

# Overview

The Bronx Community Justice Center (Justice Center) works to create a safer, more equitable Bronx through community-driven public safety initiatives, youth opportunity, and economic mobility efforts. Our vision is to support the South Bronx community to become a thriving place where local ownership, community-led investment, and youth opportunity can flourish. The Justice Center works toward this vision by focusing on community safety, youth opportunity, neighborhood investment, economic mobility, and community healing.

## Community Safety

We create safer communities by preventing violence at all levels and responding when violence does occur. The Justice Center builds upon the strong foundation of violence prevention work our Save Our Streets program has established over the past nine years.



- **Save Our Streets (S.O.S.):** is a gun violence prevention program that aims to reduce and prevent shootings through the use of public health strategies. Credible messengers engage those who have been most impacted by violence using strategies including street outreach, conflict de-escalation by trained violence interrupters, mentoring, community organizing around gun violence prevention, and leadership opportunities for impacted youth. When violence does occur, S.O.S. responds by providing opportunities for communal response and healing.
- **Youth Advisory Councils:** engage youth impacted by community violence within each S.O.S. catchment in

structured group mentorship sessions. Group sessions provide an opportunity for youth to develop leadership skills and build positive peer relationships.

- **Hospital Response:** implements a comprehensive model of hospital response to provide crisis intervention, supportive services, and prevent retaliation when an individual experiences violence. Staff also provide connection to victim services and advocacy services once an individual has left the hospital.

## Youth Opportunity

The Bronx Community Justice Center works towards healing and redefinition of possibility for young people from the South Bronx through a range of opportunities, including leadership development and entrepreneurship. The neighborhood-centric program model is rooted in creative social enterprise that builds hard and soft skills, provides paid internships, and creates employment pipelines.

- **Insight Initiative:** provides a meaningful alternative to incarceration and detention programming designed specifically to serve young people facing gun and other felony charges. Launched in January of 2022, the program is specifically designed to engage youth who have been impacted by violence and/or gang involvement. Using a transformative, healing-centered model, Insight Initiative allows youth to take accountability for their actions, contribute to their communities and address root causes to prevent future

justice involvement. Many youth have also experienced harm and trauma. Insight offers support so that youth have an opportunity for healing.

## Interest-based Programs for Youth

The Justice Center offers a range of paid, interest-based and project-based internships including boxing, music production, digital media and design, documentary, community benefits and urban planning. Each internship culminates in the execution of a youth-led community-based event supporting community safety and healing. Current programming includes the following youth groups:

- **In-She-Spire:** creates a safe, empowering, and nurturing environment designed to address the unique needs of young women ages 14 to 24. Project In-She-Spire is dedicated to fostering meaningful social connections among young women, with the aim of fostering positive youth development, strengthening resilience, and boosting self-esteem. Our goal is to provide them with the vital skills and resources needed to navigate systemic obstacles and



overcome adversity.

- **Boyz II Men:** young men's gender based programming where the mission is to work towards a future where young men develop healthy masculine identities which allow them to grow as respectful leaders and connected allies in their communities.
- **High School Equivalency:** onsite high school equivalency programming allows participants to study and obtain their high school equivalency with programming tailored to the Justice Center's specific needs and integrated with youth and workforce programs to increase engagement and success.

## Neighborhood Investment

We help residents transform neglected spaces, converting high-crime areas into safe and inclusive public spaces in which social and commercial activity can flourish. Placekeeping engages community residents—those who are closest to the issue—to define the goals and the tools for change. These initiatives also create avenues for youth and community members to impact their neighborhood by conceiving, designing, and implementing changes to public spaces to address the underlying causes of violence such as disinvestment and marginalization.

- **South Bronx Community Safety Initiative:** engages youth, community members, and key stakeholders to develop and implement a holistic community plan to improve safety. The project includes facilitating a

youth advisory team, a peer violence prevention training program, and a range of placekeeping projects including improvements to the neighborhood infrastructure and community activations in the South Bronx.

- **NSTAT:** engages a team of resident stakeholders to improve community safety in the Patterson, Mitchell, and Mott Haven Houses, three NYCHA developments in the South Bronx. Each stakeholder team works to review and assess community data and neighborhood needs, develop an action plan, engage city agencies to address neighborhood issues and manage resources, and implement a



range of community projects to improve neighborhood safety.

## Economic Mobility

We understand that long-term community safety cannot be achieved without addressing poverty, marginalization and structural racism. An integral part of our safety approach is supporting mobility out of poverty through a combination of entrepreneurship training, supporting local investment, and creating

safe public spaces and business corridors that can attract businesses, customers, activity, and investment.

- **Workforce Development:** The Justice Center offers a range of workforce development and work readiness programs including certification programs such as OSHA and security, drivers training programs, and community internship programs.
- **Community Internship Program:** provides supported opportunities for youth to gain work experience and receive mentorship from successful professionals, while investing in and supporting small locally owned businesses.
- **Youth Entrepreneurship Program:** provides participants with hands-on, project-based training to develop and launch a business. Participants gain skills to develop their side hustles into entrepreneurial ventures while also creating collective projects focused on community safety and healing.

ing counseling, advocacy, and peer-based groups focused on healthy relationships, trauma and healing, and wellness.

- **Individual Support:** healing centered individual and group counseling provides space for participants to receive the support they need, navigate challenges, and access opportunities for healing.
- **Leadership Retreats:** support healing for our participants and builds their ability to be successful in programming and their future goals. Participants at the Justice Center have the opportunity to participate in the two day out of state retreat incorporating rites of passage, leadership development, and healing activities.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## Community Healing

We understand the complexities and intersecting factors that impact community trauma. We support healing from trauma on an individual level, while also incorporating a broader-based community healing approach to truly create a transformational experience for not only youth, but the impacted community as a whole. The Justice Center provides individual and group-based support includ-