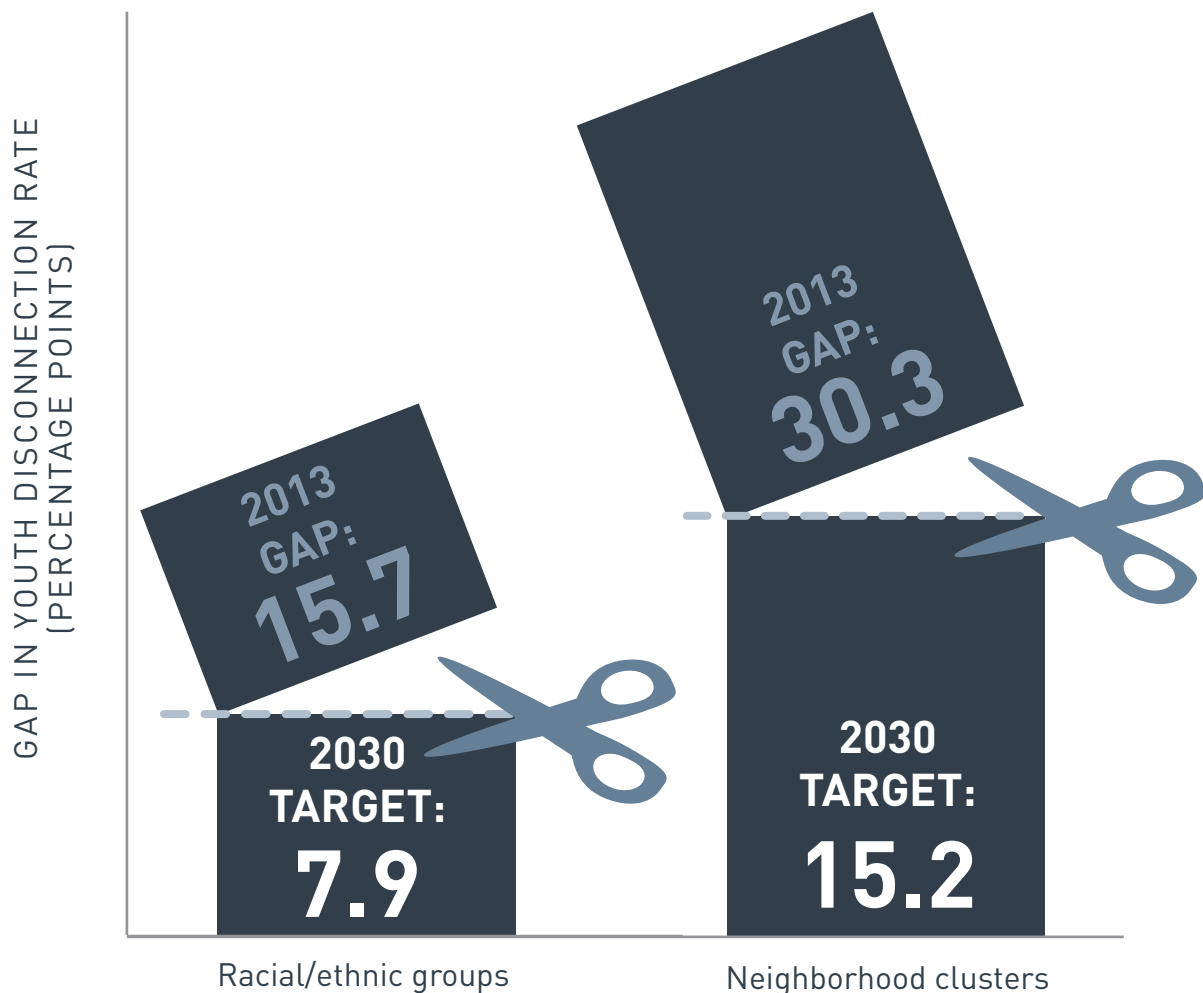


# HALVE THE GAP BY 2030

YOUTH DISCONNECTION  
IN AMERICA'S CITIES

## PHILADELPHIA METRO AREA CLOSE-UP

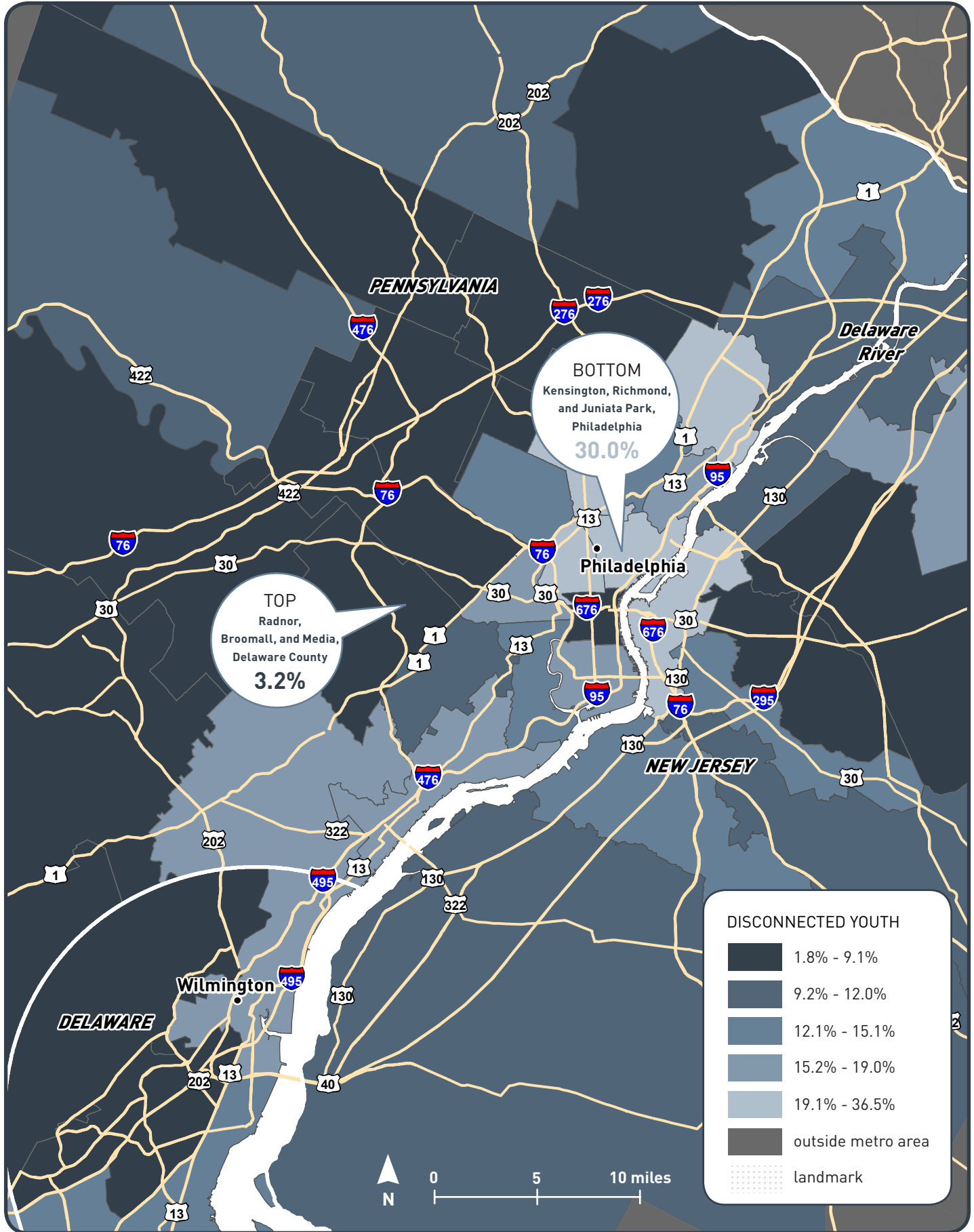
KRISTEN LEWIS and SARAH BURD-SHARPS



**Patrick Nolan Guyer** | CHIEF STATISTICIAN & CARTOGRAPHER  
**Diana Tung** | REPORT DESIGN

TO DOWNLOAD THIS REPORT, PLEASE VISIT  
[WWW.MEASUREOFAMERICA.ORG/HALVE-THE-GAP-2030](http://WWW.MEASUREOFAMERICA.ORG/HALVE-THE-GAP-2030)

# YOUTH DISCONNECTION IN THE PHILADELPHIA METRO AREA



## About the Philadelphia 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 Philadelphia 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:** 5.62 out of 10

**HD Index ranking:** 10th out of 24

**Total population:** 5,997,474

**Adult unemployment rate:** 8.9%

**Adults with at least bachelor's degree:** 32.9%

**Poverty rate:** 13.5%

**Youth unemployment rate (ages 16–24):** 22.5%

**School enrollment rate (ages 16–24):** 65.0%

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

The country's sixth most populous metropolitan area, **greater Philadelphia** is home to approximately six million people. The metro area is comprised of eleven counties in four different states—Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania County; Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland. The youth disconnection rate in and around the City of Brotherly Love is 14.3 percent, the same rate as nearby Baltimore. While both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh enjoy youth disconnection rates lower than the national average of 14.6 percent, Pittsburgh bests Philadelphia with a disconnection rate of 12.6 percent. Philadelphia has nearly triple the number of disconnected young people, 112,000, as Pittsburgh, 39,000.

