



# Girls' LEAP Prospectus



## Description:

*Girls' LEAP (Lifetime Empowerment and Awareness Program) has increased the safety and well-being of over 3,500 high-risk girls in underserved areas in Boston since 1997. By partnering with after-school agencies, Girls' LEAP engages girls (ages 8-18) in unique programming that addresses the physical and emotional aspects of violence and focuses on building self-defense techniques, decision-making and conflict resolution skills, and personal courage. Programs are led by all-female teaching teams of adult women with undergraduates and Teen Mentors, all of whom serve as strong role models for participants. Training and follow-up with host agency staff are other key components of the model designed to increase program effectiveness and foster enduring impact. Girls' LEAP plans to double its capacity over the next two years to serve 1,000 girls annually.*

**Location:** Cambridge, MA

**Website:** www.girlsleap.org

**Founded:** 1997

**Current Budget:** \$320,000

## Geography & People Served:

Girls ages 8-18, prioritizing communities with high exposure to violence

## Social Problem:

- Girls (8-18) are increasingly and disproportionately put in challenging situations in their schools, neighborhoods, and intimate relationships.
- Nationally, 83 percent of girls report being sexually harassed in school.
- In Massachusetts, one in five girls experiences dating violence, and girls rank violence against women and girls as their top concern.
- In Boston, incidents of reported sexual assault are highest among girls aged 10-14.
- Girls have few safe forums to discuss issues of violence and learn how to respond constructively.
- Girls in Boston constitute only 39 percent of after-school participants, and most after-school programs do not have the expertise to address with girls the physical and emotional aspects of violence.

## Key Accomplishments & Social Impact:

- 3,500 girls served since 1997
- 83 percent of participating girls felt more confident in their ability to stay safe
- 93 percent of participating girls learned how and when to use physical self-defense skills
- 74 percent of participating girls showed increased self-esteem
- Received multiple awards, including the Boston Celtics: Heroes Among Us Award (2007), Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women: Unsung Heroines Award (2006), and Best Practices Award, Girl Scouts, Swift Water Council (2003)

## Two-Year Goals:

- Grow program to serve 1,000 girls annually
- Increase the number of school and after-school programs to 40 annually
- Enhance the Teen Mentor program by adding program hours and strengthening the mentors' role in community outreach
- Increase full-time and part-time staffing
- Increase partner relationship management
- Build monitoring & evaluation system

**Total Investment – Two Years:** \$800,000

Girls' LEAP Prospectus 2008

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## Ways to Invest

### In-Kind Support

- Two or three board members with expertise in financial management and/or organizational growth
- Office space
- Printing and design services
- Event support

### Financial Support

- \$50,000** Staffing for program growth
- \$25,000** Partner agency relationship management
- \$15,000** Teen Mentor expansion
- \$10,000** Evaluation system development
- \$5,000** Communications, outreach
- \$1,000** Sponsorship of girl in Teen Mentor program



a Root Cause social enterprise

## Need & Opportunity

*“Healthy, safe, empowered girls transform communities.”*

Sylvia Mathews Burwell, president, Global Development Program, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

### Social Problem

Girls (ages 8-18) are increasingly and disproportionately put in challenging situations in greater Boston and beyond. Such situations are not isolated exceptions, but occur every day in schools, neighborhoods, and intimate relationships where girls face a variety of violent and unhealthy situations. For example,

- 83 percent of middle and high school girls nationally report having been sexually harassed in school.<sup>1</sup>
- 40 percent of Boston girls report that they are more likely than boys to rarely or never feel safe in multiple locations, including neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup>
- One in five girls in Massachusetts experiences physical or sexual violence when dating.<sup>3</sup>
- Incidents of sexual assault are greater for girls aged 10-14 in Boston than for any other five-year age bracket.<sup>4</sup>
- Girls in Massachusetts have identified violence as their top issue of concern, outranking other challenges such as eating disorders, teen pregnancy, racial discrimination, and poverty.<sup>5</sup>

