

CREDIBLE MESSENGER MOVEMENT

Program Model Overview

August, 2021



**Credible Messenger Mentoring
Movement**

Theory of Change

In order to help break current cycles of violence, justice system involvement, and marginalization; and to address the long-term impacts on young people of color, sustained investment in the most impacted communities is required.

Such an investment should focus on the recruitment, development, and empowerment of Credible Messengers - indigenous natural leaders who have successfully navigated their own prior involvement in the justice system, share similar life experiences with current justice-involved young people, and are poised to have a transformative impact on an individual, family, community and systemic level.

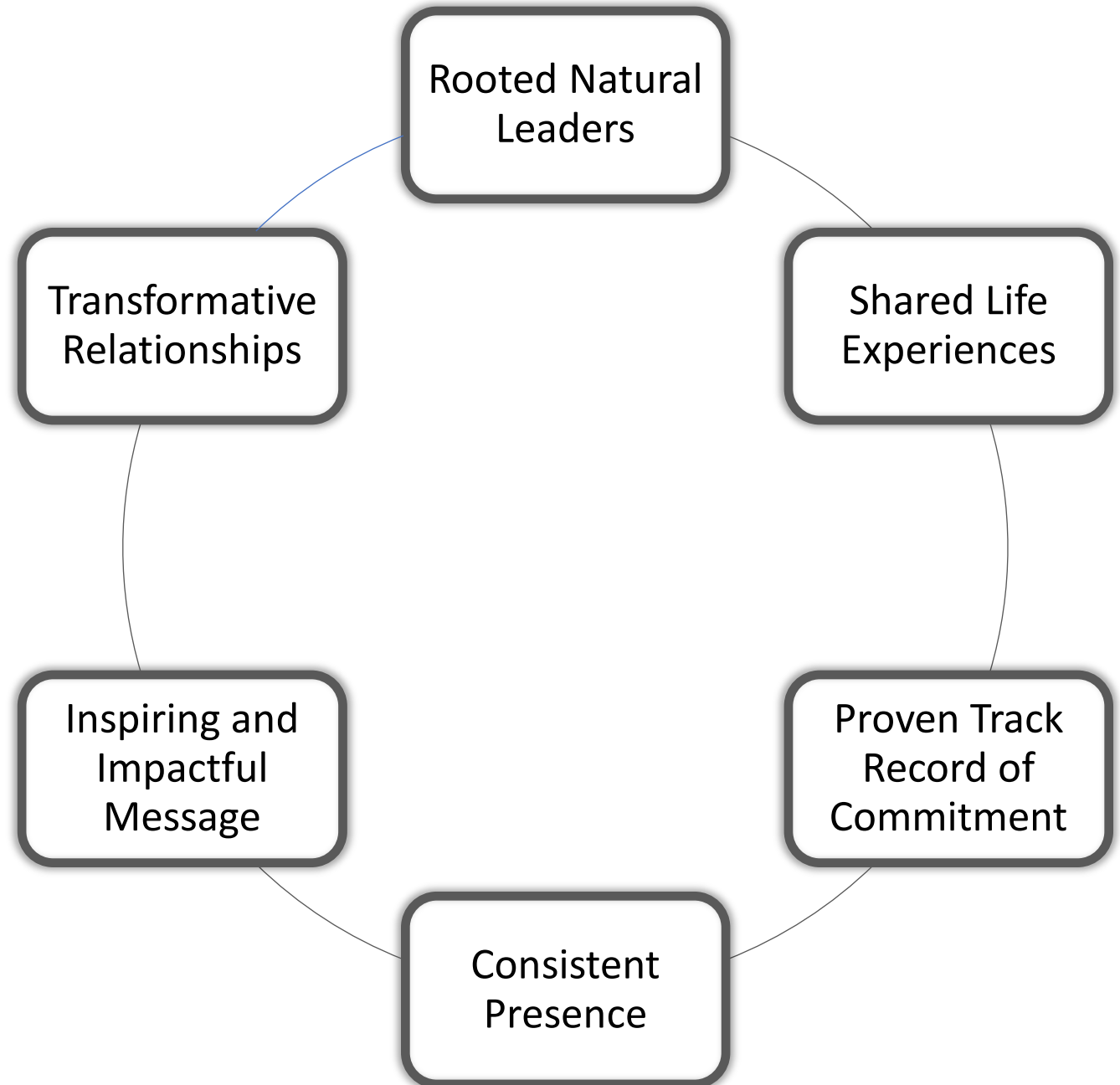


Credible Messenger Mentoring Defined

Credible Messengers Practice Transformative Mentoring, which is:

