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The Promise of a Healthy California:

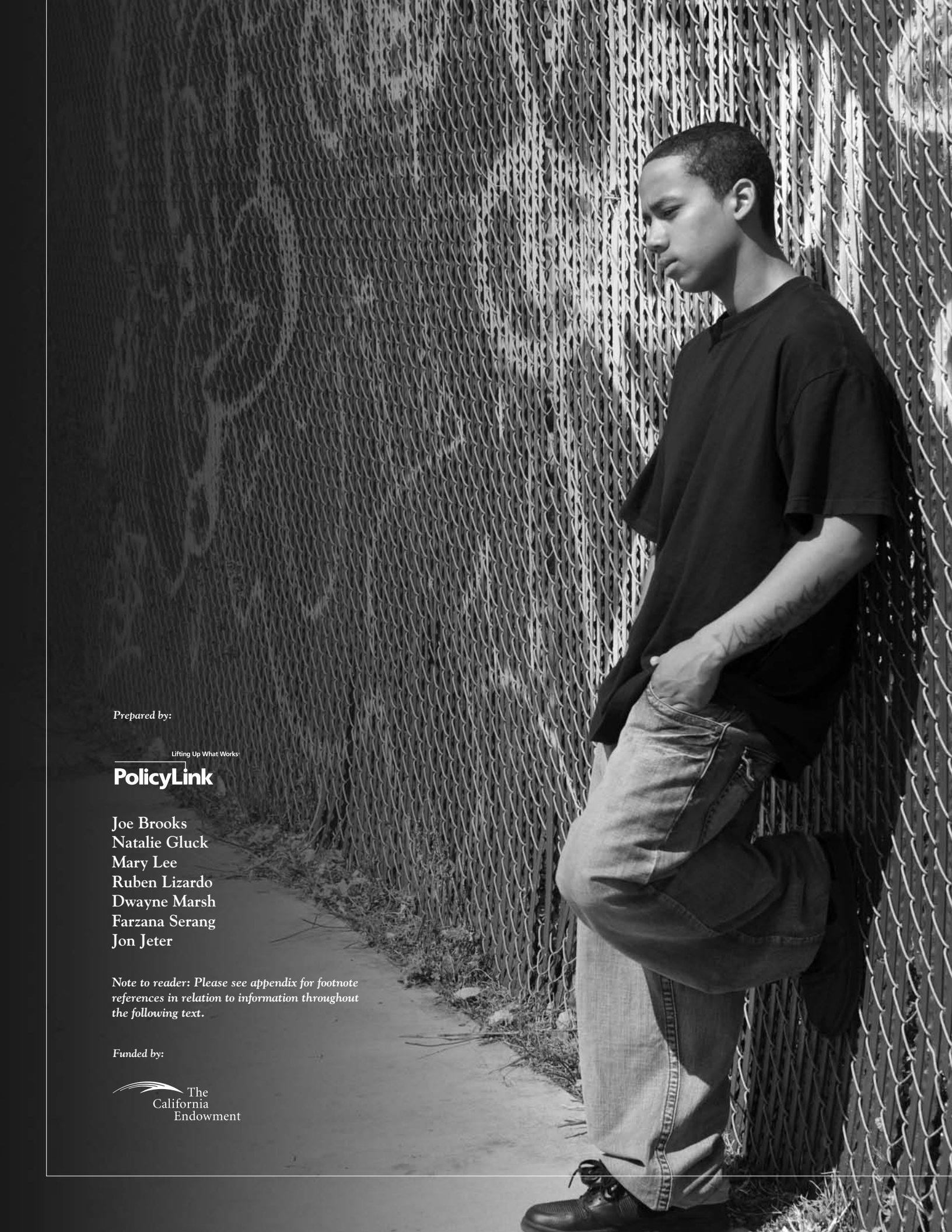
Overcoming the Barriers for Men and Boys of Color

Prepared by:

Lifting Up What Works®
PolicyLink

Funded by:

The California Endowment



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Note to reader: Please see appendix for footnote references in relation to information throughout the following text.

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Part I
Introduction

Addressing the racial disparities that separate Californians from one another is not merely a matter of social justice. The state's alarmingly high school-suspension and dropout rates for boys of color, and high rates of unemployment, incarceration, and mortality rates for African American and Latino men affects the bottom line. They act like an onerous tax borne by every man, woman and child, or like valuable plant equipment idled by disrepair and a lack of investment. If California were a business, it would be awash in red ink, with too many unproductive assets.

Consider, as one example, the cost-benefit analysis if California managed to reduce by just 10 percent the number of African-American and Latino male high-school dropouts. According to one study by the National Center for Education Statistics, the higher graduation rate would save California's criminal justice system $1.2 trillion—over the course of the affected students' adult life—by lowering costs associated with crime, such as prosecuting, jailing, and monitoring defendants, inmates, and parolees. Another study, conducted by a team of researchers at Columbia University's Teachers College, found that for each youth added to the graduation rolls, taxpayers saved $127,000 in the form of additional tax revenues paid by the graduates and lower public health, welfare, and criminal justice costs.

Investing in expanding opportunities for men and boys of color is not just the right thing to do; it fattens our bottom line.

For decades, federal and state governments have isolated men of color from the workforce, from their communities, and even from their families through a series

"… people do not live in silos, but in communities where everything—the economic, the social, the physical, and the environmental—are all connected."

of educational, social welfare, and penal policies, which have severely weakened households, neighborhoods and even, Gross Domestic Product.

Through our work and research, PolicyLink has identified **the importance of "place" in the lives of our citizens. Where you live, to a large extent, determines whether you are exposed to** hazardous pollutants and unhealthy food; whether you attend a good school or land a decent job with a livable wage; or whether you are likely to go to jail or die relatively young.

Just as place is a key factor in determining someone's quality of life, it can also be an effective resource and an organizing tool for addressing the systems that have largely failed men and boys of color. Who knows if the neighborhood school needs to improve its science curriculum, or if the community needs a new park, grocery store, or a job-training center better than the people who live in the community?

Moreover, this report argues not just for a community-led approach to re-calibrate the life trajectory of African-American and Latino men, but for an effort that recognizes that people do not live in silos, but in communities where everything—the economic, the social, the physical, and the environmental—are all connected.

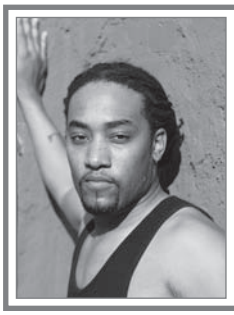
We can build a better man by cleaning the air he breathes, improving the quality of the vegetables carried at the stores where he shops, and making his commute to work faster and cheaper. Residents cannot thrive if their communities and neighborhoods have successful businesses but no way to get to work, full-service grocery stores but pollutants in their home, safe streets but no healthcare, a good education but no strong social networks that give them a voice in how their lives are governed. Therefore, developing healthy communities' means crossing the artificial boundaries that separate, say, fixing transportation concerns from fixing education. **Policy makers, community activists and government officials must view the health of a community not in individual parts, but as an unbroken whole, made up of individual but virtually inseparable parts.**

In the context of systemic failures, the mantra of "personal responsibility" misses the larger and defining reality. The significance of Juan diligently doing his homework, for example, diminishes if he is taught by an inexperienced teacher using outdated books, or if he is attending a dilapidated school in a neighborhood that is dangerous and offers no appealing employment opportunities. The larger systems that shape and limit the lives of men and boys of color are broken and must be repaired to achieve any real and lasting change.

Like the United States as a whole, California's institutions—in practice, at least—function as a cruelly efficient system of exclusion and destruction. If a state had set out to intentionally construct a mechanism for crippling a large portion of its population, it could hardly have done a better job.

But there are solutions to these problems, and PolicyLink, with a lot of help from grassroots leaders and advocates in these communities of color, has identified what works in strengthening neighborhoods, families, fathers, and sons. These include a range of community health programs, early childhood education and after-school programs, mentoring and anti-violence efforts, and community college and training programs to prepare young men for a 21st century economy.

This report will not focus on data that illustrates racial disparities and their impact. Those trends have been well documented in previous reports prepared for The California Endowment (TCE), including the "Boys and Men of Color: Strategy, Purpose Direction" power-point presentation and the "What are the Odds for Boys and Men of Color" report prepared by the Rand Corporation. Rather, this paper will assess the context of California's systemic failures, detail the lessons gleaned from research done by Harvard University's Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, explore the process for developing public will for change, argue for place-based solutions, highlight successful practices, and make recommendations for policy change and intervention.



Recommendations

- **Build** on current research and practices addressing the institutional, political, and cultural factors that reduce opportunities for men and boys of color.
- **Engage** the African-American and Latino communities to ensure that all stakeholders are represented in the effort to create effective, transformative policies. This builds consensus among community leaders, which in turn enables them to build public support among their various constituents.
- **Coordinate** efforts between researchers, institutions, stakeholders, local leaders, and policy makers to form a movement for integrating men and boys of color into the mainstream.

