CONEXIONES
healing • compassion • transformation

Local Evaluation Plan

WestEd – December 2019

WestEd is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research, development, and service agency that works with education and other communities throughout the United States and abroad to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults. WestEd has more than a dozen offices nationwide, from Massachusetts, Vermont, Georgia, and Washington, DC, to Arizona and California, with headquarters in San Francisco.
Project Background

Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) is California’s 7th largest school district in the state and the largest district in Orange County. It is located within a high-need, complex urban setting that presents barriers to success both within and outside the classroom. SAUSD students have often experienced the devastating impacts of trauma through family disruption, domestic violence, abuse, high crime neighborhoods, homelessness, and extreme poverty. Such challenges tend to lead to additional barriers to educational success, such as mental health issues, substance abuse, gang involvement, incarceration, and high recidivism rates. Each of these factors are strong contributors to increased absenteeism, truancy, disciplinary reports, suspensions, expulsions, dropouts, and involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Addressing the impacts and barriers associated with trauma, the proposed program will build on the district’s definition of school climate. This will be achieved by expanding its current collaborative approach, which includes mental health and diversion services, to address the current gaps in substance use, housing support, and job development; these are all aligned with Proposition 47 goals. Through the proposed program, students will be connected to the resources they need; staff will be connected to the professional supports they need; and parents will be connected to the overall process that will contribute to their child’s success. For this reason, the proposed program will be referred to *Conexiones*, which means “connections” in Spanish.

*Conexiones means “connections” in Spanish and is indicative of the collaborative approach the program will take to connect students to resources they need.*

The three primary goals for *Conexiones* are to: (1) decrease student recidivism for substance use-related offenses; (2) decrease student disciplinary referrals and suspensions; increase student social and emotional health; and (3) create a streamlined, common referral process and data tracking system for students at-risk for arrest. These goals will be accomplished through the following objectives by the end of the grant: (1) students will have the supports necessary to avoid or decrease substance use and will recognize the long-term impact of substance use; (2) students will have increased engagement in restorative practices and will have increased access to mental health, substance use treatment, and supportive services; and (3) school Coordination of Services Teams (COST) will utilize a universal referral form to report student needs and request support.

To ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the impacts of *Conexiones* and its alignment with Prop 47 Guidelines, SAUSD has subcontracted with WestEd as the independent evaluator. The overarching purpose of the evaluation is to increase understanding of what works and to identify effective practices to reduce recidivism for substance use-related crimes among SAUSD students. A logic model outlining the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes is included in Appendix A.
Project Activities

Through Conexiones, SAUSD and its partners will establish a comprehensive wraparound program that includes services related to substance use, mental health, diversion and support services for eligible students at eight target school sites. Target schools were selected due to the high rates of substance use-related disciplinary reports. Services will be provided to students who meet one of three eligibility requirements: substance use-related offense (i.e., substance use-related suspension or expulsion), self-reported substance use, or Santa Ana School Police (SASPD) Referral for a substance use-related offense.

Conexiones will provide the following services at the target sites:

- Substance Use Counseling: Project Kinship, a key SAUSD community partner organization, will provide group and individual counseling for substance use.
- Mental Health Services: SAUSD staff will provide individual mental health counseling.
- Support Services: Students in need of support services, such as assistance with food, case management, housing, transportation, will be referred to Project Kinship.
- Diversion Services: Three options are offered:
  1. Students can be referred to restorative practices interventions offered by SAUSD, Project Kinship, or Neutral Ground, another key SAUSD community partner organization; these will be one-time sessions.
  2. Students can be referred to Youth Diversion, a program offered by SASPD for students who have a previous substance use-related offense.
  3. Students can be referred to the Toward No Drug Abuse Saturday program, 6-hour, one-time session.

A universal common referral form will be utilized to refer students to Conexiones services. A draft of the Conexiones Referral is included in Appendix B. The Conexiones Referral form will be completed by the school site Coordination of Services Teams (COST). The COST is a group of individuals at each school site who work together to address student needs. The majority of the Conexiones referrals will originate from the COST team and will include referrals for students who are eligible for services because they 1) have a substance use-related offense (i.e., suspension or expulsion) or 2) self-report substance use. The COST will complete a Conexiones referral form and provide the form to the Project Kinship Program Manager and Conexiones Coordinator. The Project Kinship Program Manager and Conexiones Coordinators will each be assigned to four target schools and will be responsible for attending monthly COST meetings and maintaining ongoing communication with the school-site COST. The third way students can be referred for Conexiones services is via the SASPD if they attend a target site and have a substance use-related arrest; in these cases, the SASPD will provide the referral directly to the Conexiones Coordinator. An informational flyer will be provided to each COST that explains the program, eligibility criteria, participating schools, and referral process is included in Appendix C. The Conexiones intake form that will be completed for all students at intake is included in Appendix D.
Process Evaluation

Process and fidelity data will be collected throughout all years of the project. WestEd will utilize qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques to report findings and to ensure interventions are implemented as intended. WestEd will conduct surveys and focus groups with the services providers, COST members, and members from the Conexiones Local Advisory Committee to understand collaboration among the partners and usefulness of the common referral system. WestEd will identify any possible lapses in the referral process and discuss strategies for improving the referral process. WestEd will conduct these focus groups at least annually. WestEd will also conduct focus groups with subgroups of students to discuss knowledge of services, participation in services, and perceived usefulness of services.

