



Promising Youth Alliance Launches in Dallas ; Collaboration among Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs, and Phoenix House Unites Proven Best Practices in Comprehensive Continuum of After-School Care

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DALLAS - (BUSINESS WIRE) - The board of directors of Promising Youth Alliance (PYA) announced the formation of this collaborative enterprise among three of the nation's most successful providers of youth development services: Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas, and Phoenix Houses of Texas. These three well-known service organizations have been piloting an integrated program of their services at a Dallas school, creating after-school programming that serves the whole child cost-effectively with best-in-class services from each organization.

PYA's creation was informed by a pro bono engagement by McKinsey & Company's Dallas office that assessed successful after-school programs around the country and analyzed the particular needs of Dallas's youth. Currently, 84% of DISD students are economically disadvantaged, and more than 100,000 students in the community are unsupervised after school every day. Research shows that after-school care can significantly improve the lives of young people and reduce crime and other social problems.

J. D. (Denny) Carreker, chairman of the board of PYA, said, "The research findings were disturbing. Thousands of our young people, the future of our community, are not being 'saved by the bell' but left to their own devices, despite many great programs in Dallas. In PYA great programs are integrated to address the whole child. That is what makes PYA unique: we are a collaboration of the best that delivers superior programming when and where the child needs it."

PYA programs, integrated models drawing on the special expertise of each participating organization, are designed to improve children's academic performance, character and leadership development, and overall health – all at lower cost per child. Other benefits will accrue to the children when additional organizations join PYA. The programs are measured and assessed by the University of Texas at Dallas's Institute for Urban Policy Research.

Dr. **Timothy Bray**, director of UTD's Institute for Urban Policy Research, explained, "Our role in PYA is accountability. PYA wants to clearly, purposefully, provably deliver results, whether in the form of better grades, fewer dropouts, less crime, lower drug use, improved attitudes, or better social skills. We are helping PYA create the precise deliverables and performance benchmarks that will monitor these trends that imperil our young people and provide immediate feedback to tailor the program to each child's individual needs."

Big Brothers Big Sisters brings the premier mentoring model to PYA, providing life-transforming mentoring relationships that have a direct and lasting impact on young people. Boys & Girls Clubs brings superior curriculum in education and career, character, and leadership development. Phoenix House brings successful substance abuse prevention services. All three organizations see in PYA an effective alliance for delivering their integrated services to more children and for learning from PYA's successes how to improve their own offerings.

Charles Pierson, CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters, said, "With PYA, we are taking our most valuable asset – our proven mentoring capabilities that help children realize their potential and build their futures – and bringing it to so many more children, enhanced with additional services that our Little Brothers and Sisters need."

Charles English, president, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas, said, "By taking our 'clubs' to schools where children can more easily access our curriculum and where they can be enriched by the offerings of our fellow providers, we can better serve our community where our services are most needed. The collaboration with these experienced organizations means that we can continue to focus our resources on what we do well and fold in what they do well for the betterment of each child we touch."

Clyde Rush, senior vice president and regional director, Phoenix Houses of Texas, said, "Our ability to deliver effective substance abuse prevention services can have a greater impact when we are a part of a comprehensive program that serves the whole child. Being part of the seamless safety net of services that is Promising Youth Alliance can help our community address the negative influences that endanger our youth."

John Rodgers, PYA president and CEO, points out that PYA will prove its value first in the Dallas community with its three participating organizations. "However," Rodgers adds, "we are passionate about providing a truly comprehensive continuum of care. Going forward, we will welcome additional organizations with complementary services such as healthcare and nutrition as members of PYA."

Rodgers notes that PYA plans to expand to additional schools in the fall of 2010 and that, since the three charter members have national standing and reach, PYA is also positioned to be established in additional cities once the model is refined.

Contributions can be made to the Promising Youth Alliance Fund, c/o The Dallas Foundation, 900 Jackson Street, Suite 750, Dallas, TX 75202, or by contacting Betty Brownlee, at bgbpya@yahoo.com, telephone: 214-621-7086.

Big Brothers Big Sisters is a donor-supported volunteer organization that places caring adults in the lives of children in one-to-one mentoring relationships. Through the positive impact of those friendships, children with a Big Brother or Big Sister are more likely to graduate from high school and are less likely to begin using drugs, begin using alcohol or engage in negative conflict. For more information, contact 888.887.BIGS or visit www.bbbstx.org.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. They are open to all boys and girls between the ages of 6 to 18, regardless of race, religion, economic status or national origin. Thirteen local Clubs serve a membership base of more than 5,000 youth by providing programs based upon the physical, emotional, cultural and social needs of boys and girls. The programs offered provide strong moral guidance, positive role models and life-changing educational programs designed to save kids from lives of crime and failure. BGCD is an organization that stands for traditional values, while providing progressive programs that address the problems faced by the youth of today, including substance abuse, teen pregnancy, gangs and violence. <http://www.bgcdallas.org/>.

Phoenix House is the nation's leading non-profit provider of substance abuse treatment and prevention services, serving more than 5300 men, women (including women and children), and teens each day at more than 120 programs in 10 states— California, Connecticut, Florida, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Texas, and Vermont. In Texas, Phoenix House typically serves over 1,000 people every day, including troubled teens and their families. For more information, visit <http://www.phoenixhouse.org/locations/texas/>.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/cgi-bin/mmg.cgi?eid=6391081&lang=en>

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