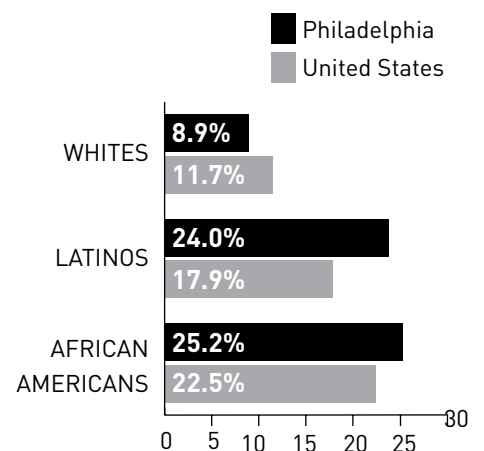
## Youth Disconnection by Race and Ethnicity

In Philadelphia, white youth experience a very different reality than their peers. The disconnection rate for white youth in the city is one of the five lowest in this study, whereas the rates for both Latinos and African Americans in Philly are among the highest in urban America. More than a quarter—25.2 percent—of African American youth are disconnected from school and work, a higher rate for African Americans than in all of the other metro areas except Detroit, and the Latino population experiences a rate of youth disconnection—24.0 percent—that is the highest of any of the largest metro areas for Latinos.

## Youth Disconnection by Gender

Although the gender difference among youth disconnection rates in the Philadelphia metro area reflects the American trend of young men

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

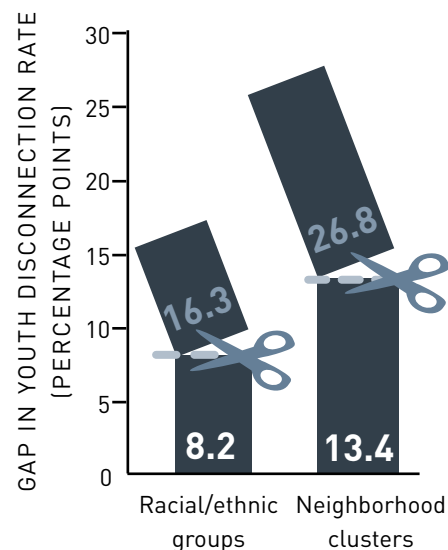


experiencing higher rates of youth disconnection than young women, the Philly gender gap is one of the widest in the nation. While just 12 percent of young women lack key social and economic anchors, 16.6 percent of males between the ages of 16 and 24 do. The only cities where this gap is larger are St. Louis and San Diego.

## Youth Disconnection by Neighborhood

The Philadelphia metro area is made up of forty-three neighborhood clusters. The rate of young people neither working nor in school ranges from a low of only 3.2 percent in Radnor, Broomall, and Media in Delaware County, PA neighborhood, to a high of 30.0 percent in Kensington/Eastern North Philly, a range of nearly 27 percentage points. Parts of the Philadelphia metro area with low levels of youth disconnection tend to have low poverty, low unemployment, relatively little racial and ethnic diversity, and high levels of adult educational attainment. In fact, in the three neighborhoods with the lowest rates of youth disconnection, more than half the adult population has at least a bachelor's degree. Areas with higher youth disconnection tend to have more poverty and adult unemployment, weaker educational attainment, and higher proportions of African Americans and Latinos. However, some majority white neighborhoods struggle with high youth disconnection as well, such as Torresdale, Bustleton, and Somerton in Far Northeast Philadelphia, where one out of every four youths is disconnected. Only about 21 percent of adults in this section of the city have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 33 percent for the wider metro area.

## Halve the Gap in Philadelphia



### Most Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
Radnor, Broomall, and Media, Delaware County, PA	3.2
Newark, Pike Creek, and Hockessin, New Castle County, DE	3.8
King of Prussia, Bryn Mawr, and Penn Wynne, Montgomery County, PA	3.8

### Least Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
East Park, North Central, and Tioga, Philadelphia, PA	23.8
Torresdale, Bustleton, and Somerton, Philadelphia, PA	25.2
Kensington, Richmond, and Juniata Park, Philadelphia, PA	30.0