

Did You Know?

About the Program

Project B.L.I.S.S. stands for **B**uilding **L**inks **I**mpacts **S**elf-Sufficiency. The Commission of the Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAP Riverside) and the Board of Supervisors have adopted "Bliss County", the Vision of Riverside County without poverty. Project B.L.I.S.S. is the program that implements this Vision. Through a partnership with Move the Mountain Leadership Center in Iowa, "Circles™" was implemented as a major part of Project B.L.I.S.S. as a way to develop relationships and build bridges that make it easier for people to transition out and remain out of poverty.

How the Program Works

Project B.L.I.S.S. identifies a family living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level that has decided that they are ready to change their lives. The family is known as a Circle. Together, with volunteers called Allies, a trusting relationship is formed. The Circle and Allies meet together on a regular basis to help the family who has made the decision to take the necessary steps to move out of the isolation created by poverty and accomplish goals established by the family.

Getting Ahead Curriculum

Getting Ahead is for Circle Leaders and helps prepare them for a "Circle". It helps them understand economic class issues and helps them develop a plan to improve their resources and be an effective Circle Leader. Participants learn how the hidden rules of class can be used to build financial, emotional, social and other resources.

Project B.L.I.S.S. (Building Links Impacts Self-Sufficiency)

Nine graduates of Project B.L.I.S.S. were recognized at a ceremony at Riverside's Kansas Avenue Resource Center in January, 2011. Notable successes of this class include:



- Project B.L.I.S.S.'s oldest graduate (71 years old)
- 2 of the 9 obtained better housing
- 6 of the 9 enrolled in the Individual Development Account (IDA) program
- 1 of the 9 became a U.S. Citizen and obtained her daycare license
- 2 enrolled in English as Second Language classes
- 4 of the 9 obtained better education
- 3 of the 9 increased their income
- 4 of the 9 are mentoring and teaching classes for new families



A partnership was formed with Desert Sands Unified School District (Head start) in 2010. Getting Ahead classes have been provided to approximately 30 families. Weekly Life Skills classes are also provided for the families hosted at the District Office in La Quinta, CA. Fourteen families graduated from the Getting Ahead Class in December, 2010.