



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

# RFP Response Form

## RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports

### PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, Inc.

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Cecelia Ware, Executive Director

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [Infinitelifesol@gmail.com](mailto:Infinitelifesol@gmail.com)

Website: <https://infinitelifestylesolutions.org/>

Legal Status:  For-Profit Corp.  Nonprofit Corp.  Sole Proprietor  Partnership

Date Incorporated: February, 2017.

Partners included in this Proposal: None

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* Amber Farr and Nicholas Cotter from the Allegheny County Department of Human Services recommended Infinite Lifestyle Solutions to apply for this RFP.

Does your organization have a telecommunications device to accommodate individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing?  Yes  No

### REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	Cecelia Ware	[REDACTED]	<a href="mailto:infinitelifesol@gmail.com">infinitelifesol@gmail.com</a>
Contract Processing Contact	Cecelia Ware	[REDACTED]	<a href="mailto:infinitelifesol@gmail.com">infinitelifesol@gmail.com</a>
Chief Information Officer	Tonya Avery	[REDACTED]	<a href="mailto:averybusinessconsulting.com">averybusinessconsulting.com</a>
Chief Financial Officer	Lindsay Gay	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MPER Contact*	Lisa Buettner	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

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\* [MPER](#) is DHS's provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.

### **BOARD INFORMATION**

Provide a list of your board members as an attachment or in the space below.  
Click here to enter text. (Please see attached document)

Board Chairperson Name & Title:

Board Chairperson Address:

Board Chairperson Telephone:

Board Chairperson Email:

### **REFERENCES**

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization. *Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

Taili Thompson, Director of Violence Prevention  
Community Partner-Operation Better Block

[REDACTED]  
[tthompson@obbinc.org](mailto:tthompson@obbinc.org),

Father Paul Abernathy, CEO  
Community Partner - Neighborhood Resilience Project

[REDACTED]  
[pabernathy@neighborhoodresilience.org](mailto:pabernathy@neighborhoodresilience.org)

Jeff William, Executive Director  
Community Partner - Foundation of Hope Diversion Program

[REDACTED]  
[jwilliams@foundationofhope.org](mailto:jwilliams@foundationofhope.org)

### **PROPOSAL INFORMATION**

Date Submitted August 8th, 2022

Amount Requested: \$300,000

### **CERTIFICATION**

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- MWDBE and VOSB documents
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
- W-9
- At least one letter of support from a community-based organization or community member

### **REQUIREMENTS**

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 125 points. Your response to this section should not exceed 12 pages. (Pages 1-3 are not included in the page count).

#### **Experience and Leadership (25 points possible)**

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

1. Describe your organization's experience providing services to/in communities that have been marginalized by mainstream systems.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions is a social service organization for youth and families who have been victimized and traumatized by gun violence. Our mission is to provide trauma informed care in the most vulnerable environments. We strive to build relationships in trauma sensitive communities, facilitate healing, and interrupt the spread of violence. We want children to have hope that Pittsburgh is a place where they can feel safe and therefore thrive.

Having experienced her own trauma while growing up here in Pittsburgh on the Northside and seeing multiple family members victimized by gun violence, others murdered, and her son shot, Cecelia Ware, founder of Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, knew she had to do something different. Cecelia's son was shot on the first day of summer in 2016 in a park on the Northside, in broad daylight, while over a hundred children and parents were present. No counseling or trauma-related services were available to help her or her family members to heal. The only services available were the City of Pittsburgh Police and a victim advocate. Cecelia Ware, being a veteran nurse with behavioral health experience, founded and began this organization in hopes of addressing gun violence and the trauma that the victims and community members were experiencing.

Saving Our Sons and Daughters was developed using restorative circles so that our youth could develop skills to address the trauma, talk about their feelings, regulate their emotions, build peer relationships, and resolve conflicts. There were no programs specifically focusing on addressing social norms regarding violence or any that demonstrated models for developing emotional intelligence, responding to trauma, and teaching youth empathy. The Saving Our Sons and Daughters program was a new beginning for so many students and young people. Deep emotions were brought to the light and expressed in these circles. Social workers, teachers, and parents had no idea how gun violence and school violence was impacting our children. Emotional and mental health support was being addressed, art therapy was a way for students to get the feeling out without using words, and healing began.

Once the trust was built, usually after the first or second circle, children wanted to share more. They expressed that they would hide under their bed, listen to loud music or cry into a pillow when they heard gun violence. Some students even expressed feeling ashamed and admitted being threatened with a gun just walking down the street in their own communities. Students of all genders identified experiencing threats like this.

Children and teenagers are taught how to regulate their emotions, so they are capable of responding and reacting to conflict in a neutral way. We believe in restoring any harm that was done to help keep children in the community, schools, and in programs. We focus on conflict resolution, leadership skills, and social emotional learning along with teaching critical life skills, and healthy coping skills.

Families receive support through our case management and coordination of care. Restorative Parenting workshops are offered throughout the year. If children are suspended from school, due to their aggressive behavior, or fighting, their parents will have the opportunity to take part in family group conferencing. These conferences are held when children re-enter the school system or when deemed necessary. The conferences build relationships between school administrators, staff, and parents. Conferences help to transition the student back into school without any conflict and helps give parents the confidence and courage to advocate for their child to stay in school and be supported by our restorative services. Over the past five years we

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have served students across Allegheny County from the Woodland Hills, Pittsburgh Public, Propel and McKeesport School Districts.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions (ILS) started listening to the needs of the community while attending several Town Hall meetings throughout the County. Residents complained about a lack of Mental Health services for gun violence victims and stated how much they needed support for their children who were affected by gun violence in their community. Parents mentioned that there was no one to help their children cope with these violent incidents and that their children are distracted from their schoolwork, fearful, anxious, and depressed. Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, (ILS) stepped in and responded to the requests of parents, teachers, and social workers to provide the needed support.

