Texas Opportunity Youth Summit

OCT. 15–16, 2019 | HOUSTON, TEXAS
Setting the Stage

  - Available at dallasfed.org/cd
  - Data from the American Community Survey (U.S. Census)
    - Current as of 2017
    - Surveys youth living in “group quarters” (correctional facilities, college dormitories, residential health facilities, etc.)

- National picture
  - There are 4.5 million opportunity youth nationwide.
  - Disconnection rate: 11.5% of all 16–24-year-olds
Texas Picture

- Texas is home to 487,471 opportunity youth
  - Disconnection rate: 13.8% of 16–24-year-olds

- It’s not just an urban issue
  - Harris County: 13.4%
  - “Deep East Texas” region: 30%

- Overrepresentation of black and Hispanic youth
  - 52% of Texas OY are Hispanic
  - 16% black

- Overrepresentation of girls and women
  - 52% female
We looked further at four Texas counties...

**Bexar County**

33,613 opportunity youth
Disconnection rate: 13.2%
Opportunity Youth By Race/Ethnicity in Bexar County

Percent of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Opportunity youth</th>
<th>16–24-year-old population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Census Bureau.
Opportunity Youth By Gender in Bexar County

- Male: 48%
- Female: 52%

SOURCE: Census Bureau.
Dallas County

45,010 opportunity youth

Disconnection rate: 14.2%
Opportunity Youth By Race/Ethnicity in Dallas County

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
SOURCE: Census Bureau.
Opportunity Youth By Gender in Dallas County

SOURCE: Census Bureau.

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
Harris County

75,852 opportunity youth

Disconnection rate: 13.4%
Opportunity Youth By Race/Ethnicity in Harris County

Percent of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Opportunity youth</th>
<th>16–24-year-old population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
SOURCE: Census Bureau.
Opportunity Youth By Gender in Harris County

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
SOURCE: Census Bureau.

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
Hidalgo County

22,601 opportunity youth

Disconnection rate: 18.5%
Opportunity Youth By Race/Ethnicity in Hidalgo County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Opportunity youth</th>
<th>16–24-year-old population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
SOURCE: Census Bureau.
Opportunity Youth By Gender in Hidalgo County

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
SOURCE: Census Bureau.

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
Insights from Focus Groups

- We conducted three focus groups of former opportunity youth in Harris County and Hidalgo County.

- Disconnection is often the result of a difficult choice (e.g., family member falls ill and needs a caretaker).

- Participants thrive with the investment, financial or emotional, of a trusted adult.

- Programs are most helpful when they’re flexible (schedules, form of communication)
  - Continuation of services also important.
Insights from Focus Groups, Continued

Barriers to education:
- Curriculum/class offerings
- Financial aid forms
- Enrolling in courses
- Understanding requirements for graduation

Barriers to employment:
- Online applications
- Lack of a social network
Insights from Focus Groups, Continued

Speak your mind.
Don’t let anything hold you back.
Learn from my mistakes.
Be heard and not listened to.
Admit your mistakes.
You only live once; make good decisions.

Give it [the program] a chance, and be open-minded.
Don’t give up.
Work hard.
Keep going.
Read a lot.

You can’t control everything that happens to you, but you can control the amount of effort you put into things.

Don’t get greedy—stick it out [by completing high school rather than working].
Don’t leave a stone unturned.

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We interviewed community practitioners in the four counties (plus in Austin and Lufkin), and they shared about reconnection strategies they’ve found successful:

- Location and transportation
- Continuity of services
- Mental health services
- Cultural competency
- Cross-sector collaboration
- Elimination of small-dollar barriers
- Caring for the most vulnerable
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