



# PACE CENTER FOR GIRLS, INC.

Reach & Day Program Expansions

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# **I. Executive Summary**

## **The Problem PACE Seeks to Solve**

Throughout America, millions of girls grow up in poverty and in environments where family dysfunction, crime and violence are ever-present, and hope and opportunity are hard to find. These are the girls at risk of dropping out of school, substance abuse and involvement in the criminal justice system. Today, nearly 30 percent of the one million juveniles arrested annually are girls and their share of arrests, detainment, and court cases has steadily increased over the past two decades. Unfortunately, their stories remain unchanged and include histories of victimization, including physical and sexual abuse. Most girls are typically nonviolent and pose little or no risk to public safety. Further, their involvement with the juvenile justice system usually does more harm than good.

## **PACE Model and Aspirations for Impact**

Three decades ago the PACE Center for Girls opened its doors and a movement for girls was born. At the heart of the movement is the belief that all girls, no matter their circumstances, deserve the opportunity to live a life define by responsibility, dignity, serenity and grace.

PACE has a successful and proven program model, that since its inception, has changed the life trajectory of more than 40,000 girls across Florida. Today's PACE girls are tomorrow's mothers, workforce and community leaders and when they find success at home, in school and in their communities - they break generational cycles of poverty and violence and become a force for social and economic good across our country.

PACE Center for Girls serves girls across a continuum of need, from prevention and early intervention, to intensive intervention and diversion from systems involvement. As a result of PACE, girls transform their lives by developing critical life and academic skills and graduate from high school, enroll in post-secondary education, stay out of the criminal justice system and obtain living-wage employment.

Over the past several years, PACE expanded its successful Center model to include PACE Reach, providing much needed counseling, case management and mental health services to girls beyond the walls of the PACE Centers. In partnership with schools, community organizations, and court systems, PACE Reach has proven impact, provides a vehicle to serve more girls, broadens the profile of the girls we serve and has a lower cost per girl when compared to the Center Program. PACE currently serves 2,800 girls a year in 19 Florida locations. Within five years, PACE plans to serve 5,000 girls annually and expand into two more states. The 10-year vision is to serve 10,000 girls a year and have a large enough geographic footprint to positively influence the criminal justice, child welfare, and education systems.

## **Five-Year Initiatives**

PACE has developed a growth plan to support achievement of the five-year goals of serving more girls and to position the organization for longer-term sustainable growth. Its plan is grounded in the reality of where the organization is today and incorporates development of critical capabilities and capacity to deliver quality at a larger scale. This plan includes six initiatives:

- **Initiative #1 - Strengthening the Delivery of Services:** PACE will invest in model evaluation, refinement, codification, and fidelity to increase impact and support growth to serve more girls.
- **Initiative #2 – Expanding the Model in Existing Geographies:** PACE will add Reach to existing Florida Centers to serve an additional 2,000 girls annually.
- **Initiative #3 – Expanding the Model into New Geographies:** PACE will open programs in Georgia to serve 400 girls annually, targeting Macon, Atlanta, and Savannah.
- **Initiative #4 - Piloting a New Model in New Geographies:** As part of a city-wide collaborative, PACE will launch Reach in New York City to serve 500 girls annually.
- **Initiative #5 - Influencing Systems:** PACE will influence systems change through federal and state advocacy and by building visibility and creating demand for its services.
- **Initiative #6 - Growing Capabilities and Capacity:** PACE will build its brand capacity for new, business development, and revenue development capability and build out internal programs, operational supports, and infrastructure to meet its growth needs.

PACE also will pursue a learning agenda that evaluates its program model, influence strategy, revenue model, and the role of headquarters. Planned initiatives have been staged to ensure success and sustain quality delivery of the model. PACE has also prioritized initiatives and components and will be reviewing and adjusting the plan in the event there are insufficient funds to pursue the full plan.

#### **Financial Implications of the Five-Year Initiatives**

Planned initiatives will require \$15 million in investments over five years. Assuming annual expense growth at 5 percent due to price and salary adjustments, PACE’s pro forma budget would increase to \$75 million in FY22.

PACE must significantly grow its ability to raise revenue in order to achieve financial sustainability over 5 years. This includes growing private funding to \$17 million by FY22, holding “other” revenues flat (in-kind and investment income), and using current public revenues forecasts. PACE is seeking \$15 million in growth capital to support \$3 million in one-time capacity building, \$1M in program expenses, \$5M in capital expenditures and \$6 million in building development capability.


#### **Conclusions**

PACE’s growth plan is ambitious and will require managing risk. Cited risks include potential challenges related to model fidelity, quality of outcomes, funding model effectiveness, change management and organizational culture. PACE has proposed to manage such risks by emphasizing capacity-building initiatives and a learning agenda.

PACE’s five-year plan will allow the organization to serve 5,000 girls annually and set the stage for reaching its 10-year goal of serving 10,000 girls each year. PACE will move from a Florida-centric organization to one with the organizational capacity, codified model, credibility and “pull” it needs for national scale.