Failing to address girls' needs has many harmful consequences in both the short term and long term. In the short term, girls are at risk for immediate physical and emotional harm that often recurs. In fact, domestic violence has the highest re-victimization rate of any crime with sexual assault being the second-highest.<sup>6</sup> Research has also shown that girls typically respond to victimization and trauma by engaging in self-destructive or internalized behaviors, including smoking, unhealthy weight control, and suicidal behavior.<sup>7</sup>

However, increasing evidence also suggests that girls are beginning to externalize their response to victimization and trauma by participating in activities that jeopardize the safety of others, as reflected by an alarming spike in girl gang activity and involvement with the juvenile justice system.<sup>8</sup> Girls are the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice system both locally and nationally. In Massachusetts, the number of girls in juvenile custody increased by 168 percent over the 10-year period from 1995 to 2005. National studies indicate that at least 70 percent of incarcerated girls report histories of physical or sexual abuse. In addition, Boston is experiencing a rise in girl gang involvement and teenage prostitution, as recently highlighted by a Boston City Council special report. For girls to thrive, there must be an alternative to unhealthy behavior and a violent gang response. As Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, a nationally recognized public health leader, summarizes, “we need to help girls be both non-victim and non-violent.”<sup>9, 10</sup>

Girls who miss or perform poorly in school or engage in high-risk behaviors in the short term due to their unspoken fears and experiences may face long-term problems. Their academic, professional, and emotional development can be thwarted if they do not have adult support, safety, or skills to deal with violence (or the threat of violence) in their lives. Most concerning is the very real possibility that these problems and behaviors will transfer to the next generation of girls, who will be at greater risk for victimization and less able to respond in ways that do not jeopardize their health or the health of others.

### Root Cause Factors

Researchers and practitioners typically highlight social and cultural norms that condone violence when trying to understand why girls are struggling to be “non-victim and non-violent.” Girls often do not believe in their own right to safety and tend to minimize their own experiences. Media, family members, and, most importantly, peer groups

<sup>1</sup> *Harassment-Free Hallways: How to Stop Sexual Harassment in Schools* (American Association of University Women Educational Foundation, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the 2004 Boston Youth Survey* (City of Boston, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> Jay Silverman et al., “Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Abuse, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicide,” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Vol 286 no 5 (2001).

<sup>4</sup> *The 2003 Boston Trend Report: Snapshot of Boston's Children and Youth* (Boston Center for Youth and Family Services, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> 2001 Girls' Hearing Survey Results, <http://www.mass.gov/women/pubs/Bostongirlsurvey.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> *Reducing Repeat Sexual Assault* (Vera Institute of Justice, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> *The 2003 Boston Trend Report: Snapshot of Boston's Children and Youth* (Boston Center for Youth and Family Services, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> *Task Force on Youth Violent Crime Prevention*, Boston City Council (2006).

<sup>9</sup> Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Social Innovation Forum Breakfast Series, February 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Prothrow-Stith is a widely acclaimed physician who has worked extensively with inner-city youth in combating violence. She has worked as a public health practitioner in inner-city hospitals and neighborhood clinics and as chief spokeswoman and curriculum developer for violence prevention in schools and communities. Currently, she is associate dean for faculty development and a professor at the Harvard School of Public Health.

often normalize unhealthy relationships. This “normalization” is reflected by the fact that over 75 percent of high school girls endorse some form of coerced sex, according to a survey of teen dating attitudes.<sup>11</sup> In addition, 40 percent of girls aged 14-17 know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, girls’ beliefs about their experiences can be further reinforced when adults do not recognize or take girls’ reports of violence and harassment seriously. In their research on after-school programs in Boston, Molly Mead and her team observed that even when sexual harassment is reported, staff may not recognize the “out of line” nature of events and may unintentionally send the message that girls need to “learn how to cope.”<sup>13</sup>

