

# Building Pathways to Employment for Disconnected Youth

A Community Approach

# Meet the Committee

Jeff DeMario, Vita Nova, Inc.

Claudia Kirk Barto, Junior Achievement of the Palm Beaches

Cathleen Ward, Ward Damon Attorneys at Law

Clarice Redding Louis, Vita Nova, Inc.

Judith Fletcher, Fred Deluca Foundation

David Schaffer Zaret, Vita Nova, Inc.

Genifer Johnson, Community Member

Ike Powell, PBC Youth Services

# Defining the Disconnect

- ▶ **Disconnected Youth** - also known as Opportunity Youth; young people who are between the ages of 16 to 24 years old and are disconnected from school and work.
  - ▶ Disconnected Youth is a label in United States public policy debate for NEETs - or young people "Not in Education, Employment, or Training". (Measure of America, 2017) Disconnected Youth number 4.9 million in the United States; about one in eight of the age cohort
  - ▶ Emphasis is placed upon this group because the years between the late teens and the mid-twenties are believed to be a critical period during which young people form adult identities and move toward independence.
  - ▶ The effects of youth disconnection include:
    - ▶ limited education
    - ▶ social exclusion
    - ▶ lack of work experience
    - ▶ fewer opportunities to develop mentors and valuable work connections
- ▶ Disconnection can have long-term consequences that snowball across the life course, eventually influencing everything from **earnings** and self-sufficiency to **physical and mental health** and marital prospects. Much discussion has been focused on how to reach these young people and connect them with broader social institutions in order to prevent these negative consequences.
- ▶ The average disconnected youth costs **\$37,450** a year in government services.

# Clarifying Terms

- ▶ **Pathways & Pipeline** - a system that build the skills, knowledge, and qualifications that they will need to enter school or work.
- ▶ **Asset Mapping** - a tool that relies on a core belief of asset-based community development; namely, that good things exist in communities and that those things can be highlighted and encouraged. These are assets suited to advancing those communities; a means, not an end
- ▶ **Hub** - a center of a network, activity or region.

# Data

- ▶ In Palm Beach County (2018-2019) there was a population of approximately **162,000** individuals between the ages of **15-24**
- ▶ PBC had a graduate rate of **87%** during that time period.
  - ▶ but what happened to the **13%**?
    - ▶ Where are the other **21,000**, and how will this data impact graduation rates?



# Data

## PBC Unemployment Rates

- ▶ PBC Overall: 3.6%
- ▶ 16 or older: 6.5%
  - ▶ 16-19: 24%
  - ▶ 20-24: 11.5%
- ▶ Based on data from a total population between 15-19 in 2018 of 64,379:
  - ▶ 4.2% were idle (2,703)
- ▶ Based on data from a total population between 16-19 in 2019 of 65,853:
  - ▶ 2.7% were considered idle
  - ▶ 41.1% were in the labor force

# Target Work for 2021

## ▶ Barriers to the Work

- ▶ Location
- ▶ Competing Interests
- ▶ Funding
- ▶ Lack of Youth Buy-In

## ▶ Committee Goals for 2021

- ▶ Who Can Help
- ▶ Youth Feedback
- ▶ Coalition Building



# Why are youth disconnected?

lack of support

We don't understand their needs

don't know where to go or who to ask

Lack of trust with adults

lack of information

Lack of support/guidance.

Lack of knowledge to reach resources and how to take advantage of said supports.

They do not see the relationship between themselves and the community.

Family responsibilities

# Why are youth disconnected?

Lack of mentorship

Not having a good role model

Many are a consequence of untreated historical trauma and lack of families, communities, and government support and guidance.

Lack of supportive relationships-  
community, family, environment.

Lack of support,Dysfunctional family,Lack  
of communication,lack of understanding

# What do you believe are barriers to employment and education for young adults?

lack of exposure

Underrepresentation

Race/Ethnicity

no faith

awareness

unable to connect with employers

Low wages

Lack of internships to various types of work.

Misconceptions and misunderstanding about their capacity and available resources.

# What do you believe are barriers to employment and education for young adults?

A system that is not equipped to meet the need where it lies!

Lack of an available living wage

mental health challenges

Motivation, wellness, lack of resources

# What resources are missing for this population?

transportation  
access to mh services  
job readiness  
mentoring

**Let's have a conversation! Send us your questions and feedback.**

**2 questions**  
**0 upvotes**