Policy Focus for Action

Community Health and Healthcare

- Address systemic factors that deny access to healthcare and treatment for both physical and mental health needs. Reduce the stigma associated with mental health treatment and access to mental health services.
- Elevate the understanding of health approaches to include the systemic factors in the physical or "built" environment of a community that limit opportunity for physical activity and/or healthy eating. Engage community stakeholders in defining health broadly to incorporate the health of the community into the definition, Such a definition would encompass the goals of good jobs, housing, schools, and significant reductions in violence and crime.
- Encourage youth and men to make their health a priority and seek information about prevention from faith-based and community-based programs.

Early Childhood Development and Education

- Reform systemic factors in schools that disengage and push children out of public schools, and employ community organizing strategies that change these systemic practices.

- Work with children and parents to build the skills and capacity needed for healthy social and academic development.
- Reconnect youth and men to educational opportunities that put them on the path to success.
- Redouble investments in community colleges. Only 54% of Latino and 50% of African-American young men graduate from California high schools. At the same time, an increasing number of jobs require some technical training. Therefore, it seems clear that community colleges will have to play a more central role in preparing young men for the labor force.

Violence/ Gang Prevention/ Re-Entry

- Address the systemic economic, community, and family conditions that fuel hopelessness and self-destructive behaviors such as chemical dependency, delinquency, unprotected sex, and other acts of recklessness.
- Develop an agenda to reform systemic barriers to education, health, and work.
- Identify policy changes that will enable ex-offenders to re-enter communities as better fathers, husbands, workers, and citizens.

Men and boys of color who are born into communities of concentrated poverty have few opportunities available to them. And with few positive male role models in their communities, young African-Americans and Latinos often exacerbate the problem by making the worst choices from a menu of bad choices, unaware of their alternatives or the consequences. The aim here is to fill their gaps in understanding by connecting these men and boys to social networks that offer them—like a road map—a better future than they would otherwise envision.

Providing this road map is the fundamental role of advocates working to steer men and boys of color away from the unemployment line, prison, and early graves. Across the nation, communities are losing hundreds of thousands of their men and boys to violence, drugs, and an adult and juvenile justice system that does little or nothing to

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"The aim here is to fill their gaps in understanding… connecting these men and boys to social networks that offer them—like a road map—a better future…"

equip these men and boys to successfully return to their communities. Complicating this dire set of circumstances are the negative health consequences related to violence, drugs, and unhealthy life styles that undermine opportunities for individual, family, or community well-being.

Part II
Insights and Lessons Learned from the Research of Harvard University's Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice

See Appendix for more complete version.

According to the U. S. Department of Education, U.S. public schools are suspending and expelling increasing numbers of schoolchildren, who then are more likely to spend time in prison. In 2004, more than 3 million public-school students were suspended and 106,000 expelled, representing, respectively, increases of 7.4 percent to 9.3 percent since 2000. California's public schools suspended 396,000 students and expelled another 18,862 in the 2002-2003 school year.

For more than three decades, studies have revealed that harsh school disciplinary measures are imposed on children of color at highly disproportionate rates. The Institute for Democracy, Education and Access (IDA) based at UCLA found African-American students represented 8 percent of the state's public school enrollment but 19 percent of out of school suspensions in the 2002-2003 school term.

Russel Skiba and his colleagues studied 37 states and found a strong relationship between racial disparities in school suspensions and overall juvenile incarceration rates. In 2003, youths of color made up 38 percent of the public school enrollment in the U.S., yet 65 percent of the juveniles in secure detention facilities. That same year,

African Americans made up 25 percent of California's incarcerated juveniles, more than three times the percentage of their population in the state.

In an attempt to make schools safer, school administrators have even adopted many law enforcement techniques, including metal detectors, tasers, surveillance cameras, canine units, and even biometric hand readers. Some schools, including the nation's largest, which are in the New York Public Schools system, have dramatically increased the police presence inside the schools.

In his 2006 book, *Punishment and Inequality in America*, Harvard sociologist Bruce Western writes that these kinds of measures and harsher juvenile justice policies do not protect communities, but rather deepen the damage in the very communities the strategies are designed to protect by putting more children on a dropout track. This further widens inequality because dropouts are more likely to appear in the criminal justice system down the road.

A negative experience at school can encourage aggressive, anti-social behavior. A recent study suggested that metal detectors, surveillance cameras, locker searches, and other zero-tolerance strategies actually put schools at increased risk for disorderly conduct and confrontations between students and faculty. Research indicates that students feel more connected to schools when they perceive the teachers as caring and the discipline as tolerant. Studies have linked students' sense of connectedness to their schools with reduced risk for teen pregnancy, violence, and substance abuse.

The Challenge of Addressing Interrelated and Mutually Perpetuating System Failures

At the other end of the prison pipeline, ex-offenders are trying to return to their communities. Men enter prison with poor educations and few job skills and emerge with no more education and training than the day they went in. Then they face the added challenge of looking for work as an applicant with a criminal record. It's a recipe for recidivism. In California, as elsewhere, African American males have a

higher unemployment rate than that of any other demographic group, are nearly six times more likely than whites to be locked up, and four times more likely to be victims of violent crime.

The absence of African-American males—historically their households' primary breadwinner—throws the families they leave behind with a hard road to travel, mostly on their own. African American children experience poverty that is deeper and more enduring than do children of any other racial or ethnic group.

First, the poverty of the neighborhoods alone is vastly different than in other communities. African Americans live in the most racially and economically segregated neighborhoods. A poor white child, for instance, lives in a neighborhood with a poverty rate of 13.6 percent. A poor African American child lives in a neighborhood with a poverty rate of 29 percent, and poor Latino children live in neighborhoods with a rate of 26.2 percent.

The disadvantages often starts before birth. Boys of color are more likely to be born underweight, which is a factor in learning disabilities and emotional problems later in life. As children, they are more exposed to abuse, neglect, and trauma than other children, and large numbers of them swell the foster-care system. They have increased early childhood exposure to lead paint and other toxins—another factor in learning disabilities and chronic illnesses like asthma. And, a lack of full-service grocery stores in poor neighborhoods means a diet largely deficient in the healthy foods that children need for physical growth and brain development.

Furthermore, they live in inadequate, crowded, noisy housing conditions with poor indoor-air quality and inadequate light, and in dangerous neighborhoods where it is not always safe to even venture outside. These conditions in turn lead to school absences, poor academic performance, behavioral problems, suspension, disproportionate special education placement, high drop-out rates, unemployment, and a general exclusion from mainstream society and opportunities.

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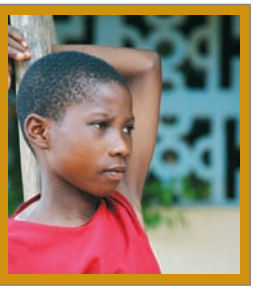
"African American children experience poverty that is deeper and more enduring than do children of any other racial or ethnic group."

It's a formula for despair and marginalization in which segregation is as important a factor as poverty. This almost perfect isolation from the mainstream and healthy, helpful role models hardens boys and men of color, encouraging hostile attitudes towards schools, teachers, police, clergy, authority figures, and even parents.

The children of incarcerated parents are more likely to experience anxiety and withdrawal, behave aggressively in the classroom, drop out of school, and bear children out of wedlock.

All of this creates an even more stressful environment which in turn is linked to violence.

Poor, single mothers are much more likely to suffer from depression, resulting in hostility and irritability toward their children, even praising them less than do healthier mothers. Children experiencing toxic stress levels are unable to form positive relationships with teachers and peers, and they behave disruptively, which is often met with stern punishment, fueling feelings of low self-esteem. Without health care and mental health services, adolescents often self-medicate by abusing drugs or alcohol, or engage in risky sexual behavior that contributes to STDS, HIV-AIDS, and unwanted pregnancies.



Part III
What Advocates Know

With all these issues, advocates and policy reformers know a lot about how to help men and boys of color.

Through our work in communities of color, and our initial conversations with leaders on the front lines of this struggle, PolicyLink knows that a number of programs and leaders are working to strengthen families and communities, and providing boys and men of color with the road map they need to navigate the existing system:

- Community and Family Health programs and agencies that are successfully meeting the physical and mental health needs of the families of boys and men of color;
- Early childhood and after school programs that are working with children, youth, and their parents to build the skills and capacity needed for healthy social and academic development;
- Youth led community arts and leadership efforts are providing opportunities and mentorship support for boys and young men to develop their talents, contribute to the community, and take control of their lives and futures;
- Community led youth violence prevention and gang intervention efforts are succeeding in reclaiming young lives;
- Community colleges and workforce education programs are providing effective education and training, which young men (and those returning to society) can draw upon to gain the skills needed to find good paying jobs in their communities;

Meanwhile, a host of other great leaders and organizations are hard at work leading system reform efforts to address:

- The institutional policies and practices that underlie the disproportionate incarceration of boys and men of color;

- The institutional policies and practices that underlie escalating drop-out rates and low college-going rates among boys and men of color;
- The institutional policies that underlie racial health disparities in communities across the nation;
- The institutional policies that underlie the widening racial divide in regards to poverty, economic opportunities, and wealth accumulation.