ILS began working in Greater Valley Community Services in Braddock, The Healthy Village Learning Institute in McKeesport School District, Woodland Hills Intermediate School in Swissvale and the Student Achievement Center (SAC) in Homewood, where there were no social workers or anyone coming in to provide any Mental Health support or crisis intervention. The lack of traditional service providers and inability for students and families to have access to these services in a timely manner left the students vulnerable to unresolved trauma, negative behaviors, and retaliatory violence.

**Infinite Lifestyle Solutions (ILS) is committed to being a viable and readily accessible solution to children, teens, individuals, and families in need of informal mental health support throughout Allegheny County.**

2. Describe your organization's experience building trust with the communities within which you work and provide at least one specific example to illustrate that experience. Attach at least one letter of support from a community-based organization or community member.

After the Antwon Rose shooting, our youth in the Northside and Braddock were afraid of the police and did not understand the laws. They had questions that they would ask in our restorative circles that we could not answer. We invited the graffiti police officer Detective Sloan into our restorative circles. He was able to answer some questions but the youth wanted more. The students and Detective Sloan thought it would be a good idea to invite more officers. So the students and I developed Cops and H.O.O.P.S. Hold Off On Pulling Shots. We asked Detective Sloan to set up a meeting with Chief Shubert and he did. The program proposed meeting with six different police units, having restorative circles, and letting police officers tell their stories of why they became police and what it was like for them growing up in their communities. At the end of the six weeks the cops and youth had a basketball tournament.

This program built trust with the police, students, and family members. Every week they had dinner together after each restorative circle. Parents and Grandparents were present and sat outside the circle and were able to have conversations with officers during dinner. So many relationships were restored and trust began to happen again. Chief Shubert expressed being so pleased by the feedback from the officers, families, and students that he asked us to implement this program throughout the City of Pittsburgh in each zone. Unfortunately, Covid-19 happened and we had to put this on hold.

Another example of trust being built in our communities is in our attendance at town hall meetings. At these meetings, we listened to the parents and families crying out for solutions to

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gun violence and asking for change to help their children. We partnered with the Woodland Hills School District and facilitated the Saving Our Sons and Daughters Programming. The community wanted and needed more. By request, we partnered and moved into the Greater Valley Community Services Center. That year, the R.H.I.S.E. Restoring Hope In Sensitive Environments healing service was held. This service gave youth and families an opportunity to hear from public officials about what Public Safety Officials around Allegheny County were doing to change the social norms of gun violence. Families shared their stories of being resilient after experiencing traumatic gun violence. Families participated in a celebration of African Music and Dance and connected to mental health resources.

Another example was our response to the pandemic and the needs of the students when Pittsburgh Morrow Intermediate School closed. Immediately our programming went virtual on Google Hangout to stay connected with our students. Weekly meetings were held with the school to report to each other about the challenges with virtual learning and staying connected with youth and families. The school had students that were not logging on to Schoology and asked for our assistance. Our outreach team went into the community once a week to do wellness checks when the City was shut down. Over 100 wellness visits were made during the pandemic. Families were reconnected with school, internet services, food, mental health, and other social services. The families and school administrators were so grateful that we had trusted community connections and that we were willing to risk our own lives to check on the families we served.

**(Please review letters of support attached)**

### **3. Provide a concise statement of your organizational philosophy.**

Our **philosophy** is to provide effective restorative programs, services, and activities to help youth and families to eliminate the impact that violence and trauma have on the body, so they can heal, thrive, grow, and become law-bidding members of an educated, skilled, and experienced member of society.

### **4. List demographic information about your organization's leadership and staff, as well as the population they serve.**

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, Inc. is made up of individuals who grew up in the communities on the North Side of Pittsburgh and the (East McKeesport) as well as allies who have experienced working in the school system and formal mental health system of Allegheny County. Infinite Lifestyle solutions (ILS) includes a leadership position and staff with the following demographic information:

The leadership is Black- African American age 51 (F), and lives in the Mexican War Streets of the Northside. Outreach worker is Black- African American age 51(M), and lives in the Mexican War Streets of the Northside. Outreach worker is Black African- American age 38, (F) and lives in the Marshall Shadeland Community Northside. Social Worker is Black - African American age 27 (F), and lives in the Perry South Neighborhood of the Northside. Art Therapist - is age 33, (F) White- Italian American lives in the East Mckeesport Area.

The population served by this agency is listed as:

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90% Black- African American

8% White

2% Other (Asian, Africans, Hispanic).

### **Project Details (50 points possible)**

5. Describe what Informal Mental Health Support services your proposed Project will provide, and the intended outcomes you hope to achieve. Include how the Project will meet one or more of the goals listed in RFP Section 2.1.

#### **The Proposed Project has 3-supportive services:**

1). Infinite Lifestyle Solutions currently serves 114 students across all programs. This proposed Project will expand the current program to include a 25% increase in number of students, 25 of which will be added to the Propel Wellness Center two days a week. The expanded Program will facilitate restorative circles, one-on-one sessions, cognitive behavioral therapy for students who may have unresolved trauma, depression, anxiety, and grief for students for intervention and preventative services. ILS has a dedicated staff trained in restorative practices and family counseling. ILS will offer family-centered restorative circles and one-on-one sessions. These restorative circles with families will focus on restorative parenting and developing deeper and stronger relationships with their children. This partnership involves receiving referrals from the Magistrate Leah Duncan Williams. Her goal is to have restorative services for youth and families who appear in her court with low level offenses, such as fighting and truancy. These Mental Health supports will also include art therapy, Yoga sessions and crisis/safety planning.

ILS has adapted to the needs of the community by adding a telehealth option to ensure uninterrupted support for students and families despite continual impacts from Covid-19. Telehealth will be offered as a back up option for any student needing access to a higher level of Mental Health supports. This service will help close the gap and keep students connected until they are connected to other mental health providers. Parents will be supported when there is a need for technical assistance in accessing these telehealth services.

