

## ***Real as Me***

### ***A Social and Emotional Learning Program for Young Women***

### **Application Packet**

Youth Communication (YC) has been awarded a grant from the New York Community Trust to support the implementation of *Real As Me* (RAM), a girls' empowerment social and emotional learning program, with New York City teens. Through this grant, YC will partner with **up to 15** schools or community-based organizations to train and support staff and deliver curriculum to impact **100+ young women** at each site. YC invites you to apply to partner with us in this project. The program will be adapted for remote implementation.

#### **What does it mean to be an implementation partner?**

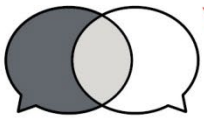
Our goal is to work closely with several secondary schools, who will receive the curriculum and accompanying professional development program, to implement *Real as Me*. In these efforts, YC will provide professional development, curriculum resources, and other technical assistance to support successful implementation. Each partner will receive this program, **valued at \$15,000**. For partners training one cohort of staff (up to 15 people), this program will be **covered completely**. Fees will apply for additional cohorts.

#### **To be eligible for this funding support, partners must:**

- Implement the program as designed and with the support of YC;
- Administer student and staff surveys at the end of the school year to measure impact of the program on students' social and emotional learning outcomes;
- Provide other student academic data (in aggregate), such as on-time promotion rates and disciplinary referrals (if available); and
- Be implementing RAM for the first time in the 2020-2021 school year (partners already implementing RAM are not eligible for this grant funding).

We are excited by your interest and look forward to reviewing your application. Applications may be submitted via email to: [bcohen@youthcomm.org](mailto:bcohen@youthcomm.org).

Please contact Betsy Cohen with any questions about the project or the application process at the email address provided above, or at 508-397-7384.



## **Real as Me Program Overview**

*Empowering Young Women through Social and Emotional Learning*

**Real as Me (RAM)** consists of an anthology of true stories by young women in our writing program and a comprehensive leader guide with 30 fully-scripted and easy-to-implement session plans. The stories:

- cover a variety of issues, including: dating, family life, gender bias, violence, body image, sexuality, etc.;
- demonstrate how young women have used SEL skills, including seeking and providing help, self-advocacy, and recognizing their strengths, to achieve goals despite gender biases;
- engage reluctant readers in topics that interest them, with relatable and vivid depictions of experiences compellingly told by teens just like them;
- encourage group discussion by allowing participants to talk about the writer's circumstances without having to discuss their own experiences;
- make participants feel less isolated and more likely to seek help as a result of reading and discussing stories about teens facing challenges similar to their own; and
- build staff empathy for young women and a sense of belonging in the classroom.

**Lesson design, frequency, and timing:** The 30 sessions are suitable for weekly advisories over a school year. Each session can be completed in a single period.

**Ages/target audience:** RAM is suitable for girls in grades 6 through 12. It is especially appealing to girls who face more serious challenges in their lives, due to trauma, poverty, family break-up, etc. The program can be used successfully with girls who have a wide range of reading levels.

**Settings:** The ideal setting for implementing RAM is in groups of 6-15 girls in circle-style discussions in which the group leader acts as a facilitator. The curriculum will be adapted for remote implementation.

**Staff:** RAM has been successfully implemented by after school youth development staff, teachers, social workers, juvenile justice counselors, and other adults who work with girls from a youth development perspective.

**SEL/gender focus /literacy:** RAM lessons are designed to help young women strengthen the five core social and emotional competencies and practice important literacy skills, while also supporting strong identities as young women.

**School characteristics:** All partners must select at least 100 girls to take part in RAM sessions and train a minimum of 10 staff to lead the groups. There must also be a defined time during the school day, approximately once a week, to implement the program (e.g., advisory, extended learning time).

**Evaluation:** Each partner will be required to administer surveys to student participants and staff at the end of the program. (We will share the survey data with you.)

