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New Orleans Youth Master Plan: Community Conversations Report

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NEW ORLEANS

YOUTH MASTER PLAN

Community Conversations Report

Oct 2020

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One Community in Conversation

The New Orleans Youth Master Plan Community Conversations were held July-September 2020 via Zoom. Utilizing a human-centered design approach and an equity lens, a community of New Orleans youth and adults came together in an effort to redefine success and create innovative pathways to get there.

These are their stories.

Key Questions

- What is success?
- What does success look like for New Orleans children & youth?
- How does success look at varying developmental stages?
- What are the commonalities across developmental stages?
- What are the barriers to success?
- What are the root causes of inequity?
- How can success be achieved?

Positive Youth Development

Developmental Stages	Framework
Birth-24	*Positive Youth Development*
Birth-5	Health & Well-Being
6-10	Learning
11-14	Youth Voice
15-19	Space & Place
20-24	Safety & Justice
	Economic Stability

SUCCESS DEFINED

For New Orleans Children & Youth, Birth-24

What is success?

The following data indicate responses to the key question noted above. Workshop participants engaged in a design thinking activity to create a *Success Profile* of New Orleans youth, for each developmental stage.

Birth-5

Health & Well-Being

- Learned health habits
- Access to quality care
- Language development & acquisition
- Developing gross & fine motor skills
- Developing emotional intelligence
- Positive peer interactions
- Present, loving caregiver

Learning

- Play
- Creative problem solving

Youth Voice

- Ability to freely express emotions

Space & Place

- Access to quality healthcare*
- Outdoor recreation areas
- Safe spaces to express emotion
- Environment conducive to identity development
- Opportunities for play

Safety & Justice

- Free from punishment

Economic Stability

- Present, loving caregiver

6-10

Health & Well-Being

- Access + accessibility to resources

Learning

- Regular school attendance
- Supplemental educational tools/resources
- High-quality education

Youth Voice

- Positive self-image, capabilities & confidence in talents
- Ability to express needs and be listened to
- Meaningful contribution to family + community
- Community support/ Responsive community

Space & Place

- Creative expression
- Access & accessibility to resources
- Explores new activities

Safety & Justice

Economic Stability

11-14

Health & Well-Being

- Access to relevant/responsive mental health resources
- Sense of community

Learning

Youth Voice

- Agency to make decisions, own voice, own thoughts
- Space for youth voices to be heard by adults*

Space & Place

- extra-curricular & out-of-school activities & spaces for enjoyment
- Exposure to positive things & people to offset negative balance*
- Sense of community*
- Space for youth voices to be heard by adults*

Safety & Justice

- Exposure to positive things & people to offset negative balance*

Economic Stability

15-19

Health & Well-Being

- Access + accessibility to resources
- Mentorship + support system
- Building relationships & expanding peer network
- Comfort navigating & expressing emotions*

Learning

Youth Voice

- Confidence to employ self-defense tactics
- Community support while navigating the world*
- Comfort navigating & expressing emotions*
- Self-determination: Freedom in decision-making
- Uses personal experiences to create definitions for success

Space & Place

- Opportunity to navigate the world, define themselves, explore their passions & make mistakes*

Safety & Justice

- Ability to navigate New Orleans without fear
- Ability to defend themselves from harm

Economic Stability

20-24

Health & Well-Being

- Positive mentors
- Peer support
- Diverse problem-solving support group

Learning

- Public access to resources for entrepreneurship *
- Educated about adult life skills & responsibilities
- Financially literate*

Youth Voice

- Self-determination: Self-knowledge
- Accomplishing self-defined dreams
- Talents & abilities affirmed by peers
- Try
- Dream
- Fail
- Chances to succeed

Space & Place

- Public access to resources for entrepreneurship *
- Access to social capital to help solve problems when needed*
- Knowledge & utilization of available resources

Economic Stability

- Security when times are hard & out of control
- Access to financial capital to give youth a chance
- Access to social capital *
- Financially literate*

Safety & Justice

- Ability to walk streets without fear of incarceration
- Opportunities to succeed widely

Success Summary, by Developmental Stage

Birth-5

Meeting developmental milestones, relative to individual

Play as learning & identity development

Opportunities for free play and recreational space

Physical wellness

6-10

Creativity, expression and exploration central to development

Community support & encouragement

11-14

Space to exercise youth voice & develop agency

Belonging to and acceptance from community

15-19

Relationship building

Learning from experiences and mistakes

The world as a tool for self exploration

Freedom

20-24

A community & network to call on when support is needed

Financial literacy

Self knowledge & a community that affirms one's sense of self

Success Summary, by Category

Health & Well-Being

- Quality health care
- Relevant mental health support
- Public resources
- Positive community network
- Emotional intelligence

Learning

- Holistic education
- Youth-centered curriculum & design
- Learning life skills

Youth Voice

- Positive self-image
- Knows & expresses needs
- Developing own voice
- Failure informs future

Space & Place

- Access outdoors recreation areas
- Internal exploration thru external enjoyment
- Safe spaces available, adequate & relevant

Safety & Justice

- Free from punitive discipline
- Access to restorative justice models
- Free of fear of incarceration

Economic Stability

- Financially literate
- Access to financial & social capital
- Preparation for adult life

