



## **FLY's Vision and BHAG**

### **Introduction**

This document presents the FLY's Vision statement and our Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG). The Vision statement describes the optimal desired future state FLY is ultimately working toward. The BHAG essentially summarizes our ten-year strategic plan, which is how we will attempt to live out this Vision in our work from now until 2028.

To help in understanding our choices in crafting these statements, following the statements below we have provided a chart that gives detailed explanations of the key words and phrases we chose for each of them.

### **Vision**

FLY envisions a country where **all** kids grow up valued and supported, and the pipeline to prison is replaced with meaningful opportunities for kids to live healthy, free, and productive lives that make stronger, safer, and more vibrant communities for us all.

### **BHAG**

By 2028, through partnering with kids, communities, and systems, FLY will help dismantle California's pipeline to prison, equip 25,000 juvenile-justice and at-risk youth to transform their lives, and strengthen services for marginalized youth in California and beyond.

### Vision Meaning and Justifications

FLY envisions a country where **all** kids grow up valued and supported, and the pipeline to prison is replaced with meaningful opportunities for kids to live healthy, free, and productive lives that make stronger, safer, and more vibrant communities for us all.

<p>FLY envisions a country</p>	<p><i>FLY is looking to the future of youth in communities across the nation. This touches on the fact we often share that America incarcerates more kids than any country in the world. We want to be a part of reversing that trend.</i></p>
<p>where <b>all</b> kids</p>	<p><i><b>All</b> in boldface is a DEI message of inclusion plus a direct echo of FLY’s Belief Statement. We are including kids who are systematically marginalized by the rest of society, including youth of color, youth in poverty, LGBTQ youth, undocumented youth, and youth with disabilities, among others. Until they are valued and supported as indicated in the rest of this statement, our work is not done.</i></p>
<p>grow up valued and supported</p>	<p><i>We want each kid to see themselves as someone of value and worthy of the support of their community, and for the community in turn to see them as a precious resource for which they are responsible to nurture and love.</i></p>
<p>and the pipeline to prison,</p>	<p><i>“Pipeline” implies a steady stream and a lack of choice—something systemic—and “prison” emphasizes the fact that many of those incarcerated as youth end up in prison as adults. It is often the “school-to-prison pipeline” when describing juveniles, which research shows us plays a very significant role, <b>and</b> we also want to include in our language the JJ system, foster system, and other systems that may fail kids. This language also touches on the importance of racial justice in our work as it’s widely known that racism and disproportionate minority contact created and perpetuate the pipeline. It shows how committed FLY is to combatting the cycle of incarceration because it is so detrimental to children and communities. From the very first, we have focused on breaking the cycle and getting kids free of the system.</i></p>

<p>is replaced with meaningful opportunities for kids</p>	<p><i>This is another DEI message of equity. "Meaningful" shows that supports are truly accessible and relevant. "Opportunities" is deliberately plural and is a stronger word than "choices" or "chances." This phrase also has echoes of the growing justice reinvestment movement that encourages the diversion of resources away from incarceration and other forms of punishment toward solutions that benefit kids <u>and</u> bring more resources into their communities.</i></p>
<p>to lead healthy</p>	<p><i>Violence is considered a health epidemic in our country. "Healthy" here refers to kids being able to live without being victims or perpetrators of violence and without experiencing the mental and emotional suffering it causes. Other types of suffering that healthy kids don't have to experience include addiction to drugs and alcohol, abuse and neglect, hunger and poverty, and the lack of emotional support, good adult role models, and other positive influences. We are not speaking specifically about healthcare in this context.</i></p>
<p>free</p>	<p><i>"Free" means both not incarcerated and free from violence and other forms of harm. It also means that their minds and hearts are open to many possibilities because they are connected to their personal power. Freedom is essential to healthy development and the ability to reach their true potential.</i></p>
<p>and productive lives</p>	<p><i>"Productive" means able care for themselves and contribute to their families, communities, and society as a whole, which they will do through education, employment, leadership, civic engagement, etc.</i></p>
<p>that make stronger, safer, and more vibrant communities</p>	<p><i>We are tying the benefit to youth directly to the community. When all kids can live up to their full potential, they become a resource that makes communities stronger. "Safer" also indicates that providing kids with opportunities and alternatives to juvenile incarceration helps break the vicious cycle of crime, making the world safer for them and for the community as a whole. "Vibrant" refers to the fact that they are able to share their unique strengths with the community, making it a more positive place to live, work, and thrive.</i></p>

for us all.	<i>This is a message of inclusion to the audience—what benefits marginalized youth and communities ultimately benefits you as well. You have a direct stake in this.</i>
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**BHAG Meaning and Justifications**

