

GIRL Trouble

Shangra, age 16 grew up in Bayview Hunter's Point and all around San Francisco, moving in and out of shelters and temporary housing with her mother. After watching her mother struggle with drug addiction and poverty, Shangra gets a job at the Center for Young Women's Development to earn a paycheck and get job experience. The part-time pay is not enough to keep her and her mother off the streets, so Shangra decides to deal drugs to take care of her needs and help her mom. *"I just want to graduate from a regular high school, but i'm really behind. I couldn't concentrate because I'd be so worried about my mom"*. Shangra gets busted for the first time for selling crack cocaine. *Girl Trouble* illuminates the choices Shangra makes as she battles the temptations of the street economy and moves through the juvenile justice system into adulthood.



Stephanie grew up in the Haight Ashbury Neighborhood in San Francisco with her grandmother. After a history of domestic violence in her family, Stephanie enters the juvenile justice system in middle school. Now, age 16, she lives under an alias because she has a warrant for her arrest after running from a court-ordered group home placement. Her status is complicated by the fact she is pregnant and the father of her baby is abusing her and dealing drugs. She is at risk for being brought back into the system and losing custody of her child. The film documents Stephanie's relationship choices and the difficulties of creating a new path for herself that may involve leaving the father of her child as well as part of herself behind.



Sheila grew up in the Sunnydale housing projects in San Francisco, one of seven children in a close-knit Samoan family. Sheila first entered the juvenile justice system in middle school for running away from home. Now 17, she has been in and out of the juvenile justice system for various offenses including drug dealing and assault. Everyone in her family has been incarcerated at one time or another, and some for violent offenses. Sheila shows up at the Center because she has heard that they hire girls on the streets and girls from juvenile hall. She does well at the Center at first, and enrolls in a class at City College. *Girl Trouble* reveals Sheila's search for something better in her life, although at times she cannot envision what that life might look like.



Lateefah grew up in the Fillmore district in San Francisco and is a community leader and youth activist. After initial contact with the juvenile justice system for shoplifting, Lateefah gets a job at the Center at age 17. She is now 22 and is the Executive Director of the peer-run organization. The single mother of a four-year old girl, and a graduate of a continuation high school, Lateefah clings fiercely to the belief that young women can become change makers and leaders in their communities. *"We need to have an economic opportunity to survive, so we can start thinking 5 and 10 years down the line and not just where am I going to sleep tonight"*. During the course of the film, Lateefah is challenged by the problems the girls bring to the Center, and is one of the few people who stands by the young women no matter what happens.

