

# Fears and Hopes Through Creative Expression

## Teens Impacted by Prison Share Their Story

Research offers a startling statistic: One in 14 children in the United States has a parent either is or has been behind bars. If the number astonishes you, it's because these young people have learned through experiencing deep stigma and shame to keep their truths close to the vest. But in a club at Parkrose High School, these teens have had an opportunity to be seen, heard, and understood. They are members of a club founded in 2022 known as The PATHfinder Club (Paving a Trail of Hope).

Founded by Portland's own PATHfinder Network, which in 2023 took over operations of POPS the Club (Pain of the Prison System); The PATHfinder Club (TPC) provides support for teens whose lives have been impacted in any way by incarceration, detention and deportation. Each year since the model organization, POPS, was founded, they have released powerful, award-winning book collections featuring writing and artwork created by club mem-



Kids at Parkrose High's PATHfinder Network

bers across the country. The work reflects the words and wisdom of these young people who possess much knowledge and a perspective too seldom unheard, unseen, or misunderstood.

On February 13, the newest collection, *ADVICE TO 9TH GRADERS: Stories, Poetry, Art & Other Wisdom* (Out of the Woods Press) will be published.

Originally designed to be a collection for entering 9th graders to have an opportunity to feel welcomed to high school, the book itself extends far beyond offering straightforward advice for teens. Indeed, as those who attended The Pathfinder Network's 30-year anniversary celebration earlier this year learned when youth contributors read

their work onstage, their poetry, their artwork, their stories and insights offer each of us a window into the souls of these resilient youth. The PATHfinder Club and their publications have given them a chance to roar and as a result, they have also given all of us an opportunity to learn from tender, deeply honest and hard-won perspectives.

The Pathfinder Network invites the community to join them in celebration on Wednesday, February 13, at 5 p.m at Parkrose High where they will officially launch *Advice to 9th Graders*. There, community members will have an opportunity to meet many of the writers and artists who created this book as well as a chance to meet TPC's leadership team and the book's editor.

As Leticia Longoria-Navarro, Executive Director of The Pathfinder Network, puts it when discussing the impact of The PATHfinder Club and this publication, "Hearing your experiences reflected in the stories of others, especially the hard ones, can help lessen the impact of stigma, shame and adversity. Feeling like you are not alone in your experiences can create powerful shifts and open the door to meaning, healing and power. That is what we create in Clubs, and that is what we have expanded on in *Advice to 9th Graders*."

For those unable to make the event, The PATHfinder Club welcomes your questions and also invites you to purchase a copy of the book (or a copy for every 9th grader you know) at Out of the Woods Press.

## Community Grieves Children's Author...

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ing at a bar in the 17200 block of Southeast Division Street. Officers arrived and found an injured man inside the bar. Officers began trauma first aid until EMS arrived. Paramedics initiated advanced care before transporting the patient to the hospital with life threatening injuries.

The involved man remained on scene and spoke to officers, and no suspect is currently being sought. The police said they have not charged anyone. Enhanced Community Safety Team (ECST) detectives responded to the scene and began an investigation. Several hours later, PPB was notified that despite lifesaving efforts by medical professionals, the patient died at the hospital. The Portland Police Homicide Unit was notified and is assuming the investigation. The fatal shooting is the city's ninth homicide this year.

Neighbors and friends say the victim was 37-year-old Montrell "Trell" Goss. His passion was writing children's books and

reading them at schools along with a mascot named Triple C. His two published books center around Chillin' the Courageous Coyote - who is described as misunderstood. Goss's books can be found on Amazon.

According to a statement that was made by Laura Cromwell who watched Goss grow as a children's author gave a statement to KPTV "He was a peace-maker kind of guy," she said. "He wanted to make the world a better place. And it starts with kids." She continued and said more than anything; Cromwell said she wants people to know Trell Goss was a good guy.

Police said witnesses may have left before speaking with police. If anyone has information about the shooting and has not yet spoken with investigators, police ask that they contact Detective Eric McDaniel at [Eric.McDaniel@police.portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Eric.McDaniel@police.portlandoregon.gov) or 503-823-0833, or Detective Sean Macomber at [Sean.Macomber@police.portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Sean.Macomber@police.portlandoregon.gov) or 503-823-0404, and reference case number 24-26686.

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