Unfortunately, PolicyLink also knows their successes have been limited by a lack of coordination and resources. In many cases, the scale of these efforts is insufficient to engage more than a fraction of those who need help. Equally important, many of our best thinkers, practitioners, reformers, and partnership-builders work in isolation from one another. PolicyLink knows that the tendency to work in silos happens for a number of good reasons. For example:

- Undertaking system reform is complex, and the entrenched power interests in key institutions makes it extremely difficult to successfully move reform in even one system. As a result, it seems daunting to tackle reform across the continuum of systems that are charged with serving and empowering boys and men of color from cradle to grave.
- Some community leaders (and ex-system reformers who have given up on realizing system reform) have chosen to focus their energies on intervention strategies that strengthen the capacity of boys and men of color to successfully navigate the existing structural arrangements.
- As a result, PolicyLink knows many system reformers and intervention practitioners have chosen to focus their talent, energy, and organizational resources on the goal of helping boys and men of color successfully navigate different stages of development:

    1) Early Childhood Investment frame: Those focused on strengthening families and early childhood experiences may believe the best strategy is to ensure

children ages 0-8 develop the stamina and resiliency needed to succeed in spite of the challenges they are sure to face as early teens.

2) School-to-Prison Pipeline frame: Another set of leaders is focused on improving the chances that boys and young men of color ages (ages 8-19) will gain access to education and workforce development that will ensure their success and divert them from the incarceration/economic isolation path.

3) Recurrent Violence, Recurrent Trauma frame: Another group of leaders is most interested in developing intervention and reform strategies to help boys and men (ages 11-24) who are struggling to feel safe and supported after experiencing injury and stress.

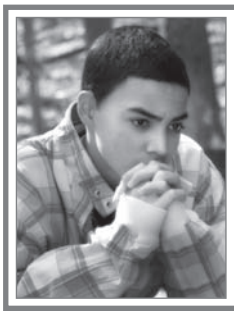
4) Reentry frame: A grouping of leaders that are engaged in projects and policy reforms that will give men of color who are returning to their families after prison the best chance to become contributing members of our society.

The preceding variety of approaches demonstrates the lack of consensus on an over-arching research or policy framework. The challenge of connecting and unifying this diverse set of practitioners, advocates, researchers, and foundations to successfully craft and implement a prevention agenda for men and boys of color presents TCE with a significant, but daunting, opportunity.

Below, several programs are highlighted for their varying approaches and lessons in success. These are a sampling; there are many more effective and innovative programs than this report could list.

La Clínica de la Raza, Oakland–Health/Male Leadership

The mission of La Clínica de La Raza, Inc. (La Clínica) is *to improve the quality of life of the diverse communities it serves by providing culturally appropriate, high-quality and accessible health care for all*. Since being established in 1971, La Clínica has been at the forefront of providing culturally and linguistically appropriate health care services to the medically underserved, non-English speaking immigrant populations. Today, La



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Clínica operates 26 sites in Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano Counties. La Clínica offers comprehensive health care services including pediatrics, family medicine, women's health, adolescent health, prenatal services, preventive medicine, mental health services, dental and vision care, school-based clinics, pharmacy, laboratory, radiology services, street outreach, case management, and community health education. La Clínica has recently emphasized services targeting boys and men of color through school and community-based health education, youth development, and clinic services for youth and adults.

Since 2006, La Clínica has been actively involved in the Alameda County Public Health Department's Urban Male Health Initiative, which has linked La Clínica's work to this countywide initiative. Additionally, La Clínica staff have made presentations at conferences nationally to address the multiple health issues, affecting males of color, specifically among immigrant communities. One such issue is male involvement in teen pregnancy prevention and fatherhood services.

In speaking with Ignacio Ferrey, he emphasized La Clínica's work:

1) In partnership with Alameda County Public Health Department, helping young men in schools develop leadership skills, providing peer education ,and emphasizing male responsibility for preventing teen pregnancy, and promoting reproductive health and responsible sexual behavior;

2) In partnership with Street Level Health Project, providing day laborers with health education, information, and health services to improve health access for one of the most vulnerable California populations; and

3) Through an established support group providing adult Latino men a safe space to talk openly about life as well as issues such as community violence, including domestic violence, while building leadership skills to be positive models in our families and communities. Recently, the group developed a digital story about the impact of the group on the men and in their families.

Ferrey attributed the success of the program to—the fact that the men participate in developing the program, the clinic's programs are embedded in school communities, and they conduct outreach to day laborers. In short, La Clínica staff members take the programs and resources to the population.

"You have to go where the guys are. You can't expect them to come to us. We learned that over the years, how to deliver services for males," Ferrey said.

He also credited a committed staff and an approach that incorporates youth and cultural identity in redefining masculinity by challenging the stereotypes of society.

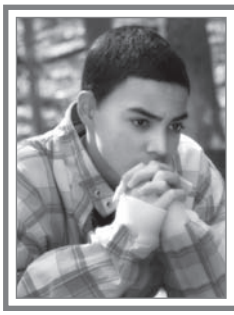
More recently, the agency's recognition of the importance of addressing the needs of young and adult men has been critical to finding ways to improve men's health outcomes and improving their involvement in their family and community. This shift occurred in the last couple of years, initiating an agency-wide needs assessment process that identified gaps in services, best practices by population, and possible ways to fill the gaps in health services for all men and boys.

For other agencies or communities to replicate La Clínica's success, he said, they would have to critically evaluate their work with men, train staff, and build relationships with other agencies providing services for the population, This would enable them to develop partnerships and coordinate services within and between agencies.

"We are working to shift the way health services are delivered for adolescent and adult males in addition to reframing their perception of their own health and self," he said. "As a society, we can't continue to see men disconnected from families. We have to look at men in the context of families and community and get men to recognize that as well."

Success, A New Beginning, Los Angeles–Re-entry/Education/ Community Healing

Success works to promote community healing and enhancement through non-



traditional leadership and innovative civic engagement. All programs and services are based on its "Theory of Change for Community Enhancement." The young adults and youth they serve engage in a wide range of activities including education, experiential service learning, healing circles, leadership development, and civic participation. These activities aim to enhance their individual and collective capacity to identify and meet their needs to participate more fully in the public discourse and policy initiatives that affect their lives.

This program uses formerly incarcerated people who have returned to the community to inspire and educate other young men and women possibly headed down the same path.

Maryanne Galindo, chief operating officer, said the organization's focus on working with multiple generations, juvenile and re-entry adult offenders, and multi-cultural populations has contributed to its success. In prisons, Latino and African-American men are segregated according to race. To re-enter the racially diverse South Central Los Angeles community, they need to detox from that segregated experience. The multiple-generation focus has also been very successful.

The organization has the philosophical and pedagogical framework of taking people where they are and using cultural tools, such as storytelling, to allow them to feel comfortable. This approach builds them up and doesn't expect them to conform to traditional hierarchical classroom lectures and formats.

The partnership with the local community college has been crucial, allowing participants to build their individual capacity. It has enhanced their sustainability, providing a continuum of services, and creating a bridge to schools, where they take courses that offer skill certificates in fields such as construction, counseling, and teaching.

"We tell them if they spent 8, 10 or 15 years in prison, 2 years to get an AA degree is nothing." Galindo said. "Their label is not ex-felon, but college student. It's empowering."

As well as helping students enroll, the program takes classes into the California

Youth Authority, bringing the college to the community. The arrangement is mutually beneficial, increasing the enrollment of the college and providing a bridge for the students. The program also provides technical support to professors to help them understand how to teach this population more effectively.

Galindo emphasized the importance of the healing component. Many participants are military veterans who treated their post-deployment pain with drug use that led them into the criminal justice system. The combination of the healing and academic approaches is important. The program has trained and certified 35 participants in both the academic and healing curriculum.

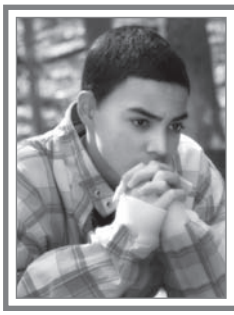
Success would benefit from resources that would allow it to document its approach and curriculum. It believes the curriculum could be adapted to other programs. The organization has received inquiries from several communities about replicating its approach and hopes to expand the skills-certificate model to community colleges throughout the state.

Youth Uprising, Oakland–Youth Development/Arts & Culture/ Community Healing

Youth Uprising offers a wide range of programs and services in its state-of-the-art, 25,000 square-foot facility in East Oakland. These include youth leadership and community building, media arts, physical arts, performance arts, material arts, health and wellness, career and education, and social enterprise. Youth Uprising is dedicated to being in the forefront of advancing youth leadership development as a means of affecting positive community change. It seeks to do this by ensuring that youth and young adults are supported in actualizing their potential as a result of:

1. Consciousness-raising that exposes them to a broader set of realities, and develops their capacity to think critically about personal and community experiences;

2. Personal Transformation that builds their capacity to transform experiences of trauma and oppression into opportunities for positive personal and community change; and



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"Youth Uprising is dedicated to being in the forefront of advancing youth leadership development as a means of affecting positive community change."