In addition, researchers have identified factors that increase girls’ risk of dating and sexual violence, including prior exposure to violence as a child; feelings of low self-esteem; sadness or hopelessness; depression; and experiences of harassment by peers.<sup>14</sup> Data from the 2006 Boston Youth Survey and the 2003 Boston Trend Report show that many girls are susceptible:

- 40 percent of female teens reported being sad or feeling hopeless every day for at least two weeks in a row.<sup>15</sup>
- Girls were more likely than boys to exhibit a higher number of depressive symptoms (48 vs. 28 percent).<sup>16</sup>
- Girls were more likely than boys to report having stress for a variety of reasons, including conflict with others (39 vs. 19 percent).<sup>17</sup>

Addressing these social norms and risk factors requires engaging girls directly in peer groups to build their resiliency and teaching adults who work with girls about healthy development and the impact of violence, so that they can foster a safe programming environment and respond supportively to girls’ experiences.

### **Current Landscape**

While after-school programs are a proven youth development vehicle, most are not designed to help girls overcome the specific physical and emotional challenges they face in their daily lives.<sup>18</sup> For one thing, most after-school programs focus on sports or recreation and do not typically offer activities that address girls’ interests or skills. For example, girls report that they are half as likely as boys to participate in sports programs (33 percent vs. 67 percent) and significantly less likely to participate in after-school programs in general. Boys, in turn, have quickly become the overwhelming majority of participants (61 percent) in after-school programming in Boston. To increase girls’ participation, programs may look to recruit more strong female leaders in after-school programming to equip girls with skills to react to challenging situations in the future. A recent study found that by recruiting high-quality female staff, organizations have seen girls’ participation in programs skyrocket as girls connect with female adult role models.<sup>19</sup>

With the topic of girls’ fears and experiences largely unaddressed during or after school, girls have few safe opportunities to explore vital questions of safety, boundaries, and constructive options when put in challenging situations. As a teen participant in Girls’ LEAP powerfully stated, “Every girl knows someone that’s been shot, but no one will talk to us about how we feel about it. At Girls’ LEAP, we have developed an emotional language, and we have the time to talk about it.”<sup>20</sup> Without forums to explore the effect of violence on their lives, girls are less likely to develop the physical and self-reflective skills necessary for their positive development and well-being.

Girls can find healing and resilience in programs that are designed to draw upon their strengths and build their capacities. The Girls’ Coalition of Boston suggests that girls thrive when programs incorporate the following characteristics:

- Safe and supportive space
- Shared responsibility and power

<sup>11</sup> Day One Sexual Assault and Trauma Resource Center, Survey Results, 1998. <http://www.dayoneri.org/datingattitudessurvey.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> End Abuse Center, Facts of Domestic Violence, <http://www.endabuse.org/resources/facts/DomesticViolence.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Kathryn Weaver et al., “Where Are the Girls?” A Report of the Greater Boston Girls’ Coalition (2004).

<sup>14</sup> Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2008, <http://www.buildinghealthyteenrelationships.org>.

<sup>15</sup> *The 2003 Boston Trend Report: Snapshot of Boston’s Children and Youth* (Boston Center for Youth and Family Services, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> *Report of the 2006 Boston Youth Survey* (City of Boston, 2006).

<sup>17</sup> *The 2003 Boston Trend Report: Snapshot of Boston’s Children and Youth* (Boston Center for Youth and Family Services, 2003).

<sup>18</sup> Kathryn Weaver et al., “Where Are the Girls?” A Report of the Greater Boston Girls’ Coalition (2004).

<sup>19</sup> *Safe and Engaged Teens*, Report of the 2007 Summer Safety Funder Collaborative (2007).

<sup>20</sup> Anonymous Girls’ LEAP participant.

