



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 university-school-community action research grant developed to disrupt Black girl school 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).

What/Who We Are Seeking to Join Our Efforts:

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!



THE CODE SWITCH NETWORK

Building a Network of Advocacy to Advance Girls' Rights

The driving force behind the Code Switch grant project is its ability to develop and expand upon a network of collaborating partners, each committed to advancing the rights of girls, with primary goals focused on achieving racial equity in education for girls of color. Bringing together a dynamic network of individuals and organizations, Code Switch works in collaboration with network partners to develop pathways of well-being and success for the girls it, and its partnering organizations serve.

Volunteers are called upon to join the network, supporting its work through service to the full Code Switch collaborative. Founding members of the collaborative are listed below.

TOURO UNIVERSITY NEVADA (TUN): TUN is a university partner committed to preparing educators and medical practitioners who teach, lead, and serve for social justice. As the holder of the Code Switch grant, TUN guides the work to build network capacity and infrastructure through research. It also develops and organizes curriculum for restorative justice trainings, as well as in-school and community-based circles, and co-hosts and sponsors community events, youth-led action and conference/international travel.

TEACHING AND UNITING LADIES TO INSPIRE POSITIVE SUCCESS

(TULIPS): TULIPS is a non-profit mentorship organization committed to providing mentored experiences for young ladies aged 13-21. As a Code Switch partner, TULIPS provides participating girls with mentors, as well as access to leadership development, youth advocacy, and conference/event sponsorship opportunities.

PETERSON ACADEMIC CENTER (PAC): PAC serves as the primary school-site for Code Switch peace circles. Girls enrolled at Peterson participate in peace circles which serve as a safe space to heal harms caused by lived/schooling experiences, as well as work through and repair the harms they cause as a result of choices made. They also learn and practice culturally-centered conflict resolution skills and prepare to lead the facilitation of restorative justice peace circles in school and community spaces.

CODE SWITCH

Restorative Justice for Girls of Color

Volunteering With Code Switch

WHO ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS? Our volunteers are concerned, responsible professional women of color and their non-women of color allies committed to mentoring, guiding, nurturing, supporting, and advocating on behalf of the educational rights of girls and young women of color. Also committed to disrupting the inequities that girls and young women of color face in Pre-K-12 education, 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 grant year (May 1st – April 30th). Non-mentoring volunteers provide support with grant initiatives. Activities may include supporting event planning, speaking at school-based events, attending network meetings, and/or helping with office tasks. Volunteers committing to mentorship work are expected to have two contacts per week with our girls. In-school mentors are asked to meet weekly with their student 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 and are asked to accompany girls to planned mentored events and outings.

WHY DOES IT WORK? The mentorship relationship helps our girls to develop healthy life and leadership skills which help establish 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 safe, humanizing space to discuss and resolve conflicts connected to life and schooling experiences. 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 MENTORS NEED TO DO TO GET STARTED? Once the volunteer application is submitted, each applicant's references are contacted and a background and interview process is completed. All volunteers are required to participate in a three-tiered training process that includes an introduction to the Code Switch Network, the completion of mentor training requirements with community partners (i.e. local school district), and on-going training in the use of restorative practices.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

CULTURAL FEMTOR: Many of the Girls of Color we work with are at risk of dropping out of school and are in need of committed adult role-models who can help guide them in the right direction. Cultural Femtors are Professional Women of Color from the community, aged 25+, who help girls tap into the knowledge, cultural wealth, and power they already have living inside of them. They work with girls in community space, helping them develop a strong sense of self-determination by exploring and developing cultural consciousness and identity. Cultural Femtors also provide participating girls with the tools they need to be successful and thrive in and outside of school. These volunteers should also expect to work directly with partnering mentorship organizations.

SCHOOL BASED MENTOR: Many of our girls lack the supports and guidance necessary to achieve and thrive in school. Many also lack the necessary requirements to graduate. School based mentors are professional Women of Color from the community, aged 25+ volunteering to spend time with girls in a public middle and/or high school within the Code Switch partnership network. They serve as positive role models, as well as a trusted advisor committed to keeping girls on track academically, and providing them with the love, support, nurturing, tools and confidence they need to successfully graduate from high school.

EDUCATOR MENTOR: Like *School Based Mentors*, Educator Mentors provide girls and young women with the supports and guidance necessary to achieve and thrive in school. Specifically, Educator Mentors are Women of Color educators teaching, leading, and serving in a public middle and/or high school within the Code Switch partnership network. They serve as school-based liaisons, positive role models, as well as a trusted advisor committed to keeping girls on track academically. They also provide girls with the love, support, nurturing, tools and confidence they need to successfully graduate from high school.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE NETWORK ADVOCATE: These volunteers are committed to educational equity for Girls of color and work on behind the scenes organizing projects, including working with the Code Switch grant team, as well as collaborating network partner organizations to develop and implement grant and partner organization initiatives. Advocates also work with girls in community space to help guide youth advocates as they develop and implement youth-led projects.

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

HOW TO BECOME A MENTOR

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 by participating in the local school district's (CCSD) volunteer and mentorship screening processes. This includes signing 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.

Step 4: Background Check Verification: Potential volunteers will submit proof of completing the local district's mentorship and Search Soft applicant process, as well as written proof of fingerprint and federal background check clearance. Once clearances are received applicants are eligible for volunteer service.

Step 5: Orientation: Potential volunteers will participate in an orientation session with the local district to review important issues, skills, tips, and strategies to promote successful mentoring.

Step 6: Restorative Practices Training: Potential volunteers will 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:

- Self-identity work by reflecting on one's own privilege, assumptions, and biases about girls of color,
- the specific needs and issues faced by girls of color,
- oppression and social justice issues experienced by girls of color, and
- how to apply this knowledge to mentoring girls of color

Step 7: Weekly Volunteer/Mentored Sessions: Volunteers will be matched with tasks specific to application requests. Weekly mentoring sessions may occur during the school day, on the school campus after school, in community space during Monday drop-ins, each for one hour each week, and as a remote connection made via phone, video-call, email, text, or social media engagement.

Step 8: Project Evaluation: Volunteers, Mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians will complete an end of year evaluation to assess the effectiveness of volunteer service.

Other Engagement Opportunities: Volunteers are encouraged to attend special Code Switch events, as well as regularly scheduled restorative practices training sessions. Support sessions for volunteers and mentors are also held on the fourth Sunday of each month at Nevada Partners. Code Switch network meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month at Children's Sunrise Center on Desert Inn Drive. Please visit the [Code Switch calendar](#) on the website for detailed information.

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 we will have in the life of a girl, as well as the amazing transformations we will have and inspire together.

Volunteer Criteria:

- Self-identify as a Professional Woman of Color, aged 25+ (and/or as a non-Woman of Color ally committed to educational equity for Girls of Color, aged 25+)
- 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:

Click [HERE](#) to complete and submit a Code Switch application online and/or complete a paper application and submit it via email to codeswitchgrantteam@gmail.com. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact:

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