



VISION

We have a **DREAM** that this world finds the cure to pathological threats against the community, families, and children. We have a **DREAM** that young people will no longer be predisposed to trauma and stress caused by early exposure to violence. We have a **DREAM** to see generational cycles of recurring violent behaviors broken, childhood PTSD canceled and the colorful imagination of a child beautify the darkness in this world.

IDYD offers victim advocacy, grief support, and case management to families and children of murdered parents. We accomplish this mission with IDYD core programming which includes an annual community violence awareness march, a mentoring program for children ages four to 18, and an annual toy giveaway. In addition, IDYD provides individualized case management to families in crisis.

It is the IDYD vision to not only continue this core programming but increase our reach to impact more children and families dealing with loss. It is also an aspect of our mission to increase community awareness of violence while embracing the stories of survivors of violence and trauma.

With your help, IDYD will develop and implement the following vision for IDYD program and organizational growth:

Trauma in the Classroom Series - Children who are survivors of childhood trauma, including the loss of a parent, behave differently in classroom settings as a result of their experiences. Informing our community of these differences, and creating real dialogue around this and issues like these affecting children in schools, is important to the mission of IDYD. It is our **DREAM** to create an information series that helps educators and members of the community to better meet the needs of our children.

Community Panel Discussion Series - Advocating against violence in our community begins with open dialogue. To that end, it is the IDYD **DREAM** to provide a community discussion series with survivor stories as a focus. With your help, we can begin a community conversation about issues affecting survivors and victims of violence.

IDYD Program Staff - To increase the impact of IDYD locally, additional staff is needed to implement the IDYD mission. Current program delivery is provided by high-level volunteers and the IDYD executive director. It is the IDYD **DREAM** to increase the impact of our mission with increased staff.

IDYD National Presence - The sad but true reality is violence affects many communities in addition to our own. It is the IDYD **DREAM** to have a national presence earmarked by local curriculum development that is shared with IDYD chapters across the country.

HISTORY

On July 4, 1996, Dean J. Samuel was violently killed at the age of 22, five months shy of becoming a father. This tragic event devastated his family! However, when his son was born, he brought with him joy and fond memories of his father...

Although Dean's son was surrounded by love, support, and guidance, the family could never fill the void he felt from not having a father. This void became a hindrance in his progress and his family realized they could no longer protect him from the pain of his loss. But he, and many others like him, needed to discover ways to handle the tragedy of this situation in a healthy manner.

The IDYD foundation was birthed after realizing that suffering can give way to hopelessness and despair. We have joined together to not only encourage youth who have violently lost parents to **SURVIVE** but to also empower them to **THRIVE**. By discovering the gift inside each of us, children will begin to unlock hidden treasures that bring meaning to life through **HOPE** and **PURPOSE** beyond the pain.

OUR PROBLEM

One out of every 20 children under the age of 15 will suffer the loss of one or both parents.¹

1.5 million children are living in a single-parent household because of the death of a parent.²

Children who have had a parent die suddenly have three times the risk of depression than those with two living parents, along with an increased risk for PTSD.³

The death of a parent can be a very difficult and confusing time for a child. Children will deal with the death of a parent differently based on personal characteristics such as life experience, age, personality, and ability to cope with stress. The reaction of a child who suffers the violent death of a parent may take several forms. Some children may become anxious, fearful, or withdrawn.

Conversely, children who witness violence may believe that the use of violence is justified and that using violence demonstrates power. They may learn to use violence to attain their wishes, or to identify with the aggressor as a way to solve interpersonal conflict, conflict with the adult world, or conflict with their peers.

Over the past ten years, there have been 140 murders in the city of Pontiac, Michigan⁴. This is 140 of our community's mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, and other loved ones that no longer have the opportunity to impact the children in their lives. These murders will continue to affect our community in many detrimental ways, but the effect on a child when a parent is lost can be life-altering.

A 2000 Journal of Childhood Psychology and Psychiatry study found that one out of every five children who have lost a parent will develop a psychiatric disorder. Additionally, as many as one in four children have significant PTSD symptoms following exposure to a traumatic event like the murder of a parent or parental figure. More studies demonstrate that these traumatic experiences during childhood lead to a significantly increased risk to many of the leading causes of early death in adulthood. Thus, youth are in need of prompt identification and effective intervention for symptoms related to trauma exposure⁵.

¹ Recognizing the Needs of Bereaved Children in Palliative Care 2008

² Grieving in Schools Nationwide Survey 2012

³ JAMA and Archives Journals

⁴ Oakland Press, July 2018

⁵ Adverse Childhood Experiences Study, Felitti et al., 1998

OUR PLAN & IMPACT

At IDYD, we know that with the right kinds of support, children and teens can adapt, learn to express their grief in healthy ways and thrive!