3. Hard Skill/Leadership Development that increases their creativity, strengths, and skills as effective leaders who are competitive in the marketplace.

Omana Imani, director of special projects, attributed the program's success to multiple partnerships, including with the city, county, community-based organizations and the city police department, and to the staff's dedication.

Many of the staff members are community residents. The team of indigenous workers and staff members with academic degrees in their fields provides a rich and effective mix. When the now nearly 4-year-old program was first getting established, planners made a point of talking to the neighbors, community-based organizations, schools, and churches.

"We didn't want to just plop down in the neighborhood," said Imani. "We didn't want to be seen as someone else who comes in and takes over what is happening in the neighborhood. We were collaborating with the neighborhood to build an organization." She thinks that type of up-front, community buy-in could effectively serve other organizations as well.

Currently, the organization is in the process of strategic planning. It is thinking of ways to build on its youth-leadership-development success to work toward community transformation. In a short time, the organization has been able to build an impressive clientele—200 to 300 young people go to the center daily. However, staff members feel they must respond to the high homicide rates in the area and the city, and are searching for ways their work can "trickle out to the community" in a more strategic and deliberate manner.

Fathers and Families of San Joaquin, Stockton–Community development/ Father Engagement

Fathers and Families offers services and parenting classes for young fathers and incarcerated men; youth development and gang intervention programs; healing circles that incorporate indigenous teaching and culture cures; and community research and

organizing initiatives. The organization's central belief is that re-connecting fathers with their families strengthens both the families and communities.

Sammy Nunez, executive director, said the program began as a grassroots group that recognized a gap in services to the community; there was little effort to reach out to fathers. In surveying the needs of the community, they found too many fathers were either chronically unemployed and unable to support their families in a meaningful way, were in county jail, in drug treatment, or simply transient in the community.

It started with a campaign to inform the community of its services and found a "hunger for daddy-type services," Nunez said. Men were referred by their mothers, wives, ex-wives and children.

"We saw we could turn this around if we engage the fathers," he said. "We saw the need for fathers to get back involved in the community and their children's lives, to re-establish themselves in a good way with their children and families."

Nunez said a lot of fathers of color carry pain and shame from untreated trauma, and themselves grew up with absent fathers. They had vowed not to repeat their father's mistakes but didn't know how. Fathers and Families gives them the skills and support they need to build relationships, and reconcile and bond with their children and families. Once fathers bond, they begin making decisions based on how they will affect their families.

The healing circles are powerful tools that help the men confront their pain and remain accountable to each other.

He attributed the program's success to the dedication and sincerity of the staff, having a method to approach the work, training and constant self-examination and evaluation, and the professionalism and strength of the organization.

Nunez called the work sacred. "There is nothing like giving a family, a child, back their father, getting a family moving upward toward success and self sufficiency. It truly is a blessing to do this work."

Community Build, Los Angeles–Comprehensive/Environment

Community Build's programs for youth includes the Scholars to College program, a health initiative that provides health education and direct mental and physical services, career-exploration consulting, counseling, drug-and alcohol-dependency support, and help with child-care issues. Community Build's Telecommunications Career Training (TCT) program is geared to youth ages 16-18 who are incarcerated and are scheduled to be released to the community. The program, run by residents of the community, addresses incarceration recidivism by focusing on skill attainment and employment retention.

It includes an adult re-entry component, which provides placement and assistance to adults 18-30 with felonies or misdemeanors. They are assisted with supportive services such as clothing, housing, traffic warrant clean-up, tattoo removal and career preparation.

Brenda Shockley, president and executive director, said the program began working with men and boys of color in response to the conditions that led to the Civil Unrest in Los Angeles in 1992. She said it focused on ages 17-30 because these young men were literally hanging out on the corners because the job-training and employment programs had been decimated by Republican administrations.

"We found, that for that population, *nothing*, and I mean, *nothing* changed a young man faster or more permanently than a decent pay check," Schockley said. "The fact that they could contribute to the household and support their children made all the difference in the world."

She said that with time, attention, and resources the organization also has had remarkable success in getting young men of color into college.

In addition, over time Community Build began working with a younger population, primarily middle school students and their families, to help them avoid barriers such as school dropout, school failure, lack of preparation for college, criminal activity, and gang involvement. The program engages families in cultural, athletic, and spiritual activities.

Its model-assessment, education, training, employment placement, along with case management and support services—has served the organization well and has been tailored to work with foster youth, youthful offenders, and gang-involved youth. The services have been expanded to include mental health and housing.

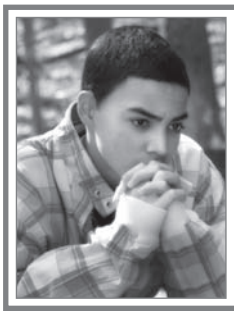
Shockley attributed the program's success to the fact staff members come from the community, identify with the young men, and are able to address their issues in the context of the youths' personal needs, and the needs of the family and community. In addition, a one-stop arrangement allows case managers, teachers, peer counselors and job developers to work as a team, sharing insight and responsibility for the young person.

The program's efforts to stabilize the lives of young men of color and their families could be enhanced by the availability of affordable housing and jobs providing a livable wage.

PolicyLink knows the issues facing men and boys of color must be addressed on both the harm and opportunity sides—engaging high school drop outs, for example, and creating positive school climates that keep students from dropping out to begin with.

The overall strategy must connect the people helping men and boys of color navigate the broken system with the people trying to affect policy change that will fix or replace the broken system.

While multi-dimensional, intertwined systemic failure presents a daunting challenge, it also offers the opportunity for multi-dimensional, intertwined systemic correction. As



PART III

"… theories of change involve leadership development, research, program development, communication, and building public will…"

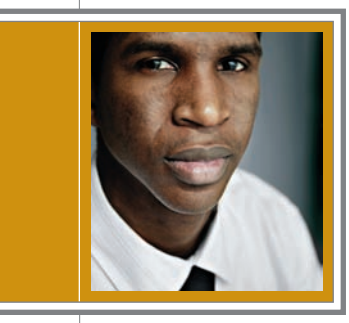
researchers and advocates understand the myriad ways poor health, for example, affects the ability to learn, they know that programs and policies that improve health will also enhance the ability to learn.

PolicyLink knows theories of change involve leadership development, research, program development, communication, and building public will to impact policy. PolicyLink and TCE have made a jump start in several of these areas, including leadership development, research, and program development.

A policy advocacy agenda that would address challenges and opportunities facing men and boys of color, should be grounded in a comprehensive analysis of the systems and institutions that line the pathway to choices. It should also generate interventions that result, at a minimum, in pathway choices that are not dead end, and at best, in choices for real opportunities to succeed in life.

This analysis should include a better picture of the comprehensive strategies for systemic reform, strategies to eliminate institutional practices that push boys and men out of the very institutions charged with preparing them for success (e.g., early childhood programs, K-12 schools, physical and mental health systems, workforce education, higher education, the regional labor market, etc.). To significantly increase the numbers of boys and men of color that have access to the supports they need for healthy development and success, a more robust and inter-connected intervention and policy-reform strategy is needed.

Advocates know they cannot turn away from this challenge, whether they be foundations, equity activists, policy makers, program directors, legislators, government officials, or simply concerned Californians. The continued racial disparities and their costs—social, economic, and moral—threaten to drown the state and its future.



Part IV
Developing Public Will

The good health of men and boys of color is critical to realizing a "Healthy Communities" agenda. Simply put, communities can not be healthy if their men and boys are sick, uneducated, incarcerated, and unemployed. An examination of how the mass incarceration of men harms their families, neighborhoods, and larger communities makes this point all too clearly.

Too many of our residents may believe the problems facing men and boys of color are too big to solve. However, public opinion can be changed, public will can be directed. The media campaign against smoking cigarettes, and the population's growing environmental awareness are two compelling examples.

Advocates already have convincing information that can be used to develop the public will. While lawmakers have often favored harsh penalties over prevention because of political expedience, there is greater public support for a preventive approach than many may have believed.

In a 2007 survey, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency found that while 90 percent of respondents said crime was a major problem in their community, two-thirds did not believe harsher penalties are effective solutions. By a ratio of two to one, respondents said prevention is more effective; 91 percent supported strengthening rehabilitation efforts in the juvenile justice system.

Similarly, in a national survey conducted in 2006, researchers led by Mark A. Cohen found that spending more public money on "prevention programs to help keep youth out of trouble" ranked higher than spending more for police on the streets, prisons, and

tax relief. While elected officials have pursued a get-tough approach , the public is well aware it is not working.