2). Infinite Lifestyle Solutions (ILS) has agreed to partner with the Northside District Judge Magistrate, Honorable Leah Williams-Duncan who will determine which offenses would warrant being directed to ILS to work with. These are youth in the community who have truancy violations and minor Juvenile offenses that would normally warrant a fine to the parents or Juvenile detention for the minor student. ILS will also partner with Gwen's Girls, Inc. to provide restorative sessions for youth attending their program who will be diverted from the Juvenile Justice System. With these partnerships ILS will provide restorative circles for behavioral intervention, conflict resolution with parental involvement, positive coping skills, one-on-one sessions for youth that may have unresolved trauma or deeper issues that need to be addressed, cognitive behavioral therapy, and art therapy. (statement of need here)

3) Infinite Lifestyle Solutions(ILS) has assessed a need for an efficient system for response to **provide emergency crisis intervention to students** who may or may not be currently using ILS's Programs. ILS will provide a Trauma Response System specifically for the schools (ILS)

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already served and partnering organizations. When a trauma response need is identified within their programs, ILS will work with a team of established, trusted connections with a trained point person within each school who is able to follow the HUMBLE model in order to deescalate the crisis, if possible, at the school the student attends. A designated phone number will be established with a dedicated ILS staff person to take the phone calls from the designated point person, and document all information once a trauma response is identified.

ILS will determine the level of need based on details of the situation and will establish short-term emergency-prompted safe healing spaces in the appropriate setting if deemed necessary. The identified setting will be accessible to individuals in need and will be either in the school setting during school hours, in the ILS space after school, or in an identified community partner space such as the Allegheny Carnegie Library or Propel Wellness Center. Information about location and times will be posted in each school, organization facility and public library chosen as a safe healing space. This system will be shared through point individuals and ILS team members to community members/families in need of the trauma response support to invite them to use the healing spaces.

### **Intended Outcomes for the proposed Project is:**

- 1) Young children and youth will be knowledgeable on how to regulate their emotions.
- 2) Youth will show a decrease in negative mental health symptoms.
- 3) The number of Students arrested in crisis decreases in the Schools ILS serves.
- 4) Support for youth and families in crisis are readily accessible.
- 5) Trained out-of-school partners will help to Close the gap and get more young people served with mental health support and connected to higher levels of care if needed.
- 6) Improved school attendance by 20% and ongoing support for youth and families involved in Juvenile sentencing.

The Project that Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, Inc. proposes, aligns with the following goals of Allegheny Department of Mental Health as written in the RFP Section 2 Page 7 (#1, #2 and #4):

1. **#1 Grow access within a community to informal helpers...ILS has been an informal organization serving school districts with Mental Health supports since 2017. This proposed project will initiate training for developing additional informal supporters throughout the community in safe settings within the schools, Carnegie Libraries and Propel Wellness Center. The team will be trained to help students and families experiencing a mental or emotional crisis with the appropriate Trauma response. (see #3 above).**
2. **#2 Increase the availability of culturally competent, proactive supports that connect people to preventative care when their mental health symptoms are escalating or when they are in emotional distress.**

ILS is expanding the restorative programs already in place and is hiring staff to serve the additional students (see #1 above) and will train helpers throughout the community as previously mentioned. Crisis/safety plans will be created with students and copies will be provided to children and families for their use outside of the school setting. This will be a collaborative



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process so that students and families are hands-on in the process of choosing supports and are empowered to take ownership of their safety plan so that it is realistic and unique to their specific needs. The creation of these safety plans will involve identifying culturally competent supports that students and families can use when in distress. Some of these may be natural supports in the individuals' families and communities and some will be informal and formal mental health supports. Students and families will be connected to the helpers in the communities that are trained through the ILS program. Barriers to reaching out to supports will be explored so that ILS can support students and families in using their safety plan and creating action steps to break down barriers to valuable support options.

3. #4 Reduce stigma and smooth the way to formal mental health supports for people who may not know about or feel comfortable accessing them.

ILS' programs are designed to help students enjoy the process of receiving mental health support through activities such as art therapy, yoga, gardening, music, and special community events that help engage youth in the communities ILS serves. Food, games, face painting, and other creative activities help to provide safe places for children where they can become familiar with discussions around mental health and learn about the variety of ways to engage in therapy, outside of traditional talk therapy. Engaging in restorative circles with peers from school - which are incorporated alongside these activities - builds rapport between children and mental health supports facilitating circles while also gradually creating more comfortability with conversations about mental health. The topic of stigma is explored in these circles so that collaborative discussions will occur to reflect on stigma members have experienced in their own lives around mental health. ILS team will use psychoeducation and person-centered discussions to challenge students' and families' current beliefs about mental health and barriers they feel are present to reaching out for help.

ILS staff with experience in the social work and formal mental health fields will interact with students and families and introduce them to resources in the communities. ILS has a growing and evolving resource list that identifies formal supports in the North Side and Greater Pittsburgh areas and what population they have experience serving. BIPOC providers and providers who specialize in serving the LGBTQIA+ community will be identified in order to connect students and families to providers who can provide care that affirms the culture and identity of individuals served. ILS staff will take time to collaborate with students and families to identify aspects of their cultural identities and specific needs in order to focus on connecting them to appropriate providers. ILS staff with experience in the field will act as advocates for students and families during the process of connecting them with formal supports. Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, Inc. intentionally creates a stigma free program.

- 1) Provide youth with preventative restorative circles in the community and schools
- 2) Provide trauma responsive restorative circles for youth in crisis in the community and schools.
- 3) Provide youth and families restorative circles for family supportive services.
- 4) Our staff is trained in the restorative (HUMBLE) experience.

