

Protecting Every Adolescent through Conflict Resolution, Education and Mentoring (P.E.A.C.E.) Program

Program Evaluation Report



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Methods	8
Engagement Summary	9
Survey Findings and Analysis	10
Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes	11
Parent Interviews Summaries and Themes	25
BCFM Staff Focus Themes	28
Appendices (A-D)	32

Executive Summary

Overall Impact Statement

The Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan's Protecting Every Adolescent through Conflict Resolution, Education and Mentoring (P.E.A.C.E.) program is making a measurable difference in the lives of Detroit youth and families. In a mixed methods evaluation, conducted from June to September 2025, surveys, interviews, and focus groups revealed consistent outcomes: youth are learning to resolve conflict nonviolently, regulate their emotions, and build the confidence needed to succeed in school and beyond. Parents and staff reinforced these outcomes, noting improvements in responsibility, maturity, and communication.

This program is not prevention, but intervention. The program employs evidence-based best practices, intentionally designed for young people who have already been impacted by violence or trauma, equipping them with tools and trusted relationships to move forward. Staff describe themselves as more than service providers: "We are a strategic partner. We're not just here to support." This mindset reflects the program's commitment to deep, relational engagement.

The impact is clear. Youth reported that they have learned to "walk away," "self-reflect," and "think before reacting." Families highlighted the program's dual benefits: addressing behavioral and emotional growth while also providing tangible supports such as food, supplies, and community resources. Staff emphasized that their ultimate goal is to create safe, trusting environments where, in their words, "we want the students to feel the love, the concern, the compassion."

Together, these perspectives illustrate how the Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan is helping young people navigate immediate challenges while building long-term resilience.

Executive Summary

Youth Outcomes



Youth participants consistently described improvements in anger management, self-awareness, and their ability to make positive decisions in moments of stress or conflict. Many reported learning to “walk away,” “self-reflect,” and “think before reacting.” Survey findings reinforced these outcomes, with high average ratings for program satisfaction (4.27/5), conflict resolution (4.15/5), and trust in mentors and life coaches (4.20/5). Interviews added depth, showing how these lessons are applied to daily challenges such as peer conflict, school transitions, and future planning. Several youth participants also described gains in self-confidence, leadership, and academic motivation, with aspirations toward careers in psychiatry, law, real estate, athletics, and entrepreneurship.

Executive Summary

Family and Caregiver Perspectives

Parents and caregivers consistently echoed youth outcomes, reporting noticeable improvements in responsibility, communication, and overall outlook. Caregivers described their children as more mature, confident, and socially engaged. Families also valued the program's tangible supports; including food, supplies, and access to resources like housing and employment; which eased economic pressures and strengthened family stability. The program's mentorship component was viewed as particularly transformative, providing youth with trusted adult relationships and parents with reassurance that their children were supported.



Executive Summary

Staff and Program Practices

The staff focus group highlighted the central role of relationship-building, both with youth and their families. Staff described face-to-face engagement, relatability, and modeling as the most effective strategies, supported by strong community partnerships to address basic needs. The program's trauma-informed, intervention-focused approach was praised for being responsive to youth who have already been exposed to violence, distinguishing it from more punitive models. Staff also emphasized their passion and commitment, noting that youth feel safe, cared for, and eager to return.



Executive Summary

Major Themes Identified

- **Violence Intervention and Prevention & Emotional Regulation:** Youth consistently cited conflict resolution lessons learned, anger management strategies, and coping skills as life-changing lessons.
- **Mentorship & Adult Support:** Both youth and parents highlighted the program's reliance on strong mentor relationships and safe spaces.
- **Personal Growth & Future Orientation:** Participants reported gains in confidence, maturity, academic motivation, and future career goals.
- **Family and Community Support:** Parents valued not only behavioral changes in their children but also direct supports like food, supplies, and outreach resources.
- **Program Expansion Needs:** Families and youth expressed strong interest in longer program cycles, expansion into high schools, and more extracurricular opportunities



Methods



Data for this evaluation were collected between June and September 2025 using approaches grounded in a trauma-informed lens. Given the sensitivity of the program topics and the age and vulnerability of participants — many of whom were referred to the program for support — special care was taken to ensure youth felt safe, respected, and in control of their participation. Data gathering prioritized centering youths’ lived experiences and direct feedback about the program’s impact.

