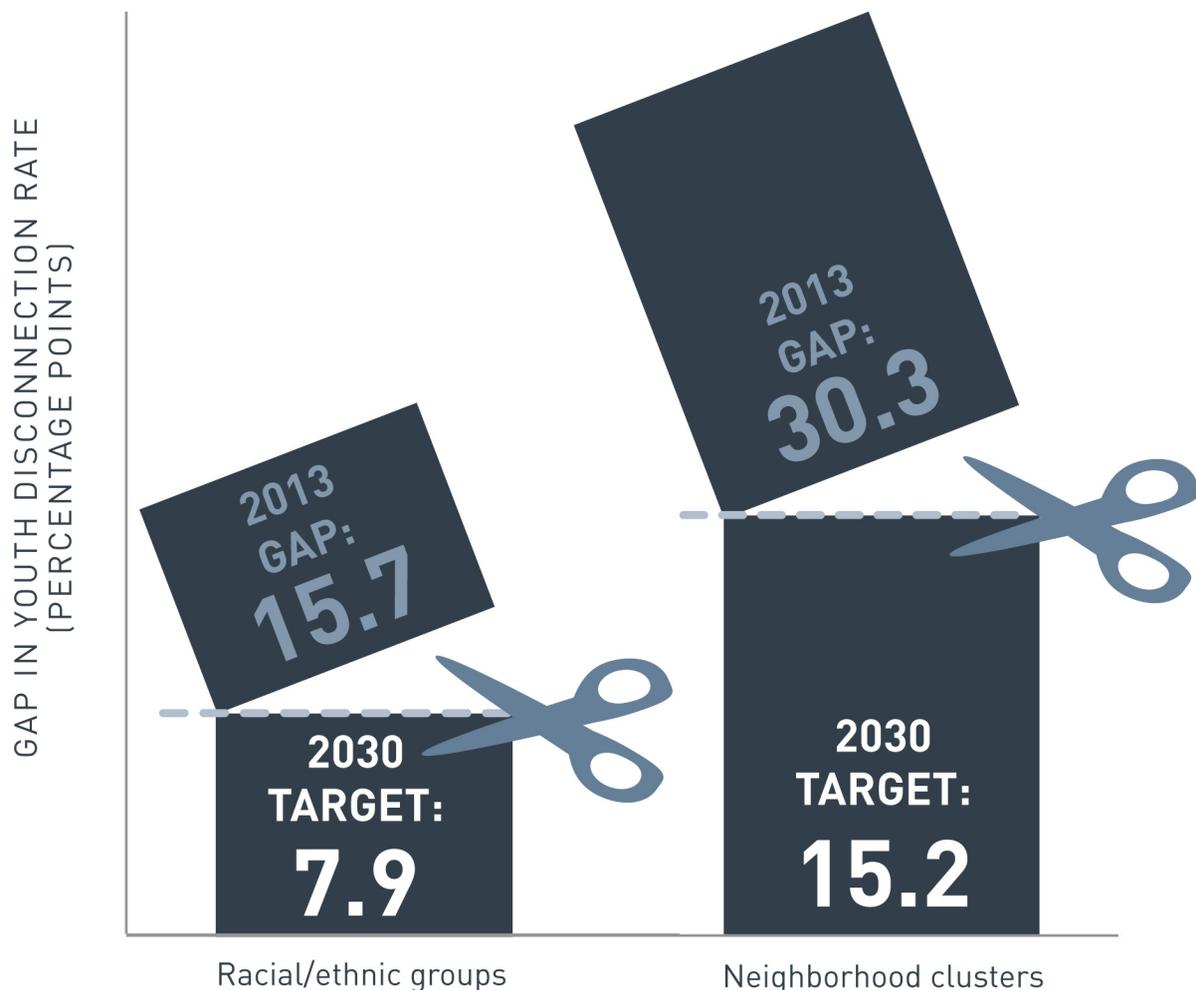


HALVE THE GAP BY 2030

YOUTH DISCONNECTION
IN AMERICA'S CITIES

BOSTON METRO AREA CLOSE-UP

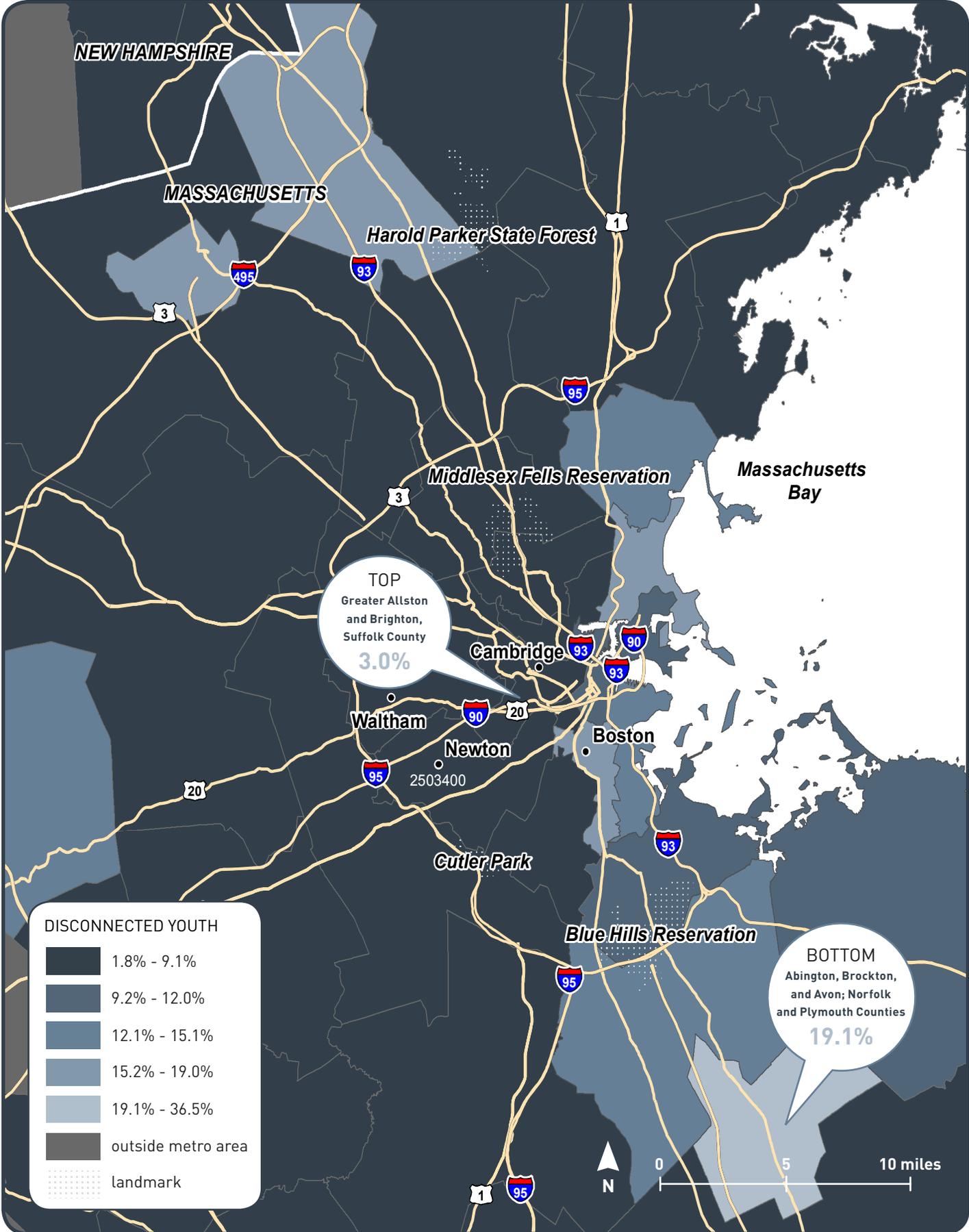
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1 YOUTH DISCONNECTION IN THE BOSTON METRO AREA



About the Boston Metro Area Close-Up

This document is an excerpt from *Halve the Gap by 2030: Youth Disconnection in America's Cities*. It portrays in detail the landscape of youth disconnection in the Boston Metro Area, with a map of the metro area; identification of the neighborhood highs and lows; youth disconnection rates by race, ethnicity, and gender; and key well-being indicators to provide context.

Who Are Disconnected Youth: Definition and Data Sources

Disconnected youth are people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither in school nor working.

Young people in this age range who are working or in school part-time or who are in the military are not considered disconnected. Youth disconnection rates in this report are calculated by Measure of America using employment and enrollment data from the 2011 American Community Survey (ACS) of the US Census Bureau. For further details, see the Note on Methods and Definitions.

Several official data sources exist that can be used for calculating youth disconnection. As a result, researchers working with different data sets, or different definitions of what constitutes disconnection, arrive at different numbers for this indicator. Measure of America uses the ACS for four reasons: (1) it is reliable and updated annually; (2) it allows for calculations by state and metro area as well as by the more granular census-defined neighborhood clusters within metro areas; (3) it includes young people who are in group quarters, such as juvenile or adult correctional facilities, supervised medical facilities, and college dorms; and (4) it counts students on summer break as being enrolled in school.



