



**B•Unbound**

## Our Story

B-Unbound is a collaboration of [Big Picture Learning](#), an innovative education organization, and [Straight Up Impact](#), a film company inspiring social change. It emerged from a shared vision and a common friend, education icon [Sir Ken Robinson](#). Straight Up Impact was developing a film series called Meaning in Madness and Sir Ken and his daughter, Kate, were executive producers of [the first film](#) about the education system's impact on youth mental health. The subject of the film, Mackenzie, inspired the idea for a community-based initiative that promoted youth voice in exploration and peer-to-peer sharing. Straight Up Impact was looking to partner with an organization creating actionable change in communities, not school systems. This proved hard to find.

With Sir Ken's unexpected passing, his daughter Kate suggested talking with his longtime friend [Elliot Washor](#), co-founder of Big Picture Learning, author of [Leaving to Learn](#) and an education innovator for over 40 years. Although Big Picture Learning primarily operates in schools, Elliot shared an outside of school program he developed that would build interest-based relationships that enable young people to learn about the things that matter to them, make choices about their destinies, and allow their personal agency to shine through—with the support of adults in the community. He had not yet received the needed funding.

[Pam Roy](#), co-founder of Straight Up Impact and an entrepreneur, had previously started a parenting blog to advocate for the importance of meaning, out-of-school experiences and relationships to support youth mental health and wellbeing. Pam was inspired by Elliot's idea and the potential for a shared initiative. With the support of their organizations, Elliot and Pam, co-founded B-Unbound.

B-Unbound is operated by nonprofit Big Picture Learning and capitalizes on their 26-years of experience, research, and success. [Anthonette Pena](#), is the B-Unbound Program Director. She is a former science teacher, STEM Education Director and an Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow. Other Big Picture Learning team members participating in the development and operations of the platform include Chief Communications Officer [Chris Jackson](#) and Director of Digital Innovation [David Berg](#).

The platform was built utilizing the [ImBlaze](#) software originally developed by Big Picture Learning to allow students at participating schools to connect to mentors in their communities. This technology was streamlined without school-based limitations and adapted for white-label use as B-Unbound. It operates parallel to school systems and is available to any youth regardless of zip code.

We are currently piloting B-Unbound on the east and west coasts. Hosts of the platform include a Chamber of Commerce, youth maker space, Boys & Girls clubs and more.

B-Unbound is an initiative powered by Big Picture Learning in collaboration with Straight Up Impact.

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