



**UPSTREAM RESOLUTION of ALIGNMENT  
Aligning On The Move Practices and Activities  
With the Upstream Investments Initiative**

RESOLUTION of On The Move:

WHEREAS, the County of Sonoma is sponsoring a community-wide strategic initiative called Upstream Investments with the following **mission**: To facilitate the implementation of prevention-focused policies and interventions that increase equality and reduce monetary and societal costs for all residents of Sonoma County.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments **vision** for all residents of Sonoma County is that poverty is eliminated and all people have an equal opportunity for quality education and good health in nurturing home and community environments.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative is designed to target the following **factors**:

Social and economic factors

Poverty and racial/ethnic disparities  
Community conditions  
Public opinion, public policy, and laws

Family and individual factors

Family dysfunction  
Negative peer influences  
Early antisocial behavior

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative seeks to promote four community **goals**:

1. The whole community is engaged in supporting the healthy development of children.
2. Community members have access to education and training and are adequately prepared for the challenges of the future.
3. All community members are well sheltered, safe, and socially supported.
4. Sonoma County has a thriving diverse economy that produces economic security for all.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative seeks to expand **funding** for Model Upstream Programs and also seeks to promote **organizational practices** that support the Upstream Vision.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Strategic Initiative promotes the implementation of **outcomes-based practices** including Evidence-Based Practices, Promising Practices, and Emerging Practices.

WHEREAS, Twenty-two **indicators of success** will inform the community about the success of Upstream Investments.

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Reduced child maltreatment             | 12. Improved higher education       |
| 2. Reduced youth binge drinking           | 13. Improved housing affordability  |
| 3. Reduced youth drug use                 | 14. Reduced homelessness            |
| 4. Reduced youth depression               | 15. Reduced juvenile arrests        |
| 5. Reduced youth tobacco use              | 16. Reduced adult arrests           |
| 6. Reduced teen births                    | 17. Reduced domestic violence       |
| 7. Reduced obesity                        | 18. Reduced gang membership         |
| 8. Improved pre-school attendance         | 19. Improved youth connectedness    |
| 9. Improved 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade reading | 20. Reduced poverty                 |
| 10. Improved 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade math   | 21. Reduced unemployment            |
| 11. Improved high school completion       | 22. Improved health insurance rates |

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that On The Move shares the Upstream Investments mission, goals, commitment to improving the indicators of success, and vision and has aligned its organizational practices with the Upstream Investments Initiative as follows:

The mission of On The Move and V.O.I.C.E.S. (Voice our Independent Choices for Emancipation Support) is deeply aligned with the Upstream Investments mission and vision. V.O.I.C.E.S. exists to provide a supportive, safe, and non-judgmental community where youth transitioning from systems of care (including foster care, group homes, probation and mental health) can utilize peer-based resources, feel connected, and build a foundation for their futures. In line with the Upstream Investments' mission, V.O.I.C.E.S. utilizes prevention-focused policies and interventions, which reduce monetary and societal costs for all residents of Sonoma County.

V.O.I.C.E.S. shares the Upstream Investments community goals in the following ways:

1. *The whole community is engaged in supporting the healthy development of youth.*  
Supportive relationships are built between the Sonoma community, local agencies, transitional-aged youth and V.O.I.C.E.S.
2. *Community members have access to education and training and are adequately prepared for the challenges of the future.*  
Transitional-aged youth at V.O.I.C.E.S. have access to mentoring and training which supports their road to self-sufficiency in the areas of education, employment, health and housing.
3. *All community members are well sheltered, safe, and socially supported.*  
The V.O.I.C.E.S. Youth Center offers a safe, friendly and non-judgmental environment where transitioning youth feel connected and valued by both peers and adults. In addition, youth are supported in identifying and attaining housing options, including placements in low-income or subsidized housing programs.
4. *Sonoma County has a thriving diverse economy that produces economic security for all.*  
V.O.I.C.E.S. promotes economic security for transitioning youth by providing a variety of employment and education resources. Youth are able to access one-on-one coaching to explore career development and educational placement options, and receive financial assistance and counseling services for post-secondary education and vocational placements.