- Mentoring relationships
- Opportunities for new learning
- Gender sensitivity<sup>21</sup>

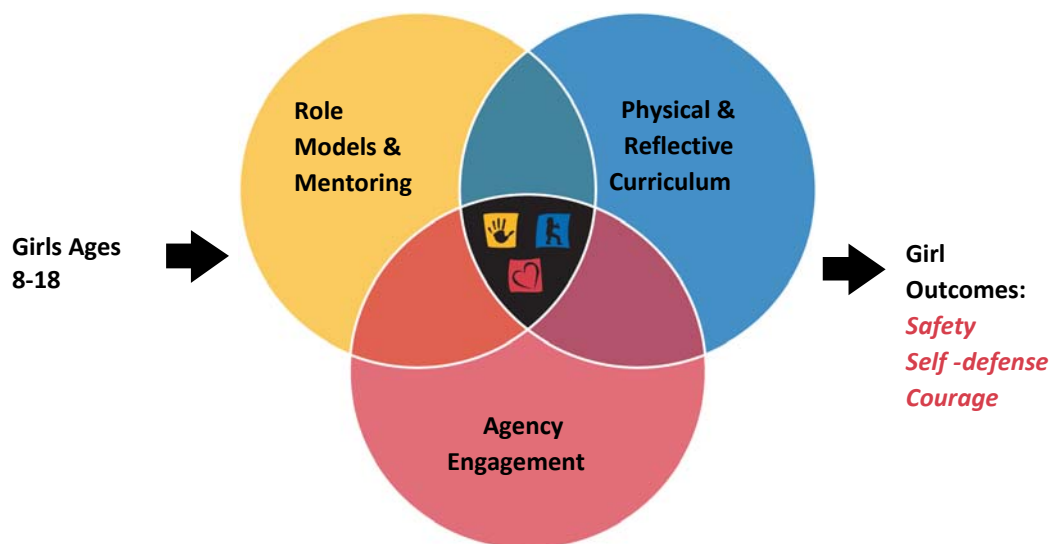
With 40,000 girls (ages 8-18) in Boston and few after-school programs that fully address their needs, there is high demand for an effective, well-structured program that engages girls during the most dangerous time of the day (3 to 6 p.m.) and has the potential to break the cycle of victimization and violence at an early age.<sup>22</sup>

### Social Innovation in Action: The Girls' LEAP Model

*"This program teaches us how to value our voice and how to use it. I am still the person I was yesterday. I have not changed. I have learned."*

Girls' LEAP Participant

Since 1997, Girls' LEAP (Lifetime Empowerment and Awareness Program) has increased the safety and well-being of over 3,500 girls and young women (ages 8-18) in Boston, prioritizing communities experiencing high exposure to violence. Currently, Girls' LEAP reaches 650 girls annually with the only program in Boston focused on physical and reflective skill development to help girls combat the violent circumstances they face. Its innovative model (see graphic below), developed over 10 years, started as a grassroots response to violence against women in Cambridge and has demonstrated positive outcomes for girls in safety, self-defense, and courage. Girls' LEAP works in partnership with existing community agencies, offering 22 programs at 17 locations in 2007. The model has proven effective and is in such great demand that Girls' LEAP had to turn away as many agencies as it could serve last year. As shown in the graphic below, the Girls' LEAP model comprises three core components: role models and mentoring, physical and reflective curriculum, and agency engagement.



#### Role Models and Mentoring

Strong female role models are critical for girls' development and Girls' LEAP satisfies this need by delivering programs with all-female teaching teams consisting of Teen Mentors, undergraduate "teaching women," and adult facilitators. In combination, these women provide a diverse set of role models and individual interaction with participants:

- *Teen Mentors:* Through the Girls' LEAP Teen Mentor program, graduates of LEAP programs are trained to serve as assistant teachers in programs for younger girls. In 2007, Girls' LEAP developed the Teen Mentor program into a year-round training and employment opportunity that incorporates assisting LEAP

<sup>21</sup> Kathryn Weaver et al., "Where Are the Girls?" A Report of the Greater Boston Girls' Coalition (2004).