Primary data collection occurred during Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan’s P.E.A.C.E. program events, which provided a familiar and supportive environment for participants. To broaden engagement and meet stakeholders where they are, supplemental phone interviews were conducted with youth and caregivers who could not attend in person. Across all methods, facilitators emphasized transparency, choice, and emotional safety to mitigate the risk of re-traumatization while fostering open and authentic sharing.

Participants shared their stories about **overcoming challenges** and the impact of mentorship on their emotional growth and family support through this vital program.

Engagement Summary

Data collection activities engaged multiple stakeholder groups to ensure a well-rounded understanding of the program's impact. This multi-modal engagement approach provided both breadth and depth, ensuring that youth voices were centered while also including staff and caregiver perspectives to contextualize the findings.

Engagements:

- ✦ Surveys were distributed broadly, with 41 completed (plus 3 duplicates removed from analysis), offering a wide snapshot of participant perspectives.
- ✦ 11 one-on-one youth interviews were conducted, designed to capture lived experiences in their own words.
- ✦ Staff input was gathered through one focus group, consisting of 7 staff members, which provided valuable insights into implementation and practice.
- ✦ 6 one-on-one parent interviews were conducted, designed to capture parent and caregiver feedback on the program's impact on their children.

Survey Findings and Analysis

Response Summary

There was a total of 41 unique responses to the survey administered at BCFM events and through staff communications with participants in June, July, August, and September of 2025.

Average age of the participants who took the survey: **14.02 years**

Schools represented among the survey takers:

- **Cody** – 11 responses
- **Bow** – 11 responses
- **Noble** – 10 responses
- **Sampson Webber** – 7 responses
- **Mumford** – 2 responses



Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Close-Ended Questions

Respondents to the survey were asked to answer the following questions using a 5-option scale: 1-star (strongly disagree), 2-stars (disagree), 3-stars (not sure), 4-stars (agree), and 5-stars (strongly agree). The following represent the average response for each of the questions using this response scale.

1. How would you rate your satisfaction with the program so far with 5 stars being the best?

a. Average response: [4.27](#)

2. I feel welcome in this program.

a. Average response: [4.37](#)

3. This program meets my needs.

a. Average response: [3.85](#)

4. I trust and respect my life coach.

a. Average response: [4.24](#)

5. My life coach listens to me

a. Average response: [4.20](#)

6. I learned ways to handle conflict without fighting

a. Average response: [4.15](#)

7. Because of this program, I better understand what violence is and how it affects people

a. Average response: [4.27](#)

8. I learned how trauma can affect me and others

a. Average response: [4.12](#)

9. I like the Transitions modules we've done

a. Average response: [3.78](#)

10. I am excited by what I can learn about myself and others through this program

a. Average response: [4.15](#)

Additional multiple-choice questions asked to the survey respondents:

1. "How do you usually take part in this program?" (options: In-Person, Online, Both) (n=41)

a. In-Person – 29 responses; Online – 4 responses; Both – 8 responses

2. "How do you prefer to participate in this program?" (options: In-Person, Online, No preference)

a. In-Person – 27 responses; Online – 4 responses; No preference – 10 responses

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Open-Ended Questions

Survey respondents were asked 4 open-ended questions. For each of these, the evaluation team did a thematic analysis and have included selected quotes to demonstrate each of these themes.

Question 1 - Can you name some of the other resources (help, services, or programs) this program has shared with you?

1. Violence Prevention & Conflict Resolution [6 mentions] - Several responses emphasized non-violence and managing conflict constructively.

Quotes:

- “They have taught me that violence is not key and it could be resolved in many other ways than harm”
- “This program taught me how to take different actions, and how to settle situations.”

2. Case Management & Resource Providing [6 mentions] - Youth noted tangible supports and organized activities.

Quotes:

- “Food, play days, field trips & more.
- “Food distribution”
- “Graduation/Recognition Dinner and Leadership/Conflict Resolution”

3. Leadership & Mentorship [4 mentions] - Students pointed to opportunities for growth and guidance.

Quotes:

- “Mentorship”
- “Becoming a leader”
- “Leadership skills, grocery box”

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

4. Knowing How to Avoid At-Risk Behaviors [3 mentions] – Youth described how understanding the context of avoiding violence enhanced their learning to avoid other behaviors, like using or abusing drugs or alcohol

Quotes:

- “I learned about it’s important to stay drug free”
- “That smoking is just as bad as drinking, also that it can kill you.”

5. Family & Community Engagement [2 mentions] - The program connected families and fostered group participation.

Quotes:

- “Transportation and including my family in programs.”

Question 2 - Can you tell us in your own words what you think about the Transitions lessons (curriculum)? What did you like or not like?

