

overview

DESCRIPTION: Vision Regeneration is shifting the cultural norms of at-risk youth ages 10-17 in order to eliminate violent and destructive behaviors, helping them turn to lives that are productive, rewarding and spiritually enriched. Vision Regeneration offers school-based intervention programs to selected schools in the city of Dallas; after-school and summer prevention programs in two Dallas neighborhoods with the highest juvenile crime rates; and juvenile offender programs to youth in Dallas County. Recognizing and leveraging the powerful role cultural influences play in the lives of youth, Vision Regeneration has also launched a social network, PositiveXchange, and broadcasts a TV show to engage youth in a positive way.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY: Vision Regeneration is seeking to scale its model and become a \$1.2 million organization, which represents an increase of \$500,000 by 2012, to deepen their existing connection with at-risk youth in Dallas ISD and to expand to new schools in order to re-shape the culture within the toughest neighborhoods in Dallas.

NEED FOR CHANGE

The costs of youth violence are intolerable, and we are all paying the price – in terms of taxpayer burden to keep youth behind bars, lost productivity and opportunities for incarcerated youth, deterred economic development in high crime neighborhoods, and the physical and emotional costs to victims of violence. Youth violence is plaguing Dallas communities:

- Among 10 to 24 year-olds, violence is the leading cause of death for African Americans and the second leading cause of death for Hispanics in Dallas.
- In 2010, the chance of being a victim of violence in Pleasant Grove, a high-crime neighborhood where Vision Regeneration works, is about 1 in 18 - four times higher than Dallas overall (1 in 73).
- In 2010, the murder rate in Pleasant Grove is .21 murders per 1000 residents, which is almost twice as high as the civilian casualty rate in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan during the same time period.

Youth who live in violent neighborhoods, such as Pleasant Grove, focus on near term survival which puts them at-risk for joining gangs and engaging in criminal activity.

OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

Vision Regeneration respects the powerful influence that youth culture and neighborhood leaders exert on youth behavior. Vision Regeneration’s uniqueness lies in harnessing this power to change youth ideas and behavior. Three aspects of Vision Regeneration’s model are the keys to its success:

- Vision Regeneration doesn’t wait for youth to want to change. They meet youth where they are, at school, after school and in the juvenile system, engaging them in a new direction. Their approach has been recognized by Dallas County and Dallas ISD.
- Vision Regeneration recruits “urban specialists” who have experienced the violence and environment that its youth confront. They have immediate credibility and are not afraid to go deep into a youth’s world.
- Vision Regeneration goes beyond traditional program engagement by shifting the predominant cultural ideas that challenge urban cultural norms and reinforces positive ideals through traditional media, online platforms and other urban entertainment opportunities.

SOCIAL INNOVATION IN ACTION – THE VISION REGENERATION MODEL

Vision Regeneration achieves results through a strategy of intrusive programs, cultural invasion, and collaboration which elevate the cause and advance the movement.

1. VIOLENCE FREE ZONES: Urban specialists engage and mentor students identified as leaders who are negatively impacting the school climate at 17 Dallas ISD campuses.

2. GANG INTERVENTION: Urban specialists, who were once gang members and/or ex-offenders, engage and mentor Dallas County youth offenders to encourage them to transform their beliefs and values.

3. AFTER-SCHOOL & SUMMER PROGRAMS: Vision Regeneration works in Pleasant Grove and South Oak Cliff, two zip codes with Texas’ highest juvenile crime rate, to provide programming that teaches positive behaviors and life skills.

4. SOCIAL MEDIA MOVEMENT: Today’s popular cultural context of drugs, gangs, sex, and negative culture influences diverts youth from their potential. Vision Regeneration uses both traditional forms of media and social media to shift these messages to the importance of education, community, humanity, and faith.

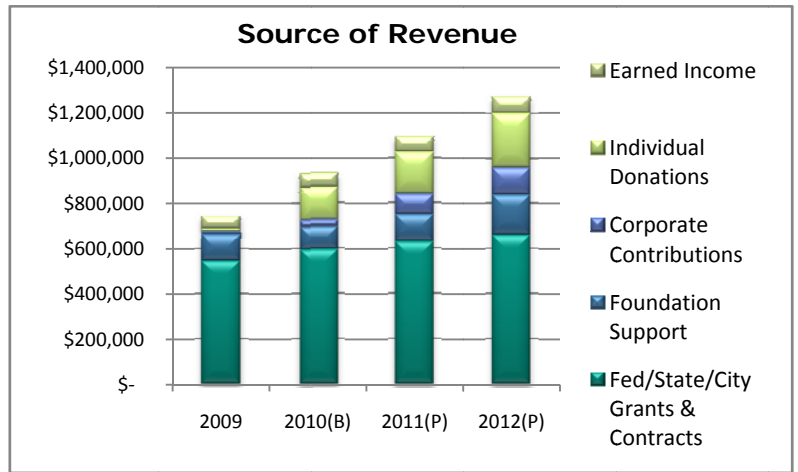


FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Vision Regeneration has had strong support through government contracts from Dallas County and Dallas ISD and seeks to diversify its revenue base principally through individual donations and corporate support. Over the next two years, Vision Regeneration is seeking to expand its annual revenue from \$700,000 to \$1.2 million, representing nearly 65% growth in its budget.

This growth will fund:

- Increasing direct student leader contact in each DISD school with additional urban specialists;
- Expanding to additional schools and community centers;
- Better equipping staff with the latest training and equipment; and
- Launching a cause campaign to end urban youth violence.



GOALS AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

PROGRAM AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH: Below is a summary of the key measures Vision Regeneration will track to demonstrate progress, capture lessons learned and make course corrections as needed. *Note: Fiscal year is Jan 1-December 31.*

	FY 2009	FY 2010 (P)	FY 2011 (P)
Program Performance			
Number of youth served	540	570	600
Number of registered youth through social media networks	350	700	2000
Number of violence-free zones	18	22	26
Number of community-based partnerships	9	15	35
Organizational Health/Capacity-Building			
Conduct formal evaluation of programs	--	Secure funding	Launch
Launch cause marketing campaign	--	Plan/Secure funding	Launch
Increase number of corporate partners	5 partners	9 partners	14 partners
Increase percentage of individual donors as part of total revenue	2%	5%	10%

SOCIAL IMPACT: Currently, Vision Regeneration uses the metrics below to measure its impact on youth in Dallas. Vision Regeneration is seeking additional funding to conduct a formal evaluation of their unique model and provide a deeper understanding of its programs' long-term social impact.

IMPACT Indicators	
Percentage of youth in after-school program who do not enter the juvenile justice system (4 times higher than same population at large)	98%
Percentage of successful discharges from Juvenile Probation (compared to 39% average for Dallas Juvenile Department)	49%
Percentage of youth carrying a weapon to Violence Free Zone schools (compared to 18% average in Dallas ISD)	0%

invest

Ways to Invest: Financial

- \$50,000 Become a lead sponsor of PositiveXchange's campaign to end youth violence.
- \$35,000 Match government support for summer 9-week program serving 150 youth
- \$16,000 Sponsor annual fuel costs for program transportation
- \$ 2,000 Provide stipend for undergraduate/graduate intern

Ways to Invest: In-kind

- Technology and advertising/marketing assistance for PositiveXchange
- Food for program and events
- Provide corporate-supported employees to assist staff in programs
- Host a "Friends with Vision" party to help cultivate interested donors