Measure of America, a project of the Social Science Research Council, provides easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding well-being and opportunity in the United States and to stimulate fact-based dialogue about issues we all care about: **health**, **education**, and **living standards**. The root of this work is the human development and capabilities approach, the brainchild of Harvard professor and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.

Human development is about improving people's well-being and expanding their choices and opportunities to live freely chosen lives of value. The period of young adulthood is critical to developing the capabilities required for a full and flourishing life: knowledge and credentials, social skills and networks, a sense of mastery and agency, an understanding of one's strengths and preferences, and the ability to handle stressful events and regulate one's emotions, to name just a few. Measure of America is thus concerned with youth disconnection because it stunts human development, closing off some of life's most rewarding and joyful paths and leading to a future of limited horizons and unrealized potential.

KEY WELL-BEING INDICATORS

HD Index: 6.46 out of 10

HD Index ranking: 3rd out of 24

Total population: 4,603,344

Adult unemployment rate: 7.5%

Adults with at least bachelor's degree: 43.1%

Poverty rate: 10.7%

Youth unemployment rate (ages 16–24): 16.5%

School enrollment rate (ages 16–24): 69.2%

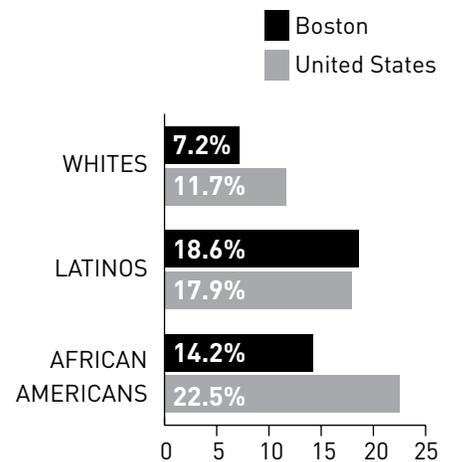
Sources: *Measure of America 2013-2014* and U.S. Census Bureau, 2011.

The **Boston metro area** is comprised of Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, and Suffolk Counties in Massachusetts and Rockingham and Strafford Counties in New Hampshire. The youth disconnection rate in the Boston metro area is 9.2 percent, the best-ranking of the country's twenty-five most populous metro areas. This disconnection rate is 5.4 percentage points better than the national average. Yet even in top-ranked Boston, nearly 62,000 teens and young adults ages 16 to 24 are neither in school nor in the workplace.

Youth Disconnection by Race and Ethnicity

Nationally, African American and Latino young people have higher rates of disconnection than their white counterparts. This is the case in Boston as well though Boston's Latinos, rather than African Americans, have the highest disconnection rate; in most metro areas, the African American rate is the highest. In a metro area where conditions are generally quite favorable for young people's connection to the important institutions of school and work, disconnection among Latino youth is very high. Only six other metro areas have higher Latino youth disconnection rates. On the other hand, the African American rate of disconnection, 14.2 percent, is the lowest African American rate of America's major metro areas. The gap between the group with the most (whites) and the least (Latinos) connected youth is 11.4 percentage points.

How Do Racial and Ethnic Groups Compare to Each Other and to Their National Counterparts?



Youth Disconnection by Gender

Beneath Boston’s excellent rate of youth connection lies a significant gender gap. While 10.1 percent of young males are neither working nor in school, the female disconnection rate is only 8.3 percent, a gap that is nearly twice the national average. These percentages represent roughly 34,000 young men and 28,000 young women.

Youth Disconnection by Neighborhood

The Boston metro area is made up of forty-one neighborhood clusters. In the Boston neighborhoods of greater Allston and Brighton, only 3 percent of young people are cut off from school and work; in Abington, Brockton, and Avon, the rate is more than six times that, 19.1 percent. The three neighborhood clusters with the highest rates of youth disconnection all have far larger African American or Latino shares of their population than the Boston metro area overall. Factors strongly associated with neighborhood youth disconnection rates are discussed on pages 19–22.

Most Connected Neighborhood Clusters

| NEIGHBORHOOD | RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%) |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Greater Allston and Brighton, Suffolk County, MA | 3.0 |
| Brookline and Newton, Middlesex and Norfolk Counties, MA | 3.2 |
| Cambridge, MA | 3.3 |

Least Connected Neighborhood Clusters

| NEIGHBORHOOD | RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%) |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Lawrence, Methuen, and Andover, Essex County, MA | 16.9 |
| Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop, Suffolk County, MA | 17.3 |
| Abington, Brockton, and Avon Cities in Norfolk and Plymouth Counties, MA | 19.1 |

Halve the Gap in Boston