V.O.I.C.E.S. promotes the following Upstream Indicators of Success through its practices and programs:

- |                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. Reduced youth binge drinking     | 14. Reduced homelessness            |
| 3. Reduced youth drug use           | 15. Reduced juvenile arrests        |
| 4. Reduced youth depression         | 16. Reduced adult arrests           |
| 5. Reduced youth tobacco use        | 18. Reduced gang membership         |
| 6. Reduced youth teen births        | 19. Improved youth connectedness    |
| 7. Reduced obesity                  | 20. Reduced poverty                 |
| 11. Improved high school completion | 21. Reduced unemployment            |
| 12. Improved higher education       | 22. Improved health insurance rates |

V.O.I.C.E.S. commits to submitting the following program components to the Portfolio of Model Upstream Programs:

- *My LIFE Program* provides case management and life-planning “conferences” for foster youth in which participants meet with a trusted team of adults to map out specific steps they will take toward independence. Through the program, youth develop life-long connections, independent living skills and long-term goals that support the youth’s road to self-sufficiency in the areas of education, employment, health and housing.
- *Independent Living Program (ILP)* supports emancipating foster youth to develop a detailed Transitional Independent Living Plan, while meeting regularly with an individual Life Skills Coach. Youth receive a combination of case management, drop-in services, workshops, events and learning excursions. Youth are supported in identifying and attaining housing options, including placements in low-income affordable housing or subsidized housing programs. Young people also are engaged in various leadership activities, including legislative advocacy and the ongoing program development of V.O.I.C.E.S.
- *V.O.I.C.E.S. Health and Wellness Program* utilizes best practices in the fields of youth development and health that are specific to current and former foster youth and young people leaving systems of care. The program was designed and implemented using three Promising Practices published by, Annie E. Casey Foundation, a leader in youth development research:
  1. Remove barriers to access by providing centralized wellness services and a coordinated guided referral system.
  2. Increase health and wellness knowledge through hands-on educational opportunities.
  3. Establish meaningful relationships with youth through mentoring and youth leadership opportunities.
- *V.O.I.C.E.S.’ Best Practices Model* was established in 2007 when On The Move conducted a Participatory Evaluation Research study with the help of professional evaluators to determine V.O.I.C.E.S.’ impact on the youth it serves. The study articulated five essential components that make up the V.O.I.C.E.S. Best Practices Model:
  1. Youth Leadership: Young people share power, make decisions and lead V.O.I.C.E.S.
  2. Community Building: Create supportive relationships between the community, transitional aged youth and V.O.I.C.E.S.
  3. Intergenerational Learning: Young people and older people learn from each other, share points of view and wisdom and experiences.
  4. Systems Change: Partner with systems to provide feedback and develop policies and procedures that support youth, parents and staff who work within systems of care.
  5. Co-located Service Delivery: Staff from various agencies provide youth-friendly services under one roof at the V.O.I.C.E.S. Center.

V.O.I.C.E.S. commits to dedicated funding and staff time necessary to develop its program materials and evaluation in order to successfully submit its programs to the Upstream Investments Initiative.

V.O.I.C.E.S. currently implements the following programs already on the Portfolio of Model Upstream Programs:

*Tackling Tough Skills:* V.O.I.C.E.S. plans to work with Youth Link (SAY, PPSC, WCCS & The Center) to ensure that youth in the ILP program access to this Upstream Program provided by the county wide collaboration.

