



Being My Brother's Keeper



Photography:
The Obama Foundation

in Chicago

our action plan to support our boys and young men of color





In 2014, President Obama started an initiative, My Brother's Keeper (MBK), to improve the outcomes for boys and young men of color. Chicago is proud to be a part of the national MBK initiative that is creating a more just country for boys and young men of color.

This Action Plan is dedicated to the 100,000 boys and young men of color in Chicago. They said "I need to have strength. Its me **against** 500 people."

We are changing that. We want 500+ people **for** you.

Thrive team

WITH SUPPORT FROM:
 **MBK ALLIANCE**

“Hey, Chicago.”

This is not your regular Action Plan.”

“We are changing the narrative”

What you're about to explore is the result of real, honest conversations with 200+ boys and young men of color, as well as community-based organizations, civic and business leaders. This is a bold discussion

of what's really going on in our city. This is a call (for all of us) to take action. Read on to discover what we learned, and how you can make a big difference starting today.

Photography:
The Obama Foundation



11K BOYS OF COLOR START HIGH SCHOOL

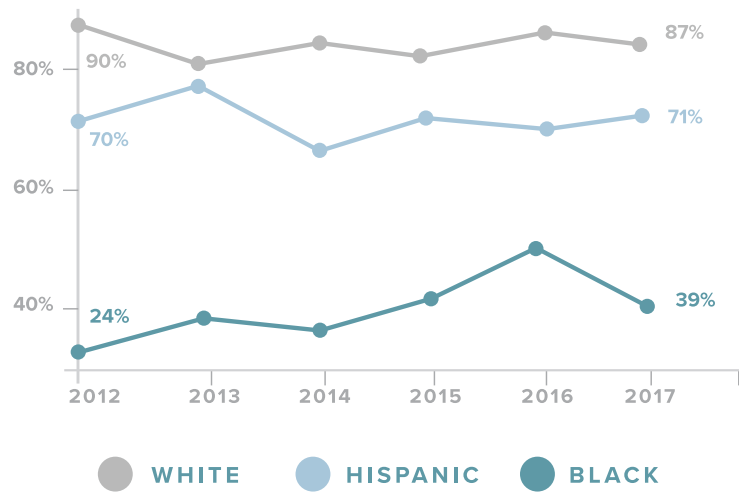
7.5K BOYS OF COLOR GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL

5K BOYS OF COLOR ENROLL IN COLLEGE

2K BOYS OF COLOR GRADUATE COLLEGE WITHIN SIX YEARS*

*Four-year college graduation rate only

PERCENTAGE OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL 20 - 24 YEAR OLD YOUTH MEN WHO ARE EMPLOYED



1 in 5 BOYS & YOUNG MEN OF COLOR ARE DISCONNECTED

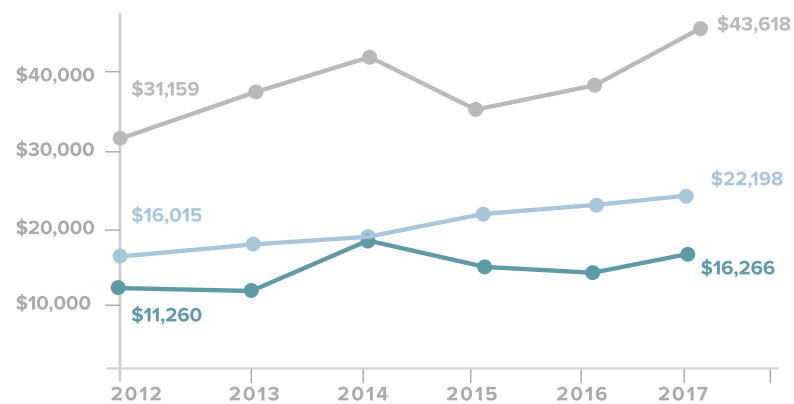
21% OF ALL BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR IN THE CITY ARE DISCONNECTED FROM SCHOOL AND WORK

LATINX & BLACK MALES



21,569 YOUTH | 21%

AVERAGE WAGES FOR 20-24 YEAR OLD OUT-OF-SCHOOL MEN



"We are dying for jobs."

"My friends, we wanna make it in life. We want what you want."

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You already know the data. You have seen the same charts that show the somber stats for boys and young men of color. The data tells us that boys and young men of color need pathways to careers. When you look at that data, do you see yourself? Because how we interpret the data should be more about what we should do and not about what boys of color are not doing.

This Action Plan includes opportunities for you to act whether you are an everyday Chicagoan a community based organization, government agency, employer, or funder.

Look for the icons that speak to you:

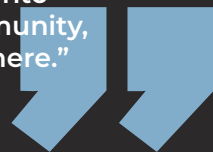
- Individual Chicagoans:** What can you, as an individual, do to contribute?
- Communities & Community-based Organizations:** How can your community and its organizations help?
- Institutions:** What can public agencies, philanthropy, and local businesses do to help?



If I told you that I am a young man of color that grew up on the South Side of Chicago, what is the first thing that comes to your mind? **Be honest.** I bet you thought about gangs, drugs, poverty, or violence. They call me 'at risk.' But that isn't what I am."

"If I am at risk, then everyone I know is at risk—is my grandma at risk? The only thing we are 'at risk of' is being misunderstood by you."

"So when you sat down to listen to us talk, I was skeptical. The thing is, I don't think you really care about me. I've had too many people show up in my life for a minute but leave when it got hard. So I need you to listen. Right here. Right now. Here what we have to say and take it into action. Prove us wrong. Show us that you care. Read these suggestions and put them into play in your business, community, school, non-profit. We out here."



"THEY CALL ME 'AT RISK.' BUT THAT ISN'T WHAT I AM."



WE HAVE A DEEPER STORY. WE WANT YOU TO LISTEN.

