

BEAVER COUNTY R.E.A.C.H.

FACT SHEET JULY 2014

BC-REACH (Re-Entry Addressing Co-occurring Histories) focuses on individuals incarcerated in the Beaver County Jail who have been diagnosed with a Co-Occurring Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder (COD). Sometimes these offenders fail to make decisions needed for a successful transition and do not access available resources needed to live on the outside. This increases their risk of relapse and recidivism.

Aliquippa Impact

Aliquippa Impact is a Christian, neighborhood-based, non-profit, youth development organization serving the young people and families of Aliquippa, PA. Among the children served by Aliquippa Impact are those whose parents are incarcerated or in a pattern of being in and out of jail and are involved in BC-REACH.¹

A Future Anticipated Cohorts

One of the Aliquippa Impact's programs that serve these children is the A Future Anticipated (AFA) Cohorts. It started in 2010 when the Aliquippa Impact's board decided to build on what the organization has already been doing – serving the youth through compassionate presence in their lives and developing relationships between the staff and volunteers and the youth in the community. The AFA cohorts specifically target youth who have many



risk factors that contribute to the toxicity of a youth's environment. Young people are recruited into the cohorts through community outreach, referrals from the Aliquippa School District and the summer City Camp program. The students in the AFA cohorts have the opportunity to set individual and cohort goals and receive the support needed to reach these goals. This year-round program serves both boys and girls between the ages of 8 and 15. The Freedom Achievers, the cohort with the youth whose parents are in the REACH program, currently has eight boys and girls that are in the 3rd through the 5th grades. The program uses the Developmental Assets

framework that consists of 40 building blocks or positive experiences and qualities that influence young people's development.² Throughout the year the kids meet weekly for 1 ½ to 2 hours and do an asset activity, as well as share food and recreation together. Some of these kids also attend a City Camp program in summer.

Story of Johnathan

Johnathan³ is a seven-year old boy who has been participating in the Freedom Achievers Cohort since August of 2013. Johnathan's father is currently incarcerated, which makes him eligible for this group. Similar to any other student that Aliquippa Impact targets, Johnathan entered the cohort with quite a few odds stacked up against him. Often his behavior would result in violence and anger. Although these issues have not turned around completely, Johnathan's participation in the cohort is definitely making a difference in both his attitude and behavior. Johnathan and his younger sister Destiny participated in monthly outings including ZooBoo, ice-skating, and lunch dates. They have also attended weekly KidsKlubz at the Crestmont Alliance Church. Being in a cohort Johnathan has set three personal goals and has been working towards them with assistance from his cohort leader. Johnathan's goals are becoming a police officer, a better football player, and learning how to cook and bake. In the summer of 2014 Johnathan attends the City Camp where he has an opportunity to work toward his meal preparation goal. Everybody at Aliquippa Impact continues to look forward to making lasting encounters in Johnathan's life.

¹ Aliquippa Impact <http://www.aliquippaimpact.org/>

² A Framework of 40 Developmental Assets was developed by the Search Institute <http://www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-assets>.

³ All names have been changed to protect confidentiality.