolving needs of youth. The organization has expanded its reach by becoming an approved vendor for the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners and being recognized by the Maryland State Department of Education for its effective model in decreasing negative youth statistics.

#### Youth-centered Transformation Across Baltimore

NVYS exemplifies a strength-based approach that places youth at the center of their own transformation. Its impressive metrics and citywide footprint position them as a leader in culturally responsive, school-integrated youth intervention.

#### Website:

[New Vision Youth Services](#)

## Appendix B: Supporting Exhibits

Exhibit 1. Number of Youth Enrolled in Services and Total Youth Served By Grantee and Fiscal Year

Performance Measures		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
		N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>Baltimore Brothers</b>							
	Number of new youths enrolled	45	80	65	58	54	<b>302</b>
	Number of youths served during reporting period	45	80	65	81	83	<b>354</b>
<b>The Choice Program</b>							
	Number of new youths enrolled	61	40	55	33	18	<b>207</b>
	Number of youths served during reporting period	61	42	84	65	35	<b>287</b>
<b>Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement</b>							
	Number of new youths enrolled	--	--	70	62	46	<b>178</b>
	Number of youths served during reporting period	--	--	156	159	125	<b>440</b>
<b>New Vision Youth Services</b>							
	Number of new youths enrolled	--	--	26	72	73	<b>171</b>
	Number of youths served during reporting period	--	--	98	72	73	<b>243</b>

Note: -- Indicates no data available. MOAAME and NVYS provided data from 2023—2025.

\*Fiscal Year – June 30, YEAR to July 1, YEAR (i.e., June 30, 2020 – July 1, 2021)

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Exhibit 2. Number and Percent of Youth Who Created a Support Plan, Re-engaged in School and/or Obtained Employment, or Were Alternatively Served by Restorative Practices by Grantee and Fiscal Year\*

Performance Measure – How Well We Do It	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>Baltimore Brothers</b>											
Youth who created a support plan	--	--	--	--	--	--	58	100%	--	--	
Youth who re-engaged in school and/or obtained work	--	--	14	15%	22	96%	4	11%	--	--	
Youth who were alternatively served by restorative justice practices	--	--	--	--	23	100%	37	100%	--	--	
<b>The Choice Program</b>											
Youth who created a support plan	--	--	--	--	19	--	15	44%	20	80%	
Youth who re-engaged in school and/or obtained work	--	--	4	7%	11	41%	1	2%	1	3%	
Youth who were alternatively served by restorative justice practices	--	--	--	--	0	100%	9	90%	0	0%	
<b>Mayor’s Office of African American Male Engagement</b>											
Youth who created a support plan	--	--	--	--	70	100%	62	100%	46	100%	
Youth who re-engaged in school and/or obtained work	--	--	--	--	112	72%	117	74%	74	59%	
Youth who were alternatively served by restorative justice practices	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
<b>New Vision Youth Services</b>											
Youth who created a support plan	--	--	--	--	98	100%	54	75%	68	93%	
Youth who re-engaged in school and/or obtained work	--	--	--	--	46	47%	36	54%	15	21%	
Youth who were alternatively served by restorative justice practices	--	--	--	--	--	--	36	54%	1	33%	

**Note:** -- Indicates no data available. MOAAME and NVYS provided data from 2023—2025. Data for Baltimore Brothers was not available for 2025 as the fiscal year ends June 30, 2025.

\*Fiscal Year – June 30, YEAR to July 1, YEAR (i.e., June 30, 2020 – July 1, 2021)

Exhibit 3. Number and Percent of Youth who Completed a Support Plan, Youth who were Served by Alternatives to Formal Youth Justice Processing or Maintained/Gained Connection to School or Work at Discharge By Grantee and Fiscal Year\*.

Performance Measure – How Well We Do It	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>Baltimore Brothers</b>											
Youth who completed their support plan by the end of services	--	--	78	100%	63	100%	36	95%	--	--	
Youth who were alternatively served by formal youth justice processing	--	--	--	--	65	100%	58	100%	23	100%	
Youth who maintained or gained connection to work or school at discharge	--	--	--	--	--	--	37	97%	--	--	
<b>The Choice Program</b>											
Youth who completed their support plan by the end of services	--	--	22	73%	4	20%	1	6%	0	0%	
Youth who were alternatively served by formal youth justice processing	--	--	--	--	38	100%	18	100%	17	100%	
Youth who maintained or gained connection to work or school at discharge	--	--	--	--	--	--	25	52%	1	50%	
<b>Mayor’s Office of African American Male Engagement</b>											
Youth who completed their support plan by the end of services	--	--	--	--	61	43%	113	77%	99	79%	
Youth who were alternatively served by formal youth justice processing	--	--	--	--	--	--	33	62%	124	100%	
Youth who maintained or gained connection to work or school at discharge	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
<b>New Vision Youth Services</b>											
Youth who completed their support plan by the end of services	--	--	--	--	83	88%	37	74%	1	50%	
Youth who were alternatively served by formal youth justice processing	--	--	--	--	2	100%	72	100%	21	100%	
Youth who maintained or gained connection to work or school at discharge	--	--	--	--	--	--	36	54%	1	33%	

**Note:** -- Indicates no data available. MOAAME and NVYS provided data from 2023—2025.

\*Fiscal Year – June 30, YEAR to July 1, YEAR (i.e., June 30, 2020 – July 1, 2021)