

Investing in Social Capital For Our Youth

Engagement and Program Opportunities

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TOC

Table of Contents

Purpose and Vision Statement	3
Executive Summary	4
Background on Mesa County's Community Transformation Initiative	10
Why Engage Youth?	13
Overview of Categories of Youth Engagement	19
Youth Engagement in the Arts	22
Summary of Successful Youth Programs in the Arts	28
After School Matters	31
Children of the Street	34
Matthews Opera House	36
Think 360 Arts	38
Union Youth Engagement	40
Young Artist Movement (YAM)	42
Project Recommendations in the Arts	45
Youth Engagement in Civics	48
Summary of Successful Youth Civics Programs	52
Colorado Youth Action Council (COYAC)	54
Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI)	56
Generation Citizen	58
UpRISE	60
Project Recommendations in Civics	62
Youth Engagement in Sports and Outdoor Recreation	64
Summary of Successful Sports Programs	69
Active RVA	72
Aspen Institute Project Play	74
i play! afterschool	76
Kids Inc	78
USA BMX STEM Program	80
WIN for KC	82
Project Recommendations in Sports	85
Youth Engagement through Volunteerism	88
Summary of Successful Volunteerism Programs	91
Letters to Strangers	93
National Youth Leadership Council Service-Learning (NYLC)	95
Student United Way	99
Youth Garden Project	100
Project Recommendations in Volunteerism	103
Overall Project Recommendation	105
After School Matters	105
Additional Resources	
Mesa County Youth Activity Directory, 2021	110
Opportunities	141
Appendices	142

Vision and Purpose

Vision | To strengthen the social fabric of Clifton community's youth—defined as 11- to 18-year-olds— through positive youth engagement opportunities resulting in improved social capital, health outcomes, and lasting community transformation for generations.

Purpose | Mesa County Public Health (MCPH) aims to be a forward-thinking community partner by addressing barriers to community health at their source and implementing preventive strategies. Because of this proactive approach, MCPH is poised to address the upstream needs of our youth as we exit a global pandemic by providing meaningful peer-to-peer engagement opportunities resulting in increased social capital and youth wellbeing. This report and its recommended programs are intended to cast a broad vision, spark new ideas for collaborative partnerships, and aid in the grant-writing/funding process to successfully bring new youth engagement programs to the residents of the Clifton Transformation area and ultimately, to all youth within Mesa County.



Executive Summary

Introduction

As we consider the work presented in this report along with its recommendations, it's important to understand how we made the bold conclusion that public health instinctively belongs in preventative, upstream approaches to address the health of our population. The role of public health has evolved as we have become more advanced in our understanding of disease prevention and broadened our definition to include the factors which attribute to quality of life known as the Social Determinant of Health (SDoH). This includes community transformation efforts to increase social capital and youth engagement opportunities.

The History & Role of Public Health

Public Health came about in the early 19th century after previous decades/centuries of the popular myth that disease was caused by immorality or spiritual unhealth. As medical advances were made, so grew comprehension of communicable diseases, their sources, and how to control them. The public also began to embrace the idea that disease and its spread could be controlled, and it was a civic responsibility to do so.

As the public continued to support the government's role in health, its responsibilities grew to include disease prevention including sanitation, immunization, hygiene, and regulation. The concept of prevention has continued to broaden from its original scope of disease prevention to that of upstream interventions to improve health outcomes and quality of life for the public.

The partnership between the medical community and public health is an important collaboration. Unlike medical professionals whose primary function is to treat a sick patient in a reactive role, public health organizations primarily focus on prevention—prevention of a disease or prevention of its reoccurrence. Hospitals and public health departments work closely together to share information when outbreaks occur, slow the spread, and investigate the source of infection through contact tracing as we have witnessed with COVID-19; however, this work and collaboration occurs with every communicable disease including influenza. Testing and vaccinating are often a collaboration between public health officials and medical professionals.

In addition to the vital collaboration needed between medical professionals and public health related to disease and disease prevention, public health departments work closely with residents and elected officials to recognize health trends, make policy recommendations, and implement solutions for the betterment of the public.

County public health departments are formed by individual local county governments, but they serve as a subdivision of the state. In other words, county health departments are considered an extension



***"Public health is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations. These populations can be as small as a local neighborhood, or as big as an entire country or regions of the world."
(What is Public Health, CDC)***

of the state and are charged with protecting its residents under the state's authority. This authority also includes the ability to create and enforce public health orders under state law. If an order has been issued and a business is not in compliance with that order, best practices encourage any local public health department to first seek voluntary compliance. However, if the violation continues, a county public health director can bring civil and even criminal charges to ensure immediate compliance and the public's safety. ([COVID19 Resources, Colorado.gov](https://www.colorado.gov/covid19))

Mesa County Public Health (MCPH)

With a staff of over 80 trained experts charged with communication, disease prevention, upstream intervention, research to include the Community Health Needs Assessment, testing and vaccinating, education, policy recommendation and implementation, consumer protection, and permitting, MCPH actively works to improve its residents' quality of life and prevent disease outbreaks on a daily basis. Mesa County Public Health is also charged with consumer protection, which oversees restaurant and childcare licensure and body art and swimming pool protocols/safety guidelines.

The Community Health Needs Assessment written by MCPH in collaboration with Mesa County's local hospitals is a comprehensive document prepared with the goal of providing a current snapshot of the health of Mesa County. The assessment also identifies areas of concern within the county by using state and local data to paint a picture and inform future policy decisions and program implementation. The 2021-2023 Community Health Needs Assessment is due for release this year, currently under revision. [The 2018-2020 Health Assessment can be reviewed here.](#)

Mesa County's Forward-Leaning Approach

Mesa County Public Health has established itself as a leader in its forward-leaning approach to address barriers to health at their source.

This has been demonstrated not only by the Healthy Mesa County initiative, but through many additional programs that focus on meeting the needs of residents and addressing the conditions in which they live, work, recreate, and access care.

Meals on Wheels, the Nurse Family Partnership, the Clifton Community Transformation Project, Childcare 8,000, and the Fruita Youth Council, among other educational and preventative services, have been created by MCPH to help bridge health gaps in the community and improve outcomes for its residents through upstream solutions focused at the source of need.

The Health and Wellbeing of our Youth

Because MCPH is a proactive community partner in tune with the needs of its constituents and continually looking at innovative solutions, it's of no surprise the department is primed and ready to take care of its youth as we exit a global pandemic.

Although it's too soon to have longitudinal data on the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our youth, it's widely understood and accepted that adolescents' social-emotional, physical, and

mental wellbeing, along with their education, have suffered as peer-to-peer interactions, in-person schooling, and extracurricular activities were stripped away during the shutdown. A recent publication concluded that “widespread changes in the social environment, such as enforced physical distancing and reduced face-to-face social contact with peers, might have a substantial effect on brain and behavioural development during adolescence.” (Orben, Tomova, & Blakemore, 2020)

In May of 2021, Children’s Hospital of Colorado declared a “State of Emergency” for youth mental health in Colorado as they have experienced an unprecedented demand for mental health services since the onset of the pandemic. Initially, low-level anxiety and depression became exacerbated by the stress, fear, and isolation during the pandemic, which have resulted in a record number of youth suicide attempts.

According to Dr. David Brumbaugh, MD who serves as the Chief Medical Officer for Children’s Hospital of Colorado: “There have been many weeks in 2021 that the number one reason for presenting to our emergency department is a suicide attempt. Our kids have run out of resilience – their tanks are empty.” (Children’s Hospital Colorado)

Unfortunately, Western Colorado is experiencing the same growing demand for mental health services—both inpatient and outpatient—that Children’s Hospital Colorado is witness to. According to Stephanie Keister, Public Relations Director for Mind Springs Health and Mind Springs Hospital:

“From June through December of 2020, adolescent outpatient clients rose 4 percent over the same period in 2019. Unfortunately, the numbers keep growing. From January to May of 2021, we’re seeing an average of 649 adolescent clients per month in our combined outpatient offices throughout the 10-county area we serve. This is a rise of 13 percent over the same period in 2020.

Our adolescent inpatient admissions at West Springs Hospital significantly rose in 2020, as we saw an increase of nearly 40 percent over 2019. So far in 2021, we are seeing similar numbers for inpatient adolescent admissions that we saw in early 2020.

The majority of youth we are seeing for inpatient services are ages 14-15 years old and are being treated for is depressive disorders, PTSD, or varying psychosis disorders—these are all similar diagnosis to what we saw at West Springs Hospital prior to



the pandemic; we believe that the stressors of the pandemic have simply exacerbated the level of care needed for young people in Western Colorado."

Unlike children under the age of 10 and adults over the age of 25, adolescents are at a greater risk of negatively being impacted when social interactions are removed. Adolescence is a period of formative biological and social transition. Social cognitive processes involved in navigating increasingly complex and intimate relationships continue to develop throughout adolescence. (Blakemore & Mills, 2014)

Orben et al. go on to explain what we know to be anecdotally true: "Adolescents are at a unique period in their lives when the social environment is important for crucial functions in brain development, self-concept construction, and mental health. (Orben, Tomova, & Blakemore, 2020)

Despite these alarming numbers, Stephanie Keister of Mind Springs Health and Hospital also shares that we have reason to be hopeful: "The good news is, these numbers tell us that outreach efforts are working. Parents and others are noticing when children are struggling and they are getting them the help they need, which is good!"

The Importance of Relationships

In addition to providing our youth with access to mental health interventions from highly trained and skilled professionals, quality relationships are essential. Peer and parental relationships can provide an invisible armor for our youth to protect them, help them build resiliency muscles, and lend toward social capital—a critical component of forward-thinking public health initiatives.

A 2020 journal article by Lancet Child Adolescent Health found that "high quality peer relationships appear to protect against mental health problems and strengthen adolescent resilience." (Orben, Tomova, & Blakemore, 2020)

More important than peer relationships for youth during adolescents are relationships with their parents. Although peer relationships and interactions with other adults are very important, "The quality of attachment to parents was significantly more powerful than that to peers in predicting well-being. In addition, the quality of attachment to parents showed a moderating effect under conditions of high life stress on the measures of self-esteem." (Greenberg, Siegel, & Leitch, 1983)

Strong relationships also play an important role in developing protective factors that strengthen youth resilience. Youth.gov also includes "family support and monitoring; caring adults; positive peer groups; strong sense of self, self-esteem, and future aspiration; and engagement in school and community activities" as positive elements of youth development. (Youth.gov, 2021)

Relationships = Social Capital

It is without coincidence that scholars believe relationships are the key component in the theory of social capital. According to John Field, "The theory of social capital...can be summed up in two words: relationships matter. By making connections with one another, and keeping them going over time, people are able to work together to achieve things that they could not achieve by themselves, or could only achieve with great difficulty." (Field, 2003)

An international micro-finance organization born with the purpose of helping vulnerable families worldwide escape poverty describes social capital as a tool for lasting change: "One of the greatest tools... to bring about lasting change is social capital." (Five Talents)

Increased social capital for youth results in collaboration, ongoing civic engagement and community change. (Saito & Sullivan, 2008)

Targeted Youth Engagement

This report targets youth defined as 11- to 18-year-olds—commonly middle and high schoolers— with the understanding that youth 19- to 24-years-old are more likely to be captured by Colorado Mesa University, Western Colorado Community College, The Workforce Center, and community programs focused on career readiness or technical training.

Any program highlights or recommendations are not meant to take the place of highly trained and skilled mental and behavioral health providers whose work is in high demand. Rather, it gives weight to the importance of peer interactions and quality relationships integral for development, which lead to strong social capital using the vehicle of successful youth programs.

This report focuses on 4 categories of youth engagement—arts, civics, sports, and volunteerism (a form of civic engagement). Each category makes the connection between public health and its corresponding category and proceeds to give an overview of successful youth engagement programs across the country in that category.

Following the overview, a project recommendation is made in each category for implementation in Mesa County with supporting documents in the [appendix](#). The recommendations include more in-depth information to assist in grant writing efforts to secure funding. Implementation will require community partnerships; programs can be scaled to size specific to Mesa County's needs; and outcomes can be successfully tracked with surveys at the beginning and end of each adopted program.

Strengthening Clifton's Social Fabric

From the onset of its creation, engaging Mesa County youth within the Clifton Transformation Project boundaries have been at the center of this report's focus with the intent of strengthening Clifton's social fabric. However, it's important to note, any program recommendation can be applied county-wide and will benefit all youth.

As the first transformation area in Mesa County, the boundaries of the Clifton Transformation Project were identified because of the high number of law enforcement dispatch calls, low social capital, lack of safe spaces to gather, and low socioeconomic status. By joining forces with Clifton residents, Mesa County Public Health, the board of county commissioners, and numerous community leaders and organizations are coalescing around the common goal of increased social capital and community

health.

Encouraging youth engagement and positive peer interactions must be a part of the solution as we work to rapidly counter the negative impacts of the shutdown, implement meaningful engagement solutions for our youth, and create lasting change for generations.

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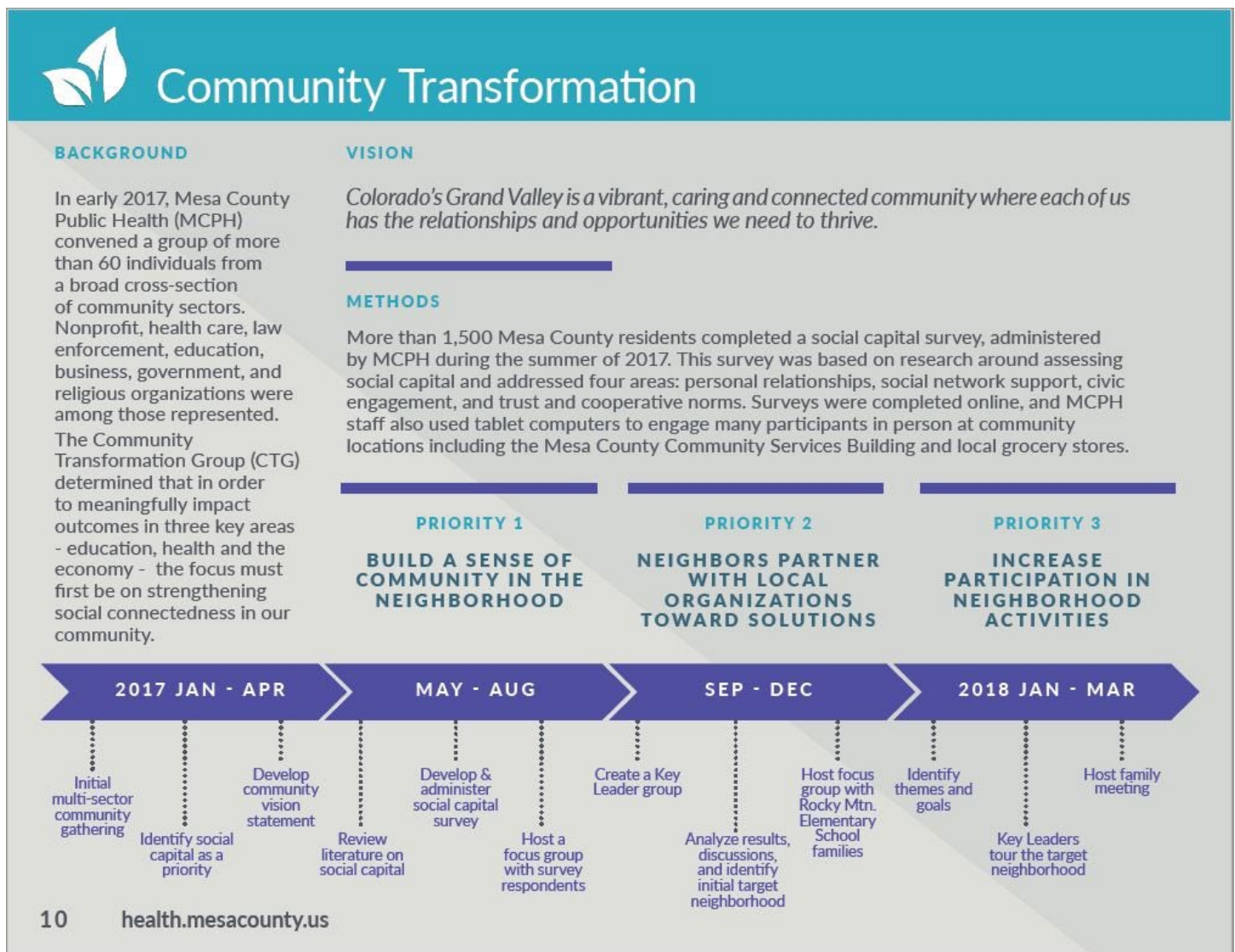
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Background on Mesa County's Community Transformation Initiative

"By joining the energy and insights of people in the neighborhood with the resources and commitment of individuals and organizations across Mesa County, we're making transformation happen."
(Healthy Mesa County, 2020)

Mesa County Public Health (MCPH), within the 2017-2020 Community Health Needs Assessment, identified social connectedness as a priority.

Social connectedness is multi-dimensional—it is not only about the quantity of relationships a person has, but the quality including the individual's support network. There is much research supporting strong social connections with improved health outcomes. Not only is connection understood to increase communication among groups and to improve mental health for individuals, studies show



Source: 2018-2020 Community Health Needs Assessment



"social connectedness could help to improve targeting of initiatives to increase participation in preventive health care." (Stafford, et al., 2018)

In 2017, Mesa County Public Health through the Community Transformation Initiative (CTI) brought together a varied group of community leaders from non-profit, government, and business sectors and created a coalition for change called the Community Transformation Group (CTG). This volunteer coalition of community members has been highly engaged for over four years. They have coalesced around common strategies identified through 2023 with the ultimate goal of strengthening social connectedness. (Healthy Mesa County, 2020)

Clifton Transformation

A small area in Clifton was strategically identified as the first action area in part due to the high volume of law enforcement dispatch calls and low socioeconomic status. Although the CTG and The Colorado Trust have provided a consistent framework for meetings and coalition building, Clifton residents have been thoughtfully engaged and empowered to ensure action is intentionally driven by them and not prescribed to them to ensure buy-in and longevity of positive changes.

To date, CTG has held community meetings with residents in partnership with The Colorado Trust to identify common community concerns and goals. These goals focus on safety and cleanliness of the physical environment including safe spaces for kids to play and gather, sidewalks, lights, and structures.

To that end, events such as Rocky Mountain Elementary movie nights, National Night Out events, and community trash clean-ups have taken place. Food pantries have been organized through schools and churches in the area. Most recently, MCPH created a Youth Impact Council in partnership with Riverside Education Center (REC) based at Rocky Mountain Elementary School.

The Colorado Trust

The Colorado Trust ("The Trust") has been actively working to engage, facilitate, and empower local residents to effectively be change agents by serving as a backbone organization. Community Outreach Advocates (COA) of all ages have been identified and are working within their spheres of influence and at their pace with the help of The Trust to facilitate conversations around positive change and social connectivity in order to form clear goals and next steps birthed from the community. A youth COA has been identified and engaged, but The Trust knows the youth component of engagement needs to be strengthened.

Community Action Plan

Moving forward, CTG has created a Community Action Plan, which is a community level strategy to help facilitate transformation goals within the area.

The goals have been identified as:



The strategy to help achieve these goals are two-fold:



If these strategies are successful by 2024, Clifton will have at least one new or significantly improved community space that is safe, welcoming, and accessible to people of all ages and abilities; and at least one sustainable, long-term funding source will be established for physical environment improvements (i.e. trash clean-up in the county budget or the creation of a special district to fund improvements).

20-Acre Land Procurement

With the understanding that Mesa County is in the process of purchasing a 20-acre parcel of land behind Rocky Mountain Elementary School, a location for a permanent community space will be secured. With the construction of a community center, Clifton will be ready to begin implementing youth engagement programs in Clifton, increase neighborhood participation in activities, and strengthen the community's fabric through engagement opportunities.

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Why Engage Youth?

If we want to realize outcomes with lasting effects for the betterment of our communities, we must engage our youth. Youth are the future. By engaging them in shared decision-making, we are giving them a voice, demonstrating we are listening, helping them develop leadership skills, and teaching them effective ways to implement lasting change. Engaged youth have increased social capital, which naturally insulates them with protective factors and ultimately, results in positive youth development. By engaging youth, we are building trust, creating strong relationships, and building a more vibrant future for our youth, our communities, and our nation.

The Benefits of Social Capital

According to John Field, "The theory of social capital...can be summed up in two words: relationships matter. By making connections with one another, and keeping them going over time, people are able to work together to achieve things that they could not achieve by themselves, or could only achieve with great difficulty." (Field, 2003)

The origins of social capital trace back to notable researcher Robert Putnam. His definition of social capital explains that it includes "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action." (Putnam R. , 1993) Despite the diversity of working definitions of social capital among scholars, a wide array of social capital benefits exists. Some benefits of social capital development include the development of health, socioeconomic, behavioral and other outcomes at the individual and community levels. (Chilenski & Summer, 2016)

Social capital is commonly referred to as social connectedness with others. It not only includes formal networks like our connection through church, our school, or neighborhood associations, but every interaction no matter how big or small. Putnam describes these encounters "like pennies dropped in a cookie jar, each of these encounters is a tiny investment in social capital." (Putnam R. , 2001)

Social capital is not confined to a particular demographic, but the youth population has traditionally been underrepresented within literature. However, recent studies have explored the link between youth development and community enhancement. Henness et al. suggest that when we "shift... the focus from the individual to the community, social capital allows us to better understand the broad value of education and youth programs" and "... provides insights into cross-generational networks and connections that support building more inclusive communities." (Hennes, Ball, & Moncheski, 2013) Various observational studies and industry reports have "linked indicators of social capital at the individual, youth, family and community level to a suite of positive outcomes for youth." (Krasny, Kalbacker, Stedman, & Russ, 2015) These include:

- A reduction in adolescent violence and risk-taking behavior. (Duke, Skay, Pettingell, & Borowsky, 2009), (Saito & Sullivan, The Many Faces, Features, and Outcomes of Youth Engagement, 2011)
- Preparation for leadership roles within their local communities and the larger society. (Jarrett, Sullivan, & Watkins, 2005)

- Enhancing happiness, health, and the formation of high-quality relationships with adults. (Krasny, Kalbacker, Stedman, & Russ, 2015)
- Positive psychosocial development enhanced academic achievement, mastery of specific skills, and positive identity development. (Saito & Sullivan, The Many Faces, Features, and Outcomes of Youth Engagement, 2011)

The Heart of Youth Engagement

Creating an environment where social capital—essentially, relationships and trust—is built between youth and adults is at the heart of youth engagement. According to Act for Youth, “Youth engagement ... result[s] when young people are involved in responsible, challenging action to create positive social change. This means involving youth in planning and in making decisions that affect themselves and others. Youth engagement happens in youth-adult partnerships that are structured so that both groups contribute, teach and learn from each other.” (Act For Youth) When adults and youth are engaged together, relationships are built, trust is created and successful, multi-generational problem solving can be achieved. It’s through the multi-generational concept that lasting change is achieved.

Protective Factors

Not only do peer, parental, and caring adult relationships increase social capital for our youth, they are considered “protective factors” and are commonly thought to influence a youth’s ability to overcome adversity. These factors can provide an invisible armor for them to “protect against mental health problems and strengthen adolescent resilience.” (Orben, Tomova, & Blakemore, 2020)

Dr. Resnick defines protective factors as “the circumstances, the experiences, the factors that buffered young people from involvement in behaviors and outcomes damaging to themselves and/or others.” He goes on to further explain “[r]esearch into protective factors against the major threats to adolescent health and well-being ...include ongoing adjustment in school and academic achievement, participation in extracurricular activities, development of close friendships, and crystallization of a cohesive sense of self.” (Resnick, 2000)

In an effort to strengthen youth protective factors, Dr. Resnick outlines a dual-approach: “Many of these interventions have adopted the dual approach of reducing risks in the environment of young people whenever possible, while also enhancing multiple protective factors at the individual, familial, and extrafamilial levels such as social skills, academic competence, family relationship and relationships with adults and institutions outside of the family.” (Resnick, 2000)

Relationships are just as crucial for youth who live with economic hardship. Research confirms what we know to be anecdotally true, youth with lower socioeconomic status are “effected with worse physical and mental health over their lifespan...” but it also validates that protective factors such as “supportive relationships can mitigate against the physical health problems often associated with economic hardship.” (Hostinar, 2019)

Not unlike Dr. Resnick’s list, Youth.gov also includes “family support and monitoring; caring adults; positive peer groups; strong sense of self, self-esteem, and future aspiration; and engagement in school and community activities” in their list of protective factors. (Youth.gov, 2021)

The Sum Equals Positive Youth Development

"Positive Experiences + Positive Relationships + Positive Environments = Positive Youth Development." This catchy equation coined by Youth.gov is used as a shorthand definition of Positive Youth Development (PYD), which inherently include social capital and protective factors. The full definition reads:

PYD is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationship and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths. (Youth.gov, 2021)

Positive Youth Development "focuses on the whole individual, viewing socioemotional development as equal in importance to cognitive development. This holistic view is best reflected in the five C's: competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring; a sixth C, contribution, has also been identified as resulting from the first five." (Syvertsen, 2011)

According to Lonnie Sherrod, a contributor to Silbereisen and Lerner's work, "PYD takes in internal and external factors to a youth's success and focuses on positive developments rather than deficiencies... It targets not those who are not only at high risk, but all youth." (Silbereisen & Lerner, 2007) If youth possess more internal and external assets, research shows that they will be more healthy and successful into their adulthood. (Silbereisen & Lerner, 2007)

Strengthening Community Programs

Numerous studies stress the importance of investing in ways to develop youth social capital at the community level. These "cross-sector initiatives" are so important to youth, particularly to those who are economically disadvantaged, because they provide social interaction with

individuals and/or groups and other valuable resources that they would not otherwise have access to. (Opportunity Nation, 2014) It is imperative that community leaders realize the value of youth-centered programs and work together to positively affect the trajectory of their young constituents' futures. As Misener et al. noted, "social capital is more likely to develop where there is effective communication, cooperation, and further collaboration between the parties." (Misener & Doherty, 2012)

Recommendations for community practitioners: (Hennes, Ball, & Moncheski, 2013)

Facilities and budgets are not the driving forces behind the creation of social capital for youth. Instead, adults within the community who serve as mentors and role models are the ones who "facilitate youth's social, interpersonal, academic, athletic, and artistic skills." (Jarrett, Sullivan, & Watkins, 2005) It is also important to understand that youth need positive interactions outside of the traditional school environment. While there is obvious value in educational and extracurricular offerings, Saito and Sullivan put forth that "while the activities, venues and specific target outcomes vary greatly, high quality youth development programs can provide intentional, developmentally appropriate opportunities for young people to grow and develop that occur outside the formal school day (Saito & Sullivan, The Many Faces, Features, and Outcomes of Youth Engagement, 2011)

Summary



Avoid "one-shot" projects and instead focus more on complex experiences with a high public value that allow youth to interact with various community partners.



Allow youth to identify community issues and design related service activities.



Ensure that service-learning projects involve ongoing contact and interaction among youth, city and county officials, and other community leaders.



Provide recognition for youth who are involved in improving their communities (awards, scholarships, conference trips, etc.).



Organize school or community-based youth leadership development programs.

Research suggests that participation rates in youth programs decline around the ages of 12-13 and

remain low throughout adolescence. As a result, community leaders should proactively seek ways to provide youth with engagement opportunities that allow for social capital to be created. (Saito & Sullivan, The Many Faces, Features, and Outcomes of Youth Engagement, 2011) Saito and Sullivan note that youth engagement “is more than just a method or a tool. It represents a philosophical shift in the way we think about the relationships, roles, assets, power and opportunities that can exist between young people and the adults, programs and communities that surround and include them. (Saito & Sullivan, Rings of Engagement, 2008)

For local leaders, these words are a reminder that increasing social capital among youth is a shared responsibility, which if performed correctly, will result in a tremendous return on investment for the residents of Clifton and greater Mesa County.

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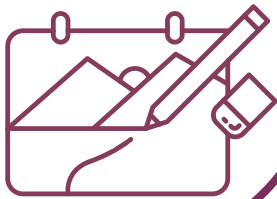
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Overview | Four Categories of Youth Engagement

Within this report, four program categories are offered spanning from traditional engagement activities like organized sports, to non-traditional programs in the arts, to programs in civic engagement and volunteerism (a clearly defined category of civic engagement). Each engagement category is connected to increased social capital outcomes for youth and/or improved public health benefits and all assume that adults will be engaged in their implementation. Per the definition of youth engagement, it's important that youth-adult partnerships are formed and structured allowing both groups to teach and learn from each other.

As youth transition into young adulthood, they require an array of skills that will prepare them for higher education, trade school, jobs, military service, or career opportunities. The social capital gained through strong relationships with engaged adults outside of family allow for the "development of caring, confident, and competent youth." (Duke, Skay, Pettingell, & Borowsky, 2009) Henness et al. also note that a higher level of youth engagement strengthens a populace over time by integrating a "new generation of youth into community and civic life." (Hennes, Ball, & Moncheski, 2013)

Arts Engagement

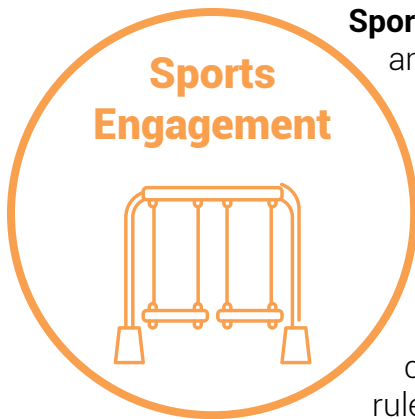


Arts Engagement | The arts are loved by many, but not often thought of in the context of public health. Participatory community arts can achieve social cohesion resulting in social capital and civic engagement. Arts and culture can provide a necessary vehicle to connect people, expose root issues, shine a light on problems and concerns of underrepresented people, and even encourage a positive shift in socio-culture norms and behaviors. (Sonke, et al., 2019) Additionally, a study conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts, found that at-risk teenagers and young adults who were involved in arts growing up statistically had better academic achievement outcomes and civic participation. (Cattarall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012)

Civic Engagement



Civic Engagement | When a new generation enters civic life, social change occurs as younger generations replace older generations. With that context, it's imperative our youth understand their current form of government, how they can participate and elevate their voice, and ways to effect change. (Zukin, 2006), (Flanagan, 2001) By actively working to address community challenges, there is a shared sense of purpose among citizens. Civic engagement promotes collective empowerment, creates a sense of community cohesion, and builds trust between individuals and groups working together to address various societal needs (Ballard & Syme, 2016) "...The health benefits from civic engagement, include[e] fewer symptoms of depression and a lower risk for negative health behaviors. By actively working to address community challenges, kids and teens are creating change within themselves." (International Youth Foundation, 2018)



Sports Engagement | In addition to the obvious health benefits of exercise and the inherent rewards of cooperation and team work, Misener et al. highlight the increased citizenship and volunteerism that is facilitated by community sport clubs. Since the volume of social capital is ultimately determined by the size of the network, well-managed sports leagues and other community-based programs are vital. Most youth programs work hand-in-hand with other local organizations and this larger “net” of relationships allows for social capital to grow exponentially over time. (Misener & Doherty, 2012) According to Seippel, “Sports build social capital because they build self-confidence and teach respect for the rules... they widen our social contact and spread tolerance and egalitarian values on the sly.” (Seippel, 2006)



Volunteer Engagement | As youth become more connected within their respective communities, they may choose to volunteer their time at organizations or causes that are of interest to them and focus beyond themselves. According to a study by Opportunity Nation, youth who volunteer “are considerably less likely than their non-volunteering peers to be disconnected from work and school.” Youth volunteers also acquire a wide range of transferable skills and create or strengthen their network. As a result, the social capital that they build over time can be extremely beneficial as they grow older and pursue additional opportunities to advance their educational or professional careers. (Opportunity Nation, 2014) Since many young Americans struggle with anxiety, depression and even suicidal tendencies, volunteering may provide a positive buffer. Volunteering provides psychological resources, which are useful for managing negative feeling like stress, depression, and anxiety. Additionally, it reduces isolation through social support. (Kim & Morgul, 2017)

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Youth Engagement Through the Arts



The Waves of Public Health Have Grown to Include the Arts

The different phases of health improvement have been referred to metaphorically as waves of public health. The following table briefly summarizes the first four waves of public health.