<sup>22</sup> The 2003 Boston Trend Report: Snapshot of Boston's Children and Youth (Boston Center for Youth and Family Services, 2003).

programs and making presentations to youth and adult audiences on solutions to violence against women and girls.

- *Teaching Women:* The Girls' LEAP Teaching Women program trains and employs undergraduate women from Wellesley and Simmons Colleges to help with LEAP programs in Boston neighborhoods.
- *Adult Facilitators:* An adult facilitator is always present to lead the program, supported by the Teen Mentors and Teaching Women. Facilitators typically have experience in youth development and education and are trained in LEAP's curriculum.

Collectively, the team mentors participants and facilitates their success in the program and beyond.

**Physical and Reflective Curriculum**

Girls' LEAP programs use an original curriculum that combines physical self-defense skills with self-reflective activities and is based on a series of set overarching themes with activities to match them. For example, some themes with corresponding activities are:

- Setting personal boundaries
- Sexual harassment versus flirting
- Anger de-escalation and conflict resolution
- Safe and unsafe secrets
- Healthy relationships
- Everyday courage

Themes are linked to girls' abilities to develop skills to ensure safety. As a result, girls finish the program with a powerful toolkit that will help them make constructive choices in both everyday and potentially violent situations.

Girls' LEAP offers three main programs using this curriculum. The core program is the intense standard program, but introductory and mother-daughter programs are also offered. Each program is hosted by a community-based partner agency that provides facilities and recruits participants. LEAP also requests that at least one partner staff member participate with the girls.

Program	Description
Introductory Workshop, 2-4 hours	An introduction to basic self-defense and awareness skills. Participants learn escape skills and reflective activities focused on personal boundary setting and saying no.
Standard Program, 16-20 hours (2 hours each session)	The most transformative of all LEAP offerings, this 8- to 10-session program empowers participants through completion of the entire self-reflective and physical skill curriculum. It culminates with "community days," when participants "teach back" the skills and insights they have gained to friends, family, interested community members, and partner agency staff.
Mother-Daughter Program, 15-18 hours	Designed for joint participation, this program offers training in LEAP self-reflective and physical skills and aims to build communication and shared strength between girls and a significant female adult in a safe environment. Programs include large group sessions and opportunities for girls and adult women to interact separately.

**Agency Engagement**

LEAP engages well-established community agencies in two ways to activate them in their goal as potential advocates for girls. Primarily, LEAP's agency engagement is its work with existing partners by leading training on girls' development, encouraging staff participation in program activities, and providing follow-on support. Currently, Girls' LEAP trains partner organizations' staff in understanding the impact of violence on girls, ways to foster girls' healthy development, and a strengths-based pedagogy that improves staff competency and investment in programming for girls. The organization expects partner agency staff to participate in the LEAP program itself, thereby becoming familiar with the programming skills and LEAP impact so that they can also incorporate LEAP skills in daily interactions. Secondly, LEAP engages other agencies that want to improve their

work with girls through training. LEAP takes this opportunity to share knowledge and to promote organizational visibility as an expert in girls' programming and violence prevention.

### Social Impact

Girls' LEAP is committed to making ongoing improvements in its ability to measure its impact and is in the midst of expanding its measurement toolbox. LEAP currently collects data from participating girls through pre- and post-program surveys. LEAP is also piloting an observation evaluation tool that would allow the facilitators to track the engagement and progress of participants upon intake and exit. By tracking changes in girls' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors, LEAP can alter the program accordingly to ensure it is achieving its intended impact. The table below is a sample of the evaluation data Girls' LEAP has collected during the current academic year. All of the data are reported from the Girls' LEAP participants directly.

Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who feel more confident in their ability to stay safe</li> </ul>	83%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who report that they learned multiple ways to stay safe</li> </ul>	87%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who learned when to leave an unsafe situation</li> </ul>	84%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who learned to trust their feelings when they think they are in an unsafe situation</li> </ul>	87%
Self-Defense Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who say they learned how and when to use physical defense skills</li> </ul>	93%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who learned how to use their words to get away from a dangerous situation</li> </ul>	89%
Courage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who showed increased self-esteem</li> </ul>	74%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who learned to feel sure of themselves</li> </ul>	87%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who learned to respect others</li> </ul>	83%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who learned to accept advice and ideas from others</li> </ul>	81%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who reported that Girls' LEAP helped them choose a trusted adult to talk to</li> </ul>	84%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of girls who reported that Girls' LEAP helped them to communicate how they feel</li> </ul>	75%

LEAP is in the early stages of determining how to assess effectiveness at the agency level, with the primary outcome being to improve the agency's ability to address the needs of the girls it serves. Anecdotal evidence from partner agencies that have been working with LEAP for several years suggests that, as the partnership deepens, each agency begins to prioritize girl programming and initiates changes in its offerings for girls. This is reflected in a comment from Liz, a Somerville Boys and Girls Club director: "I feel the girls are really taking away a new confidence in themselves. In addition, it has been really refreshing for me to take the class and learn and re-learn techniques of how to lead groups and work with girls."

### Program Performance

Girls' LEAP offers a girl-specific program model and pedagogical approach that have generated strong demand from girls and community partners as a means of addressing rising youth violence. Youth development organizations across Greater Boston increasingly request both the programs for girls and the trainings for their staff in violence prevention, healthy development for girls, and strengths-based teaching. LEAP is responding to that demand by increasing its capacity to serve 1,000 girls annually by 2010. This growth will occur by deepening relationships with existing partner agencies to enroll more girls at those sites and adding new partners. To ensure that LEAP continues to add value for its partners and can articulate that value to enlist new partners, LEAP is exploring how to gather data on partner agency satisfaction and anticipates adding this measure in the future. The table on the next page provides a sample of program performance measures that LEAP is tracking.

	2006A	2007A	2008E	2009E	2010E
Number of girls	420	500	650	800	1,000
Number of safety programs	20	22	28	34	40
Number of Teen Mentor hours	110	340	1,450	2,050	2,650

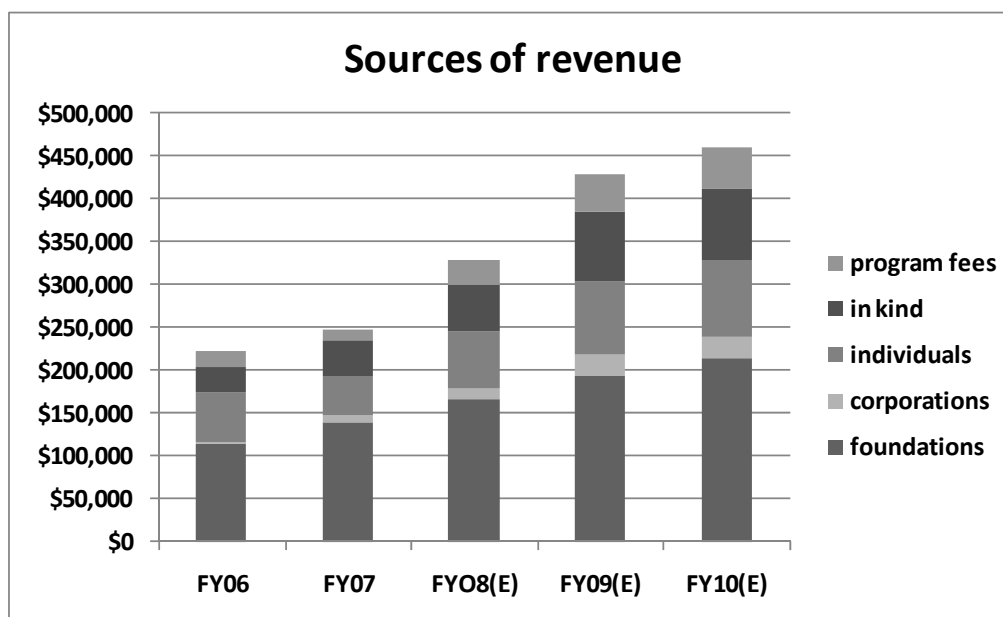
### Financial Sustainability

Girls' LEAP began as a volunteer-led effort, and hired its first full-time staff member in 2002. As the organization grew, LEAP devised a strategy to keep costs low, looking to part-time instructors to execute on its mission. While the strategy has been successful, recent demand for its program cannot be met with predominantly part-time staff. Therefore, LEAP is planning to support its growth strategy through a hybrid staffing model, with part-time instructors and additional full-time program staff who will have both teaching and program management responsibilities. Budget growth over the next two years is primarily driven by an increase in staff and anticipated investment in essential infrastructure and systems, including larger office space and program evaluation expertise. To achieve its goal of serving 1,000 girls annually, LEAP is seeking an investment of \$800,000 in philanthropic support over the next two years.

	2006A	2007A	2008E	2009E	2010E
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$203,000	\$185,000**	\$320,000	\$430,000	\$460,000
<b>Total Full-Time Staff</b>	2	3	4	5	5
<b>Total Part-Time Staff</b>	6	6	9	12	14

\*\*Girls' LEAP's budget dip reflects its decision to defer spending to 2008 when the appropriate infrastructure/staffing has been put into place for expansion

As shown in the chart (below), LEAP is a financially sustainable organization with a deliberate strategy for diversified revenue generation. Unique among violence-prevention programs, LEAP is able to earn approximately 10 percent of its revenue from agency fees.<sup>23</sup> Every partner agency contributes to the cost of the programs, reflecting the high value agencies place on what LEAP delivers. Fees are typically negotiated on a sliding scale to ensure that LEAP can work with agencies in underserved communities. Projected growth in fees is based on growth in the number of programs offered.



<sup>23</sup> Based on estimated 2008 budget.

In addition to fees, LEAP has relied on a strong base of foundation grants and individual gifts since its inception. During this next period of growth and organizational development, LEAP will continue to turn to foundations and individuals. LEAP is planning to expand its network of individual donors through its annual campaign and event series and deepen relationships with those donors who can make major gifts. At the same time, LEAP is focused on gradually increasing revenue from corporations, with an initial goal of doubling corporate dollars over the next year, primarily through event sponsorship. LEAP has successfully garnered in-kind support for legal, communications, and event services and will continue to leverage these resources whenever possible.

## Leadership

Deborah Weaver, the executive director of Girls' LEAP, co-founded the organization as a community response to a wave of violence against women and girls in Cambridge in 1994 and 1995. Deborah holds an MFA equivalent in dance and is a faculty member in the department of physical education, recreation, and athletics at Wellesley College. She has been teaching for over 30 years, focusing on the relationship between self-esteem, physical training, and well-being. LEAP was co-founded by Peggy Barrett, previously the director of the Tufts Women's Center and now the education director at the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center.

Deborah's success in leading Girls' LEAP has been recognized by the local community and beyond. Recent awards for Deborah and Girls' LEAP include the Boston Celtics: Heroes Among Us Award (2007), Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women: Unsung Heroines Award (2006), and Best Practices Award, Girl Scouts, Swift Water Council (2003). Deborah is supported by a program manager with significant experience in youth program development and by a director of development and finance with experience in at-risk youth programs and nonprofit management and finance.

Girls' LEAP is supported by an eight-member board of directors, including people with expertise in business, nonprofit management and philanthropic investment, legal aspects of violence against women, and program evaluation.

## Key Funders

Girls' LEAP has received funding from a variety of sources, demonstrating support for the organization's approach and results to date. They include:

- United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Today's Girls...Tomorrow's Leaders
- Boston Foundation
- Edith Glick Shoolman Children's Foundation
- George Macomber Family Charitable Gift Fund
- Anna B. Stearns Foundation
- Kaizen Corporation/Anna's Taqueria
- Wellesley College
- Jane Cook 1983 Charitable Trust
- Janey Fund
- Simmons College
- Harvard University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology



### Key Measures Report with Targets (April 2008–March 2009)

Below is a summary of the key measures that Girls' LEAP will be tracking for the first 12 months after the Social Innovation Forum's showcase event, as a way to demonstrate progress toward its two-year goals, capture lessons learned, and make course corrections as needed:

	Baseline (March 08)	Target (March 09)
<b>Program Performance</b>		
Increase number of girls	650	800
Increase number of programs	28	34
Increase number of Teen Mentor hours	1,450	2,050
<b>Organizational Health/Capacity-Building</b>		
Add two or three board members	8	10-12
Increase number of individual gifts greater than \$500	20	30
Cultivate new major gifts of at least \$2,500	-	3
Increase part-time staff	9	12
Increase full-time staff	4	5
Design intake/exit survey for partner agency	-	Completed/In use
Develop program database	-	Completed/In use
Refine/implement participant observation tool	Include 6 programs	Include 24 programs

## Success Stories

### Yordanos, Teen Mentor

My name is Yordanos. I'm 15 years old. I'm the second-oldest in my family, and I'm a freshman at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School. I'm also a Teen Mentor for Girls' LEAP.

When I started with LEAP last June, I didn't like it. The training was intense. I thought, "Why are we doing this? I'll never use it." I didn't get along with some of the girls, and my friends thought LEAP was a joke. I laughed along, but underneath, I was afraid that I was too weak to make it. I felt unsure and powerless.

As time progressed, I started to loosen up. I helped teach two programs, one in Dorchester and one in Roxbury. In Dorchester, a girl named Shayla asked me about becoming a Teen Mentor. I was surprised that she would see me as a leader. I thought I was just there to throw out some advice in the small group reflections. The recognition felt good.

At the end of the summer, LEAP staff asked me to continue as a Teen Mentor. I realized that I liked teaching other girls the skills I had learned. I noticed that I'd come a long way; I didn't need anyone to tell me that. I also found the skills useful. I was more aware walking home in the dark, and I felt safer and more confident. I didn't want that feeling to go away.

When the summer Teen Mentor program closed with a community day to show our family and friends what we had learned, I decided right there to continue as a Teen Mentor through the school year.

This fall, I was asked to speak at the training for new Teen Mentors. When I walked in the room, the first person I saw was Shayla. She was so bright you couldn't miss her! It felt good that I had helped her to become a Teen Mentor. I knew I was advocating for something important. Now, we attend Teen Mentor meetings together!

I've had some bad experiences with girls. Girls' LEAP was the first positive experience I have had working with girls. It feels good knowing that there are other girls like me out there. I'm not ashamed to talk to my friends about Girls' LEAP, either. I am much more involved with LEAP and want other teens to have the same opportunity. The initial challenge and doubt were worth it. Now I'm more aware, confident, and strong. Since becoming a Teen Mentor, I know I'm powerful!



***Since becoming a Teen Mentor,  
I know I'm powerful!***

Yordanos

### **Christina, LEAP participant**

My name is Christina, but everyone calls me CT. I grew up in Dorchester but attended public schools in Wellesley through the METCO program. I was pretty good at juggling both worlds until one day in high school they collided. During my junior year of high school a string of rape attacks occurred in my neighborhood. I asked a friend to get me a knife....

Girls' LEAP taught me that an aggressive attitude can make a dangerous situation more volatile. I believed that I needed a weapon, because I wasn't comfortable with the power of my body and my mind. LEAP does not make me think that I'm Superwoman, but I have learned to avoid and escape dangerous situations.

My own experiences are a vital advantage when working with Girls' LEAP participants. We come from the same neighborhoods. The fact that a participant can identify with me is influential. I want other young women to understand that they have the same capacity to be empowered and safe.



***LEAP does not make me think that I'm Superwoman, but I have learned to avoid and escape dangerous situations.***

Christina