

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 13, 2020

Adoption agency focused on finding families for teens in foster care hires new Executive Director

You Gotta Believe (YGB) is excited to announce the hiring of Jennifer Pinder as Executive Director.

YGB selected Ms. Pinder after an extensive search led by board members and Mary Keane, the outgoing Executive Director. Ms. Keane will remain with the organization as Senior Advisor, overseeing YGB family programs.

"We are thrilled to have Jennifer taking on the role of Executive Director of YGB," says Gretchen Beidl, the Board President. "Jennifer brings to the job an exceptional combination of leadership, expertise in program building, and a personal connection to our mission. Both the Board and Staff are impressed with her vision and strategic thinking for YGB."

"We are fortunate to have Mary Keane remain with YGB to manage YGB's programs and continue to deepen the partnership she forged with Children's Village, a leading agency working with some of New York's most at-risk youth" continued Gretchen Beidl. "We expect great things in our future with Jennifer as Executive Director and Mary focusing her extraordinary expertise in finding and supporting families for older kids in foster care."

Jennifer Pinder joins YGB with more than 20 years of nonprofit and corporate experience, most recently at the social science research firm, IMPAQ International. There, Ms. Pinder was a strategic leader in partnerships with multiple Federal agencies including the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation; the Office of Head Start; the Children's Bureau; the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

"As an adoptee, I have a unique appreciation for the loving, lifelong support network a family provides and I am excited to join an organization that has an established, 25-year history of finding permanent families for older children in foster care," says Ms. Pinder. "I look forward to working with the talented and committed YGB staff and board, many of whom were either adopted from foster care or are parents to kids adopted from foster care. I am eager to continue our collaboration with Children's Village and grow our partnerships in the field to continue YGB's mission."

“No one could be more thrilled to welcome Jennifer to You Gotta Believe than I am!” says Mary Keane. “Jennifer is everything I could have hoped for to take the helm of YGB. I am looking forward to working with Jennifer as I transition back to the program work, connecting older youth to loving families, which is my personal passion.”

“This pandemic has highlighted the need for a family for every child leaving foster care” continued Mary Keane. “Recent stories of kids in foster care being kicked out of dorms with no place to go demonstrates the importance of family even when a child receives support services. I will be focusing my energies on working with our team to train parents and provide them the comprehensive post-placement support so crucial for ensuring successful long term outcomes., With Jennifer Pinder in the Executive Director role, we are confident we will be able to find even more kids the loving parents they need and deserve.”

Jennifer Pinder starts her role as Executive Director on July 13, 2020.

About [You Gotta Believe](https://www.yougottabelieve.org)

YGB focuses exclusively on finding permanent parents and families for the most vulnerable kids in foster care. No child should leave the foster care system without a lifelong support network of a family in place. **Everyone deserves a family – and that family is a critical element to human health and prosperity.**

Today, more than 400,000 children are in foster care in the US, and every year, as many as 19,000 of them will age out of the foster care system. Without the safety net of a forever family to provide the security and comfort most take for granted, these young people are left on their own to face a future filled with hardships — from lack of education to unemployment, higher rates of incarceration, poor health, early parenthood, or homelessness (as much as 40 percent of these kids will experience this devastation in their lifetimes). In New York City alone, there are more than 1000 kids currently awaiting adoption, with more than 900 kids on the verge of aging out. Together, we work toward the day when no child ages out.

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