V.O.I.C.E.S. implements the additional following practices which reflect Upstream Investments principles:

- *Transformative Mentoring* is utilized by V.O.I.C.E.S. staff during on-going case management and coaching to youth. Both peer and adult coaches use the Transformative Mentoring technique designed to deliberately affect change in negative anti-social behaviors, self-esteem, attitude and behavior.
- *Transitions Framework*, an evidence-based practice, is also incorporated into the case management and coaching of V.O.I.C.E.S. participants. The Framework supports youth in navigating the different stages of transition that occur when emancipating from foster care or transitioning from other systems of care.
- *Project-Based Learning* is used at V.O.I.C.E.S. as way to promote wellness and provide hands-on educational opportunities for program participants. Historically, foster youth have had few or no opportunities to connect with their community and build developmental assets. V.O.I.C.E.S. supports youth in building their leadership capacity, teaches them to advocate on behalf of their needs and to have a presence in the community.
- *Efforts to Outcomes (ETO)* is a web-based automated data information and evaluation system which has been implemented by V.O.I.C.E.S. ETO tracks program effectiveness through a combination of quantitative and qualitative data measurements, including individual assessments, dose and intensity of services utilized, survey feedback and outcomes achieved. The information provided by ETO allows V.O.I.C.E.S. to learn from data in order to continue developing the most effective practices for transitional aged youth exiting systems of care.

With a strong network of internal staff and practice experts, as well as a demonstrated effectiveness to engage participants, V.O.I.C.E.S. has the experience and capacity to effectively implement its programming with high levels of fidelity to its evidence-base. Additionally, V.O.I.C.E.S. has been highlighted repeatedly in professional publications that indicate the program is "viewed by many youth advocates as a national model of collaboration and youth empowerment." V.O.I.C.E.S.' Best Practices Model has already been identified as a promising practice by the Youth Transition Team Initiative:

*"The youth leaders of V.O.I.C.E.S. [have] demonstrated that youth could sometimes be more effective than adults in bringing together community resources and creating a center where youth's real needs are met."*

V.O.I.C.E.S. partners with several agencies and organizations that promote Upstream Investments. With the increased number of young people needing access to V.O.I.C.E.S. services, it is imperative that the program leverage all the resources and relationships available. Over the last three years, VOICES has worked to create seamless service systems by building collaborative partnerships with 26 agencies, both public and private. As a result of these coordinated partnerships, 23 staff representing 15 agencies are now co-located at the VOICES Center in Santa Rosa. These partner staff members work approximately 244 hours each month on behalf of the 1,200 youth served.

Co-located Partners and Staff

- Sonoma County Health Services Mental Health Division Transitional Age Youth Services
- Sonoma County Human Services Department Employment and Training Division
- Sonoma County Housing Authority and Redevelopment Family Unification Program
- Sonoma County Human Services Department Economic Assistance Food Stamp Eligibility
- Sonoma County Human Services Department Family Youth and Children's Division
- Sonoma County Office of Education Foster Youth Services
- Community Action Partnership
- Santa Rosa Junior College
- Southwest Community Health Center
- Goodwill Industries Inc.
- Social Advocates for Youth
- TLC Child and Family Services

Community Collaborative Partners

- SAVOR (Sonoma Alliance for Vegetable and Fruit Outreach Revolution)
- Sonoma County Department of Health Services Alcohol & Other Drug Services Division
- Court Appointed Special Advocates
- Ceres Project
- Junior League of Napa-Sonoma
- New Ways to Work
- Sonoma County Probation Department
- Workforce Investment Board
- Children's Home Auxiliary
- Continuum of Care
- Kids Street
- Santa Rosa Farmers Market
- Valley of the Moon Children's Foundation
- Worth Our Weight


V.O.I.C.E.S. commits to promoting community-wide knowledge and understanding of Upstream Investments by promoting the Initiative with community partners and funders, posting a link to SonomaUpstream.org on the V.O.I.C.E.S. website and utilizing social media networks.

Approved and adopted the 7<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2012, I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the Board of Directors of On The Move.

Following Roll Call Vote:    Ayes:              11  

                                      Nos:                   0   

                                      Absent:              0   

  
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 Diana Gordon  
 Secretary for On The Move