

# RECONNECTING YOUTH

Helping young people get their education back on track.

JUNE 2019



## OVERVIEW

Today in King County there are 14,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 24 with no high school credentials and no viable job prospects. We know that these young people are overwhelmingly low-income; most are youth of color and many are English language learners. Over 1/3 of these young people are parents themselves and 29% of them are currently homeless or unstably housed.

It's clear that the long-term costs are too high to leave these young people disconnected from their futures. Civic Enterprises, a public policy and strategy firm, estimates that the future lifetime taxpayer burden is \$258,000 for each 16-year-old youth who is out of school and out of work.

We also know that these young people are resilient. While they're looking for a chance to get reengaged, they bring the energy and tenacity necessary to get back on track.

## HOW IT WORKS

The Reconnecting Youth program operates in 15 sites around King County, allowing young people easy access. Staff and partners provide some variation in style, fit and location, so that if one approach doesn't work, participants can try another. All partners offer support built on these three key elements:

1:1  
MENTORING

**1:1 mentoring.** A staff coach mentors each young person throughout the program until individual goals are met.

EDUCATIONAL  
COACHING

**Educational coaching.** Young people receive tutoring and support during the enrollment, instruction and testing process of earning a GED. Many also get connected to internships and part-time jobs.

CAREER  
NAVIGATION

**Career navigation.** Staff offer postsecondary navigation support so that young people can take future steps toward a career path.

## 2x Doubling Your Impact

Your Reconnecting Youth gift is leveraged so that more than 2x the number of students get on the path to success.

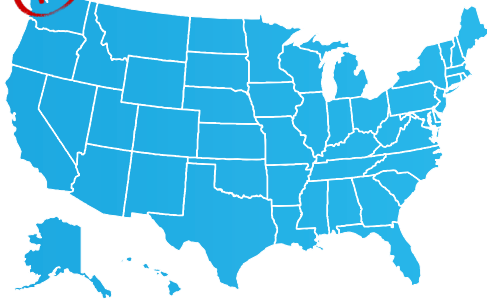
\$4,500  
individual and  
corporate support

\$4,445  
average reimbursement  
from state

\$8,945  
total cost  
per student

41st

Washington state ranks 41st in high school graduation rate



**Reconnecting Youth success is a result of United Way bringing these community partners together:**

- Accelerator YMCA
- Asian Counseling and Referral Service
- Aspen Institute
- Auburn Opportunity Project/  
Auburn School District
- Auburn Youth Resources
- Bellevue College
- Career Link at South Seattle College
- Centro Rendu—St. Vincent de Paul
- Community Center for Education Results
- Consejo Counseling and Referral Services
- Eastside Reengagement Center at Friends of Youth
- El Centro de la Raza
- Federal Way Open Doors Program/  
Federal Way Public Schools
- Green River College
- Highline Learning Centers
- Highline Public Schools
- iGrad/Kent School District
- Jobs for the Future
- Juma Ventures
- King County Employment and Education Resources Group
- Kona Kai Coffee
- Lake Washington Institute of Technology
- Learning Center North at Shoreline College
- Learning Center Seattle at Seattle Vocational Institute
- Multi-Service Center
- Neighborhood House
- Port Jobs
- Puget Sound Educational Service District
- Renton School District
- Renton Technical College
- Seattle Central College
- Seattle Education Access
- Seattle Goodwill
- SOAR
- Southwest Youth & Family Services
- Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
- White Center Community Development Association
- YouthCare
- Youth Development Executives of King County
- YouthSource
- YWCA of Seattle-King County-Snohomish County

## TAKING IT TO SCALE

With strong donor support, we've transformed a set of small underfunded youth programs into a comprehensive system. Since the demonstration project in 2014 operated with three sites, we've expanded the program to 15 sites and multiple partners, including colleges and employers.

We're building capacity across King County and bridging the gap from attaining high-school equivalency to earning college credits.

### Examples of growth to date

- **From 3 sites** serving 317 youth **to 15 sites** serving 12,223 youth
- **Doubled capacity** at YouthSource and Highline to serve high-need geographic areas
- Nearly **\$21 million** in state dollars have been drawn down since 2015



“ I experienced bullying that forced me to miss much of the 8th grade. I'm so grateful to United Way for helping me find the right place in which to succeed.”

~ **Marité,**  
Reconnecting Youth participant and college student

## RESULTS

Reconnecting Youth continues to demonstrate strong progress:

- **2,333** youth have earned a high school credential
- **12,233** young people have participated in the program
- **\$20 million** raised from dozens of individuals and corporations

Since the demonstration project in 2014, focused on youth 16–21, we've expanded the target population to youth 16–24. We found that the need—and motivation—for these older youth is great.