It is not surprising that Californians, increasingly, recognize that excluding significant segments of the population from reaping the benefits of citizenship has a price tag. Education offers a compelling example. According to the Civil Rights Project at Harvard Law School, only 54% of Latino and 50% of African-American men that enter high school graduate with diplomas.

In their study titled "*The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for All of America's Children*, "a team of researchers at Columbia University's Teachers College documented substantial savings to taxpayers when high-school graduation rates are increased. With each additional high school graduate, there is a lifetime public benefit of $209,100 resulting from more taxes paid, less public health costs, fewer welfare payments, and lower criminal justice costs. When the cost of intervention was included, the savings was still $127,100.

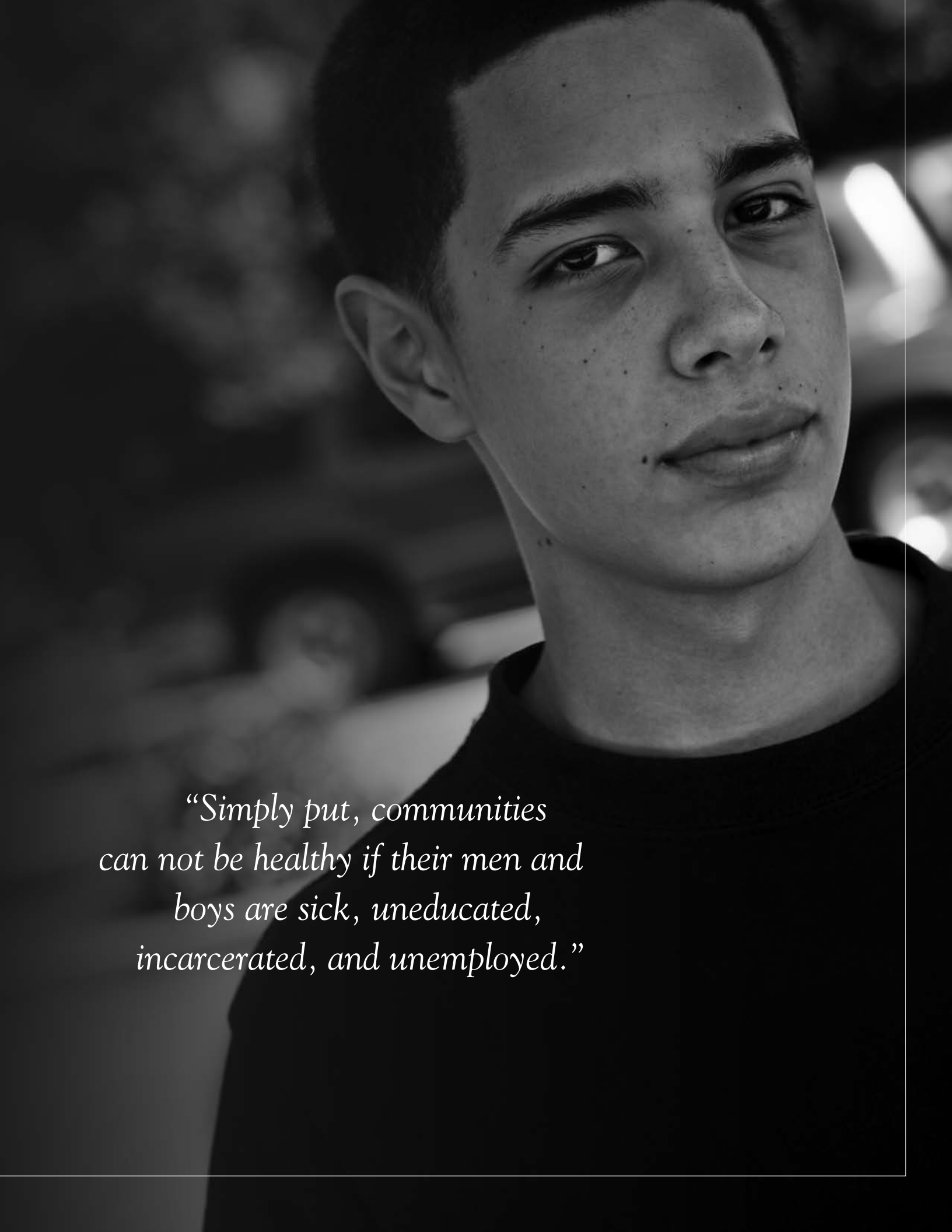
If the drop-out rate were cut in half nationwide, U.S. taxpayers would save $45-billion over the lifetime of these youth.

Looking at the cost savings in reduced criminal activity alone, the numbers are startling. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, if the high school graduation rate for males (enrolled in 9th grade in 2005-2006) was increased by 10 percent, California would see a lifetime savings in crime-related costs of $1.2-trillion. Los Angeles would see a similar savings of close to $134-million. If the rate went up 10 percent for African American and Latino males, the city would save more than $128-million ($23-million for African Americans and $105-million for Latinos.)

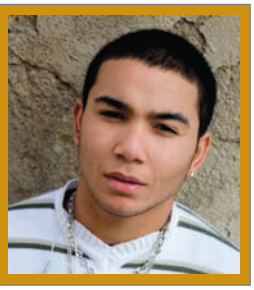
Imagine what the city and the state could do with those millions of dollars, how much stronger California's economies and communities would be. Californians would be able to invest in the building and development of their cities—in education, infrastructure, green technology, and health-care centers, for example—rather than in the arrest and jailing of so many young men of color, which results in severely limited life choices.

In another revealing cost-benefit analysis, researchers at Vanderbilt University and the University of York, led by Mark A. Cohen, established that the lifetime benefit of saving a high-risk youth from extended bouts of delinquency, joblessness, and incarceration is between $1.7-and $2.3-million, while a typical career costs taxpayers between $1.3-million to $1.5-million. The cost for a high school dropout is between $243,000 and $388,000, while for a heavy drug user it's $370,000 to $970,000. These numbers do not include the loss of economic development that results from the population's fear of crime, and efforts to avoid it.

California has valuable, largely untapped resources. Seen simply as a balance sheet, the current system is wasteful, costly, and senseless.



"Simply put, communities can not be healthy if their men and boys are sick, uneducated, incarcerated, and unemployed."



Part V
Building a Platform and Infrastructure for Action

The goal is to create healthy communities throughout California by developing local and statewide policy and advocacy strategies that target the needs of men and boys of color. These strategies would cover the areas of healthcare and community health, early childhood development and public education, community and workforce development, and the built environment.

Addressing the needs of men and boys of color is critical to improving the overall health outcomes of their families and communities, and requires a complete systems change. Work on this project needs to take place at the community, advocacy, local-policy, and state-policy implementation levels.

This calls for the development of a network of practitioners and advocates working in the four areas named above, promoting policy reform, strengthening intervention work on the ground, conducting research, and providing technical assistance to peers. The effort should include the development of African American and Latino leadership forums—working on parallel tracks—to collaborate on a joint policy agenda.

To develop this network, it is necessary to: identify and recruit leaders from a wide cross section of stakeholders; foster dialogue between academics; act as a liaison between the academic community and practitioners; develop an infrastructure to create and implement a prevention agenda; develop an online learning community; and plan a series of regional meetings to share research and develop a joint policy agenda for action at the local and state levels.

"Addressing the needs of men and boys of color is critical to improving the overall health outcomes of their families and communities…"

The California Endowment can benefit from a framework that analyzes how the focus on men and boys of color complements the foundation's strategies, identifying an approach that integrates the needs of this population but is also applicable to other populations. This should include collaborative work to understand the challenges, identify the policy opportunities, and deepen the understanding of how the foundation's objectives are advanced by improving the outcomes for men and boys of color. An information base validating this work should be established.

This work also requires a comprehensive policy agenda to include the needs of men and boys of color and advance place-based strategies that will have an impact on policy. Working in partnership with the foundation and the leadership forums, the framers of the agenda should establish an infrastructure to move the work from the place to policy level. The framers should develop strategies that lead to state-level policy reform, and recommend successful place-based strategies that can be applied to a larger scale. This would include the identification of concrete policy recommendations and systems reforms in The California Endowment's four focus areas.

Part VI
Conclusion

This report began with the vision of a healthy California that includes all of its residents and nurtures and utilizes their vast potential. It identified the savings realized when so many resources are not drained by school discipline, incarceration, and illness that limit the life choices of men and boys of color and their communities. More importantly, it discussed the untapped potential of this population that would impel the state toward greater health, achievement, innovation, and economic well-being.

As a society, we must ask ourselves, why wouldn't we work to build a state that is healthier in all aspects? How could we decline such a challenge? It is not simply in the interest of the men and boys of color, but of the entire state's population.

The society is thus challenged to identify and address the needs of men and boys of color. This report has laid out a theory of change and several of the pathways for them to have a promising future. It has discussed the task of developing the public will to back this change, identifying compelling arguments and information.

