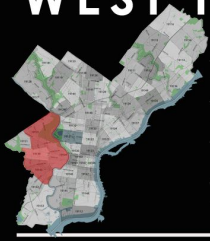


WEST PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE AMBASSADORS



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As College Ambassadors, we collect research on how our peers, families, schools, and communities help or fail to help us prepare for college. We are storytellers, expressing the voice of the African-American male. Furthermore, we are advocates for change, reaching out to people with power and influencing their decisions on making the community a better place while refusing to look down on another brother unless we are helping him up.

We have identified several supports that we believe a healthy community should provide to help young Black boys become successful young men. Based on our firsthand experiences, secondary research, and a survey of 58 of our peers, we have graded West Philadelphia on its ability to prepare us for successful manhood. This report card will serve as the basis for an assessment tool that can be used to help programs better serve young Black men.

LOVE

is the mental assurance that we can depend on our village to not give up on us, to guide us in the right direction, and to give us the overwhelming feeling of affection that will help us to overcome obstacles. A healthy community should provide safe family and neighborhood environments, as well as developmental and nurturing supports within our neighborhoods.



RESOURCES

are the tools we need to better ourselves and our communities. A healthy community should provide well-maintained and clean houses, blocks and neighborhoods, as well as adults who are well-connected to social, political and economic resources.



EDUCATION

includes book smarts, life smarts provided by oldheads who can help us make wise decisions, and social capital provided by good connections. A healthy community should provide a good number of college-educated residents and access to high quality education supports such as SAT prep and academic tutoring.



VISION

comes from the early and consistent exposure to positive ideas, messages, and dreams. A healthy community should provide strong postsecondary messages through TV and radio ads, billboards, and other information sources. It should also provide cultural and professional enrichment opportunities for young children.



OPPORTUNITIES

include access to activities, connections, supports, and information that will help us to make our dreams come true. A healthy community should have a significant number of successful residents who are doing professional work, owning businesses, or serving as civic leaders, as well as provide young Black men with a significant level of interaction with well-educated and professional adult Black men.