Table 1. Summarizing four waves of public health

Table 1 – Summarising four waves of public health.			
The first wave	The second wave	The third wave	The fourth wave
Approximately 1830–1900: Classical public health interventions, such as water and sanitation etc; concerns with civil and social order.	Approximately 1890–1950: Scientific rationalism provides breakthroughs in many fields – manufacturing, medicine, engineering, transport, and communications etc.	Approximately 1940–1980: Emergence of the welfare state and the post-war consensus: the National Health Service, social security, social housing and universal education etc.	Approximately 1960–2000: Effective health care interventions help to prolong life. Risk factors and lifestyle become of central concern to public health. Emergence of nascent concerns with social inequalities in health.

Source: Hanlon, Carlisle, Hannah, Reilly, & Lyon, 2010

As new challenges to public health arise, thoughts about society, well-being, and health itself also shift, therefore, responses to health improvement continue to evolve. (Hanlon, Carlisle, Hannah, Reilly, & Lyon, 2010) As public health transitioned into the “fifth wave,” there has been a heightened emphasis on well-being stimulating the utilization of the arts as a resource for enhancing health and cultural change. (Hanlon, Carlisle, Hannah, Reilly, & Lyon, 2010) “Proponents of the fifth wave acknowledge that there is no single action mechanism for advancing health. Instead, health must be woven throughout the fabric of social life, including policy, education, and sociocultural norms.” (Sonke, et al., 2019, p. 6) Arts and culture can be that necessary vehicle to connect people, expose root issues, shine a light on problems and concerns of underrepresented people, and even encourage a positive shift in socio-cultural norms and behaviors. (Sonke, et al., 2019, p. 6)

The arts are defined by Merriam-Webster as “painting, sculpture, music, theater, literature, etc., considered as a group of activities done by people with skill and imagination.” (Merriam-Webster, 2021) Research over the past several years has shown that the arts have a positive influence on individuals and community health; consequently, healthcare systems accept and utilize the arts to promote health outcomes. (Center for the Arts in Medicine, 2021) There are many measurable positive health impacts of art in medical facilities. For example, “patients in hospitals have been found to experience less anxiety, lower levels of pain, and faster healing after medical procedures when their hospital surroundings incorporated various forms of art.” (Thomas, 2017)

Research continues to justify the idea that art belongs in public health as new studies prove strengthened social capital and community cohesion anchored by art. According to a report on the

theory of change and case studies titled: WE-Making, How Arts & Culture Unite People, art is at the heart of community well-being because it "includes all types of community members, encourages participation for part of the community that might not otherwise participate, anchors spaces and organizations grounded in community and builds on achievement over time, aligns with community change goals to reinforce desired impacts, [and can be] reflective of community well-being goals" including "attachment to place, engagement in civic life, and social capital through sharing of stories." (Engl, 2021)

The findings from the National Endowment for the Arts study titled The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies further validates how essential it is to incorporate art in young people's lives. Teenagers and young adults who were involved in arts growing up statistically had better academic achievement outcomes and civic participation. (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012) Findings from this study also suggest that the gap in academic achievement levels between the youth of high versus low socioeconomic status can be narrowed with arts involvement in either in-school or extracurricular programs. (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012) Community health is positively impacted when youth are academically successful and involved, therefore, art experiences should be utilized to increase achievement levels and engagement.

Creative Placemaking

A popular concept—creative placemaking helps create a bridge for art and public health. Creative placemaking can include a "mural, a street carnival, busker musicians on a street corner, or a public art sculpture about the place's history. (Americans for the Arts) In fact, public mural art was created using community groups that actively included people with behavioral health challenges. (Thomas, 2017)

The National Endowment for the Arts defines creative placemaking as the partnership of public, private, non-profit, and community sectors to strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region through arts and cultural activities. (Helicon Collaborative, 2018) Studies have proven that creative placemaking has positive and measurable outcomes on individual and community health.

Participatory public art, which engages the community in the planning and creation of the art, has been found to have many favorable influences such as increased community engagement, reduced social isolation, and decreased negative stigmas. (Thomas, 2017) One such participatory public art project to have accessed core outcomes was Philadelphia's Mural Arts Porch Light Program. The program evaluation study was conducted by the Yale School of Medicine and the researchers' findings strongly suggest public art promotes public health:

Public murals promote changes in residents' perceptions about their neighborhood to reduce health risks due to neighborhood decay and disorder. Specifically, increases in residents' perceptions of collective efficacy and neighborhood aesthetic quality in the years following installation of a public mural provide evidence of the public health impact of murals. Another community-level finding was that public murals focused on behavioral health themes and produced with the support of behavioral health consumers and stakeholders, can reduce behavioral health stigma among neighborhood residents. (Tebes, et al., 2015, p. 6)

Another example of a placemaking project that provides irrefutable evidence of the value of engaging youth with art in public spaces is the program Gallery37. This program successfully bridges the arts and workforce development by creatively partnering professional artists with youth in a project-based apprenticeship in Chicago; youth in this program earn a stipend for their work on a designated undeveloped city block in Chicago. (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010) This opportunity for teens in Chicago create an environment where teens learn from experts in the field who mentor them, as well as develop better communication skills, recognize new career opportunities, and express themselves through art. (After School Matters, 2021)

Key takeaways from this project boast that "Gallery37 improves youth graduation rates, expands the arts and design workforce, offers public performances throughout the city, and greets visitors with airport murals that celebrate the City's diverse cultures." (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010, p. 53) Furthermore, this art program was a catalyst for the After School Matters program that emulates the apprenticeship model and is now an umbrella program to several content areas including arts, sports, science, communications, and technology. (After School Matters, 2021) Embracing art in youth engagement has positive influences on cultural health and overall public health.

Creative Youth in Community Development

Including youth in public art has proven to have remarkable effects on the health of a community. In a recent creative placemaking field scan to investigate the impact creative youth have on communities, it was concluded: "Through creative youth & community development projects, creative young people impact their communities in significant ways which too often go unacknowledged." (Poulin, 2020, p. 5) Another notable finding of the field scan is the "increased importance of partnering across sectors and among stakeholders to increase the impacts of creative youth in communities." (Poulin, 2020, p. 6) The collaboration and strategic investment of other youths, adults, organizations, and agencies working alongside others create perspectives that their projects have greater impacts. "In many cases, projects foster safe and healthy spaces while simultaneously addressing the physical and mental health, safety, and overall well-being of people." (Poulin, 2020, p. 23) Encouraging youth engagement in these types of



programs and projects will promote not just individual health, but cultural health and overall well-being in communities.

Framework for Arts and Culture in Public Health

It has become apparent that focusing simply on an individual's health is not enough and new approaches to health care are needed to address "upstream drivers of health outcomes: structures, systems, environments, policies." (Sonke, et al., 2019, p. 1) An evidence-based framework for arts and culture in public health created by the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine and ArtPlace offers the following general recommendations for action:

- Co-locate health and social services with arts and cultural activity.
- Partner with arts organizations and artists on design and implementation of interventions.
- Hire local artists to work on research teams, from design to dissemination.
- Look to existing local art and cultural artifacts for answers to research questions.
- Co-develop priority and core outcomes for cross-sector work.
- Coordinate joint convenings at the local, state, and national levels.
- Advocate for inclusion of arts and culture in Healthy People 2040. (Sonke, et al., 2019, p. 1)

Effectively executing these actions require not only innovation and combined efforts that take into consideration local culture, lived experience, and community assets, but also endeavors that encourage the health and well-being of society and the environment as a whole. (Sonke & Golden, Arts & Culture in Public Health: An Evidence-Based Framework, 2021)

The following figure communicates the positive outcomes that can result through implementing the recommended actions, as well as the mechanisms that help impart them. (Sonke & Golden, Arts & Culture in Public Health: An Evidence-Based Framework, 2021)

Figure 1. An Evidence-Based Framework for Arts & Culture in Public Health

Source: Sonke & Golden, Arts & Culture in Public Health: An Evidence-Based Framework, 2021

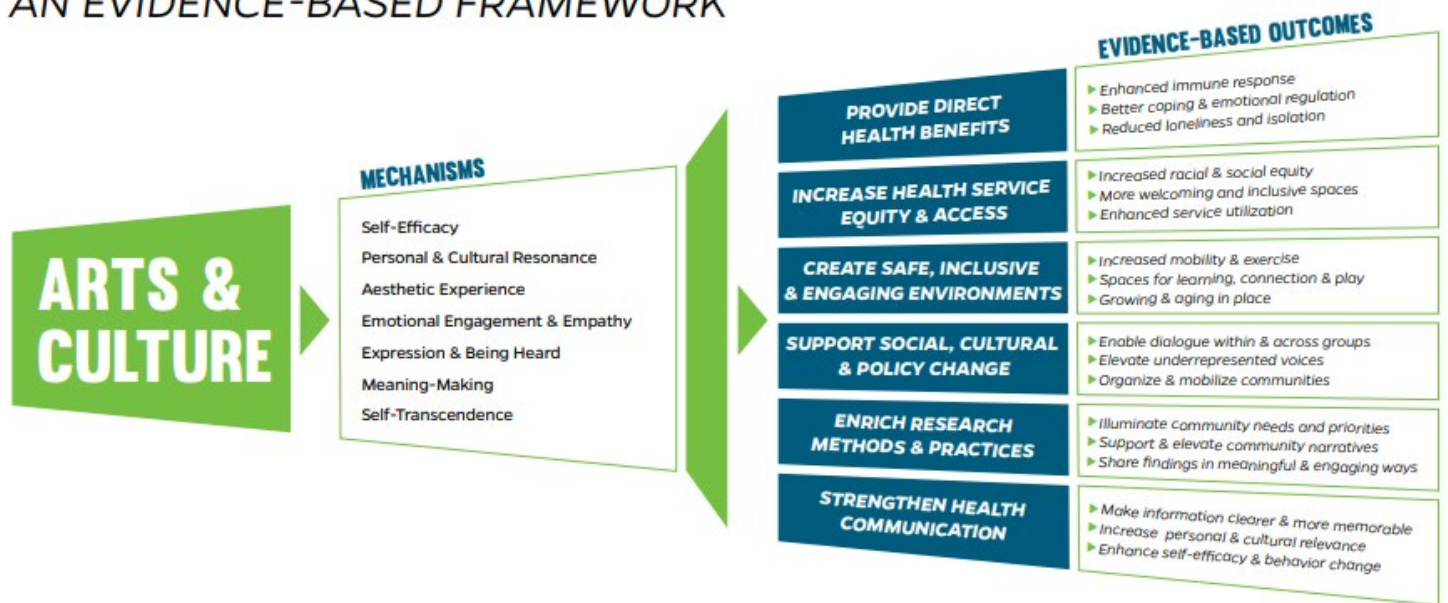
Summary

Incorporating the arts in public health, especially through community and youth engagement, has proven to enhance community well-being. Studies continue to offer mounting evidence that there are positive and measurable outcomes to justify prioritizing arts and culture in approaches to better healthcare. Research also suggests that "intentional involvement of stakeholders led to success," therefore, involvement of local partnerships, community sectors, local artists, and strategic collaborations to encourage community engagement are imperative. (Poulin, 2020, p. 29) Utilizing current research and findings and implementing similar public art engagement programs that have proven successful will allow Mesa County to make great strides in increasing community health.

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ARTS & CULTURE IN PUBLIC HEALTH

AN EVIDENCE-BASED FRAMEWORK



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Summary of Successful Youth Engagement Programs in the Arts

After School Matters (Chicago, IL)

After School Matters is an apprenticeship program for youth in Chicago, Illinois that empowers youth to have successful futures by helping them explore and develop their talents during their high school years through project-based programs. After School Matters started out as an innovative art apprenticeship program called Gallery 37 that partnered teens with professional artists to work on a designated undeveloped city block in Chicago during the summer of 1991. Youth earned a stipend for their work on this project and not only learned better communication skills and how to creatively express themselves through art, but it also opened their eyes to new career opportunities. After School Matters is now an umbrella organization to thousands of programs in a variety of content areas including art, sports, science, communications, and technology. The After School Matters website offers resources including a teen manual of how the program is run, recruitment guide, resources directory, activity booklet, quality standards, and annual reports. (After School Matters, 2021)



Children of the Street | Youth Art Engagement Project (British Columbia, Canada)

The Youth Art Engagement Project has been making a difference in the Lower Mainland community of British Columbia for the past 10 years through a multi-session program that engages high-risk youth while utilizing art projects to raise awareness of different social justice topics such as sexual exploitation. Partnering with the local school district allows access to students aged 15-18 through a weekly two-hour session that consists of an hour-long workshop regarding social justice topics such as sexual exploitation, gangs, drugs, social injustice and the second hour of art mentorship where students can express how they feel and introduce many different mediums so youth can get creative about expressing their thoughts and feelings. An art gallery celebration allows students to display their art, demonstrate their understanding of the issues learned, and raise public awareness. (Youth art engagement project, n.d.)



Matthews Opera House and Art Center (Spearfish, SD)

At Matthews Opera House and Art Center, youth in Spearfish, South Dakota are encouraged to engage their imaginations, utilize critical thinking skills, and promote emotional intelligence as they participate in artistic experiences. Each summer the children's theater program allows students to experience every facet of theater including costumes and set construction to the performance for free in the historic Matthews Opera House. During the school year, the local artists offer interactive workshops through their Artists in Schools program. Matthews Opera House and Art Center also make a presentation at the local festivals with crafts, games, songs, and art activities. (Education and Programs: Youth Engagement, 2021)



Think 360 Arts (Denver, CO)

Think 360 Arts has been collaborating with schools and communities across Colorado to make high-quality arts education programs accessible to youth. They offer many in-school and community programs including educational performances, workshops, and residencies where professional teaching artists work with school educators to create a custom program design and implementation to fit the unique needs, goals, budget, and schedule for the program. With over 50 years of experience and research in arts integration and best practices, Think 360 Arts offers a wealth of resources for educators including professional development for teachers and administrators, social-emotional learning resources, studies and articles in arts education, lesson plans, local and national resource links, grant information, as well as a free online platform called Teaching Artist TV. (Think 360 Arts for Learning, 2021)



The Union|Youth Engagement (Omaha, NE)

The Union's Youth Engagement program offers free creative experiences for North Omaha youth through a variety of programs including Saturday Art Club, Youth Open Studios, Together Workshops, and Gallery Explorations. These hands-on arts and culture enrichment programs provide a safe environment for youth ages 5-17. Action Brigade is a visual arts and civic engagement program geared towards youth ages 11-17 that utilized teaching artists to equip youth with tools and strategies to creatively respond to topics impacting them. (Youth Engagement, 2021)

Young Artists Movement | Youth Solutions (New Orleans, LA)

The Art's Council has positively influenced New Orleans through arts and culture in the city and is empowering youth to do the same. The Young Artists Movement (YAM) is a convening agency consisting of experts in public art, education, youth development, and justice.



Professional artists mentor youth, encouraging and guiding them through research, design, and installation of high-quality murals or public art. Youth discover how public art can be a powerful tool to transform their communities, as well as learn personal, social, and entrepreneurial skills through this paid internship. (Arts Council New Orleans, 2021)

Art's Council also collaborated with many institutional partners and sponsored a Creative Intelligence Agency to establish a pilot program that empowers youth through creative placemaking called Youth Solutions. The components of this program include a professionally developed youth art and design educational and social-emotional learning curriculum toolkit, an evaluation and impact assessment framework developed with Louisiana Public Health and a series of partnerships with the Arts Council and local organizations. The toolkit, curriculum framework, and evaluation are offered as free resources to interested organizations. (Arts Council New Orleans, 2021)

Additional Successful Art Engagement Programs for the Community

ArtPlace America and The University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine published a white paper entitled Creating Healthy Communities Through Cross-Sector Collaboration in 2019 that encourages the public health sector to embrace arts and culture to strengthen America's communities in health, well-being, and equity. The paper offers multiple examples of successful collaborative place-based art programs that effectively address five urgent public health issues including collective trauma, racism, social exclusion and isolation, mental health, and chronic disease. This paper can be accessed at https://arts.ufl.edu/site/assets/files/174533/uf_chc_whitepaper_2019.pdf. (Sonke, et al., 2019)

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Program Example Overview:

After School matters
afterschoolmatters.org

AFTER
SCHOOL matters

Mission:

To provide Chicago public high school teens opportunities to explore and develop their talents, while gaining critical skills for work, college and beyond.

Age Ranges:

Teens must be at least 14 years old to participate.

Overview:

After School Matters empowers teens in Chicago through an apprenticeship model program that allows them to earn a stipend as they work on projects alongside skilled professionals. It is an umbrella organization offering more than 26,000 program opportunities every year in a variety of content areas including art, sports, science, communications, and technology. Students gain confidence as they develop job skills through an application and interview process to join a program and hands-on experience. They also learn values, dedication, and hard work in the program as they are expected to meet participant, attendance, and stipend and wage requirements in order to earn their stipend. Valuing teens' time and efforts through a stipend empowers teens and help them recognize different career options. Furthermore, stipends have been found to lower participation barriers, as those who have to help bring in household income can still participate.

Research is an important part of After School Matters programs. Teen and instructor perspectives are collected through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and program observations. Quality evaluations are done through an evidence-based program observation tool called Youth Program Quality Assessment. Professional Development for instructors is one-way research from the program evaluations are used. These mandatory workshops based on the research gathered helps instructors effectively address pertinent issues adequately prepared to mentor youth.

After School Matters has three dedicated buildings for teens around Chicago, but programs are offered at a variety of spaces including, neighborhood sites, schools, parks, community centers, libraries, and community organizations. Teens take pride in the spaces they see as their own and it translates to high levels of achievement.

Background:

Gallery 37 was an innovative art apprenticeship program where teens earned a stipend as they worked on a designated undeveloped city block in Chicago in the summer of 1991 with the guidance of professional artists. This successful program empowered youth as they creatively expressed themselves through art while learning new talents, better communication skills, and became aware of new career opportunities. Gallery 37 turned into what is now known as After School Matters. It follows the same apprenticeship model but has grown into thousands of programs with a variety of content areas.

Youth Programs:

Youth programs are offered in the spring, summer, and fall in four different content areas:

- **Arts:** performing, visual and culinary arts such as dance, vocal, photography, painting, and food preparation.
- **Communications & Leadership:** business, journalism, marketing, media, and social sciences such as social media, video editing, public speaking, community organizing, and law.
- **Sports:** sports instruction, stadium management, health and wellness, and sports-related certifications such as basketball officiating, martial arts, bicycle repair, and lifeguarding.
- **STEM:** applied and natural science, audio/visual technology, industrial technology, and informational technology such as architecture, music production, environmental science, computer programming, and repair.

Programs are categorized in the following ways:

Apprenticeships: Teens must be 14 years old for these project-based programs that are led by industry experts. There are three levels of apprenticeships; the introductory level is the pre-apprenticeship that provides broad exposure to a specific content area and related careers. The next level involves more hands-on learning with content-specific skills and progresses students towards a showcase. The advanced apprenticeship is designed to refine technical skills and results in a complex project or showcase. All students are awarded a stipend for program completion.

Assistantships: Teens must be 16 years old to participate in assistantship programs. These opportunities introduce teens to workplace experience while alongside After School Matters staff. Students are paid an hourly rate of \$8.25/hour.

Internships: Teens must have participated at least three years in the After School Program and be 16 years old, although some positions in internships require teens to be 18 years old. These opportunities are more industry-specific and offer entry-level professional experiences with external organizations and companies.

Impact:

Direct Outcomes

- Increased Freshmen On-Track rates, high school attendance, and high school graduation rates;
- Improved decision-making, collaboration, and connection to schools;
- Increased college enrollment and a high percentage reported having plans for after high school;
- Enhanced feelings of a safe and supportive environment, interaction, and engagement.

Structure and Funding:

The structure of After School Matters is based on an apprenticeship and internship model. Teens apply and go through an interview process to join a program. An After School Matters Recruitment Guide is in the [appendices](#); it offers tips and suggestions on how to promote the program and recruit teens, as well as information for interviews and enrollment. As teens work on projects led by experts in the field, they learn hard skills in particular content areas. They also advance in skills that will prepare

them for college or a career such as personal mindset, planning for success, social awareness, verbal communication, collaboration, and problem-solving. Instructors earn stipends for their hard work and achieving program requirements. Teens earn \$336-\$725 monetary stipend during the summer session and \$275 - \$475 per session for the Fall and Spring sessions if they successfully meet program requirements.

The core program components are

- Advocate for teens and youth development.
- Build opportunities for teens through partnerships.
- Engage teens in development for work and higher education.
- Showcase teen accomplishments.
- Disseminate research and best practices about out-of-school time for teens.

After School Matters is funded by:

- Donations from corporations, organizations, and individuals
- Government grants and support
- Contributions and foundation grants
- Gallery 37 retail sales
- Special event revenue from the annual gala
- Interest income
- Investment income and miscellaneous income

Contact Info:

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<https://www.afterschoolmatters.org/>

Program Example Overview:

Children of the Street –
Youth Art Engagement Project
childrenofthestreet.com



Children of the Street

Mission:

Our mission is to take a proactive approach through public awareness, education and early intervention strategies to prevent the sexual exploitation and human trafficking of children and youth, while offering support to families.

Age Ranges:

The Youth Art Engagement Project is geared towards youth 15-18 years old.

Overview:

Children of the Street works to prevent sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of children and youth through education and awareness workshops, youth programs, and awareness campaigns in the Lower Mainland, British Columbia. Annually, they facilitate over 500 workshops, reaching over 25,000 people in an effort to change the culture and attitudes of how the community reacts and responds to sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. They advocate for change by collaborating with the government and community partners for changes in legislation and policies that protect the youth. They also offer intervention services to victims and their families.

Background:

Children of the Street Society began by a group of parents who were affected by a child being drawn into sex trafficking in the Lower Mainland, British Columbia in 1995. The Society has been providing prevention workshops to educate children and youth and increasing awareness of the issue of sexual exploitation. In 2019, Children of the Street joined PLEA Community Services.

Youth Engagement Program:

Children of the Street's Youth Art Engagement Project is a social justice art project for youth. Project facilitators mentor small groups of youth in the classroom for two hours a week over a ten-week period. The first hour is dedicated to activity-based learning in regard to sexual exploitation; they learn what it is, how it affects children, families, and communities, and how to prevent it from happening to them. They also learn about topics surrounding the issue, such as gangs, drugs, and alcohol. The second hour the participants experiment with different types of art media, such as mini-play, visual art piece, painting, sculpture, written songs or poetry, and create their own Social Justice Art. A Youth Art Engagement Project training sample is included in the [appendices](#); it includes learning objectives, materials needed, and lesson plans for each week. The Youth Art Engagement Project ends with a public art gallery celebration so the youth can share their project with their peers and the community.

Impact:

- Increased awareness of how to prevent sexual exploitation and sex trafficking.
- Demonstration of students' understanding of the issue of sexual exploitation through art.

- A positive experience for high-risk youth groups to showcase their creative art at a gallery celebration.
- Promotes public awareness of the issue with the art gallery celebration.
- Over 25,000 children and youth were reached through 540 Children of the Street workshops and the Youth Art Engagement Project.
-

Structure and Funding:

Children of the Street partners with schools and offers social justice and art curriculum through the Youth Engagement Art Project. This project allows two facilitators to mentor youth and educates them about sexual exploitation prevention. Children of the Street focuses on prevention measures knowing that in the long term, their work will inevitably decrease the need for intervention and enforcement services. Pre and post surveys are filled out by students to evaluate the project and see if students have a better understanding of the topics and if they had any changes in behavior or attitudes by the end of the project. These pre and post-surveys are included in the [appendices](#).

The budget for Youth Engagement Art Project ranges from \$80,000-\$95,000 and the main expenses are listed below:

- Salaries for the project facilitators, project manager, and program manager.
- Art supplies
- Food
- Event venue rental
- Event decorations and food
-

Main funding sources are listed below:

- Gaming funds
- Civil Forfeiture funds
- Corporate donations
- Foundation donations
- Individual donations
- Municipal grants
- Service clubs

Contact Info:

Camilla Ho, Contact Program Facilitator



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childrenofthestreet.com/youthart

Program Example Overview:

Matthews Opera House & Arts Center
Youth Engagement

the
MATTHEWS
Opera House & Arts Center

Mission:

The Matthews creates meaningful artistic experiences for area youth to engage their imaginations, increase critical thinking skills, and foster emotional intelligence.

Age Ranges:

- Children's Theater is for students in grades 2nd to 12th.
- Artist in Schools is for K-12th grade.
- Free Art Activities are offered at events and Fall Festivals for all children.
- Young Artist Formation is for students of all ages.

Overview:

The Matthews Opera House & Arts Center (The Matthews) created youth engagement programs so that youth in Spearfish, South Dakota, could participate in artistic experiences which helps them to engage their imaginations, utilize critical thinking skills, and develop emotional intelligence. Some of these programs are offered during the school year, and others are summer programs.

Background:

The Matthews Opera House opened in 1906 and went through a series of restorations over the years. In 1998, Matthews Opera House merged with the Spearfish Area Council for the Arts and Humanities adding an Arts Center. The Matthews Opera House & Arts Center continues to expand programs to connect with the community including the annual Festival in the Park, outreach with schools, and partnerships for economic development.

Youth Engagement Program:

- Children's Theater is offered in the summer for students in grades 2nd grade through 12th to experience every facet of theater including acting to costumes to set construction. Students are divided into two age groups and practice, prepare and perform two productions in the historic Matthews Opera House.
- Artists in Schools is an opportunity for students to experience a professional performance live. Bringing contracted artists into the classroom integrates arts into education and opens the opportunity for creative discussion.
- Free Art Activities are offered throughout the year at events such as Matthews' Festival in the Park and Spearfish Downtown Business Association's Fall Festival. The Matthews also offers free arts and crafts during the summer months to encourage children to design, touch, paint, and experiment with musical instruments.
- Young Artist Formation is important to The Matthews as making space and a place for youth to learn and grow their artistic talents is a core value. They are dedicated to young artists and encourage them to enter the Community Art Show.

Impact:

- Increased awareness of theater and arts.
- Fostered emotional intelligence and increased critical thinking skills in students.
- Promotes young artist formation.

Structure and Funding:

- The Matthews' Youth Engagement program is funded by:
- Foundation and Government grants (35%)
- Corporate and individual donations (18%)
- Gallery and Ticket sales (47%)

The breakdown of the current 2021 Youth Programming Budget is listed below:

Personnel

Community Engagement Manager \$35,000

Outside Artistic Personnel

Director Stipends (2 x \$250) \$500

Outside Professional Services

Play Production License \$1000

Scripts \$100

Printing/Marketing

Playbills \$500

Materials

Play Sets \$500

Play Props \$200

Play Costumes \$200

Visual Art Supplies \$500

Contact Info:

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matthewsopera.com/education-and-programs/youth-engagement/

Program Example Overview:

Think 360 Arts for Learning
think360arts.org



Mission:

To lead Colorado in cultivating and sustaining the arts as essential to all learning through creative experiences for students and teachers.

Age Ranges:

- Think 360 Arts have programs to serve a wide variety of ages.
- Affiliation with World Trap Institute allows them to reach early childhood learning.
- In-school programs and youth community programs serve students K-12.
- Professional Development, Business, and Organizational Workshops are geared towards educators and administrators.
- Creative Aging program is designed for older adults.
- Teaching Artist TV is a free online platform for all age ranges.

Overview:

Think 360 Arts is a nonprofit organization that has been providing Colorado with the opportunity for high-quality arts education and resources for over 50 years by collaborating with schools and the community. Think 360 Arts works with professional teaching artists to develop customized programs that utilize arts to enhance learning. They have around 60 teaching artists on their roster that are trained and passionate about art and offer over a dozen artist categories to choose from and an abundance of options for activity disciplines of visual, performing, and literary arts. They offer K-12 schools performances, workshops, and residencies. They also help teachers by providing [educator resources](#), [lesson plans](#), and best practices in regard to integrating arts in education. Moreover, they provide information on how to get grants and funding. They offer professional development, business, and organizational workshops, and community programs as well.

Background:

Think 360 Arts has been collaborating between schools, arts organizations, and cultural institutions since 1963 to deliver high-quality arts education programs to K-12 students. Their years of experience and research in arts education expanded when they successfully merged with Colorado Alliance for Arts Education and The Harmony Project.

Youth Programs:

Educational performances are 30-45 minute artistic experiences that creatively engage a group of up to 250 students and get them involved in learning. Professional teaching artists are carefully selected for each program to deliver a curriculum that is age-appropriate.

Workshops are 50-60 minutes long interactive programs that are tailored to fit into curricular goals and

complement work done in the classroom and designed for smaller groups of only 30 students. Residency is a series of 3 or more workshops that allow students to dive deeper into the art experience. Some residencies also include open studio time that allows the teachers and students to witness the artist in action as they work on their own artwork in a space provided by the school.

Impact:

- Increased collaboration among artists, educators, communities, and other organizations;
- Provides equity, diversity, and access to arts;
- Encourages inspiration, innovation, creativity, imagination, and expression through arts;
- Incorporates professional quality of the arts in the classroom;
- Enhances learning through utilizing arts as a fundamental tool.

Structure and Funding:

Think 360 Arts acts as a liaison between schools and teaching artists. They work with teachers and administrators to customize programs that best fit their goals, schedule, and budget. All professional artists on the Think 360 Arts roster are background checked through the Colorado Bureau of Investigations and complete ongoing training for working with youth and creatively integrating arts in the classroom.

Pricing for Think 360 Arts programs is determined by each artist and depends on the time and day requested. A minimum of three workshops are required for residencies; open studio time and installation of artwork may be included. Additional costs may be applicable for mileage fees, material fees, and lodging fees. Many artists on the Think 360 Arts current roster are located on the front range, however, there are a few near the Western Slope and they have been actively expanding their reach in other parts of Colorado. Think 360 Arts is dedicated to helping schools integrate arts in the classroom through professional artists so they work hard to assist with funding and [grants](#). It is necessary to complete a [Program Inquiry Form](#) for pricing on specific residency, performance, and workshops.

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think360arts.org

[Community Report: 2020 Community Report Think 360 Arts](#)

Program Example Overview:

The Union's Youth Engagement

The logo for The Union, featuring the word "UNION" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is stylized with a circular cutout in the center. The logo is set against a dark maroon background.

Mission:

The Union for Contemporary Art strengthens the cultural and social landscape of our community by using the arts as a vehicle to inspire positive social change.

Age Ranges:

- Saturday Art Club is for youth 7-14 years old.
- Youth Open Studios are for youth 5-15 years old.
- Together Workshops are designed for children and their caregivers.
- Gallery Explorations are intended for youth 8-14 years old and for children and their caregivers.
- Action Brigade is geared towards students 11-17 years old.

Overview:

The Union's Youth Engagement program offers hands-on arts and cultural enrichment programs for North Omaha youth at no cost. These creative art experiences encourage youth to positively change their lives and their communities through arts education and civic engagement. Youth Engagement programs provide a safe environment for youth as they engage in visual and performing arts to urban agriculture and cooking.

Background:

The Union's Youth Engagement program began as an Art Club in a response to curious neighborhood children who knocked on the door. The simple Art Club grew into numerous programs that inspire youth through arts and cultural enrichment activities.

