



# MY BROTHER'S KEEPER (MBK)

## HOUSTON MOVEMENT OVERVIEW BOOKLET

**Mayor Turner's MBK Summit 2016**

Improving the quality of life for all youth in Houston and  
building a city of champions!

**HOUSTONHEALTH.ORG**



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[www.mbkhouston.org](http://www.mbkhouston.org)

# FROM THE MAYOR

Greetings!

Houston has been my home for more than six decades. I was raised by my father and mother but my mother was the CEO of our household. With no high school education, working as a maid at the Rice Hotel, never learning how to drive, she raised nine sons and daughters. She saw to it that we were educated, and when times were rough, she told us that tomorrow would be better than today.

As a young man, when I took the bus from Acres Homes to downtown, walking the streets of the city of Houston, I would remember what my mother would say, and I began to dream big because she would always tell me that when you dream big, big things can happen.

Houston has always been a city of opportunities, a city where dreams can come true and like many of you, I was fortunate and afforded opportunities to succeed in life despite the obstacles. However, so many of our city's boys and young men of color are facing challenges that are too overwhelming for them and will require our city to unite our goodwill and resources to assist them in overcoming these challenges.

Here are the facts:

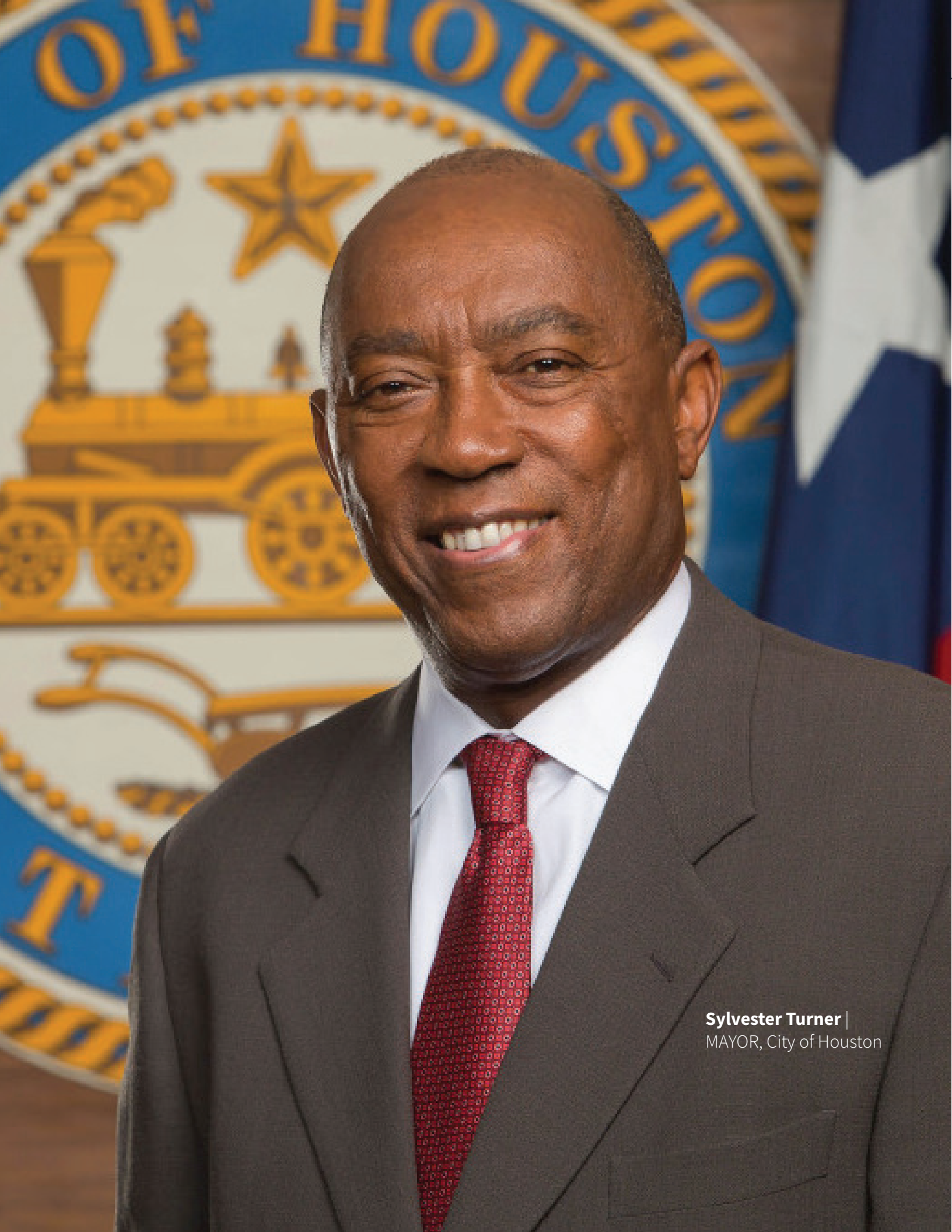
- There are 228,433 males ages between 10-24 in Houston, which is nearly half the size of the entire city of Atlanta
- More than 50% of these youth are Hispanic and 25% are black
- Hispanic and black youth are 2x times more likely to live in poverty
- Black male youth out of school suspension rates are 2x times higher and are 7x times more likely to have an encounter with law enforcement compared to white male youth
- 10% of minority male youth of color are admitted into a juvenile detention centers

Whenever there is crisis there are opportunities, and we must work together to eradicate these disparities and dismantle the cradle-to-prison pipeline while creating a culture of achievement that will enable our youth to reach their full potential. This is an economic imperative and must be addressed systemically and collectively.

