

An abstract artwork featuring the word "BRAVE" in large, white, block letters. The background is a dense, chaotic pattern of splattered and dripped paint in various colors, including blue, red, black, and pink, on a light-colored surface. The artwork is set against a background of blue and red fabric.

BRAVE

Loyola University Chicago BRAVE Project

Advisory Board Newsletter SPRING/SUMMER 2020

Authored By:
Dr. Caleb Kim, Principal Investigator
BRAVE@luc.edu

Jessica Rosenthal, LCSW, Project Manager
jrosenthal3@luc.edu

**Artwork by Centro Romero BRAVE students, Summer 2020*



LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives



Response to COVID-19

Since mid-March 2020, the BRAVE Project has responded to the pandemic by modifying programs and budgets in order to accommodate the changing social situation and emerging needs of youth and their families. BRAVE youth were offered virtual programming while they were sheltered at home and enrolled in e-learning. Agencies replaced in-person programming with weekly virtual/online case management services, virtual group work programs, and opportunities for youth to connect and socialize. Some youth were offered incentives (e.g. gift cards) to participate in the programs and in some cases, home visits occurred for delivering necessities packages and to perform wellness checks. Additionally, efforts were made by BRAVE sites to partner with local community entities such as Friends of Lincoln Park, 40 Acres, After School Matters, LUC, and the local Alderman to provide additional resources such as food deliveries, tutoring/academic support, and telehealth therapy. Furthermore, BRAVE sites have used various methods to make contact with BRAVE students. The majority of enrolled BRAVE students were contacted on weekly basis for wellness checks. Remote check-ins and food deliveries will continue until schools re-open.

Year 3, Fourth Quarter Summary

As of June 2020, there are approximately 60 enrolled youth who will continue in BRAVE across all agencies. During the fourth quarter period, April-June 2020, there were 173 individual encounters with these youth. Throughout this period, agency partnerships with community resources provided one-on-one training, education, consultation, and/or case management, group education/training, and language interpretation or other verbal language assistance. When the fourth quarter data was analyzed, changes were seen between the first and second waves of surveys for the intervention youth including a decrease in a) number of times in physical fights, b) physical fights on school property, c) times anyone forced them to do sexual things, and d) being physically hurt in a dating situation. Additionally, data in the intervention youth indicated the BRAVE program is effective in reducing internalizing behaviors. Further analysis is being conducted and will continuously be shared.

Modifications and/or Innovative Strategies for BRAVE Program Continuation

- Partner agencies will offer a hybrid of virtual and in-person programs.
- Programs (virtual and in-person) are focusing on improving youth retention and rebuilding their community engagement through service projects, trust building activities, and socioemotional discussions regarding interpersonal relationships, current events (COVID-19, Racial discrimination, Police violence, domestic abuse) and educating students on the effects of these topics both individually and on a societal level.
- BRAVE partner agencies will continue outreach to students who are unable to come to site in-person due to fears or transportation limitations.

- Agencies will continue to share resources with BRAVE families who may be experiencing domestic violence and/or who need safety measures regarding COVID-19.
- Monetary incentives are being considered to encourage youth participation.
- Parent social events and focus group interviews will be offered virtually.
- Data collection has been implemented remotely. Youth received surveys via US Mail or electronically.

BRAVE Plans for 2020/2021

- BRAVE will continue to offer planned programs in Year 4 including case management, group work, tutoring, field/site visits, mental health services, and community building and policy making.
- Agency programming will be delivered either online or in-person in the fall 2020, depending on the situation of COVID-19, CPS e-learning plan, and CDC guidelines.
- Loyola University Chicago will develop and implement BRAVE programming for agencies that support the continuation of previously successful community outreach programs, violence prevention and academic improvement.
- There will be a reduced number of MSW interns and college volunteers assigned to partner agencies due to online classes and changes in the in-person field practicum policy of LUC School of Social Work in the 2020 academic year. Agencies will have the option to hire additional part-time staff if their need increases.
- BRAVE tentatively plans to hold an Advisory Board meeting mid fall

Participating Agencies

By the Hand Club For Kids - Englewood

Contact Person: Eddie Wilson, Site Director
 8301 S. Damen Ave., Chicago, IL 60620
 Office: (773) 733-9837
eddie.wilson@bythehand.org

Centro Romero

Contact Person: Grace Christian, BRAVE Site Coordinator
 6216 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60660
 Office: (773) 508-5300
g.christian@centroromero.org

Lincoln Park High School

Contact Person: Chana Matthews, BRAVE Site Coordinator
 2001 N. Orchard Street, Chicago, IL 60614
cmatthews3@luc.edu

Vietnamese Association of Illinois

Contact Person: Rickele Coy, BRAVE Site Coordinator
 5110 North Broadway Street, Chicago, IL 60640
 Office: (773) 728-3700
rickele.coy@hnvi.org

** BRAVE at Centro Romero has been focusing on rebuilding community and group identity. The cover image depicts a summer art project focused on teamwork, trust, and play. The BRAVE students, majority of which were high school aged, took a large canvas and wrote "BRAVE" on it with tape, then primed the canvas over the tape. A few days later, after it had dried, BRAVE students filled balloons with paint and water. They then pinned the filled balloons to the canvas and pinned the canvas to a large piece of cardboard to hold it upright. Staff and students took turns throwing darts at the balloons. With much excitement and anticipation, the students watched as the paint exploded all over the canvas.. The next day, the tape and balloon pieces were peeled off, revealing a group family name of "BRAVE" as well as demonstrating a moto, "Together we are BRAVE at Centro."*