For quantitative data, WestEd will track three variables: (1) staff qualification, (2) student referrals, and (3) student participation in services. WestEd will assess whether Conexiones staff have been appropriately trained in the service they are providing by soliciting confirmation of training from SAUSD and its partnering agencies. This will be a binary variable indicating whether staff are appropriately trained. A definition of appropriate training will be decided in collaboration with SAUSD Conexiones leadership. These checks will occur at the beginning of the project and anytime a new staff member is onboarded.

Project Kinship will document referrals to and participation in all Conexiones services and deliver student-level referral and participation data to WestEd on a monthly basis. Student referral forms will include a unique ID for each student, so that their referral to and participation in services can be tracked. Student participation will also be compared to referrals to create a variable measuring the rate at which students comply with referrals. For mental health and substance use referrals, attending a minimum of four sessions will be considered “engagement” in Conexiones, and attending a minimum of eight sessions will be considered “completion” of Conexiones services (though students may participate in more than eight sessions). For diversion services that are one-day sessions (e.g., Toward No Drug Abuse Saturday Program), program attendance will be a single, binary variable.

Outcome Evaluation

Outcomes of Conexiones will be evaluated using a pretest–posttest design. Two types of outcomes will be examined: school-level and person-level. Because enrollment will be continuous (i.e., youth are not enrolled as part of a cohort), person-level outcome measurement will vary for each youth. However, in all cases, the baseline measurement will occur prior to participation in services; the outcome measurement will occur after programming has been received.

School-Level Outcomes

The treatment group will consist of all the Conexiones schools. The comparison group will be the SAUSD schools that do not receive Conexiones but have similar characteristics as the treatment schools. Characteristics include school size, grade levels served, and prevalence of substance-use related school offenses. The treatment schools were chosen due to their high-level of need, thus, comparison schools will inherently be different at pretest.

Local definition of revisidism:
A new substance use-related school offense.
introducing bias into the comparative analysis. Taking this bias into account, raw numbers will not be directly compared between groups, but rather, change scores will be calculated for outcomes of interest. Any positive change in the treatment schools that goes beyond changes in the comparison group will be considered evidence that the treatment, rather than external factors, contributed to positive change.

School-level outcomes will include rates of substance use-related disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and recidivism. Data on substance use-related disciplinary referrals and suspensions will be collected from SAUSD.

**Student-Level Outcomes**

A benefit of the school-level approach is that it allows for a comparison with non-treatment schools. However, a limitation is that it lacks the ability to disentangle the relative impacts of the various Conexiones services. Consequently, WestEd will also analyze student-level identifiable data. WestEd will first examine how many participants fall into each possible combination of services (e.g., referrals for mental health and substance use services versus referrals for mental health services only). Based on those combinations, dosage indicators will be created and used in outcome analyses as covariates to examine the relative impacts of the constellations of services received.

To assess student-level changes, WestEd will utilize an existing annual social and emotional health survey that asks questions regarding social and emotional competencies including self-management, growth mindset, and social awareness. This survey is administered annually to every student in the district and is tracked by student ID. WestEd will look specifically at survey data for students involved in Conexiones. Conexiones students will also participate in a substance use perceptions questionnaire developed by WestEd prior to and after receiving substance use-related services. Finally, to evaluate recidivism, SASPD will collect and share with WestEd data on substance use-related new arrests, probation violations, and probation discharges.
Exhibit A. Project goals, objectives, data sources, and analysis plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Analysis Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Goal 1: To decrease student recidivism for substance use related offenses.** | By the end of the program, students will have the supports necessary to avoid or decrease substance use and will recognize the long-term impact of substance use. | • Santa Ana School Police (SASP)  
• Pre/post CORE survey  
• Perceptions of substance use survey  
• Referral logs  
• Monthly data sheets  
• SAUSD | • Descriptives  
• Regression |
| **Goal 2: To decrease student disciplinary referrals and suspensions and increase student social and emotional health.** | By the end of the program, students will have increased engagement in Restorative Practices and will have increased access to mental health and substance use treatment supports. | • SASP  
• Pre/post CORE survey  
• Perceptions of substance use survey  
• Referral logs  
• Monthly data sheets  
• Student focus groups  
• SAUSD | • Descriptives  
• Regression  
• Content Analysis |
| **Goal 3: To create a streamlined, common referral process and data tracking system for students at-risk for arrest.** | By the end of the program, School Administrator, School Counselors, Nurse, Parent and Community Liaison, School Social Workers (SSW), Restorative Practice Interventionists (RPI), Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors (CADC), Housing Case Manager, and Job Developers will have a common referral system to identify and track services provided to students. | • Referral forms  
• Partner surveys  
• Local Advisory Committee Interviews  
• COST Members  
• Focus groups | • Descriptives  
• Regression  
• Content Analysis |
Dissemination