My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Houston is the solution that will bring non-profits, public, and private sector groups to the table to provide a coordinated network of support to eliminate barriers that prevent boys and young men of color from achieving their dreams. It is essential that our city's youth have access to quality education and employment opportunities as well as safe environments in which to function and grow. I am excited about the progress MBK Houston has made, as outlined in this booklet, and equally optimistic regarding forging ahead with the collective efforts of leaders such as you, because tomorrow will be better than today!

Sincerely,

**Sylvester Turner**  
Mayor, City of Houston



**Sylvester Turner** |  
MAYOR, City of Houston



# FROM THE HHD DIRECTOR

Greetings!

The Houston Health Department proudly accepted the charge to lead the My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) national challenge in September 2014 and launched the city’s Local Action Plan in May 2015. The plan is available at [www.mbkhouston.org](http://www.mbkhouston.org) and outlines the recommendations to eliminate barriers facing boys and young men of color in our city.

Our youth, particularly youth of color, face enormous challenges every day. Data indicates that on almost all indicators, boys and men of color lag far behind the rest of our population. The gaps between boys and young men of color and the rest of the population are stark and are seen in education, earnings, health, employment, neighborhood safety, workforce development and encounters with the law enforcement and justice system.

MBK Houston is an ambitious undertaking for our city. Improving future outcomes for our youth and children also means a better quality of life for all Houstonians. This translates to better economic conditions for families, access to quality education for all children and youth, improved health outcomes, a well-trained workforce, greater access to resources, safer neighborhoods, and a host of other factors. As leaders and decision makers and in our community, we need your help and support.

The Houston Health Department serves as the backbone organization of MBK to leverage the expertise of nonprofits, agencies, educational institutions and other partners to coalesce around strategies and evidence-based methodologies and programs seeking to increase opportunities and close disparity gaps that persist in our communities.

I am grateful to all the organizations and individuals that have joined us to improve life outcomes for boys and young men of color. Our city is stronger when young people have opportunities to pursue and experience success. Supporting the improvement of life outcomes for our youngest residents is the responsibility of us all.

**Stephen L. Williams, M.Ed., M.P.A.**  
Director, City Of Houston  
Houston Health Department

**Stephen Williams |**  
DIRECTOR  
Houston Health Department



# The My Brother's Keeper Initiative

Houston's youth face many challenges in preparing for productive adulthood. This is particularly true for young men of color. Many indicators show that this group lags behind others on measures such as high school graduation rates, household income, employment and neighborhood safety. This group is also more likely to have encounters with law enforcement and the justice system.

The My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative aims to address these inequitable conditions faced by boys and young men of color. MBK originated from the White House in 2014. Recognizing the inequitable conditions that boys and young men of color face throughout their lifetime, a coordinated national movement was launched.

The initiative was built around six key milestones:

- Entering school ready to learn
- Reading at grade level by third grade
- Graduating from high school ready for college or career
- Completing post-secondary education or training
- Successfully entering the workforce
- Reduce crime and violence and provide a second chance opportunities

The MBK initiative is an ambitious undertaking for our city. Improving future outcomes for our youth and children also means a better quality of life in the future, for all Houstonians. This translates to better economic conditions for families, access to quality education for all children and youth, improved health outcomes for our residents, a well trained workforce that can meet the challenges of the future, greater access to resources and safer neighborhoods, and a host of other factors.





# THE CHALLENGE

In our city, many boys and young men of color face immense challenges beginning even before birth and continuing until their advanced age. The primary factors are the lack of opportunity and the lack of resources available to them. Lack of opportunity can be defined as not receiving a quality education, growing up in a home without access to sufficient resources, not feeling safe in one’s home, low availability of secure jobs, and living in an unsafe neighborhood. We have a responsibility to our communities to create and make available equitable opportunities and resources , so that all Houstonians can thrive and grow.