6. Describe where and to whom you will provide your Project, and why that community needs the proposed Project.

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The Restorative practices work will take place at the schools, organizations and centers that we have been working in: Pittsburgh Morrow School(PreK-8), Perry High School (Charter), Propel Northside School, the Healthy Village Institute in McKeesport, Greater Valley Community Services, Student Achievement Center in Homewood, and the newest space Propel Wellness Center in the Northside. The work will also continue to be central in the focus of services at Infinite Lifestyle Solution's Teen Support Center in Perry North of the Northside.

### **Who:**

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions' proposed Program will serve students starting at 5 years old (Kindergarten) through High School students, age 17 years old. The parents of these students also have access to mental health support including restorative healing circles and family counseling. The ILS proposed Program will also include the latest partnership starting in September 2022, with Gwen's Girls in the Diversion Program to support youth who are faced with entering the juvenile justice system. The focus will be on crisis interventions. Another new partnership is with the Northside District Magistrate, the Honorable Leah Duncan-Williams located conveniently on the Northside next door to Infinite Lifestyle Solutions (ILS). ILS plans to become a restorative system for families in truancy court and other low level offenses instead of punitive sentencing whenever possible. This program will also start in September, 2022. This proposed project will also accommodate individuals and families within the neighborhoods of the schools served by ILS as they reach out.

### **Why:**

We started working at The Healthy Village Institute in McKeesport in 2021. It has been identified as the City with the most homicides due to gun violence. Research shows that traumatic stress causes disturbances in processing information that can create barriers to learning. (Van der Kolk & McFarlane, 1996) These same studies indicate that a high school dropout rate can be traced back to unresolved trauma which can impact a person's thoughts and attention span, and create negative reactions, causing harm to others and themselves. With Psychiatric and other Mental Health treatments the effects of trauma has less of an impact on the student's ability to learn and the dropout rate can improve.

According to a Post Gazette article, no area of the city has experienced more nonfatal shootings over the past five years than Pittsburgh, PA's Homewood neighborhood. In the North and South sections of the neighborhood, police have reported 87 such cases. (Post Gazette 04/03/2021, pg.6-9).

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, Inc.'s goal is to combat the effects of trauma from gun violence and crimes in the neighborhood by expanding our reach and servicing more students. ILS is providing consistent and effective Mental Health Supports on an informal level wherever possible and makes referrals to higher levels of care to traditional Mental Health Systems of treatment. ILS offers telehealth to close the treatment gap in receiving Mental Health

**7. Describe any formal or informal partnerships your Project will require and your plan to develop those. Include a description of how you envision DHS supporting you. (Consider**

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describing how you prefer to communicate with DHS about any system or other barriers your Project encounters, and about any opportunities for system improvements you may identify.)

This project will require us to partner with the Propel Wellness Center to occupy space in the center 2 days a week. The Magistrate Leah Duncan Williams, to refer youth and families to restorative family circles. The Pittsburgh Public School, The Buhl Foundation, One Northside, and Taili Thompson already have a partnership with us supporting this work. ILS has already met with the Magistrate Leah Willams Duncan and with Propel Wellness Center Coordinator and provided them with an Executive Summary of the proposed work. A formal meeting with their Mental Health Team will take place to formalize the partnership. Dr. Kathi Elliot, CEO of Gwen's Girls initiated a new partnership with ILS to support the Diversion Program. ILS will meet with Dr. Elliot in a formal meeting within the next week to discuss and plan the specific details of collaborative interventions.

ILS envision DHS supporting us with technical support, data entry, and our trauma response system. DHS can advertise to our communities that we are serving, and provide training for data entry into their system. Provide us with support in getting approved with medical insurance companies for billable services. ILS prefers to have to communicate by phone, virtual meetings, and in person as needed.

**8. Provide a concise project timeline listing when certain activities (e.g., planning, hiring, implementation) and milestones will begin and end.**

August 2022:

- Set goals for the implementation of the programs..
- Meet with each of our partners to formalize expected goals and outcomes of our services.
- Schedule monthly Community Advisory Board Meeting that will take place throughout the Project. Set schedules for activities and action steps, timelines will be planned.
- ILS will hire the part time Mental Health Art Therapist full time by August 10th and the Full time Social Worker by August 18th. Advertise and Hire a Fiscal Manager by the end August 2022.
- Onboarding will take about two weeks for new hires. The work shall start in late September.
- An informal mental health support Crisis Hot-line will be created within the ILS organization.
- Complete the Restorative HUMBLE deescalating training curriculum, marketing materials, to use as a Guide for the responders. (i.e step-by-step visual aid on what to do).

September 2022

- Recruit community, school, and organizational informal helpers to act as Trauma Responders for students and families in crisis. This is an ongoing task.
- The project will start October 1, 2022 and end September 30, 2024.

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9. Describe your proposed staffing plan, role descriptions and any training requirements. Include whether or not staff will have or obtain certification as peer specialists, and why.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, Inc. will hire the current Art Therapist that has already been working as a part-time staff with ILS, to become a full-time Art Therapist, a Full Time Social Worker and Fiscal Manager.

Art Therapist roles and responsibilities:

- Full time start date August 10, 2022.
- Implement all Mental Health Support programs in Art Therapy sessions with youth and families to align with current & new Mental Health outlined by the Executive Director (I.e Gwen's Girls and court appointed referrals)
- Program coordinator for the program and developing programs.
- Art therapist will receive weekly supervision by a licensed LPC and an ATR-BC.
- Art therapist has completed training in trauma and has two years of training in family counseling. Continued trauma training will be completed.

Social Worker roles and responsibilities:

- The full-time social worker will be hired on August 18, 2022.
- Facilitate work along with the Art Therapist.
- Provide Case Management to support youth and families.

