

YOUTH CONNECTION ACROSS THE OPPORTUNITY YOUTH FORUM IN 2021

The Opportunity Youth Forum (OYF) is a network of collaboratives in urban, rural, and tribal communities across the U. S. seeking to create reconnection pathways for better outcomes in education, employment, and well-being for opportunity youth. **Opportunity youth are young adults, 16-24 years of age, who are neither working nor engaged in education.**



About opportunity youth in OYF communities

912,332 opportunity youth lived in 39 OYF communities in 2021

Age

75.3% of opportunity youth were over 20 years old

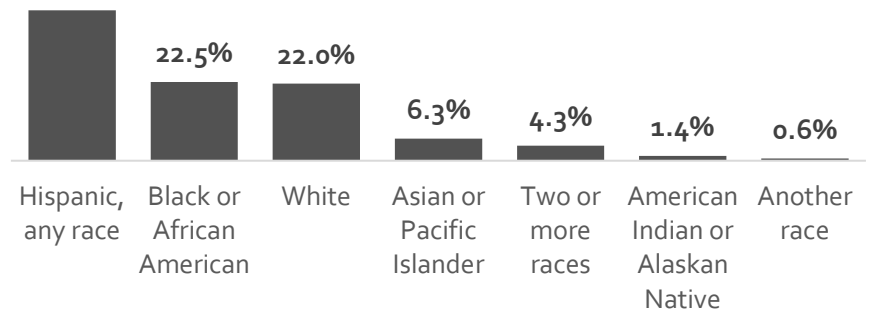


Gender*



Race & Ethnicity

42.9% of opportunity youth in OYF communities are Hispanic



Network-wide Disconnection

2021 disconnection rates across all OYF communities have generally not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Though the rate of young people experiencing disconnection dropped from 2017 to 2019, 2021 rates were mostly at or above 2017 rates.

	in 2017	in 2019	in 2021	Change from 2017 to 2021
Community Disconnection Rate Number of opportunity youth	11.9%	11.0%	13.1%	1.3 ↑
High School Disconnection Rate	12.8%	11.6%	12.6%	-0.2 ↓
Postsecondary Disconnection Rate	21.4%	20.6%	25.1%	3.7 ↑
Workforce Disconnection Rate	12.4%	11.7%	15.8%	3.4 ↑

Equity Outcomes

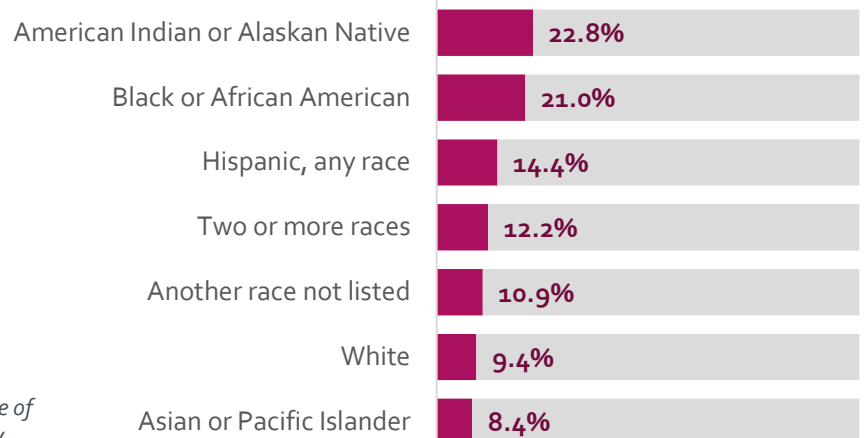
Equity outcomes look at the **proportion of disconnected youth within each racial or ethnic group**. Comparing these rates can reveal disproportionate levels of disconnection and help partners prioritize and customize their efforts.

Aligning with existing research about who educational and workforce systems are most likely to push out, in 2021, **American Indian and Black youth were most likely to experience disconnection**; more than one-fifth were disconnected.

*Equal Measure acknowledges that people identify across a range of gender categories. Unfortunately, the 2021 American Community Survey only tracks male and female.

Percent of youth of each race or ethnicity who are disconnected

22.8% of all American Indian or Alaskan Native young people in OYF communities are disconnected





2021 High School Disconnection Rate: 12.6%

204,000 young people without a high school diploma or GED and not working were disconnected from high school in OYF communities

- **13,558 fewer youth were disconnected** from high school in 2021 than in 2017.
- The high school disconnection rate for **American Indian and Alaskan Native youth decreased** by 4.6 percentage points between 2019 and 2021. However, they were still **most likely to be disconnected from high school** (21.7%).
- **Black and African American youth disconnection from high school increased** by 1.5 percentage points between 2017 and 2021 (to 17.9%). The disparity in disconnection between White and Black or African American youth increased.



2021 Postsecondary Disconnection Rate: 25.1%

607,248 young people without a postsecondary credential and not working were disconnected from postsecondary education in OYF communities

- **37,964 more youth were disconnected** from postsecondary education in 2021 than in 2017.
- While postsecondary disconnection for most gender and racial/ethnic groups increased between 2017 and 2021, **American Indian and Alaskan Native postsecondary disconnection decreased** by 6.9 percentage points. However, their postsecondary disconnection rate remained the highest of any racial or ethnic group (47.2%).
- Large racial and ethnic disparities in the postsecondary disconnection rate persist. **Hispanic, American Indian and Alaskan Native, and Black or African American youth were much more likely to be disconnected** from postsecondary education than White and Asian or Pacific Islander youth.



2021 Workforce Disconnection Rate: 15.8%

101,084 young people with a postsecondary credential were disconnected from the workforce in OYF communities

- **27,238 more youth were disconnected** from the workforce in 2021 than in 2017.
- Workforce disconnection rates **increased for all gender and racial/ethnic groups** from 2017 to 2021, with **Black or African American youth experiencing the greatest increase in disconnection** and the highest overall disconnection rate (24.4%).
- Workforce disconnection among **Hispanic youth** (of any race) increased the least from 2019 to 2021, only increasing by 0.4 percentage points (to 18.1%).

OYF Communities Reflected in this Analysis

Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Bozeman, Buffalo, Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, Chicago, Del Norte County, Denver, Detroit, El Paso, Flint, Greenville, Hartford, Hawai'i, Hopi, Houston, Jasper, Los Angeles, Minneapolis / St. Paul, Missoula, New Orleans, New York City, Newark, Oakland, Roaring Fork Valley, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pueblo of Jemez, Pueblo of Laguna, Pueblo of Taos, San Antonio, San Augustine, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Clara County, Seattle / South King County, Southern Maine, Tucson

About the analyses: Equal Measure combined the geographic areas of 39 collaboratives in the OYF network as of June 2023, then ran analyses using American Community Survey PUMS 1 year estimate data from 2017, 2019, and 2021. For more information about the Common Measures, see:

<https://www.aspencommunitysolutions.org/oym-common-measures/>

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