**“Education is imperative to the future success and vitality of Houston. Reducing chronic absence in our schools will ensure that our children reach their highest academic and economic potential.”**

Source: When Students Miss School: The High Cost to Houston. <http://www.bushhoustonliteracy.org/news-events/reports>

31%

of Houston males 18 to 24 years of age are enrolled in college or graduate school as compared to 39% nationally

25.8%

of males 18 to 24 years of age in Houston have not completed high school

12,000

Number of teens ages 16 to 19 in Houston not attending school and not working

48,000

Number of boys and men of color (0 to 25 years of age) in MBK areas



0.04% of Spanish speaking students are meeting the Total Literacy Benchmark in pre-K (2015-2016)

12.8% of English speaking students are meeting the Total Literacy Benchmark in pre-K (2015-2016)

31% of the students in one of the elementary schools in the MBK area who met 3rd Grade reading benchmark

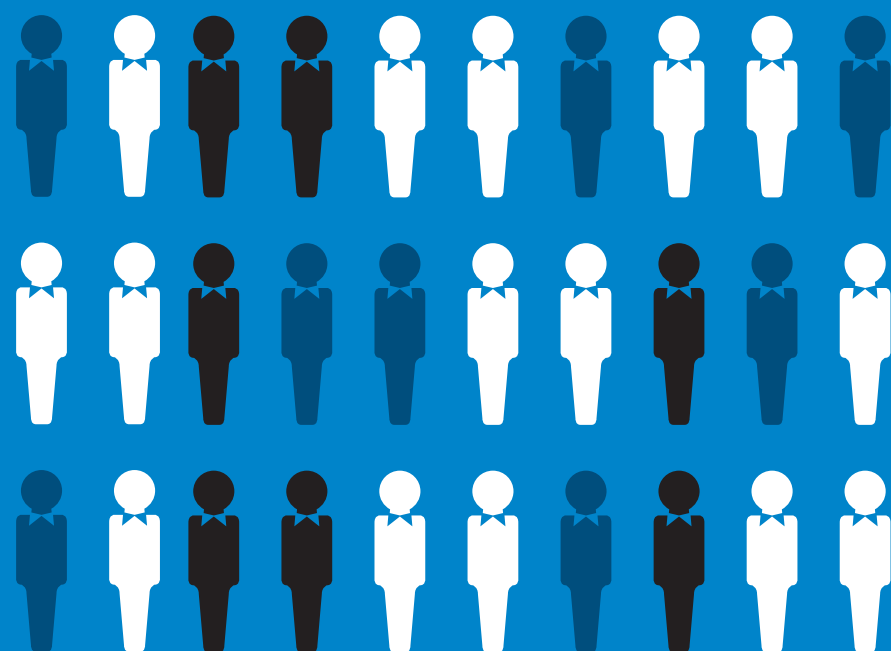
97% of the schools in MBK areas have at least 71% of their students who are economically disadvantaged

7 Number of schools in the MBK area with NO books circulated from the school libraries during the previous school calendar





**One HISD counselor is responsible  
for nearly **4x** as many students  
as the Texas school average.**



More than **50%** of Houston's  
youth aged 10-24 years are  
Hispanic and a quarter are black.

MALES IN HOUSTON  
AGES 10-24

**228,433**

BLACK MALES ARE  
**7x**

MORE LIKELY TO HAVE AN  
ENCOUNTER WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT THAN WHITE MALES

BLACK MALE YOUTH ARE 2.6x AND HISPANIC MALE YOUTH ARE 2x  
MORE LIKELY TO BE IN

**POVERTY**  
THAN WHITE MALES

The out of school **suspension rate** for serious  
offenses is 2x higher among Black male youth than White males.



**Narrowing the Scope** – *“Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.”*– Lao Tzu

Because Houston is such a large community, the MBK approach is to bring a higher concentration of resources in a defined area for a defined population in a concerted effort to move the needle on key indicators on success for boys and young men of color.

MBK aims to turn around lives and create more opportunities for boys and young men of color across the city. Houston is home to over 200,000 boys between the ages of 10-24; 75% are either black or Hispanic. Many of them need supports that extend beyond the school district’s resources and reach. Tackling these momentous challenges will require the strength and cooperation of many city organizations, groups and residents.

