The Alex House Project envisions a world in which low-income families benefit from comprehensive supports. In particular, young women transition successfully into parenthood with peer-led parenting training, encouragement and assistance to access higher education and employment.
THE ALEX HOUSE PROJECT (AHP) is a Brooklyn-based, peer-led 501c3 social service support and leadership development organization for young expecting and parenting mothers, ages 15-25, who reside in economically depressed, New York City neighborhoods.

PEER LEADERSHIP. Alex House participants gain essential parenting skills, develop relational capacity and discover an expanded sense of self and life possibilities. Our graduates then have the opportunity to deepen their learning through advanced leadership training. We train our graduates to lead Alex House outreach, intake, parenting training, and provide emotional supports to their peers. Nobody is better positioned for this work than young parents who themselves have known early parentification, external judgement, racial discrimination, economic hardship, gender bias and personal isolation. Combining the wisdom of harsh life experience with the Alex House approach to parenting training and leadership development awakens in participants their potential to thrive and serve as role models and community leaders. Together, AHP trained, peer educators impact not only the lives of young mothers and their children, but also their extended families, schools and communities.

OUR COMMUNITY. Alex House supports high need, underserved homeless youth, LGBTQ youth, young women in new immigrant communities and parenting youth in foster care, from throughout the five boroughs of NYC. Our community is directly affected by poverty, homophobia and racism. We draw from mother-and-child group homes, family foster care, domestic violence shelters, as well as referrals from community-based organizations, city and state-funded institutions. Our base in Red Hook, Brooklyn is home to New York’s largest NYCHA development, housing over 11,000 people in 2,878 apartments. Ninety percent of the tenants are people of color, as are most AHP participants. We are as racially and ethnically diverse as New York City.

TARGET POPULATIONS. Since its 2013 inception, Alex House is documenting life-changing results with three populations:

“Alex House helped me realize I wanted more for myself and my children. I was able to get out of a toxic relationship and now I am working on getting my diploma with the hopes of going to college. I never dreamed I would be working towards goals like this. Alex House referred me to a children’s hospital where my son was diagnosed correctly and received medical care that I didn’t know was available to him.”

–Young Mother 2013
The results in this report are based on data collected using SEED Impact’s Theory of Change on Its Feet™. This framework guides our visioning, goal-setting and ongoing assessment of Alex House results:

**THE ALEX HOUSE PROJECT’S THEORY OF CHANGE AND OUTCOME PERFORMANCE**

**THEORY OF CHANGE ON ITS FEET™**

**OUTCOME PERFORMANCE MAP**

- **BEGIN ENGAGEMENT**
- **EXPECT-TO-SEE**
  - The minimum change we expect. If not achieved, it will be considered a disappointment or failure.
- **LIKE-TO-SEE**
  - Emergent change through multiple years of exploration, discovery, and achievement.
- **LOVE-TO-SEE**
  - The grounding of new lifestyles, sustained practices and noteworthy accomplishments.
- **CHANGE THAT STICKS**
- **INTENDED LIFE-CHANGING OUTCOMES**
- **PROGRESSIVELY DEEPENING GAINS THROUGH ONGOING ENGAGEMENT**

**YOUNG MOTHERS THEORY OF CHANGE**

At right, we show our vision (logic model) for Young Mothers and detail our theory of change: the progression of outcomes that we equip young mothers to achieve.

The key was to clarify our expect, like and love-to-see outcome statements. Then we put our theory of change on its feet and used it to tally results throughout the year.
**OUTCOME PERFORMANCE FOR TARGET 1: YOUNG MOTHERS**

**Young Mother Outcomes in 2019,** 25 percent increase from 2018
- **11** new to program, completed 8-week parenting classes
- **14** continued engagement, benefitting from ongoing activities and services
- **16** realizing life-changing gains in family stability, education and/or employment

**Cumulative Young Mother Outcomes 2013-2019**
- **85** young mothers completed 8-week parenting classes
- **75** continued beyond first year, benefitting from ongoing activities and services
- **46** realizing life-changing gains in family stability, education and/or employment

"Joining Alex House for me has been like a breath of fresh air. I felt really isolated being new to the area. Here I not only met people my age, I met other mothers with children the same age as my children.”

—Young Mother 2016

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**ONE YOUNG MOTHER’S STORY**

Before engaging in The Alex House Project, Natalie was unemployed and sleeping on other people’s couches. She did not have custody of her son. She enrolled in parenting training with Alex House, spring 2013. She remained active and became a program leader in 2016.