Fiscal Manager roles and responsibilities:

- Oversee all agency finance and accounting functions.
- Preparation of monthly and year end financial reports.
- Complete audits and 990 tax returns.
- Fiscal support for all grants and contract monitoring reviews.
- Provide Human Services Support.

Each new hire is required to have Mental Health Youth First Aid training, Certified Clinical Trauma Professional training and the Restorative Practice training. There is no need for staff to obtain certifications as a peer specialist. Infinite Lifestyle Solutions has a Youth Work Force Development Program in operation currently for the next 10 weeks funded by the Hear Foundation. ILS is training four (4) youth from Perry High School to become peer specialist Safety Ambassador Outreach Workers.

### **Community Involvement and Trust (30 points possible)**

10. Describe how you included community members in planning and designing your Project.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, Inc. has developed a Community Advisory Board (CAB) by selecting members of the communities where the most students served by ILS reside.

Community members, current and former program participants were sent an email notifying them that we are looking for people to start a community advisory board. From the response 15 people were selected to create the board and 5 youth were included among the 15 selected. Each

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member was given an application to fill out that asks their opinions about the needs for serving students and families who need trauma informed care and mental health services. They will meet monthly to help with the planning and designing of the proposed Project.

### **11. Describe how you will include community members in the implementation/staffing/assessment of your Project.**

The community advisory board (CAB) will have on their agenda to assist us with implementation/staffing/assessment of this project. One of our current board members who is a business consultant will provide a SWOT analysis and a strategic plan to the CAB to assist them in creating a logic model to use for this program. The timeline for the CAB over the next month: they will construct an organizational framework and solidify collaborations, month 2-3 create a community engagement process, month 4-6 develop mechanism for extending work into new schools, month 7-8 plan for stakeholder collaborative, month 9-10 assess new schools and community cultures for specific needs, identify new school districts affected by gun violence, month 12 begin to enter new school districts and hire additional staff. All of ILS staff reside within the communities the organization serves. The restorative (HUMBLE) training will be completed with designated community helpers who are within the communities served.

### **12. Explain why you are the appropriate provider of this Project, specifically addressing why your community will trust you to provide this Project. (Consider describing the length of time in the community and years in operation, prior successful programs, the community's involvement in current programs, other examples of leadership in your community or other information you think would be helpful.)**

We are the appropriate provider for this work. We are already providing informal mental health services. We have been working in the Northside Community since 2017. Our very first program was a math tutoring summer program that built relationships with youth and parents. Following this initial program, we met students in the church fellowship hall of Greater Allen AME Church and facilitated our Saving Our Sons and Daughters program funded by a micro grant from the Office of Violence Prevention in the Allegheny County Health Department. The program was a success after 8 weeks and we expanded beyond the restorative healing circles to add the creative arts, music, and yoga.

Parents were asking how we can support their children who were being bullied outside of school in the community. This prompted us to open the Teen Drop-in Center to close the gap after school and throughout the summer. This partnership started with the funding from Children's Hospital and Pittsburgh Presbytery and we rented space at the Northside Propel Wellness Center. We hosted a community celebration with Public Safety Firemen to support fathers on the front lawn at Martin Luther King School. As the gun violence peaked in other neighborhoods, we listened and partnered with Woodland Hills School District. In 2018, the Saving Our Sons and Daughters program was facilitated in the intermediate school for two years. After facilitating the program in the school, we were invited to Greater Valley Community Services again to help close the gap to keep students safe and provide restorative work over the summer and a healing service later that year for the community.

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

In 2019, Saving Our Sons and Daughters started programming with Pittsburgh Morrow Intermediate School. Over the years we have served youth within this school. Again listening to the community's verbalized needs as well as students wanting more safety beyond the school play yard, we developed the Restorative Safe Passages Program. This program trains students to be safety ambassadors, meet with police officers in restorative circles, and protect their peers from bullying and violence in and out of school. Community members were in need of an official ceremonial celebratory event to symbolize that healing is possible, so we started the community healing service RHISE, Restoring Hope in Sensitive Environments. This gave communities hope that change is possible and connected them with resources. It also gave the police officers a chance to speak in a non-threatening environment and inform community members that work against violence was being done across Allegheny County.

ILS has been very responsive to our community's needs. We opened up our doors for a month after the AirBNB mass shooting on the Northside to offer a space for community members to come engage in restorative circles and therapeutic forms of healing. We went into the schools to support youth after that event and many other shootings that happened in Homewood and on the Northside and provided healing circles. During the pandemic, ILS was able to partner with Gwen Girls and hosted a learning hub for almost 50 youth that came from all parts of the City of Pittsburgh, ages 5 -16. These students and families received all of our services. From classroom support to restorative circles, yoga, art therapy, and virtual therapy. One Northside contracted with us to support the mini grants recipients to receive virtual emotional support and business consulting to help pivot their projects during the pandemic.

The community knows that we are here for them. Morrow school administrators developed a team with ILS to assist them in getting reconnected with students and families who fell off the radar during virtual learning. Every week during the worst part of the pandemic we were there. Our team went out and knocked on doors fully masked and gloved to get students back in school and get families the resources they needed eg. internet connection, food, art therapy packets to attend virtual art therapy with us. Creative and therapeutic healing circles were facilitated virtually with children to offer them a safe space to process their feelings about the pandemic and all of the changes they were experiencing to daily life.

### **Data Collection and Reporting (10 points possible)**

13. Describe what data you currently collect on your programs.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions currently uses Sign in sheets when attending the programs each day. From the sign-in sheets ILS keeps track of how many times the students attend each group session and keeps a record of the topics that were covered in the group they attended. Progress notes are a qualitative measurement to indicate how students are working on specific goals in sessions/groups. At the end of the month, all of the sheets are tallied and an attendance report is generated along with the number of new participants served on a daily basis. Also noted are student's progress and milestones when a student reaches a particular goal.