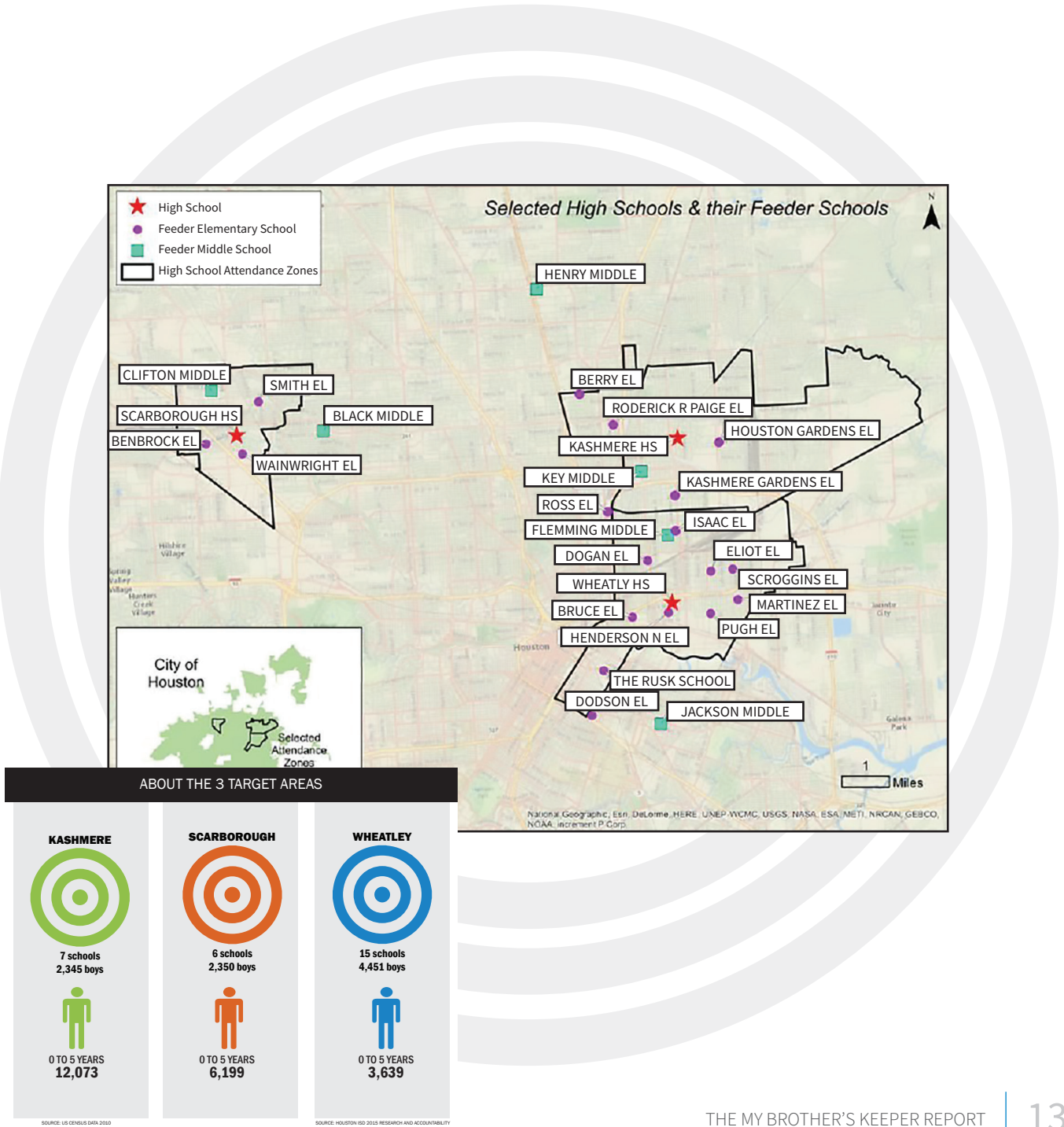
The public, private sector, nonprofits and volunteers must work together to maximize existing resources. The City of Houston’s Health Department is serving as the “backbone” agency for the MBK initiative, and has brought together over 200 partners and has developed an intervention strategy based on best practices that will be tested and replicated across the entire city. As partners, we are shaping the future of our city, one community at a time.



*“Our youth, particularly youth of color, face enormous challenges every single day. Some have no lights or food and oftentimes witness violence at home or around their neighborhoods. They are just trying to simply survive but lack the social and emotional supports to navigate the uncertainties of life by themselves.”*–Noel A. Pinnock | MBK Houston Division Manager and Project Coordinator

## MBK IMPACT AREAS

MBK Houston will initially serve three school feeder patterns within the Houston Independent School District. The areas chosen during the planning process include elementary, middle and high schools within the Kashmere, Wheatley, and Scarborough communities. There are 29 HISD schools in these three target areas as well as three charter schools. There over 9,000 boys and young men of color attending these schools. To view the complete listing of targeted schools, visit <http://www.mbkhouston.org/ourcommunities>.





## The MBK Houston Approach – Building a pipeline to college, career, and whole-life achievement.

My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Houston is a movement to improve outcomes and reduce opportunity gaps for boys and young men of color. MBK Houston uses a collective impact approach to develop partnerships and collaborations to improve the systems (i.e., education, health, social services, and families) responsible for assuring the health and well-being of children. MBK Houston has brought together a diverse group of organizations and individuals who utilize their strengths, leverage their

existing resources and work together to implement collaborative solutions that overcome barriers faced by youth of color.

HHD staff has been working with a variety of partners to implement activities that support the MBK Local Action Plan. MBK is creating a network of service providers and support systems that give youth of color, particularly, boys and young men of color the skills, tools and supports that they need to be successful from cradle to career.

## Implementation Strategies

The MBK Houston implementation strategies are based on recommendations from the Local Action Plan, recommendations from the Milestone Action Teams and feedback and information obtained from meetings and interviews with school principals in the MBK feeder patterns. After the launch of the Local Action Plan, the six Milestone Action Teams began work to develop implementation plans that would translate the broad recommendations from the Local Action Plan into actionable plans that include activities, target dates and responsible parties.

The recommendations from the Milestone Teams were completed and submitted to the MBK support

team in October and November 2015. Also following the launch, HHD staff held a series of meetings with the principals from the MBK feeder patterns in order to gain insight into what the schools needed to improve outcomes for students. During the fall of 2015, MBK Houston formed three Area Action Teams, one in each of the three school feeder patterns. Members of the MBK Houston report team did outreach in the communities to invite community residents and organizations working in communities to participate on the Area Action Teams.