1. General Positive Feedback / “Liked Everything” [9 mentions] - Many participants expressed overall satisfaction or enjoyment, often without specifics.

Quotes:

- “I liked everything”
- “I liked everything so far!”
- “I liked them alot and I thank them alot”
- “It was cool”

2. Activities, Games & Materials [3 mentions] - Respondents appreciated interactive activities, resources, and tangible materials.

Quotes:

- “I like the basketball & the teachers/staff”
- “I like when we did the box thing.”
- “She liked having her own book and materials”

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

3. Violent/At-Risk Behavior Prevention / Conflict Management [4 mentions] –

Several shared how they valued discussions about alternatives to violence and how self-control can help them navigate past conflict and violence, as well as other related behaviors that could lead to violence..

Quotes:

- “I liked how we discussed and we saw how we can make situations better without using violence.”
- “I think it helped me improve on controlling my temperature”
- “I liked how we talked about what substances are bad for humans because it is helpful”

4. Mentorship & Staff Support [2 mentions] - Relationships with mentors and staff were seen as positive.

Quotes:

- “I liked the mentors”
- “I think that the transition lessons are very fun because my mentor really understood me and others...”

5. Life Lessons & Personal Growth [2 mentions] - Some valued broader lessons about life and self-improvement.

Quotes:

- “I like how that they talk to me about life”
- “What I like about the it is how I be can a nicer person”

6. Program Resources & Structure [2 mentions] - Some noted the resources provided and commented on curriculum organization.

Quotes:

- “I like it Because they have many resources.”

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Question 3 - Can you tell us one thing you have learned about yourself from being in this program that you didn't know before?

1. Violence Prevention, Conflict Resolution, and Anger Management [9 mentions] - Youth described learning that they can resolve conflict without violence and better manage anger.

Quotes:

- "It taught me that violence is not the answer"
- "I learned that I don't have to fight, argue, or make it seem like I'm big and tough to be cool or stand out."
- "You always can talk things out with the people you had problems with"
- "How to control my temper"
- "Different ways to manage my anger"
- "How to resolve conflict"
- "I've learned that I'm more mature than I thought because I've learned to handle serious situations in a good matter than violence."
- "I learned about gun violence"

2. Personal Growth, Confidence, and Leadership – 7 mentions

Many reflected on positive personal qualities they hadn't recognized before.

Quotes:

- "I learned that I can do anything I put my mind to"
- "That you can be anything you put your mind too. And you can calm down in certain situations that seem inescapable."
- "That I am very social and how to become a leader"
- "That I am a good communicator and also a good leader."
- "I gained confidence."
- "I feel ready for a job."
- "I've learned that I'm more mature than I thought..."

3. Positive Self-Discovery (Kindness, Sensitivity, Humor) – 5 mentions

Some realized personal traits about kindness, emotions, or personality.

Quotes:

- "I learned about myself that I am very sensitive"
- "I can be kind"
- "To always be true to me"
- "I could be a nice person if I tried."
- "That I am actually pretty funny."

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

4. Practical Knowledge and Healthy Life Skills [6 mentions] – Several responses pointed to specific skills or knowledge gained that reinforce healthy lifestyles and further disrupt potential pathways to violence.

Quotes:

- “I can save money ”
- “I learned how to control my emotions”
- “I have learned that I never want to do drugs”
- “I learned to stay drug free”

5. Support & Care from Others – [3 mentions]

Several discovered that the program/community cared about them.

Quotes:

- “There were people who care”
- “What I didn’t know about this program is that they help you”
- “I learned people in this program care.”



Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Question 4 - What is one thing we could do to make this program better for you or someone like you?

1. No Changes Needed / Program is Good as Is [10 mentions]

Many participants felt the program was already effective and didn't need improvement.

Quotes:

- "Nothing"
- "Everything is good"
- "The program is perfect to me in my opinion I don't think anything has to be changed."
- "Stay the same"
- "Nothing I like it"
- "nothing needs changing"

2. More Activities, Excitement, and Engagement [7 mentions] - Several suggested adding more engaging activities, sports, or fun opportunities.

Quotes:

- "Have school events instead of just classroom"
- "I think the program could use more excitement."
- "More basketball time"
- "Have more actives."
- "more activities"

3. Emotional and Personal Support [3 mentions] - Some highlighted the need for more emotional support and outlets for self-expression.

Quotes:

- "Help with the emotional effects"
- "I think what you can do to make this better for me is talk to me when I am going through stuff"
- "I wish there were more ways to express yourself."

