

Earlier this month, the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) determined that the Barry J. Nidorf Secure Youth Treatment Facility and Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall have met minimum standards for juvenile facilities and can remain open with ongoing inspections and continued compliance.

DYD is committed to reducing harm for justice-impacted youth and collaborating closely with our community and County partners to ensure a truly safe, supportive, and rehabilitative environment for young people. Together with our partners, we will continue to advance meaningful, sustainable youth development programming and alternatives to detention such as Safe Healing Centers.

One example of this effort is the continued success of our Credible Messenger Program, which has expanded to serve youth assigned to Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF), girls and gender expansive youth, and youth with developmental disabilities. DYD's Credible Messenger partners (the Anti-Recidivism Coalition, Healing Dialogue in Action, Young Women's Freedom Center, and Alma Family Services) support detained youth with transformative mentorship and care coordination through a foundation of trust and shared personal experience navigating system involvement.

In March 2024, the Credible Messenger Program celebrated sixty-two youth in the first two graduation ceremonies for Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) youth who completed a Credible Messenger led curriculum at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall and Campus Kilpatrick. The curriculum covered essential topics such as financial literacy, conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, and anger management.

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DYD is also excited to share additional examples of the ways we are working collaboratively to bring youth development programming to young people in facilities. The Drum Corps Program, a rehabilitative musical program in partnership with the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles, is offering youth training in percussion instruments, music theory, and cultural musical history.

Starting in May, A Swan Within will begin working at Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall, to engage youth in weight training, outdoor strength conditioning exercises, ballet exercise, and holistic wellness practices. On April 27th, Susan Burton, founder of the women's reentry organization A New Way of Life, will visit the girls' unit in Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall to discuss her book and her life's journey through tragedy and trauma to triumph.

As April comes to a close, we want to recognize Second Chance Month and Youth Violence Prevention Week by recommitting ourselves to creating a safer, more inclusive community where every young person can thrive and find support on their journey.

New Youth Development Branch Director

We are excited to introduce Jai Phillips as the new Director of the Youth Development Branch starting May 1st! Jai brings decades of experience leading transformative initiatives to provide youth and families with equitable access to culturally responsive, community-based resources and development opportunities to this role. Throughout his time with the California Community Foundation, Children's Defense Fund, and the Jackie Robinson Foundation, Jai has demonstrated a commitment to building knowledge of and capacity for youth development in Los Angeles County.

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In this new role, Jai will oversee the expansion of regional Youth Development and Diversion Networks across the County, including 24-Hour Youth Centers, as well as diversion partnerships and other collaborative opportunities to strengthen equitable access to youth development resources across the County. Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Jai Phillips as he embarks on this new chapter with DYD.

Youth Development Network Partnerships

DYD is teaming up with 33 community-based organizations for our initial investments in regional Youth Development Networks (YDNs)! This collaborative effort marks an important step forward in our commitment to supporting and empowering young people.

By partnering with this inaugural YDN cohort, we aim to strengthen the ecosystem of resources and opportunities tailored to the needs of youth in our communities. These 33 initial organizations have been strategically selected to ensure equitable distribution across LA County, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and accessibility. These organizations provide a range of youth services including arts and creative expression, mental health support, education, mentorship, and community engagement. They offer diverse opportunities such as apprenticeships, counseling, trauma-informed care, and career readiness initiatives. Some organizations specialize in serving specific populations such as youth in foster care, LGBTQ+ youth, or those impacted by system involvement or homelessness.

Additionally, we're thrilled to announce our microgrant cohort, a select group of organizations identified through our rigorous Request for Information process. These organizations have demonstrated exceptional potential, and we're committed to providing them with the support and resources needed to enhance their capacity to serve youth effectively. Please visit our [webpage](#) to learn more and stay tuned for updates as our Youth Development Networks continue to grow.

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