**What about the boys?** Youth Communication also has a highly engaging positive masculinity curriculum that is suitable for use with boys alongside *Real As Me*, called *Real Men 2.0*. (Its cost would not be covered by this grant.)

What We Provide	What We're Asking of You
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Professional development program</b>, including an initial orientation to the program and three follow-up sessions, for at least 10 staff members. Participants will:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Learn</b> about the theories underlying the curriculum related to social and emotional learning and relationship building;</li> <li>○ <b>Experience</b> a lesson as facilitated by one of our expert trainers; and</li> <li>○ <b>Practice</b> essential facilitation skills such as active listening, asking open-ended questions, facilitating difficult discussions, and creating a brave space.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Program Guide:</b> RAM includes a fully scripted Program Guide for each staff member with story-centered, interactive sessions. Each session includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An <i>Opening Activity</i> to activate background knowledge, boost reading comprehension, and set the emotional tone of the story;</li> <li>○ A <i>Read-Aloud and Story Discussion</i> in which students practice active reading strategies, build comprehension, and develop fluency;</li> <li>○ An <i>Explore the Ideas Activity</i> in which group members make connections, build understanding, and rehearse positive behaviors; and</li> <li>○ A <i>Closing Circle</i> in which group members make personal connections to the story and share their reflections and takeaways.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Anthologies:</b> Each staff member receives 12-15 anthologies to use with their group.</li> <li>• <b>On-site support visits:</b> YC will visit periodically to provide technical assistance and feedback on program implementation.</li> <li>• <b>Optional individual coaching sessions:</b> In-person coaching sessions (at the program site) are an opportunity for <b>debriefing, reflection, and skill-building</b> once the participants have led several group sessions. These are provided for an additional fee of \$300 per staff member.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select and support at least 100 students to participate in regularly scheduled RAM groups.</li> <li>• Select and support at least 10 staff members to lead RAM groups.</li> <li>• Appoint a <b>Project Lead</b> who will:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ meet with Youth Communication as soon as possible to plan for successful program implementation in the 2020-2021 school year; and</li> <li>○ be responsible for coordinating the four professional development sessions and YC site visits and observations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Implement 80% of the sessions in RAM (24 of 30 group sessions) during the 2020-2021 school year.</li> <li>• Administer staff and student surveys at the end of the school year to measure the impact of RAM on students' social and emotional development.</li> <li>• Provide student data in aggregate (such as GPA and attendance).</li> </ul>



REAL STORIES  
REAL CHANGE

# ***Real as Me***

## ***A Social and Emotional Learning Program for Young Women***

### **Application Form**

**Instructions:** Please type or print. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

#### **Part I: Contact Information**

School/CBO Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/CEO Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/CEO E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

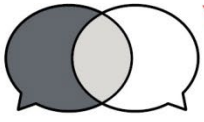
Principal/CEO Direct Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Contact Person (if different than Principal/CEO): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person's Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person's E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person's Direct Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



**Part II: School/ CBO Information**

Please complete to the best of your knowledge. If information is requested that you don't know, please indicate that.

1. Please indicate what grade levels you serve:

Middle (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades)       High School (9<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> Grades)       Both

2. Please indicate the demographics of your youth population:

Black or African-American: ____%	White: ____%
American Indian/Alaska Native: ____%	Asian: ____%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: ____%	Hispanic/Latino: ____%
More than one race: ____%	Other ( <i>please describe</i> ): ____%

3. Grade levels served: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Total # of students: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Gender breakdown: young women: \_\_\_\_% young men: \_\_\_\_%

6. Percentage of youth eligible to receive free/reduced price lunch: \_\_\_\_\_%

7. The average percentage of youth who attend school daily: \_\_\_\_\_%

8. 2018-2019 graduation rate (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_%

9. How do you envision scheduling this program into your school/program day (e.g., advisory, after-school, extended learning time, ELA class)? \_\_\_\_\_

10. How many students do you envision participating? \_\_\_\_\_ Staff? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you currently have gender-based groups? Yes  No

11. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your community?