Youth Engagement Program:

- Saturday Art Club is created to serve youth in North Omaha and offer opportunities for creating art projects and discussing and collaborating with peers in an intimate setting of only 24-30 per session. They also learn about food as they cook lunch or snack with a chef and in summer months, they harvest the produce for the meals and explore plans in The Union's Abundance Garden.
- Youth Open Studios are offered on Thursday evenings for youth to express themselves creatively and freely through drawing, painting, reading, playing games, and checking out the exhibits in the gallery. This time allows caregivers to attend a Co-Op workshop reducing barriers to participation.
- Together Workshops allow children and their caregivers quality time together through creative

activities such as printmaking, ceramics, gardening, painting, food preservation, and more.

- Gallery Explorations are multi-part workshops for youth to engage in themes and practices of current exhibits in the gallery. It encourages critical thinking about contemporary artists' work.
- Action Brigade is a visual arts and civic engagement program geared towards youth ages 11-17 that utilized teaching artists to equip youth with tools and strategies to creatively respond to topics impacting them. They meet with community members to learn about current local and global issues and discuss approaches to productively address them.

Impact:

- Over 300 youth were engaged for over 3,000 hours of arts-based programming in 2018.
- Increase youth's awareness of civic issues and equip them with tools and strategies to address them.
- Provides opportunities for low-income families to participate and engage in various art experiences.

Structure and Funding:

The Union's Youth Engagement program is funded by:

- Corporate donations
- Foundation and government grants
- Community partners

Contact Info:

Jacqueline Smith, Youth Studios Manager



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u-ca.org/youthengagement

Program Example Overview:

Young Artist Movement/Youth Solutions



Mission:

We believe that public art is a powerful tool to positively transform individuals, places, communities, and institutions. Our mission is to create a more equitable and healthier New Orleans by bringing together young adults, artists, and other members of our communities to create a series of large-scale public artworks that explore stories of people and place, equity and justice, and cultural and historical heritage.

Age Ranges:

YAM and Y=S are geared towards youth 14-22 years of age.

Overview:

Arts Council New Orleans promotes art and culture and empowers youth to do the same through their programs that engage youth in creative placemaking. Young Artists Movement (YAM) and Youth Solutions (Y=S) are paid internships that partner teens with professional artists, educators, and youth advocates to create high-quality murals and public art. Youth Solutions (Y=S) is a multi-year pilot initiative designed to address youth trauma resulting from disconnect, disinvestment, and neighborhood blight. This program integrates art and design education with social-emotional learning while documenting the impacts. In 2015, Arts Council collaborated with institutional partners to sponsor a Creative Intelligence Agency which helped create a curriculum toolkit that is available as a free resource and located in the [appendices](#). In addition to the toolkit, an evaluation and impact assessment framework was developed with Louisiana Public Health and a series of partnerships with the Arts Council and local organizations. The framework offers tools and metrics for assessment by outlining five objectives and impact areas and connecting these to measurable indicators to provide evidence of the positive impact creative placemaking has on youth. Another primary component of Y=S is cross-sector collaboration and the strategic partnerships with local youth-serving organizations to artists, youth educators, caseworkers, City of New Orleans Health Department, Louisiana Public Health Institute, Mayor's Office of Cultural Economy, and National Association of Minority Architects.

Background:

Arts Council New Orleans was formed in 1981 as a private nonprofit organization like the Arts Council of Greater New Orleans and the Mayor's Committee on Arts and Cultural Development successfully merged. This organization continues to improve the New Orleans community through programs and services such as YAM and Y=S.

Programs:

YAM is a paid internship for teens to complete high-quality large-scale murals as experts in the field

guide them through the creative placemaking process. Youth learn entrepreneurial skills as they are mentored through the mural research, design, and installation service. The program is set up for 2-3 days a week for 3 hours and 20 minutes and teens get paid a \$1,1500 stipend for 144 program hours. Stipends allow participants to see the value of their hard work and creativity; it also helps with program retention. Teens also benefit from the knowledge and life skills the program equips them with. The Internship Job Description details the expectations and payment information; a sample for this program is in the [appendices](#).

Y=S is also a paid internship program but is designed specifically for youth that has experienced trauma. Through creative placemaking and a curriculum that integrates art and design educational and social-emotional learning, teens develop skills from this program to help counteract the cognitive dissension and mitigate the negative effects of trauma. Furthermore, this program has an expert in grief and trauma intervention available to students. Y=S is a pilot program that gathers data from the experiences, research, and analysis and offers the information, including the curriculum toolkit and evaluations, as free resources to all who are interested.

Impact:

Direct Outcomes

- Increased collaboration among artists, educators, communities, and other organizations.
- Beautifies the community the youth live in through public art and murals.
- Youth gain artistic, leadership, communication, and entrepreneurial skills.
- Exposure to art and design techniques, design-thinking strategies, digital tools, and professionalism skills for youth.

Structure and Funding:

The structure of YAM and Y=S is based on an internship model. Students must apply and interview for a position. Once offered the position, teens receive an Intern Job Description and sign necessary paperwork including a Participation Agreement, Personal Vehicle Authorization, Liability Waiver, Photograph, and Video Release Form which is all included in the [appendices](#). All participants are also required to fill out pre-and post-evaluation forms which help them to provide evidence of the positive impact the programs are having on the students. The evaluations are also located in the [appendices](#). The retention rate for these programs is historically high. These programs are operated on different time frames and numerous interns come back to work on the different projects year after year. Recently, YAM hired a part-time coordinator that is a YAM alum. This speaks to the quality of this program and proves it is transforming young teens into young adults equipped with professional skills to fulfill their creative potential. Many sample contract agreements and job descriptions for various positions of this program are in the [appendices](#). YAM and Y=S are funded by

- Donations from corporations, organizations, and individuals
- Government grants and support
- Contributions and foundation grants

- Commissions from client work

The original program for YAM required around \$500,000 to get off the ground. Sample budgets that detail project revenue and expenses are attached in the [appendices](#).

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<https://www.artsneworleans.org/young-artist-movement/>

<http://www.artsneworleans.org/homepage/youth-solutions-2/>

Program Recommendation for Implementation:

Young Artist Movement/ Youth Solutions



Mesa County has the opportunity to positively transform youth and their communities through creative placemaking by replicating the successful youth engagement programs that Arts Council New Orleans has done with their programs: Young Artist Movement (YAM) and Youth Solutions (Y=S). These programs empower youth as they create public art in their own neighborhoods through an internship program.

YAM is a paid internship for teens to complete high-quality large-scale murals as experts in the field guide them through the creative placemaking process. Youth learn entrepreneurial skills as they are mentored through the mural research, design, and installation service. The program is set up for 2-3 days a week for 3 hours and 20 minutes and teens get paid a \$1,500 stipend for 144 program hours. Stipends allow participants to see the

value of their hard work and creativity; it also helps with program retention. Teens also benefit from the knowledge and life skills the program equips them with. The Internship Job Description details the expectations and payment information; a sample for this program is in the [appendices](#).

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The professional teaching artists for these programs ensure that the artwork is fresh and creative so that it is something clients will want to pay for. Past clients of YAM include The Four Seasons Hotel, a local hostel, a food court, a community pool, and temporary art installations that travel to different places in the community. Mesa County has sufficient opportunities for art and mural installation between possible clients such as hotels and office buildings. Public spaces for art and mural opportunities may include parks, community pools, underpasses, interior and exterior walls of libraries and public buildings, alleys, and parking lots. In fact, for the past few years, local Mesa County artists have been painting murals on the bleak underpasses.

One of the youth and development projects of Y=S that positively impacted the New Orleans community were the creation of neighborhood benches and sunshades designed and created by teens in the program to benefit the younger generation. This project brought together many community partners such as local youth-serving organizations, artists, youth educators, caseworkers, City of New Orleans Health Department, Louisiana Public Health Institute, Mayor's Office of Cultural Economy, and the National Association of Minority Architects. There are plenty of areas in Mesa County that would benefit from something like this, including Clifton, Colorado. The Y=S curriculum toolkit and evaluations are offered as free resources and included in the [addendum](#) for efficient implementation of the program.

Cross-sector collaboration is one of the primary components that allow YAM and Y=S programs to be successful, therefore, it is imperative that Mesa County mimic that element. Arts Council New Orleans works with numerous agencies including the Louisiana Public Health Institute, the City of New Orleans Health Department, the Mayor's Office of Cultural Economy, and the National Association of Minority Architects.

Mesa County has several opportunities to collaborate with organizations to create successful youth art engagement programs including the Mesa County Health Department, Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture, Colorado Creative Industries, and Grand Junction Creates. The Grand Junction Create's mission is to keep downtown Grand Junction beautiful and to support local artists and community events. Collaboration among many of these organizations has already been taking place for a recent downtown initiative developed in 2019 called [The Vibrant Together Plan](#). The goal of this plan is to sustain Downtown Grand Junction so that it can be successful. By including youth in this initiative through a city-wide youth public art program, it would ensure success in the future of our youth as well.

Furthermore, Mesa County already has some amazing programs that can be partnered with that offer teen and after-school art programs. Postvention Alliance recently received a grant from the Grand Junction Commission on the Arts and Culture for [Healing with Art, Writing, and Movement for Youth](#). Collaborating with these local artists, community organizations, and government agencies will help youth arts engagement programs survive and be sustainable in the Mesa County area while helping our youth.

To review the mission and program overview, visit [YAM's Program Example Overview](#).

Program Recommendation for Implementation:

Think 360 Arts For Learning



Think 360 Arts offers the perfect opportunity for Mesa County to enhance learning through arts education in schools and community programs. Think 360 Arts has been collaborating between professional artists, schools, and Colorado communities for decades providing invaluable knowledge and expertise in best practices in arts integration. Their [2020 Community Report](#) highlights the amazing impact they have had on many Title I schools and low-income communities in Colorado as they served over 20,000 individuals and held 161 unique art programs.

Think 360 Arts will work with Mesa County schools or interested programs, like the Riverside Education Center, to help create custom programs to address specific classroom needs, goals, schedules, and budgets. The performances, workshops, and residencies they offer

are tailored by professional teaching artists to tie into the curriculum and are guaranteed to engage students and stimulate learning. With over 60 professional teaching artists on their [roster](#), they are able to cover many different artist categories and activity disciplines. All of the professional teaching artists on Think 360 Arts' roster are located in Colorado. Although many reside on the Front Range, Think 360 Arts is currently working to find more artists local to the Western Slope. Another available option for a program or to supplement teaching is Think 360 Teaching Artist TV that launched in May 2020 allowing everyone access to quality programs and encourages movement, singing, acting, and art-making.

Mesa County educators and administrators can also benefit from [workshops](#) and [professional development](#) that assist leaders in new ways to spur creativity, innovation, and engagement in the classroom. Think 360 Arts also equips them with proven [research](#) and [lesson plans](#).

An example of a Think 360 Arts community program that Mesa County can implement is the [Acquiring Restitution Through Talent](#) (ARTT) program. This program was created in 1994 in partnership with Denver District Attorney's office to help first-time juvenile offenders to work with Think 360 Teaching Artists for an 8-10 week period as they work hard creating artwork to market and sell so the profits can be used to pay back the victims of their crimes. This program helps youth see the value and benefits of their hard work and labor. Grand Mesa Youth Services Center or Hilltop could be potential community organizations that would be willing to partner with Mesa County offices and collaborate with Think 360 Arts through training and workshops to implement a similar program.

Booking a program is as easy as filling out a [program inquiry form](#) and a staff member from Think 360 Arts will follow up to work through all the details and identify what works best for the specific school or community in Mesa County. The staff even help with some of the budget aspects of get started including a webinar presentation for writing a grant to apply for Colorado Arts Partnership grants, which is located in the [appendices](#) and links to great resources for grants to help secure funding.

To review the mission and program overview, visit Think 360's [Program Example Overview](#).

Youth Engagement through Civics



Defining Civic Engagement

Nearly all definitions of youth civic engagement include participation in clubs or associations both in and out of school, civic and political involvement, and volunteerism. (Morimoto, 2013) Youth civic engagement is defined as *"working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community. It also involves developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference."* (Erich, 2000)

According to Flanagan et al, the broader meaning of civics implies being a member of a group with "knowledge of community affairs and political issues, civics skills as competencies in achieving group goals, and civic attachment, as a feeling or belief that you matter." (Flanagan, 2001) There is evidence that practice in civic engagement, social relations, and values and behaviors communicated by adults help shape civic development in youth. (Verba S., 2003)

Brandtstädter & Rothermund frame civic engagement through action theory and define it by activities that are focused on problem solving and helping others, through collaboration or individually that result in change in communities. (Brandtstädter, 2002), (Dubé, 2021)

More often than not, civic engagement for youth emerges primarily through volunteerism. (Morimoto, 2013) Because volunteerism plays a valuable role teaching youth interact with social constructs—but can occur outside of politics and government—it is covered in a separate section in this document titled Youth Engagement through Volunteerism. It's also interesting to note in the 2006 National Civic and Political Health Survey, the majority of youth volunteered to "help others, not to address a social or political problem." In fact, "only six percent of youth believed that their volunteering was a means to address social or political problems." (Youth.gov)

However, it is important to recognize that social change occurs when younger generations replace older generations as voters and political leaders. (Zukin, 2006) With this in mind, it is imperative that youth understand their current form of government, how they can participate and elevate their voice, and ways to meaningfully effect change and contribute. (Flanagan, 2001) It is also understood that with less social capital, there are less ties to one's community and less political involvement. (Kapucu, 2011) If that is known to be true, the converse should be assumed—more political involvement equates to greater social capital and stronger ties to one's community.

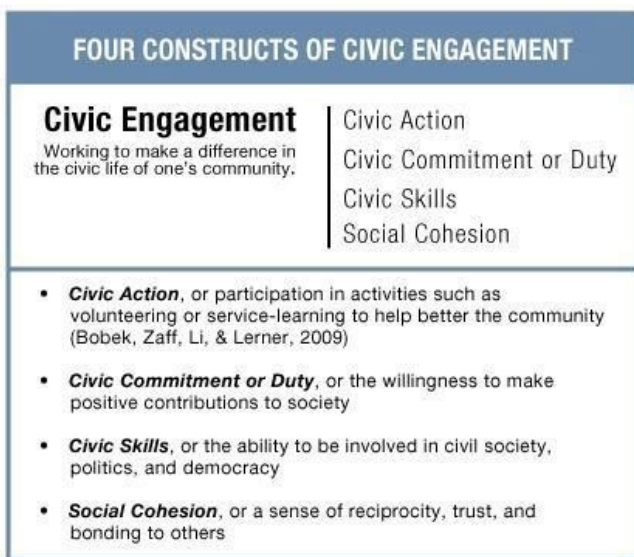
Constructs of Civic Engagement

There are four interrelated constructs necessary for civic engagement— described by Erlich as "promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes"—covered in Figure 1 below and retrieved from Youth.gov (Erich, 2000):

- Civic Action: Includes volunteerism and service learning to help improve one's own community without intent to make political change.

- **Civic Commitment or Duty:** This goes beyond volunteerism and includes intent to make a positive difference.
- **Civic Skills:** Includes the ability to become involved in civil society such as running for public office and voting.
- **Social Cohesion:** Includes trust, a key component in social capital, the feeling of mutual reciprocity, and relationships through bonding.

FIGURE 1. FOUR CONSTRUCTS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT Source: (Youth.gov)



Youth Predictors of Civic Engagement

Youth's participation in civics varies, but often tracks with their college plans. Youth who are not planning to attend college, often look demographically alike to those who are not engaged civically. Specifically, they tend to be minorities, children of parents who are less educated, and individuals of lower socioeconomic status. (Zukin, 2006), (Tufts College) Conversely, youth who are planning on attending college and pursuing higher degrees typically come from homes with parents who have college degrees and are financially stable. With that advantage, they often have more opportunities and support to volunteer and engage in political conversations. (Ellwood, 2000)

According to Syvertsen, Amy et. al (2011) there is also evidence that "public schools provide different opportunities for civic learning to college- and non-college-bound students. Comparisons of students in diverse academic tracking sequences have revealed that courses for college-bound students provided significantly more activities to build civic commitments and skills than did courses for their peers in lower academic tracks."(Syvertsen, 2011)

Youth who have strong connections in family and community contexts "predicted greater likelihood of voting, community volunteer service, involvement in social action/solidarity groups, education groups, and/or conservation groups, and endorsement of civic trust in young adulthood" (Duke, Naomi et al., 2009).

Positive Youth Development, Community Health and Civic Engagement

If the ultimate goal of youth civic engagement is teaching youth about democracy and meaningful ways to contribute to civil society, youth governance and opportunities to give youth a real voice are paramount. By taking steps to give youth a voice, they are also given representation, the ability to develop skills, and make important contributions, which is lock-step with Positive Youth Development (PYD). (Verba S., 2003)

Positive Youth Development "focuses on the whole individual, viewing socioemotional development as equal in importance to cognitive development. This holistic view is best reflected in the five C's:

competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring; a sixth C, contribution, has also been identified as resulting from the first five." (Syvertsen, 2011)

According to Lonnie Sherrod, a contributor to Silbereisen's work, "PYD takes in internal and external factors to a youth's success and focuses on positive developments rather than deficiencies... It targets not those who are only at high risk, but all youth." (Silbereisen) If youth possess more internal and external assets, research shows that they will be more healthy and successful into their adulthood. (Silbereisen)

In addition to creating social capital, civic engagement promotes collective empowerment, creates a sense of community cohesion, and builds trust between individuals and groups working together to address various societal needs. (Ballard & Syme, 2016)

The International Youth Foundation, a 30-year-old non-profit organization dedicated to inspiring and equipping young people "to realize the future they want," understands what research has found to be true: "Young people don't need to take to the streets to benefit from civic engagement—researchers found that activities like voting and volunteering had the same health benefits, including fewer symptoms of depression and a lower risk for negative health behaviors. By actively working to address community challenges, kids and teens are creating change within themselves. While they see the impact as external, they too are benefiting." (International Youth Foundation, 2018)

Summary

If we consider that social change occurs when younger generations replace older generations as voters and political leaders, it is imperative that youth understand their current form of government, how they can participate and elevate their voice, and ways to meaningfully effect change. (Flanagan, 2001), (Zukin, 2006)

Our youth have important perspectives to offer that can shape their community and prepare them to lead it in the future. As we consider youth involvement in civics, engaging and preparing our youth not only provides positive benefits to society, but teaches them positive skills from collaboration to problem-solving skills to an understanding of our democracy and how to effect change. Their engagement can have positive impacts on their personal and community health, and embolden youth to have a voice and provide representation on behalf of one another. (MacPhee, 2017)

Understanding that disadvantaged or disconnected youth who are not planning to attend college typically have less opportunities to engage civically can help inform strategies to target programs where they are needed most, but all youth will benefit from increased opportunities for civic engagement.

References

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Successful Youth Programs in Civics

Colorado Youth Advisory Council (Colorado)



The Colorado Youth Advisory Council (COYAC) was created in state statute in order to engage youth in the lawmaking process. Specifically, it was created to “examine, evaluate, and discuss the issues and interests, and needs affecting Colorado youth now, and in the future, and to formally advise and make recommendations to elected officials regarding those issues.” COYAC gives youth a voice in the lawmaking process and is made up of 40 youth members who apply to serve 2-year terms through a competitive application process. They can participate virtually or in-person to the quarterly required meetings alongside four elected state legislators. Currently, Senate District 7 (Sen. Ray Scott) is not represented on COYAC.

Family Leadership Training Institute of Colorado



Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) of Colorado was founded in 2008 with the premise of teaching the tools of democracy in a way that is accessible and understood so leaders from all walks of life will engage in civic activities and strengthen our communities. FLTI operates under CSU's Office of Community Engagement with program support provided by CSU Extension, CDPHE, and the Colorado Attorney General's Office of Community Engagement. The 20-week program can either be facilitated under the traditional model for adults-only or can use the 2Gen model, which also includes adult participants' children ages 11-18 taught simultaneously, but in a separate classroom. Each participant chooses a capstone project to create and implement within their community during the 20-week program.



Generation Citizen (New York, NY)

Generation Citizen (GC) creates curriculum and programs to support civics education in schools, community, and government to cultivate youth civic engagement. Recognizing that many young people are not involved in politics because they do not realize the power that politics has to create change, Generation Citizen aims to create civic education that inspires youth engagement. Students learn how to effectively solve community problems and change policy

through hands-on curriculum and student-driven projects that provide real world experiences. With the understanding that democracy works best with increased participation, GC works to eliminate the civic engagement gap in underserved youth populations by prioritizing their efforts to reduce barriers to civic engagement.

upRISE (Colorado)

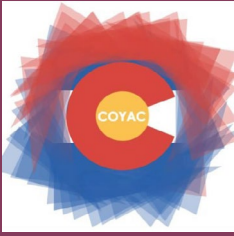


UpRISE is "Colorado's Social Justice Tobacco Control Movement" and is led by a Youth Action Board (YAB) and made up of young people coalesced around the issue of anti-tobacco or tobacco control. The fact that most tobacco users started in their youth motivated the creation of UpRISE. Tobacco and vape companies spend millions of dollars marketing to young people and tobacco is a major cause of illness and death in the United States. Moreover, UpRISE is the voice for "[historically marginalized youth](#)" targeted by tobacco companies.

UpRISE uses its powerful young voices to stand up for health equity in Colorado through coalitions. These coalitions collaborate with young people to get a collective voice, discuss action plans, and share resources. Over 300 youth and adults are currently engaged in UpRISE youth coalitions in 21 locations.

Program Example Overview:

COYAC: Colorado Youth Advisory Council



Mission:

The mission of the Council has been to examine, evaluate and discuss the issues, interests and needs affecting Colorado youth now and in the future and to formally advise and make recommendations to elected officials regarding those issues.

Age Ranges:

The council consists of 40 youths between the ages of 14 and 19 years old and includes four legislators who serve as non-voting members.

Overview

The Colorado Youth Advisory Council (COYAC) was created in state statute in 2008. Originally sponsored by Representative Ellen Roberts of Durango, COYAC legislation was introduced in order to engage youth in the lawmaking process. Specifically, it was created to “examine, evaluate, and discuss the issues and interests, and needs affecting Colorado youth now, and in the future, and to formally advise and make recommendations to elected officials regarding those issues.” ([HB 08-1157](#)) COYAC gives youth a voice in the lawmaking process and is made up of 40 youth members who serve 2-year terms and can participate virtually or in-person to the quarterly required meetings. Of the 40 youth members, COYAC’s is made-up of the following:

- 35 voting members who represent each senate district in Colorado;
- 1 voting member who represents the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe;
- 1 voting member who represents the Southern Ute Indian Tribe;
- 3 non-voting members who represent rural areas to ensure diversity;
- 4 Colorado state legislators.

Leadership of the Colorado General Assembly appoint four legislative members to review COYAC proposals and include 5 youths from COYAC who are non-voting members on this committee. The following four members have been appointed for [2021 to the COYAC Review Committee](#):

- Senator Dominick Moreno;
- Senator Kevin Priola;
- Representative Hugh McKean;
- Representative Yadira Caraveo.

Youth members of COYAC are charged with the following roles: (1) advise state legislators on the most relevant youth related issues; (2) build relationships between the youth and their statewide elected officials; (3) create policy recommendations for consideration by the COYAC Review Committee; and

finally, (4) educate students about the important skills in civic engagement and give them opportunities to use those skills.

COYAC is run out of the Bighorn Leadership Development Program, which began in 2001. Bighorn Leadership is a non-partisan program that offers Coloradans the opportunity to get involved in statewide issues while equipping them with the tools necessary to understand and create public policy, participate in community activism, or run for public office.

Budget and Funding:

The General Assembly has [appropriated .4 FTE](#) to this program and allocated \$37,493 in expenses between personnel services, legislator and per diem costs, and centrally appropriated costs. It does not appear that students get a stipend for their service though, and that their time is expected to be voluntary.

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<https://coyac.org/>

Program Example Overview:

Family Leadership Training Institute of Colorado (FLTI)



Foundation of FLTI

"When the tools of democracy are accessible and understood, leaders from all walks of life will engage in civic activities, strengthening the social fabric of our communities."

Programs/Age Ranges

Regular Module: 10-25 Adults

2-Gen Module: 10-25 Adults and their children ages 11-18-years-old.

Values

Civic Partnership

We partner with adults and youth, families and individuals, grassroots movements and government agencies to

increase civic knowledge, develop innovative tools, and create opportunities to practice inclusive and equitable local leadership.

Diversity

We foster inclusive environments that promote and nurture diversity, broadly defined, and encourage thoughtful, intentional dialogue that respects the individual and accepts multiple pathways to collective community health.

Mutual Trust & Reciprocity

We strive to build bridges rooted in communities that cross social divides at the individual level, as well as connecting traditionally underrepresented people with local decision-makers in order to foster greater trust, cooperation, and capacity to address emerging public issues that impact everyone.

Overview

Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) of Colorado was founded by the parent organization, National Parent Leadership Institute (NPLI), in 2008. FLTI of Colorado operates under CSU's Office of Community Engagement with program support provided by CSU Extension, CDPHE, and the Colorado Attorney General's Office of Community Engagement. This comprises the state team which provides annual facilitator training and coaching assistance to ensure program fidelity.

Each FLTI site provides a site coordinator, and 2-4 trained facilitators to lead the 20-week program. Outside of the aforementioned curriculum and staff, each site varies a little in implementation because it caters to the community it serves.

Ten to twenty family leaders are selected to participate in a 20-week training class through a highly competitive application process. After acceptance in the class, they participate in a 20-week nonpartisan leadership course which includes:

- A full-day community building retreat;
- Phase I: 10 sessions focused on personal leadership development;
- Phase II: 10 sessions focused on the civic process and how to effect change;

- A day of civic engagement— Front Range participants attend a day at the Capitol, Western Slope participants engage with a city council or county commission session;
- A personally developed civic project.

FLTI is currently located in the following sites across Colorado: Aurora, Boulder, Eagle, Lake, Prowers, Pueblo, Summit County, and Montbello in the Denver Metro Area. Mesa County is in an inactive site, but could re-engage through Mesa County Public Health as the host agency.

Impact

- Increased opportunities for underrepresented groups;
- Dramatic increases in civic knowledge;
- Greater participation in civic activities;
- Increased self-efficacy and sense of purpose;
- Increased critical thinking skills in youth participants;
- Improved parent-child interactions.

Structure and Funding

FLTI is a community driven, collaborative initiative. The success of a FLTI Site is based on the following key components:

- Civic Design Team
- Host Agency
- Site Coordinator
- Facilitators
- Funding and Resources
- Alumni
- State Team
- Technical Assistance and Training

Sufficient funding is important for success. Under the Sample Budget within the Site Implementation Guide the total investment can range from \$65,840 for adult-only programs to \$104,540 for 2-Gen implementation (page 18).

See the FLTI Site Implementation Guide in the [appendices](#) for further budget and curricula information.

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Program Example Overview:

Generation Citizen



Mission:

Generation Citizen (GC) is working to transform civics education so that young people are equipped and inspired to exercise their civic power.

Ages:

Generation Citizen targets youth 14-19 years of age through the curriculum created for middle school and high school students. GC also offers online learning programs and professional development for youth educators.

Overview:

Generation Citizen creates curriculum and programs to support civics education in schools, community, and government to cultivate youth civic engagement. Recognizing that many young people are not involved in politics because they do not realize the power that politics has to create change, GC aims to create civic education that inspires youth engagement. Students learn how to effectively solve community problems and change policy through hands-on curriculum and student-driven projects that provide real world experiences.

Each semester ends with a Civics Day to celebrate students' efforts and gain valuable feedback as student representatives from classes present their plans. Community members, public officials, governors, mayors, and even members of Congress have shown up to past Civic Days.

With the understanding that democracy works best with increased participation, GC works to eliminate the civic engagement gap in underserved youth populations by prioritizing their efforts to reduce barriers to civic engagement. GC created an amazing toolkit to provide practical guidelines to help youth in underserved communities better understand civics and empower them to participate and become a change agent. GC began in 2008 and now has six current action civics sites that are in California, Texas, Massachusetts, New York, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island.

Programs:

[Democracy Doesn't Pause](#) provides free resources for teachers, parents, and youth and including virtual lessons, virtual connections through Facebook livestream for civic gatherings, and other platforms and panels to facilitate connections and sustain engagement.

[Kick Start Action Civics](#) is a free online program that Generation Citizen offers to prepare and engage educators in civics curriculum. It includes student-led projects that not only prepare students, but also motivate them in political engagement as they go through a five-step process.

1. Debate and build consensus over personal issues.
2. Research and develop action plans.
3. Implement an action plan.

4. Present action plans at Civics Day.
5. Reflect and explore more ways to become civically engaged.

Teacher-Led Model supports teachers and administrators through training and support so they can effectively lead action civics in their classrooms. Topics of workshops include:

- Introduction to GC and Action Civics
- Democratic Classroom Pedagogy
- Local Government Guidance
- Civic Day Prep
- Action Planning Expertise
- School-Wide Partnerships

Democracy Lab was created for Massachusetts 8th grade students with the goal of expanding civic learning. Democracy Lab is available through subscription and includes the following:

- Professional Development
- Student Resources
- Teacher Resources
- Professional Learning Community.
-

Although this program is not geared toward Colorado, it could be replicated to provide teachers with the same opportunity.

Impact:

GC evaluation consists of pre- and post- semester student surveys, teacher and Democracy Coach surveys taken mid- and end-semester, as well as classroom observations. The evaluations gauge three main indicators: student's civic knowledge, student's civic skills, and student's civic motivation which are likely to predict future civic engagement. The evaluation results have reported significant increases among each main indicator for students concluding GC has an important impact on engaging youth in civics.

Budget and Funding:

According to the GC's 2020 Annual Report, revenue from foundations, government revenue, individuals, program services, and corporate giving totaled \$5,309,525.98. Expenses for this organization's programs, fundraising, and administration totaled \$5,621,345.96.

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Program Example Overview: UpRISE



Mission:

Amplifying Colorado young people's passion to shift perspectives about the tobacco industry and root causes of nicotine and substance use.

Our vision: Colorado's young people use their voices to create health equity.

Ages:

Youth Action Board (YAB) consists of young adults (up to age 25) that lead the UpRISE movement. Members of an Adult Advisory Board provide support to the YAB.

Overview:

UpRISE is "Colorado's Social Justice Tobacco Control Movement." This civics activism group led by a Youth Action Board (YAB) consisting of young people coalesced around the issue of anti-tobacco. The fact that most tobacco users started in their youth was the motivation behind UpRISE.

Tobacco and vape companies spend millions of dollars marketing to young people and tobacco is a major cause of illness and death in the United States. Moreover, UpRISE is the voice for "[historically marginalized youth](#)" targeted by tobacco companies; UpRISE defines historically marginalized youth as "youth of color, youth who experience economic precarity, rural youth, and/or youth identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender."

UpRISE uses its powerful young voices to stand up for health equity in Colorado.

UpRISE has a few staff members and an Adult Advisory Board that supports Youth Action Board (YAB). The diverse youth leaders on YAB created the mission and vision and drive the movement. The board meets regularly to discuss social justice issues, investigate underlying causes of tobacco use, and plan statewide activities.

Twelve Colorado cities are represented by YAB.

- Silverton
- Fort Collins
- Salida
- Centennial
- La Junta
- Sterling
- Denver
- Aurora
- Northglenn
- Craig
- Kremmling
- Lakewood

Mesa County can contact upriseyouthmovement@gmail.com for more information about YAB and

how to get youth in Mesa County, Colorado involved and represented.

UpRISE Coalitions collaborate with young people to get a collective voice, discuss action plans, and share resources. Over 300 youth and adults are currently engaged in UpRISE youth coalitions in 21 locations. Past UpRISE coalition activities have allowed youth to highlight the root cause of an identified system flaw through an arts-based project and then present their findings to adults in the community.