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

4. Access, Timing, and Transportation [3 mentions] - A few mentioned logistical improvements that could increase accessibility.

Quotes:

- “Offer transportation”
- “Transportation”
- “Different time than lunch”

5. Expanded Reach or Scope [3 mentions] - Some responses pointed to broadening who or where the program serves.

Quotes:

- “Having it in high school”
- “More things for younger people to do with they life and over the summer”
- “Reach out to Northwestern High School”

6. Program Structure and Feedback [3 mentions] - Suggestions for improving how the program is run or incorporating participant feedback.

Quotes:

- “There should be more examples of things”
- “have a little bit more surveys”



Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Interview Summaries:

1. **A 17-year-old student at Cody High School**, about her experiences with a drug-free program. Princess aspires to be a psychiatrist and therapist, influenced by her struggles with mental health and the lack of understanding from peers. The program taught her about drug safety, social responsibility, and self-esteem. It provided tools for handling tough situations and emphasized the importance of having a support system, including her mother and a biology teacher named Miss Keys. The participant feels the program has improved her mental health and self-awareness, contributing to her positive outlook and future goals.
2. **A 13-year-old student at Noble Elementary Middle School**, discussed her experience in what she calls the “life entertainment program”, which she joined through her school counselor. The program, which focused on trauma, violence, and abuse, helped Faith realize the consequences of her playful hitting. Through discussions and activities, she learned to self-reflect and consider others' feelings. She noted significant personal growth, particularly in understanding red flags and making better choices. She has participated in the program multiple times and values the increased awareness it provided, aiming to carry these lessons into high school and beyond.
3. **Before the program, the 14-year-old student frequently fought**, often stemming from social media disputes. The program significantly improved his anger management, with teachers playing a crucial role in his progress. He found the program enjoyable and beneficial, appreciating the respectful communication from adults. He feels better equipped to handle conflicts and values the understanding he received. He would have liked to participate longer and suggests the program should continue to help others.

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Interview Summaries:

4. **A 14-year-old student at Westfield Preparatory Academy**, discusses their experience with a program that helped them navigate difficult situations by walking away or involving friends. They learned maturity and conflict resolution skills, particularly from a program that brought together two girls with anger issues. The program also taught them the importance of communication and compromise, which they plan to apply to their high school basketball team to foster unity and avoid distractions. They emphasize the value of learning about others and effective communication in various aspects of life.
5. **The participant discusses their involvement in a program**, exploring the reasons for joining, the impact of the program on their behavior, and the lessons learned, such as maintaining a routine and avoiding violence. The conversation also touches on the participant's experience with mentorship and the grades they worked with. The participant expresses a positive outlook on the program, indicating a willingness to participate again if given the choice.
6. **The student who was suspended due to addressing a bullying**, situation initially felt indifferent about the program but now appreciates the opportunity to express her feelings. She aspires to be an NBA star player, influenced by her mother's encouragement. Despite learning about violence prevention, she admits to getting into two fights this year. The program taught her to de-escalate conflicts and communicate better. Mr. Davis's room is her safe space, reinforced by the program's support, as evidenced by their communication with her mother.
7. **The participant started the program at age 12**, discussed his journey and the impact of the program on his life. Initially interested in law, he shifted to real estate after learning about it through the program. The program helped him develop career strategies and emotional management skills, particularly in handling stress and anger. The student's mentor assisted him in slowing down his speech due to a stutter. He now feels better equipped to handle high school and future challenges, viewing them as less stressful due to the tools and techniques he learned.

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Interview Summaries:

8. **This was her first Black Caucus event Dechira a 14-year-old student,** discussed his interests, including roller skating and making TikToks, and his involvement in a Black Caucus program recommended by Dean Hicks at school. Dechira aims to improve her social skills, anger management, and academic performance. She aspires to pursue a career in criminal justice, inspired by shows like Law and Order and Bosch. Jara highlighted the importance of handling conflicts differently and finding better friends. She uses coping mechanisms like cold baths, cooking, and running to manage stress. Dechira values support from his mother and a school security guard and is open to both short-term and long-term programs to help her achieve her goals.

9. **The evaluation team interviewed Lanaya,** likes to be called Naya, about her experiences with a mentorship program. Naya, who attended Bow Elementary Middle School and will be attending Detroit Lions Academy, joined the program after hearing about it from Miss Brooks. She aims to become a hair stylist and run her own business. The program has helped her become more independent and manage stress better. Naya has faced challenges, particularly in math, but has received support from her teacher. She values the program's focus on addressing gun violence and feels it has significantly improved her self-awareness and coping skills. Naya concludes by expressing gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the interview.