**Reducing Risk.**  
Serving More Girls in  
Pinellas County.


 Pace Center for Girls serves around 200 “at-risk” girls annually in Pinellas County through PACE Day and PACE Reach programs. Yet, at-risk girls in many parts of the county don’t have access to PACE services and many girls need prevention services by the time they enter middle school and they are not receiving them.

## Why Pace?

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PACE Center for Girls is an important prevention, diversion and early intervention model specifically responsive to the needs of girls and is the only program in Pinellas County that is recognized as among the most effective programs in the country for keeping girls out of the juvenile justice system.

The foundation of PACE is based on creating a gender-responsive culture, providing a safe environment that celebrates girls, and providing services that fit how girls learn and develop. PACE uses a holistic, strength-based and asset building model which trains staff to respond effectively to both the strengths and the challenges that the girls and young women in the program display. At PACE, girls can remediate and restore age-appropriate grade levels, while simultaneously addressing their mental health, social, family and emotional needs and challenges.

 Pace Center for Girls has been transforming the lives of girls in Pinellas County for more than 20 years. In that time, we have helped over 3,000 girls achieve her potential and celebrate a life defined by responsibility, dignity, serenity and grace.

## Why Now?

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One of the major challenges facing Pinellas County is that which occurs at the juxtaposition of poverty, mental health and substance abuse issues, and the concomitant societal and behavioral responses to these challenges. PACE Center for Girls addresses these problems head on by working preventatively with girls and teens as they enter their formative years and are identified as being 'at risk' of delinquency and trauma. However, although we have successfully helped girls transform their lives for over 20 years in Pinellas County, our work does not reach all the girls who need it or who could benefit from it in the county. To do our part in stemming the tide of trauma, poverty and lives lost to substance abuse and incarceration, PACE Center for Girls in Pinellas County believes that now is the time to expand its cost-effective center based and community-based mental health programming to better serve girls in our county.

## Scope of Work

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### PACE Day Program

The PACE Day program takes a preventive approach to help at risk girls between the ages of 11-17 stay in school and avoid involvement, or deeper involvement, with the juvenile justice system. PACE provides academic and social services during regular school hours in a safe, supportive environment tailored to girls' needs, with an emphasis on relationships, relevant life skills, and the cultivation of girls' strengths. A low staff-to-participant ratio allows for individual attention and an awareness of each girl's history of trauma. Recognizing that the girls' problems are often intertwined with family and peer relationships, either as cause or result, PACE strives to engage families and the larger community in the girls' care.

Girls served in the Day program have multiple identified risk factors and are therefore considered at risk. These risk factors include trauma, abuse and neglect, family instability, poverty, parental incarceration, academic underachievement, untreated mental and physical health and judicial involvement. Academic underachievement and school failure make it unproductive for these girls to remain enrolled in their zoned school. Research indicates that youth who possess certain risk factors have an increased likelihood of becoming delinquent. A thorough risk assessment is the approach utilized by PACE to identify the most effective interventions, thus providing opportunities to introduce protective factors that mitigate those risks. A comprehensive strength based

The length of stay for girls in the PACE Day program is 12-15 months during which time they remediate and restore age-appropriate grade levels, while simultaneously addressing their social, family, emotional and mental health needs and challenges.

Currently the services that are rendered in the Day program include a thorough assessment of the risk and protective factors and needs of each girl and interventions ranging from case management services, supportive counseling, crisis intervention, parental engagement, social and emotional learning and mental health therapy. All interventions are specifically tailored to the needs of each girl and are delivered onsite at PACE Pinellas.

Expanded services in the center program would create an additional masters level counselor position that would offer case management, crisis intervention, supportive counseling, parental engagement and social and emotional learning.

### PACE Reach Program

As a community-based early intervention program, Reach provides mental health intervention and support services that help girls transform their lives and avoid costly court or system involvement while being maintained in their zone schools.

Girls who participate in the Reach program have significant identified risk factors and high ACE scores (Adverse Childhood Experiences). Girls in the Reach program have experienced traumatic events such as neglect, parental imprisonment, abuse and other trauma experiences that impair healthy development. Family instability, poverty, academic problems, untreated mental and physical health needs are also very common. Most girls in the Reach program are experiencing mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse disorders, stress disorders and a host of behavioral disorders. Many have untreated neurodevelopmental challenges as well.

PACE Reach's clinical programming includes a thorough assessment process designed to address the needs and challenges of at-risk, teenage girls, a comprehensive and holistic schedule of interventions, and outcome measurement and evaluation. Clinical interventions are provided by a licensed therapist on an intensity level determined by individual treatment planning. Clinical interventions are individualized, gender-responsive, trauma informed, and strength-based. They also include case management, group therapy, and family engagement.