## Core MBK Houston Interventions

1. Assure a core set of services and support on MBK campuses
2. Establish an early warning system and service response system
3. Create a community support network that consists of community residents, volunteers, parents, youth, faith based organizations, civic groups etc. who support the achievement of MBK goals through volunteerism, community planning, advocacy, outreach and education, and resource development
4. Engage and support parents and caregivers and increase parenting skills
5. Engage youth and increase the assets that they have to help them be successful
6. Use data to plan and monitor action for effectiveness

MBK Houston will determine baseline performance criteria and set measurable targets that are robust and practical. Data driven decision-making will be foundational for determining community action.





MBK will provide assistance to youth and families in the three targeted areas through a Systems of Care (SOC) model. Systems of Care is a service delivery approach that builds partnerships to create a comprehensive spectrum of health, mental health, social and emotional supports, and enrichment services to meet the needs of students identified by the Early Warning System shown on the following page.

The Systems of Care components include information and referral, service linkage, navigation, case management and wraparound services that include a variety of resources to help specific youth and families.

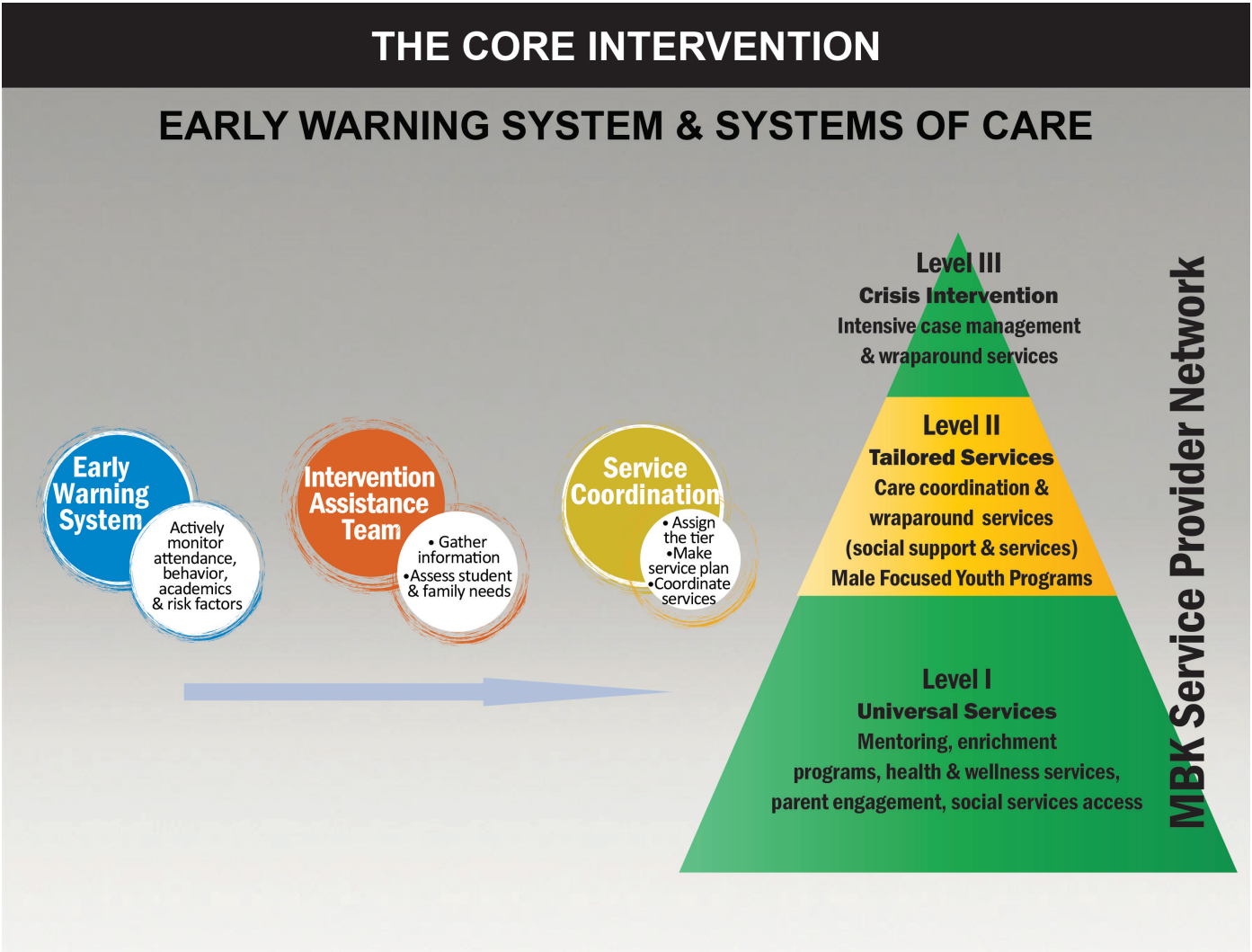
SOC planning meetings are ongoing with the collaboration of HISD, Communities in Schools (CIS), Harris County Community Youth Services (CYS), Harris Center for MHIDD, and Harris County Department of Education (HCDE). The planning group is finalizing processes, service components and interlocal agreements.