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Interview Summaries:

10. **Deonna wants to be called Porkchop, a student at Noble Elementary** Middle School, discussed her experiences with a program she joined through a recommendation from her counselor, Mr. Davis. She expressed her goals of attending college, specifically Michigan State, and aspiring to play in the WNBA. Deonna highlighted the importance of maintaining a positive attitude and problem-solving skills, which she believes are crucial for her future. She mentioned using music and sleep as coping mechanisms and valued mentors who helped her avoid trouble. The program assisted her in managing loud environments better, contributing to her focus and safety. She values mentorship for guidance and focus, particularly in avoiding trouble. The program helped her tune out distractions and develop a more positive outlook. Diana believes it aids in managing anger and improving overall behavior, making her feel proud of her progress.

11. **Calvin currently a student at Bow Elementary Middle**, will be attending Renaissance in the Fall. The program helped him step out of his comfort zone and make better choices. He expressed that he turned into a morning person and when he is stressed, he prays and seek mentorship from church members for his attitude. His goal is to get a 4.0 in school to help him become a composer or an attorney. He shared a story about a social media conflict that turned into a real-life situation when an old student came to the school to start trouble and the police had to intervene. He said in high school, he will join more clubs and engage in more group discussion.

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Youth Interview Thematic Analysis

-  **1. Violence Prevention & Conflict Resolution** [8 mentions] - Participants frequently described learning alternatives to fighting, de-escalating conflict, and managing anger more constructively. Examples: Emphasized walking away, talking things out, avoiding physical fights, and recognizing red flags.
-  **2. Emotional Regulation & Coping Skills** [8 mentions] - Youth highlighted learning to manage stress, emotions, and triggers. Examples: Mentioned anger management, self-reflection, calming techniques (e.g., running, cold baths, music, prayer), and controlling tempers.
-  **3. Mentorship & Supportive Adults** [7 mentions] - Trusted adults (teachers, counselors, mentors, parents) played a significant role in guidance and emotional support. Examples: Noted safe spaces (e.g., Mr. Davis's room), encouragement from parents, and mentorship shaping growth.
-  **4. Personal Growth, Self-Esteem & Independence** [7 mentions] - Youth described discovering strengths, maturing, building confidence, and improving self-awareness. Examples: Reported becoming more independent, more mature, or developing stronger self-esteem.

Youth Interviews Summaries and Themes

Youth Interview Thematic Analysis

-  **5. Career Aspirations & Future Goals** [6 mentions] - Several participants connected program lessons to future ambitions. Examples: Goals included psychiatry, real estate, WNBA/NBA, hairstyling/business, law, criminal justice, composing, and legal careers.
-  **6. Academic Motivation & School Engagement** [4 mentions] - Programs were linked to improvements in academic focus, routine, and aspirations for success in school. Examples: aiming for a 4.0 GPA, improved math confidence, better classroom behavior, turning into a “morning person.”
-  **7. Gun & Community Violence Awareness** [2 mentions] - Some participants described gaining awareness of gun violence and its impact. Examples: Highlighted the program’s focus on safety and social responsibility.
-  **8. Positive Peer & Social Relationships** [2 mentions] - A few noted learning about healthy friendships, teamwork, and communication. Examples: Included choosing better friends, improving social skills, and uniting teams (e.g., basketball).

Parent Interviews Summaries and Themes

Interview Summaries:



1. The conversation revolves around the impact of a mentorship program on a young man. The program, which he has participated in annually since age 11, has significantly changed his behavior and attitude. It has instilled in him a sense of responsibility, improved his social skills, and fostered a positive outlook. He now enjoys dressing up, is more vocal about his opinions, and has developed problem-solving skills. His mother, is grateful for the program's influence, noting the increased positivity and reduced moodiness. She hopes the program will expand to high school students, emphasizing its transformative effect on her son's life.



2. Parent Victoria Glenn, who likes to be called Vicky discussed her positive experiences with a community program that supports her child and family. She highlighted the program's impact on her daughter's communication skills, reduced anger, and increased focus on the future. Vicky appreciated the support, including food, supplies, and emotional assistance, which has been crucial as a single mother of four. She praised the program's outreach, resources, and the sense of family it provides. Vicky emphasized the importance of community support and expressed her gratitude, particularly for Miss Johnson's role in the program.