- Designed to promote Healing, Development and Restoration
- Intentional, Structured, Systemic
- A Long-Term Commitment
- Focused on Transforming Thinking and Behavior
- Built upon a Healthy, Trusting Relationship

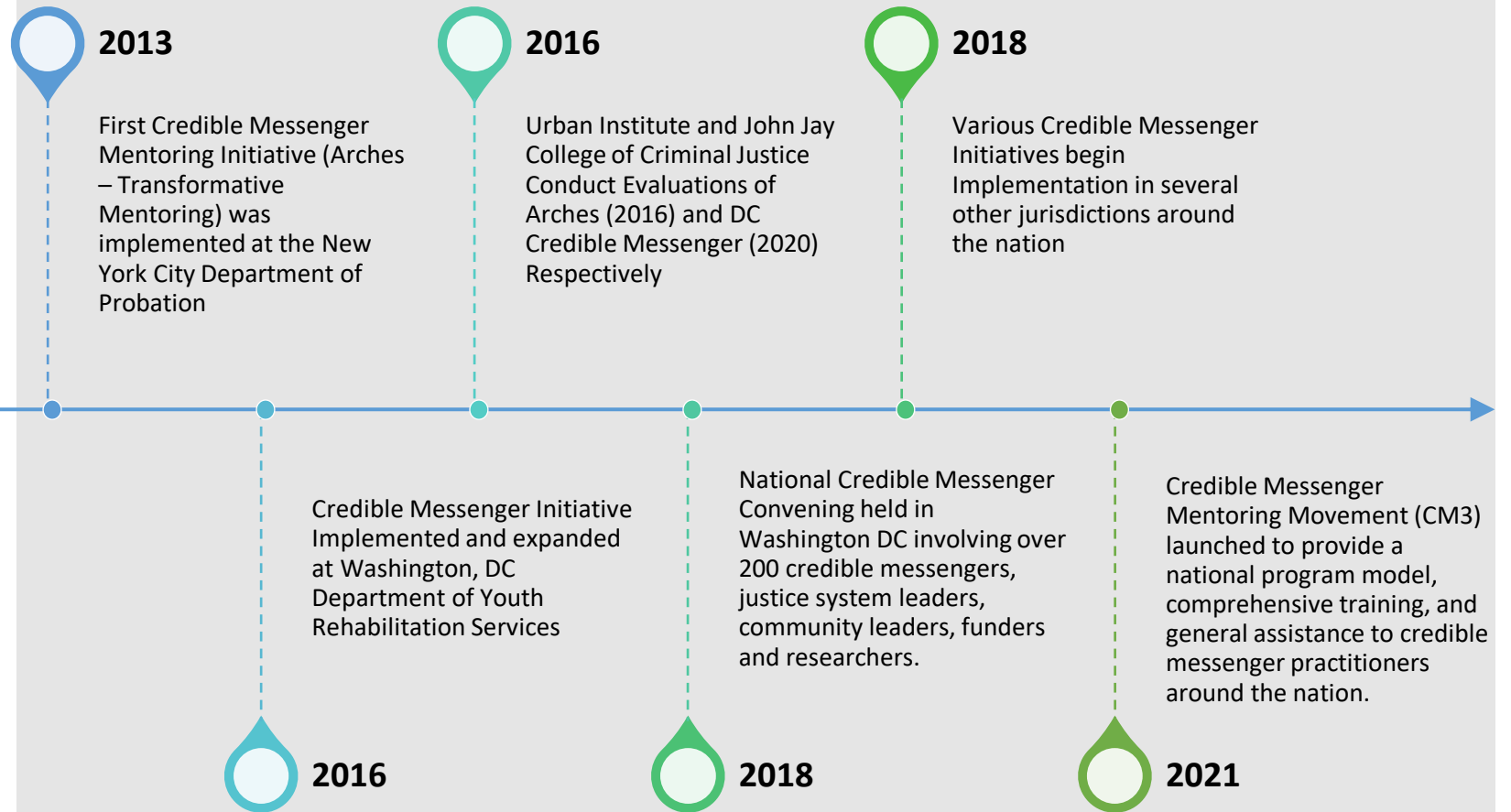
Credible Messenger Characteristics



Credible Messenger Mentoring Training Areas

- Positive Youth Justice Framework
- Adolescent Brain Development & the Impact of Trauma
- Healing Centered Engagement
- The Art and Science of Hope
- Restorative Justice Practices
- Individual Transformative Mentoring
- Crisis Intervention & Conflict Resolution
- Life Path Planning & Fundamentals of Care Coordination
- Co-navigating Services, Resources, and Opportunities via Government and Community-based Organizations

History and Evolution



Credible Messenger Mentoring in Secure Settings

Secure facilities for court-involved youth are inherently problematic, partly because they are artificial settings that run a high risk of institutionalizing and otherwise doing harm to the young people they house. Historically, detention centers and various other secure youth correctional facilities have engaged in various forms of abusive and inadequate treatment of youth. Among the practices that have been particularly harmful are isolation, shackling, the use of pepper spray, various forms of corporal punishment, and deprivation of basic needs. More subtle, yet equally harmful impacts include inadequate access to education, behavioral health services, culturally appropriate programming and disconnection from family & community supports.

In this era of reform, many of these and other harmful practices continue to be abolished and access to critical services is increasing. This progress has been achieved via a series of measures, including legislation, local policy change, increased emphasis on evidence-based practices and processes of internal culture changes centered on more restorative, youth development informed approaches.

One emerging practice is Credible Messenger Mentoring, that brings highly trained community members into secure facilities to provide “transformative mentoring” to facility residents via a series of programs and activities. While not traditional agency employees, Credible Messengers work in conjunction with various facility program staff and clinical treatment staff to provide a holistic set of supports to the youth.



Credible Messenger Mentoring: Sample Facility-based Program Overview

A team of credible messengers will provide intensive transformative mentoring services to youth being placed in detention.