PolicyLink's initial charge was to build upon what was learned from the research of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at the Harvard Law School, and connect it to the work on the ground that PolicyLink has identified as promising. With the Institute's highly informative research on the school to prison pipeline as a base, PolicyLink analyzed the interrelated and mutually perpetuating systemic failures in the areas of employment, health, built environment, and violence that push out and permanently exclude men and boys of color from mainstream society and its promise. PolicyLink advocates a holistic approach to intervention and policy reform.

This report has also identified several programs that have devised successful strategies for addressing the needs of this population. Some of these strategies include:

- the involvement and employment of community residents in programming;
- program development based on a needs assessment of the community;
- healing circles and counseling for pervasive and untreated trauma; programming that is taken to the population in schools, jails, or day-labor centers;
- effective partnerships with other organizations and agencies;
- and the use of cultural models to promote male leadership.

Based on their on-the-ground experience, these programs have already started acting on a belief that is gaining currency among service providers and policy makers: the health and well being of men and boys of color is essential to the health of their families, communities, and the larger society.

The report makes several recommendations to TCE. It starts with the goal of developing a unifying framework to foster collaboration that will connect interventions, policy, and system reforms. Toward the accomplishment of that goal, the report offers four strategies:

- build on the current research and further explore the institutional, political, and cultural systems that limit opportunities for success;
- engage stakeholders, and build on growing relationships within the African-American and Latino communities to ensure that all members with a stake in the issues are supported and represented in the process of forming policy;
- strategize solutions in a proactive fashion with local leaders and policy makers to ensure sustainable outcomes;
- coordinate efforts between researchers, institutions, stakeholders, local leaders, and policy makers to collectively advocate on the behalf of men and boys of color; and
- build the public will for change.

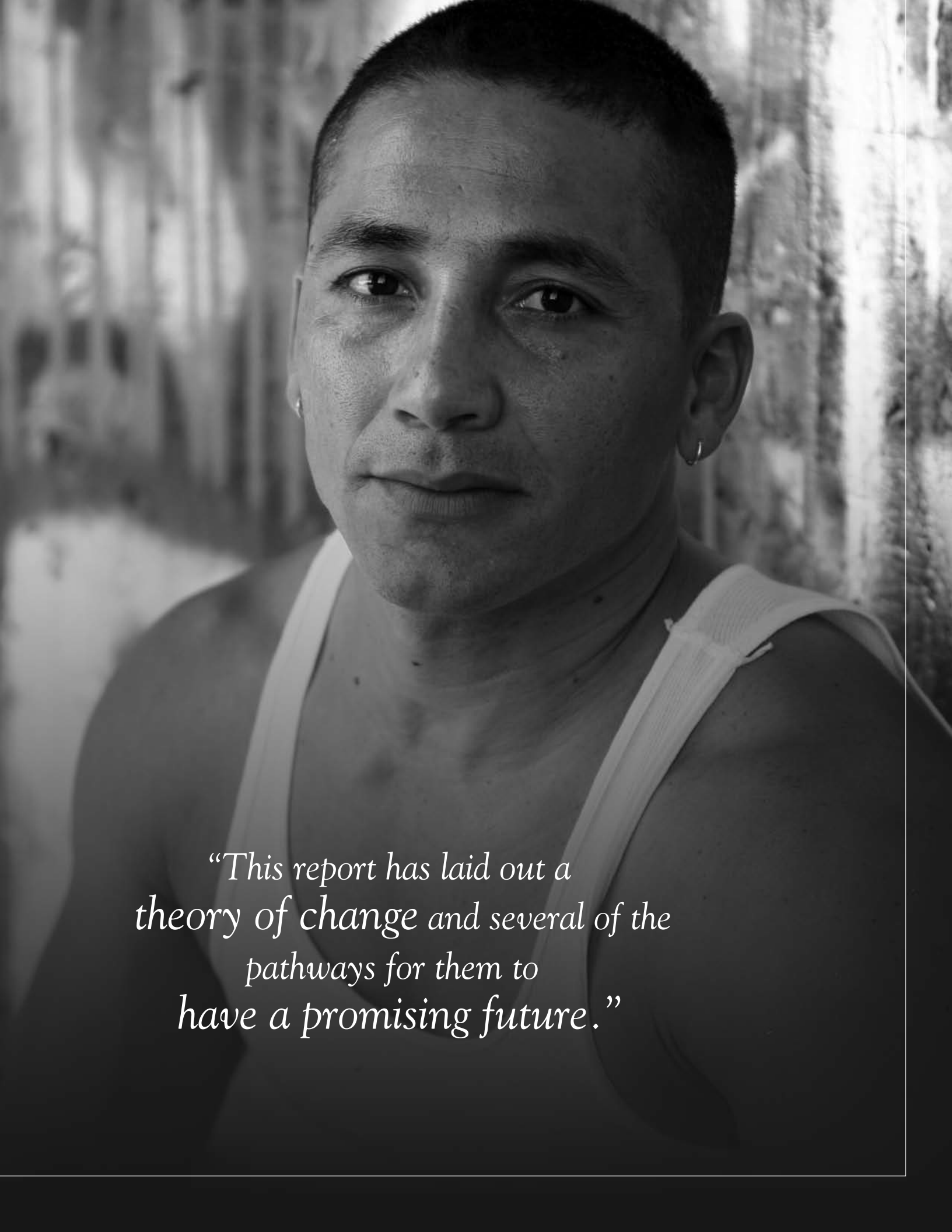
Further, the report sets forth a platform and infrastructure for action that includes the development of leadership tables. These would be comprised of practitioners and advocates; foster strategic thinking, analysis, and planning with The California Endowment; and develop place-based policy strategies and system reforms at both the state and local level.

In closing, the report looks to the words of Glenn C. Loury, author of *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*. In the conclusion of a powerful essay titled "America Incarcerated," he challenged society to look at the issue from the perspective of political philosopher John Rawls' theory of justice. Rawls said individuals look at justice from an "original position," behind "a veil of ignorance" that conceals realities such as their class, race, gender, and talents.

"We need to ask what rules we would pick if we seriously imagined that we could turn out to be anyone in society," Loury wrote. "Imagine that you could be born a black American male outcast shuffling between prison and the labor market on his way to an early death to the chorus of *nigger* or *criminal* or *dummy*. Suppose we had to stop thinking of *us* and *them*. What social rules would we pick if we actually thought that *they* could be *us*?"

"What weight would we give to various elements in the deterrence-retribution-incapacitation-rehabilitation calculus, if we thought that calculus could end up being applied to our own children, or to us? How would we apportion blame and affix responsibility for the cultural and social pathologies evident in some quarter of our society if we envisioned that we ourselves might well have been born into the social margins where such pathology flourishes?"

That is our challenge and moral imperative: Imagine if we were them and they were us, Californians.



"This report has laid out a theory of change and several of the pathways for them to have a promising future."

Appendix

The Neighborhood to Prison Pipeline: A Well Worn Path from Suspension, Expulsion, Dropping Out and Incarceration, excerpted from the Harvard Report, ***Paving Pathways to Participation, Promise and Prosperity.***

The words "school to prison pipeline" offer a powerful visual image. It is through this lens that one might best appreciate how a child's life trajectory can change in an instant through no fault of his own. Here it is also evident that thinking in terms of individual "choices" is of limited usefulness. What might look like a "choice" from a middle class vantage point might not be a "choice" at all for a child with a limited array of options—a child who experiences trauma and compounded stress every day of his life.

Increasing numbers of children and teens in the United States are getting suspended and expelled from public schools.[1] Such suspensions and expulsions make students more vulnerable to falling onto the track of jail and prison. "School to prison pipeline" is shorthand for three phenomena :

- One, the increasing use of "zero tolerance" discipline policies with mandatory or predetermined punishments for certain behaviors. These polices have led to increased expulsion and suspension, which denies opportunities to learn, and have been linked to dropping out[2], both of which research links to incarceration.[3]
- Two, the practice in which educators refer students to the criminal justice system for relatively minor infractions that were previously or are better handled within the school; and
- Three, the less tangible proliferation of a criminal justice culture, apparatus, and architecture in schools.[4]

[1] *U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d07/tables/dt07_153.asp*
[2] *For example, see Rafaele Mendes, Linda M. "Predictors of suspensions and negative school outcomes: A longitudinal investigation," In Wald, Johanna and Daniel J. Losen, eds. Deconstructing the School to Prison Pipeline. New Directions for Youth Development, No. 99 (Fall 2003).*
[3] *Abandoned in the Back Row. Walter Haney—The Ninth Grade Bulge, presented at School to Prison Pipeline Conference, May 2003.*
[4] *Organizations and institutions differ on the meaning of the "school to prison pipeline." The American Psychological Association, for example, uses it more exclusively to refer to educator referrals to the criminal justice system for relatively minor infractions.*

According to the most recent statistics from the U.S. Department of Education, in 2004 more than 3 million students were suspended and 106,000 were expelled, representing a 7.4 percent increase in suspensions and a 9.3 percent increase in expulsions from 2000.[5] In California, 396,000 students were suspended and another 18,862 were expelled during the 2002 2003 school year.[6]

For more than three decades, simple investigations have revealed that harsh school discipline policies are imposed upon children of color at highly disproportionate rates.[7] Racial disparities can be misconstrued as an illustration that more African-American and Latino youngsters are committing crimes. Any discussion must answer the question of whether or not African American and Latino youngsters are receiving harsher punishments than white students after being accused or found guilty of the same or similar offenses. Similarly we must look at underlying causes for disparities, understanding the roles of implicit forms of bias, structural forces, and social ills.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, in 2003 national data showed that 14 percent of African-American students but fewer than 5 percent of white students were suspended at least once from school. African-American students were almost 3 times more likely than white students to be suspended. These disparities have widened since 1972, when 6 percent of African American students and just 3 percent of white students were suspended.

