

The Working On Womanhood program empowers young women to own their narrative and become advocates for the world they want to live in.

WOW is a school-based, trauma-informed group counseling program that improves the social-emotional competencies for girls in 6th–12th grades who are exposed to traumatic stressors in under-resourced communities.

WHY WOW WORKS



IT'S AN EVIDENCED-BASED PROGRAM

that is backed up by a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) conducted by the University of Chicago's Urban Labs.



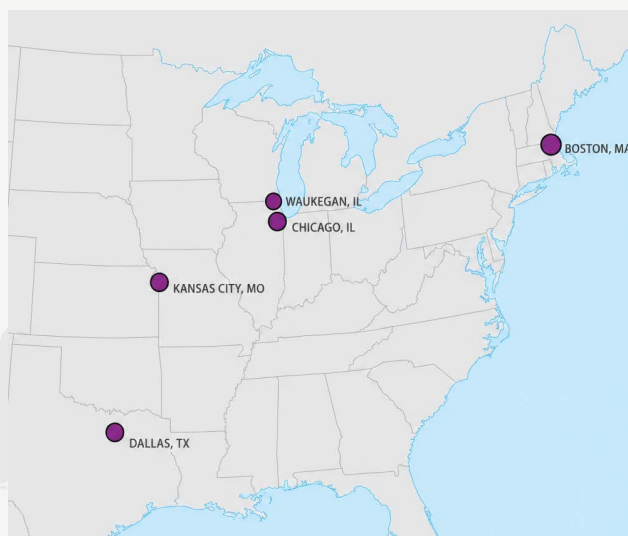
IT SUPPORTS YOUNG WOMEN WITH SIGNIFICANT RISK FACTORS

to exposure to traumatic stressors in high risk and under-resourced communities.



IT DELIVERS ON OUR MISSION

of "meeting students where they are," by providing ongoing basic, social-emotional, and mental health supports.



NATIONAL FOOTPRINT

WOW was launched in 2011 in Chicago as an innovative response to the urgent need to reach girls and young women of color across under-resourced communities. In 2025, WOW served more than 4,600 youth across five cities in the U.S.

HOW WOW WORKS

- ▶ WOW is a two-year, school-based curriculum, delivered through 39 weekly group counseling lessons.
- ▶ Circles are led by WOW counselors, who are college-educated, Youth Guidance staff, many of whom are from the neighborhoods they work in and/or have shared lived experiences.
- ▶ Group sessions include 10–12 young women and each counselor has a caseload of roughly 50 young women per-school.
- ▶ Counselors embed themselves into our partner sites' ecosystem by joining school teams, including Behavioral Health Teams, and provide a level of student support that is uncommon in many urban school environments.

WOW CORE VALUES

The WOW curriculum is informed by cognitive-behavioral therapy, acceptance commitment therapy, and narrative therapy and is organized around five core values:

→ SELF-AWARENESS

I have power. I know who I am. I accept who I am. I inspire others to become who they want to be.

→ EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

I am resilient. I recognize and use all of my emotions. I respond in healthy ways to others' emotions.

→ HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

I respect myself and others. I maintain healthy boundaries in my relationships. I communicate my needs and wants. I advocate for myself.

→ LEADERSHIP

I am a leader. I set goals. I am accountable. I seek mentors to show me the way. I take a role in improving my community.

→ VISIONARY GOAL-SETTING

I have goals. I am motivated. I overcome barriers. I work on my goals every day.



To learn more about the WOW program, please scan the QR code or email info@youth-guidance.org.

**YOUTH
GUIDANCE**
GUIDING KIDS TO BRIGHT FUTURES



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At the start of high school, I was the oldest of five children, and most of my time went to helping my mom whenever I could.

As a result, I struggled with confidence and I started to believe college wasn't a possibility for me. It caused me to withdraw from social activities and to under-perform in school.

It was my WOW Counselor who affirmed me and told me to set my sights higher. Because she believed in me, I was able to believe in myself.

EVERYONE AROUND ME HAS SEEN THE DIFFERENCE WOW HAS MADE IN MY LIFE FIRSTHAND. MY FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND TEACHERS HAVE ALL BENEFITTED FROM THIS VERSION OF ME THAT FIERCELY BELIEVES IN HERSELF.”

– WOW ALUMNA