Those services will include restorative group sessions, individual mentoring sessions, conflict resolution, and co-navigation of related programs and services provided in the detention hall.

The credible messenger team will collaborate with various probation/detention staff in planning, administering, and facilitating youth engagement functions; and will participate in relevant staff meetings to support the overall goals of youth healing, restoration, development and preparation for reintegration into the community.



Key Credible Messenger Roles & Responsibilities

- Form Trusting Relationships and Lines of Communication with Youth
- Provide Individual Transformative Mentoring Sessions
- Facilitate Restorative Focused Group Activities (independently and in conjunction with designated staff)
- Accompany Youth as they Matriculate Through Their Day/Evening Activities
- Credible Messenger Program Implementation
- Document Interactions with Youth in Designated Data Base
- Participate in Relevant Staff Meetings



Key Probation and Facility Staff Roles & Responsibilities

Agency / Facility Leadership: Set Vision & Tone for Infusing Credible Messengers into the Culture and Framework of the Facility. Ensure appropriate staffing levels, space and resources are available

Safety, Security and Operations Staff: Support Credible Messenger work by facilitating Access, Movement and Coverage of Relevant Facility Spaces.

Behavioral Health Staff: Spearhead the facilitation the Development of an Overall Youth Engagement (programmatic and treatment) Framework for Youth in the Facility; assist with incorporating Credible Messengers into the Framework and co-facilitate various interactions with youth.

Restorative Justice & other Relevant Staff: Co-facilitate Development of Youth Engagement Framework and co-facilitate various interactions with youth.



Credible Messenger Continuum in the Community

Sample Transitional Community-based Program Highlights

Youth transitioning from probation facilities and community-based youth under probation supervision will be engaged by Credible Messengers in the community

Credible Messenger Mentoring Process

- Restorative Group Work
- Individual Transformative Mentoring
- Crisis Intervention
- Development of Individualized lifepath plan
- Proactive Support and Co-Navigation
- Connection to Services, Resources, and Opportunities via Government and Community-based Organizations

Key Implementation Steps

- Stakeholder Consensus on Program Model
- Define Scope of Service and Implementation Timeline
- Procurement of Credible Messenger Services
- Credible Messenger Trainings and Orientations
- Begin Program Operation
- Track & Evaluate Impacts and Outcomes