## **RFP for Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports**

14. Describe how you will know if your Project is effective in achieving its goals and what data you will collect to track its effectiveness.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions will create an individualized treatment plan for each student and a collective treatment plan that lists ILS' organizational goals and identifies measurable objectives that will be worked on in circles to move towards these goals. Individual progress notes will then refer to these goals to clearly document which goals are being addressed each time a circle or session is facilitated. Treatment plan updates will be completed consistently to identify where we are in regards to the specific objectives to provide a qualitative account of progress. These treatment plans will incorporate observations from ILS staff as well as students, School Administrators, and family feedback on how they feel progress is going in order to encompass a comprehensive account of effectiveness of the program.

### **Budget (10 points possible)**

15. Provide a detailed line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with planning, implementing, and sustaining the Project. Please remember that Project staff must earn no less than \$15/hour and you may include language assistance services costs in the budget. See attached budget.

16. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in the proposed budget.

Staff included in this work is Executive Director, Art therapist, Fiscal Manager, Social worker, 2 outreach workers, and an academic coach. Our current space will need to expand into the commercial space below us to support our staffing. The rent, gas, light, wifi, trash removal window finishings, office furniture, office equipment is included in this expansion. Office supplies are needed to accommodate staff increase. Health benefit packages are offered to all staff. A new phone line will be established for the trauma response and staff will be supplied with phones. Advertising new services on our website, flyers, mailings, and social media. Art packets are needed for students and families. A Yoga therapist will be used throughout the years of the program. IT consultants will service our new computers and SPSS software. Data analysts will support us in compiling and reporting data. Van is essential to transporting students.

# ILS, INFORMAL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT GRANT REQUEST

BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEARS 2023-2025	GRANT REQUEST	\$300,000
	ADDITIONAL INCOME	
	TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME	\$426,298
ACTUAL REVENUE RECEIVED	GRANTS RCV'D- BUHL & PGH FOUNDATION	\$125,000
	ADDITIONAL INCOME	\$0
	PROJECTED BALANCE	\$301,298

PROJECTED AMOUNT FOR REQUESTED GRANT	\$300,000
ACTUAL BALANCE (Actual income minus grants received)	\$301,298
BALANCE NEEDED FROM OTHER SOURCES	(\$1,298)

EXPECTED EXPENSE AND EXPENDITURES	Projected Cost	Actual Cost	Difference
RENT SPACE	\$52,800	\$0	\$52,800
GAS HEATING	\$10,800	\$0	\$10,800
LIGHT	\$8,400	\$0	\$8,400
WIFI	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
CELL PHONE	\$4,200	\$0	\$4,200
TRASH REMOVAL	\$2,400	\$0	\$2,400
WALL PAINTING	\$2,100	\$0	\$2,100
WINDOW FINISHINGS	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
TRAUMA RESPONSE PHONE	\$1,800	\$0	\$1,800
WEBSITE PAGE	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
HEALTH BENEFITS	\$28,400	\$0	\$28,400
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	\$55,000	\$0	\$55,000
FISCAL MANAGER	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
ART THERAPIST	\$36,160	\$0	\$36,160
SOCIAL WORKER	\$27,400	\$0	\$27,400
LEAD RESTORATIVE OUTREACH WORKER	\$35,600	\$0	\$35,600
RESTORATIVE OUTREACH WORKER	\$28,360	\$0	\$28,360
ACADEMIC COACH	\$10,150	\$0	\$10,150
YOGA THERAPIST	\$5,200	\$0	\$5,200
IT CONSULTANT	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
DATA ANALYST	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
GRANT WRITER	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
ACCOUNTING FEES	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	\$4,500	\$0	\$4,500
(4) DESK TOP COMPUTERS	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500
(4) LAPTOP COMPTERS	\$2,800	\$0	\$2,800
PRINTER	\$750	\$0	\$750
CONFERENCE TABLE	\$350	\$0	\$350
OFFICE DESK AND FURNITURE	\$3,500	\$0	\$3,500
LIABILITY INSURANCE	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
WORKERS COMPENSATION	\$1,550	\$0	\$1,550
POSTAGE	\$350	\$0	\$350
ADVERTISMENT	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
FOOD AND SNACKS	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
ART PACKETS	\$3,500	\$0	\$3,500
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$1,575	\$0	\$1,575
MISC SUPPLIES	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
TAXES	\$28,153	\$0	\$28,153
MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
Total	\$426,298	\$0	\$426,298

TOTAL PROJECTED COST	\$434,598
TOTAL ACTUAL COST	\$0
TOTAL DIFFERENCE	\$434,598

TRANSPORTATION	Projected Cost	Actual Cost	Difference
TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500
FUEL COST	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
INSURANCE VAN	\$2,800	\$0	\$2,800
Total	\$8,300	\$0	\$8,300

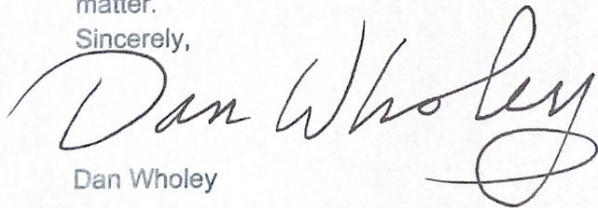


August 4, 2022

To the Department of Human Services Director,

Hello. I am writing to you today to give my support and recommendation to Ms. Cecelia Ware and her program Saving Our Sons and Daughters. Ms. Ware and I met at the Robert Wholey Fish Market in January of 2018. She asked me if I would support her after school program providing lunches, dinners and snacks for children affected by gun violence. Cecelia wanted to provide meals while teaching these students coping skills after their traumatic event of losing a loved one to gun violence. Ms. Ware's own son was shot over a minor incident and was almost killed. He recovered and Ms Ware decided to do something to help our community of Pittsburgh. She is teaching hundreds of students through out Allegheny County school systems to avoid gun violence and not to escalate arguments when interacting with other teens. Each school system has welcomed her and she works tirelessly with their students. Also Ms. Ware took the initiative to involve The City of Pittsburgh Police, notable speakers and Yo Yo Ma, inviting them to many of her programs working directly with her students. Also Ms Ware has been completely accountable with expenses presented to me involving Saving Our Sons and Daughters. Every dollar spent at Robert Wholey & Co went to support the children of Allegheny County. I am very proud to support Ms. Ware as she is helping to make our community a better place free of that wretched gun violence. I hope your fine organization can do the same. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions on this most important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dan Wholey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Dan Wholey".

