



Choose 2 Be U


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WHITE PAPER

by: V.O.I.C.E. Consulting, LLC

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Executive Summary

Choose 2 Be U (C2BU) is an innovative youth development program designed to prepare high school students for success through leadership, self-exploration, social entrepreneurship, and work-based learning. Implemented in three adaptable models: school-based, community-based, and residential settings, C2BU addresses academic, behavioral, and social-emotional barriers faced by youth, particularly those from underserved urban communities.

Grounded in evidence-based frameworks such as Habits of Mind, life coaching, and youth-led inquiry, C2BU builds self-awareness, resilience, and purpose. It is designed to evolve into an evidence-based practice by maintaining strong evaluation fidelity, integrating trauma-informed methods, and aligning with public health prevention strategies.

Through dynamic modules, real-world experiences, and mentorship, C2BU inspires youth to “choose to be” their best selves; leaders, innovators, and change-makers in their schools, families, and communities.

Why is this program needed?

Youth in Cleveland and surrounding areas are disproportionately impacted by school disengagement, trauma, and limited access to meaningful career pathways. Many face intergenerational poverty, exposure to violence, and systemic inequities that hinder academic success and emotional well-being.

Schools and community agencies often lack integrated, culturally responsive interventions that empower youth to reflect, lead, and act with intention.

C2BU provides a proactive and asset-based solution by integrating leadership

coaching, prevention education, and entrepreneurial development into one comprehensive framework. The program nurtures the whole student, academically, emotionally, and socially; equipping them with lifelong tools to thrive.

Program Framework

Choose 2 Be U operates as a trauma-informed, evidence-informed youth empowerment initiative across three primary implementation models:

School-Based Implementation

Format: Weekly classroom sessions, optional one-on-one or group coaching

Program Goal: To provide a robust and supportive foundation for students facing academic, behavioral, or emotional challenges that may hinder their success.

Core Components

- Weekly Classroom Coaching Sessions
 - Students engage in modules on Self-Awareness, Interpersonal Growth, and Future Planning, aligned with the Habits of Mind framework.
- Violence Prevention Modules
 - Addresses types of violence, oppression, and media influence through Artivism and Youth-Led Research projects.
- Life Coaching:
 - One-on-one or small group sessions promote identity development, personal responsibility, and life balance.

Outcomes

- 85% of students demonstrate improved self-regulation and decision-making
- 80% show progress in managing stress, anger, or peer pressure
- Increased engagement and academic perseverance

Community-Based Implementation

Format: 6-week hybrid summer model | 25 hours/week

Focus: Workforce & Leadership

Program Goal: To prepare students for 21st-century careers by fostering leadership, entrepreneurship, and digital literacy through a social impact lens.

Core Components

- Workforce Readiness
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Digital Literacy
- Coaching Circles
- Certifications: CPR, Digital Media
- Youth Pitch Showcase

Outcomes

- 90% complete program and produce a professional portfolio
- 80% report improved job readiness and leadership skills
- 75% develop and present a youth-led social enterprise

Long-Term Impact: Graduates enter post-secondary education, internships, or employment with confidence and an entrepreneurial mindset. This model also serves as a pipeline to the C2BU Internship Program.

Residential Implementation

Format: Weekend-based, multi-phase residential leadership sessions.

Program Goal: To empower youth to make positive life choices, build resilience, and strengthen protective factors through prevention and leadership development.

Core Phases

- Who Am I / Where Am I?
- My Role as a Team Member
- The Art of Positive Expression
- You, Me, and the Community

Outcomes

- Improved coping and communication skills
- Reduced behavioral incidents, truancy, and substance use
- Increased civic engagement and community participation

Evaluation Tools

- Pre/post self-assessments
- Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
- Reflection journals, coach logs, and family feedback

High School Internship Extension: Building Career Pathways

The Choose 2 Be U High School Internship Program expands youth leadership into career-focused experiential learning. Students complete 120 hours in one of three tracks:

- Social Services (Counseling & Social Work): Peer education, mentoring, motivational interviewing
- Health & Wellness (Public Health & Prevention): Harm reduction, community outreach, wellness promotion

- Community Advocacy (Nonprofit Leadership): Event planning, digital storytelling, grant writing

Each track blends real-world practice with reflective coaching, preparing students for careers in social impact sectors.

Evaluation and Path Toward Evidence-Based Practice

Data Collection & Analysis

C2BU's evaluation system integrates multiple measures:

- Pre- and post-assessments of skills and self-perception
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
- Coach and staff progress monitoring
- Youth reflection journals
- Capstone project rubrics
- Family and partner feedback

Evidence Development Plan

C2BU is positioned to advance from evidence-informed to evidence-based through:

- **Fidelity Monitoring:** Standardized facilitator manuals, consistent dosage, and data tracking
- **Outcome Validation:** Use of validated tools and control/comparison group studies

- **Partnership Research:** Collaboration with universities to publish outcome data
- **Longitudinal Follow-Up:** Tracking youth engagement, education, and employment trajectories

With consistent implementation and rigorous data analysis, it is our goal for C2BU can qualify under federal registries such as SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP) or Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development.

Theoretical Foundations

1. **Social Learning Theory:** Youth learn through observation, modeling, and social reinforcement.
2. **Positive Youth Development (PYD):** Focus on strengths, competence, and connection.
3. **Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT):** Building self-awareness and managing thought patterns.
4. **Critical Race and Intersectionality Frameworks:** Ensuring culturally responsive, inclusive practices.
5. **Collective Impact Framework:** Aligning schools, families, and communities toward shared outcomes.

Sustainability and Future Growth

From Me 2 U, Inc. envisions C2BU as a cornerstone of youth leadership and workforce readiness throughout Ohio.

Key strategies for sustainability include:

- Expansion of certified facilitators and school partnerships
- Integration into prevention and workforce funding streams (e.g., HRSA, SAMHSA, ARPA)
- Development of a digital C2BU Learning Hub for hybrid and remote access
- Alignment with local DEI and public health initiatives

Choose 2 Be U empowers youth to see themselves not as products of circumstance but as architects of their future.

Through its three-pronged model, it builds leadership, fosters purpose, and creates tangible pathways to success.

By bridging evidence-based practices, prevention strategies, and entrepreneurial innovation, C2BU is poised to become a national model for youth empowerment and social change.

This White Paper was written by V.O.I.C.E. Consulting, LLC, the creator and ongoing developer of the Signature Six Programs.

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Call to Action

From Me 2 U, Inc. invites funders, partners, and policymakers to join our mission of equity, prevention, and transformation. Your investment can support:

- Facility expansion
- Workforce program scale-up
- Research and evaluation initiatives
- Capacity-building for underserved families

Together, we can protect and empower the future.

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