

Proud Parenting Grant Program

Local Evaluation Plan

Submitted by:

Volunteers Of America Los Angeles (VOALA)

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VOALA Proud Parenting Local Evaluation Plan VOALA – GG Consulting

Program Description. The Proud Parenting Program will address the root causes of poor father involvement. Services will begin with *intakes and in-depth assessments to identify service needs*, followed by *case management* to connect fathers with the appropriate services to meet their needs. The Proud Parenting Program will equip fathers to become better parents through responsible parenting education classes using evidence-based curricula, including *On My Shoulders and 24/7 Dad*. The program will improve the housing and economic stability of fathers, and address other unmet service needs, through referrals to a wide range of supportive services provided by VOALA and referral partners, including employment services, housing, childcare, healthcare, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, legal assistance, and domestic violence services.

Population Served & Eligibility Criteria: VOALA's Proud Parenting Program will serve 25 young (under 25) justice-involved fathers of color in the South Gate and Florence/Firestone communities in Los Angeles County each year. The program will focus on some of the most *high-need fathers in these high-poverty, high-crime communities*. The program will specifically serve justice-involved fathers who face multiple barriers to healthy, effective engagement with their children and co-parents, including fathers who are gang-involved (identified through VOALA's Gang Reduction and Youth Development, or GRYD, program), young fathers (18-24) who have a history of justice involvement (identified through VOALA's Project SLATE), and justice-involved fathers of children served by VOALA's Head Start/Early Head Start programs. An *eligibility screening* will be done to determine that they live within the service area, have a history of justice involvement, are 25 or younger, and have at least one child under 18.

VOALA has been serving the most vulnerable individuals since 1896. It currently provides more than 160 programs to more than 40,000 people each year in the Greater LA area, with an annual operating budget of \$110 million, over 2,000 employees and 3,100 volunteers. VOALA is adept at managing federal funds, with 90% of our agency budget generated from federal, state and local government funding. Agency accounting information is maintained electronically on Microsoft Great Plains, and reporting is done electronically through FRx Financial Reporter. VOALA submits to an annual independent audit which documents that we are in full compliance with generally accepted accounting principles, including the A-133 to measure contract compliance.

Services Provided: When participants are referred to VOALA for services, they will undergo an eligibility screening (to determine that they live within the service area, have a history of justice involvement, are 25 or younger, and have at least one child under

18). Eligible fathers interested in the program will be enrolled and will complete the detailed assessment and develop a family partnership agreement (FPA) with their Case Manager to assess each family's needs and identify which program components will be provided to each participant. Case Management services are voluntary and participant centered. Case notes will document the content and outcome of case management meetings with all participants. Case managers will track all services provided to participants, including positive outcomes and sustainability upon program discharge in Service Point (VOALA's internal monitoring database). They will also regularly meet with participants to discuss and track their progress in the program while actively supporting participants in establishing a range of services that address their FPA goals. Case Management services include the following:

- Intake/Screening Assessments
- FPA Development
- Client Monitoring & Data Entry
- Client Advocacy
- Liaison with Local Criminal Justice Partners
- Basic Needs
- Accessing Personal Identification
- Client Follow-Ups
- Research Community Resources
- Appointment Scheduling
- Basic Life Skills Development
- Linkage Referrals
- Partner Referral Follow-Ups & Data Collection
- Transportation

In addition to the Case Management services detailed above, all fathers will be enrolled in responsible parenting workshops. These workshops will be led by a Parenting Group Facilitator, and will use 24/7 Dad and On My Shoulders, both of which are skills-based, evidence-based curricula. 24/7 Dad is built on the basis that fathers can be nurturers, and for men, nurturing is a learned skill. The parenting programming will include a total of 58 hours of workshops for each father, including 17 two-hour 24/7 Dad sessions (34 hours) and 16 ninety-minute On My Shoulders sessions (24 hours), each held weekly.