“What is an Action Plan? Why should I read another report about young people in this city? No one really believes things will change. The problems are too big. The systems are too hard to break.” That is literally the discussion we at Thrive had as a team. How is this going to be any different? That resistance led us to interesting places. What follows is a bold discussion about what the boys and young men of color in our city really need. Forget the boring plans you usually read. We have a deeper story to tell powered by young boys and men of color ages 13 and older.

“I am 24. I've been through more than an 86 year old person.”

This Action Plan is different.

WHAT WE DID?

To ensure that we created an Action Plan that centers around the needs of boys and young men of color in Chicago, we talked with **200+ young boys and men of color** from across the city, including the following neighborhoods: Austin, Brighton Park, Chatham, Englewood, Humboldt Park, Little Village, North Lawndale, South Shore, Rogers Park, and Roseland. We

conducted focus groups and in-depth one on one interviews with boys and young men to hear their stories, wants, and needs. In order to understand the holistic needs of boys and young men of color we also convened and interviewed community-based organizations (CBOs), civic, and business leaders.

- Convening the Thrive Leadership Council to meet with youth
- Six MBK Working group meetings
- Eight youth focus groups
- 2 Thrive Action Teams setting goals for boys and young men of color by topic area (Postsecondary and Opportunity Youth)
- In-depth interviews with boys and young men of color, youth development professionals, and institutional leaders
- City Colleges/Thrive MLK Day event
- Meeting with systems leaders
- City-wide survey
- Social media campaign

A note to our readers: We believe that violence is a symptom of not systemically supporting boys and young men of color. While violence prevention is not an explicit focus of this Action Plan, we

believe that by addressing the underlying conditions that prevent boys and young men of color from achieving their dreams as outlined in the pages that follow is implicitly a violence prevention strategy.

Who Helped

The organizations that believe in us

TheJoyceFoundation

JPMorganChase

LAWDALE CHRISTIAN
LEGAL CENTER
Living God. Loving People.

MacArthur
Foundation

AFTER
SCHOOL matters

Austin Coming Together

BCG

BOEING

MBK ALLIANCE

Microsoft

metropolitan
family services

Mikva
Challenge

BUILD
HOPE · LIVES · FUTURES

CHAPIN HALL

Chasing28

children's home & aid

NATIONAL
LOUIS
UNIVERSITY
1800

new life centers
of chicagoland

ONE
MILLION
DEGREES

theOunce

THE CHICAGO
PUBLIC
EDUCATION
FUND

Chicago
Public
Schools

CHICAGO
SCHOLARS

CHICAGOLAND
WORKFORCE
FUNDER
ALLIANCE

POLK BROS FOUNDATION

THE RESURRECTION PROJECT
Building Resilience. Creating Healthy Communities.

READI CHICAGO
A HEARTLAND ALLIANCE PROGRAM

ROBERT R.
McCORMICK
FOUNDATION

CHICAGO COOK
WORKFORCE
PARTNERSHIP

CITY COLLEGES
of CHICAGO
Education that Works

Civic
Consulting
alliance

COMMUNITIES
PARTNERING
4 PEACE

NYCA
YOUTH & FAMILY
SERVICES

SOUTH SHORE
TEAM

TEAMWORK
ENGLEWOOD

UCHICAGO
Consortium
on School Research

DOVETAIL PROJECT
CHICAGO

Education Systems Center
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

EMERSON
COLLECTIVE

ENLACE

CHICAGO
URBANLABS

UIC

URBAN PREP ACADEMIES
WE BELIEVE.

YOUTH
GUIDANCE
CHANGING ROADS TO BRIGHT FUTURES

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF
FAMILY & SUPPORT SERVICES
BUILD • SUPPORT • EMPOWER

ForefrOnt
Engaging for Impact

GET IN*
CHICAGO
SAFER COMMUNITIES, BRIGHTER FUTURES

HEARTLAND
ALLIANCE
ENDING POVERTY

the Y

Westside
Health
Authority

AND A SHOUT OUT TO THE

everyday heroes in our lives

MY MOM

“She is hardworking and most consistent in my life. She is always there for me.”



MY POPS

“He’s been through stuff that I have been through.”



MY NEIGHBOR

“She feeds me and my son homecooked meals every day.”



MY GRANDMA

“She will give her last bit of money to help me out. She is so giving.”

MY MENTOR

“They give you real advice that helps keep me on point.”



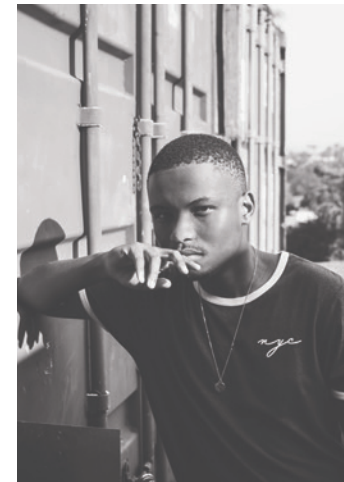
MY BROTHER

“He has me under his wing. He was once locked up and I was so sad when he was gone. When he got out, I felt better. He tells me what I should do so that I don’t make the same mistakes as he did.”



MY COUSIN

“When my cousin died, it was a reality check to me. You move different and smarter so you don’t make the same mistakes.”



MY UNCLE

“I felt like he always had my back.”



MY MENTOR

“I can come here for help and Big Mike will give me whatever I need.”