3. The evaluation team interviewed parent, Joy, about her child's participation in a mentorship program at Detroit Lions Academy. Joy's daughter transferred from Bow Elementary and joined the program to gain a mentor for support during school. Joy has noticed positive changes in her daughter, such as increased outgoing behavior and participation in activities. Joy emphasizes the importance of housing support and mentions that the program has provided resources. She feels the program keeps children engaged and away from trouble. Joy would recommend the program to other parents, highlighting its positive impact on her child's social skills and overall attitude.

Parent Interviews Summaries and Themes

Interview Summaries:



4. Parent Steven McDonald, whose child attends Martin Luther King High School, discussed his positive experiences with a program his child participated in during middle school. The program emphasized professionalism and manners, which McDonald observed as beneficial changes in his child. McDonald expressed satisfaction with the program's support and safety, though he did not feel involved in the program's decision-making. He would recommend the program to other families, particularly for young black men, and hopes his child will graduate with an associate degree. Steven believes the program significantly elevated his child's behavior and manners. While he didn't pinpoint specific changes, he did note that his son makes him proud.



5. The evaluation team interviewed parent Chantinic Currie about their child's experience in a youth program at Noble Elementary. Chantinic shared that her daughter through the program, successfully improved the child's self-assurance and reduced anger issues. Chantinic expressed financial support for extracurricular activities for her daughter, and tutoring would be beneficial. The program shared knowledge of and provided resources and employment opportunities for the family. She highly recommends the program for its support and positive impact on their child's life and attitude. The staff made her daughter feel supported because her daughter shared her feelings. Chantinic emphasized the lack of similar programs in their community and urged continued support.

Parent Interviews Summaries and Themes

Parent Interview Thematic Analysis

- 1. Behavioral and Emotional Growth** [5 mentions] - All parents noted improvements in their child's attitude, emotional regulation, or behavior. Examples: Reported reduced anger or moodiness, increased responsibility, improved manners, and more positive outlooks.
- 2. Social Skills and Communication** [4 mentions] - Parents observed growth in their children's ability to interact positively with others. Examples: Included becoming more outgoing, improved communication, problem-solving, and professionalism.
- 3. Supportive Resources & Basic Needs** [3 mentions] - Several parents highlighted material and resource supports provided by the program. Examples: food, supplies, housing resources, financial/employment opportunities.
- 4. Mentorship & Program Staff Support** [3 mentions] - Parents emphasized the importance of mentors and staff as role models and trusted adults. Examples: Noted staff making children feel supported and the personal role of leaders like Miss Johnson.
- 5. Academic and Future Orientation** [3 mentions] - Parents connected the program to school success and aspirations for the future. Examples: Mentioned focus on tutoring, professionalism, future education goals, and reduced distractions.
- 6. Family and Community Impact** [2 mentions] - Parents valued the program's effect beyond the individual child, including family support and community connection. Examples: Emphasized the sense of family, outreach, and community support where few programs exist.
- 7. Program Expansion & Accessibility** [2 mentions] - Some expressed a desire for the program to expand or continue. Examples: Suggestions included extending to high school and ensuring continued community presence.

BCFM Staff Focus Themes



Summary

The evaluation team conducted a focus group with members of the BCFM Staff to incorporate their perspectives of the program. The focus group consisted of 7 stakeholders from the BCFM staff, representing both administrative roles and direct program delivery staff. The focus group discussion focused on two primary areas: (1) What works in the program, and (2) Challenges and Opportunities to Improve the program. The focus group was conducted over Zoom teleconference on Aug 18, 2025.

BCFM Staff Focus Themes

Thematic Analysis of Focus Group Session

Themes from the discussion about what is working well in the program

1. *Face-to-Face Engagement & Relationship Building*

- Staff emphasized that in-person, one-on-one interactions are the most effective engagement strategy.
 - “Face-to-face engagement... is really working.”
- Building rapport through persistence, availability, and presence was a recurring strength.
 - “She’s constantly trying to find ways to contact the students...”

2. *Two-Generational Support Model*

- Several speakers described the value of supporting both youth and families:
 - “We’re not just helping the child, we’re helping the family.”
- This approach improved outcomes at individual and community levels, including school partnerships and crisis response.

3. *Community Partnerships*

- Notably with Eden Gives and Trader Joe’s for food distribution:
 - “We know these are low-income families... Eden Gives helps fill the gap when students are out of school.”

4. *Conscious Use of Self and Relatability*

- Staff modeled vulnerability and relatability to foster trust:
- A life coach shared her personal boxing story as a non-violent coping method.
- Another described using life experiences to connect with students about walking away from violence.
 - “We get to share a lot of ourselves when we teach the curriculum.”