Systems of Care Components:

- 1. Family driven and youth guided, with the strengths and needs of the child and family determining the types and mix of services and supports provided.
- 2. Community based, with the focus of services as well as system management resting within a supportive, adaptive infrastructure of structures, processes, and relationships at the community level.
- 3. Culturally and linguistically competent, with agencies, programs, and services that reflect the cultural, racial, ethnic, and linguistic differences of the populations they serve to facilitate access to and utilization of appropriate services and supports and to eliminate disparities in care.

SOURCE:  
Stroul, B., Blau, G., & Friedman, R. (2010). Updating the system of care concept and philosophy. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health.



# Systems of Care

This model depicts the Systems of Care processes that include active monitoring, assessment and coordination of services. The need will correlate to the level of intervention. Children with low risk factors will have access to general services (i.e., mentoring, enrichment, etc.) while children with moderate to high risk factors will have access to tailored and crisis interventions. For example, if a child is homeless, then the intervention assistance team\* will conduct a formal assessment to identify the specific needs, develop a plan to assist the youth and coordinate services to address the situation using case management processes and protocols.

\*The Intervention Assistance Team is made up of MBK social workers, Harris County's community youth specialists, Harris Center for MHIDD behavioral therapists, and school administrators and faculty.



## MBK Works Through Strengthening Systems and Supporting the Many Factors that Contribute to Child Success

“People don’t really care how much you know until they know how much you care.”— John Maxwell



### Learning & Skill Building

- Win Win, Conflict Resolution Training
- Job Training & Apprenticeships
- Dual Credit Classes
- Positive Behavior Systems
- College Fairs
- TAP Academy Training
- Library Standardizations

### Social & Emotional Well-Being

- Individual Mentoring
- BAM (Becoming A Man Support Group)
- Mental Health Counseling
- Early Warning System - Systems of Care

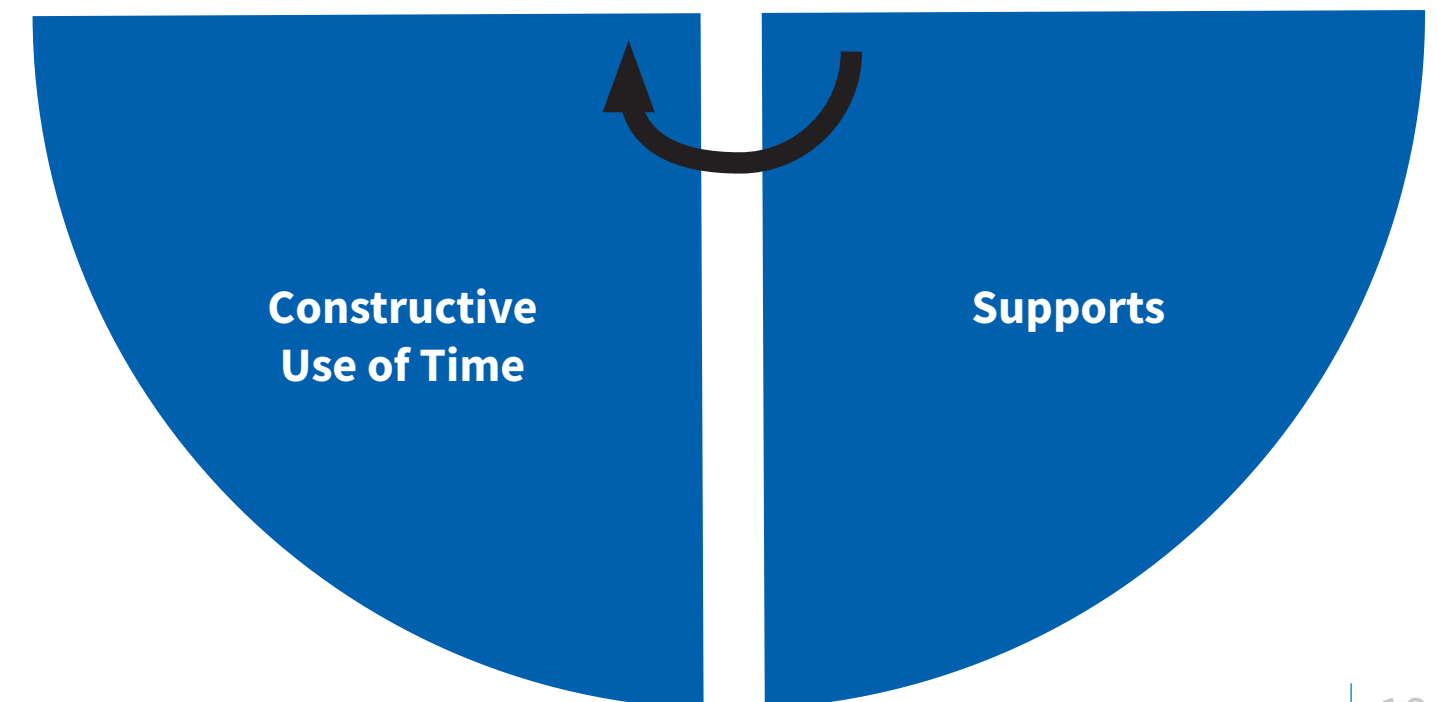
All children are capable of achieving success, no exceptions, if given the right opportunities and access to programs and services that provide them the skills, social and emotional stability, and other care support systems to help them overcome some of life’s most difficult challenges.

### Constructive Use of Time

- After school programming
- Out of school programs
- Paid Work Experiences (Co-op)

### Supports

- Mentoring
- ReDirect (Diversion)
- Parent Engagement
- Boston Basic
- Becoming a Man
- Positive Behavior Support Systems
- Volunteer Partnership Network





# 2016 Highlights

In addition to the core interventions, MBK projects span from forming youth justice councils to canvassing neighborhoods, improving adult and early childhood literacy, workforce development, ending the cycle of addiction and incarceration, improving interactions between youth and law enforcement, encouraging artistic expression, improving child nutrition and immunizations and enhancing preschool to college readiness.

The movement is gaining momentum and visibility as program staff and community partners work to make MBK a household name.



**100**

Number of volunteers recruited for school literacy programs

**344**

Number of youth hired via McDonald's Owners Job Fair

**6,211**

Number of households contacted as part of MBK AIM

**3,000**

Number of students who attended the "Three Doctors" events

**1,310**

Number of households engaged as part of MBK AIM

**\$25K**

Grant from Rockwell Fund (Marketing and Communications)

**1,495**

number of apartments visited in Kashmere, Wheatley, and Scarborough areas

**\$860K**

Dollar amount received from the city's 1.3 million dollar pledge



# Houston Health Foundation — Bringing valuable health services to children and families of Houston’s most under-served communities.

The mission of the Houston Health Foundation is to provide a funding stream to support public health projects beyond the normal scope and capacity of city operations.

The Foundation works with donors, partner organizations and volunteers to help bring valuable health services to the children and families of Houston’s most under-served communities. Foundation programming provides oral health care

through Project Saving Smiles, vision screening and eyewear through See to Succeed, access to fresh produce and nutrition education with the Houston Health Department’s (HHD) Community Nutrition program as well as STD screenings at HHD H.I.T.S for HIV concerts. The Foundation also plays a key role in ensuring families receive the support services they need to create safe and healthy environments for children to live in through our AIM initiative.

## Chairman | William F. Burge, III

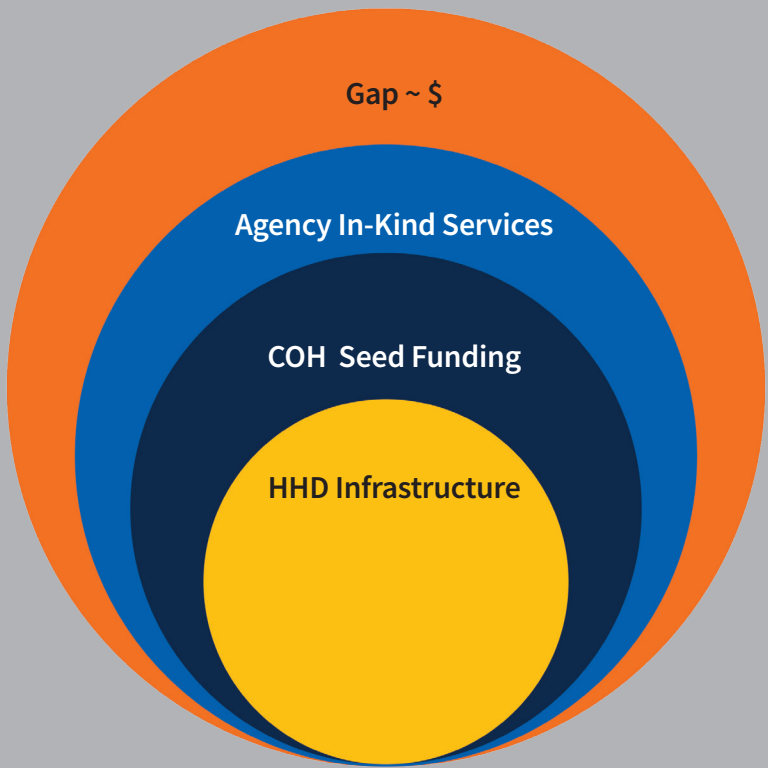
For more information on Chairman Williams F. Burge, III, visit: <http://houstonhealthfoundation.org/who-we-are/our-board>



# WHAT IS NEEDED

## THE ASK...

### Funding Strategy



#### Gap ~ \$

- Systems of Care
- Male-focused Youth Programs
- Parent & Youth Engagement
- Food and Security

#### Agency In-kind Services

- Literacy
- Job Readiness & Mentoring
- Food and Security
- College Preparation
- Behavioral Health Services
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Data Sharing & Dashboard

### In-Kind and Matching Support

The many agencies that have contributed to the planning work have already committed an enormous amount of in-kind resources to this effort. Other organizations that understand the importance and priority of MBK in the City of Houston are invited to bring new resources to support our efforts. It is anticipated that in-kind service dollars, both existing and new, will be brought to the table by partners.

