

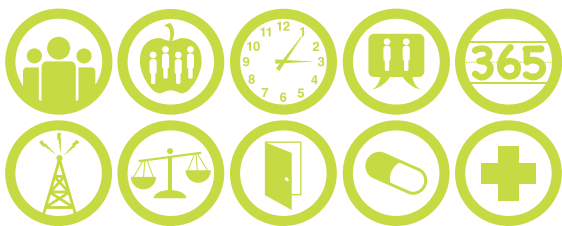
AUDACIOUS IDEAS

10 US
THAT HAVE CHANGED BALTIMORE



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE-BALTIMORE

Since 1998,
OSI-Baltimore has
been helping to
find and implement
serious solutions
to serious issues.
We believe that
audacious thinking,
coupled with
practical, integrated
action, can create
lasting change.





As we celebrate ten years of work in Baltimore, we share with you here ten examples of audacious ideas that are changing the lives of city residents for the better.



A CORPS OF SOCIAL PIONEERS

In each year since 1998, the Baltimore Community Fellowships program has nurtured a new group of visionaries, risk-takers, and social entrepreneurs whose work focuses exclusively on the city's underserved residents. Now nearly one hundred strong, these tenacious, committed individuals bring unique and creative solutions to meet many daunting challenges. A corps of social activists, the Fellows touch every community as a visible sign of change and hope, hallmarks of a city rising.



KEEPING KIDS CONNECTED TO SCHOOL

In the United States, the only youth opportunity that is available to every child is a K-12 education. But the overuse of suspension and expulsion pushes kids out of school, without support or incentives for them to return. OSI-Baltimore has led a critical initiative to publicize the harmful results of suspension and expulsion, offer alternatives and improve student attendance. To reduce suspensions, we've also partnered with the Baltimore City Public School System to initiate a much-needed revision of the system's discipline code.



AFTER THE SCHOOL DOORS CLOSE

Once the school day ends, where do children go? As a lead supporter of Baltimore's Safe and Sound Campaign, we have helped build a stable network of high-quality after-school programming that keeps more than 20,000 students socially and academically engaged after school, a crucial time for extended learning opportunities that can improve academic, social and emotional outcomes. These opportunities for youth to learn comprise the best drug and crime prevention strategy—critical to Baltimore's future.



DEBATING FOR SUCCESS

In 1999 OSI-Baltimore launched the Baltimore Urban Debate League (BUDL), which began with 90 students in eight public high schools. Supported for over five years by OSI, it now engages over 1,000 students from more than 60 middle and high schools in Baltimore. BUDL has shown how debate enhances literacy and public speaking skills and increases graduation rates. In sharp contrast to the city's average, over 90% of participating students go on to college. This year, two BUDL graduates took first place in a national championship—the first African American debaters ever to do so.



LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ALL YEAR LONG

Learning doesn't stop just because the academic year ends. Affluent children generally have access to enrichment programs over the summer, but children who live in poverty do not have similar opportunities and thus lose considerable academic ground. OSI has worked with the school district and others, persuading them that year-round programming is a wise and necessary investment. With OSI's lead support, more than 25,000 city children, many of whom would otherwise spend this time unsupervised or engaged in potentially harmful activities, now participate in lively, engaging programs during the summer months.



LOCAL NEWS FOR THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

Support from OSI-Baltimore allowed WYPR, Baltimore's National Public Radio local affiliate to launch a local news department that projects a strong sense of place, highlights issues of critical importance to the region, and, perhaps most importantly, adds more critical analysis and depth to local broadcast news coverage. Our funding makes it possible for WYPR to tell stories that are not found elsewhere so that listeners can hear different voices and different perspectives to get a more nuanced understanding of life in the city.



REVISING PAROLE GUIDELINES

Despite the spiraling costs of incarceration, community leaders were not addressing this problem in 1998. OSI-Baltimore has led the way to look at multiple ways to keep the community safe while allowing ex-prisoners the opportunity to build new lives. A close collaboration with the Maryland Parole Commission and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services has resulted in newly-revised parole guidelines that allow people to be appropriately released earlier from prison, resulting in reduced incarceration costs. At the same time, OSI has worked to develop strategies to teach ex-prisoners workforce skills and give them supports they need for re-entry into their communities.



RE-ENTRY SERVICES FOR EX-PRISONERS

When individuals leave prison, they often have few resources to tap to rebuild their lives. OSI-Baltimore boldly took the lead to create systems and services to assist those in prison to make smoother transitions upon their release and provide them with vital services, including transitional housing, addiction treatment, mental health care and job training. With these services, ex-prisoners have real opportunities to become productive citizens.



A NEW TREATMENT FOR HEROIN ADDICTION

One of the great plagues in Baltimore has been heroin and the number of residents who are addicted to it. OSI-Baltimore, along with funding partners, has spearheaded a city-wide effort to expand the use of buprenorphine, a relatively new FDA-approved therapy for heroin addiction that can be prescribed by trained physicians through their office practices. Buprenorphine is administered in pill form and can be taken at home—instead of at drug clinics—thereby increasing access to treatment and reducing stigma. This medication is key to building a comprehensive treatment system.



MORE DRUG TREATMENT FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT

Working with the Baltimore Substance Abuse System, the city's public addiction treatment manager, and by galvanizing the advocacy community, OSI-Baltimore has helped to increase treatment funding by 156% and put 44% more residents into treatment since 1998. During this period, property crime decreased by 43% and over-dose deaths and new cases of HIV declined. An OSI-Baltimore-convened national advisory board of experts meets regularly to assure that the system delivers high-quality treatment, uses proven approaches and produces good results.

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 OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE-BALTIMORE
1998 - 2008
10 YEARS of COMMITMENT to BALTIMORE

Open Society Institute-Baltimore
Audacious Thinking for Lasting Change

For ten years, OSI-Baltimore has worked to create a city where all citizens live lives of dignity, prosperity and grace. For the first eight years, OSI-Baltimore was funded solely by its founder George Soros who contributed more than \$60 million to the city—the single largest outside philanthropic investment in Baltimore’s history for work to help its most vulnerable citizens.

We now seek other investors to support our work. Recognizing our progress and with his continued support, George Soros has committed an additional \$10 million and challenged us to raise \$20 million. Today we are more than halfway there. Please join us. Make a gift at www.osi-baltimore.org or by calling 410-234-1091.



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Audacious thinking for lasting change.