Findings

WHAT CHICAGO BOYS AND
YOUNG MEN OF COLOR WANT
YOU TO KNOW

01

YOUTH WANT A
VARIETY OF ADULT
SUPPORTERS

02

MENTORS EXIST
WITHIN THE YOUNG
PEOPLES' NETWORK



BOYS AND YOUNG
MEN OF COLOR NEED
MORE OPPORTUNITIES
EARLIER ON TO
**IDENTIFY THEIR OWN
PURPOSE IN LIFE**

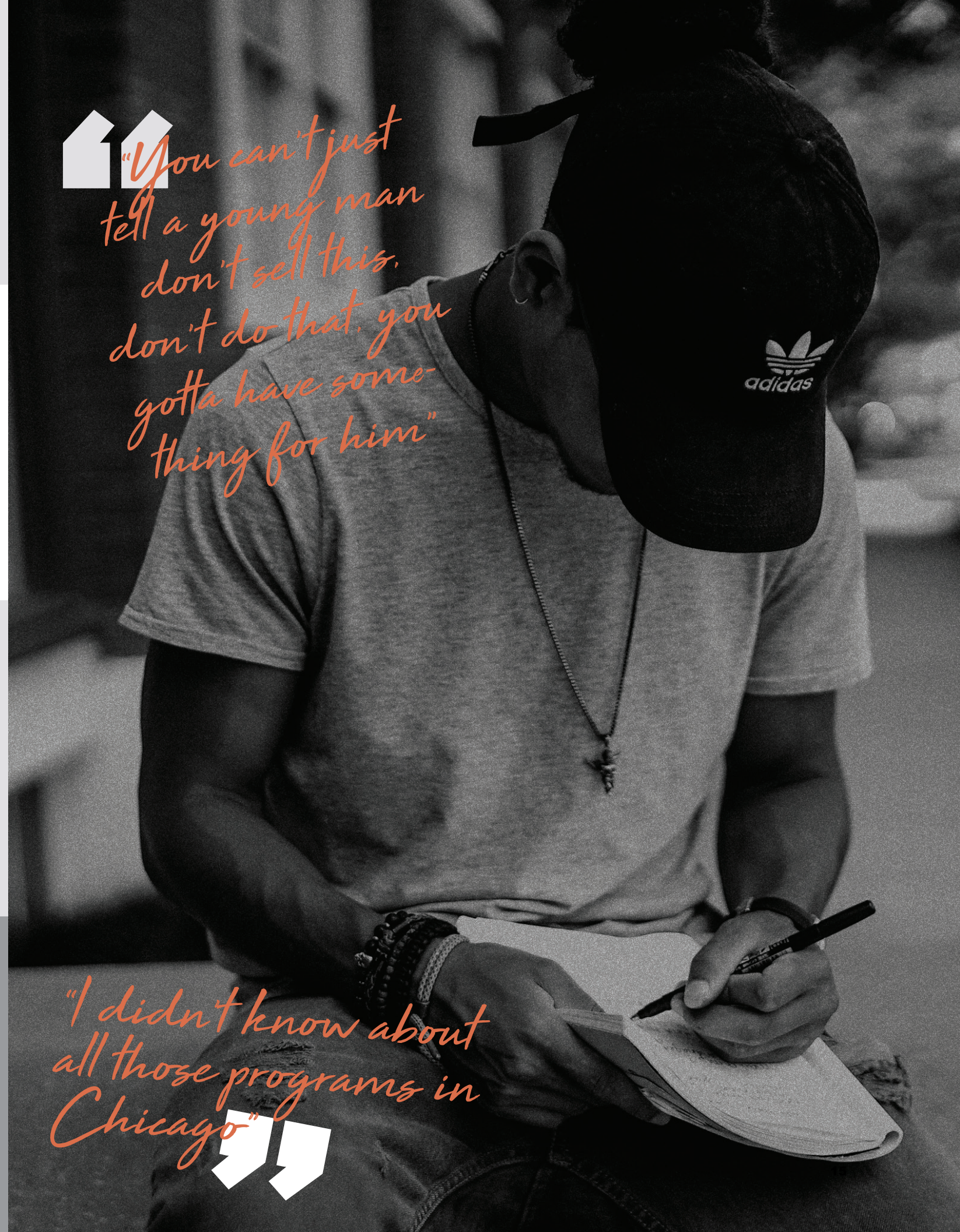
03

04

BOYS AND YOUNG MEN
OF COLOR WANT TO BE
SEEN AS PEOPLE, NOT
AS RACIST STEREOTYPES

05

BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF
COLOR DON'T HAVE THE
INFORMATION THEY NEED
OR **FEEL** LIKE THEY HAVE
TO **GET IN TROUBLE** TO
GET HELP



“You can't just
tell a young man
don't sell this,
don't do that, you
gotta have some-
thing for him”

“I didn't know about
all those programs in
Chicago”

Findings

WHAT THOSE WHO WORK WITH CHICAGO BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR WANT YOU TO KNOW



"I get so much negative feedback. I wish I had real tough skin"



06



DECISION MAKERS HAVE **FRAGMENTED AND INCOMPLETE DATA** THAT DOES NOT CAPTURE THE FULL EXPERIENCE OF BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR

07

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR SHOULD BE RESOURCED FOR **LONG-TERM WORK**

WE NEED TO HOLD OURSELVES **COLLECTIVELY ACCOUNTABLE TO BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR**

08



OUR COLLECTIVE NEXT STEPS

01

FOR FINDING 1:

WE WILL **OFFER COMMUNITY LEVEL TRAININGS** ON POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDE RESOURCES AND TOOLS TO BEST SUPPORT BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR

02

FOR FINDING 2:

WE WILL **ENCOURAGE 'MENTORSHIP AT ANY MOMENT'** BY CREATING **PROGRAMS AND FUNDING STREAMS** THAT ACKNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT THE EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS IN YOUNG PEOPLES LIVES

03

FOR FINDING 3:

WE WILL **CREATE IN-SCHOOL CLASSES** DEVOTED TO HELPING BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR FIND AND PURSUE THEIR PURPOSE IN LIFE

08

FOR FINDING 7:

WE WILL BETTER **COMPENSATE AND SUPPORT FRONTLINE STAFF** WHO WORK WITH BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR

04

FOR FINDING 4:

WE WILL **NO LONGER USE** THE LABEL "AT RISK" AND **TURN AWAY** YOUTH LOOKING FOR HELP

05

FOR FINDING 4:

WE WILL **CELEBRATE** BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR **IN THE MEDIA AND PUBLIC SPACES**

06

FOR FINDING 5:

WE WILL CREATE **DIGITAL TOOLS** THAT HELP BOYS AND YOUNG MEN EASILY FIND THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO GET HELP

07

FOR FINDING 6:

WE WILL **MEASURE THE OUTCOMES** THAT CAPTURE THE FULL EXPERIENCE OF BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR

09

FOR FINDING 7:

WE WILL **CREATE LONG TERM INVESTMENTS** IN PROGRAMS TARGETED FOR BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR

10

FOR FINDING 8:

WE WILL **HOLD OURSELVES COLLECTIVELY ACCOUNTABLE** TO THE ABOVE AND THE FOLLOWING OVERALL MILESTONE GOALS:

- INCREASE THE COLLEGE GRADUATION RATE OF BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR BY 25% IN FIVE YEARS
- DECREASE THE NUMBER OF DISCONNECTED BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR BY 15% BY PROVIDING BETTER ACCESS TO WORKFORCE PATHWAYS (E.G. APPRENTICESHIPS) AND JOBS

Youth Want a Variety of Adult Supporters

FINDING 1 >



FINDING 1

Youth want a variety of adult supporters

Young people have a diverse set of needs and competing priorities that are, sometimes, more complex than one person can handle. Due to economic and racial segregation, young people in particular sections of the city have a more difficult time creating support networks to successfully navigate

their diverse set of needs and competing priorities. The denial of access for our boys and young men of color leads to not being informed and aware of pathways and opportunities for support. Many of our boys and young men of color need additional opportunities to connect with adult supports.

SOLUTION CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP NEW POSITIVE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN YOUTH AND ADULTS.

OPPORTUNITIES



Individual Chicagoans:

Take advantage of opportunities in your community to get to know young people and take action based on their needs. Find mentoring resources at MENTOR's website: www.mentoring.com.



Communities & Community-based organizations:

Create youth development trainings for community members.


Compliment current mentor models with a model that creates a network of support for the young person.



Institutions:

Create funding streams that acknowledge and support the strengthening of existing positive relationships within young people's lives.

Photography:
The Obama Foundation



"A mentor can be anybody anonymously, for however long."

Mentors Exist Within the Young Peoples' Network

FINDING 2 >



Photography:
The Obama Foundation

Mentors Exist Within the Young Peoples' Networks

Boys and young men of color have adults in their lives that provide positive supports. Many young people have identified different adults to provide the varied supports that they require. The supports range from encouraging words to investments into the dreams of boys and young

men of color. These positive connections typically occur when the adult has the time and resources to connect with the young person. Young people rarely have the opportunity to initiate the connection with the adults they find most supportive.

SOLUTION CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN YOUTH AND THEIR EXISTING ADULT SUPPORTERS.

OPPORTUNITIES



Individual Chicagoans:

Seek out resources to develop your mentoring skills. Find mentoring resources at MENTOR's website: www.mentoring.com.



Communities & Community-based organizations:

Create asset maps of the everyday heroes in the lives of boys and young men of color and offer training and support to them in convenient locations such as community centers and faith-based organizations.

Provide skills / training / curriculum for broader community members to "mentor at any moment."



Institutions:

Give youth tickets to athletic, cultural or educational events of their choice with someone they say supports them.

Fund professional development for 'everyday mentors' leveraging evidence-based-resources like MENTOR or the Search Institute's Developmental Relationship Framework.

Photography:
The Obama Foundation



"I have many mentors for various things (skills and situations)"



Boys And Young Men Of Color Need More Opportunities Earlier On To Identify Their Own Purpose In Life

FINDING 3 >

FINDING 3

Boys And Young Men Of Color Need More Opportunities Earlier On To Identify Their Own Purpose In Life

Many programs do a great job helping young people identify what they are good at and then put them on a path to pursue that interest. But, few programs help young people understand the 'why' of what they are pursuing. Success is too often attributed to salary and not happiness. Connecting young peoples' talent to something they care about in the world is critical for positive

development. Over 80% of teens agree that there is a purpose for their life, but only 20% of teens know what that purpose is. Research by Professor William Damon at Stanford shows that teens and young adults who seek purpose report higher life satisfaction and levels of happiness. They also tend to have better physical health and are more successful academically.

SOLUTION CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES EARLIER ON FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO IDENTIFY THEIR PURPOSE(S) THAT CAN ULTIMATELY LEAD TO A CAREER.

OPPORTUNITIES



Individual Chicagoans:

Ask a young person what they care about, what they are inspired by, and what they hope to accomplish in life.



Communities & Community-based organizations:

CBOs should have a component of all programs that help youth identify their purpose. Find purpose learning resources at the Stanford Center on Adolescence: <http://coa.stanford.edu>.



Institutions:

Embed purpose learning in Chicago Public Schools and in the City Colleges system.

Create pathways with employers that support boys and young men of color towards meaningful careers.

"I was searching for myself. I didn't have the support to figure myself out... I discovered a purpose. I discovered I have a purpose."



Boys And Young Men Of Color **Want To Be Seen As People, Not As Racist Stereotypes**

FINDING 4 >



FINDING 4

Boys And Young Men Of Color Want To Be Seen As People, Not As Racist Stereotypes

Overwhelmingly, the vast majority of boys and young men of color we talked to feel like all aspects of society fear and/or look down on them. This perception is not limited to the youth of Chicago and is backed by a variety of scientific studies that point out how society views boys and young men of color through different lenses than

other young people. These perceptions of boys and young men of color are spread by negative imagery and correlations made by the media. These negative correlations contribute to reduced self-esteem internally and lack of empathy for boys and young men of color externally.

SOLUTION CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND CELEBRATE THE HUMANITY OF BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR.

OPPORTUNITIES



Communities & Community-based organizations:

Eliminate the term “at risk” when describing boys and young men of color.

See resources to help your program shift the narrative of boys and young men of color including information found on the Color of Change website: <https://colorofchange.org>.



Institutions:

Celebrate boys and young men of color at large public events.

Leverage media for disseminating positive narratives of boys and young men of color.

Seek resources that help your philanthropic institution shift the narrative on boys and young men of color including this toolkit from The Perception Institute: <https://perception.org/publications/history>.



“They look at you in a different way. They speak to me out of fear.”

Boys And Young Men Of Color Don't Have the Information They Need or Feel Like They Have to Get in Trouble to Get Help

FINDING 5 >



FINDING 5

Boys And Young Men Of Color Don't Have The Information They Need Or Feel Like They Have to Get in Trouble to Get Help

Chicago spends \$2 billion annually to support young people through arts, violence prevention, education assistance and many more programs. Unfortunately, youth may not know about the array of services offered, requirements for eligibility, and/or the qual-

ity of the programs. Many times connection to services depends on who you know and what they know. This system of connections limits the participation of boys and young men of color in programs that could provide life changing support.

SOLUTION CREATE TOOLS THAT ALLOW YOUTH TO EASILY CONNECT TO SERVICES THAT THEY NEED WITHOUT ALREADY BEING A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT AND ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH THAT ARE CURRENTLY BEING TURNED AWAY BY ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

OPPORTUNITIES



Individual Chicagoans:

Inform yourself on programs and services available for young people in your community and get to know their needs.



Communities & Community-based organizations:

Don't wait for boys and young men of color to come through your doors—meet them where they are in order to recruit and serve them.



Institutions:

Expand technology that allows young people to find programs that match their needs and interests.

Offer a Yelp-style review feature for youth to learn about and rate program offerings and quality of service.

Examine funding streams that require eligibility requirements and allow for a percentage of non-eligible participants to enroll.



"We have to get in trouble to get services."

Decision Makers Have Fragmented And Incomplete Data That Does Not Capture The Full Experience Of Boys And Young Men Of Color

FINDING 6 >



FINDING 6

Decision Makers Have Fragmented And Incomplete Data That Does Not Capture The Full Experience Of Boys And Young Men Of Color

We have some evidence of what works for boys and young men of color, but many service providers are required to track output data (ex. how much time they spend with a young person and how many times the young person comes to the program). This information doesn't inform us about how the program impacts the young person, how they are improving or how their

participation impacts their community and city overall. Currently, we also don't have a comprehensive system in place to track the status (education, employment, satisfaction, etc.) of boys and young men of color. This makes it difficult to understand the current situation and design a better future for our young people.

SOLUTION DEVELOP A DATA INFRASTRUCTURE TO CAPTURE AND UTILIZE OUTCOME INFORMATION TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR.

OPPORTUNITIES



Communities & Community-based organizations:

Learn from front-line staff what data matters to them and the youth that they work with.



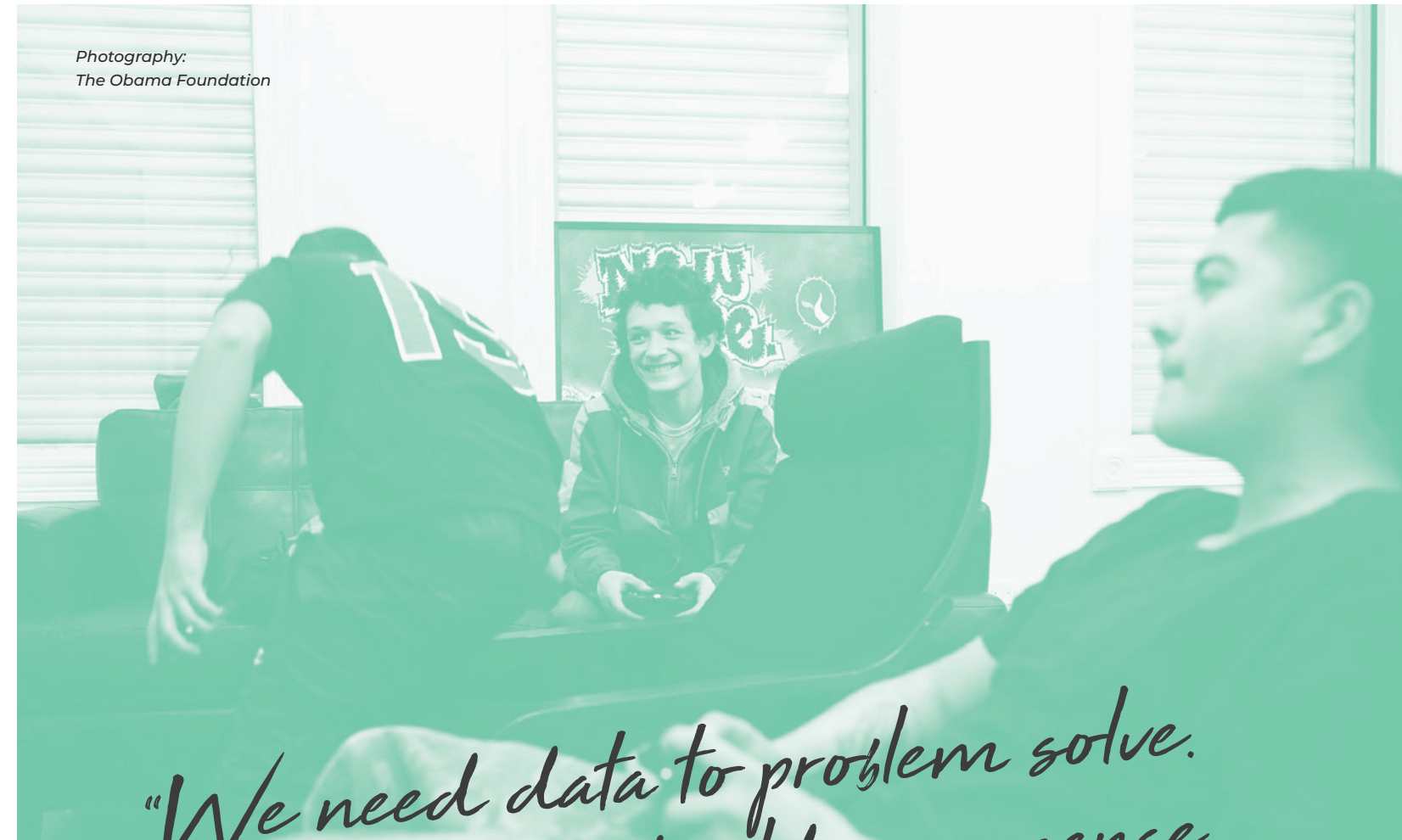
Institutions:

