



Flint ReCAST Year 4 Mini Grants

The Flint ReCAST (Resiliency in Communities after Stress and Trauma) Program was designed to assist high-risk youth and families in the City of Flint impacted by the Flint Water Emergency. ReCAST seeks to promote resilience and equity through implementation of evidence-based violence prevention and community youth engagement programs, as well as linkages to trauma-informed behavioral health services. Flint ReCAST envisions the greater Flint community working together in ways that lead to improved behavioral health, empowered community residents, reductions in trauma, and sustained community change.

A Request for proposals for Flint ReCAST Mini grants was released on Monday May 1. Twenty-Nine applications were received by the submission deadline. A selection committee was formed with representatives from several community organization to review and score the submissions. Each submission was scored by the reviewers of the selection committee. The scores of each reviewer were averaged producing a final score for each submission. Submissions were then ranked by final score under each goal area. Using this selection process and available funds as guidance, eleven proposals received notification on June 9, indicating that they were awarded.

Flint ReCAST Mini grants were awarded to organizations for the expressed purpose of supporting opportunities for collaboration, formalizing trauma-informed practices and policies and developing a sustainability plan for using trauma-informed strategies in the future to support the Flint community around the five outlined Flint ReCAST goals. A full list of the Mini Grant recipients with a brief summary of each project is listed below.

Programs Awarded By Goal Area

Goal Area 1 - Build on an extensive range of local programs and partnerships to empower the Flint community to support at-risk youth and families in developing resilience, reducing violence, and developing a vibrant community.

- **Voice For Children - Flint Families Developing Resilient Communities**

The project will develop a one-on-one leadership through mentorship model for Flint parents. This project will be paired as a companion project with the Lead Expansion Access Program Parent Advisory, a local program for families with children impacted by the Flint Water Emergency. This community-based program supports high risk families and is working to build resilience and build positive community development.

- **Peckham – Mentor Flint**

Mentor: Flint is a trauma-informed, career-based, targeted strategy intended to successfully transition at-risk youth with disabilities to adulthood. A trauma-informed model includes practices that promote a culture of safety, empowerment and healing. Mentor: Flint utilizes these practices in a collaborative approach between the youth/young adults, who bring their lived experiences; employers, who provide in-demand job opportunities and workplace support; and mentors, who are trusted figures upon whom the youth can rely.

Goal Area 2- Use trauma-informed, evidence based programming to mitigate potential behavioral health impacts of the Flint Water Emergency on Flint youth and families.

- **R L Jones Community Center - COC - Help Center and Access & Functional Needs Program**

Understanding that the only way to mitigate behavioral health with individuals impacted by the Water Emergency is to ensure their basic needs are met has proven even more critical during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The COC currently touches on several of the Center for Disease Control's Guiding Principles for a Trauma-Informed Approach with clients as it seeks to support the growing gap in basic needs in the community. The COC has seen a 30% increase in service need in the wake of COVID-19.

- **St. Luke's N.E.W. Life Center - Employment Prep Program**

New Life operates a 16-week employment preparation program and offers 90 day paid on the job opportunities for graduates of the program. With ReCAST funding, the program will expand its interventions for participants to identify and develop strategies to cope with the trauma they have experienced. Based on interactions with the community the center anticipates an even greater need for trauma-informed interventions due to the stress and challenges of COVID -19.

- **Sylvester Broom Empowerment Village - SBEV SOC Program**

SBEV's SOC program fills a significant gap in extracurricular and after school programming for Flint students. The SOC is a fully integrated program that operates four days a week, in separate six-weeks sessions throughout the year, including a summer-camp program. Each session presents students and parents with a new opportunity to explore new activities and interests, while maintaining focus on academic success, character building, and health.

Goal Area 3- Integrate several evidence-based violence prevention programs to enhance ongoing community-organization led activities to divert high-risk youth from the school to prison pipeline.

