



## ***CODE SWITCH***

### ***RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN OF COLOR***

#### **Who We Are:**

Code Switch: Restorative Justice for Girls and Young Women of Color (here after called Code Switch) is a school-community-university action research grant developed to disrupt Black girl pushout by stopping the disproportional rates of discipline girls of color face in Pre-K – 12 schools.

#### **Mission:**

Provide girls and young women of color with access to spaces, resources, and opportunities meant to 1) eliminate the harms they experience as a result of educational inequities and 2) inspire them to tap into the power and voice they already possess to self-advocate in-kind.

#### **Goal:**

Work strategically and in collaboration with community partners and volunteers to examine, disrupt and eliminate inequities shaping the schooling experiences of girls and young women of color by creating bridges and pathways to their healing, well-being and post-secondary success.

#### **What We Do:**

Involve girls and young women of color (as well as the women of color and allies who teach, mentor, and support them) in restorative justice sister circles, mentored experiences, community-based leadership, youth-led advocacy, and opportunities for personal and cultural development through conference and international travel.

#### **Current Collaborators:**

Touro University Nevada, Peterson Academic Center (a Clark County School District alternative School enrolling students expelled from district middle and high schools) and community-based mentorship nonprofit Teaching and Uniting Ladies to Inspire Positive Success (TULIPS).

#### **Future Collaborators:**

Youth Serving Organizations, Mentors of Girls of Color, Women of Color Educators, Parents/Caregivers/Mothers/Othermothers of Girls of Color, and Allies in support of Educational Equity for Girls of Color willing to serve as collaborators and volunteers as we build a strategic network of support for Code Switch girls. Join our team!

# CODE SWITCH

## Restorative Justice for Girls of Color

### Volunteering With Code Switch

**WHO ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS?** Our volunteers and mentors are professional women of color and racial justice allies committed to mentoring, guiding, nurturing, supporting, and advocating for girls and young women of color. They are also committed to helping girls thrive and succeed in school and in life.

**WHAT IS THE COMMITMENT?** The success of our volunteer program is based on positive relationship building, stability and continuity. Our volunteers are asked to commit to Code Switch for a minimum of one 12 month period. Non-mentoring volunteers provide guidance and support behind the scenes. Activities may include supporting event planning, speaking at school-based events, implementing actionable solutions to equity challenges addressed in network meetings, and/or helping with office tasks. Volunteers committing to critical mentorship are expected to have two contacts per week with our girls (email, text, and online contacts apply). In-school mentors are asked to meet weekly with their mentee for one hour at the partner school site during and/or after the school day. Community-based mentors provide girls with academic, emotional, and cultural support outside of the school setting and are asked to accompany girls to planned mentored events and outings.

**WHY DOES IT WORK?** The mentored relationship helps girls develop healthy life and leadership skills which aids in establishing a strong foundation for future academic achievement, emotional and personal growth, and community-based advocacy on behalf of themselves and other youth. Events and circles employing restorative practices provide girls with culturally-centered, safe, and humanizing space to discuss and resolve conflicts connected to school and life. Combined, both increase the likelihood that participating girls thrive, graduate from high school and go on to pursue positive post-secondary pathways of success.

**WHAT WILL VOLUNTEERS NEED TO DO TO GET STARTED?** Volunteers are required to participate in a multi-tiered application and training process that includes an introduction to the Code Switch Network via the completion of online training modules, submitting an application, participating in an interview and passing a comprehensive background check. References are contacted as part of the background check. The completion of mentor training requirements with community partners (i.e. local school district, mentor providers, etc.), as well as participating in on-going training in the use of restorative practices is also required.

# ***BECOME A VOLUNTEER***

***CULTURAL MENTORS:*** Cultural mentors spend time with girls outside of the school setting. They serve as positive role models, as well as a trusted adviser, and are committed to keeping girls on track academically. Cultural mentors are also asked to accompany mentees to occasional outings and events sponsored by Code Switch and/or partnering mentorship organizations. A 12-month commitment and two contacts per week are required (email, phone, & online contacts encouraged).

***EDUCATOR MENTORS:*** Educator mentors provide girls and young women with the support and guidance necessary to achieve and thrive in school. They serve as school-based liaisons, positive role models, as well as a trusted adviser committed to keeping girls on track academically. They also work with other site-based stakeholders to employ culturally-centered restorative practices within the school setting. A 12-month commitment and two contacts per week are required (email, phone, & online contacts encouraged). If serving at a host site, educator mentors may also organize and facilitate weekly sister circles.