Co-develop an evaluation questionnaire similar to the [Human Flourishing Program](#) at Harvard to better identify outcome oriented data from youth and communities.

Create opportunities for boys and young men of color to “check-in” emotionally, physically, and spiritually at multiple points throughout the day.

Conduct Census-style community evaluations every four years to capture the State of Chicago for boys and young men of color.

Photography:
The Obama Foundation



“We need data to problem solve. Track data on building a sense of community around this young person.”

Organizations That Support Boys And Young Men Of Color Should Be Resourced For Long-Term Work

FINDING 7 >

*Photography:
The Obama Foundation*



FINDING 7

Organizations That Support Boys And Young Men Of Color Should Be Resourced For Long-Term Work

Positive intervention in a person's life takes time and support. Funding streams that support these interventions do not reflect the time, resources and commitment necessary to achieve the collective outcomes for boys

and young men of color. Short grant cycles increase turnover within non-profit organizations which lead to fractured relationships between youth and adult allies.

SOLUTION RESTRUCTURE THE GRANT MAKING AND DISTRIBUTION PROCESS.

OPPORTUNITIES



Communities & Community-based organizations:

Support professional and career development for frontline staff that work directly with boys and young men of color and pursue funding that values their important work.

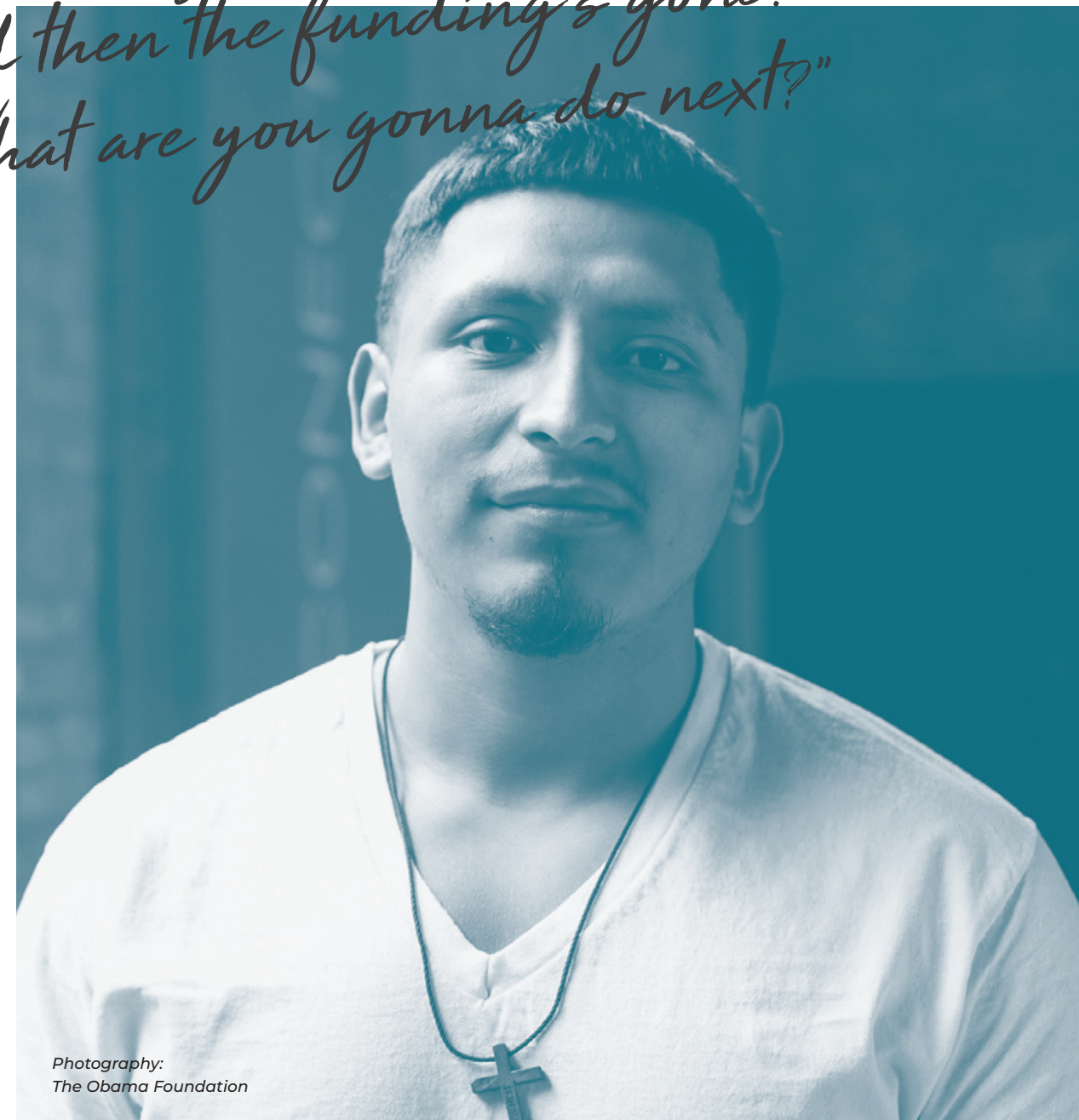


Institutions:

Grant cycles should also reflect an understanding and commitment to a long-term outlook and long-term contracts. Funding organizations should also encourage collaboration between organizations that serve boys and young men of color.



