

girls@the margin
action alliance



Believe
Achieve
Empower

Who are girls and young women @ the margin?

The majority are survivors of child sexual, physical and emotional abuse and neglect, grew up in homes marked by persistent domestic violence and substance abuse, and they continue to experience violence in their lives.

As a result, they bear the life long burden of healing from trauma and face significant challenges including profound social isolation, addiction, depression, low educational achievement, etc. They tend to live in poverty, to be disproportionately young women of color, and are the children of young mother's. Moreover, these young women tend to be involved in foster care, juvenile justice, mental health, substance abuse, and multiple other systems.

Additionally, high percentages are young mothers and many are involved in, or have experienced, domestic trafficking/commercial sexual exploitation. Despite their collective goal to improve the lives of the clients they serve, these systems often end up exacerbating the trauma and isolation young women have already experienced.

2010–2012 Priorities

Working across systems and disciplines G@TM will:

1. Raise awareness about the impact of violence and sexism (in all its forms) on girls and young women @ the margin.
2. Advocate for the collection of comprehensive data on girls and young women in all systems charged with their care and service.
3. Champion efforts to increase the availability of sound and effective gender and culturally responsive, trauma-informed, strength-based services.
4. Elevate the voices and stories of girls and young women.

About the Girls @ the Margin Action Alliance

While we know there are already organizations and coalitions that focus on the needs of girls, they tend to focus on specific systems and policy reform efforts such as juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health, education or housing. Currently, there are no collective

initiatives on the national level that **reach across disciplines and systems** using a holistic perspective to address root causes of the complex issues confronting girls and young women @ the margin. The Girls @ the Margin Action Alliance (G@TM) was conceived to fill this gap.

G@TM is envisioned as a flexible and nimble affiliation of organizations and individuals who work across systems choosing to ally with each other. This is not another coalition with paid staff, letterhead, etc., so we don't need an extensive operating structure and rules. All we need is an agreement to work collaboratively across systems and disciplines in the best interest of girls who are marginalized in their homes and communities.

Guiding Strategies – How we do our work!

- The voices of girls and young women @ the margin are central to the movement.
- All girls and young women have the right to live in safe homes and communities.
- Root causes such as racism, sexism, classism, poverty and violence, and how they impact girls specifically must be addressed.
- Holistic cross-system strategies are the most appropriate and effective prevention and intervention approaches to issues faced by girls and young women.
- Gender and culturally responsive, trauma-informed strength-based services and programs are essential to the ability of girls @ the margin to thrive.
- Change must be simultaneously pursued on the state and national levels.
- Effective front-line practice must directly inform state and national policy changes.

What we want to achieve!

- **Support a national forum** that will allow participating organizations and individuals to share policy, programs, and communication strategies to help further their respective institutional goals – as well as improve overall opportunities for girls and young women @ the margin.
- **Provide opportunities for** girls and young women to share their stories!
- **Leverage the collective influence** of multiple organizations and individuals to increase support for key policy changes by creating a nimble and large group of national, state and local girl-focused organizations that can be quickly mobilized and brought to bear.
- **Highlight** “Girl’s Programs” in the field to inform federal and state policy.
- **Build public will** in support of critical issues identified by girls and young women @ the margin.
- **Connect national policy groups and frontline direct service** providers across systems

for improved policy and practice. **Providing** state as well as national girl-focused organizations a seat at the federal table.

- **Increase attention of funders and policy makers** on the potential and the needs and issues of girls and young women @ the margin.
- **Provide cross-disciplinary perspective** and access to allow participating organizations and individuals to broaden their organizational focus.
- **Craft national communication strategies** and increase media attention on girls and young women @ the margin making them a national priority.

Outcomes for girls and young women @ the margin

G@TM will work to ensure that policies and practices in all systems contribute to the following **outcomes for girls and young women at the margin**:

- **Empowerment** and strong self-esteem.
- Safe, stable and affordable **housing**.
- Access to, and completion of, **educational** goals.
- Employment, **economic self-sufficiency** and wealth building.
- Mental and physical **health** and **safety**.
- Strong social **support systems**.
- **Civil and human rights**.

JOIN NOW and you'll get information about Alliance meetings, emails about legislation and actions you can take to support girls and young women. You won't hear from us every day or week, just when something important is happening. You can also send information to the members of the Alliance directly by contacting:

jeannette@TheNationalCrittentonFoundation.org or shakira@rebeccaproject.org

Convenors



BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF POTENTIAL