UpRISE youth and adults examine and expose the tactics of the tobacco industry to abuse power. Their research has shown that advertisements and marketing are strongly directed towards socioeconomic neighborhoods, African American communities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people. Furthermore, the tobacco industry has been using debt bondage and forced labor on their tobacco farms. Tobacco negatively impacts the environment caused by deforestation and incorrect disposal of cigarettes and electronic smoking devices.

UpRISE coalitions also examine root causes of tobacco and nicotine use in youth in Colorado so that the core issues can be addressed. After concluding that one of the root issues of youth using tobacco and nicotine is caused by young people feeling ignored or unheard by adults, UpRISE youth met with their school principal to discuss their ideas of improving student/ teacher relationships.

By strategically leveraging the power of young voices, UpRISE is able to transform systems through informing community decision-makers to support the health of youth. UpRISE organizes Annual Youth Forums which are designed to train and equip young people so they feel empowered and prepared to meet with local community members and decision-makers that can help them with policy change. These forums include representatives from each coalition, Youth Action Board, Adult Advisory Board, and staff.

Budget and Funding:

Most of the funding for UpRISE comes from A35 Funding for tobacco prevention education. Past grants for each coalition were \$5,000. Due to some of the budget cuts, UpRISE will be making some changes to the grants for the coalitions. UpRISE also offers Fee for Service models and can support some of the coalitions through creating their contract for certain resources. Because of the limited amount of coalition funding, some communities have been able to partner with the local health departments that are willing to write them into their budgets. UpRISE is also considering offering mini-grants that support youth in working towards policy change; these mini-grants will not include the workbook.

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Program Recommendation for Implementation:

Family Leadership Training Institute



"When the tools of democracy are accessible and understood, leaders from all walks of life will engage in civic activities, strengthening the social fabric of our communities."-FLTI

Between 2009 to 2019, FLTI of Colorado has graduated over 1,400 family leaders across the state. According to the 2018-2019 State Impact Report and when compared with national statistics, FLTI graduates are more engaged in community organizing work and civic management and more likely to contact a public official. Additionally, FLTI graduates are more likely to advocate for a policy issue than before completing the program

and their knowledge of who their state and local elected officials are grew just over 125%, while their knowledge of how state laws are made increased 185%. (FLTI Statewide Impact Report)

In 2017, FLTI completed an efficacy study to get a sense of the effects of the program on its graduates related to civic engagement, knowledge, empowerment, and community health. What they found was in overwhelming affirmation of the program's positive, long term effects:

Most FLTI graduates (86%) sustained meaningful, sometimes transformative, levels of civic engagement after program completion. This engagement involved multiple forms of leadership, most often advocacy, program implementation, and media campaigns; 63% of graduates directed at least some of their activities to marginalized populations. Content analyses of graduates' civic (capstone) projects and results mapping story maps indicated that 81-90% of community activities aligned with public health priorities. (MacPhee, D.F., 2017)

If done with intentionality, cohorts should be made-up of a diverse demographic, and in the past have represented typically underrepresented groups including a majority of adults who have earned High School Diploma equivalents.

Because of this diversity, barriers to enrollment and course completion should be considered. Mesa County should proactively consider transportation to and from weekly classes, locating the classes within walking distance or close to public transportation, and providing meals and childcare for families who attend and their young children who may need to join them.

Because the program teaches civics and coalition building to underrepresented groups, it gives a voice to the powerless and empowers change. The change really occurs when they begin proactively working to select their capstone project. This project can be anything from kicking off a walk to represent a cause to challenging themselves to begin reading the paper everyday to mounting a campaign to see gas stations put less sugary snack options at children's eye level when checking out.

The capstone project coupled with the diverse group of speakers offered and the opportunity to speak in front of city councilmembers is emboldening. Participants soon feel like they are welcome to share their opinion, that they do have a seat at the table, and that their voice is important. These important steps are the foundation to become a change agent.

Because of this report's premise, the 2-Gen Model is the recommended model to pursue and implement. Under the 2-Gen Model (2-Gen Module: 10-25 Adults and their children ages 11-18-years-old), parents and youth go through the classes at the same time but with different facilitators and in different co-horts with curriculum geared toward their age groups. This compels both generations to grow together as they learn how to create long-lasting, effective change while increasing their civic knowledge and creating opportunities to practice leadership.

To review the mission and program overview, visit FLTI's Program Example Overview. See the FLTI Site Implementation Guide in the [appendices](#) for further budget and curricula information.

References

MacPhee, D. F. (2017). Promotion of civic engagement with the Family Leadership Training Institute. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 60, 568–583.

Youth Engagement Through Sports and Outdoor Recreation



The ability of cities and towns across the United States to engage youth in high-quality programs is of utmost importance as our nation continues to face numerous health crises. According to a report produced by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, only 1 in 5 adolescents meet the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (at least 60 minutes of daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity). (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, 2019) In addition to their obvious physical benefits, purposefully designed youth programs also serve as catalysts for mental, emotional, and social development as children grow older. (Widmer,

Duerden, & Taniguchi, 2014) Youth engagement also has long-term implications as studies have shown that children who engage in a variety of leisure-time physical activities are more likely to continue their participation into adulthood. (Christiana, West, & Davis, 2017)

Various organizations and governmental agencies have noted the disparities in participation among several populations including: girls, racial and ethnic minorities, youth raised in low socioeconomic households, rural youth, and children with disabilities. (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, 2019) These young Americans are less likely to be physically active and often fail to enjoy the perks associated with youth sports and outdoor recreation. Some researchers have even noted that "the conceptualization of youth play has shifted from a primarily outdoor to a predominantly indoor activity." (Larson, et al., 2019) Although this trend may look discouraging, numerous scholars suggest that facilities and programs provided by local parks and recreation departments are particularly well positioned to meet the health needs of community residents." (Christiana, West, & Davis, 2017)

The Benefits of and Challenges Facing Youth Sport

"Sport is viewed as a setting with potential to offer social benefits to youth participants and alleviate broader social problems. Such promise requires intentionality of sport program philosophy, design, and execution. When designed with intentionality, youth sport can bring about positive change for individual youth and societies." (Anderson-Butcher, 2019)

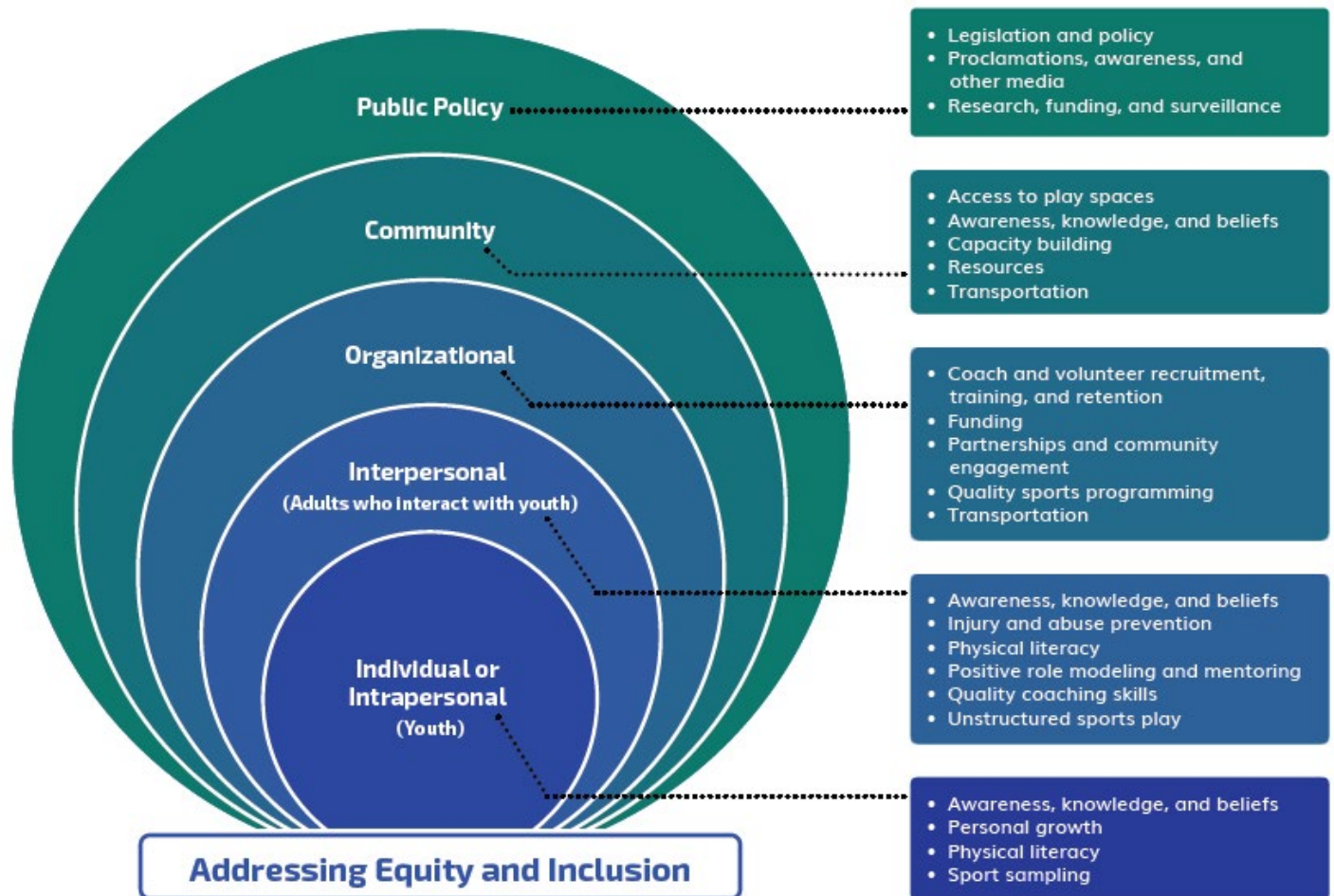
According to a study conducted in 2019, approximately half of the youth around the globe participate in some form of organized sport. Although this type of activity is primarily associated with developing physical literacy and enhancing performance through competition, this approach "often minimizes the impact that sport could have in relation to healthy youth and societal outcomes." (Anderson-Butcher, 2019) The 2019 National Youth Sports Strategy (NYSS) noted several of these benefits, including: (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, 2019)

- Developing competence and self-esteem;
- Reduced risk of suicide and suicidal thoughts/tendencies;
- Improving life skills (i.e. goal setting, time management, work ethic);
- Enhanced social and interpersonal skills (i.e. teamwork, leadership, relationship-building).

Several frameworks related to social development and youth sports participation among youth exist within the literature. Positive youth development (PYD) focuses on the "5 Cs: social competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring. It is also noted that when youth demonstrate these

characteristics at a high level, a sixth “C” is revealed through contributions youth make to themselves, their family, school, community, and society. (Anderson-Butcher, 2019) Sport for development (SFD) is seen in programs and opportunities that go beyond traditional sport delivery and emphasize improvement in other areas such as social well-being. The First Tee program is a great example as it teaches young golfers how to respect others, build perseverance, and increase overall sportsmanship. The NYSS notes the various levels of youth sports and offers great advice for organizations and community leaders seeking to increase youth engagement through sports (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Framework for Understanding Youth Sports Participation (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, 2019)



Even though millions of youth across the United States participate in sports each year, there is still room for growth. According to a survey conducted by the Sport and Fitness Industry Association in 2019, only 38% of kids aged 6 to 12 played team or individual sports on a regular basis in 2018. (Aspen Institute, 2019) Therefore, there is a clear opportunity for cities and towns across the nation to provide more programs where youth can increase their level of physical activity through sport. However, this goal faces many challenges as researchers have identified several barriers to initial participation and continued involvement. (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, 2019) In addition to the disparities noted earlier, these include:

- Limited access to play spaces

- Cost
- Minimal interest or knowledge
- Time and competing demands
- Low levels of enjoyment
- Lack of physical literacy

Recent literature suggests that community leaders could utilize “sport plus” (increasing participation in sport by reducing barriers and involving parallel programming to advance additional outcomes) or “plus sport” (use sport to attract youth to programs but emphasize social and/or life-skill development) designs. (Anderson-Butcher, 2019) In 2010, Durlak lamented the fact that many after-school programs tend to focus only on athletic or academic benefits and overlook the opportunities to help kids grow personally and socially through participation. (Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010) Therefore, youth practitioners need to understand that social development for youth is a growing priority and an inclusive, fun, and developmentally appropriate program can have a tremendous impact on the youth within their respective communities.

Outdoor Recreation: Meeting the Needs of Generations Z and Alpha

“Recreation professionals should ensure that recreation programs are available in a wide variety of formats, including those that emphasize competition (leagues, clinics, and clubs), as well as those that might focus more on participation than competition (drop-in and special events, or perhaps clinics or clubs in which competition is intentionally deemphasized).” (Christiana, West, & Davis, 2017)

According to the Outdoor Foundation’s annual participation report (2020), “average outdoor outings went from a high of 91 per year in 2012 to just 77 per child participant in 2019.” The foundation believes that this “represents a risk to future industry growth” and should be seen as a warning sign for organizations and programs tasked with promoting physical activity among youth. (Outdoor Foundation, 2020) Recent research within the field of early childhood education has explored the “intersection of technology, play and motivation,” particularly the rise of “gamification” (using game-based mechanics to engage participants). (Tootell, Freeman, & Freeman, 2014) For Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) and Generation Alpha (born between 2010 and 2020), studies have shown that these children spend far less time outdoors than previous generations. (Larson, et al., 2019) In order to develop programs, create marketing campaigns and obtain funding, local leaders and organizations must understand the trends of and barriers to outdoor participation among American youth. (Gouldenberg & Soule, 2015)

Although technology has obvious societal benefits, the “explosion of mobile media devices” has become the largest barrier to outdoor play. A recent study of screen time usage revealed that youth ages 13 to 18 spend close to nine hours per day looking at a screen. (Larson, et al., 2019) Additional findings revealed:

- Screen time eclipsed outdoor time for most individuals in the study
- Disengagement with nature and engagement with electronic media often increases as children progress into adolescence
- Screen time was higher than outdoor time for almost every demographic group
- Although rural youth spend more time outdoors than their urban counterparts, screen time still eclipsed outdoor time for this population

While competitive sport programs benefit children in many ways, Christiana et al. (2017) suggests that noncompetitive activities (unstructured play and other recreational activities) may be the key for promoting physical activity among youth who “are not athletically gifted or have decreased self-efficacy in their athletic abilities.” (Christiana, West, & Davis, 2017) Outdoor activities such biking, swimming, hiking, and skateboarding allow participants to control their levels of time and/or social involvement without being constrained by established rules or other limits typically associated with competitive sports. The 2020 Outdoor Participation Report revealed that the five most popular outdoor activities for youth aged 6 to 17 were biking, running, camping, fishing, and hiking. Interestingly, the Outdoor Foundation also found that these youth participants were “much more likely than non-participants to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities, including scouts, student council, music, dance and other clubs and classes.” (Outdoor Foundation, 2020)

Gutman's (1982) means-end theory provides an important framework for outdoor programs. Attributes (the means) can consist of “physical objects, services or experiences” such as mountain biking or outdoor camps. Consequences are the “direct results of an attribute” and can be viewed as positive or negative by participants. Examples of consequences might include learning how to kayak or simply enhancing one's interpersonal skills. Finally, values (the ends) are participants' “desired end-state of mind” resulting from the aforementioned attributes and consequences (i.e. transferring skills learned in an outdoor program to another area of one's life). (Gutman, 1982)

Whether it be creating a merger between technology and outdoor time “to promote nature connection” or expanding non-competitive activity options, local parks and recreation departments along with additional community programs and facilities have a tremendous opportunity to engage kids outside of school hours. As a rural county with numerous outdoor recreation or “nearby nature” offerings, Mesa County is in a great position to counteract the physical activity trends currently plaguing the youth population. (Larson, et al., 2019)

Summary

Although the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted the youth sport and outdoor recreation industries, parents “appear to really be valuing right now the physical, emotional and social benefits” that these programs provide to their children during these difficult times. (Aspen Institute, 2020) Establishing school and community partnerships to better facilitate joint-use agreements and cooperative programs allow municipalities and youth organizations to pool their resources and extend a wide range of services and their related benefits to the youth within their respective communities. (Christiana, West, & Davis, 2017) Moving forward, it is evident that the promotion of physical activity through sport and outdoor recreation faces many challenges, but research, preparation, and a renewed focus on improving the lives of youth will allow Mesa County to lead the next generation into a much healthier world.

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Successful Youth Programs in Sports

Active RVA (Richmond, VA)



Active Richmond, Virginia (Active RVA) is a program developed over the last 20 plus years by the Richmond Sports Backers organization. The Sports Backers, led by Jon Lugbill, are innovators in their philosophy to leverage sports and outdoor recreation events (both events they assist in recruiting and those the organization owns and operates) into increased community outcome achievement. This program has resources designed for individuals, community, work, and school. Active RVA's school certification program is a component designed at elevating the health and wellness of the entire community.

Aspen Institute's Project Play (Nationwide)



The Aspen Institute's Project Play initiative has been extremely active in advocating for access to sport participation across the country. The organization has produced several studies and provides resources for communities to foster increased participation in sport and physical activity. Project Play has produced a Teamwork Toolkit with ESPN and Under Armour, designed to promote development of healthy communities through sport. The organization also developed leader resources to mobilize communities for program implementation, grant-making, and collaborative initiatives. Project Play also features resources for parents and community coaches.

I Play! Afterschool (San Antonio, TX)



Founded by San Antonio Sports, the I Play! Afterschool program at select area schools for 25 participants to embark on a five-week training program. The program currently features soccer, track, volleyball, baseball, and tennis. The program has participation requirements and concludes with a competition among participants from the various school programs. This program is intended for elementary school students but could be catered to necessary age-levels. San Antonio Sports has spun-off I Play! At Home and a sport training video portfolio for teachers and coaches to encourage practice at home. The I Play! Programs reside under San Antonio Sports' community development arm.



Kids, Inc. (Amarillo/Canyon, TX)

Kids, Incorporated is a regional-based program designed at providing sport participation programs for all area youth. Servicing more than 15,000 youth per year, Kids, Inc. Spurred from an afterschool program and a local visionary. The program offers 27 sports participation opportunities, as well as a kids inclusion program designed to link youth in sporting activities regardless of development or special needs. The core of Kids, Inc. programming is catered to 4th-6th graders, but the framework could be expanded to meet community needs.

USA BMX STEM Program (Nationwide)



USA BMX's STEM Program is a one-of-a-kind education curriculum developed by the sport of BMX's national governing body designed at educating youth in science, technology, engineering, and math through the context of one of the fastest growing sports in the country: BMX. The curriculum has rolled out to a variety of cities that host USA BMX events, including Houston and Tulsa. The push for STEM education coupled with the tremendous community asset in the Grand Valley BMX track at Mesa County Fairgrounds yields a unique opportunity to engage with this proven, USA BMX program. The program is geared for elementary aged students, but can be expanded to middle school students.

WIN for KC (Kansas City, MO)



The Women's Intersport Network (WIN) for Kansas City (KC) is a program developed by the Kansas City Sports Commission and Foundation aimed at empowering women and girls through sport. The WIN umbrella encompasses a variety of programs for youth and adults, including summer sports camps, after school programs, women-only athletic events, and fundraising events. WIN has grown to a marquee program providing access to underprivileged youth in the Kansas City area by fostering mentorship and leadership pipelines, corporate and philanthropic engagement, and community pride.

The primary WIN program for exploration in Mesa County is the Camp WIN program whereby the organization hosts nearly 1000 girls for sports camps each summer. Not only do the camps expose young girls to the benefits of sport and physical fitness, they also craft leadership lessons and peer-to-peer learning in the camp programs.

Key Legislation

PHIT Act*

*All information below comes directly from the [PHIT Act website](#) (2021).

The PHIT Act is legislation pending in Congress which will allow Americans to use pre-tax medical accounts to pay for physical activity expenses. The PHIT Act will provide an incentive for adults and their children to get physically active which will help prevent healthcare costs related to preventable chronic diseases.

Currently, pre-tax medical accounts are primarily used for reimbursement of medical expenses once you become sick. The PHIT Act will allow taxpayers to place up to \$2,000 a year in existing pre-tax medical accounts for reimbursement of physical activity expenses. Lower costs to be physically active will promote active lifestyles and improve the health of Americans. The PHIT Act will put prevention in our healthcare system. Basically, what we have today is "sickcare." The PHIT Act will help promote "wellness care." which is true healthcare.

The activities eligible for pre-tax reimbursement under the PHIT Act could include:

- Youth & Adult Sports League Fees
- Health Club Membership Dues
- Exercise Classes & Personal Trainers
- Sports & Fitness Equipment (used exclusively for physical activities)
- Youth Sports Camps
- Pay-to-Play School Sports Fees
- Organized Running Event Registration Fees

There is excellent, bipartisan support for the PHIT Act in Congress. It needs to be brought to the floor for both the House and Senate.

The PHIT Act proposes [several programs](#) geared at increasing physical activity of kids. PHITAmerica.org. (2021). Retrieved from <https://phitamerica.org/about/phit-act/>.

Program Example Overview:

Active RVA (Active Richmond Virginia)



Mission:

Active RVA is a movement. It's a collaboration. To make Richmond the most active region in the country, we work across industries, with kids and parents, city and county administrators, CEO's and employees, and with YOU to get every corner of our community moving.

Ages:

No specific age range, seeks to provide benefits for the entire community of Richmond, VA. However the school program is designed for all levels of education, elementary, middle, and high school.

Vision:

At Active RVA we're improving the quality of life in the Richmond Region through active living. Every Richmonder, regardless of age or income level, deserves a more attractive and vibrant place to live where safe opportunities to walk, run, dance, swim, bike or work out abound. We know from countless studies that a host of chronic diseases can be prevented by moderate physical activity. A healthier community contributes to a more productive economy and students who get daily exercise perform better in the classroom. By building cross-cutting initiatives that support and celebrate active living for all of our neighbors we can make Richmond the most active community in the country."

Overview:

The Richmond Sports Backers set a priority to make Richmond, Virginia (RVA) a physically active community for more than twenty years. Active RVA (2021) reports "tens of thousands of participants in Sports Backers' events and training teams have made physical activity a priority in their lives." Active RVA began in 2012 in an effort to foster a healthier community. The priorities set-forth by Active RVA (2021) include: 1) Aligning strength of partners, 2) Changing policy changes opportunity, 3) Building a culture that celebrates every active lifestyle, 4) Leveraging the best of what we have.

Programs:

To achieve these objectives, Active RVA has instituted four primary programs including those for 1) individuals, 2) community, 3) work, and 4) school.

Active RVA at School

The primary focus of this overview is the Active RVA [school program](#). The premise of this program is to engage schools with promoting active lifestyles and wellness among youth. The school program has evolved to include a [school certification program](#) for elementary, middle and high schools demonstrating initiatives to promote healthy, active lifestyles.

The Active RVA school program resources school stakeholders including faculty, staff, students, and families for implementing active lifestyles, making it very collaborative in nature among the school's

stakeholder ecosystem.

Additional Programming:

Kids Run RVA

[Kids Run RVA](#) is a youth program designed to get kids physically active through a series of events and programs in the community. The objective of this program is to foster an active, healthy lifestyle among kids to build future habits that can be sustained for a lifetime.

Annual Report:

[2018-19 Sports Backers Annual Report](#)

Contact Info:

Ruth Morrison, Active RVA Outreach Manager



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100 Avenue of Champions
Richmond, VA 23230



804-285-9495

<http://www.activerva.org/>

Program Example Overview:

Project Play



Mission:

The Aspen Institute's Project Play has been called the "conscience of youth sports." Their mission is to develop, apply and share knowledge that helps build healthy communities through sports. They identify gaps and work with leading organizations to fill them so every child in America can access sports, regardless of zip code or ability.

Age Ranges:

All ages of youth.

Overview:

Launched in 2013 by the [Aspen Institute Sports & Society Program](#), the initiative develops, applies and shares knowledge that helps build healthy communities through sports. Project Play produces reports that take measure of the state of play at the national, regional and city levels, with exclusive data and insights. It creates frameworks and tools that stakeholders can use to grow access to quality sport. Then each fall, it pumps new ideas into the bloodstream and pushes the movement forward at the [Project Play Summit](#), the nation's premier annual gathering of leaders at the intersection of youth, sport and health.

The program also mobilizes leaders at the [community](#) level. In Baltimore, Harlem, Southeast Michigan and Western New York, Project Play has used Collective Impact methodology to create shared agendas and develop mutually reinforcing actions. It helps foundations shape grant-making criteria and connects local groups with national organizations that can lead to new investment or innovative partnerships.

Programs:

Leaders can come from rec groups, national sport organizations, policymakers, education, parents, public health, business and industry, and technology and media. Project Play's [Leader Resources](#) page can help leaders build healthy communities.

Teamwork Toolkit

The [Teamwork Toolkit](#), created in partnership with ESPN and Under Armour, is a first-of-its-kind digital platform that can help local leaders build healthy communities through sports. Newly updated for 2020 to help you identify gaps in your community, develop a shared agenda, and plan for action.

State of Play Reports

The Aspen Institute has landscaped the state of youth sports at the city, county, regional and state levels. These [reports](#) provide essential data and insights for leaders, who have used them to shape

grant-making, partnerships and policy.

Additional Programming Offered by Project Play

Parent Resources

It's not easy helping a child navigate today's pressurized world of youth sports. This [page](#) offers free resources developed by Project Play and its partners, whether the goal is finding the [best sport](#) or [local program](#) for a child, [mobilizing your community](#) to improve its state of play, or [coaching kids](#) more effectively.

Coach Resources

Growing the quality and quantity of youth coaches is a strategic priority of Project Play and its partners, whose efforts have helped [lift](#) the percentage of adults nationally who report training in key competencies. This [page](#) offers resources that coaches and sport providers can use to drive further progress.

Budget:

The Aspen Institute's 2019 Annual Report is located on this [page](#), in addition to other financial statements. However, the specific budget for Project Play is not identified.

Annual Report Link: [Sport for All - Play for Life, State of Play 2020](#)

Contact Info:



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Washington, D.C. 20037

<https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/>

Program Example Overview:

i play! afterschool



Mission:

i play! afterschool is San Antonio Sports' innovative afterschool program that ignites a love of sport in 3rd through 5th graders, while teaching them life lessons about active living, good nutrition and strong personal character.

Age Ranges:

Boys and girls 3rd through 5th grade

Overview:

i play! afterschool is a free youth sports training program: Twenty-five (25) students enrolled in the After School Extended Day program at select schools have the opportunity to participate in the San Antonio Sports i play! afterschool program. Kids receive training in five, 5-week sports development sessions (soccer, track, volleyball, basketball, tennis). The program also includes leadership and team building skills, nutrition and character education. After each five-week session, participating schools compete against each other in a tournament-style event. Transportation is provided for all participating children and each participant in i play! afterschool receives a backpack, t-shirt, shorts, socks and athletic shoes.

Requirements:

Must be in 3rd – 5th grade and enrolled in the After School Extended Day program at select schools in the following districts: Harlandale ISD, North East ISD, Northside ISD, San Antonio ISD, Southwest ISD. Parents will be required to sign an agreement that commits their child to being present for the full hour of the daily i play! afterschool program. Participating children must attend each of the five Saturday tournament events. Parents are encouraged to attend all tournaments. Practice good nutrition and exercise habits at home.

Criteria for Participation:

- Read on grade level
- Keep a passing grade in all core courses (Math, Science, English and Social Studies)
- 4/5th graders have passed previous year's STAAR exam

*In the 2020-21 school year, i play! afterschool is only being offered in North East ISD due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The program hopes to return to more schools in the 2021-22 school year.

Additional Programming Offered by i play! afterschool

i play! at home

i play! at home, a spin-off of the in-person afterschool program and provides children resources to practice their sport skills away from school for free. i play! at home offers fun ways children can practice their skills in four different sports – basketball, soccer, track, volleyball – and an Alpha Warrior Junior workout series, using equipment and objects that can be found at home. Workout trackers are paired with instructional videos to help kids learn skills and practice each sport. Students have the opportunity to earn a piece of an i play! at home uniform for each sport unit they complete. Sport units can be completed in any order.

Video Library for Teachers, Coaches, and Educators

Due to Covid-19, San Antonio Sports developed 68 [sport training videos](#) and made them available to school districts for virtual P.E. and to the public to help keep kids active. Sports include soccer, track, volleyball, basketball, tennis and general exercise.

The instructional video library provides children video resources to practice their sport skills anywhere. These i play! instructional videos provide fun ways children can learn and practice basic skills using equipment and objects that can be found at home. In addition to the sport videos, a Junior Alpha Warrior® video series that provides basic at-home exercises is also included.

Annual Report: [San Antonio Sports 2019 Annual Report](#) (i play! afterschool is located on pg. 7)

Contact Info:



Sara Tovar, Director of Youth and Community Programs

210-820-2125



San Antonio Sports
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San Antonio, TX 78283
Physical Address
100 Montana St
San Antonio, TX 78203
(3rd floor of the Alamodome)

<https://sanantoniosports.org/youth/i-play-afterschool/>

Program Example Overview:

Kids, Incorporated (Kids, Inc.)



Mission:

"It is the mission of Kids, Incorporated to be an organization of excellence by providing quality year-round sporting activities, while ensuring that every child who desires to participate has the opportunity to do just that!" (Kids, Inc., 2021)

Age Ranges:

Boys and girls ages 4 through 6th grade (although an adult soccer league is also offered)*

*Could be expanded as outlined below (see Considerations).

Overview:

Kids, Incorporated is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on providing opportunities to enhance the life lessons derived from participation in sports. The organization has been serving youth in the Amarillo/Canyon, TX area for 76 years. (Kids, Inc., 2021). Kids, Inc. serves the region by providing sports league programs and was founded by C.C. "Bus" Dugger in 1945 when he offered 11 elementary-aged boys the opportunity to participate in organized after school activity. Since that time, the program has blossomed into a portfolio of 27 sports with thousands of participants, expanding its reach to Hereford, TX and Elk City, OK. (J. Lackey, personal communication, May 10, 2021)

Programs:

Youth Sport Programs (Amarillo/Canyon area)

Kids, Inc. offers a wide range of sport participation opportunities for boys and girls ages 4 through 6th grade. In order to maintain the credibility of their programs, Kids, Inc. groups kids using their grade level or age group, depending on the criteria for each particular sport. They do allow kids to "play up" one grade level as long as the sport allows for it. They do not allow a child to "play down" a grade level.

Kids Inc.'s [Full Sports Menu](#) provides detailed information for each of their programs offered during various seasons throughout the year. The pre-COVID 5-year average participation (2015-2019) was 15,884 youth athletes per year. (Kids, Inc., 2021) The Hereford, TX location (near Amarillo/Canyon) also offers fitness classes and a hiking club. (Kids, Inc., 2021)

Additional Programming Offered by Kids, Inc.

Kids Inclusion (A Partnership Between Kids, Inc. and the [Turn Center of Amarillo](#))

Kids Inclusion is a program designed to bring kids of varying abilities together to participate in sports. Organizers pair able-bodied and athletes with disabilities on the same team in a "friendly and fun" environment. The underlying objective of the program is to educate kids on inclusion among athletes with varying abilities and special needs. (Kids Inclusion, 2021)

The sports available as part of the program include bowling, softball, basketball, track and field, and soccer. Teams are put together with the assistance of therapists from the Turn Center and rule modifications are made to ensure all athletes can participate. The program includes weekly practices and games, just like traditional sports programs. (Kids Inclusion, 2021)

Cost of Kids Inclusion is offset by the support of donors, which enables Kids, Inc. to keep the cost minimal at \$20 per athlete, per sport and incentives for free participation exist to parents/guardians who agree to help coach. Additional scholarships are also available for Kids Inclusion participants. (Kids Inclusion, 2021)

Alex O'Brien Tennis Elite Academy

The Alex O'Brien Tennis Elite Academy is an offering of Kids, Inc. that caters to elite-level, competitive tennis players. The tennis academy is designed for those athletes beyond the "Learn to Play" tennis programming offered through Kids, Inc. (Kids, Inc., 2021) Academy Cost: \$150 per 6-week session

Panhandle Sports Hall of Fame

In 2016, Kids, Incorporated was asked to take over the administration of the Texas Panhandle Sports Hall of Fame (PSHOF). Established in 1958, the PSHOF honors the area's greatest athletes, coaches, teams, and sports administrators. (J. Lackey, personal communication, May 10, 2021)

Budget: \$1,683,900

Considerations:

The Kids, Inc. program is geared for kids in 4th through 6th grade, however, the premise of providing additional sport and/or recreational opportunities to the youth of Mesa County is solid. With an increase in organized competitive sport, and travel sport, and a decrease in overall recreational participatory opportunities, a program borrowing from the foundations of Kids, Inc. may reduce barriers to participation and provide an alternative outlet for sport and recreation than what is currently available, especially to populations in need.