Dan Wholey

Robert Wholey & Co.

Ecommerce Manager, Owner

412-391-3737



July 22, 2022

To whom it may concern,

Cecelia Ware has been of great service to Pittsburgh Public Schools and the Student Achievement Center (SAC) as part of our Trauma Support Team as it relates to community violence.

She has provided individual and group counseling services not only for our students but staff and parents as well. Cecelia has been a great asset to the SAC Family and we look forward to her services in the future.

*Dennis Boyce*

Dennis Boyce  
Alternative Education Assistant  
Pittsburgh Student Achievement Center



Pittsburgh  
Student Achievement  
Center

Dalhart Dobbs, Principal  
925 Brushton Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Phone: 412-529-7860  
Fax: 412-247-7926

Parent Hotline:  
412-529-HELP (4357)  
[discoverpps.org/sac](http://discoverpps.org/sac)

Regards,

*Dalhart T. Dobbs, Jr.*

Dalhart T. Dobbs, Jr.

The Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries may be directed to Dr.

Dara Ware Allen, Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504/ADA Title II Coordinator at 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 or 412.529.HELP (4357).

# SOUTH ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

David McDonald  
*Assistant to the Superintendent*

Michael Calvert  
*Director of Elementary Education*

Charles Michael  
*Director of Secondary Education*

2743 Washington Boulevard  
Liberty Borough  
McKeesport, Pennsylvania 15133  
Phone (412) 675-3070  
Fax (412) 672-2836

Sheila Lubert  
*Business Manager*

**Dr. Lisa N. Duval**  
*Superintendent*

LIBERTY BOROUGH    GLASSPORT    PORT VUE BOROUGH    LINCOLN BOROUGH

July 15, 2022

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing in support of Cecilia Ware and Infinite Lifestyle Solutions (ILS). While I was principal at Pittsburgh Morrow PreK-8, Cecilia and her organization were a valuable community partner. ILS has been integral to the success of Morrow's students for several years now, and plans are in place to continue to grow programs that ensure safety and social emotional wellness at Morrow. Among these programs is the Restorative Safe Passages Program, which aims to promote safety to and from school. This program also builds relationships with police officers and community members by inviting them into restorative circles during school hours. Officers, community members, and ILS staff are present in and out of class, with goals to decrease community violence and build healthy relationships.

ILS also has participated in Back to School Night and other school events, implementing R.H.I.S.E. (Restoring Hope In Sensitive Environments), a community healing service for students and families returning to school. This program addresses trauma and gives families hope that healing is possible, changing the social norms around community violence.

The Saving Our Sons and Daughters Program has also been a part of Morrow's programming. It focuses on providing restorative healing circles and social emotional wellness activities throughout the school year. Its goals are to decrease conflict, anxiety, stress, and depression as well as increase academic success.

Additionally, Cecilia and ILS played a vital role at our school during the pandemic. Their team performed wellness checks at students' homes, helping us to locate students who were not attending school online and establishing a critical line of communication. Ms. Ware and her team then worked with us to provide students and their families support to meet their basic needs.

Cecilia Ware and Infinite Lifestyle Solutions have been a valuable partner for Pittsburgh Morrow and the Northside community at large. I support their efforts to expand their work and scope of impact. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Calvert



# Greater Valley Community Services

"Enriching Lives for a Greater Community"

July 27, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter as a recommendation for the services provided by Infinite Solutions (IS). For the past few years, we have worked collaboratively with Infinite Solutions as they have supported the community with trauma informed care using healing restorative circles, Art therapy, yoga, African drumming, and academic support. Of those many initiatives, Infinite Solutions has always been professional, reliable, and timely.

Greater Valley Community Services' (GVCS) first engagement with Infinite Solutions was a trauma-based camp that truly had a positive impact on our youth. Our SPACE serves as a hub for innovative projects that engage youth in the Braddock area in various ways. One additional project hosted was by Infinite Solutions called RHISE, a healing service.

Infinite Solutions has brought compassion, respect and dignity to youth while maintaining a safe and engaging environment. The feedback and results were always positive, and we are always happy to collaborate with Infinite Solutions.

I would like to recommend Infinite Solutions as a DHS partner as they are a value to the community and other community partners. If you need more information, please feel free to contact me at 412-351-7155.

Kindest Regards,

*Jacqueline M. Smith*

Jacqueline M. Smith  
Executive Director



1805 Buena Vista St • Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
Phone: 412-325-1412 • Fax: 412-325-1428  
[www.propelschools.org](http://www.propelschools.org)

RE: Letter of Support

To whom it may concern,

Propel Northside and the Propel Northside Community Wellness Center would like to formally extend our support for Infinite Lifestyle Solutions and the hard work that they have committed to tackling in the Northside and beyond. Infinite Lifestyle Solutions has proven itself to be an adaptive, compassionate, and sincere partner when it comes to addressing the mental health needs of our community, including our scholars here at Propel Northside.

During a time of high need and staffing shortages for our school, we called on our community partners Infinite Lifestyle Solutions to work with some of our 6th grade students who needed some extra support. In this work, the ILS staff quickly and professionally established rapport with the group and discovered deeper issues rooted in loss, trauma, and interpersonal conflict. Without ILS's restorative circles, it is unclear if our group of 6th graders would have been able to process these feelings in a healthy and productive way.