Referral Services. In addition to case management and parenting workshops, VOALA will connect participants to existing VOALA programs as needed, including employment services provided by a VOALA Job Developer (leveraged), assistance securing public benefits provided by a VOALA Benefits Advocacy Specialist (leveraged), assistance securing stable housing through VOALA's more than 1,500 units of affordable housing or through housing location services provided by VOALA's Housing Navigator (leveraged), and early childhood education through VOALA's Head Start/Early Head Start programs. VOALA maintains relationships with more than two dozen MOU support

service partners that provide healthcare, behavioral health care, SUD treatment, DV services, and legal services. The Case Manager will coordinate referrals, provide transportation (bus passes or via VOALA van) as needed, and follow-up with partners to ensure participants are connected to the services they need.

VOALA has been serving justice-involved adults and youth for 70 years through pre- and post-release services and gang reduction programs partnering with various criminal justice agencies and faith/community-based organizations (i.e., Los Angeles Sheriffs and Los Angeles County Probation Departments, Federal Bureau of Prisons, GEO Group, Inner City Law Center, JWCH Institute, Kedren Healthcare, Skid Row Development Corp., St. John's Well Child and Family Center, Southern CA Alcohol and Drug Prevention, Compton Adult School, Maxine Waters Employment Preparation Center, and El Camino College, etc.), Among past programs was a 110-bed men's reentry facility for state prison parolees; in the 30 years operating this program, over 90% of participants became gainfully employed and moved back into the community. Programs serving this population through established partnerships vary. They include: 1) Second Chance, which began in 2017, has served 174 individuals to date. 2) Jail In Reach, which began in 2015, is funded through the DHS, Office of Diversion and Reentry Programs, is serving 170 ex-offenders with a 41% re-arrest rate and 24% re-conviction rate, which is significantly lower than the general jail population. 3) Whole Person Care, which began in 2018 and is funded through DHS, Office of Diversion and Reentry, and has served 470 inmates in the 20 months this program had been in operation. Other corrections programs currently operated by VOALA include DOL IVTP (employment services for re-entry Veterans), OJJDP Young Fathers Reentry, Training to Work Adult Reentry Program, and Central City Recovery including post-release treatment for state and county inmates.

Project Goals & Objectives: The Proud Parenting Program will ultimately equip fathers with the relationship, parenting, and employment skills and tools they need to successfully support their families and make a better life for their children. To do so, it has four goals:

- 1) Increase the parenting knowledge, skills, and attitudes of fathers
 - A. Between pre- and post-program assessments, participants will demonstrate gains on at least 3 scales from 24/7 Dad Pre/Post Parent Surveys: Parent Observation of Child Behavior, Parent Attitudes and Beliefs, and Parent Behavior.
 - B. By the end of their time in the program, 75% of fathers will demonstrate gains in parenting knowledge, attitudes, and skills as measured by all 5 Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory domains from pre- to post-course administration.

- 2) Increase opportunities for positive parent-child interactions
 - A. By the end of their time in the program, 75% of fathers will demonstrate gains in parenting knowledge, attitudes, and skills as measured by all 5 Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory domains from pre- to post-course administration.

- 3) Improve communication and relationship skills between co-parents that lead to a healthy relationship
 - A. By the end of their time in the program, more than 75% of participants' co-parents will describe positive changes in the father's behavior at home.

 - B. By the end of their time in the program, 75% of spouses/romantic partners will report that their husbands/partners: communicate better with their partner and children; are more patient when interacting with their partner and children; and show a general change in attitude to reflect a more positive outlook on life and family.