In addition, Kids, Inc. has taken the concept of participation one step further through its Kids Inclusion program which, similar to Special Olympics Unified Sports program, seeks to create opportunities for all kids to participate in athletics, regardless of physical or mental ability. Scaling an appropriate version of the Kids, Inc. program in Mesa County, inclusive of activity, age, and location considerations could fill a vital gap in the health and well-being of youth.

References:

Kids, Inc. (2021). Kids, Inc. Contact Us. Retrieved from <https://www.kidsinc.org/contactamarillo>.
Kids Inclusion. (2021). About. Retrieved from <https://www.kidsinclusion.org/about>.

Contact Info:

Jimmy R. Lackey, President and CEO



jlackey@kidsinc.org



806-376-5936

<https://www.kidsinc.org/>

Program Example Overview:

Kids, Incorporated (Kids, Inc.)



Mission:

Creating a passion for education and sport through cycling.

Age Ranges:

This project-based program is best suited for elementary students (grades 3-5) but has been expanded for middle school students ages 11-14. The USA BMX Foundation anticipates expanding the programming suitable for up to age 17 in the future based upon the success of the existing program.

Overview:

The eight (8) module curriculum is equal parts education, athletics, and exercise. Students use BMX bikes to perform various experiments to explore the world of STEM. Funding for the program is traditionally secured through grants, donations and sponsors. In addition, the program is aligned with many state STEM standards, including NGSS, and incorporates a pre/post testing element that assists with outcome-based reporting. For more information, see [this flyer located in the appendices](#).

Budget:

The program is \$1999 to purchase. Additional elements are for purchase as well, including BMX bike building kits. Cost per participant is depending on the number of program participants in the community. For example, if 500 participants go through the program annually, cost drops to \$4 per student, making the program extremely cost-effective.

Additional Youth Programs Offered by the USA BMX Foundation:

Read to Ride

The USA BMX Read to Ride Program is available for schools or libraries. The program is designed to encourage, motivate, and inspire youth to develop and improve their reading skills during non-school hours and combat learning loss over extended school breaks.

A BMX bike and helmet are given to the top overall reader, as well other prizes for each grade/age level readers. All students are given a Certificate of Accomplishment and a free one-day membership to USA BMX which entitles them to a day of riding at the track along with a bike & helmet to use.

From books and magazines to comics, e-reads to newspapers, we believe that reading promotes imagination and gives children the opportunity to visit worlds far away and imagine new ones of their own.

For information, please see [this flyer located in the appendices](#).

Track Modeling Program

Created exclusively for 4th graders, the Track Modeling Program is aligned with Next Generation Science Standards and uses the Three-Dimensional Learning Model framework. Through science and engineering practices, cross-cutting concepts and disciplinary core ideas, students have an opportunity to conceptualize, design and build a scale BMX track.

This STEAM program is designed to cover one weeks worth of material, or 25+ hours of classroom time. This program is free to schools through donations and sponsorships. The USA BMX Foundation provides all materials needed, including classroom curriculum for teachers. The program is truly turn-key.

Students start by reviewing still images and video of different tracks from around the world to fuel ideas and creativity before they create sketches of their own track vision. Next, they Skype with an Elite Level Pro BMX Rider to ask questions to help shape their concepts. From there, students form teams where they share their individual ideas in an effort to come up with a collaborative team-designed track. Still in their groups, they formulate questions to submit to a BMX track builder.

Working from the track builders responses, teams start to finalize their designs by the end of day two. On day three, they take a field trip to a local BMX track where they walk the facility, take a tour of the inner workings of the business, ride the track and gain a first-person perspective of the track. Back in the classroom, they work with different types of soil mixtures to create the ideal track dirt with a heavy focus on earth sciences.

On the final two days, they compile their experiences and form project roles and responsibilities to engineer a scale model of their track blueprint complete with turns, berms, and jumps.

Students take pride in showcasing their vision and creativity while learning about various career opportunities at the intersection of engineering, architecture, construction, and sport.

As part of the culminating event, students work is put on display and evaluated by a community panel. USA BMX Foundation provides all participants awards, along with trophies for the top categories.

Contact Info:

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<https://www.usabmxfoundation.org/educational-programs>

Program Example Overview:

Women's Intersport Network for
Kansas City (WIN for KC)



Mission:

We envision a community where sport ignites the life of every woman and girl.

Age Ranges:

Women of all ages, with specific programming geared toward youth.

Overview:

The Women's Intersport Network for Kansas City (WIN for KC) was established in 1994 to empower the lives of girls and women through advocating and promoting the lifetime value of sports and fitness, while providing opportunities for participation and leadership development.

WIN for KC, a non-profit, exists because its volunteers and contributors believe in the physical and emotional well-being of females through involvement in sports and fitness. WIN for KC events and programs include participation and networking opportunities, leadership seminars, and promotions of women's events. WIN for KC also recognizes girls and women's contributions to sport and advocates for equal opportunities.

Programs:

Camp WIN

Four weeks of sports camps held every summer in KC designed specifically to introduce girls to more than 14 sports/fitness activities. Camps are held at four different sites around the KC community over the four-week period, with each week's camp lasting 5 days.

Each site has a [Site Coordinator](#) and an [Assistant Site Coordinator](#). Stipends are given to coordinators (\$600 and \$250, respectively) to assist with camp service and foster a level of responsibility and professionalism with the program's congruency to the Camp WIN staff.

Programming includes daily lessons containing life skills including attitude, preparation, challenge, and sports-womanship. The camps feature more than 900 total participants ages 6-12.

Middle and high school aged students serve as [Team Captains](#) and [coaches/instructors](#), cultivating a mentorship experience for younger participants. Camp participants are broken into groups by age (6-8 and 9-12).

[Registration](#) for [Camp WIN](#) is \$275 per participant and scholarships are available. Camp WIN is underwritten by several [sponsors](#), of which the Presenting Sponsor is the charitable foundation arm of the Kansas City Royals. Sponsorship in this type of programs by local businesses presents a strong opportunity for alignment with growing DEI efforts, and increasing corporate social responsibility efforts.

Additional Programming Offered by WIN for KC

Evelyn Gates Award

The [Evelyn Gates Award](#) was established to honor a female high school varsity volleyball student-athlete who exhibits top tier skill, spirit and sportsmanship in the Kansas City area. The winner of the award is chosen by area high school coaches. This award is the only one of its kind honoring a female official in the state of Missouri.

The annual traveling trophy is presented to the student-athlete to display at her school along with a \$500 stipend for its athletic department.

I-WIN

[I-WIN](#) is a cultivated group of women influencers in and around Kansas City who serve to support and advance the efforts of WIN for KC. They pay a \$125 membership, and in exchange, receive exclusive opportunities and offers from WIN for KC and the Kansas City Sports Commission. Think of them as ambassadors, evangelists, and door-openers for the sustainability of the WIN for KC program. The organization has built a sense of prestige and clout around WIN for KC and have leveraged that into the I-WIN program.

SHIFT

[SHIFT](#) is a new one-day program being offered by WIN for KC focused on developing skills of mindfulness and movement. It is a women-only event available for ages 14 and older. The cost of registration for the 3-hour session is \$40.

Strong Girls

[Strong Girls](#) is a mentorship intervention program developed by WIN for KC focusing on teaching girls ages 6th-8th grade life skills including positive thinking, goal setting, confidence, stress management, and social skills. The program centers on both physical activity and life skill activities. Participation is free.

Programming consists of 2-hour weekly meetings (one at the University of Kansas and one at the University of Missouri-Kansas City) that feature Highlights virtues and lessons. The Strong Girl Pledge is "As a Strong Girl, I pledge to treat everyone with kindness and respect." The program runs August through December annually.

Summer Swing

Annual women-only [golf tournament](#) fundraiser supporting WIN for KC programming.

Try-Athlon

Annual women-only "[TRY-athlon](#)" sanctioned by USA Triathlon designed to encourage women to TRY a triathlon either in-person or virtually. Programming includes training program (virtual and in-person), multiple competition options (Sprint, Super-sprint, Duathlon, Aquabike, Team Relay).

THRIVE KC

THRIVE KC is the adolescent ambassador program arm of WIN for KC. THRIVE KC consists of high school girls from the greater Kansas City area who commit their time and energy to the promotion of women and girls in sports. They focus on Teaching Health, Respect & Integrity Via Example. Terms are structured around the school calendar year.

Women's Sports Awards

WIN for [KC's Women's Sports Awards](#) is an annual awards banquet honoring six local individuals or groups based upon their achievements in sports and fitness. It usually features a high-profile emcee and keynote speaker such as Holly Rowe (ESPN) of Simone Biles. This event is a wildly successful fundraiser for WIN for KC.

Budget:

Budget and cost per participant varies based upon specific elements of WIN for KC programs. Additional information can be obtained if a certain element is of particular interest.

Contact Info:

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<https://www.sportkc.org/win-for-kc/>

Program Recommendation for Implementation:

USA BMX STEM



USA BMX Foundation STEM program is an ideal sport and recreation program to implement in Mesa County for several reasons. In fact, USA BMX Foundation Executive Director, Mike Duvarney noted that they had begun to consider implementing this successful program with Grand Valley BMX, our local track, pre-pandemic and the effort waned amid the pandemic's onset.

Not only is Mesa County already home to a top-notch track modeled after the track built for the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, but the track is also located on county property amid a cycling-centric community. In addition, Grand Valley BMX is already closely associated with USA BMX (the sanctioning body for the sport of

BMX), and hosts an annual Mile High Nationals event.

USA BMX has successfully implemented this program at the elementary level, but 20% of their program sales are for ages 11-14 and they anticipate further expansion of the program up to ages 17 in the coming years. The program also brings in elite BMX competitors as motivational speakers. In addition, the barrier to entry is low, given that the cost of the program decreases with the number of participants and usages. The total cost for the program is \$1999. USA BMX Foundation noted that many program users have used the program for 5+ years and have driven the cost down to \$5 per participant. For example, if the program is purchased and run for 10 students, the cost is \$200 per participant.

A [map on the USA BMX Foundation's website](#) shows the multitude of locales that are currently implementing the USA BMX Foundation STEM program, bringing credibility and consistency to the program.

Another important aspect of this program is the fact that it is not only tied to sports/recreation and physical activity, but it is also built on a foundation of core science, technology, engineering, and math concepts underscoring the participant's learning outcomes. According to the USA BMX Foundation Executive director, many school districts currently have a windfall of STEM funding right now and are looking for ways to use it. This dovetailed approach of sport and learning provides an excellent synergy for participants to experience learning and fun in a real-world way, while building valuable STEM discipline knowledge.

Lastly, there is a [bike-building](#) element associated with this program, which provides additional hands-on mechanical experience. Given the dozen or so bike shops around the valley, and the additional cycling-related programs, such as Hilltop's bike building operation through its Residential Youth Services program, many community intersections exist that support the potential success of USA BMX Foundation's STEM program in Mesa County.

To review the mission and program overview, visit USA BMX STEM's [Program Example Overview](#).

Program Recommendation for Implementation:

WIN FOR KC



For many years, the Women's Intersport Network (WIN) for KC has been a model program in the sports commission world setting an example of leveraging the power of sport in the community. WIN has received numerous awards and accolades as other destinations seek to leverage their work in the sports events and tourism space into building community and driving measurable outcomes of that effort.

The WIN program umbrella has blossomed to include many elements outlined below. Based upon the research, existing assets, and knowledge of our community, we recommend looking into fashioning programs in Mesa County after WIN's

"Camp WIN" program, and the "Strong Girls" program specifically.

Camp WIN is an extraordinary program that blends access to sport participation with leadership skill development and mentorship opportunities. While Camp WIN in Kansas City is held in 4-week long sessions at various locales around the community, it started from humble beginnings and has experienced significant growth from a couple hundred, to a few hundred, to nearly 1000 participants annually. The historical growth signifies the opportunity for a scalable program in Mesa County. Clearly, population differences exist, but scalability is certainly an advantage. Perhaps most importantly, Camp Win meets participants where they are in terms of geographic location, and provides scholarship opportunities to reduce barriers to entry.

Additionally, Camp WIN is often the young female participants' first opportunity to participate in a myriad of sports. Many of the sports in which the youth engage at Camp WIN are what we would call traditional team sports (i.e., soccer, basketball, volleyball, etc.); however, the program can be altered based upon opportunities in the market and existing venues. For example, in Mesa County, perhaps the camps focus on outdoor-recreation activities accessible here such as hiking, running, mountain biking, etc. versus solely traditional team sports.

Other important consideration of the program is its focus on women only. While this is the structure WIN for KC has achieved success based upon the needs of that market, it is certainly reasonable that Mesa County could expand programming to males as well.

Next, the Strong Girls program is a fantastic program emphasizing outreach to at risk youth and truly honing on fostering strong values and mentorship relationships, alongside physical activities. With the many resources available in Mesa County, such as Colorado Mesa University, Hilltop, and others, our community could be prime to implement some of these strategies.

Unlike USA BMX Foundation's STEM Program, WIN for KC has not historically been an "off-the-shelf" program. However, we believe WIN for KC has licensed at least a portion of the program to another market. Our team has a strong connection with WIN for KC leadership and should Mesa County be interested in pursuing one of the programs – either custom built, or in a licensed version – we can certainly facilitate setting up those conversations.

To review the mission and program overview, visit [Win for KC's Program Example Overview](#).



Youth Engagement Through Volunteerism

"Civic engagement is much like a sport; you can't jump into a game without understanding the rules and practicing it. But many people think that citizens can get to age 18, jump in, and do well and care about community service." (Sparks, 2018)

While there are numerous community-level offerings for youth (sport, art, outdoor recreation, etc.), volunteerism offers young Americans the chance to focus beyond themselves and help others in an organized setting. Since sustained involvement is the key to successful volunteer initiatives, Ho et al. noted the importance of understanding the relationships between strategy and impact. (Ho, Clarke, & Dougherty, 2015) These include:

- Socialization: Making individuals aware of (and care about) the social problem that exists within the community.
- Influence: The ability to influence other individuals to take action to address the social problem in their own individual lives.
- Partnership: Targeting the social problem through mutually beneficial cooperation with other individuals.
- Power: Directly impacting the social problem through personal actions.

Volunteer efforts strengthen communities in many ways. In addition to creating social capital, civic engagement promotes collective empowerment, creates a sense of community cohesion, and builds trust between individuals and groups working together to address various societal needs. (Ballard & Syme, 2016) However, these benefits are much easier to bring to fruition when a strong foundation is present. Multiple studies suggest adolescents whose parents are involved in community endeavors are more likely to participate in similar activities. Volunteering is also higher in communities with high average education levels, shorter commutes to work, high levels of home ownership, multiple non-profit organizations located nearby, a low percentage of multiunit housing, and high rates of volunteer retention. (Do Good Institute, 2018)

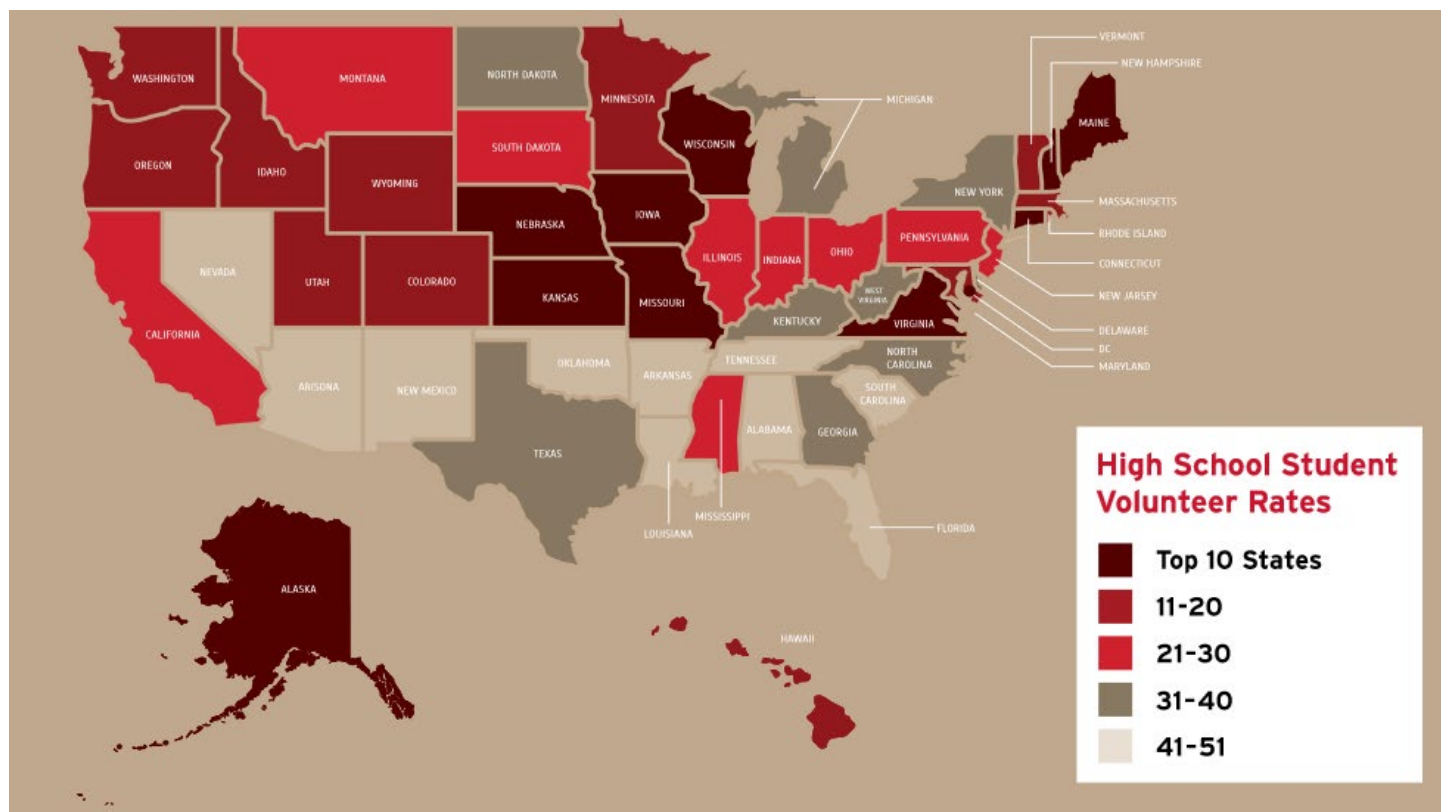
Creating Opportunities for High School Students

"On average, between 2013 and 2015, nearly 2.8 million – or 28.5 percent – of U.S. high schoolers, aged 15 and over, volunteered almost 237 million total volunteer hours annually, which represented a total value of about \$5.47 billion to religious, educational, and other organizations." (Do Good Institute, 2018)

Data collected by the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy revealed that volunteering rates for high school and college students peaked in 2003 and plateaued for a few years before dropping sharply in 2006. Since 2006, the rate of volunteerism among high school students has remained steady at 28-30%. (Do Good Institute, 2018) The state of Colorado enjoys a 34.1% rate which ranks 15th among all 50 states including the District of Columbia (Fig. 1). Even though some studies have

investigated the link between educational requirements and volunteerism rates, Sparks stated that “state policies don’t have as much influence as people think they do... there are other factors such as the availability of good, appealing opportunities to volunteer that make young people feel they can make a difference – that are much more important in determining how much volunteering takes place among teenagers.” (Sparks, 2018) This assumption is backed by other researchers who suggest that using a “bottom-up approach” and allowing adolescents to have a say in the design and organization of volunteer programs will lead to increased motivation and interest among participants. (Buelens, Theeboom, Vertonghen, & De Martelaer, 2017)

Fig. 1 High School Student Volunteering Rates by State, including Washington D.C., 2012-2015



Schools play a major role in introducing kids to various types of community involvement, although “any civic skills acquired from youth volunteering are likely to be largely irrelevant for voting.” (Kim & Morgul, 2017) According to a national study conducted in 2018, approximately 70% of school principals reported that their K-12 schools offered community service opportunities to their students. Data also revealed that the average high school volunteer contributed 33 hours a year to various causes. (Do Good Institute, 2018) Even though experts have long debated whether required service programs provide the same benefits as voluntary ones, many studies suggest that both types ultimately lead to increased community involvement in adulthood. (Kim & Morgul, 2017)

Benefits for Youth who Volunteer

According to Ballard and Syme, “adolescence is a critical window of development... during which opportunities for participation in meaningful activities, feeling that one matters, and forming warm and supportive relationships with adults are crucial to positive youth development.” (Ballard & Syme, 2016)

The literature reveals a plethora of benefits for adolescents who choose to be involved in various types of civic engagement. In addition to acquiring leadership, organizational, speaking, and writing skills, there are significant health benefits as well. (Buelens, Theeboom, Vertonghen, & De Martelaer, 2017) A study exploring the impact of caregiving through formal volunteering programs found that young participants had lowered cardiovascular risk, cholesterol and body mass index compared to the control group. The authors noted that “although civic development and adolescent health are traditionally examined as separate processes, we believe that there is a compelling reason for considering them together.” (Ballard & Syme, 2016)

Since many young Americans struggle with anxiety, depression, and even suicidal tendencies, volunteering may provide a positive buffer. Kim and Morgul found that volunteering “influences subjective well-being through two basic mechanisms.” (Kim & Morgul, 2017) It provides:

- Psychological Resources: Useful for managing negative feelings like stress, depression, and anxiety.
- Social Resources: Reducing isolation and offering social support.

Summary

Kim and Morgul suggest “there is relatively strong evidence that youth volunteering bolsters later community involvement, both theory and empirical evidence offer mixed expectations regarding the relationship between youth volunteering and political participation.” (Kim & Morgul, 2017) However, youth volunteers gain a plethora of social skills, develop a higher self-esteem, and are more motivated to accomplish academic tasks. As they progress into young adulthood, they are better-rounded and have a much stronger commitment to serving others. When designed and organized correctly, a quality volunteer program can add tremendous value to a community by preparing its youth for a lifetime of community service.

References

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Successful Youth Programs in Volunteerism

From picking up trash on the side of the highway to helping build homes with local chapters of Habitat for Humanity to delivering food to those in need through local food banks or Meals on Wheels to stuffing KidsAid backpacks with nutritious food, volunteerism opportunities abound for youth in their local communities. Here are some programs that go beyond a “one and done” experience to draw youth into meaningful long-term engagements as change-agents within their communities.



Letters to Strangers (Nationwide)

Letters to Strangers (L2S) is a global youth-run 501(c)3 nonprofit seeking to destigmatize mental illness and increase access to affordable, quality treatment for youth aged 13 to 24. L2S has coined the phrase: “We believe that writing is humanity distilled into ink.” They use this mantra and activate their chapters, which are often student clubs on school campuses, to write heartfelt, anonymous letters to offer support, provide encouragement, and share in vulnerability to help other youth who are fighting their way through difficult times. They exchange letters with other partner sites and distribute them. The principles behind every letter written to strangers are empathy, connection, growth, love and vulnerability.



National Youth Leadership Council (St. Paul, MN)

According to NYLC, “service learning is an approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic and civic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs.” It’s a type of experiential learning, which is project-based and includes students’ passions to address real community needs. The process compels the student to answer questions about true needs in a community, root causes of needs, and how they can contribute to a solution after learning more.



Student United Way (Bellefontaine, OH)

United Way of Logan County, Ohio created a Student United Way composed of 28 high school juniors and seniors from every district in the county representing seven different schools. The students were charged with creating their own allocation criteria. When ready, they accepted grant applications and reviewed the requests and conducted interviews from local organizations on youth related issues. Of the \$70,000 grant requests they received, the Student Committee had \$25,000 to award and ultimately, chose 7 local organizations serving youth in their county.

Youth Garden Project (Moab, UT)



The Youth Garden Project was started in 1996 with the intention of serving youth who had court-ordered community service hours with "an opportunity to serve their hours in an educational and nurturing environment." The small garden began in the founder's backyard and helped twelve youth in the first year. Today, the garden sits on 1 and half acres, grows over 3,000 pounds of produce, and serves one thousand kids annually through its many youth and community programs.

Program Example Overview:

Letters to Strangers (L2S)



Mission:

Letters to Strangers (L2S) is a global youth-run 501(c)3 nonprofit seeking to destigmatize mental illness and increase access to affordable, quality treatment for youth aged 13 to 24.

Motto:

L2S embraces this motto: Mental Health Made Personal. They "want mental health made personal, because each person deserves to be treated as the individual they are. No one's identity should be buried beneath statistics... often there is nothing greater than a person-to-person human connection."

Principles:

The principles behind every letter written to strangers are empathy, connection, growth, love and vulnerability.

How L2S Achieves Their Mission:

Letter- Writing | L2S has coined the phrase: "We believe that writing is humanity distilled into ink." They use this mantra and activate their chapters, which are often student clubs on school campuses, to write heartfelt, anonymous letters to offer support, provide encouragement, and share in vulnerability to help other youth who are fighting their way through difficult times. They exchange letters with other partner sites and distribute them.

Peer Education | Through partnerships with mental health organizations and schools, they provide training and youth talks around the globe. They also facilitate youth-for-youth educational mental health guidebooks and modules.

Policy-Based Advocacy | They keep track of mental health related policy issues and work with their chapter administrators to facilitate changes in mental health conversations. They are responsible for creating the first student-run mental health task force. They have turned their letter writing campaigns into in-person events to educate elected officials on their mission, types of treatment and policy reform.

Overview:

L2S was founded in 2013 by Diana Chao, a first-generation immigrant who grew up in Southern California. As a 22-year old who founded this organization at 17-years old, her "why" is compelling and is the reason this organization has a global reach today:

I'm a 22-year-old first-generation Chinese-American immigrant from Southern California, a huge matcha fan, and an absolute chaotic good on the alignment chart. Growing up, I had a secret: I have bipolar disorder, and I didn't believe I deserved the air I breathed. After surviving a series of suicide attempts, I found healing from an unexpected source: writing. In writing letters to strangers, I realized that I wasn't alone - I never was alone. And you aren't, either. So as a sophomore in high school, I

founded Letters to Strangers, which has since grown into a global youth-run organization that seeks to destigmatize mental illness and increase access to affordable, quality treatment. Among many other honors, the We Are Family Foundation named me a Global Teen Leader for this effort in 2017, I am the youngest winner of the Unilever Young Entrepreneurs Award, the only American winner of the 2019 Global Changemakers, the 2019 NAMI Young Leader Award winner, and I gave a TEDxTeen speech at the Playstation Theater in Times Square to a standing ovation. I also used to volunteer for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline and the Lifeline Crisis Chat.

All of this has taught me that if we all had second chances, perhaps our lives would be so different. But not all of us are lucky enough to get a second chance.

This is why I fight. I know personally that when all you understand is emptiness, one letter one human connection can save a life. Mental health matters; mental health is personal. I fight because I can't bear it otherwise.

Start a Chapter, Be a Partner, Volunteer as a Healthcare Worker, or Write a Letter

Start a Chapter | Chapter members write letters and receive peer-to-peer training to equip themselves and the community to advocate for mental health issues. Essentially, places that would provide L2S services.

Be a Partner | Partner Sites are located within places that would provide mental health services to those in need. Partner Sites are located in homeless shelters, food banks, jails, rehab centers, etc. Essentially, places that could use the services of L2S.

Volunteer as a Healthcare Worker | Mental health services are expensive, in high demand, and hard to come by. Volunteers offer their expertise at Partner Sites at a reduced or pro bono rate to help L2S meet their mission. They also support or train chapters and partner sites.

Write a Letter | Handwritten letters can be submitted online after signing up and reading the letter guidelines. Once your letter is approved by a moderator, it will be sent to someone either digitally or in a local chapter or partner site.

Budget

There are no membership fees, and the umbrella organization works to help each chapter through their funding initiatives.

Contact Info:

 hi@letterstostrangers.org

<https://www.letterstostrangers.org/>

Program Example Overview:

National Leadership Youth Council
(NYLC), Service-Learning



Mission:

To create a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world with young people, their schools, and communities through service-learning.

Motto:

Serve. Learn. Change the World.

Ages:

Youth leaders ages 13-18.

Overview:

According to NYLC, “service-learning is an approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic and civic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs.” Essentially, service-learning is experiential, project-based learning and includes students’ passions to address real community needs. Service-learning is self-taught and NYLC’s resources provide the framework to be successful through adult facilitation. The process compels the student to answer questions about true needs in a community, root causes of needs, and how they can contribute to a solution after learning more.

NYLC uses this example to drive the concept of service-learning home: “Picking up trash on a river bank is service. Studying water samples under a microscope is learning. When science students collect and analyze water samples, document their results, and present findings to a local pollution control agency – that is service-learning.”

How it Works:

Service learning is most often taught after school or incorporated into school curriculum, but it can happen anywhere. According to NYLC: “Successful service-learning is a multifaceted teaching and learning process. [It] is a flexible approach, easily adapted to different age levels, community needs, and curricular goals. Successful service-learning projects are tied to specific learning objectives, and many of the best are tied to numerous areas of study. Projects can engage entire schools over an academic year, or involve a small group for a short period of time.”

<i>Elementary School</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>High School</i>
Fifth-graders tutored younger students in reading over the course of a school year. The project improved language skills for both younger and older students and helped the tutors develop their organizational and leadership skills.	A middle school science class studying pollution and disease worked with the Environmental Protection Agency to learn about the dangers of radon and how to test for it in homes. To educate the community on hazards, testing, and cleanup, students created an infomercial to share with local schools and community groups.	When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, high school students took their community concerns online, providing resources for those struggling with mental health issues, virtual story hours for younger students, and opportunities to celebrate senior year with a standardized Instagram format about next step plans.

Source: <https://www.nylc.org/page/WhatisService-Learning>

Membership:

NYLC connects members and builds their service-learning community to change the world. There are four types of memberships ([see the side-by-side comparison of membership levels here](#)):

- Individual | K-12 educators, administrators, service-learning coordinators, community-based program staff.
- Organizations | Schools, districts, and organizations fall in this category.
- Champions | Community partners, consultants, donors, advocates who provide support to service-learning practitioners or the youth.
- Youth | Youth ages 13-18. The program is under construction and will be ready in fall of 2021.

When you become a member, you gain access to their “virtual briefcase” which includes resources, videos and webinars to help you grow and better your service learning work.

Getting Started:

NYLC recommends reading Dr. Susan Root's book titled *Service-Learning by Design* ([download your free copy here](#)) in order to identify desired results; develop plans for measuring progress; and designing learning experiences that support reaching these goals.

Advocacy:

NYLC also participates in advocacy work and partnerships to grow visibility of service learning on Capitol Hill.

Partners:

Opportunities for partnerships abound outside of advocacy. The two main types of partnerships are:

Project Ignition Partners and Statewide After-School Network Partners.

