



# RECLAIMING OUR OPPORTUNITIES. TRANSFORMING STEREOTYPES. PROGRAM EVALUATION RESULTS 2017-2018

## What is Project ROOTS?

The mission of Project ROOTS is to provide a quality group mentoring program that influences positive youth development by allowing students to learn, explore, achieve and discover through social and emotional learning and academic enrichment activities. Project ROOTS was implemented through a partnership between San Diego Unified School District, Project Concern International (PCI), and the San Diego District Attorney's Office-Prevention and Intervention Programs at 12 San Diego Unified PrimeTime sites in 2018. The Boys and Girls Clubs- Encanto Branch has been an implementing partner since 2009.



"This program is a pathway to a healthier community with less domestic violence, sexual abuse and gang violence."

-Summer Stephan,  
San Diego County District Attorney

## The Curriculum

The Project ROOTS curriculum (formerly known as the Girls Only! and Boys Only! toolkits), is a gender-sensitive, group mentoring program that aims to address the root causes of gender-based violence and unhealthy relationships that is based on the social cognitive theory and positive youth development framework. The toolkit aims to build protective factors in children to build their resilience to the rising threats of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), sexual harassment, bullying and negative cultural influences that perpetuate abuse and violence in our society. They are brought to question the cultural normalization of violence, their association to peers who tolerate it, the norms that valorize power, and the violence that surrounds them at home and/or in their community.



- ➔ 1-hour session / 2 times per week
- ➔ Target age is 8 – 13 years old
- ➔ Average of 20 kids per group
- ➔ 1 trained, certified facilitator
- ➔ 74 activities to choose from!



Sarah was a quiet girl who didn't talk about anything for months. One day, the group started to talk about jail and prison. Half of the kids had parents or relatives in jail and the group started to cry. When they started to see each other cry, they yelled out "group hug!!" and they all started to embrace and say, "I love you." Towards the end, Sarah started to cry, everyone froze. She disclosed, "My brother is in jail all of this year and I miss him. And it was on my birthday when the cops came and took him."

*\*Name and photo changed for confidentiality.*

**Project ROOTS meets the following Health Education Content Standards for California:**  
Injury Prevention & Safety  
Mental, Emotional, and Social Health  
Growth, Development, and Sexual Health



75% of transactions for illegal sex are online



80% of participants are using social media; and half have at least 2 social media accounts

10 was the average age of participants

## 2017 - 2018 Evaluation Results



100%

of participants knew whom to go to for help with a problem

81%

increased their knowledge about sex trafficking tactics

100% of participants feel as though their Project ROOTS facilitator cares about them

70% are better able tell their friends "no" when they don't want to do something, after participating in the project

65% improved their knowledge about what consent means



## How has Project ROOTS changed you?



"You want to make a difference? You want to improve the behavior? [...] 70% of those girls were in the office all the time. Even the principal said, 'I haven't been seeing you in the office lately, what's going on?' I go, 'It's the girls club.' It will help with behavior, it'll give the girls a voice and that's how they feel, that they don't have a voice."

- Project ROOTS Facilitator

"It shows me to be brave and be ready for anything that comes in my way."

"It changed me to be mature, brave, and strong."

"Believing that I am special in many ways."

"Because now I know how to be me and let no one stop me."

"It made me be a stronger girl by keeping my body safe."

"It made me stronger by learning about others."

"By being aware of what's around me [and] what's happening."



### QUESTIONS?

**Bianca Morales-Egan, PCI**  
Sr. Program Manager, Human Trafficking Prevention  
bmorales-egan@pciglobal.org