- 4) Improve stability of fathers and their families
 - A. By the end of their time in the program, 70% of participants who are unemployed at intake will obtain employment

 - B. By the end of their time in the program, 60% of participants who have child support arrearages will decrease them

 - C. By the end of their time in the program, 70% of participants who do not have a visitation order will be able to increase their contact with their children

 - D. By the end of their time in the program, 70% who have child support orders at intake will increase their contact with their children where possible

Project Evaluation Design. A mixed-methods approach will be utilized to determine program implementation and impact, with both quantitative and qualitative data collection activities for both the process and outcome evaluation. This approach will ensure that changes and improvements to the program can be assessed regularly by the evaluators and implemented by the leadership team. Implementation of the program will be evaluated through *process evaluation* with brief reports generated every quarter based on ServicePoint quantitative data, surveys, and interviews. *Outcomes evaluation* will assess the extent to which project goals were achieved with brief reports generated every year based on ServicePoint quantitative data, surveys, and interviews. A final summative evaluation will consolidate all process and outcome measures, reports, and evaluations. The main process evaluation questions are: 1) Has the VOALA Proud Parenting program fully implemented all proposed activities? and 2) Is the VOALA Proud Parenting program making satisfactory progress toward meeting the established

goals for Years 1 and 2? The main outcome evaluation questions are: 1) To what extent has the VOALA Proud Parenting program met its goals and measurable outcomes?; and 2) What is the impact of VOALA Proud Parenting program on its clients?

Process measures. To assess whether the program is providing services to its clients, the following data will be collected by the VOALA data team and entered weekly (via ServicePoint which is a project and data management software program) as clients are recruited, enrolled into the program, and participate in the program. The process indicators will include:

- number and characteristics of individuals served
- number of individuals who participate in case management
- number of individuals who participate in and number who complete all 24/7 Dad workshops
- number of individuals who participate in and number who complete all On My Shoulders workshops

Outcome measures. To assess whether the program has an impact on its clients, the following outcomes will be collected by the VOALA data team and assessed via pre- and post-program surveys (i.e., during in-take and at the completion of the program) and with annual interviews with clients (and partners, spouses) and staff by the external program evaluators:

- number of individuals who secure employment
- number of individuals who access one or more support services
- number of individuals who increase child support payments
- number of individuals who increase contact with their children.

- improved parenting knowledge (e.g., scales from 24/7 and AAPI)
- improved communication with co-parents
- increase in the number of participants who are employed
- increased quantity and improved quality of participant contact with children
- increased child support payments.

The outcomes will be analyzed to determine whether changes and improvements are observed following participation in the program. Where possible, statistical analyses will be conducted to determine whether changes and improvements occurred (e.g., percentage increase, paired-sample t-tests).

Project oversight. The evaluation of the program will be overseen by VOALA Director of Evaluation Dr. Suzanne Markoe Hayes, as well as external evaluators Drs. Gino Galvez and Michael Giang (i.e., GG Consulting). The VOALA evaluation team will work closely with the external evaluators to maintain monthly communication and will coordinate data collection activities, data analysis and reporting. As needed, these meetings will discuss project components, effectiveness, and make adjustments as necessary.

Data collection & Tracking. Dr. Markoe-Hayes, or a database coordinator, will build a customized Service Point database to track program measures and outcomes and develop a dashboard to be used for real-time data informed decision making. ServicePoint is a flexible, web-based software system used by human services organizations to easily manage and coordinate services, guide resource allocation, demonstrate effectiveness, and track client progress over time. All participants whose information is entered into the database will be asked to sign a Release of Information (ROI).

Data collection instruments will adhere to culturally competent norms. Data will be protected, with case files stored in a locked cabinet in a locked room, and electronic records kept in a password-protected database on a password-protected computer. The Evaluator will ensure confidentiality of data and use of Informed Consent Agreements. Program staff will be trained by the Database Coordinator on how to utilize the database, including logging in with password protected credentials, entering client data, monitoring client progress/status, and assessing program outcomes via custom reports.

Quantitative Assessment Plan. The quantitative assessment will include data collection of individual baseline data at program entry. Data collection will span the following areas: participants' demographics, education and employment history, justice involvement history of involvement, and the process measures listed above. Data will be entered into ServicePoint weekly and will be monitored by the database coordinator to ensure that data is being entered accurately and efficiently. The data will be evaluated for errors and inconsistencies before statistical data analysis. Data analysis will include running descriptive statistics, developing tables and graphs to display data, and conducting paired-samples t-test to evaluate pre- and post-survey data.

