



*Courtesy of Beyond Emancipation*

# Beyond Expectations

ORGANIZATIONAL SNAPSHOT: **Beyond Emancipation**

Headquarters:

**Oakland, California, USA**

Number of Employees: **40**

Coaching Implementation Date:

**January 1, 2010**

Number of External Coach

Practitioners: **10**

Number of Internal Coach Practitioners:

**1 (4 total as of November 14, 2016)**

Number of Managers and Leaders

Using Coaching Skills: **11**

Number of Employees Receiving

Coaching from a Coach Practitioner:

**40**

Prism Nominating Coach:

**Johnny Manzon-Santos, PCC**



When asked about the ability of coaching to influence social change, more than half of coach practitioners who participated in the *2016 ICF Global Coaching Study* said they believe to a large extent that coaching is able to influence social change.

Beyond Emancipation (B:E), a nonprofit organization in Oakland, California, USA, is putting this belief into action. B:E is one of the primary providers of services for former foster youth in Alameda County, California. Since its inception in 1995, the organization has evolved from a small auxiliary of the county's Independent Living Skills Program to an independent nonprofit that serves more than 900 youth each year.

B:E developed an innovative client service model with coaching at its heart: Creative, Connected, Resourceful, Whole (CCRW). This model, which has been affirmed by an independent evaluator as a promising practice, empowers youth and helps them build resilience and create lasting community connections.

Coaching and a coaching approach are also integrated into every aspect of B:E's operations. As part of their onboarding, all B:E employees are trained in coaching skills and approaches. All B:E employees also have access to professional coaching. Currently, three B:E staff members (two in direct service and one in

human resources) are enrolled in an ICF-accredited training program en route to eventually becoming ICF-credentialed coach practitioners. The strong coaching culture at B:E has been credited with decreasing burnout and turnover, improving interpersonal relationships and communication, and driving creative approaches to problem-solving.

In recognition of B:E's innovative social justice-oriented direct service model, the International Coach Federation (ICF) awarded it with an honorable mention in the 2016 ICF International Prism Award program. The Prism Award program honors organizations that have achieved the highest standard of excellence in coaching programs that yield discernible and measurable positive impacts, fulfill rigorous professional standards, address key strategic goals, and shape organizational culture. (Learn more at [Coachfederation.org/prism](https://coachfederation.org/prism).)

## A Population at Risk

Current and emancipated foster youth represent an immensely vulnerable population. One study of alumni of foster care revealed that, at an average age of 24, only one in five was employed, only two percent had a college degree, and less than half had participated in employment training before leaving foster care. One-third of youth who age out of foster care live at or below the poverty level, and one in five has been homeless within a year of leaving care. Furthermore, approximately 70 percent of inmates in California have spent time in foster care.

In response to insufficient traditional models for working with soon-to-be and recently emancipated foster youth, B:E turned to coaching, integrating it into all direct services. Modalities include traditional one-on-one coaching to help youth set goals, be accountable to those goals and build their confidence; group coaching to support youth development, skill-building and relational capacity; and crisis-informed coaching to address the youth's presenting crisis, focus on immediate solutions and begin long-term goal-setting.

The first application of CCRW occurred in B:E's b2b program, launched nearly five years ago to support current and former foster and probation youth to enroll and succeed at Laney College. The b2b program incorporates coaching, case management, support with financial aid applications and challenges, academic counseling and educational planning and support, paid internship opportunities, and weekly skill-building and team-building workshops.

## **Transforming the Workplace to Transform Lives**

Coaching is also integral to B:E's workplace culture. All employees have access to coaching from a professional coach practitioner, and coaching skills training is a component of every B:E employee's onboarding process. In 2016–2017, three percent of the organization's budget is dedicated to coach-specific training, curriculum development and evaluation. The organization is also investing in additional coach-specific training for three team members, with the goal of having all three obtain ICF Credentials upon completing the program and accruing the appropriate number of experience hours.

B:E's strong coaching culture has decreased burnout (an issue that's endemic among social services professionals in direct service roles), reduced siloing, and increased creativity and cross-pollination between teams. A coaching mindset has transformed the B:E team's approach to strategic planning by empowering staff to think outside the box. Most importantly, B:E's strong coaching culture enables people to show up authentically and holistically in the workplace, leading to greater overall satisfaction and efficacy. Case managers, in particular, report that coaching has made them more able to "get curious;" see clients as creative, connected,

resourceful and whole; and meet clients where they are to provide the support they need.