By 2028, through partnering with kids, communities, and systems, FLY will help dismantle California’s pipeline to prison, equip 25,000 juvenile-justice and at-risk youth to transform their lives, and strengthen services for marginalized youth in California and beyond.

By 2028,	<i>This is a 10-year strategic plan.</i>
through partnering with kids, communities, and systems	<i>Leading with partnerships shows FLY’s strong emphasis on collaboration. All of our key messages emphasize not just service work and impact on youth, but impact on communities and systems, much of which happens through partnerships. Volunteerism, which is so strong in FLY, is a form of partnership. Leading with “partnering with youth,” is a nod to FLY’s unique youth-centered culture. It also acknowledges kids’ self-advocacy and agency, recognizing the fact that most of the work of transformation in their lives is theirs.</i>
FLY will help dismantle California’s pipeline to prison,	<i>As in the Vision, the “pipeline” concept shows systemic injustice that forces kids into the system. “Dismantling” is an important word choice because it connotes taking something apart piece by piece over time. This is a reference to our policy agenda/systems change work. The “help” implies that FLY will not be attempting this on our own or doing all of it, rather that we’ll become involved in efforts already underway that best align with our focus and areas of strengths. It makes sense to focus on California not just because we are here already but because this is the state with the highest rate of youth incarceration in the country<sup>i</sup>.</i>
equip 25,000	<i>The replacement of the word “help” with “equip” is in response to staff and youth who feel that “help” lessens the work of the youth (and their agency overall). “Equip” alludes to a partnership with youth where FLY provides support, belief, and the opportunities to build skills. Once equipped with this foundation, youth do the hard work they need to do to exit the system.</i>  <i>The 25,000 reflects our current agency-wide result, which is an 80% positive effect on approximately 2,000 youth per year, which is then multiplied over the 10 years until 2028 (16,000 total) and then adjusted for agency growth (scale up and out: 4,000) and the effect</i>

	<i>of our policy work and Lifeline Institute and the impact it will have (5,000). (This number might be adjusted further up or down.)</i>
juvenile-justice and at-risk youth	<i>Here we specifically name our target populations – the kids most likely to be caught up in the pipeline.</i>
transform their lives,	<i>We know some board, staff, donors frequently fall back on this phrase when talking about what FLY really does. It has strong resonance with internal and external audiences and honors the agency of our kids. They transform or change themselves. This also is a subtle suggestion that they will be stronger and able to stand on their own feet.</i>  <i>We also acknowledge that this is a both/and with systems change and direct service. Even as we work to dismantle the pipeline, there will be kids that are suffering in it, so we will continue to support them in exiting the pipeline and having the chance to pursue positive and productive lives.</i>
and strengthen services for marginalized youth in California and beyond.	<i>This refers to future service efforts like the Lifeline Institute, which is an idea we are evaluating for viability. It also emphasizes our strength in service design and delivery, and from a messaging standpoint, allows us to end the statement on a positive note. Use of the term “marginalized” is a DEI message that encompasses kids with a number of identities and backgrounds, though we can emphasize specific subpopulations depending on the interests of the donor or funder we are speaking to. Lastly, we indicate that we will focus these efforts on California primarily and beyond the state secondarily. If the Lifeline Institute does not go forward in some way this final sentence could be eliminated.</i>

<sup>i</sup> While rates of incarceration are declining overall according to a report released by Children Now in 2015, California has more incarcerated youth (11,532 total or 271 per 100,000 youth) than any other state in the nation. Texas, the second most populous state behind California, has less than half (5,352 total or 204 per 100,000 youth) California’s number of incarcerated youth. Moreover, racial disparities continue to grow with significant overrepresentation of black and brown youth.