

It is a known fact that every individual has a basic urge/desire to accomplish one ultimate “dream”. It is the driving force of their lives and they strive to achieve this-but sometimes they get derailed, either by choice or circumstance. For those who find themselves “off track” there is a viable alternative. That is the basic tenet under which the Love and Peas Foundation was founded.

The intervention of the Love and Peas program begins by befriending children and families in “poverty”. It starts by gathering their perspectives as to what led to their particular circumstances, and then, by using this information, create an action plan to accomplish their ultimate life vision. During this process the previously identified pitfalls will be addressed in order to assure a higher probability of success. Part of the process involves provision for mentoring as a means of connecting these individuals to pertinent resources. Then, having achieved a respectable level of recovery, the revitalized families will be enlisted to share their knowledge with new clients (“pay it forward”). This is the Love and Peas Foundation’s program, a four tiered system best described using the acronym ACCT (Acquaint, Connect, Cultivate, Transform).

Acquaint:

Identify a single child, or children, within an impoverished family through public assistance networks and advertising in low income communities. This will isolate individual families who might be good candidates for the program. The criteria for selection will be based on interest, need, involvement in public assistance programs and participation in any similar programs that suggest a need for intervention.

Connect:

Once engaged, the child and family will be asked a series of questions in order to identify the nature of their need. Then, based on their perception of cause, collect information that substantiates this belief, or not, and expose the underlying causes that serve to perpetuate their unhealthy situation. Thus begins the process of establishing a relationship with our foundation. Everyone involved must be willing participants and show an interest in taking responsibility for themselves and their future. The children and parents will each be paired with a mentor. The primary purpose of the mentor is to be an active resource for the child and the parents to keep them on task throughout the process. Mentors will have abundant resource information and will expend generous amounts of time instructing the families on how to access vital resources, covering areas like how to go about learning a new skill, how to take advantage of available educational opportunities and how to bring into fruition their desire to break down the poverty barrier.

Cultivate:

As part of the basic program, each child and family will take a course in life skills that will teach them how to communicate more effectively, how to acquire direction and stay focused, how to set goals, and how to enhance their personal relationships. The children will take an age appropriate course, separate from their parents. The parents will take a course geared toward professional achievement. The mentors will again be an essential part of this phase by helping families prepare for job interviews, providing input regarding appropriate interview wear and teaching skills that promote job stability.

When participants express interest in having their own business, tutoring regarding ways to start a small business and the essentials of what creates and maintains a successful small business will be made available.

Transform/ Transition:

At this stage of the program the families will be required to give back to the Love and Peas Foundation community. This will be accomplished in a multitude of ways such as: letting other families know about the program and encouraging them to participate, volunteering time to help in the process of program maintenance, and sharing knowledge learned as participants in the program with families that are newly involved. The expectation is that families who have gone through the program will become the mentors for the new members of the Love and Peas community, moving and perpetuating the organization forward. This will ensure that the ACCT system grows exponentially to involve more families and allow the Love and Peas programs to engage an entire community in the mission to stop the cycle of hunger permanently.