



## **EDUCATION: EXCELLENCE THROUGH COUNSELING, EDUCATION, AND LEARNING (EXCEL)**

### **Program Summary**

- Program purpose: Stabilizing youth with emotional and behavioral challenges to better access curriculum in the school setting, and prepare to transition to inclusive educational environment.
- Provides culturally responsive, trauma-informed, relationship-based services to approximately 100 children and youth, grades K-12, in Alameda County annually.
- Provides behavioral supports for students, families, and schools to develop tools and learning environments for academic success through:
  1. Special Day Classes – Working with districts to provide special education classrooms with integrated mental health services for children with emotional and behavioral challenges;
  2. Mobile Special Education Teams – Providing integrated specialized mental health services to individual students at their school sites, including behavior assessment, social skills development, and 1-1 coaching in the classroom.
- Budget: \$2,025,750; Funders: Government Contracts – Hayward Unified School District (HUSD), Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (ACBHCS)

### **The Need/Gaps We're Addressing**

Nationwide, the dropout rate for students with learning disabilities is nearly three times the rate for all students. Only one other category of students – those with emotional and behavioral challenges – experience a higher dropout rate. These students are grappling with both. Adverse childhood experiences and the toxic stress associated with traumatic, and often cumulative, early adverse experiences can disrupt the healthy brain development of impacted children and youth. This can lead to behavioral, emotional, and school problems during childhood and adolescence, and even more serious issues in adulthood.

## EXCEL Program Director

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## The Leadership Team

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## EXCEL Webpage

<http://lincolnfamilies.org/programs-services/education/excel>

**For more information please call**  
510.273.4700



## Outcomes/Impact

- 96% improved school functioning, a 10% increase over last year
- Waiting on stat

## Call to Action

- A \$500 gift provides therapy tools for school-aged children and youth coping with trauma;
- A \$1,500 gift provides recreational experiences for 15 kids, providing opportunities for positive interactions with others, and developing self-confidence and feelings of belonging and acceptance;
- \$20,000 in funding would support the creation of a multi-sensory room, helping students self-soothe and get back on track faster.

## Ron's Story:

Ron was part of Lincoln's EXCEL program at his high school, which provided him and other special education students with alternative ways to access learning through social, emotional and behavioral interventions. In his junior year, school security and administration accused Ron of a crime, of which he denied any knowledge. The actions of the EXCEL team made the difference in what happened next.

While being questioned by security and the site administrator, Ron called members of an activist group for support. Four young men from the group soon arrived at the school and demanded a meeting to advocate on Ron's behalf to receive due process.

Concerned about the incident and being caught "off guard" by the demand for a meeting, the site administrator met first with Lincoln's program manager to problem-solve, then the entire Lincoln team. Together, they developed a plan to work with Ron and turn the incident into a learning opportunity. They reframed Ron's work with the activist group as strength. Ron was encouraged to lead groups on activism and given the green light to screen a documentary about the group. Lincoln's EXCEL team worked with Ron to invite an older member of the activist group to the classroom and led a facilitated discussion with him and the group.

A difficult incident, which could have easily escalated into a combative situation, was ultimately resolved through collaboration with the school leadership. The successful resolution hinged upon recognition by the Lincoln team of the importance of Ron's connection with the activist group and the support they provided him. During the resolution period, a district administrator happened to be on campus one day. Ron took the opportunity to use his advocacy skills and tell him about critical resource needs for his EXCEL classroom. It wasn't long until the school received electronic tablets for Ron's classroom.