In California, public school educators suspended more than 770,000 students last year. That's 6 out of every 100 students, up from 5 per 100 the year before, according to a recent analysis by the San Francisco Chronicle[8]. Of those, 394,463 were suspended in the amorphous categories of "willful defiance" and "disruption of school activities"—the categories most likely to include disproportionate numbers of African-American and Latino students.

[5] *The 2000 suspension an expulsion figures can be found here: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d04/tables/dt04_144.asp The 2004 suspension figures can be found here: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d07/tables/dt07_152.asp*

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *This year, U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights found suspension rates for black students two and three times higher than suspension rates for white students. Research consistently found this pattern. See, for example, Leone, P.E., et. al., School Failure, Race, and Disability: Promoting Positive Outcomes, Decreasing Vulnerability for Involvement with the Juvenile Delinquency System: The National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice (October, 2003); In 2000, researchers found that African-American students are two to three times as likely to be suspended or expelled as other students. (Skiba, Michale, Nardo, and Peterson. Opportunities Suspended, (Civil Rights Project and Advancement Project 2000).*

[8] *Asminov, N. "Suspensions point to trouble in schools," San Francisco Chronicle, May 19, 2008*

The Institute for Democracy, Education and Access (IDEA) based at UCLA finds that in California in 2002–2003, African-American students represented 8 percent of the state's public school enrollment, but 19 percent of out-of-school suspensions[9]. Latino students made up half of the enrollment and half of the expulsions and suspensions.[10]

Failure in school is also linked to incarceration. About 40 percent of incarcerated people did not graduate from high school. Upon entering prison, only about a quarter of California's inmates could read at or about the 7th grade level.[11] In 2005, California incarcerated 460 white people, 2,992 African Americans, and 782 Latinos per 100,000 residents. In an alarming racial disparity, African-Americans were 6.5 times more likely than white people to be incarcerated.[12]

Suspension rates are highest in urban districts, and these are of course the districts that enroll a disproportionate share of students of color.[13] Some research has demonstrated that urban administrators were more likely to follow zero-tolerance policies to the letter, without considering mitigating circumstances, while administrators in rural districts used such policies in a more "interpretive" manner. In urban districts, in 2003, nearly 25 percent of students were suspended at least once, compared with 13 percent in suburban schools and 7 percent in rural schools.[14]

Russel Skiba and his colleagues studied 37 states and found a strong relationship between racial disparities in school suspension and overall juvenile incarceration rates.[15] Nationally, in 2003, youth of color made up 38 percent of the U.S. youth populations. However youth of color represented 65 percent of the youth in secure detention facilities.[16]

[9] *"Suspension and Expulsion At A Glance," Institute for Democracy, Education and Access at the University of California, Los Angeles. Calculations based upon Office for Civil Rights, 2002 Elementary and Secondary School Survey.*

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *From Cellblocks to Classroom: A Lao Report. Legislative Analyst's Office. (A Lao Report, Legislative Analyst's Office, From Cellblocks to Classroom: http://www.lao.ca.gov/2008/crim/inmate_education/inmate_education_021208.pdf)*

[12] *U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear, 2005.*

[13] *See for example, Dunbar, C. and F. F. Villarruil, What a Difference the Community Makes: Zero Tolerance Policy Interpretation and Implementation," Equity and Excellence in Education, 37, 351 359 (2004). This study uses Michigan as a case study.*

[14] *Derived from Department of Education, 2004.*

[15] *Skiba, R. Simmons, A, Staudinger, L., Rausch, M. Dow, G. and Feggins, R. 2003, may. Consistent removal: Contributions of school discipline to the school-prison pipeline. Paper presented at the School to Prison Pipeline conference, Harvard University.*

[16] *Improving Life Opportunities for Youth, Families, and Communities of Color. Annual Report of the W. Haywood Burns Institute. San Francisco, California. 2007. https://secure.lenos.com/lenos/burnsinstitute/bihome/burns.report.2007.pdf*

APPENDIX

"… studied 37 states and found a strong relationship between racial disparities in school suspension and overall juvenile incarceration rates…"

In California, in 2003, 25 percent of incarcerated juveniles were African-American, though only 8 percent of the state's youth population was African-American.

In his study, "The Color of Justice: Understanding and Addressing Racial Inequity in School Punishment," Skiba and his colleagues at Indiana University found that African-American students in a large Midwestern urban school district were referred to the office for less serious and more subjective reasons than white students. They also generally received harsher punishments than white students accused of similar offenses. The researchers concluded that "these results argue that disproportionate representation of African-Americans in office referrals, suspension and expulsion is evidence of a pervasive and systematic bias that may well be inherent in the use of exclusionary discipline."[17]

Some research suggests that teachers are more likely to refer African-American students than white students for suspension, suggesting that they may be misinterpreting the actions of African-American males as threatening.[18]

A growing body of research points to the power of "implicit bias" in decisions that affect life outcomes for people of color. This refers to unconscious negative feelings about particular racial or ethnic groups that clash with one's publicly professed views or feelings. Some social psychologists and others advocate for further professional education that might bring such prejudices and their consequences to light, and possibly reduce huge racial disparities in school discipline and harsh juvenile sentencing.

Courts at both the state and federal level have increasingly deferred to the power of school officials to regulate student conduct. Professor Randall Beger of the University of Wisconsin argues that at just the time courts dispensed with constitutional safeguards protecting students, schools stepped up intrusive surveillance tactics.

[17] *Skiba, Russell J., The Color of Discipline. 2000. Indiana Education Policy Center.*
[18] *For an excellent discussion of this phenomenon, see: Ferguson, AA. 2000. Bad Boys: Public Schools in the Making of Black Masculinity. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.*

Various law enforcement agencies have increased the use of criminal justice apparatus in schools, often in a well-meaning attempt to make schools safer, including metal detectors, tasers, surveillance cameras, canine units, and biometric hand readers.[19] Generally schools have also increased the presence of the police force in public schools.

This nationwide increase in punitive school policy does not appear to be a rational response to school violence; the most recent government data indicates that there had been a decline in school violence.

Indeed, we built the school to prison pipeline concomitant with our collective construction of a system of mass incarceration. Evidence shows that both policies—exclusionary school policies and incarceration—have failed to make our urban schools or neighborhoods marked by concentrated disadvantage safer.

In February, 2008, the Pew Center on The States reported a disturbing milestone: more than one in every 100 adults is in jail or prison. One in 30 men between the ages of 20 and 34 are incarcerated. For African-American males, that figure is one in nine. One in every 53 people in their 20s is behind bars.[20] U.S. per capita incarceration rate is 700 per 100,000 citizens, the world's highest rate, and 7 times the world average. The U.S. prison population more than doubled from 1980 to 1990 alone.[21]

Pew joins several other research organizations in concluding that growth in incarceration has not been driven by either an equal increase in crime or by general population growth, but flows from a wave of policy choices that sent more lawbreakers to prison and for longer periods.

In his 2006 book, *Punishment and Inequality in America*, Harvard sociologist Bruce Western demonstrates that punitive policies of increasing incarceration backfire, and end up hurting the communities they are ostensibly designed to protect. He documents the strong link between mass incarceration and inequality, particularly among African-American men.

[19] *See for example, Judith Brown., Derailed! The Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track, Advancement Project (2003).*
[20] *The Pew Center on The States. One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008. February 27, 2008*
[21] *U.S. Department of Justice. 21 U http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/corr2tab.htm*

He argues that incarceration is not merely a symptom of social inequality, but itself creates and exacerbates inequality by undermining families and further separating poor communities of color from American mainstream opportunities and life. Western's study, for example, shows that previous incarceration reduces a man's annual earnings by 40 percent; the risk of divorce is also heightened. Steady work and a stable emotional relationship are two variables strongly linked with a crime-free life.[22]

Western says it is time to reconsider our 20-year experiment with imprisonment, pointing out that separating poor African American communities from mainstream American life has divided the nation. The stigma of criminality now brands a whole generation of young African American men with little schooling. His analysis is relevant to punitive policies for juveniles.