BCFM Staff Focus Themes

Thematic Analysis of Focus Group Session

5. *Strength of Staff Commitment*

- Participants underscored the sincerity and passion among staff and partners.
 - “Everyone involved... has a sincere desire to help end violence.”
 - “The students feel safe and cared for — and they want to come back.”

6. *Intervention-Focused & Evidence-Based Strategy*

- The program was positioned as intervention rather than prevention.
 - “Our students have already been affected by violence — we’re working with those who need support now.”
- The evidence-based curriculum is adaptable and grounded in real experiences.

7. *Positive Youth Modeling & Belonging*

- Staff challenge the normalization of risky behaviors:
 - “Students say everyone in their neighborhood drinks or smokes — but our program shows that’s not true.”
- Youth expressed joy, connection, and pride (e.g., requesting photos, TikToks with staff, hugging life coaches).

BCFM Staff Focus Themes

Themes from the discussion about challenges and opportunities to Improve

1. *Engagement Barriers*

- Some youth exhibit skepticism due to community norms around violence and substance use.
- The program must actively counter the belief that “everyone is violent or using.”

2. *Family Involvement Challenges*

- Though not deeply explored, several anecdotes suggest variability in family participation and support needs.
 - “We talk to parents about things like food needs or violence at home.”
- Youth often turn to staff for emotional support when they can't talk to their families.

3. *Resource and Referral Follow-Through*

- Success is partially measured by the team's ability to act on referrals:
 - “When those referrals come across and we complete them... that shows we're effective.”
- Challenges may arise in logistics (e.g., transportation), but the team mitigates this (e.g., using Uber).

4. *Contrast With Other Approaches*

- Staff drew distinctions between their school-based, relational approach and more punitive or “jailhouse” intervention models.
- Staff also commented on the challenge (in one high school) of offering the BCFM CVI Program alongside another CVI program that has more of a reputation as the “fun” CVI
 - “We're not doing ‘scared straight’ — we're doing evidence-based, school-embedded support.”

5. *Sustained Support & Mentorship Needs*

- Youth seek mentorship beyond the formal structure.
 - “Some even asked me to be their mentor.”
- This raises the need to institutionalize sustained connections.

Appendix A: Youth Participant Survey

Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan - Youth Participant Feedback Survey

We need your help to better understand how this program helps you learn and to see how we can do better together. Please take your time answering the questions in this survey because your voice matters to us!

* Required

1. What is your name?

(This will only be used to tell if you did the survey. Your answer to the questions will not be connected to your name, so you are encouraged to answer honestly based on your time in the program.) *

2. How old are you?

3. What grade will you be in when school starts in the fall? *

- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10
- ☐ 11
- ☐ 12

4. Which School do you attend? *

- ☐ Cody
- ☐ Sampson Webber
- ☐ Mumford
- ☐ Noble
- ☐ Bow

Appendix A: Youth Participant Survey

5. How long have you been in this program? *

- ☐ Less than 1 month
- ☐ Between 1 and 3 months
- ☐ More than 3 months

6. How would you rate your satisfaction with the program so far with 5 stars being the best? *



7. How much do you agree with each of these? Select an option that best fits your opinion. *

	Strongly disagree 🙄	Disagree 🙅	Not sure	Agree 👍	Strongly Agree 😊
I feel welcome in this program.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This program meets my needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I trust and respect my life coach.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My life coach listens to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I learned ways to handle conflict without fighting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because of this program, I better understand what violence is and how it affects people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I learned how trauma can affect me and others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like the Transitions modules we've done	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am excited by what I can learn about myself and others through this program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix A: Youth Participant Survey

8. How do you usually take part in this program? *

- ☐ In Person
- ☐ Online or Virtual
- ☐ Both

9. How do you prefer to participate in this program? *

- ☐ In person
- ☐ Online
- ☐ I don't have a preference

10. Can you tell us one thing you have learned about yourself from being in this program that you didn't know before? *

11. Can you name some of the other resources (help, services, or programs) this program has shared with you? *

12. Can you tell us in your own words what you think about the Transitions lessons (curriculum)? **What did you like or not like?** *

13. What is one thing we could do to make this program better for you or someone like you? *

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

 Microsoft Forms

Appendix B: Youth Interview Script

Black Caucus of Michigan Foundation: Youth and Parent/Caregiver Interview Script

Part 1: Questions for Youth

Introduction

- What is your name? Is there something you prefer to be called?
- What school do you attend now and what school will you attend this fall?
- What is your favorite thing to do when you get to choose?