We greatly appreciate the work Infinite Lifestyle Solutions has done for us and the community of the Northside and support their endeavors completely.

Sincerely,

Cody Manson-Webb, MSW

Site Coordinator, Propel Northside Community Wellness Center

Angela Weidman, Chair  
Ernst & Young, LLP

Renee D. Farrow, Vice Chair  
Decorating Details

Dr. Elizabeth Carter, Treasurer  
Highmark

Paula Yurkovich, Secretary  
Smith Micro Software

Caren L. Caldwell, MBA  
UPMC Health Plan

Bridgette Cofield, JD, SPHR  
Carlow University

Randie Cosby  
Labor Relations Consultant

Elizabeth Crow  
COMCAST NBC Universal

Todd Goss  
First National Bank

Walt Hales  
CEO, HPS Digital, Inc.

Dr. Kathy Humphrey  
Carlow University

Kenya Matthews  
Google

Kelly K. Miller  
Thermo Fisher Scientific

Sonia Layne-Gartside  
Consultant, Master Trainer,  
OCM Specialist

Michelle Ritter Esq.  
Business General Counsel

Nicole Webster  
Accenture

Dr. Erroline Williams  
Professional Coach & Consultant

Frances Woodward Esq.  
Highmark Wholecare

Dr. Kathi R. Elliott,  
DNP, MSW, CRNP  
CEO, Gwens Girls



July 27, 2022

Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
One Smithfield Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

To Whom It May Concern:

As a community partner and participating member of the Black Girls Equity Alliance, I wholeheartedly support Infinite Lifestyle Solutions' application to provide Community-Led and Community-Operated Informal Mental Health Supports in Allegheny County.

Cecelia Ware, the Executive Director of Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, has been a community partner of Gwen's Girls since 2018. We have consulted on many of her programs over the last few years. I have personally watched this organization grow from supporting one community to now providing well-need trauma-responsive services across the county. Cecelia is a valuable collaborator with the BGEA. She has her personal story of trauma and violence that ignites her desire to serve others from a trauma lens.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions has innovative and creative restorative solutions to approach trauma and violence in the youth and families in our county. In 2020, they were able to pivot their teen support center after their doors were closed due to the pandemic and serviced over 50 youth in person by using space at our Gwen's Girls Northside facility. They also served youth virtually by providing Art Therapy, Yoga and Tai Chi. They are an example of resilience, this organization needs to be recognized for their unique work with trauma and mental health.

I highly recommend that you consider this organization as a provider for informal community mental health services. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information.

Best regards,

Kathi R. Elliott  
CEO

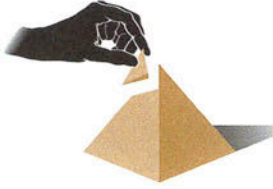
## CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF LEGACY & TRANSFORMATION

**HEADQUARTERS**  
711 W. Commons St. 3rd Fl.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

**WILKINSBURG SITE**  
Community Forge  
1256 Franklin Ave.  
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

**CLAIRTON SITE**  
Morning Star Baptist Church  
307 Shaw Ave.  
Clairton, PA 15025

Facebook: @GwensGirls | Twitter & Instagram: @Gwensgirlspgh  
www.gwensgirls.org • contactus@gwensgirls.org  
phone: 412-904-4239 • fax: 412-904-4829



# Healthy Village Learning Institute

*"BUILDING TOWARDS EXCELLENCE"*

July 25, 2022

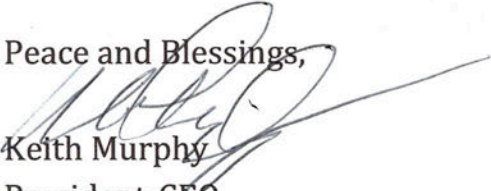
Keith Murphy  
Healthy Village Learning Institute  
1102 Freemont Street  
McKeesport, Pa. 15132

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter of support for Infinite Lifestyle Solutions. They have demonstrated a commitment to provide restorative circles to teen girls in our McKeesport community focusing on decreasing the impact of individual, family, and peer trauma, mental health issues, and teen dating violence prevention. Art Therapy is also used in the restorative circles. In offering Art therapy as an integrative mental health service to enrich the lives of individuals, families, and peers through active art-making, creative process, psychological theory applications, and connected human experience within a psychotherapeutic trust building relationship.

It is my hope that serious consideration is given to Infinite Lifestyles Solutions in this effort of strengthening the great work being done.

Peace and Blessings,

  
Keith Murphy  
President-CEO

To Whom It May Concern,

July 13, 2022

My name is Rev. Cornell Jones. I am the Director of Street Outreach for the City of Pittsburgh. I oversee all the street intervention programming that happens in our city. I work with intervention teams and the police to help stop shootings and retaliations. I am writing to you about Infinite Lifestyle Solutions. This is one of my favorite partners that assists the City of Pittsburgh with trauma and violence prevention work. Infinite Lifestyle Solutions is a new solution for violence. They are building relationships with youth throughout the county. They have decided to invite youth from different school districts to come out and enjoy a day of bowling with one another. They have brought kids together from underdeveloped neighborhoods and school districts. Through their work they are removing hopelessness about gun violence, drug epidemic, failing relationships, chronic diseases, disobedient children, and any other aspects of life that get in the way of positive choices.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions also organizes restorative circles between youth and the police. On a weekly basis, they were bringing this group together to have discussions about very difficult topics. By the end of this project, the community and the police started to look at each other in a different way. This was exciting to me because I saw bridges being built that have been destroyed for numerous years.

This is an amazing program that is changing the world on a daily basis. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at (412)952-5230.

Rev. Cornell Jones

Director of Street Outreach