



Making a Difference: Your Support in Action

September 2025 Newsletter

Welcome to our bi-annual newsletter, offering a snapshot of your support in action. Through your generosity, the dedicated team of clinicians, clergy, companions, artists, and support staff at the Social Impact Center are able to foster post-traumatic healing for adults, youth, and families. Building these programs and innovating toward improved outreach and support is attributable to your generosity – a commitment that we do not take for granted. Here is a snapshot of recent accomplishments, with our gratitude:

Youth Exchange - Beyond the Badge 2-Part Series

In partnership with the YMCA Roxbury and the Boston Police Department, the CJP Youth Exchange program hosted a two-part series, Beyond the Badge: Youth and Police in Community – Connect, Create & Converse. The series was designed to engage youth with local police in real conversations and fun activities to transform fractured and often traumatic relationships by rebuilding community and trust. The first session, Real Talk! Dinner and Dialogue, hosted close to 50 youth from our Youth Exchange program ages 13 to 17, sharing a meal with local police for honest conversations. Dialogue questions from police to youth included: “Do you think youth should be involved in decisions about safety or policing? Why or why not? And if so, how?” Questions from youth to police included: “What is the hardest part of your job that people don’t know about? What should I do if I feel unfairly treated by a police officer?” The second session, Breaking the Boundaries: Hoops & Hobbies, attended by an equal or greater number of youth, focused on team engagement where youth could choose to play basketball or engage in art or music with local officers. Our hope is to make this an annual event.



Young Men’s Group After Care Program

We are currently designing a framework to extend the Young Men’s Group through an after-care program. The Young Men’s Group curriculum is built specific to the distinct needs of Black males, creating a scaffolding essential to reclaiming identity, learning tools for emotional regulation, and creating pathways toward healing and thriving. According to a recent study reported by the American Psychological Association, “Effectively addressing the mental health of Black men and boys requires innovative solutions that are grounded in an understanding of the many issues affecting men’s health, informed by scientific rigor and data, and driven by the community and the men and boys whose health we are trying to improve.” Having pioneered a culturally responsive, peer-led model of trauma support that centers the healing experiences of Black males who are often excluded from traditional mental health services, CJP is poised to address this critical need. We’re looking to add more sponsors to launch this program; contact Kathleen Brittan, kbrittan@rpcsic.org or 617-618-8352 for more details.



“CJP has offered me and my son the opportunity to find belonging, to heal, and to thrive. I’m deeply grateful for all CJP has done for us.”



You Deserve Joy! Intergenerational Trauma Healing through Creative Arts Immersion

For the last 10 years the Social Impact Center has served Roxbury and surrounding communities by creating programs that assist and encourage participants to experience post-traumatic healing. One such program, Reimagining our Stories, which focuses on creative expression through writing, visual arts, and music & movement, was the genesis for You Deserve Joy! Intergenerational Trauma Healing through Creative Arts Immersion.

The event, attended by nearly 200 men, women, and children, embodied the discipline of Spectrum of Wholeness – integration – understood across a range of levels, from the individual to the collective and even beyond. The event began with a Call to Joy with sacred African drumming, followed by a range of activities including mindfulness and body movement with Panda drums; writers corner; mini canvass painting; seed planting; tapestry weaving;

lively line dancing; and Soul Story, fashioned on our Can We Talk...[®] program, that featured a songwriter and storyteller who, in real time, transformed each story into a unique song. All who participated also enjoyed nourishing food, a quiet space for personal reflection, and specially donated items including healing oils. This event was sponsored by an Arts Activation grant through the City of Boston Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture.

News about the winter 2025 installment of You Deserve Joy!, sponsored by Imago Dei Foundation, will soon be shared.

Enhanced Trauma Healing Training for Community Companions

The Community and Clinical Supports (CCS) is a program that provides evidence-based interventions for trauma under the supervision of a licensed mental health counselor and a community trauma healing specialist who assist people outside of regular programming. Central to this are Community Companions -- trauma survivors themselves who make up the front-line of care by fostering connection and empowerment through presence, guidance, and access to additional resources without judgment or personal bias. We are grateful for the financial support that has allowed us to launch a monthly series of in-person enhanced training, ensuring our staff have the support resources needed to fully care for the families and individuals they serve. Topics include The Integrity of Accompaniment, Self-Care and Components of Protocol, and Secondary Trauma and Burnout.

Trauma Healing Education

Beginning on September 24, Rev. Liz Walker and Colleen Sharka, Director of Replication & Trauma Education, will conduct a course, Understanding Collective Trauma. This 8 week course, open to the general public, combines expert insights, interactive discussions, and practical tools to help individuals and communities navigate the impact of shared traumatic experiences. Rev. Walker and Colleen will focus on the connection between individual and collective trauma. In a world grappling with unprecedented challenges, understanding and addressing collective trauma is crucial for personal and societal well-being. You may register here

<https://roxburypv.destinyone.moderncampus.net/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=1024639>

Can We Talk...[®] Community Grows!

Since January of 2025, new sites that have been trained and launched are:

- Rendall Memorial Presbyterian Church in Harlem, NY
- Bethel AME Church, New Bedford, MA
- Pilgrim Baptist Church, Washington DC



Trainings to be scheduled for fall 2025 include

- Allen AME Church; Providence, RI
- Greater United in Faith Community Church; Gastonia, NC
- High Street Congregational Church; Auburn, ME
- New Beginnings Community Church; Redwood City, CA
- Howard University, Washington, DC

More Information about CWT can be found at

<https://canwetalknetwork.org/>

Mother's Group

After a long hiatus due to the recent COVID pandemic, the Mother's Group is now meeting on a hybrid virtual and in-person schedule. At their first in-person meeting in June, approximately 15 women gathered to focus on self-care. While sharing delicious food and soft beverages, the women took inspiration from a table full of offerings for self-care, including feet detox, hand creams, inspirational books of powerful quotes and pens to add in personal notes, and canvasses with painting supplies. In addition to their own creative work, each left with a "trigger sheet," a resource of helpful suggestions to address anxiety and complex feelings as they arise.



Notables:

- Congratulations to Debra Fitzpatrick, Community Companion Coordinator and facilitator of the Roxbury Can We Talk...[®], for receiving the Community Service Award from the Church of Anointed Fire, one of our CWT sites, in April 2025.
- Congratulations to Rev. Liz Walker who received the Peter Gomes Distinguished Alumni Award at the Harvard Divinity School in May 2025.
- In June 2025, the CJP co-sponsored the Youth Mental Health Forum with Vital Village, Lower Roxbury Coalition, and ABCD Roxbury/North Dorchester Neighborhood Opportunity Center.
- The Social Impact Center has a newly redesigned [Website!](#) In addition to updated information and easy navigation, you can also find our Historical Overview 2000-2023, and our 2024 Annual Report.
- RPCSIC was recently awarded the Gold Star of Transparency from Candid, which can be found on our website. Candid is a merger of Foundation Directory and Guidestar, a resource donors access to verify and research nonprofits that are aligned with their priorities.



All programs of the Social Impact Center are funded entirely through philanthropic contributions. These tax deductible gifts fund the vital programs that provide real-time support for adults, children, and families on their healing journey. Become a Partner in Healing, or contact Kathleen Brittan, kbrittan@rpcsic.org or 617-618-8352 for more information.

Roxbury Presbyterian Church Social Impact Center
328 Warren St. Boston MA 02119 rpcsocialimpactctr.org