Suspension and expulsion are spectacularly ineffective policies by any measure. For more than a decade, well-controlled research studies have demonstrated an alarmingly high correlation between suspension/expulsion and dropping out of school.[23] Dropping out is strongly correlated with involvement in the criminal justice system and incarceration.[24]

One study in Texas recently found that students with a history of school discipline were 23 percent more likely than those without such a history to become involved in the criminal justice system.[25]

School culture can also contribute to student behavior that leads to suspension, expulsion, arrest, and incarceration. Ethnographic research strongly shows negative school culture can engender aggressive, "anti-social" behavior, which then makes exclusionary policies seem sensible and natural to adults working there.

[22] *Bruce Western, Punishment and Inequality in America. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006. See also, Bruce Western & Becky Pettit, 2005. Black White Earnings, Inequality, Employment Rates and Incarceration. AM. J. SOCIOL. 111:553 578. See also, Becky Pettit & Bruce Western. 2004. Mass Imprisonment and the Life Course: Race and Class Inequality in U.S. Incarceration. AM. SOCIOL. REV. 69:151 69.*

[23] *Tobin, T. G. Sugai; and G. Colvin. 1996. Patterns in middle school discipline records. Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders. 2: 82-94. Ekstrom, R.B., M.E. Goertz, J.M. Pollack and D.A. Rock. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. Teachers College Record, 87, 357-73.*

[24] *Lochner, L., and Moretti, E. (2004). "The Effect of Education on Crime: Evidence from Prison Inmates, Arrests, and Self Reports." The American Economic Review, 94 (1), 155-189. Freeman, R. (1996). "Why Do So Many Young American Men Commit Crimes and What Might We Do About It?" Journal of Economic Perspectives, 10(1), 25-42.*

[25] *Study of Minority Over-Representation in the Texas Juvenile Justice System, Public Policy Research Institute, Texas A & M University (2005).*

Conversely, research indicates students feel more connected to and engaged with schools when they perceive the teachers as caring and the discipline is tolerant. Studies have linked a student's sense of connectedness with reduced risk for teen pregnancy, violence, and substance abuse.[26]

Even architecture and school layout contribute to an alienating and hostile school climate that can engender negative behavior and aggression, according to research. Portable buildings and classrooms can increase isolation, prevent communication, and decrease feelings of belonging. Overcrowding is also associated with feelings of isolation and disengagement from school, and is correlated with involvement in the juvenile justice system.[27]

In a contradiction of what might seem obvious, a study of discipline practices in the U.S. showed that metal detectors, surveillance cameras, and locker searches actually increased the risk of disorder within a school.[28]

In 2002, researchers analyzed the effectiveness of zero tolerance policies and during the decade and a half since they took hold. The researchers found no evidence that student behavior improved, or that perceptions of school safety or actual school safety increased.[29] Researchers in an earlier study also found little evidence that zero tolerance strategies improved student behavior or overall school safety. The data on suspensions and expulsion, they wrote, raise serious concerns about the equity and effectiveness of school exclusion as an educational intervention.

Thus, the interlocking set of structures that give rise to the school to prison pipeline is manifest in the corridors, playgrounds, and skyrocketing suspension, expulsion, and dropout rates. A review of the research and experience with the school to prison pipeline—which we believe to be closely related with our nation's corrosive infatuation

[26] *McNeely, C., Nonnemaker, J., & Blum, R. (2002). Promoting student connectedness to school: Evidence from the national Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. Journal of School Health, 72, 138 147; Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence, 2001*

[27] *Flannery, D.J. (1997). School violence: Risk, prevention, intervention, and policy. Report No. RR93002016 ERIC Clearinghouse. http://eric web.tc.columbia.edu/monographs/uds109.*

[28] *Johnson, Tammy; Boyden, Jennifer; Pittz, William J. (2001). Racial Profiling and Punishment in U.S. Public Schools: How Zero Tolerance Policies and High Stakes Testing Subvert Academic Excellence and Racial Equity. See also, Berger, Randall, "The Worst of Both Worlds: School Security and the Disappearing Fourth Amendment Rights of Students," Criminal Justice Review, Vol. 28, no. 2 (2003).*

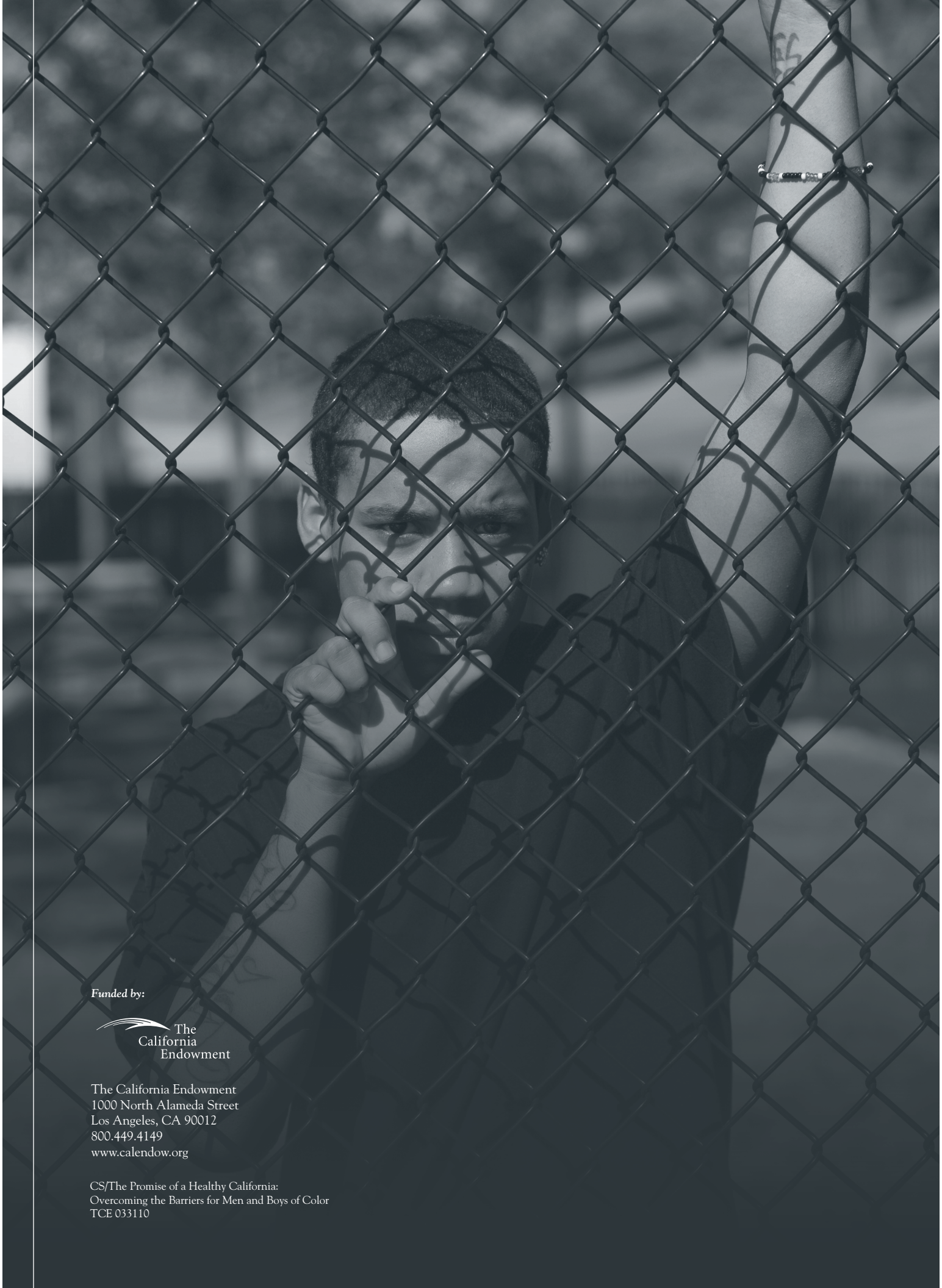
[29] *Skiba, R.J. and Knestling, K. (2002) Zero tolerance, zero evidence. An analysis of school disciplinary practice. In R.J. Skiba and GG Noam, Eds. New directions for youth development no. 92: Zero tolerance: Can suspensions and expulsion keep schools safe? Pp 17-43. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass*

APPENDIX

"In a contradiction… metal detectors, surveillance cameras, and locker searches actually increased the risk of disorder within a school."

with incarceration—clearly shows that an important step in redirecting that pipeline will be better informed, *inclusionary* school-based policies and practices that enhance a student's engagement with school.

We should be careful not to demonize the educators, who employ ill-advised, ineffective zero-tolerance policies. They did not create the structures of inequality that result in the school to prison pipeline by themselves. In our most distressed communities, educators have been left alone to respond to the host of social ills and inequities that undermine their efforts to educate children. One study found that teachers recognized suspensions were not effective in addressing student misbehavior. But they supported suspensions because they needed immediate relief in their classrooms, and did not feel equipped to tackle the deeper emotional and psychological needs of their students.



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