IDYD is a cutting-edge mentoring program designed to encourage, guide, and help grieving children heal from the loss of a parent due to violence, empowering them to channel their grief into greatness. Each person's grief process is unique and we are committed to walking with them for however long it takes. IDYD's mentoring program is a safe place, where participants have fun, explore, discover, and learn who they are as we navigate their new reality.

Past research, on the intergenerational cycle of violence, indicates that adults who were traumatized as children are more likely to commit crimes at a later age⁶. To avoid this repetition it is important to provide intervention at an early age to children who are exposed to or are victims of, community violence.

Identify Your Dream helps make sure grieving kids discover creative ways to express their emotions, remain connected to other grieving youth, and receive quality grief support. Our program impacts children through guidance, motivation, emotional support, and role modeling.

We target PTSD by encouraging youth to identify their dream, providing an opportunity for each child to shadow a successful person in our community who has pursued that same dream, and with a mentor, children are able to complete a Dream Project. We believe that the pursuit of a dream will give a sense of meaning and belonging to the lives of the children we serve, despite their loss.

Sweet Dreams Toy Giveaway

Christmas toy giveaway program for children in Pontiac, Southfield and Detroit, Michigan who have suffered the loss of a parent to violence.

2015 - 12 children served

2016 - 30 children served

2017 - 66 children served

Annual Stomp Out the Violence March

Annual march to bring awareness to the extreme effects of violence.

2011 to 2018 - more than 1000 attendees have participated in this annual community event.

⁶ Lipschitz et al., 2000

Mentoring Program

Core, central programming of the Identify Your Dream Foundation. Involves initial assessment by psychologist and recommendations for ongoing assessment and treatment. Assessments are currently being provided by Dr. Lucetry Dalton, a licensed clinical health psychologist/fellow at McLaren-Flint Hospital. Sessions occur twice monthly for 90 minutes.

2018 - 14 children aged four to 18 served

Individual Case Management

When children in low-income communities experience the loss of a parent, the grieving process can sometimes be overshadowed by what seems like more immediate concerns. IDYD understands and works to provide resources for families during their time of crisis. Services are determined and provided on a case-by-case basis and have included:

- *Attending court proceedings in support, or on behalf of families*
- *Providing resources for emergency shelter and utilities*
- *Providing grief kits (IDYD backpack, journal, a personalized framed photo of loved one, pen, grief themed children's book)*
- *Children's uniforms for school*

OUR COST

Our annual cost to provide Identify Your Dream core programming to children in Pontiac, Southfield, and Detroit, Michigan is approximately \$30,000. However, the need is much greater than our current reach, as demonstrated annual costs below:

Current IDYD Program Expenses

Individual Case Management - \$8,000

Mentoring Program - \$12,000

Stomp Out the Violence March - \$3,000

Sweet Dreams Toy Give Away - \$3,000

Community Awareness Activities - \$4,000

Total: \$30,000

Wish List Program Expenses

Trauma in the Classroom Series - \$5,000 - \$10,000

Community Panel Discussion Series - \$5,000

IDYD National Presence - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000

Increased IDYD Program Staff - \$10,000 - \$50,000

Total: \$120,000 - \$1,065,000

WHY NOW?

The murder rate in Pontiac Michigan was five times the national average in 2016⁷.

Since July 27, 2018, there have been 20 murders in Oakland County, with **12** of them occurring in the city of Pontiac⁸.

Because of the violent ways in which the children we serve have lost a parent, they are more likely to suffer from CGT or Childhood Traumatic Grief. CGT is the encroachment of trauma symptoms on the grieving process that prevents the child from negotiating the typical steps associated with normal bereavement.

When a child loses a parent, without the proper interventions and support, they are destined for a lifetime of mental and emotional instability, PTSD, increased risk for early death in adulthood and certain depression. IDYD aims to break this cycle by offering victim advocacy, grief support, and case management to families and children of murdered parents.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Identify Your Dream is always seeking donations of time, talent and financial resources to help achieve our mission.

We are currently seeking sponsors for our annual Bow Ties and Jeans Fundraiser. The annual event takes place each November. Sponsorship opportunities begin at \$100. We are also seeking financial support from individuals like you to implement our programming. Please consider making a donation to the IDYD Fund today. Major gift opportunities exist in support of IDYD wish list programming. Please consider making a stretch gift to support increased mission outreach and program expansion.

We are always seeking to expand our reach in the community and show a presence and support for the people and communities we serve. Please join our mailing and email list to stay informed of opportunities to be involved with IDYD.

We are seeking board members to serve for three-year terms on the IDYD Board of Directors. Passionate, community-oriented individuals should direct their interest to IDYD founder, Deleah Sharp at idyourdream@gmail.com.

⁷ City-Data.com

⁸ Oakland Press, July 27 2018