WestEd will complete all evaluation reporting including quarterly progress reports, Two-Year Preliminary Evaluation Report, Final Local Evaluation Report, and ongoing dissemination activities. All reports will be submitted per the BSCC timeline. Quarterly Reports will focus on addressing the process-related outcomes, such as the number of students served by the program activities, services available and received, demographic characteristics of participants, and progress toward each of the three project goals. A Two-Year Preliminary Evaluation Report will address process and outcome components, such as whether Conexiones followed the proposed logic model activities, whether targets were met, whether activities were implemented as intended, etc. The report will outline findings related to the implementation, the impact, and suggestions for continued program improvement. The Final Evaluation Report will culminate findings regarding evaluation goals, methodology, progress toward project goals, process and outcome findings, barriers to success, and unintended outcomes. Dissemination of evaluation results will include presentations to the Local Advisory Committee, the Final Evaluation Report, and WestEd’s dissemination platforms, which include wested.org, and a Justice and Prevention Research Center newsletter, which has a large readership.
Appendix A.
## Conexiones Logic Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Short-term Outcomes</th>
<th>Long-term Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| History of partnership between SAUSD and:  
- Project Kinship  
- Neutral Ground  
- WestEd | Develop a common referral form for **Conexiones**  
Identify students who have substance use-related offenses and may be in need of substance use, mental health, diversion, or support services  
Utilize **Conexiones** referral form to refer students in need of substance use, mental health, diversion, or support services  
Provide substance use, mental health, diversion, or support services | Number of trained substance use counselors providing services  
Number of trained mental health professional providing services  
Number of diversion activities  
Number of support services provided  
Number of students referred  
Number of referrals | Number of students engaged in **Conexiones**  
Number of students completed **Conexiones** services | Students report increases in social and emotional competencies  
Students report increases in knowledge of substance use impacts  
Reduction in number of substance use-related offenses  
Reduction in number of substance use-related arrests |

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**Existing Coordination of Services Teams (COST)**

- **Conexiones** Coordinator
- Project Kinship Coordinator
- SAUSD Mental Healthy Counselors

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**History of partnership between SAUSD and:**

- Project Kinship
- Neutral Ground
- WestEd
Appendix B.
### Eligibility Criteria:
- ☐ Substance use-related offense
- ☐ SASPD referral
- ☐ Self-reported substance use

### Referring Party Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referring Person/Title</th>
<th>Agency/Department</th>
<th>Referral Date (Required)</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Site</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>E-mail</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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### Participant Information

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<tr>
<th>Name (Last Name, First Name, MI)</th>
<th>Aeries ID (Required)</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing Address:</th>
<th>Participant lives here</th>
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<thead>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Gender:</th>
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<th>Female</th>
<th>Non-Binary</th>
<th>Prefer to Self-Define</th>
<th>Prefer Not to State</th>
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</thead>
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<table>
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<th>Race/Ethnicity:</th>
<th>Preferred Language:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Phone:</th>
<th>Alternate Phone:</th>
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### Participant Emergency Contact Information

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<th>Name:</th>
<th>Relationship:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address:</th>
<th>Participant lives here</th>
<th>Language Spoken by Emergency Contact:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Potential Needs

- ☐ Assistance with Food
- ☐ Civil Legal Services
- ☐ Housing Services
- ☐ Transportation Services
- ☐ Basic Necessities
- ☐ Education Services
- ☐ Mental Health Services
- ☐ Other Support Services
- ☐ Case Management
- ☐ Employment Services
- ☐ Social Services
- ☐ Additional Services (Diversion)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure Any concerns with securing right to work documents or enrolling in government benefits?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure Does Conexiones staff need to talk with referring person prior to intake?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure Has participant been notified that a Conexiones staff will contact him/her or their emergency contact?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure OK to leave messages?