Project Ignition Partners include:

- Plainfield South, Plainfield, IL
- Harvard High School, Harvard, IL
- Woodrow Wilson High School, Portsmouth, VA
- Collinsville High, Collinsville, IL
- Three Forks FCCLA, Three Forks, MT
- Mercer County High School, Aledo, IL
- Perry Service Learning Program, Perry, OH
- Butler County Safe Communities, Middletown, OH
- East Central High School FCCLA, Brookville, IN
- Cypress Ridge Interact - Interact Club, Houston, TX
- Randolph Elem / Fenger H.S. / CPS, Chicago, IL
- Gillespie High School MPACT'D, Gillespie, IL
- Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammon, Arthur, IL
- Urbana High School, Urbana, IL
- Skully Serves, Seattle, WA
- Camp Fire New Jersey, Trenton, NJ
- Belton High School, Kansas City, MO
- Making Our Future Possible....By Being Safe Today! Jackson, KY
- Making Dreams Come True, Valley of Rainbow, Waianae, HI
- Camp Fire Patuxent, Bowie, MD

Statewide After-School Partners include:

- Beyond School Bells - Nebraska SAN
- Delaware Afterschool Network (DEAN)
- Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network
- Ignite Afterschool (Minnesota)

- Indiana Afterschool Network
- Louisiana Center for Afterschool Learning
- Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
- Michigan Afterschool Partnership
- New Jersey School-Age Care Coalition
- North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs
- OregonAsk
- Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/ Youth Development Network
- Tennessee Afterschool Network
- Texas Partnership for Out-of-School Time (TXPOST)

Contact Info:

Amy Meuers, CEO



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(651) 393-5695

<https://www.nylc.org/page/WhatisService-Learning>

Program Example Overview:

Student United Way of Logan County



Mission:

To facilitate successful agency partnerships that enable a safe, healthy and caring community.

Purpose:

Giving students a voice to help fund solutions to the unique problems facing Logan County residents.

Ages:

High school juniors and seniors representative of the area.

Overview:

Logan County, Ohio created a Student United Way composed of 28 high school juniors and seniors from every district in the county representing seven different schools. The committee kicked-off it's six-month process with a Cost of Poverty Experience simulation to help open their eyes to the needs facing local families. They also participated in community tours to better understand the competing needs in different parts of the county: "Students toured the Logan County Jail, visited Recovery Zone, met at Green Hills Community, and learned the importance of personal and corporate philanthropy at the Honda Heritage Center."


As the allocation committee process began, the students were charged with creating their own allocation criteria. When ready, they accepted grant applications and reviewed the requests from local organizations on youth related issues. Of the \$70,000 grant requests they received, the Student Committee had \$25,000 to award. Using their criteria, they were able to narrow the applications to a list of finalists who were invited to join them for interviews and personal presentations. After heated conversations, detailed discussions, and lessons in the art of compromise, the student committee awarded 7 local organizations serving youth the grant monies.


"Student United Way teaches many valuable lessons, such as teamwork, compromising, formulating opinions, and interacting with other students," said Audrey Slemmons, senior at Calvary Christian. "I enjoyed hearing others' opinions and listening to what the applicants had to say on interview day."

Contact Info:

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 United Way of Logan County
130 South Main Street, Unit 109
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 (937) 592.2886

<https://www.uwlogan.org/student-united-way>

Budget

Outside of the \$25,000 allocation for grants, there is a minor allotment for food and t-shirts for each student.

Program Example Overview:

Youth Garden Project



Mission:

The Youth Garden Project cultivates healthy children, families, and community through educational programs and connecting people with food from seed to table.

Values:

Each youth program is designed and intended to meet community needs through these values: Encourage academic learning through hands-on activities; Develop practical, vocational and life skills; Provide opportunities to serve and interact in our community; Cultivate a safe and nurturing place for youth to interact; Promote ecological awareness and responsibility.

Ages:

Elementary through high school and beyond.

Overview:

The Youth Garden Project was started in 1996 with the intention of serving youth who had court-ordered community service hours with “an opportunity to serve their hours in an educational and a nurturing environment.” The small garden began in the founder’s backyard and helped twelve youth in the first year. Today, the garden sits on 1 and half acres, grows over 3,000 pounds of produce, and serves one thousand kids annually through its many youth and community programs.

Programs:

In-School Programs:

Garden Classrooms | Lovingly referred to as garden classrooms, these 90-minute field trips teach students lessons about gardening through hands-on experiences. Garden Classrooms are aligned with the state’s core education standards and cater to preschoolers through 6th graders including home school students. The cost includes a \$10 non-refundable donation.

Interdisciplinary Workshops | Middle and high school classes visit the garden’s facilities to engage in lessons in adapted garden spaces based on subjects and experiences. For example, there are learning tools for social studies, arts and culture, english, foods and food science, marketing, biology, natural resources, and nature art classes. The garden also hosts recurring experiences specific to environmental science and urban farming.

High School Classes | The garden teaches two, trimester-long high school classes located on-site and offers career paths for work-based learning students in sustainable agriculture; culinary arts; non-profit management & marketing; and outdoor education.

Harvest of the Month | A program that intends to bring fresh produce and recipes to youth to encourage them to try new healthy food.

After-School Programs:

After-School Clubs | The garden hosts two after-school clubs every week. The students get to hunt for bugs and insects, learn about harvesting and planting, and cook with garden ingredients. The clubs cater to 1st-3rd graders and 4th-6th graders.

Cooking Workshops | Middle school students can participate in cooking workshops monthly centered around creating yummy food from the garden produce.

Youth Volunteer Crew | The garden recruits after-school youth volunteers ages 12-18-years-old to give 1-2 hours/week helping around the garden.

Youth Camps:

Spring Break Camp | Spring Break Camp is a full day camp Monday through Friday 9-3 pm for 1st through 6th graders. Cost is \$130/camper including snacks and lunch.

Summer Camp | Day camps during the summer are catered for 1st-6th graders. Campers spend their days involved in garden activities, swimming in the creek, playing at the park, and more. Cost is \$150/camper per week.

Seed Crew:

Seed Crew employs two youth ages 14-18 to work together through the garden's summer employment program. The program is intended to teach youth sustainable agriculture skills and develop leadership and civic engagement skills. During the summer, they teach summer camp lessons, tend to the gardens, and participate in workshops that address food access, social justice, and life skills.

Youth Programs Internship Instructor:

The garden hires four youth instructors through a 6-month internship over the spring and summer seasons. The interns must be over 21-years-old and are paid \$500 monthly.

Community Events:

Weed and Feed | Every Wednesday during the growing season, the garden invites the community to help weed and then enjoy a meal cooked from healthy food from the garden.

Plant Sale | The community garden creates plant starts for the community to purchase for their own gardens.

Garden Dinners and Brunches | Guest chefs prepare four-course meals with food from the garden and other local growers for community members to enjoy at private tables throughout the garden.

Harvest Festival | An annual celebration with games, live music, and fun for the family hosted at the garden.


Annual Report:


The annual budget and financial report are included in the [appendix](#).

Contact Info:

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Program Recommendation for Implementation: STUDENT UNITED WAY



Student United Way is an inexpensive and relatively effortless youth engagement program. Over the course of 6 months, high school juniors and seniors volunteer two hours of their day, during a school day, to attend a United Way meeting catered to growing their community knowledge and civic engagement skills.

They are hand-selected by the high schools they attend. Some are chosen for their academic achievement, others for their lack of investment in school, and others are plucked because their school counselor thinks it would be a great opportunity for them. The school pays for their transportation to and from the meetings if that is a barrier to attendance, but most students have no problem carpooling and committing to these monthly meetings.

The Cost of Poverty Experience conducted by a local non-profit and offered every year to the entire community, is the kick-off event for Student United Way. The simulation event very quickly distills the barriers many families face from poverty including housing, transportation, food insecurity, childcare, and jobs. The executive director facilitates a follow-up meeting to help the students vocalize what they learned. From that, monthly meetings with community stakeholders are organized to help the students understand the full reality of the community they live in and the role of United Way. Whether they meet with a donor to learn about the importance of and reason for philanthropy, or they meet with someone who has received a donation from United Way to understand the impact of that gift, much of the 6 month program is spent with the community in facilitated conversations.

As they begin to enter an allocation cycle, the students must determine their giving criteria. Many times, the group will coalesce around a theme pulled from their time in the community and driving factors in school. Last year, the group chose mental health.

The executive director loves the investment in the students, but even more, the community loves it and rallies around him to support this program by offering their encouragement, time and expertise. The Student United Way requires some time and attention from adult chaperones and board members during the field trips and facilitated conversations, and he has never struggled to find volunteer help.

The executive director mentions that his favorite part is watching the students vocalize their priorities and learn the art of compromise when they have to whittle hundreds of thousands of dollars of requests into \$25,000 of grant awards.

Because there is a minimal budget commitment other than the redirection of grant funds, a partnership with United Way of Mesa County to engage the youth in Clifton in this exercise in order to drive youth investment and involvement in improvements in their backyard is recommended.

To learn more about the Student United Way, please visit the [Program Overview Page](#).

Program Recommendation for Implementation:

YOUTH GARDEN PROJECT



"The Youth Garden Project is a positive way to capture youth who are not interested in sports or theatre and may otherwise slip through the cracks."- Kaitlin Thomas, Executive Director of YGP

It was started with the intention of serving youth who had court-ordered community service hours with "an opportunity to serve their hours in an educational and a nurturing environment," and to this day, it aims to meet kids right where they are.

From the preschool level through adulthood, there is something for everyone at the Youth Garden Project. Since its inception in 1996, it has grown from serving twelve youth in its first year to one thousand annually. The garden currently sits on a 1.5 acre parcel and

produces 3,000 pounds of produce each year requiring just a small sliver of land for the incredible output of crops.

The executive director works closely with the school district offering after school programs and receiving a monthly stipend for their partnership. In addition to the garden workshops and outdoor classrooms, YGP has a commercial kitchen and Cobb oven where they teach their cooking classes and prepare their garden meals for the community and volunteers.

Because the county also is charged with Meals on Wheels, there is potential to have our youth not only deliver, but prep and cook healthy meals for the elderly who use this service out of the commercial kitchen that could be located on-site, mimicking Youth Garden Projects set-up.

Additionally, YGP partners with the high school to offer career pathways and high school credits. There is an opportunity to also include college credits and Ag Tract classes through WCCC and CMU.

When considering YGP's offerings in the context of Mesa County Public Health Clifton Transformation Initiative, it seemed to align on several levels. Riverside Education Center offers after school programs at Rocky Mountain Elementary School and both could be a logical partner to work with these children in the garden teaching and doing service-learning throughout the year. This would have added benefits of teaching the children how to plant and sow, but also where their food comes from and how to create healthy meals instilling pride and ownership in their work. It could also be a place to house farm to table dinners and a safe space that brings the community together.

To learn more about the garden's program, please visit the [Youth Garden Project Overview page](#) .

OVERALL Program Recommendation for Implementation:

AFTER SCHOOL MATTERS



Recommendation:

After School Matters is an innovative organization that engages youth and encourages them to explore their strengths as they develop life skills through their apprenticeship programs; it is definitely one that Mesa County should consider implementing to empower local teens. After School Matters has been perfecting their youth engagement program for three decades and it has grown into an umbrella organization that offers thousands of program opportunities in numerous content areas for over eighteen thousand students annually. And they have graciously shared their

resources so that Mesa County can successfully make this program a reality for their teens.

After School Matters is an apprenticeship program that provides teens the chance to investigate different career opportunities, develop their talents, and increase skills required for college and careers. This program is more than simply a youth employment program it is designed to advocate for youth and their development by creating opportunities for partnerships to engage them and showcase their accomplishments. Furthermore, this program utilizes all the research and information from evaluations and focus groups to implement best practices for teens.

It would be worthwhile to collaborate with some of the youth employment organizations in Mesa County as they may be willing to help form this amazing program. A few youth employment organizations in Mesa County are Riverside Education Center, CareerWise, District 51 Career Center, Young Entrepreneurs Academy, School to Work Alliance Program, Mesa County Workforce Center for Young Adults, the Youth Explorer Program, and Western Colorado Community College. In addition to these organizations, Mesa County can also partner with the District 51 Public Schools, Mesa County Public Library, Grand Mesa Youth Services, and Hilltop Family Resource Center in order to make neighborhood resources available to teens and improve success rates.

The youth programs that After School Matters offers are divided into four different content areas: arts, communications and leadership, sports, and STEM. Mesa County has many options available for cross-sector collaboration in these areas. A sample list of possible partnerships in Mesa County for each content area is below.

Art | Local artists, the Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture, Grand Junction Creates, Western Colorado Dance Theater, High Desert Opera, Grand Junction Symphony, Thunder Mountain Camera Club, and The Arts Center. CMU's art or theatre department may also be an easy to attain collaboration.

Communications & Leadership | Local businesses and nonprofits, public relations and marketing agencies, Daily Sentinel, The Business Times, Spoke + Blossom, Grand Valley Lifestyle Magazine, Grand Junction Chamber's leadership program, CiviCO, United Way.

Sports | Local golf courses, local parks and recreation departments, local bicycle shops and clubs, Powderhorn Resort, outdoor trails. See Youth Directory Guide for a more comprehensive list of suggestions.

STEM | Eureka McConnell Science Museum, Dude Solutions, Visual Globe, Chamberlin, Architects, Apex Design and Drafting, CMU's engineering program, USA BMX STEM, New Emerson elementary and feeder schools.

As participants work alongside experts in the field, they gain valuable hard skills in the trade, as well as important life skills because these professionals also serve as instructors and mentors to the teens. A number of organizations and institutions listed above may be willing to participate in this program by donating their time and expertise to empower the next generation. Moreover, these organizations would also benefit from the teens' work since oftentimes funding helps with some or all of the stipends creating a beneficial trade-off for the time the professionals put into mentoring and guiding teens and the services they provide.

Mission:

To provide Chicago public high school teens opportunities to explore and develop their talents, while gaining critical skills for work, college and beyond.

Overview:

After School Matters empowers teens in Chicago through an apprenticeship model program that allows them to earn a stipend as they work on projects alongside skilled professionals. It is an umbrella organization offering more than 26,000 program opportunities every year in a variety of content areas including art, sports, science, communications, and technology. Students gain confidence as they develop job skills through an application and interview process to join a program and hands-on experience. They also learn values, dedication, and hard work in the program as they are expected to meet participant, attendance, and stipend and wage requirements in order to earn their stipend. Valuing teens' time and efforts through a stipend empowers teens and helps them recognize different career options. Furthermore, stipends have been found to lower participation barriers, as those who have to help bring in household income can still participate.

Research is an important part of After School Matters programs. Teen and instructor perspectives are collected through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and program observations. Quality evaluations are done through an evidence-based program observation tool called Youth Program Quality Assessment. Professional Development for instructors is one-way research from which program evaluations are used. These mandatory workshops based on the research gathered helps instructors effectively address pertinent issues adequately prepared to mentor youth.

After School Matters has three dedicated buildings for teens around Chicago, but programs are offered at a variety of spaces including, neighborhood sites, schools, parks, community centers, libraries, and community organizations. Teens take pride in the spaces they see as their own and it translates to high levels of achievement.

Background:

Gallery 37 was an innovative art apprenticeship program where teens earned a stipend as they worked on a designated undeveloped city block in Chicago in the summer of 1991 with the guidance of professional artists. This successful program empowered youth as they creatively expressed themselves through art while learning new talents, better communication skills, and became aware of new career opportunities. Gallery 37 turned into what is now known as After School Matters. It follows the same apprenticeship model but has grown into thousands of programs with a variety of content areas.

Age Ranges:

Teens must be at least 14 years old to participate.

Youth Programs:

Youth programs are offered in the spring, summer, and fall in four different content areas:

- Arts: performing, visual and culinary arts such as dance, vocal, photography, painting, and food preparation.
- Communications & Leadership: business, journalism, marketing, media, and social sciences such as social media, video editing, public speaking, community organizing, and law.
- Sports: sports instruction, stadium management, health and wellness, and sports-related certifications such as basketball officiating, martial arts, bicycle repair, and lifeguarding.
- STEM: applied and natural science, audio/visual technology, industrial technology, and informational technology such as architecture, music production, environmental science, computer programming, and repair.

Programs are categorized in the following ways:

- Apprenticeships: Teens must be 14 years old for these project-based programs that are led by industry experts. There are three levels of apprenticeships; the introductory level is the pre-apprenticeship that provides broad exposure to a specific content area and related careers. The next level involves more hands-on learning with content-specific skills and progresses students towards a showcase. The advanced apprenticeship is designed to refine technical skills and results in a complex project or showcase. All students are awarded a stipend for program completion.
- Assistantships: Teens must be 16 years old to participate in assistantship programs. These opportunities introduce teens to workplace experience while alongside After School Matters staff. Students are paid an hourly rate of \$8.25/hour.
- Internships: Teens must have participated at least three years in the After School Program and be 16 years old, although some positions in internships require teens to be 18 years old. These

opportunities are more industry-specific and offer entry-level professional experiences with external organizations and companies.

Impact:

Direct Outcomes

- Increased Freshmen On-Track rates, high school attendance, and high school graduation rates;
- Improved decision-making, collaboration, and connection to schools;
- Increased college enrollment and a high percentage reported having plans for after high school;
- Enhanced feelings of a safe and supportive environment, interaction, and engagement.

Structure and Funding:

The structure of After School Matters is based on an apprenticeship and internship model. Teens apply and go through an interview process to join a program. An After School Matters Recruitment Guide is in the [appendices](#); it offers tips and suggestions on how to promote the program and recruit teens, as well as information for interviews and enrollment. As teens work on projects led by experts in the field, they learn hard skills in particular content areas. They also advance in skills that will prepare them for college or a career such as personal mindset, planning for success, social awareness, verbal communication, collaboration, and problem-solving. Instructors earn stipends for their hard work and achieving program requirements. Teens earn \$336-\$725 monetary stipend during the summer session and \$275 - \$475 per session for the Fall and Spring sessions if they successfully meet program requirements.

The core program components are

- Advocate for teens and youth development.
- Build opportunities for teens through partnerships.
- Engage teens in development for work and higher education.
- Showcase teen accomplishments.
- Disseminate research and best practices about out-of-school time for teens.

After School Matters is funded by:

- Donations from corporations, organizations, and individuals
- Government grants and support
- Contributions and foundation grants
- Gallery 37 retail sales
- Special event revenue from the annual gala
- Interest income
- Investment income and miscellaneous income

According to the [US Census Bureau Quick Facts](#) for Mesa County and the city of Chicago, IL, Mesa County has a fifth of the population that Chicago has so this program would need to be scaled to size. According to the [FY 2019 Annual Report](#) for After School Matters, the expenses for 2019 were \$52,115,746 and more than 18,000 teens participated, which makes expenses per participant less than \$2,900 annually. Monetary stipends account for \$886-\$1,675 per participant annually if participating in the spring, summer, and fall sessions offered.

Contact Info:

Mary Ellen Caron, Chief Executive Officer

 info@afterschoolmatters.org

 <https://www.afterschoolmatters.org/>

 312-239-5229

Annual Report: [FY 2019 Annual Report](#)

The [appendices](#) include extensive resources that After School Matters provided so that Mesa County can successfully implement similar programs.

Youth Activity Directory

**all descriptions and program summaries are pulled directly from the source itself.*

FAITH-BASED OFFERINGS

Grand Valley Young Life

Luke Feather, Area Director
2500 Broadway, Unit B PMB 223
Grand Junction, CO 81506
Phone: 970.589.0396
Email: lukedfeather@gmail.com
Web: <https://gv.younglife.org/>

Young Life is a world-class organization for adolescents that was started in 1941 and is present in all 50 states and over 100 countries. Locally, Grand Valley Young Life was started in 1982. Our staff and volunteers enter the world of kids, focusing on what matters to them — fun, adventure, friendship, and a sense of significance. In doing so, we earn the privilege of talking to them about something that we think matters most of all — the truth about God and His love for them. Grand Valley Young Life has programs for high school, middle school (called WyldLife), college students, and teen moms (called YoungLives.)

Young Life is offered at the following schools:

- Central High School
- Fruita Monument High School
- Grand Junction High School
- Palisade High School

WyldLife is the middle school version and is offered at:

- Fruita Middle
- Redlands Middle
- West Middle

Young Life is also at CMU and offered to teen moms through the program called, YoungLives.

Camp Hope

Louie or Carrie Nelson
509 Beech Road
Fruita, CO 81521
Phone: 970-773-0281
Email: info@camphopekids.org
Web: www.camphopekids.org

Camp Hope provides opportunities for bible studies, one on one mentoring, and an outdoor mountain wilderness experience to the kids in their community to bring hope into their lives and build lasting relationships. Camp Hope is located on the Grand Mesa in western Colorado just outside of Grand Junction. There are many diverse communities scattered within the area with a school district of over 22,000 students. A majority of elementary schools are Title 1 schools meaning that they serve disadvantaged and potentially at-risk children. Over 1300 kiddos have received a scholarship, most of them being potentially at risk. Ages 8 yrs - 13 years are invited to attend a 6-day camp called Valley to Mountaintop. Once a kiddo

attends Valley to Mountaintop they are invited back every year to the Alumni Camps. There is no age limit; older returning campers are encouraged to transition into staff.

Child Evangelism Fellowship - Good News Club

Jeani Kell

519 Grand Avenue

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-778-0133

Email: jeani@coloradocef.org

Web: <https://www.coloradocef.org/west>

Child Evangelism Fellowship is a Bible-centered organization composed of born-again believers whose purpose is to evangelize boys and girls with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to establish (disciple) them in the Word of God and in a local church for Christian living. CEF ministries for children include Good News Club and Adventure Club. They also offer a Christian Youth In Action program for teens.

Good News Club ministries take place in neighborhood settings such as homes, backyards, schools, and community centers all over the world. These fast-paced, one-hour programs are designed to bring the Gospel of Christ to children on their level in their environment. Good News Clubs have been offered in elementary schools at Loma, Pomona, Lincoln Orchard Mesa, Dos Rios, and Clifton.

Adventure Club ministries is a 3-5 day club that is offered in the summer for children of all ages. The clubs include Bible lessons, mission stories, memory verses, and songs that are all taught in fun and creative ways that engage students such as dramas and other interactive activities, crafts, and games. This ministry is taught by teens that have completed the Christian Youth in Action program.

Christian Youth In Action (CYIA) is a worldwide movement that exists to equip the next generation to make an eternal impact for God. This program is for teens age 13 and older that begins with a training camp experience that equips them to share the gospel with children. The second part of the program is ministry-based; the teens will work together to facilitate Adventure Clubs in their area. Students stretch their faith, build new friendships and learn how to bring the good news of Jesus to the world.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

CareerWise

Darcy Weir, Workforce Development Coordinator

360 Grand Avenue

Grand Junction, CO

Phone: 970-263-2916

Email: darcy@gjchamber.org

Bo Tobin, Work-Based Learning Coordinator

Phone: 970-254-5100 ext. 11216

Email: Bo.Tobin@d51schools.org

Web: <https://www.careerwisecolorado.org/en/>

CareerWise modern youth apprentices split their time between their traditional high school classroom and the workplace.

They earn a wage while receiving hands-on work experience where they can apply their classroom learning. By the conclusion of the program, students will have meaningful work experience, a nationally recognized industry certification, a professional network, and the opportunity to earn debt-free college credit. The CareerWise model is mutually beneficial for both apprentices and employers. Hiring apprentices is a dynamic investment in your company and workforce, and businesses receive a productive employee; apprentices are a true team member doing meaningful work, a talent pipeline of skilled, diverse workers that innovate the workforce, a valuable connection to the community, more leadership and growth opportunities for existing staff.

D51 Career Center

Bo Tobin, Work-Based Learning Coordinator

2935 North Ave

Grand Junction, CO 81504

Phone: 970-254-5100 ext. 11216

Email: Bo.Tobin@d51schools.org

Web: <https://cc.d51schools.org>

The Career Center offers 7 Career and Technical Education courses to District 51 high school students; students from GJHS, FMHS, PHS, and CHS are bused to the Career Center. The students earn elective and academic credits towards graduation while learning the vocational and employability skills needed to be successful in today's workforce. Our programs all use a hands-on-work-based model of instruction. The students run an actual restaurant or floral shop, build sheds, repair lawn mowers, and groom dogs!

YEA! Young Entrepreneurs Academy

Darcy Weir, YEA! Program Manager

360 Grand Avenue

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-263-2916

Email: darcy@gjchamber.org

<https://gjchamber.org/young-entrepreneurs-academy-yea>

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) is a year-long program that teaches middle and high school students how to start and run their own real businesses. YEA! was developed at the University of Rochester in 2004 with the support of a grant from the Kauffman Foundation. The Grand Junction Area Chamber is excited to be introducing YEA! to Grand Junction and Mesa County!

YEA! guides middle and high school students through the process of starting and running a legitimate business or social movement over the course of a full academic year. YEA! has graduated almost 4,000 students over the past 12 years, who have started almost 3,000 businesses and social movements! YEA! graduates started as students, and left the program as CEOs of their own companies!

SWAP - School to Work Alliance Program

2935 North Avenue

Grand Junction, CO 81504

Phone: 970-254-6011

Web: <http://gjswap.org>

SWAP -Continued

Julie Lovato

CHS & DeBeque

SWAP Coordinator

970-254-6011

Julie.Lovato@d51schools.org

Pamela Herrera

GJHS, Juniper Ridge, Independence Academy & Plateau Valley

SWAP Specialist

970-254-6010

Pamela.Herrera@d51schools.org

Roy Railsback

PHS, Grand River Academy, Gateway, InSteps & Valley

SWAP Specialist

970-254-6008

Roy.Railsback@d51schools.org

Desirae Collins

FMHS, R-5, Summit & F 8/9

SWAP Specialist

970-254-6009

Desirae.Collins@d51schools.org

SWAP is a collaborative initiative between the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and local school districts and Boards of Cooperative Education Services, Colorado Department of Education Area Businesses, and Young adults wanting to participate in today's workforce. SWAP is for young adults between the ages of 15 and 24 that have a desire to begin taking responsibility for their future and gain the skills necessary to do so. While in high school, students gain career awareness, exploration and preparation, work readiness skills training, self-advocacy training, guidance and counseling on career training and education, and work experiences. After exiting high school, students can expect job-seeking skills training, job-search activities, job placement, assistance with workplace accommodations, job coaching, on-the-job training, and job retention skills training. SWAP is offered at the following schools: CHS, DeBeque, GJHS, Juniper Ridge, Independence Academy & Plateau Valley, PHS, Grand River Academy, Gateway, InSteps & Valley, FMHS, R-5, Summit & F 8/9.

Mesa County Workforce Center - Young Adults

Kirstin Maska, Youth Employment Specialist

512 29 ½ Road

Grand Junction, CO 81504

Phone: 970-248-7563

Email: kirstin.maska@mesacounty.us

Web: www.mcwfc.us/services/young-adults/

The Mesa County Workforce Center provides services to our youth population aged 14-24. We can provide guidance in a number of ways. In collaboration with the Governor's Summer Job Hunt Program, our goal is to connect youths with employers to gain meaningful work experience.

The Young Adult Career Development Program (CDP) provides a variety of programs, workshops, and one-on-one guidance to young adults, ages 16-24, who need help finding a job, planning a career, or reaching educational goals. Our friendly staff works with each of our clients to provide customized plans to meet their unique needs.

Youth Explorer Program

Sgt. Justin Montover, Sgt.

215 Rice Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-244-3500

Email: justin.montover@mesacounty.us OR Darin.huisjen@mesacounty.us

Web: [Youth Explorer Program](#)

The Mesa County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post #321 is a unit that introduces youth to the world of law enforcement. This program is geared towards youth aged 14-20 who have an interest in a law enforcement career. Members of the unit observe deputies, criminal investigators, administrative personnel, 911 dispatchers, agency volunteers, and records personnel, in the performance of their duties for the agency.

This program includes high school internships and provides members an opportunity to participate and assist with special projects and community events. These activities provide an opportunity for youth to learn valuable skills and interact within the criminal justice community to gain a realistic picture of what a career in law enforcement entails.

The Explorer Post meets an average of twice a month for training and project assignments.

TUTORING

Riverside Education Center (REC)

Joy Hudak, Executive Director

1101 Winters Ave

Grand Junction, CO 81501

PO Box 4367, Grand Junction, CO 81502

Phone: 970-462-2901

Email: joy@rec4kids.com

Web: <https://www.rec4kids.com/>

The Riverside Educational Center (REC) offers after-school tutoring five days per week in 14-week blocks in the Fall and Spring semesters. Tutoring focuses on assistance with homework assignments followed by activities to develop reading, writing, and math skills.

Elementary level tutoring (6 years old – 5th Grade) is conducted in small groups with individual assistance as needed. Each student has an individualized folder with a lesson plan prepared according to their academic needs based on testing data and/or teacher recommendations. Each student also has a homework log which serves as a communication link between teachers, REC staff, and parents.

Elementary level tutoring is offered at the Dual Immersion Academy (REC Main), Rocky Mountain Elementary, Dos Rios Elementary, and Fruitvale Elementary School.

Secondary level students (6th – 12th Grade) are assisted by content-specific tutors covering a variety of academic areas

so all their homework needs are met. In addition to homework help, computers are available for students to practice skill-building with a variety of online programs. REC staff members also monitor and assist with student progress through MCVSD 51's ParentVue online portal.

Middle School tutoring (6th - 8th Grade) is offered at Orchard Mesa, Mount Garfield, Bookcliff, and Grand Mesa Middle Schools.

High School tutoring (9th – 12th Grade) is available for any qualifying students and takes place at Grand Junction High School and Central High School 4 days per week.

MESA COUNTY LIBRARIES

Central Library

443 N. 6th Street
Grand Junction, CO 81501
970-243-4442

Clifton Branch

590 32 Road, #6F
Clifton, CO 81520
970-434-6936

Collbran Branch

111 Main Street
Collbran, CO 81624
970-487-3545

De Beque Branch

730 Minter Avenue
De Beque, CO 81630
970-283-8625

Fruita Branch

324 N. Coulson
Fruita, CO 81521
970-858-7703

Gateway Branch

42700 Highway 141
Gateway, CO 81522
970-931-2428

Orchard Mesa Branch

230 E Lynwood Street
Grand Junction, CO 81503



970-243-0181

Palisade Branch

119 W. 3rd Street

Palisade, CO 81526

970-464-7557

Mesa County Library Youth Activities

Cydney Clink, Head of Youth Services

Mesa County Library

443 N. 6th Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-243-4442, 970-683-2458

Email: cclink@mcpld.org

Web: <https://mesacountylibraries.org/teens/>

Mesa County Library offers many events to engage teens ages 12-18 years of age. These events include Teen Themed Tuesdays; Teen Readers Meetup; Teen Homework Help; Teen Art Reception; Teen Gaming, Teen Tabletop Gaming, GOAT (Gathering of Awesome Teens), and Teen Volunteer programs.

GOAT – Gathering of Awesome Teens

Andrea Fiegel, Teen Services Coordinator

Central Library

443 N. 6th Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-683-2411

Email: teens@mcpld.org

Web: <https://mesacountylibraries.org/teens/>

GOAT is an appointed group of 12- to 18-year-olds who help create and run teen events, offer library purchase suggestions, and help out in their local community. GOAT members attend monthly hour-long meetings and participate in events and opportunities throughout the year.

Currently, only the Central Library offers GOAT and meetings are virtual only.

Teen Volunteer - Summer Reading

Kelsey Sprys, Volunteer and Community Outreach Coordinator

Mesa County Libraries

443 N. 6th Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-243-4442, 970-683-2458

Email: ksprys@mcpld.org

Web: <https://mesacountylibraries.org/teens/volunteer/>

Summer Reading at Mesa County Libraries relies on volunteers to ensure a successful summer. Summer Reading is the perfect opportunity for teens to gain real-world experience in customer service, communication, organization, group collaboration, leadership, and many other skills!