- **MADE - E.P.I.K. Life Skills Program**

MADE will incorporate trauma-informed approaches to health, finance and housing into the Life Skills program with an understanding that many returning citizens have been impacted by childhood trauma. The ACEs Connection Network reported in 2016 that the Pipeline to Prison may start with Childhood Trauma. Young people who are returning citizens, struggle when coming home because they did not learn the skills to address this trauma while in the prison system. By addressing these issues with returning citizens MADE can help reduce the recidivism rate in young people.

Goal Area 4- Create a trauma informed first responder community by providing trauma training to local police, first responders, correction officers, etc.

- **Crim Fitness Foundation - A Compassionate 1st Response: Supporting Flint Police, First Responders and Correction Officers with Trauma Informed Leadership Training**

The Crim Fitness Foundation plans to provide a first responder training by customizing the existing evidence-based, inclusive, and engaging training offerings to be most relevant to the first responder community.

The first part of the training series will focus on sharing the science of how and why trauma affects individuals in our community, the science behind Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and how we as a community can foster resiliency - this portion of the training will be facilitated by our team member who is one of 100 ACES Master Trainers in the state, and is a licensed social worker.

The second part of the training will focus on sharing trauma-informed mindfulness based stress reduction techniques to support first responders and the clients they serve. Over 90% of participants in all of Crim Mindfulness trainings delivered since 2018 find them valuable and can apply learning in their personal and professional lives so the Crim Fitness Foundation is confident this program will have a positive impact.

Goal Area 5- Increase capacity for youth and families in the Flint community to support skill building and career opportunities through evidenced-based programs.

- **YMCA of Greater Flint – Y Power Scholars**

Y Power Scholars is a 6-week summer program that offers mentoring, homework help, physical activity and nutrition education. The program is well suited for youth with mild behavior challenges and learning disabilities. Each scholar will be individualized to provide opportunity to identify and address learning gaps.

- **Big Brothers Big Sisters - Youth Workforce Mentoring Initiative**

The Youth Workforce Mentoring Initiative is a 16-week program designed to create resiliency and increase capacity for families in the Flint community to support skill building and career opportunities. Big Brothers Big Sisters adopts all six principals that guide a trauma informed approach throughout its service delivery model. A trauma informed care workshop will be provided to youth, parents, volunteers and community members in conjunction with the Youth Workforce Mentoring Initiative.

Multiple Goals: Several submissions applied under multiple goals. Scoring and review for these proposals followed the aforementioned process.

- **Ennis Center – Fostering Creativity**

Fostering Creativity is a free therapeutic arts program for youth ages 5-21 affected by foster care/out-of home placement in Genesee County; each group is facilitated by credentialed art & music therapists &/or skilled artists.

Fostering Creativity has been offered at Ennis Center for Children since 2014. The program has worked effectively to build partnerships with local artists, therapists, and like-minded organizations (such as Equine Escape, an equine therapy organization) to support at-risk youth and families in reducing the effects of trauma, developing resilience, reducing violence, and developing a vibrant community, as outlined by ReCAST's goals. Almost all of the children (who were born before 2016) participating in the program are directly impacted by the Flint Water Emergency, and many of the younger children are indirectly impacted in many ways.

- **WOW Outreach – Youth Ambassadors**

Many Flint youth are regularly exposed to violence whether it is within their homes or across their neighborhoods. The resulting trauma is being exacerbated by COVID-19. Youth Ambassadors are using Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA), six principles to support a framework for understanding trauma and developing a trauma-informed approach to expand the scope of the program.

In addition to twice monthly sessions centered on various aspects of resiliency, Youth Ambassadors conduct twice monthly "Real Talk" sessions to give participating youth an opportunity to talk about how they are feeling and coping with day to day life, this includes fear of the water situation and this new pandemic reality.



Contact Information

Lottie Ferguson, Chief Resilience Officer
City of Flint
lferguson@cityofflint.com

Afton Shavers, Project Manager
Greater Flint Health Coalition
ashavers@flint.org