Motivation for Joining the Program

- How did you first hear about the program or get involved?
- What did you hope to get from the program?
- Some people have someone in their life who helps them make good choices. Has that been true for you?

Career & Future Interests

- What do you want your future to look like?
- How do your goals help you make better choices now?
- What do you hope your future will look like — at school, at home, or in your community?

Personal & Emotional Challenges

- Everyone gets upset or stressed sometimes. What helps you deal with those feelings?
- Have you noticed any changes in how you deal with tough moments — or even small things?

Appendix B: Youth Interview Script

Black Caucus of Michigan Foundation: Youth and Parent/Caregiver Interview Script

Desired Support & Guidance

- What advice or tools help you stay calm or solve problems?
- What do you need from a mentor or adult to stay on track?

Access to Educational Resources

- Some youth face challenges at school, home, or in their neighborhood. Have you had any challenges that made it harder to focus or feel safe?
- Did the program help you with any of those things?

Ideal Mentor Characteristics

- What makes a mentor or life coach helpful to you?
- Did your mentor help you focus on your goals or avoid trouble?

Reflective Questions for Youth to build story-telling skills

- What is one part of the program you remember the most? Why?
- If a friend asked how the program helped you, what would you tell them?
- Did anything in the program change how you think or act? Can you tell me about that?
- What is one thing you do better now that makes you feel proud?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Thank you so much for sharing today and helping us to understand how this program can help you and others!

Appendix C: Parent Interview Script

Part 2: Questions for Parents or Caregivers

Introduction

- What is your name? Is there something you prefer to be called?
- What school does your child attend now and what school will they attend this fall?

Joining the Program

- How did you hear about the program?
- Why did you want your child to join?

Changes You Noticed

- Have you noticed any small or big changes in your child — (or is it too soon to tell)?
- Has your child talked to you about what they learned?

Support for Families

- Many families face challenges. What kinds of support would help you support your child more easily?
- Did the program ask for your input or give ways for you to be involved?

Your Experience

- Did the staff or mentors make your child feel safe and supported? How did you recognize that?
- Would you tell other families to join this program? Why or why not?

Looking Ahead

- What are your hopes for your child's future?
- How can programs like this help kids in your community?

Reflective Questions for Parents or Caregivers to build story-telling skills

- Was there a moment when you saw a real change in your child? What happened?
- If another parent asked about this program, what would you say?
- What is one change in your child that makes you feel proud?
- How would you tell the story of how this program helped your child?
- If you had to say one sentence about your family's time in this program, what would it be?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share at this time?

Appendix D: BCFM Staff Focus Group Questions

Discussion Topics

Topic 1: What Works in the Program

Main Question:

Thinking about your experience, what has worked best in this program?

Follow-Up Probes:

- What strategies or activities have been most effective in engaging youth?
- Were there moments that made a lasting impression on participants?
- Which parts of the program or curriculum felt most meaningful or useful?
- How do you know when the program is “working”? What signs of success do you notice?
- Have you seen changes in youth or families that suggest the program is having an impact?
- Are there elements of the program you would want to see kept or expanded?
- What makes this program uniquely valuable to Detroit youth?

Appendix D: BCFM Staff Focus Group Questions

Discussion Topics

Topic 2: Challenges and Opportunities to Improve the Program

Main Question:

Thinking about the program overall, what challenges, barriers, or growing pains have you noticed?

Follow-Up Probes (Youth Engagement):

- What engagement strategies for youth don't seem to work as well?
- Are there times when youth seem less connected or lose interest?
- What adjustments could help keep youth more engaged?

Follow-Up Probes (Staff Support):

- Were there times when staff support felt limited or inconsistent?
- Did staff seem to have the resources and time they needed?
- What would help staff be more effective in supporting youth?

Follow-Up Probes (Family Involvement):

- How does family involvement — or lack of it — affect youth participation and outcomes?
- What challenges come up in engaging parents or caregivers?
- What would make it easier to bring families more fully into the program?

Follow-Up Probes (Resources & Logistics):

- Were there barriers like transportation, scheduling, or access to space or materials?
- Did these challenges make participation harder for youth or families?

Follow-Up Probes (Positive Framing):

- If you could suggest one change to strengthen the program, what would it be?
- What new strategies, supports, or resources would make the biggest difference?



**Thank you for your
support**

www.michiganblackcaucus.org
313-285-9234