Currently, two full-time Reach therapists serve two Pinellas County middle schools: Pinellas Park Middle and Dunedin Highland Middle. Within this structure, PACE Reach has the capacity to serve 90 girls per year. Length of treatment is generally between 6-12 months, with the optimal length of the program being somewhere between 5-8 months. In addition to the (relatively) small number of girls served by the current Reach model in Pinellas County, at-risk girls are only able to access Reach therapy services if they attend one of the host schools. This leaves approximately 75-85% of the girls in Pinellas County who have already had contact with the police and well over 90% of the 'at-risk' girls in Pinellas County without access to gender-responsive and trauma-informed interventions<sup>1</sup>.

Currently in our community, girls and their families with intense needs and high risk have few to no options outside of short-term crisis centers and hospital programs. Some of them will qualify for and be able to attend PACE's Day program in Pinellas Park. However, many live too far away or are not able to access the program for a variety of other reasons. Without adequate, viable options near them, in their community, these at-risk girls continue to spiral down and eventually end up out of school, as a teenage mother, incarcerated, or as a statistic. Providing proven, cost-effective early intervention for these at-risk girls just makes good sense for Pinellas County.

PACE Center for Girls, Pinellas is proposing to expand its community-based Reach program to two additional school sites through partnership with Pinellas County Public Schools.


### **Target Communities and Number and Population to be served**

Based upon data provided by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) and the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB), PACE has selected target communities with the highest rates of juvenile crime and risky behavior and the densest population of at-risk girls, aged 11-17. The following three target municipalities were selected:

-  St. Petersburg
-  Largo
-  Clearwater

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Within these larger municipalities, the community areas of South St. Pete (St. Petersburg), XXX (Largo) and YYY (Clearwater) have the most need that can be addressed by PACE Reach. These community areas were selected based upon crime, delinquency and at-risk behavior data and were further selected by density of services/service providers, access to PACE Center for Girls Day Program, or proximity/overlap with zone school enrollment area of schools where Reach program already exists (Pinellas Park, Dunedin, TBD in St. Petersburg).

 Target Numbers to be served: annual number of girls for Reach and Day Program is 400.

## Expected Outcomes

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PACE aspires to transform girls' lives, changing their trajectory in visible ways. What does "transformation" mean?

-  Girls are self-aware, self-empowered and resilient. They are able to choose a path, set goals, and make progress towards those goals.
-  Girls are self-sufficient. They have developed a "toolkit" to enable independence and sustainability.
-  Girls have positive relationships with themselves and others. Girls self-advocate, self-care, and have positive relationships with peers and with adults.


PACE holds itself accountable for three, short-term outcomes:

1. Girls are **not involved with the criminal justice system**. PACE Reach has historically produced an excellent recidivism rate of only 7%.
2. Girls are **on track in school**. Girls in PACE Reach show a 25% decrease in behavioral and emotional disaffection in school, translating to improved school engagement and an increased likelihood of remaining in school and on track. We anticipate that 70-75% of girls enrolled in PACE Reach will successfully complete the program and less than 2% will need to enroll in the more intensive PACE Day program.
3. Girls maintain **strong social-emotional health and well-being**. Girls enrolled in PACE Reach show significant improvements in their overall mental health as well as in family relations, peer relations, social skills and leisure/recreation activities. 80% of girls enrolled in PACE Reach demonstrate improvements in at least four different scales of the POSIT (Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers), measuring emotional and behavioral health.

These will lead to long-term outcomes, including:

-  Girls **graduate high school** or obtain a GED and **enroll in college**.



 Girls earn a **living wage** & maintain **fulfilling employment**.

**List of partnering organizations and associated roles**

Department of Juvenile Justice – Funder and Referral Source

Pinellas County Public School – Funder and Referral Source

Juvenile Probation Office – Referral Source

Juvenile Diversion Program – Referral Source

Project Aware- Community Partner and Referral Source

**PACE Experience in grant writing**

Pace Center for Girls, Inc. has over 20 years of experience in successfully writing and receiving grants. To date, the Pinellas location has received over twenty million dollars in grants. In addition, we have a grant writing team that includes experts of 19 Executive Directors throughout the state of Florida that collaborate on local and statewide grant efforts, as well as a dedicated grant writer at our headquarters in Jacksonville, Florida.

**Match**

The organization is fiscally sound and will use the following annual resources to meet the match requirement.

DJJ grant	\$700,000
FTE funds	\$300,000
JWB funds	\$ 90,000
Unrestricted/Fundraising	\$250,000
In-kind donations	\$180,000

## Budget

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### Personnel Expenses

Therapist (F/T) 2 positions	\$96,000
Day Program Substance Counselor	\$45,000
Fringe Benefits (25%)	\$35,250

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Total Personnel \$176,250

### Non-Personnel Related Expenses

Program Supplies	\$10,000
Travel	\$5,000
Professional Dev.	\$7,500
Indirect - 16.5%	\$3,279

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Total Non-Personnel Related Exp. \$25,779

Total Budget \$202,079

**Total Request \$202,079**