"We pay you (youth worker) this crap money to do some good and then the funding's gone. What are you gonna do next?"



Photography:
The Obama Foundation



OPPORTUNITIES AT-A-GLANCE



INDIVIDUAL CHICAGOANS

WHAT CAN YOU, AS AN INDIVIDUAL, DO TO CONTRIBUTE?

Finding 1:

Take advantage of opportunities in your community to get to know young people and take action based on their needs. Find mentoring resources at MENTOR's website: www.mentoring.com.

Finding 2:

Seek out resources to develop your mentoring skills. Find mentoring resources at MENTOR's website: www.mentoring.com.

Finding 3:

Ask a young person what they care about, what are they inspired by, and what they hope to accomplish in life.

Finding 5:

Inform yourself on programs and services available for young people in your community and get to know their needs.



COMMUNITIES & COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

HOW CAN YOUR COMMUNITY AND ITS ORGANIZATIONS HELP?

Finding 1:

Create youth development trainings for community members.

Complement current mentor models with a model that creates a network of support for the young person.

Finding 2:

Create asset maps of the everyday heroes in the lives of boys and young men of color and offer training and support to them in convenient locations such as community centers and faith based organizations

Provide skills / training / curriculum for broader community members to “mentor at any moment”

Finding 3:

CBOs should have a component of all programs that help youth identify their purpose. . Find purpose learning resources at the Stanford Center on Adolescence: <http://coa.stanford.edu>.

Finding 4:

Eliminate the term “at risk” when describing boys and young men of color.

See resources to help your program shift the narrative of boys and young men of color including information found on the Color of Change website: <https://colorofchange.org>.

Finding 5:

Don't wait for boys and young men of color to come through your doors—meet them where they are in order to recruit and serve them.

Learn from front-line staff what data matters to them and the youth that they work with.

Finding 7:

Support professional and career development for frontline staff that work directly with boys and young men of color and pursue funding that values their important work.



INSTITUTIONS (GOVERNMENT, CORPORATIONS, AND PHILANTHROPY)

WHAT CAN PUBLIC AGENCIES, PHILANTHROPY, AND LOCAL BUSINESSES DO TO HELP?

Finding 1:

Create funding streams that acknowledge and support the strengthening of existing positive relationships within young people's lives.

Finding 2:

Give youth tickets to athletic, cultural or educational events of their choice with someone they say supports them.

Fund professional development for 'everyday mentors' leveraging evidence based resources like MENTOR or the Search Institute's Developmental Relationship Framework.

Finding 3:

Embed purpose learning in Chicago Public Schools and in the City Colleges system.

Create pathways with employers that support boys and young men of color towards meaningful careers.

Finding 4:

Celebrate boys and young men of color at large public events.

Leverage media for disseminating positive narratives of boys and young men of color.

Seek resources that help your philanthropic institution shift the narrative on boys and young men of color including this toolkit from The Perception Institute: <https://perception.org/publications/history>.

Finding 5:

Expand technology that allows young people to find programs that match their needs and interests.

Offer a Yelp-style review feature for youth to learn about and rate program offerings and quality of service.

Examine funding streams that require eligibility requirements and allow for a percentage of non-eligible participants to enroll.

Finding 6:

Co-develop an evaluation questionnaire similar to the *Human Flourishing Program* at Harvard to better identify outcome oriented data from youth and communities.

Create opportunities for boys and young men of color to “check-in” emotionally, physically, and spiritually at multiple points throughout the day.

Conduct Census-style community evaluations every four years to capture the State of Chicago for boys and young men of color.

Finding 7:

Grant cycles should also reflect an understanding and commitment to a long-term outlook and long-term contracts. Funding organizations should also encourage collaboration between organizations that serve boys and young men of color.



DEAR PARTNERS (INCLUDING YOUTH),

This Action Plan for Chicago's boys and young men of color is different.

It is not your regular Action Plan. Instead of data broken out by developmental milestones, we chose to do something different...and harder. We chose to begin our citywide collective commitment to boys and young men of color from somewhere more transformative--hearing directly from youth.

We wanted to offer a perspective on the underlying conditions keeping boys and young men of color from achieving their milestones. For instance, hearing that boys and young men of color don't think we believe in them points to a more deeply rooted, systemic problem than the easier task of simply setting a goal for college graduation.

In partnership with Thrive Chicago we started the process to create this Action Plan months ago, but our dedication to boys and young men of color started years before this process began and we are committed to ensuring that we collectively bring this Action Plan to life in the years that follow.

Now, a special note to boys and young men of color.

Some of us were you not that long ago. We deeply care about you and your future. We know that you face unfair challenges every day and we hope you know that it's not your fault.

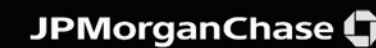
There are real policies, practices and systems in place that make it hard for you to succeed. You are growing up in one of the most segregated cities in the country, which means your access and opportunities are limited by your skin tone, zip code, and how much money your loved ones make. We want you to know that this is unacceptable to us and we want to work alongside you to create a citywide coalition to change that.