MENTORING

Partners

Blake Ammon, Mentoring Program Manager
1169 Colorado Ave
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-245-5555 ext. 101
Email: bammon@mesapartners.org
Web: <https://www.mesapartners.org/>

The mission of Mesa County Partners is to make a difference in the lives of young people by helping them develop a positive self-image, a sense of belonging, and an acceptance of responsibility for their actions. Many young people get into trouble because they lack the experience of coping with problems and pressures that exist in their lives at home, in school, and in the community. Partners believe that a one-to-one mentoring relationship with a successfully coping adult can help a young person learn skills that will improve his/her adjustment to societal expectations. Our goal is to help young people become independent and productive members of society. Mentors are asked to spend 3 hours a week with their Jr. Partner, ages 7 to 17, which could mean a lifetime of difference to a child in need of guidance.

Partners' Restitution program allows youth, who are court-ordered, the opportunity to perform community service hours and/or earn restitution to pay their victims.

FAM Foster Alumni Mentors

Kimberly Raff, Founder and Executive Director
750 Main Street, Suite 105
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-234-3519
Email: Kim@fosteralumnimentors.org
Web: www.fosteralumnimentors.org

Belonging and community are what we all want to experience. Youth from the foster care system can feel alone and ashamed of their story, leaving them feeling like an outsider. Foster Alumni Mentors is about FAMily ~ supporting, preparing, and building confidence in youth as they transition to adulthood. Every year, more than 23,000 youth age out of the foster care system. These youth need our guidance and support to create the life they want to live. FAM provides mentoring opportunities where our community can get involved to provide guidance and support to our members. We are passionate about changing the statistics and inspiring hope for these youth in Mesa County.

Giving Adolescents New Goals (GANG)

SK Alfstad
202 North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-250-2744
Email: gang.gjc@gmail.com
Web: <https://positivegang.org/>

GANG is a nonprofit organization focused on giving less privileged young people new choices, goals, and options in life through free after-school tutoring programs at Chipeta and Fruitvale Elementary; art camps and sports camps at Applewood Estates neighborhood in Grand Junction. Ultimately, we strive to develop proficiency and subsequent confidence in the youth we serve. We want as many kids as possible to have access to our services regardless of gender,

identity, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

2020/2021 created a new challenge for our organization. We were met with the obstacle of not being able to meet within the facilities or directly with the kids in groups. We were faced with postponing our program indefinitely or coming up with a plan B; we chose plan B. We developed a remote program of art, academics, and sports that kids can do at home and interact with us via text and email. Kids are being creative and having fun with clay, mosaics, hacky sac, jump rope, math games, word games, and puzzles all from home! We are hearing wonderful things from kids, parents, school counselors, and teachers about this new approach to our afterschool program. Our hope now is to reach out to kids all over the nation who are still at home who need some added encouragement or enrichment that we can send our kits.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH / AT RISK

Mind Springs Health - West Springs Hospital

Jana Bauman, LPC, Program Director

515 28 ³/₄ Road,

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-241-6023

West Springs Hospital: 970.263.4918

Email: JBauman@mindspringshealth.org

Web: MindSpringsHealth.org

Web: WestSpringsHospital.org

Our kids & teens are experiencing more mental distress and higher rates of suicide than ever before. From excessive screen usage to bullying, the world can be a dangerous place for them, and they & their parents need skills to navigate it. We teach those skills. Mind Springs Health offers therapy and counseling services for youth. West Springs Hospital has a dedicated child and adolescent unit.

Mind Springs is also partnered in a program with Pathways at School District 51 to provide individual and family therapy to adolescents that have had contact with law enforcement with the goal to prevent further penetration into the legal system.

Hilltop Family Resource Center

Sue Conry, Director of Hilltop Family Resource Center

1129 Colorado Avenue

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-244-0626

Email: suec@htop.org

Web: <https://www.htop.org/family-connections/>

Hilltop Family Resource Center serves Mesa County by providing wide-ranging programs that offer real-world solutions designed to give people of all ages a chance at long-lasting success. We put people first and give them the tools and support they need to face life's challenges through compassionate and comprehensive human services.

Hilltop Family Connections ensures that youth in the Mesa County community gain the skills to successfully transition from adolescence into adulthood by helping families access unique resources for self-sufficiency. Services include individual and group substance abuse treatment, employment and housing assistance, tutoring, assessment, referrals, mentoring, and case management. Call: (970) 244-0626

Get Real provides comprehensive confidence-building and pregnancy prevention services to youth. Get Real serves boys

and girls ages 10 to 19. Call: (970) 244-0646

Transitional Living Program (TLP) provides transitional housing and case management to youth in the Grand Junction area transitioning from the foster care system or lacking sufficient family support. TLP provides assessment and intervention related to real-life skill development and age-appropriate emancipation. Call: (970) 245-3952

The Cooking Matters program offers professional chefs and nutritionists who volunteer their time and expertise to lead hands-on courses that instruct adults, teens, and kids living in low-income families how to get the most nutrition out of a limited budget. Call: (970) 244-0469

Hilltop's Residential Youth Services

Ashley Elliott, Director of Hilltop Residential Youth Services

1405 Wellington Ave

Grand Junction, CO 81506

Phone: 970-244-0538

Email: ashleye@htop.org

Web: hilltoprys.org/

Hilltop's Residential Youth Services (RYS) is a program of the Hilltop Family Resource Center that promotes the strengths and abilities of youth and families by providing education, treatment, and recreational opportunities that empower and enrich all individuals to face life's challenges with confidence and competence. RYS offers comprehensive guidance and treatment for youth ages 12 to 18 who have encountered difficulties at home, school, and in the community, as well as support for their families. RYS is a 22-bed facility with separate residences for boys and girls located on a 7-acre campus in Grand Junction, Colorado. RYS provides additional services including Therapeutic Day Treatment, Experiential Learning, and Transitional Living.

Therapeutic Day Treatment is designed to serve youth and families who have been impacted by abuse, neglect, trauma, behavioral and substance abuse issues, as well as those that are vulnerable to negative peer influences, delinquency, or circumstances that create barriers to effective learning and potentially causing the need for a higher level of care. Comprehensive and collaborative services focus on offering educational opportunities in a therapeutically supportive environment in alignment with the Colorado Department of Human Services and the Colorado Department of Education.

The Hilltop Experiential Learning Program gives youth an amazing opportunity to build self-confidence through personal and community-based projects. Youth participate in team-building courses designed to increase communication, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. Outdoor adventure trips teach the skills of healthful living. The Hilltop Trail Crew allows youth to learn a good work ethic and the importance of giving back to the community through service projects (also allows youth to address community service and restitution requirements).

The Transitional Living Program is a community-based emancipation program for young adults. Independent Living Coaches help youth identify their needs, set goals, and connect with community partners and resources as they transition to independent living.

Grand Mesa Youth Services Center

Brian Potts, Assistant Director

360 28 Road

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-242-1521 ext. 117

Email: Brian.Potts@state.co.us

Web: <https://cdhs.colorado.gov/our-services/youth-services/residential-youth-centers/grand-mesa-youth-services-center>

Grand Mesa Youth Services Center (GMYSC) is a 70-bed, co-ed secure, multipurpose youth center operated by the Colorado Division of Youth Services (DYS) located in Grand Junction, Colorado. GMYSC provides detention, regional diagnostic/assessment for newly committed youth, and secure commitment services. GMYSC provides daily programming for both detained and committed youth in the areas of education, clinical services, recreational activities, healthy living, and transition services.

The detention unit at GMYSC is designed to provide services to youth being detained while awaiting court and/or youth that are serving short court sentences. Detention youth participate in cognitive behavioral programming designed to teach positive thinking skills, anger management, improved decision making, empathy, and other social-related skills. Through a collaborative effort with Ariel Clinical Services, youth in detention receive as-needed brief mental health assessments and crisis management counseling. In addition, youth participate in psycho-educational groups designed to promote victim empathy, independent living, goal-setting, and anger management. Educational services for detained youth are provided through the Mesa County District 51 schools. Educators from the local school district are on-site daily through the week to provide assessments to appropriate grade levels and classroom instruction. In addition, youth receive daily recreation and structured leisure time.

Karis, Inc. - The House

John Mok-Lamme

PO Box 2837

Grand Junction, CO 81502

Phone: 970-234-1810

Email: jmoklamme@karisinc.org

Web: www.thehousegj.org

The House is a 10-bed emergency shelter for homeless youth ages 13-20 which provides intensive case management and support. About 70 youth come through The House each year. The program is staffed 24/7. Think of it as a train station. This is where youth come in from the cold for short stays. From the station, they take trips to more permanent destinations: back home, to DHS programs, to Job Corp, to college, or to longer-term Karis programs.

Laurel House Apartments is a large apartment building that houses some of our community's most vulnerable youth. The program features 34 one-bedroom apartments with a lot of beautiful common space. Youth can stay in their apartments for as long as needed. Laurel House is the epitome of a home. It is a place designed to house and care for the neediest youth in our community for a very long time.

Zoe House is a 14-bed transitional housing program that provides housing and voluntary services to youth ages 18-24 and their dependents made homeless by intimate partner violence. Zoe House is the Bat Cave of our programs—a place youth hideaway to be safe and receive assistance as they prepare to re-enter a world that has done them harm.

The Host Home Program provides housing, case management, and support to homeless youth age 16-22 in local homes. It's like an uncle or aunt's house, a place where you stay for a year or two to get back on your feet.

The host family receives services and a stipend from Karis. If you have a spare room in your home, you can provide youth experiencing homelessness with the safety and security they need to reach their full potential. You can give them a HOME.

Bonnie's House is a voucher-based, 5-bed permanent supportive housing program for homeless youth age 18-24 and offers mental health services and support from a Rocky Mountain Health Care Coordinator as well as Karis services. Youth pay 30% of their income towards rent.

The Transitional Living Program (TLP) provides housing (10 beds), case management, and support to homeless youth ages 16-22 for up to two years. Think of it as an uncle or aunt's house. It's a place where you stay for a year or two to get back

on your feet. The program is centered at two four-bedroom homes: Bennie's House and Mathew's House. Youth pay 30% of their income monthly and have their income returned at program completion so they can transition to self-sufficiency. Last year, TLP served 16 youth.

The Street Outreach Program (SOP) is the arm of agency in the community and on the street. We think of it as a friendly octopus. The center of the creature is the drop-in center and the program has tentacles that reach through the community. The program is centered at our drop-in center at 4th and Main and employs 2-4 outreach workers who visit homeless youth in schools, on the street, in parks, and under bridges. This program serves youth ages 13-24 and last year served 245 youth (this includes youth who stayed in Karis housing programs).

The Asset House is a two-year transitional housing program for adults ages 18 and older. Residents at Asset House live in single rooms and shared bathrooms and a kitchen. We work to get residents connected with resources and support in the community. The monthly rent includes all utilities.

YOUTH CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Scouts Boy Scouts of America (BSA)

Gail Atkinson, District Executive for Grand Mesa and Majestic Mountain
1925 Orchard Ave *mailing address only
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-549-6794
Email: Gail.Atkinson@scouting.org
Web: www.Denverboyscouts.org

Founded in 1910 on the principles of making a difference through civic service, Scouting provides quality youth programs that build good character and leadership skills, while building better communities. Through the years the mission has remained the same, to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law. As our community continues to grow and diversify, we remain committed to growing all youth into future leaders.

Scouting builds character and community through a variety of programs and activities including camping, canoeing, hiking, mountain biking, community service projects, and more. These activities instill a sense of confidence, preparedness, and honor in our youth. Grand Junction has active troops for boys kindergarten through high school.

Girl Scouts

Cheala Herrera, Recruiter & Placement Specialist for Girl Scouts of Colorado (Western Slope Area)
580 24 ½ Road
Grand Junction, CO 81505
Phone: 970-628-8007
Email: Cheala.Herrera@gscolorado.org
Web: <https://www.girlscoutsofcolorado.org/>

Girl Scouts builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. We're the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. And with programs from coast to coast and across the globe, Girl Scouts offers every girl a chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure, and success. Grand Junction has active troops for girls kindergarten through high school.

4-H

Melissa Wonnemberg, 4-H Youth Development Agent
2775 Hwy 50
Grand Junction, CO 81503
Phone: 970-244-1834
Email: melissa.tabke@mesacounty.us
Web: <https://tra.extension.colostate.edu/4-h/>

4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization, empowering youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults. The vision of 4-H is to prepare young people, ages 5-18, to make a positive impact in their communities and the world; a world in which youth and adults learn, grow, and work together as catalysts for positive change.

4-H programs benefit participants through hands-on projects including environmental science, rocketry, foods, and nutrition, animal science, photography, and more. As a result, they learn valuable life skills such as leadership, ethics, decision making, record keeping, responsibility, and community service.

The caring support of adult volunteers and mentors inspires young people in 4-H to work collaboratively, take the lead on their own projects and set and achieve goals with confidence. 4-H'ers chart their own course, explore important issues, and define their place in the world. 4-H'ers stand up for themselves and their communities. The 4-H movement supports young people from elementary school through high school with programs designed to shape future leaders and innovators. Fueled by research-driven programming, 4-H'ers engage in hands-on learning activities in the areas of science, citizenship, and healthy living.

Girls on the Run of Western Colorado (GOTR)

Jill Henwood
202 North Ave, #284
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-257-9267
Email: jill@gotrwesterncolorado.org
Web: www.gotrwesterncolorado.org

Girls on the Run (GOTR) inspires girls to be joyful, healthy, and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum that creatively integrates running. The 3rd-5th grade program, Girls on the Run, encourages girls of all abilities to recognize their individual strengths and celebrate connections with others. Our tested curriculum blends physical activity with skill development that enables girls to adapt to whatever comes their way. In today's unpredictable world, the strategies learned at Girls on the Run are more important than ever. Heart & Sole is Girls on the Run's middle school program that meets the unique needs of girls in 6th-8th grade. The program considers the whole girl – body, brain, heart, spirit, and social connection. Girls need an inclusive place where they feel supported and inspired to explore their emotions, cultivate empathy and strengthen their physical and emotional health.

Camp GOTR by Girls on the Run provides a one-of-a-kind opportunity for girls of all abilities in 3rd-5th grade to develop self-confidence and learn life skills they can use now and as they grow. Girls will enjoy building friendships through interactive games, being physically active, and expressing creativity through arts and crafts and storytelling. Led by caring and qualified Girls on the Run coaches, the Camp GOTR combines the best of the Girls on the Run program with all the fun of camp.

Kiwanis Club - Grand Junction

Toni Heiden, President

2565 American Way

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-260-8664

Email: toni@heidenhomes.com

Web: <https://www.kiwanis-gj.org/>

Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world one child and one community at a time. Kids need Kiwanis. Kiwanis has an annual Pancake day scheduled in August at the community events center. Proceeds go to the children of our community.

Builders clubs for the middle school age, the Key clubs for high school students, the Circle K clubs for college students, plus the AKTION clubs for the mentally and physically challenged. If people learn to be involved with service work at an early age they are more than likely to continue through adulthood, and because of this concept, Kiwanis will be able to serve more children in better ways in the future years.

Fruita Monument High School Key Club is a service club dedicated to brightening the lives of others in this community and beyond. We meet Thursdays during lunch in Mr. Wuster's room (room 307) to work on simple yet significant projects, such as bookmarks for Fruita's library, placemats for a nursing home, dog toys for Roice-Hurst, and Christmas cards for Meals on Wheels. We also provide opportunities for service outside of the classroom through partnering with the Kiwanis Club of Grand Junction. It is a great way for busy students to get service hours during the school year, and anyone is welcome to come!

Fruita Youth Action Council

Brittany Kline

Fruita Community Center

324 N. Coulson St.

Fruita, CO, 81521

Phone: 970-858-0360 X 6407

Email: bkline@fruita.org

Web: <https://www.fruita.org/parksrec/page/fruita-youth-action-council>

Fruita Youth Action Council (FYAC) is a group of students (15-20 youth between 6th and 12th grades) working collaboratively with peers and community organizations to provide meaningful input on youth-related issues, programs, and the promotion of health. They want to have a diverse and unique perspective; students from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply!

ARTS, SCIENCE, THEATER

Eureka McConnell Science Museum

Jenn Moore, Executive Director

1400 North 7th Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-254-1626

Email: info@eurekasciencemuseum.org or jmoore@eurekasciencemuseum.org

Web: <https://eurekasciencemuseum.org/>

EUREKA! McConnell Science Museum is a non-profit organization that was founded by John McConnell. We operate with a

small employed staff and a large group of dedicated volunteers who bring math and science to life. Our Mission is to inspire a passion and respect for STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) in our communities.

EUREKA! has evolved from its earliest beginnings as a volunteer effort by John McConnell, teaching scientific principles to kids through hands-on demonstrations that he created. During that time the project was given the name SITHOK, which stands for "Science In The Hands Of Kids". After reaching about 5,000 students per year, the Mesa County School District granted John a space for EUREKA!. In 2018, EUREKA! relocated to the newly-constructed Confluence Hall building on the CMU campus.

The goal for EUREKA! is to make the basic elements of science and mathematics available for students and adults to investigate hands-on. The majority of the stations and exhibits have been constructed by several of our volunteers. EUREKA! hopes to redefine the way people think about, learn about, and interact with science and technology by making it fun for everyone.

Western Colorado Center for the Arts dba The Art Center

Lee Borden, Executive Director

1803 N 7th St

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-243-7337, ext. 5

Email: lborden@gjartcenter.org

Web: <http://gjartcenter.org>

Teen Programming is updated frequently and has options for teens ages 13-18. All classes address Colorado Model Content Standards for visual arts.

After-School Program: Extend your student's learning beyond the classroom with this after-school program. Children will learn something new or develop their own artistic voice while building their critical thinking skills. These ongoing sessions offer an evolving curriculum such as create your own paper-mache pet (sculpture) and prompt drawing lessons.

Summer Art Camp gives the community's children the opportunity to explore art in all its forms and encourages those students to explore their own creativity. Summer Art Camp is taught by both professional and certified art teachers. A reception is held at the end of each week and families and friends are invited into The Art Center to see the work that the campers have accomplished during the week. Classes are broken down by ages 5-7 and 8-13 and designed to challenge and teach to the ability of the students in that class.

- Nature Week allows students to explore the natural world at the Botanical Gardens to find eco-friendly inspiration!
- Animal Week teaches youth how to draw from live animal models.
- STEAM NASA offers inspired projects such as chromatography tie-dye, design a vessel for an egg drop off, The Art Center design a s'more solar oven, spinner toys, create your own plastic for a casting, force and motion artwork, and community installation!
- Art Around America celebrates Independence Day through art: Native American pottery, mixed media cityscapes, Jasper Johns flags, printmaking inspired by Robert Indiana, abstract art by black history artist Alma Woodsey Thomas, patriotic line art, July 4th chalk pastel, and salt painting fireworks.
- 3-D Adventures offers clay, papier-mâché, found objects, sculpture in the round and bias relief, drawing techniques to make 2-D Artwork appear 3-D using pencil, charcoal, markers and colored pencils, giant-sized bubbles, and community installation.
- Let's Create Clay engages the students through drawing, sculpture, printmaking, batik, nail polish pour art, oil pastels, and community installation.

The Homeschool Program is designed to meet the needs of the homeschool community by offering art classes that address art standards. There is a balance of open-ended artistic expression and creative process in the format of these classes. The classes will explore a variety of different art fields such as ceramics, drawing, collage, painting, printmaking, and sculpture. Students will have an opportunity to work together while experimenting with different art skills. Art will be used to make a connection to other academic subjects in an integrated approach in the art class curriculum. Overall, the program is designed to have fun while learning about art techniques and increasing artistic knowledge. Classes are different from session to session.

Western Colorado Dance Theater

Contact Britni Cruz-Dodd, Board President

PO Box 1084

Grand Junction, CO 81502

Phone: 970-241-0041

Email: admin@westerncodancetheater.org

Web: www.westerncodancetheater.org/

The Western Colorado Dance Theater is dedicated to uniting the community through dance.

Western Colorado Dance Theater is a non-profit pre-professional dance production organization in Grand Junction, Colorado. Our purpose is to provide quality dance and theater education and performance opportunities for children and young adults and viable entertainment for the community in the Western Slope Region. Our company was founded by local dancers and parents of Grand Junction in an effort to bring more opportunities to the youth in the Valley. This organization is open to all Dancers and Directors in the Western Slope community. Auditions are open to everyone ages 4 and up.

Creative Avenues Arts and Education Enrichment Center

Joy Potter

835 N. 26th Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-255-6757

Emails: info@creativeavenuesgj.com OR info@revolutiondancegj.com,

Webs: creativeavenuesgj.com, www.RevolutionDanceGJ.com, www.TheatreProjectGJ.com

Creative Avenues Arts and Education Enrichment Center offer youth programs in dance and theater.

Revolution Dance offers small-size dance technique classes for children age 2 through adult. We focus on teaching the whole dancer - developing technique as well as self-image and teaching students to learn to love dance as an art form. Small class sizes and a nurturing environment enable each student to reach his/her individual potential.

The Theatre Project provides quality theatre education and performance opportunities to its participants at an affordable price. We strive to cultivate creativity in a supportive and nurturing environment and allow all students the opportunity to explore the performing arts regardless of their individual financial circumstances. We endeavor to create an avenue for students to develop their theatrical talents in an attempt to instill in them an appreciation and love for the arts and arts education - specifically theatre arts.

Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra

Kelly Anderson, Executive Director

Charles Latshaw, Music Director

414 Main Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-243-6787

Emails: clatshaw@gjso.org or kanderson@gjso.org
Web: www.gjso.org

Instrument Petting Zoo can be scheduled at schools or groups for children and students of all ages to listen to musicians from the symphony provide a brief explanation and demonstration of instruments of the symphony: woodwinds, brass, strings, and percussion. The majority of the time is spent trying out the instruments. The hands-on experience is exciting and gratifying—and is reflected in their reactions when they get sounds out of a trombone, clarinet, violin, and more!

Young Artist Competition - The Grand Junction Symphony prides itself on selecting the finest artists to perform concerts with the orchestra through its Young Artist Competition each year. The instrument chosen for the competition rotates each year between piano, solo instrument, and voice. The 2020-2021 competition is for all orchestral instruments except the piano.

SUMMER CAMPS

Western Colorado Community College Summer Camps

Kurtis Armstrong, Director of the Community Education Center
WCCC Community Education Center
2508 Blichmann Avenue, Building B
Grand Junction, CO 81505
Phone: 970-255-2828
Email: cec@coloradomesa.edu
Web: coloradomesa.edu/cec

Colorado Mesa University and Western Colorado Community College offer interactive learning opportunities to help students explore future career options, get a jumpstart on learning technical skills, develop strong personal skills, and have a lot of fun! WCCC is able to support camps and make them affordable to all area youth through the Reach Your Peak grant program which is supported by the Northwest Regional Council of El Pomar Foundation. Over 90 middle and high school camps are offered for students to explore in areas of career exploration, culinary arts, health sciences, and aviation, STEAM: the arts, digital design, and filmmaking, STEM: computers, robotics, and technology, STEM: Manufacturing. Camp financial assistance is available.

Colorado Mesa University Music Summer Camps

Darin Kamstra, Camp Director, Jazztopia
Nicholas Brenholtz, Elementary School Music Camp
Lyn Ross, Middle School Music Camp
1100 North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501-3122
Phone: 970.248.1088
Emails: dkamstra@coloradomesa.edu, Nicholas.Brenholtz@d51schools.org, lross@coloradomesa.edu
Web: www.coloradomesa.edu/music/festivals-camps/music-camp.html

The CMU Department of Music offers summer camps for elementary, middle, and high school youth.

Elementary School Music Camp: This week-long event is for students who have graduated 4th or 5th grade as of June 1, 2021. Space is limited to 80 students.

Middle School Music Camp: This week-long event is for middle-school music students who have had at least one year

of training in the band, orchestra, or choir, as well as guitar students. Due to capacity limits, registration is limited. To ensure your spot, please register early! Music Camp includes five days of excellent instruction from the music faculty at Colorado Mesa University and professional musicians from the Grand Junction area. Also included in the price is a Music Camp T-Shirt and music enrichment courses. Students perform in the Music Camp band, choir, orchestra, or guitar ensemble. Open to students completing 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. This year the camp will be a day camp only; no overnight accommodations are offered.

Jazztopia Jazz Workshop: The CMU Jazz Workshop offers the opportunity for high-school musicians to explore and develop their jazz skills in a combo set. Activities will focus on improvisation, jazz history, instrument technique, and combo performance. Students who are currently in high school or about to enter high school are eligible to attend. No prior combo or improvisation experience is necessary. Advanced students completing 7th grade will be considered with the director's recommendation.

Colorado Mesa University Sports Summer Camps

Bryan Rooks, Athletic Director

Rob Courtney, Assistant Athletic Director

1100 North Avenue

Grand Junction, CO 81501-3122

Phone: 970-248-1252 or 970-248-2107

Email: brooks@coloradomesa.edu OR rcourtney@coloradomesa.edu

Web: https://cmumavericks.com/sports/2008/11/14/GEN_1114081724.aspx

More than 15 athletic camps, including overnight camps, are offered on CMU's main campus. Practice baseball, basketball, cheerleading, soccer, softball, and much more.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Colorado Canyons Association (CCA)

Chris Herrman, Executive Director

543 Main Street #4

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-263-7902

Email: info@canyonsassociation.org

Web: www.coloradocanyonsassociation.org/

Every year, CCA staff, partners, and volunteers work with k-12 schools in Mesa, Delta and Montrose counties to introduce thousands of students to their public lands through environmental education field trips that are specifically aligned with state curriculum standards.

Nature Knowledge Days has been one of our keystone education events for over 10 years. Every Spring and Fall, hundreds of 3rd grade students convene at the Devil's Canyon Trailhead in McInnis Canyons NCA and the Escalante Boat Ramp in Dominguez-Escalante NCA for a day full of learning in their wild backyard. This interactive and engaging event provides students the opportunity to experience their public lands in a unique and authentic way. Students travel from station to station, learning about the diverse resources of the NCAs including ecology, archaeology, ranching, and more! What is most powerful about this standards-based event is that kids are able to bring the abstract ideas they learn in the classroom to life in the outdoors. Your donations to CCA help pay for the transportation to this event, so all students have free access to this field trip.

Cottonwood Days: Every October, 6th grade students from Delta, Olathe, and Montrose county schools join the BLM, CCA, and other volunteers in Gunnison Gorge NCA to learn about the importance of the Gunnison River during Cottonwood

Days. Kids rotate through a series of stations focused on the ecology of the river as well as human relationships to our waterways. Tying flies, examining native and non-native fish, and searching for aquatic bugs make Cottonwood Days fun, hands-on, and memorable! This place-based learning experience gives 6th graders the opportunity to explore their abundant backyard and see how their life is connected to our western waterways.

Escalante Field Experience: Similar to Cottonwood Days and Nature Knowledge Days, Escalante Field Experience engages students in place-based learning through a series of stations. Local 7th grade students spend a full day learning about the natural and cultural history of Escalante Canyon and its surroundings. Students learn about the geologic history of the area, dating back 152 million years (and more) while hiking to dinosaur tracks and ancient river gravels from the ice age. Students visit various remains and relics from the Canyon's history, dating from the first American settlers in the 1800s all the way up to viewing modern-day working ranches. Students also learn about how modern settlement has impacted both the Native American population in the region and wildlife, and how people today are working to ensure the Canyon has a vibrant future ahead of it that all the students can participate in.

Throughout the year, CCA partners with schools, clubs, and other organizations to spread our land education efforts to a wider audience. CCA often works with at-risk youth, partnering with organizations including Hilltop Residential Youth Services, Mesa County Partners, and Riverside Educational Center to provide meaningful education experiences allowing them to look at the land with a powerful new perspective. Regardless of the event, CCA ensures that all of our education events are inclusive, educational, and fun for all!

Youth River Programs: Since its inception in 2017, CCA's river program has been offering unique, place-based education to kids from all over the western slope. Students get to leave their desk behind for a day (or several) and float through red-rock canyons, turning the river and its surroundings into their classroom. Keeping a holistic experience in mind, our river guides not only focus on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) education and state standards-based curriculum, but expand teachable moments to develop important life skills such as team building, self-confidence, and leadership abilities. Along with belly laughs, splash battles, and the occasional slip-n-slide, it's safe to say the students have a lot of fun, too!

The Catalpa Camp: Catalpa, a private inholding located within the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (NCA) along the Ruby-Horsethief section of the river, has been generously leased to CCA for the purpose of expanding outdoor education opportunities in our community. After years of hard work and generous donations from the community, Catalpa has become a fully functioning outdoor education camp for our river program. The programs are designed to bring largely under-served high school youth to the camp for leadership development and STEAM-based outdoor education programs both during the school year and the summer break. Following a long day of paddling, students unload at the Catalpa Camp and setup home base for the evening. The space then transforms into an outdoor classroom, gourmet kitchen, shelter from the rain, and more.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes Club Sports

Renae Love

402 Grand Ave STE #4

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-985-4355

Email: rlove@fca.org

Web: www.westerncoloradofca.org/

Western Colorado FCA Football - We are the Western Colorado Chiefs, an 11u FCA Youth Football Team from Grand Junction, Colorado. We are excited to offer a Faith-based football program in the Grand Valley. We are connected to JCC (Junction Community Church) connecting our football program with youth ministry to promote the foundation of faith, family values, and fun to our youth. Our Mission Statement is "Making Champions on and off the field" by emphasizing our faith and foundation on Jesus Christ. We currently promote our 5 Principles of Success: #1: Leadership, #2: Focus, #3: Disciple, #4: Work ethic, #5: Ability

We are excited to be a part of FCA and believe God has an incredible vision and purpose in store for FCA Football! We have a unique opportunity to change the landscape of youth football and other sports in America by getting our churches directly

involved and growing our impact in youth ministry programs.

Western Colorado FCA Soccer will continue to develop and maintain a community of Coaches, Athletes, Parents, and Families that choose to respect one another, seek competitive opportunities while maintaining a healthy balance of family life, church and sport. We serve as a non-profit organization that works to create affordable sports opportunities within the community to increase your skill in sport, personal character, and relationship with God!

LTI – Linsacum Training Institute

Name: Dan Linsacum

Address: 566 West Crete Circle, Unit 1

Grand Junction, CO 81505

Phone: 970.778.6605

Cell: 303.720.5662

Web: <https://www.facebook.com/LinsacumTrainingInstitute/>

Mesa County Valley School District 51 Athletics

Paul Cane, Director of Athletics

330 24th Court

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-254-5154

Email: Paul.Cain@d51schools.org

Web: https://d51schools.org/about_us/departments__directories/athletics

District 51 Athletics' mission is: developing champions for life! Athletics are an important part of our education program. Participation in a sound athletic program contributes to good sportsmanship, character, physical development, coordination, and a wholesome interest in team and lifetime sports. Interscholastic sports competition exemplifies the value of the democratic process and of fair play. Through participation, the student/athlete learns how to work with others for the achievement of group goals. Participation in interscholastic sports is a living laboratory of equal opportunity in action where all students are treated without favor or prejudice. The program of interscholastic sports will be an integral part of the total educational experience. It will, above all else, foster the growth and well-being of the individual student

Grand Junction Parks and Recreation

Ken Sherbenou, Director of GJ Parks and Rec

1340 Gunnison Avenue

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-254-3866

Email: kensh@gjcity.org

Web: www.gjcity.org

Provides and maintains city parks, facilities, public swimming pools, municipal golf courses, and cemeteries; offers a wide variety of recreational programs; including swimming lessons, youth athletics, summer camps, tennis lessons, adult leagues, and more.