### Additional Notes from Referring Party


Please give completed form to Conexiones or Project Kinship Coordinator

### Conexiones Use Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of COST Meeting</th>
<th>Assigned Screening/Intake Team for Substance Use:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Project Kinship ☐ SAUSD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assigned Screening/Intake Staff:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
Appendix C.
**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Conexiones is a collaborative led by the Santa Ana Unified School District in an effort to provide mental health, substance use treatment, diversion, housing assistance, and job development at eight target school sites in the City of Santa Ana.

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**COORDINATION OF SERVICES TEAM**

**SERVICES PROVIDED:**
- Provide Substance Use-Related Referral
- Determine Additional Services Needed

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**SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES**

**SERVICES PROVIDED:**
- Confirm Conexiones Eligibility
- Provide Substance Use Assessment
- Complete Intake Paperwork
- Substance Use Counseling/Recovery Circles
- Case Management
- Supportive Services

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**MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

**SERVICES PROVIDED:**
- Provide Mental Health Assessment
- Mental Health Counseling
- Mental Health Group Counseling
- Case Management

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**DIVERSION SERVICES**

**SERVICES PROVIDED:**
- Provide Diversion Assessment
- Restorative Practice Interventions
- Saturday Interventions Program
- Workforce Development
- SAUSD Youth Diversion Program
- Youth Development

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**PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS**

- Century
- Chavez
- Griset
- Lathrop
- McFadden
- REACH
- Sierra
- Valley

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**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

- Substance use-related offense
- SASPD referral
- Self-reported substance use

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**Neutral Ground**

Prevention | Intervention | Mediation

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**SASSP**

Primary Source Services

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**PSS**

Project Kinship

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Santa Ana Unified School District

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Appendix D.
### CONEXIONES
Intake Form

**CLIENT INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>M.I.</th>
<th>DOB</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Unique ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- **Assistance with Food**
  - [ ] Food Assistance
  - [ ] Food Stamps

- **Basic Necessities**
  - [ ] Rent Assistance
  - [ ] Utility Assistance
  - [ ] Other

- **Case Management**
  - [ ] Personalized Case Plan
  - [ ] Other

- **Civil Legal Services**
  - [ ] Legal Services
  - [ ] Other

- **Education Services**
  - [ ] High School
  - [ ] GED

- **Employment Services**
  - [ ] Employed, Full Time
  - [ ] Employed, Part Time
  - [ ] Unemployed

- **Housing Services**
  - [ ] Independent Living/Housing
  - [ ] Permanent Supportive Housing
  - [ ] Sober Living Home

- **Mental Health Services**
  - [ ] Mental Health Services
  - [ ] Bridge Housing

- **Social Services**
  - [ ] Social Services
  - [ ] Transitional Housing

- **Transportation Services**
  - [ ] Transportation Services
  - [ ] Rapid Rehousing

- **Other Support Services**
  - [ ] Other Support Services
  - [ ] Other:

### STATUS AT INTAKE

- **Probation, Parole, PRCS**
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No

- **Level of Education**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check Current Grade</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
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<td>10th</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>11th</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduation</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **GED**
  - [ ]

- **Some College**
  - [ ]

- **Other:**
  - [ ]

- **Employment Status**
  - [ ] Not working due to age (under 15 years of age) or full-time student status

- **Unemployed**
  - [ ]

- **Other:**
  - [ ]

- **Housing Status**
  - [ ] Independent Living/Housing
  - [ ] Permanent Supportive Housing
  - [ ] Sober Living Home

- **Living w/Immediate Family**
  - [ ]

- **Bridge Housing**
  - [ ]

- **Relative & Kinship Support**
  - [ ]

- **Homeless**
  - [ ]

- **Foster Care**
  - [ ]

- **Transitional Housing**
  - [ ]

- **Other:**
  - [ ]

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Rev. 12/18/2019
## CONEXIONES
Intake Form

### ELIGIBILITY

| Provisional Substance Use Diagnosis | □ Not Screened  
|                                   | □ None Reported  
|                                   | □ Mild to Moderate  
|                                   | □ Chronic to Severe  
| Substance Use-Related Offense     | □ Not Screened  
|                                   | □ None Reported  

### ENROLLMENT STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conexiones eligible?</th>
<th>Enrolled in services?</th>
<th>If not enrolled, select reason:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Yes □ No □ Unknown</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
<td>□ Ineligible □ Declined Services □ Unable to Reach □ Other: ____________________________</td>
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</table>

### PROVISIONAL GOALS

| Service Plan #1 | □ N/A  
| Service Plan #2 | □ N/A  

### TREATMENT TEAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBSTANCE USE</th>
<th>MENTAL HEALTH</th>
<th>DIVERSION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORG: Project Kinship</td>
<td>ORG:</td>
<td>ORG:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAFF:</td>
<td>STAFF:</td>
<td>STAFF:</td>
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### ADDITIONAL NOTES

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*We envision a world where hope lives and the cycle of despair ends...*