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

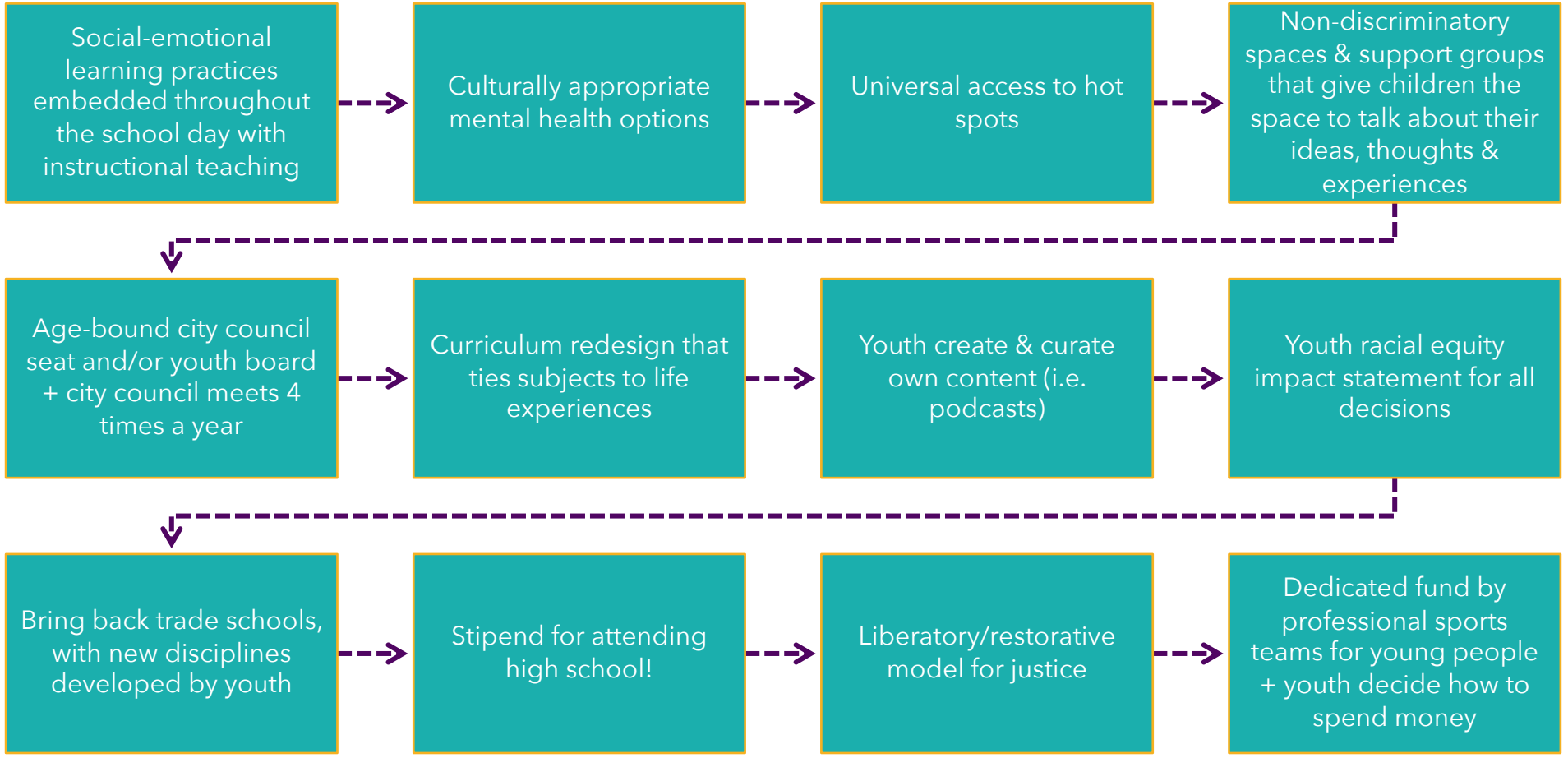
For New Orleans Children & Youth, Birth-24

How do we get to success?

The following data indicate responses to the key question noted above. Workshop participants engaged in a design thinking process to create innovative solutions that will help New Orleans youth to reach success.

The strategies presented are sample data from the Creative Solutions activity

Innovative Solutions



Click here to access the full data spreadsheet under the CM tab

KEY LEARNINGS

The following are common themes from Community Conversations

Key Learnings

- Success is relative, and supports must be responsive to specific needs and identity.
- Public access to resources (the availability of a resource or support) and accessibility of resources (the extent to which community members who need the resources are able to access them) are not synonymous. An inaccessible “public” resource may facilitate disparities
- Play, creativity and socializing are the cornerstones of identity development.
- Fear of harm or judgement hinder young peoples’ ability to explore themselves and the world around them.

Key Learnings

- Safe spaces allow young people to be their full selves.
- Agency and self-determination are the ultimate goal of success.
- The current “education as schooling” model does not meet the mental, emotional or curricular needs of youth and must be redesigned.
- A caring community is as crucial as a resourceful community.

What's Your Power?

The following Word Cloud represents workshop participant responses to the key question noted above

Our Collective

"My power is speaking life into situations and people. It's so important to do that in the midst of adversity and negativity."

-New Orleans Youth Community Conversation Participant