## **Standards for Success**

B:E's coaching approach has been aligned with ICF standards from day one. In 2010, the organization developed a partnership with a group of ICF-credentialed coaches who were part of a national initiative designed to promote the use of coaching to enhance nonprofit leadership and organizational effectiveness and to build the capacity of culturally appropriate coaches committed to working in the nonprofit sector.

Coaching skills training for staff is led by the organization's ICF-credentialed lead coach consultant (a former B:E employee who served in the role of director of coaching) and includes a day-long training at onboarding, an annual day-long skills refresher, monthly two-hour coaching clinics, peer coaching, one-on-one coaching and participation in a variety of communities of practices (e.g., crisis-informed coaching, group coaching, coaching in supervision). Coaching in supervision occurs weekly. Coaching skills and coach-specific trainings for B:E's clients are also in alignment with ICF standards, though a unique focus of the program has been translating the ICF Core Competencies into language appropriate to the context of B:E's young clients.

B:E has also taken on the formidable challenge of applying coaching in a direct service model while remaining aligned with guidelines around coaching agreements and confidentiality. When clients come to B:E, they typically know little to nothing about coaching. Their case managers meet them where they are, providing an introduction to what coaching is and isn't and facilitating an opportunity (particularly in the group coaching setting) to co-create the coaching agreement. When an issue arises in the coaching engagement that impacts case management, the coach explicitly changes to their case manager "hat" and discusses the presenting issue in the conversation. (Examples of situations that demand the case manager hat, team members say, include suicidal ideation and homelessness.)

## **Life-altering Impacts**

As a result of coaching, B:E clients have demonstrated an increase in planning and decision-making skills, including a willingness to try new things; critical thinking; the ability to set and achieve goals; the ability to delay

gratification; and the ability to articulate a future-oriented vision. When asked how coaching has benefited them, clients point to impacts including improved time management, communication and problem-solving skills; increased self-confidence; and a greater sense of personal accountability. An independent evaluation has shown that the CCRW approach improves young people's confidence and ability to express themselves, increases their capacity to handle their emotions and address conflicts, improves their ability to articulate their goals and achieve those goals, and increases their ability to establish trusting relationships with their peers and adults—all critical competencies for thriving as independent adults.

B:E's coaching approach has also yielded stabilization in safe and secure housing for clients, post-secondary education persistence and completion, career development training completion, job placement and retention, and increased self-advocacy skills. Retention outcomes for youth in the b2b program at Laney College are almost twice as high as those for foster youth in California community colleges overall. As a result, B:E is expanding b2b to three additional campuses, with all four colleges engaging B:E to train staff on coaching skills and the unique needs of foster youth in community colleges.

Based on the enthusiasm of one of B:E's clients who received training in CCRW methodology, B:E's future plans include development of ICF-aligned coach training for interested clients.

## Facing Forward

B:E is continuously seeking tools and strategies to broaden the impact of coaching on team members and clients alike. To this end, the organization has

secured grant funding to streamline its approach to case management, moving off of a patchwork of technology solutions to a single, integrated system that enables staff to track their clients' progress, as well as their own professional development.

B:E's team members are also relishing the opportunity to serve as thought leaders in transforming the direct service model by delivering training and presentations for other youth-serving organizations and systems. The organization is exploring the possibility of creating a fellowship program for graduates of accredited coach training programs to develop their skills and accrue coaching experience while increasing B:E's ability to deliver one-on-one coaching to its clients.

More immediately, coaching is a resource for the B:E team as they address the broader forces that shape their clients' lives and experiences and seek ways to spark lasting change. "The coaching culture allows us a space to come together to talk about not only what needs to be done for our clients but what needs to be done on behalf of our community," says B:E's lead coach consultant, Leslie Brown, PCC.

"We owe it to our young people to do things differently," adds B:E's Executive Director, Kate Durham. "That's the argument for building a coaching culture."

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The International Coach Federation (ICF) is dedicated to advancing the coaching profession by setting high ethical standards, providing independent certification and building a worldwide network of credentialed coaches across a variety of coaching disciplines. ICF is active in representing all facets of the coaching industry, including Executive, Life Vision and Enhancement, Leadership, Relationship, and Career Coaching. Its 27,000-plus members located in more than 135 countries\* work toward the common goal of enhancing awareness of coaching, upholding the integrity of the profession, and continually educating themselves with the newest research and practices.

*\*Numbers as of October 2016. Numbers are subject to change month to month.*

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