***YOUTH JUSTICE ADVOCATES:*** Youth justice advocates co-lead and facilitate weekly justice sessions held in community space. Circles are designed to help participating girls develop a strong sense of self-awareness and determination by guiding them to explore and unpack cultural and racial identity. They also introduce girls to theories connected to restorative practices, critical mentorship, and youth participatory action research (YPAR), as well as help them apply these concepts to actionable projects meant to make schools and communities more equitable and just. Justice Advocate volunteers should also expect to work directly with partnering mentorship organizations. An 8-month commitment is required (October - May).

***NETWORK ADVOCATES:*** Network Advocates are practitioners, researchers, education stakeholders, concerned community members, and community-based organizations inspired to take actionable steps to address the structural and institutional barriers girls attending local schools experience. In addition to working on behind-the-scenes tasks, they will form a strategically networked alliance called the Southern Nevada Black Girl Equity Collaborative charged with engaging data-driven problem solving to implement policy-based solutions to the challenges girls face.

***You can make the difference for a lifetime.  
BECOME A VOLUNTEER TODAY!***

# ***STARTING THE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS***

Serving as a Code Switch volunteer is a serious commitment. You will be serving as a role model and support system for a vulnerable, yet empowered youth population. Each volunteer brings collective knowledge, talents and life experiences to share with our girls, who are each on their own road of discovery and also bring their own unique knowledge, talents, and life experiences. We ask that you take pause and consider carefully your will to commit before completing the volunteer application process. You should also be sure you meet the criteria listed below. If you decide to join the Code Switch team, and we hope you will, know that we will be here to support you and look forward to the positive impact you will have in the life of a girl, as well as the amazing transformations we hope to inspire together.

## **Volunteer Criteria:**

- Self-identify as a professional woman of color, aged 25+ (and/or as a racial justice ally committed to advancing girl's rights)
- Strongly committed to racial equity
- Self-identify with, and willing to unapologetically engage in anti-racist advocacy
- Able to commit to 2 hours per week in volunteer/mentorship work
- Willing to complete an application and can successfully pay for and pass a comprehensive background check

## **Volunteer Commitments:**

- ✓ Serve as a positive role model.
- ✓ Take the lead in supporting participating girls through an on-going, one-to-one relationship.
- ✓ Help participating girls set goals and work toward accomplishing them.
- ✓ Build relationships with girls and the Code Switch team/network supporting them by planning and participating in Code Switch and partnering organizations' activities together.
- ✓ Continue to build knowledge about critical mentorship and restorative practices through attending monthly network meetings, as well as training and development events sponsored by Code Switch.
- ✓ Strive for mutual respect.

## **Volunteer Today:**

Email [codeswitchgrantteam@gmail.com](mailto:codeswitchgrantteam@gmail.com) with questions, or contact Dr. Tonya Walls at 702-777-4753 or [tonya.walls@tun.touro.edu](mailto:tonya.walls@tun.touro.edu).

***VOLUNTEER WITH CODE SWITCH TODAY***  
***WHAT TO DO TO GET STARTED***

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**Step 0: Complete Introductory Module:** Sign up to volunteer for Code Switch by registering with us through the [National Mentoring Partnership Site](https://www.mentoring.org) (<https://www.mentoring.org>) and we'll send you a link to our Volunteer Orientation and Training Canvas Course. Once you have completed the Introductory Module and made the decision to commit for a year, you are ready to start the process. The process includes each of the steps that follow. Let's get started!

**Step 1: Volunteer Application:** Potential Code Switch volunteers will provide information regarding personal history, education, employment, and experience with youth using the online application process.

**Step 2: Personal Interview:** Potential volunteers will be contacted by a Code Switch grant team member. They will participate in an interview before moving forward in the screening process.

**Step 3: Background Check:** Potential volunteers will agree to complete a multiple-step federal background check that may include participating in the local school district's volunteer and mentorship screening process. This could include needing to sign up as a volunteer with the local district's Search Soft system, completing the fingerprinting process, and signing up for the local school district's mentor program (application, interview with mentor program director, and participate in formal mentor training). There may be a fee for fingerprinting and background check (reimbursed by Code Switch with 12-month commitment and completion of full applicant process).

**Step 4: Background Check Verification:** Potential volunteers are required to submit proof of successfully completing a comprehensive Federal Background Check. This includes providing written proof of fingerprint and federal background check clearance. A cross-check with the National Sex Offender Registry is also necessary. Once clearances are received applicants are eligible for volunteer service.

**Step 5: Orientation:** Potential volunteers will participate in an online orientation module and follow-up interview (via zoom) to review important issues, skills, tips, and strategies to promote successful mentoring inside of local schools.

**Step 6: Code Switch Restorative Practices Training:** Participate in restorative practices training with Code Switch to develop culturally-centered knowledge and mentorship strategies unique to working with Girls of Color. Restorative topics may include but not be limited to: