

Out-of-School Time Stories

BOOST Grantee Spotlight: **Change Your Story**

For many young people in Georgia, the journey through childhood and adolescence is shaped by circumstances far beyond their control. Juvenile Justice involvement, chronic absenteeism, academic gaps, and family instability can create barriers that make success feel out of reach. Change Your Story exists to help ensure that barriers like these do not define a young person's future.

Founded more than a decade ago, Change Your Story's mission is to assist women and girls in creating positive life outcomes through programs that are relevant, progressive, and empowering. **The organization serves justice-impacted and at-risk youth across Metro Atlanta with one clear message: your circumstances do not determine who you can become.** Through consistent academic support, mentorship, mental health services, and enrichment experiences, the program helps young people build confidence and discover their strengths. Change Your Story's programming and supports are aimed at helping youth imagine new possibilities for their lives.



“They're our next attorneys and doctors and nurses and scientists and politicians, they're our next leaders of the future.



— **Angela Williams Ross, Founder & CEO**



2025-2026 Youth Served:

***30 Afterschool**



Ages Served:

K-12th Grade

Counties Served:

Douglas, Dekalb

Programming Offered:

Afterschool

BOOST Grant Purpose:

-  Expand access
-  Reduce barriers
-  Increase quality

OST Government Funding Sources:

BOOST Grant

Website:

<https://changeyourstoryinc.org/>



**CHANGE
YOUR STORY INC**

*Served as of date of publication

March 2026

Meeting Youth Where They Are

Change Your Story serves students from elementary through high school, providing differentiated instruction according to student needs. Programming combines virtual and in-person supports, removing transportation barriers and allowing youth from multiple counties to participate safely and consistently.

Afternoons begin with what the program identifies as its students' greatest need: homework help and tutoring. **Certified educators assess each student individually, tailoring instruction in reading and math to close learning gaps and reinforce school-day learning.** Tutors provide evidence-based literacy instruction in small groups or one-on-one, using guided practice and hands-on activities to build foundational reading skills like phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and comprehension. Students also receive numeracy support, practicing number recognition, counting, basic operations, problem solving, and math vocabulary daily. Tutors use real-world examples to make math concepts easier for students to understand and apply.



I never understood my math work before. Now I don't feel scared to speak up in class.

— Change Your Story Youth



Building Confidence Through Connection

Change Your Story is about more than just academic achievement, it's about helping youth believe in themselves. Many participants enter the program unsure of their abilities, hesitant to speak up and disconnected from school-day instruction. Through mentorship and experiential opportunities like volunteering at the local animal shelter, students gain confidence, learn to advocate for themselves, and begin to see their own potential.

Licensed therapists provide group and individual mental health support, creating space for youth to process experiences and emotions they often carry alone. Creative outlets like art therapy allow students to express themselves in new and creative ways. Youth who once avoided challenges start setting goals for graduation, college, and careers they once thought were unreachable.



Expanding Horizons

STREAM programming (science, technology, research, engineering, arts, and math) is woven into Change Your Story's curriculum via its global enrichment model, allowing youth to explore subjects through real-world application and helping them see that the world is bigger than their immediate surroundings. "Every letter in the in the word STREAM, we have a different country representing that letter to give our kids exposure," said Angela Williams-Ross, "our kids are going to work with [our partners] to create art that is literally going to be sent from Georgia to Germany."

Students collaborate across borders, ask questions, and see themselves represented in spaces where they may never have imagined belonging.



A Holistic Approach

Change Your Story recognizes that youth success does not happen in isolation. The program takes a multigenerational approach, supporting parents and caregivers alongside their children. **Monthly support groups provide adults with the tools to be advocates for their children while navigating the school system, as well as provide an opportunity to connect with other families facing similar challenges.**

Basic needs supports like school supplies, winter coats, and food assistance ensure that families can focus on stability and growth rather than survival. Strong family engagement reinforces learning and strengthens long-term outcomes for participating youth.

The impact of Change Your Story is evident in the achievements of the young people it serves. Students who were once at risk of not graduating high school have not only walked across the stage, but enrolled in college and entered the workforce with confidence. Some return to mentor new participants, proving what is possible when someone believes in you.

One former participant, now an educator and business owner, credits the program with helping her leave an unsafe situation and realize her worth. Others speak of renewed confidence, stronger academic skills, and a sense of belonging they had never felt before.