Natalie now has a full-time job and her own apartment. She gained full custody of her son. She reports that her son is more open and doing much better in school now that he is with her. Natalie explains:

“Alex House helped me to see that there was space for change without ever judging me when I messed up. I am now a different person.

Alex House made me accountable. Now I see how my actions affect my life and also my son’s life.”

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In early 2017, young fathers in relationship with our actively engaged young mothers voiced interest in similar training and supports. As one young father asserted about his child’s mother in Alex House parenting training, “I want what she got.”

A decision was made to offer a parallel parenting program for young fathers, including the opportunity for training to serve as peer educators.

**Young Father Outcomes in 2019**, 52 percent increase from 2018
- 2 new to program, completed 8-week parenting classes
- 7 continued engagement, benefitting from ongoing activities and services
- 5 realizing life-changing gains in family stability, education and/or employment

**Cumulative Young Father Outcomes 2013-2019**
- 22 young fathers completed 8-week parenting classes
- 13 continued beyond first year, benefitting from ongoing activities and services
- 6 realizing life-changing gains in family stability, education and/or employment

“I am so happy they have a program like this in my neighborhood. Everyone always talks about the baby’s mother and forget about the fathers. Here they offer the same services to us.”

—Young Father 2017

**2017-2019 Cumulative:***

- Love-to-See (15%)
- Like-to-See (32%)
- Expect-to-See (54%)
ONE YOUNG FATHER’S STORY

When Royal joined the program in 2017, he was unemployed and had no idea what he was going to do. The Alex House staff and peers encouraged him to create his own path and choose who and what he wanted to be. Royal is now employed and has caught up on most of his child support. Royal attests:

“Alex House has helped me grow in many ways. They taught me to take responsibility for my actions.”

PEER EDUCATORS THEORY OF CHANGE

As early as 2014, it became clear that demand for training would exceed the capacity of the Alex House founder to respond on her own. That year she took a pause, accepted only four additional moms (with five children), and devised a training program for peer leaders. Peer leadership rapidly became a hallmark of the Alex House approach.

In 2018, two young fathers joined the leadership corps.

OUTCOME PERFORMANCE FOR TARGET 3: TRAINED PEER EDUCATORS

Peer Educator Outcomes in 2019, 51 percent increase from 2018
- 3 recent recruits completed leadership training program
- 14 facilitating classes and serving as role models, paid staff and community leaders

Cumulative Peer Educator Outcomes 2013-2019
- 18 peer leaders completed leadership training program
- 32 facilitating classes and serving as role models, paid staff and community leaders

Peer educators are paid stipends and function as staff. They are equipped with valuable jobs skills, such as training in case management, mental health, first aid for youth, and to deliver the Alex House curriculum.
ONE PEER EDUCATOR’S STORY

Lakesha completed the 8-week parenting program in June 2018. She enjoyed the classes so much that she decided to observe them again in the Fall, while applying to become a parent educator. She was accepted, completed the leadership training, and facilitated her first class in April 2019.

Lakesha is currently employed as a paid Parent Educator. She is taking make-up classes to graduate from High School in June 2020. Her child has gained socialization skills at Alex House and enjoys being around other children.

Lakesha explains:

“I just love Alex House. I think it’s a great place. They offer love and support to everyone, it’s like having an extended family. I am shy, so it took me a while to come in and enroll. I’m happy that I did. Everyone is really friendly. It’s important to meet moms who are close in age. It made me feel much more comfortable. I didn’t feel judged. I always look forward to the start of the next workshop.”

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Alex House programming is delivered by, with, and for the communities that have shaped and raised our staff, participants and peer educators. Our work is made possible by many partnerships that nourish and extend the reach of our work. Explore our valued Community Partnerships.
The Alex House ecology nurtures supportive relationships and inspires community leadership. It transforms despair into hope and belief in new life possibilities.

This year we are enhancing our approach to tracking longitudinal data. Alex House looks forward to reporting life-changing results long after initial engagement, e.g., numbers of participants who go onto complete High School, apply for college, achieve post-secondary and professional degrees, secure meaningful employment, launch new businesses, maintain stable families and realize dreams fulfilled. Stay tuned.

“I don’t feel so alone anymore thanks to joining the group. The ladies have helped me to express myself more and also to stand up for myself in tough situations.”

—Young Mother 2017

“T have enjoyed my time at Alex House. I completed the leadership training program in 2017 and was the first Dad who completed the program and became a Parent Educator. With me leading the dad’s group, other dads were encouraged to apply to become parent educators as well.”

—Peer Leader 2017

We encourage you to contact SEED Impact for more information on our Theory of Change on Its Feet™.