### Matching Partner

**Example 1:** The Houston Galveston Area Council received a workforce development grant and has identified Kashmere, Wheatley, and Scarborough as the targeted service areas.

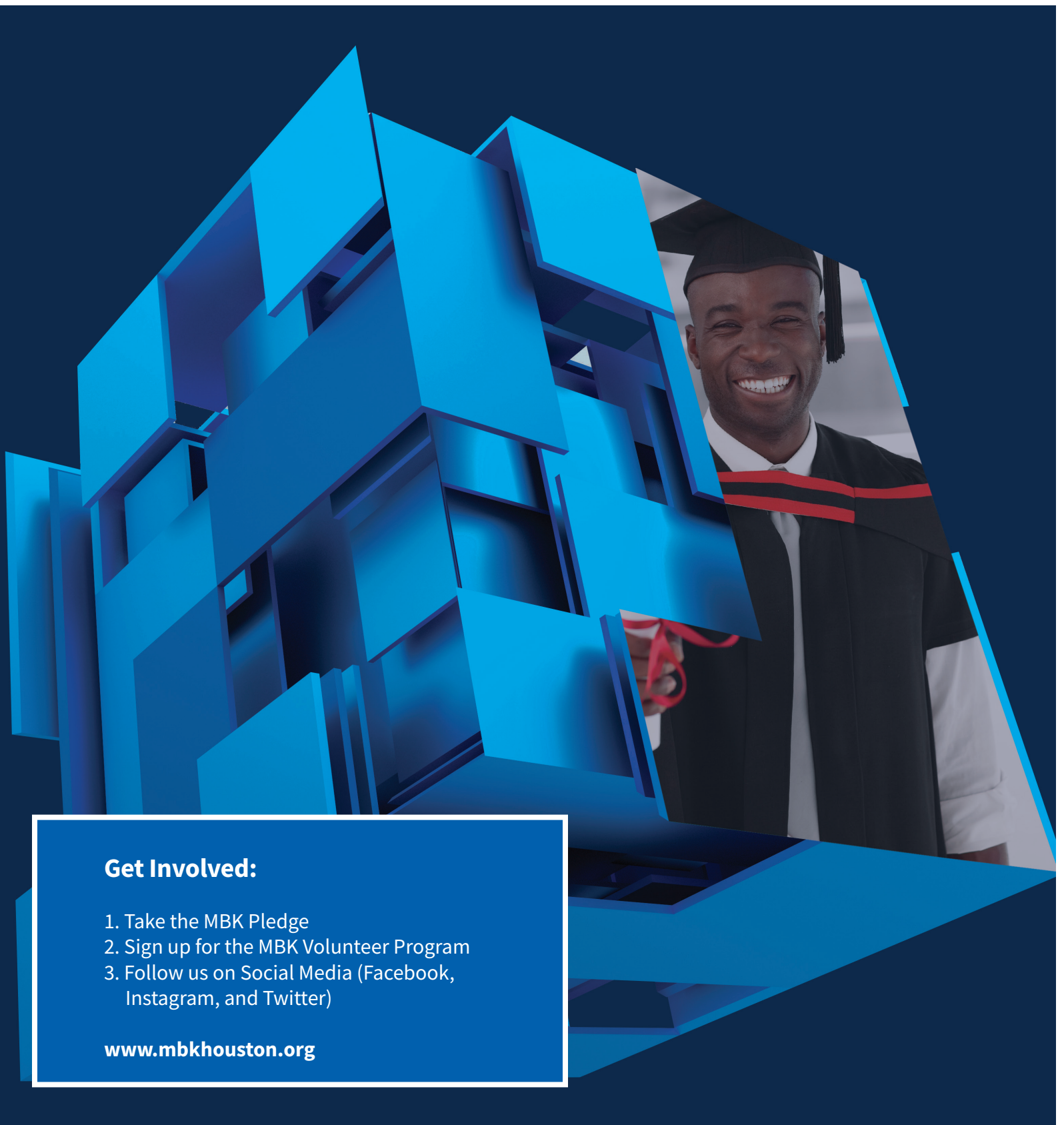
### Matching Partner

**Example 2:** HHD and Harris County CPS are partnering to put a social service worker on the two MBK prototype campuses. Harris County is paying half of the cost of two workers.

### Matching Partner

**Example 3:** Your organization’s funding and focus for activities.





## Get Involved:

1. Take the MBK Pledge
2. Sign up for the MBK Volunteer Program
3. Follow us on Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter)

[www.mbkhouston.org](http://www.mbkhouston.org)

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### HOUSTON MBK Contact Information

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