Influence

2006 Founded in the wake of Hurricane Katrina as Essence CARES by Susan L. Taylor, while Chief Editor of ESSENCE magazine, today the National CARES Mentoring Movement has local affiliates in 58 U.S. cities and 26 states across the nation.

2008 CARES learns that while 3 million children are being mentored nationwide, 15 million remain in need. CARES begins developing a group-mentoring model to support the multitudes being harmed by poverty, exposure to violence, ill-equipped schools and neglect.

2009 CARES forms a Brain Trust of 60 of the finest minds—scholars, activists, wellness professionals, faith-based and business leaders, as well as artists, who work collaboratively for a year to write A New Way Forward: Healing What’s Hurting Black America (ANWF), a 149-page manual that outlines the crises in our communities and a holistic resolution.

Impact

2010 With the support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Rep. Barbara Lee, the U.S. Department of Education and Fannie Mae, A New Way Forward training program is launched in Oakland, CA, the teachings are then passed along through large-scale teleconference seminars to thousands of potential mentors.

2013 Evaluators, with support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, report major challenges of parents and guardians. Most are deeply overwhelmed by joblessness and other significant life disrupts. In partnership with our Atlanta CARES Affiliate, National CARES begins collaboration with Morehouse School of Medicine and the United Way and Urban League of Atlanta to map out a transformational workforce-readiness and emotional-support program to advance marginalized parents.

2016 University for Parents is launched in February with 30 community partners in Atlanta. The life-transforming pilot program, which is being evaluated and referred to produce a replicable model, represents the organization’s commitment and determination to create a web of support that breaks the cycle of poverty that plagues our children and families.

2017, 2018 and beyond Leaders across all of our 58 Affiliates are being trained to receive and replicate The Rising, and its partner program, University for Parents. With arms and arms linked, we will rebuild the village and create the beloved community!

while 3 million children are being mentored nationwide, 15 million are still in need.

2014 The Rising is extended to include Pathways Academy, a school in Detroit for pregnant and parenting teens. A major evaluation of all four Rising sites is undertaken, which determines that 81 percent of Rising students have a markedly increased sense of self-worth and hope, and 91 percent are noticeably better at managing their emotions.

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THE CRISIS
THESE ARE THE FACTS:

• 40 percent of all Black children in the U.S.A are born into poverty

• 86 percent of Black children do not read or do math at grade level

• Black children are suspended from school five times more often than White children—starting in kindergarten

• Black school children are arrested for minor infractions

• Our girls ages 13 to 24 account for the majority of new HIV infections

• Black school children are arrested for minor infractions—starting in kindergarten

• Suicide rates have doubled for Black children, whose traumas are

PERSEVERANT POVERTY—a vestige of 300 years of enslavement, Jim Crow practices and discrimination—is destroying the lives of millions of African American children. Decades of discriminatory public policies and criminalizing sentencing have caused devastating rates of over-incarceration, tearing families and communities asunder, sweeping parents and their incomes away from their children, destroying communities and shattering young people’s hopes and dreams.

A SOLUTION
COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

BUILDING CLUSTERS OF SUPPORTED SCHOOLS AND PARENTS CREATES A COMMUNITY TRANSFORMED

THE RISING:
ELEVATING EDUCATION, EXPECTATIONS AND SELF-ESTEEM=

An innovative, curriculum-based group-mentoring initiative, The Rising advances students in under-resourced families and high schools, instilling the determination and critical-thinking skills needed to avoid painful, predictable futures. The Rising helps heal traumas from unrelenting violence and often hunger, homelessness, neglect and hopelessness.

The Rising unearths a deep sense of self-worth, confidence and hope for the future, recognized as predictors of students’ success.

The whole-school, group-mentoring model is designed to transform school climate and ensure that our young have the support needed to graduate from high school prepared to succeed in their careers and life.

The Rising’s highly interactive curriculum is culturally anchored and consciousness shifting. Students meet weekly during the school day in intimate, single-gender Wellness Mentoring Circles, and monthly in larger whole-school assemblies. Programming is facilitated by CARES-trained professionals and mentors. Community partners offer wrap-around services to children and their families. National CARES, through our 58 local CARES Affiliates, recruits mentors and is replicating The Rising across the nation—offering lifelines to safe harbor and stability for our struggling children and their parents throughout the country.