Qualitative Assessment Plan. In collaboration with VOALA's Research and Evaluation Department and the Program Coordinator, the evaluators will execute a multiphase qualitative assessment plan. To assess implementation and program goals, the evaluators will conduct a series of site visits, interviews, and/or focus groups. For each of these activities, semi-structured interview guides will be developed and used to gather information from clients (and partner/spouses) and staff members. These data will be recorded, transcribed, and summarized in brief reports.

In **year 1**, at least 2 site visits will be conducted by the evaluators at the VOALA Compton Center. The purpose of the site visits will be to obtain in-depth information concerning the implementation of the program with specific attention to the educational aspects of the program (e.g., case management, parenting and life skills workshops). During these site visits, the evaluators will carry out informal interviews with program staff including group facilitators, job developers, case managers and other key personnel.

In **years 1 and 2**, the evaluators will conduct interviews with program staff and clients (and possibly include partners/spouses). Interviews with staff will focus on program

implementation and outcomes. Interviews will program clients will focus on those who have completed the program or some of the parenting and life skills training components. This qualitative data collection will allow the evaluation and leadership teams to assess the efficacy of specific components and the overall goals of the program (e.g., services provided, parent knowledge, employment, other outcomes).

Target population. Services will be specifically targeted to young (25 and under) justice-involved fathers who face multiple barriers to healthy, effective engagement with their children and co-parents, including fathers who are gang-involved from high-poverty and high-crime communities.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
<p>Local grants / funds</p> <p>Staffing/VOA resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Manager (FTE) • Parenting Group Facilitator (FTE) • Office Supplies (plus laptop, printer, cell phone, desks, and cabinets) • Staff training programs & materials • Facilities <p>Collaborative Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner/referral agencies (that provide healthcare, behavioral health care, SUD treatment, DV services, and legal services; e.g., GRYD, Project SLATE, Head Start, Marvin Gardens Center, Maxine Waters Employment Preparation Center, S. California Alcohol and Drugs Programs) <p>Evaluation: VOALA and GG Consulting</p>	<p>Recruitment and Retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRYD and Project SLATE • Case Managers, <p>Responsible Parenting/Healthy Marriage Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 Dad Workshops, • On My Shoulders Workshops <p>Economic Mobility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referrals for training and job placement; • child support payment services <p>Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing search and placement services <p>Holistic, theory-driven case management</p>	<p><i>25 fathers/year will be recruited to improve their parenting/ co-parenting skills and increase father/child engagement through completion of workshops, and/or participation in support groups.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of fathers will be served • Number of fathers will participate in case management • Number of fathers will participate in 24/7 Dad workshops • number of fathers who participate in and number who complete all On My Shoulders workshops 	<p>Increase the parenting knowledge, skills, and attitudes of fathers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of fathers will demonstrate gains in parenting knowledge, attitudes, and skills • Between pre- and post-program assessments, participants will demonstrate gains on at least 3 scales from 24/7 Dad Pre/Post Parent Surveys: Parent Observation of Child Behavior, Parent Attitudes and Beliefs, and Parent Behavior. 	<p>Increase opportunities for positive parent-child interactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of fathers will demonstrate gains in parenting knowledge, attitudes, and skills from pre- to post-course administration. <p>Improve communication and relationship skills between co-parents that lead to a healthy relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of participants' co-parents will describe positive changes in the father's behavior at home. • 75% of participants' co-parents will describe positive changes in communication & more patience with their partner and children <p>Improve stability of fathers and their families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of participants who are unemployed at intake will obtain employment • 60% of participants who have child support arrearages will decrease them • 70% of participants who do not have a visitation order will be able to increase their contact with their children • 70% who have child support orders at intake will increase their contact with their children where possible