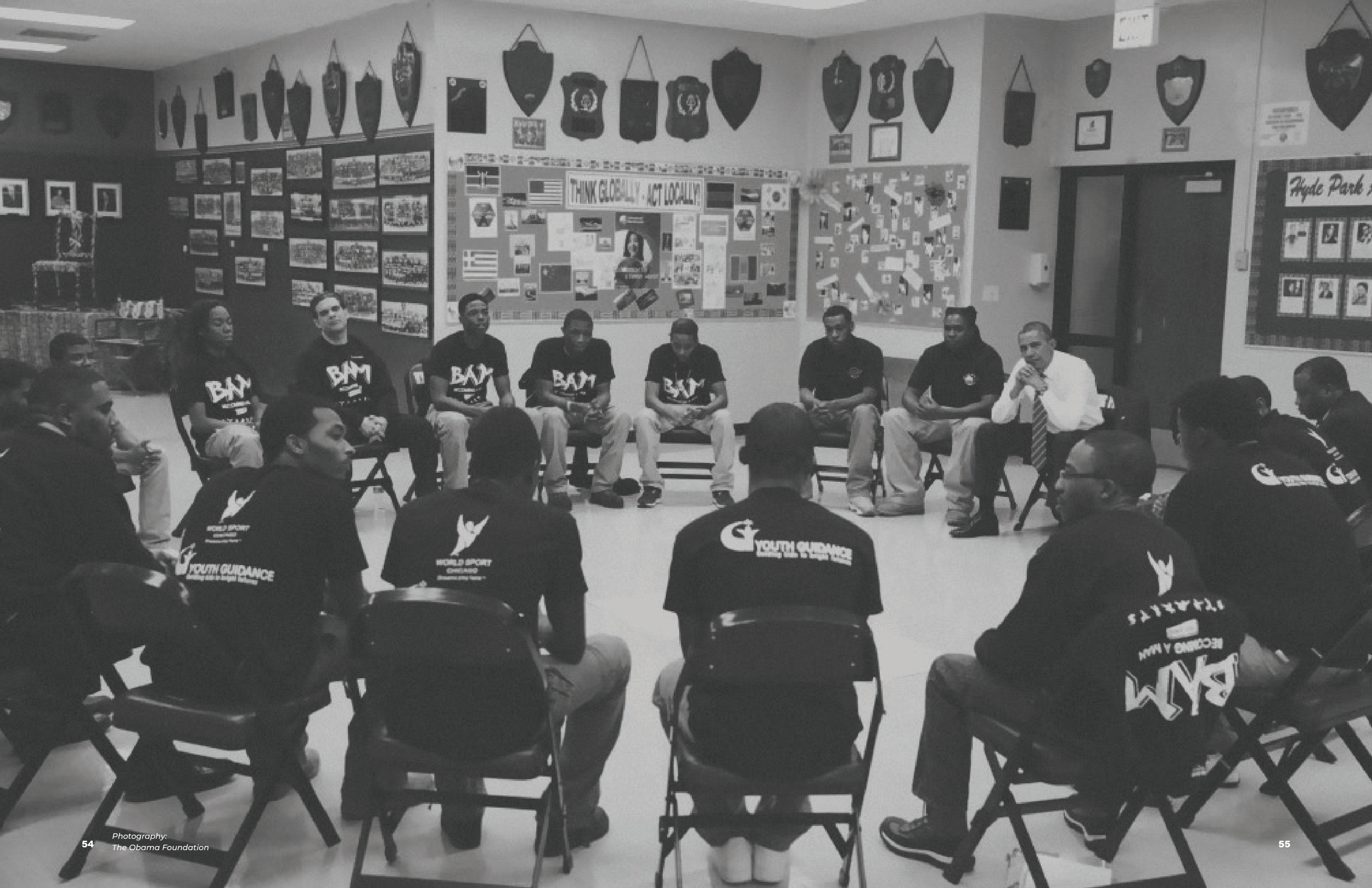
We know that we can't remove all the barriers set in front of you, but we are committed to supporting you to overcome them. We know that you have to work twice as hard as everyone else, but we are using this Action Plan to build a citywide support system to reduce the load on your shoulders. We know that you are brilliant, beautiful, creative, talented, innovative, strong, caring and so many other things that are too numerous for this letter. This is what we want the rest of the city, country and the world to know!

We will remain accountable to you
We will continue to advocate for you
We will continue to be there for you
We will continue to listen to you
We will continue to open doors for you
We will continue to celebrate you
We will continue to fight with you for the city, country, and world you deserve
We will continue to love you!

SINCERELY,

AJ Watson, Youth Guidance | Amanda Cage, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership | Angela Rudolph, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services | Bradly Johnson, Build Chicago | Christina Krasov, Thrive Chicago | Christopher Rudd, ChiByDesign | Cliff Nellis, Lawndale Christian Legal Center | Darius Ballinger, Chasing 23 | Eddie Bocanegra, Heartland Alliance | Eric Lugo, Chicago Community Colleges | Lauren Speigel, City Hall | Matt DeMateo, New Life Centers of Chicagoland | Maurice Swinney, Chicago Public Schools | Mike Simmons, Blue Sky Strategies & Co. | Rudy Lozano, JP Morgan Chase | Sandra Abrevaya, Thrive Chicago | Sheldon Smith, The Dovetail Project | Steven Washington, South Shore Drill Team | Tim King, Urban Prep | Vaughn Bryant, Metropolitan Family Services | Walter Katz, City Hall





MY BROTHER'S KEEPER ACTION PLAN

My Commitment

MY ACTION COMMITMENT FOR BOYS AND YOUNG MEN
OF COLOR IS:

NAME _____

NEIGHBORHOOD _____

thrivechicago

211 W. Wacker Drive, Suite 1000, Chicago, IL 60606
773.904.2989 | thrivechi.org | @ThriveChi

SHARE YOUR COMMITMENT
USING THE HASHTAG
#MYMBKCHICAGO