City of Fruita Parks and Recreation

Ture Nycum, Director of Parks and Recreation

325 E. Aspen Ave.

Fruita, CO 81521

Phone: 970-858-0360 x6400

Email: tnycum@fruta.org

Web: <https://www.fruita.org/parksrec>

The City of Fruita Parks and Recreation Department continually strives to exceed expectations and engage our community in physical, social, and mental activities by providing a variety of facilities, programs, and community events. As a department, we operate the Fruita Community Center – a 55,000 sq. ft. facility complete with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, gymnasium, fitness area, senior center, meeting rooms, and the Fruita Branch of Mesa County Public Library. We also coordinate a multitude of youth to senior programs to actively engage our participants and host and permit over 40 community events and festivals, including Mike the Headless Chicken Festival, Thursday Night Concerts, Sweetheart Run and Health Expo, and many more. City of Fruita Parks and Rec also maintains 11 neighborhood and community parks, 273 acres of open space, and approximately 10 miles of hard surface trails.

Depending on the season, we offer the following sports in league format: Soccer, Flag Football, Volleyball, and Basketball. Also depending on the season, we offer the following sports in an instructional and/or camp format: Soccer, Basketball, Flag Football, Tennis, Track and Field, Ice Skating, Stand Up Paddleboarding, and Golf.

Youth Programs and Activities include youth dance classes, youth art, backcountry survival skills for teens, DinoMites Days Off and Summer Camps, Easter Egg Scramble, Fishing is Fun Day, Truck N Treat, Cookies N Claus, Fruita Youth Action Council.

Town of Palisade Parks and Recreation

Troy Ward, Parks, Recreation and Events Director

120 W 8th Street

Palisade, CO 81526

Phone: 970-464-5602 or 970-986-7594

Email: tward@townofpalisade.org

Web: <https://townofpalisade.org/departments/parks-and-recreation>

The Town of Palisade Parks and Recreation Department manages the Palisade Pool and offers events at Palisade Veterans Memorial Community Center including Yoga, Pickleball, POP Pilates, Zumba, Unwind, and Meals on Wheels (formerly Grey Gourmet).

N Zone Sports - Grand Junction

Megan Doll

2695 Patterson Road, Suite #2-282

Grand Junction, CO 81506

Phone: 970-549-1714

Email: gjplay@nzonesports.com

Web: www.nzonesports.com/gj

N Zone Sports Grand Junction is committed to providing children in the community with the ultimate youth sports experience. We've combined the best elements and values that sports offer while providing a safe environment for kids to play the sport they love. We strive to make each season memorable for our players and parents within our program. Our programs are available for boys and girls! Flag football: Ages 3-18 Cheerleading: Ages 5-18

Special Olympics Colorado

Michelle Pewters, Western Regional Manager

Seth Krebill, Western Region Unified Champion Schools Coordinator

1100 N. Ave, Albers Hall #012

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 720.359.3124

Email: mpewters@specialolympicsco.org, skrebill@SpecialOlympicsCO.org

Web: www.specialolympicsco.org

Special Olympics is for children and adults with intellectual disabilities from across Colorado. We have teams for all skill levels and experience from beginners to highly skilled athletes. At SOCO everyone can play! Winter sports: basketball, speed skating, figure skating, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, snowboarding, alpine skiing; Summer sports: tennis, softball, golf, cycling, bocce; Spring sports: track and field, soccer, powerlifting, gymnastics, aquatics; Fall sports: volleyball, flag football, bowling. Youth programs include Young Athletes, Unified Juniors and Red Shirt Rockies.

Young Athletes is a sport and play program for children with and without intellectual disabilities (ID), ages 2-7 years old. Young athletes gain exposure to a wide variety of sports, as well as improved social skills, hand-eye coordination, greater sense of confidence and more through summer camps and school based programs.

Unified Juniors is an extension of Young Athletes that focuses on introducing children of all abilities to the world of team sports in a gradual, fun and non-intimidating environment. This program is for children ages 4-12, with and without disabilities designed to promote inclusion while introducing them to the basic concepts and rules of a variety of team sports offered by Special Olympics Colorado. This program provides a transitional introduction for children with an intellectual disability who are ready to move beyond the gross motor skill development portion provided with Young Athletes but are not yet ready to officially compete. These Unified Juniors are ready to start practicing on a routine basis and develop the social skills needed to be part of a team while still being able to practice and learn the skills at their own pace. Soccer, flag football, t-ball, softball, and basketball are offered.

Red Shirt Rockies is an elementary after school program that promotes sports-based skill-building and unified play from an early age.

BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

Palisade Area Little League

Dan Morby, President

PO Box 338

Palisade, Colorado 81526

Phone: 970-404-5756

Email: palisadearealittleleague@gmail.com

Web: <https://www.palisadearealittleleague.com/>

Founded in 1989, Palisade Area Little League (PALL) located in Palisade, Colorado. Promoting local youth baseball and softball. PALL helps prepare children for their future by teaching good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect for authority.

Fruita Little League

Amanda Murray

PO Box 233

Fruita, Colorado 81521

Phone: 970-640-6948

Email: fruitalittleleague@gmail.com

Web: <https://www.fruitalittleleague.com/>

Fruita Little League offers baseball, softball, and t-ball teams for ages 4-16. This league is for Fruita-area residents.

Monument Little League

John Duffy, President
568 25.5 Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501
Phone: 970-256-9012
Email: mllgrandjunction@gmail.com or jduffy@brayandco.com
Web: www.monumentlittleleague.org

Want your kids to learn and love America's favorite sport? Monument Little League offers baseball, softball, and t-ball teams for children ages 4 to 16. Little league enrollment is based upon your physical address.

Orchard Mesa Little League

Kayleen Balsiger
PO Box 40906
Grand Junction, Colorado 81504
Phone: 440-537-2836
Email: orchardmesall@hotmail.com
Web: www.orchardmesalittleleague.com

Orchard Mesa Little League offers baseball, softball, and t-ball teams for children ages 4 to 16. Little league enrollment is based upon your physical address.

Grand Mesa Little League

Chris Riley, President
518 28-3/4 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81501
P.O. Box 1744
Grand Junction, CO 81502
Phone: 970-242-6951, 970-985-2770
Web: www.grandmesalittleleague.org

Grand Mesa Little League strives to instill in the children of this community the ideas of good sportsmanship, honesty, and a sense of teamwork, by advocating the virtues of character, courage, loyalty so that they may become strong, healthy, well-adjusted members of the community.

Additional Softball Clubs

Mavs, Lady Dynamite, Elite, Aftershock...

Additional Baseball Clubs

Mavs, Bighorns, Trojans, Raptors, Grizz...

SOCCER

See Fellowship of Christian Athletes Club Sports above

Grand Junction Soccer Club - Fire FC

Shaun Howe

552 25 Rd, #B

Grand Junction, CO 81505

Phone: 970-242-4550

Email: shaun@gjsoccer.org

Web: www.gjsoccer.org

Fire FC is a parent-driven organization dedicated to providing year-round soccer opportunities that are fun, positive, safe, and challenging for all individuals. The Grand Junction Soccer Club has leagues for children ages 4-19.

Fire FC will achieve its mission by becoming a club that puts player development before wins and losses. We will provide outstanding soccer opportunities that help all kids to reach their soccer goals and that help to grow the sport and the soccer culture in our community. Fire FC will also establish itself as a professional organization that is committed to making a positive difference in the lives of our members by offering opportunities for our players to play in recreational leagues, competitive leagues, travel abroad, give back to the community (soccer and city), and to grow within the sport by experiencing and applying life lessons that will help them in all facets of their life.

LACROSSE

Grand Valley Lacrosse Club

Felicia Bishop

P.O. Box 2977

Grand Junction, CO 81502

Phone: 970-260-8258

Email: f.bishop404@gmail.com

Web: www.grandvalleylax.com

Grand Valley Lacrosse is Western Colorado's Premier Youth Lacrosse Organization. We are a community sponsored non-profit 501(c)(3) organization located in Grand Junction, Colorado that provides opportunities for youth in Western Colorado to learn and play lacrosse in a safe, fun, and competitive environment while fostering student-athlete's sportsmanship, character, and love of the game.

We organize Boys & Girls competitive teams for our primary lacrosse season, spring, as well as travel teams, camps, clinics, and indoor box lacrosse in the fall, winter, and summer.

WRESTLING

Little Mavs Wrestling Club

Mike Mendoza, CMU Wrestling

1100 North Ave

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 661-331-2804

Email: mmendoza@coloradomesa.edu

Web: https://www.facebook.com/LilMavsWrestling/?ref=py_c

Little Warriors Wrestling Club

Clint Trujillo

550 Warrior Way
Grand Junction, CO 81504
Phone: 970-260-6930
Email: Clinton.Trujillo@d51schools.org
Web: <https://www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=littlewarriors>

Founded in 1966, by National Wrestling Hall of Fame member Ted Ducray, the Little Warriors Wrestling Program provides both male and female youth of all skill levels, ages 5-14, the opportunity to grow as young athletes and citizens of our community.

Current coaches Shane Dixon, T.J. McNeeley, Alex Bautista, Caleb Brown, Joshua Trujillo, Aaron Lujan, Bradley Martinez, and Clint Trujillo, as well as several parent and community volunteer coaches, bring over 100 years of combined wrestling experience to the program.

As participants in our program, our beginning Little Warriors will explore and learn the fundamentals of wrestling, while intermediate and advanced Little Warriors will be given the opportunity to expand and hone their growing skill set.

All participants will learn the importance of Respect, positive Attitude, and Work ethic in a supportive team environment.

Additional Wrestling Clubs

Tiger Paws, Mat Cats, Outlaws, Purebread along with a girls wrestling club coached by Chad Dare...

FOOTBALL

Grand Valley Youth Football

Will Jones, Director
PO Box 4734
Grand Junction, CO 81502
Phone: 970-433-1311
Email: gvyf2019@gmail.com
Web: www.gvyfootball.com

Grand Valley Youth Football (GVYF) is Western Colorado's largest non-profit youth football league. GVYF is committed to ensuring a safe and positive playing environment for all athletes. It is the goal of GVYF to instill life-long values of teamwork, dedication, and superior work ethic in the classroom and on the playing field. GVYF offers a competitive fall season for 4th-8th graders and a non-competitive spring tackle season for ages 7-10 and a flag spring season for ages 4-6.

MOTORSPORTS

Grand Valley BMX

Nick Adams
2785 U.S. Highway 50
Grand Junction CO 81503
Phone: 970-812-3394
Email: info@grandvalleybmx.com
Web: <https://www.usabmx.com/tracks/1357>

Grand Valley BMX is committed to providing a safe, quality, and fun environment for racers and spectators. This organization offers intro classes, support, and holds races every Sunday. They accommodate people ages 2 to 92. Even if you don't have experience, they can help!

CYCLING

Grand Valley Youth Cycling

Melissa Pipkin

2542 Brenna Way
Grand Junction, CO 81505
Phone: 970-283-7127
Email: gyouthcycling@gmail.com
Web: <https://www.grandvalleymtb.org/>

Grand Valley Youth Cycling is a nonprofit 501c3 middle and high school cycling team based in the Grand Valley area of Colorado, affiliated with the Colorado High School Cycling League, and NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association). Though we primarily draw from Grand Junction, Fruita, Palisade, and their respective feeder schools, we are comprised of students from all over the Grand Valley area. Our mission is to promote the sport and our love of mountain biking, and the benefits of mountain biking, as a healthy, low impact, outdoor recreational lifestyle.

Gear Up! Mountain Biking & Science

Tina Ooley
1400 North 7th Street
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 928-533-1763
Email: tooley@eurekasciencemuseum.org
Web: <https://eurekasciencemuseum.org/gearup/>

Gear Up! was created in 2021 with the mission of connecting more learners to mountain bike and science experiences. We believe in the bicycle as a tool for self-discovery, education, exploration, and community building. Through mentorship, stewardship, and skill-building, our vision is to create curious learners who make connections between biking, science, and life.

Whether your learner has been riding for years or is brand new to the sport, we have a place for them! We all start somewhere and Gear Up! is committed to creating safe spaces for youth to explore new adventures by bike. We love guiding kids through the experiences that mountain biking offers and helping them to make connections that build confidence, curiosity, develop grit and teach them about their impact on our natural world.

Gear Up! is designed to remove barriers such as equipment, transportation, and program fees by meeting each family where they are, providing a pathway of access to the outdoors and the incredible lessons we can learn both in and from our natural world. Through our science-infused curriculum, our participants will gain self-confidence on and off the bike, as well as learn about the impacts that we have on our environment through restoration and conservation projects.

Boneshakers Adventures

Dawn Cooper, Owner
Grand Junction, Fruita, Loma, Palisade, Rabbit Valley
Phone: 970-261-0572
Email: dawn@boneshakeradventures.com
Web: <http://boneshakeradventures.com/about-us>

Our growth-focused youth mountain bike program encourages skill building in a fun, non-competitive environment. Everything we do is aligned with our three pillars: confidence, connection, community. This program helps youth to develop confidence by acquiring tools to overcome obstacles on and off the bike, while surrounded by a supportive community of peers and mentors. Spending time in nature allows children to create meaningful connections with one another and their surroundings.

Spring Youth programs are offered for beginner, intermediate and advanced for children aged kindergarten through 8th grade.

Boneshakers Adventures offers a Grand Valley, Grand Adventure summer camp for children to explore Western Colorado on their bikes, and The Art of Biking Camp where children will mountain bike on different trails throughout the Grand Valley each morning and spend the afternoon creating bike-related art projects! Our Koko Loco camp is for students 5-8th grades. Students will spend 3 days, 2 nights rafting the Ruby-Horsethief section of the Colorado River. They will be met at the take-out with their mountain bikes, and spend the next 3 days and two nights, riding and camping along the Kokopelli Trail.

Little Bellas

Shannon Casson, Program Lead

Wingate Elementary School

351 S Camp Rd

Grand Junction, CO 81507

Phone: 970-250-1216

Email: shannon@littlebellas.com

Web: <https://littlebellas.com/camp/grand-junction-co-program/>

Little Bellas is a mountain bike organization, whose goal is to help young women reach their fullest potential. We aim to create a community to empower women through cycling, accent the importance of goals and a healthy lifestyle and emphasize a positive female bond. While this program is centered around creating a female camaraderie on bikes, it is most importantly about having fun in a constructive environment.

Our goal is to create an experience where girls are having fun on their bikes. Little Bellas is a non-competitive program that offers week-long half and full-day camps, weekly program sessions, and event camps for girls ages 7 to 18 years old. Our mentoring model allows girls to have fun on trails and play games in an uninhibited environment that encourages them to be themselves. We strive to help girls find a sense of empowerment and self-confidence through interacting with positive mentors, conquering obstacles, and mastering a skill.

The Cycle Effect

Libba Moore, Mesa County Program Manager

116 East 3rd Street

Eagle, CO 81631

Phone: 970-306-7572

Email: lmoore@thecycleeffect.org

Web: www.thecycleeffect.org

The Cycle Effect focuses on three primary goal areas: physical wellness; community impact and mentorship; and building brighter futures. By providing an opportunity for girls to be engaged in regular, healthy programs that help build their self-esteem and promote overall wellness, girls are more likely to be healthier, stay engaged in school, and set goals that will support their future.

VOLLEYBALL

Mesa Juniors Volleyball CO

2695 Patterson Road Suite 2, #160

Grand Junction, CO 81506

Phone: not available

Email: mesajuniors@gmail.com

Web: www.mesajuniors.com

MJVC is a USAV sanctioned volleyball club in Grand Junction. We believe in the power of competition and are committed to enhancing the volleyball experience of western Colorado athletes. MJVC is unique in that it is a cooperative effort of coaches from the area. Together, we are committed to raising the level of volleyball in western Colorado.

Mesa Juniors Volleyball Company, like most clubs, is comprised of several teams classified according to the maximum age

of the players. MJVC has teams ranging from 12's (usually sixth graders) up to 18's (usually high school seniors). Our Club is divided into two Divisions. The 12's, 13's, and 14's teams comprise our Middle School Division, and the 15s, 16's, 17's and 18's make up the High School Division.

Mini Volleyball is an innovative program designed to get young girls started in volleyball. Basically, it is an ongoing skills clinic that meets once a week for six weeks. The goal is to introduce the game in a fun and age-appropriate way. We want to get them hooked on the game and get them started with good technique. This program has proven to be very successful.



United Volleyball Club of the Rockies

AJ Egli, Club Director
635 Tamarron Drive
Grand Junction, CO 81506
Phone: 970-210-7112
Email: aj@unitedvbc.com
Web: <https://www.unitedvbc.com/>

United Volleyball Club of the Rockies' mission is to teach young ladies to live life competitively. We offer club volleyball for girls 10-to-18 years old and we have passionate, experienced, and trained coaches for a quality club experience. Our juniors program is designed for girls ages 11-18. We have TWO DIFFERENT DIVISIONS for the girls: High School Age girls (15-18 year olds) and Middle School Age girls (11-14 year olds). All players selected to one of the club's juniors teams must be prepared for evening and weekend practices, as well as several weekend tournaments.

Additional Volleyball Clubs

WestCo, Blue Volleyball Club

GYMNASTICS

Legacy Academy Gymnastics

Brian Bensley
2285 River Road
Grand Junction, CO 81505
Phone: 970-245-3610
Email: office@legacygymnasticsninja.com
Web: <https://www.legacygymnasticsninja.com/>

At Legacy Gymnastics & Ninja Academy (formerly Grand Junction Gymnastics at Kidzplex) we nurture the whole child. Our program's mission is to help make kids fit for the future. Gymnastics, dance, and climbing develop physical qualities such as flexibility, strength, poise, agility, and coordination. These sports also nurture confidence, self-discipline, goal setting, and dedication. We believe these skills will help prepare a child for the future. Our qualified, caring instructors are all certified in our specialized training program.

Legacy offers numerous classes in recreational gymnastics for beginners through advanced, ages 5 and older, as well as competitive teams. We also offer parent tot classes for children 18 months to 5 years of age.

USA Ninja Challenge is a full fitness program for youth based on the show American Ninja Warrior.

USA Ninja Challenge offers an obstacle course program that incorporates basic skill sets from gymnastics, climbing, cross training and track and field for boys and girls ages 5 to 17. The sport of Ninja is quickly becoming the most fun and creative way to meet the physical needs of today's youth!

Colorado West Gymnastics

Terri Rahm
573 West Crete Cir. #202
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-241-2265
Web: <https://coloradowestgymnastics.com/>

Colorado West Gymnastics provides excellent gymnastic instruction for your child in Grand Junction, CO. Our core values drive everything about our work, from class curriculum development to coaching. We value small classes, in which one instructor works with up to six children, skill development, so that instructors teach proper progression of skills, and safe environments where each student reaches their full potential at their own pace.

Colorado West Gymnastics offers classes for Mommy and Me for ages 2-3 years old, Tots for ages 3-5 years old, beginner classes for ages 5 and up, intermediate classes for ages 7 and up, as well as pre teams and competitive team programs, open gym and summer camps.

SWIMMING

Bookcliff Country Club Swim Program

Lucas Turner
2730 G Road
Grand Junction, CO 81506
Phone: 970-243-3323 ext 160
Email: recreation@bookcliffcc.com
Web: <https://www.bookcliffcc.com/Amenities/Swim>

Private and group swim lessons are available to member children and grandchildren & sponsored non-member guests during the pool season.

Maverick Aquatics Swim

Contact Ed Stehlin
Colorado Mesa University
1100 North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-248-1592
Cell: 970-620-1438
Email: estehlin@coloradomesa.edu
Web: https://www.teamunify.com/TabGeneric.jsp?_tabid_=101504&team=cogjd

The Maverick Aquatics Swim Club has been the premier USA Swim club in Grand Junction, Colorado since 2011. Made up of swimmers, coaches and volunteers, the Mavericks provide competitive swimming opportunities in the community for all those interested in learning how to compete or improve competitive skills. The Mavericks strive to serve the sport. Our mission and vision reflect USA Swimming's core objectives.

The Maverick Aquatics Swim Club provides the best competitive swimming opportunities to USA Swim members in the community. The team provides superior swim lessons, coaching and training opportunities for the community. The Mavericks value current and past members as well as staff, volunteers and community supporters. The Maverick's vision is to create a foundation of excellence for Maverick Aquatics Swim Club members in competition and in life. Maverick Aquatics offers swimming for all ability levels.

TENNIS

Junction Indoor Tennis Center

Caleb Marquard
535 25 1/2 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81505
Phone: 970-901-8441
Email: junctionindoortennis@gmail.com
Web: <http://www.jitctennis.com/>

Junction Indoor Tennis Center (JITC) is a semi-private, member-owned tennis club, located in beautiful Western Colorado. We have four heated indoor courts and four outdoor courts. We also have a clubhouse with a lounge area and locker rooms. JITC has three great tennis professionals that teach private lessons, run team practices, and group drills. We are also open to the general public for court rental, special events, lessons, and leagues. Don't let the weather keep you from playing tennis; our indoor courts are open year-round!

JITC offers Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced Summer Programs. These Programs are not only full of fun, but your child will learn how to play the sport of tennis with correct technique. With so many programs to offer, please contact Caleb to discuss your student(s) interest.

Mesa County Tennis Program

Ron Elliott

555 North Avenue #7

Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-623-1750

Email: mesacountytennis@gmail.com

Web: www.mesacountytennis.com

Mesa County Tennis Program offers progressive and engaging tennis programs for all ages and levels of play. Our positive, experienced and enthusiastic staff help children grow as athletes, players, and more importantly as healthy individuals. We offer a clear "Developmental Pathway" designed to help each child progress from one level to the next. With core fundamentals at the forefront of our program, our progressive based approach is simple, dynamic, and FUN! In addition to our positive on-court teaching, the Mesa County Tennis Staff recognizes the importance of sports and specifically tennis, to teach valuable life skills. Our instructional staff prides itself on teaching and mentoring children on the importance of Sportsmanship, Teamwork, Positive Attitude, and Respect. All of our programs instill the Mesa County Tennis philosophy. We are proud members of the Colorado Youth Tennis Association (CYTA) and Net Generation.

Mesa County groups that welcome youth, but not specifically directed towards them

Grand Valley Audubon Society

610 Dike Road,

Grand Junction, 81507

Web: <https://www.audubongv.org/>

High Desert Opera

3456 C 3/4 Rd,

Palisade, CO 81526

Phone: 970-523-9605

Email: highdesertopera@yahoo.com

Web: <https://www.highdesertopera.org/index.html>

Thunder Mountain Camera Club

Dawn Morrow, President

Western Colorado Community College

2520 Blichmann Avenue, Building B, Room 171

Grand Junction, CO 81505

Email: dawn@2morrowsmuse.com

Web: <http://thundermountaincameraclub.org/about/>

Chess Club, Grand Junction

Rick Henry

Phone: 970-243-1073

Email: highlander1149@hotmail.com

Youth Directory Guide

Current programs listed in the Mesa County Youth Activity Directory are geared toward youth ages 11- to 18-years-old. An opportunity exists to extend this document to younger ages in order to create a comprehensive Children and Youth Directory in Mesa County. As we began creating this document, we learned about infant survival swim classes and programs for younger children within our public libraries providing the basis for this recommendation.

Club Sports Guide/Database

Clubs Sports in Mesa County are numerous and hard to navigate without social capital—the benefit of relying on friends and good information from friends—to find out when club sports applications are open and how to contact the right/parent coach to apply. A comprehensive directory database created, housed and managed at the Greater Grand Junction Area Sports Commission with web forms to submit updates on behalf of each club team would be a benefit to the whole community and break down access barriers for new families in the area or those with less social capital.

2Gen Community Advisory Board

Participants within any of these successful programs could be vetted and recommended to sit on a community advisory board for Mesa County Public Health. This advisory committee could be made up of both youth and adults, capitalizing the two gen model and the research that supports connection between both generations. The board could be engaged for informal conversations about community needs, trends, etc., and more formal engagement advising the department on its initiatives through monthly or quarterly board meetings.



Appendices

Baseline Data

A : Youth Artist Movement

[Youth Solutions Booklet](#)
[CIA Observation Instrument Rev_Final Page](#)
[CIA Post Assessment](#)
[CIA Pre Assessment](#)
[Draft Lead Muralist Job Description](#)
[Draft Program Director Job Description](#)
[Draft Teaching Artist Job Description](#)
[Intern Job Description](#)
[Outreach + Community Coordinator Job Description](#)
[Site + Intern Coordinator Job Description](#)
[Sample Contract Agreement](#)
[Rosa Mary Budget](#)
[YAM Unframed Mural Project Budget](#)

B : Children of the Streets

[Pre and Post Surveys](#)

C : Think Arts 360

[2020 Community Report for Think 360 Arts](#)
[Writing a CAP Grant Application](#)

D: FLTI

[Arapahoe County: Case for Investing in FLTI](#)
[FLTI Site Implementation Guide](#)
[FLTI Statewide Impact](#)
[FLTI Research on Social Engagement](#)
[FLTI Site Facilitator Selection](#)
[FLTI CSU: Agreement for Best Practices](#)
[FLTI 2Gen Model](#)

E: USA BMX

[Read to Ride Flyer](#)
[STEM Program Flyer](#)

F. Youth Garden Project

[YG Annual Report](#)
[2020-21 Approved Budget](#)
[Frittata Fun Workshop_Middle School Class](#)
[Harvest Pizzas in the Cobb Oven_Middle School Class](#)
[Mini Pies Workshop_Middle School Class](#)

G. UpRise

[2020-21 Grantee Agreement](#)
[The HUB](#)

H: After School Matters

Instructor Resources - Policy

- [Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [After School Matters Social Media Policy](#)
- [Instructor One Pager for Summer](#)
- [Instructor Program Enhancement Guide](#)
- [Interview_Enrollment Process v2](#)
- [Program Recordings for Instructors with Steps](#)
- [Resetting Offers and Accidental Deadlines](#)
- [Summer 2021 Model Breakdown - Teen and Instructor Hours](#)
- [Summer 2021 Teen Stipend Basics](#)
- [Teen Dashboard Overview - Fall 2020](#)
- [Teen Quick Tips Spring 2021](#)
- [WiselyActivationFlyer](#)

Instructor Resources - Tools

- [After School Matters Basic Resources & Wellbeing Guide](#)
- [After School Matters Spring 2021 Teen Manual](#)
- [Agenda Template for Program Providers](#)

- [All Are Welcome signs](#)
- [ASM - Recruitment Guide 2019](#)
- [ASM Support Services Resource Directory](#)
- [Equity and Intersectionality Resources](#)
- [FY19 Annual Report - ASM](#)
- [Great 1st Day Checklist](#)
- [Instructor Approved Activity Book](#)
- [Instructor Self Care Resources](#)
- [New Instructor Institute - Main Meeting 6.10.20.mp4](#)
- [Program Name - Interview Form](#)
- [Resources for Diverse Learners](#)
- [Skill Building Blocks](#)
- [Summer Program Planning Tool](#)
- [Tips for Trans Allies](#)

Instructor Self Care Tips

- [Energy Balls Bars](#)
- [How Food Affects Your Moods](#)
- [Instructor Self Care Tips](#)
- [Self-Care with Katarina](#)
- [Stress Management Diet](#)

Remote Programming Resources

- [Audio Tips for Google Meets](#)
- [Breakout Group Instructions](#)
- [Remote Engagement 202 - Additional Resources](#)
- [Remote Engagement Readings](#)
- [Remote Engagement Principles](#)
- [Remote Engagement Resources 101- The Basics](#)
- [Remote Learning Activity Book](#)

Tech Tips and Help Videos

- [Breakout Rooms in Google Meeting](#)
- [Google Chat Intro](#)
- [How to Copy and Archive your ASM Google Classroom](#)
- [How to use Google Forms for Interviews](#)
- [Instructor Support Presentation](#)
- [Inviting a Guest to your classroom](#)

Past Session Information

FALL 2020

- [9.21.20 Identity, Power, and Oppression Training](#)
- [Accessing the PACR - Fall 2020](#)
- [Fall 2020 - Teen Application Reference Guide- Read Only](#)
- [Fall 2020 TEEN STIPEND BASICS rev](#)
- [Fall PD Calendar](#)
- [Fall PD Calendar Clickable](#)
- [Fall Professional Development Menu](#)
- [Teen Quick Tips Fall 2020](#)
- [Worksheet - Tiers of Oppression-2](#)

SPRING 2021

- [Office Hours Instruction - Spring 21](#)
- [PD Menu Spring 2021](#)
- [PD Menu Spring 2021 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Spring 2021 TEEN STIPEND BASICS](#)
- [Spring PD Calendar](#)

SUMMER 2020

- [1 - Remote Learning Model and Schedule](#)

- [Acceptable Use Policy for Technology](#)
- [July and August Professional Development Calendar](#)
- [Program Recordings for Instructors with Steps](#)
- [Recruitment Best Practices](#)
- [Summer 2020 Professional Development Menu](#)
- [SUMMER 2020 TEEN STIPEND BASICS](#)
- [Teen Quick Tips Summer 2020](#)
- [Wisely Activation Flyer](#)

SUMMER 2021

- [Summer 2021 PD Menu](#)
- [Summer PD Calendar](#)
- [Summer Tech Help Office Hours](#)

CHA Learn and Earn Programs

- PLANNING TOOLS
 - [HM-A](#)
 - [AT-A](#)
 - [BE-C](#)
 - [Comm-A](#)
 - [CH-A](#)
 - [CD-A](#)
 - Copy of AT-A
 - [AT-C](#)
 - [CH-B](#)
 - [BE-A](#)
 - [AT-B](#)
 - [MT-A](#)
 - [CD-B](#)
 - [BE-B](#)

- [BE-B](#)
- [ASM Remote Program Planner - CHA L & E Teacher](#)
- [L & E Pods](#)
- [L&E Overview \(3\)](#)
- [L&E FAQ's](#)
- [L&E Overview](#)
- [L&E PD Schedule - Draft](#)

Town Halls

- [Instructor Town Hall 6.50.20](#)
- [CBO Town Hall 6.5.20](#)
- [5.27.21 CBO Town Hall Deck](#)

Workshop Recordings and PowerPoints

Workshop Powerpoints

- ["Sheltering" in an unsafe place](#)
- [\[Handout\] Community Care in Crisis](#)
- [5.27.21 _ CBO Town Hall Deck](#)
- [5.27.21 Instructor Town Hall Deck](#)
- [9.21.20 Identity, Power, and Oppression Training](#)
- [AFM Pop Ed Workshop 2.18.21](#)
- [ASM LC Workshop Slides](#)
- [ASM Spring 2021 Between the World and Me - Designing School for Black Boy Success](#)
- [ASM Summer 2021 Cultural Identity and Affirmation](#)
- [ASM Summer 2021 Intro to Race and Racial Equity](#)
- [Building Positive Remote Communities](#)
- [Developing a Practice of Anti Racist Restorative Practice](#)
- [FINAL - Building Dynamic Remote Content](#)
- [Healing, Resistance and Restorative Practices](#)
- [Implementing Anti-Oppressive Practices](#)

- [New Instructor Institute SP 21](#)
- [Trauma and Mental Health Supports during COVID 19](#)

WORKSHOP RECORDINGS

SUMMER 2020 WORKSHOP RECORDING

- [Teen and Family Town Hall](#)
- [Diverse Learners - Teens with Disabilities 6.22.20](#)
- [Site Supervisor Remote Engagement Webinar](#)
- [Remote Engagement Webinar](#)

FALL 2020 WORKSHOP RECORDINGS

- [10.1.20 Sheltering in an Unsafe Place](#)
- [9.28.20 Building Positive Communities in Remote Learning](#)
- [9.28.20 Developing A Culture of Anti Racist Restorative Practice](#)
- [10.8.20 Community Care in Crisis](#)
- [6.19.20 New Instructor Institute](#)
- [10.30.20 Taking it Back - Implementing Anti Oppressive Practices](#)
- [9.24.20 Building Dynamic Remote Content](#)
- [9.21.20 Identity, Power, and Oppression Training](#)
- [8.21.20 CBO Town Hall](#)
- [8.21.20 Instructor Town Hall](#)
- [9.29.20 Working with Diverse Learners - Teens with Disabilities](#)



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