

TABLE 10 YOUTH DISCONNECTION IN AMERICA'S MOST POPULOUS METRO AREAS, CONTINUED

Rank	Metro Area	Youth Disconnection (%)	Youth Disconnection (#)	Youth Disconnection by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity (%)				
				Men	Women	Black	Latino	White
76	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	12.3	70,300	12.3	12.3	14.6	13.5	10.0
77	Springfield, MA	12.3	9,300	16.5			22.4	
78	Baton Rouge, LA	12.4	14,200	15.3		18.2		9.4
79	Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN	12.5	17,100	12.0	12.9			10.6
80	Knoxville, TN	12.5	14,900	10.7	14.3			10.7
81	Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	12.9	11,000	10.6	15.2	19.1		10.1
82	Jacksonville, FL	13.0	21,300	14.3	11.5	20.3	12.7	11.5
83	Stockton-Lodi, CA	13.1	12,400	10.5	15.9		10.8	
84	Boise City, ID	13.2	11,800	15.2				12.6
85	Albuquerque, NM	13.4	13,900	14.4	12.3		13.7	
86	Chattanooga, TN-GA	13.7	10,300	10.6	16.7			10.6
87	Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	14.0	83,500	13.4	14.5	23.1	14.3	12.9
88	Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	14.2	33,900	14.5	13.9	26.1	11.9	12.3
89	New Orleans-Metairie, LA	14.4	19,400	16.5	12.3	20.1		10.0
90	Fresno, CA	14.6	18,800	17.1	12.1		16.7	9.9
91	El Paso, TX	14.8	18,200	15.8	13.6		14.7	
92	McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX	15.0	18,900	12.6	17.4		15.5	
93	San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	15.5	51,500	16.4	14.5		16.8	13.1
94	Birmingham-Hoover, AL	15.8	21,900	16.5	15.1	16.8		15.2
95	Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL	15.8	12,200	17.5				16.3
96	Memphis, TN-MS-AR	17.5	34,000	17.4	17.6	20.7		13.1
97	Augusta-Richmond County, GA-SC	17.6	14,500	19.1		25.2		
98	Winston-Salem, NC	18.3	13,700	21.5	15.1			17.3
99	Bakersfield, CA	20.8	24,600	20.7	20.9		18.8	24.5

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2018.

Findings: Youth Voice

“These young people want to be self-sufficient, contributing members of society. They are asking us for support and mentorship in finding their way along this path to success.”

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Throughout 2017, CSYA engaged 197 young people in a conversation about their goals and challenges as they prepare for or enter adulthood. Of the 131 young people who met the qualifications for the needs assessment project, 117 took the survey and 61 participated in focus groups (most focus group participants also took the survey). Eight youth and young adults were interviewed for the video. The stories and suggestions they shared were varied and complex. No two young people had walked the same path or faced the same challenges. Nonetheless, several themes emerged throughout these discussions and the data analysis that indicate clear actions our community should take to reconnect our vulnerable youth.

Disconnected young people want the same things for their future as their connected peers, to take care of their family, to be financially stable and independent, to complete their education (earn a college degree) and start a career, to be free to make their own decisions, to stay off drugs and out of jail, and to exceed others’ expectations of them.

Young people want to be held accountable for their choices and for others to have high expectations for them. Young people participating in the focus groups and interviews conveyed a gap between the expectations they have for themselves and the expectations others seem to have for them. They feel they would work harder if asked and that they are capable of more than people generally assume they can do.

Resources most needed by disconnected youth are often difficult to access. Young people participating in the needs assessment identified the gap between the assistance they need and services accessible in our community. When asked to describe the areas of need that were most critical and most difficult to resolve, young people indicated the following: ²⁴

Top Five Needs Identified by Young People	Five Most Difficult Resources to Access by Youth People	Top Priority Areas (High Need/Low Access)
Transportation	Housing	Housing
Housing	Transportation	Transportation
Planning for the future	College/training programs	College/training programs
Financial resources	Financial resources	Financial resources
Getting and keeping a job	Food	Planning for the future