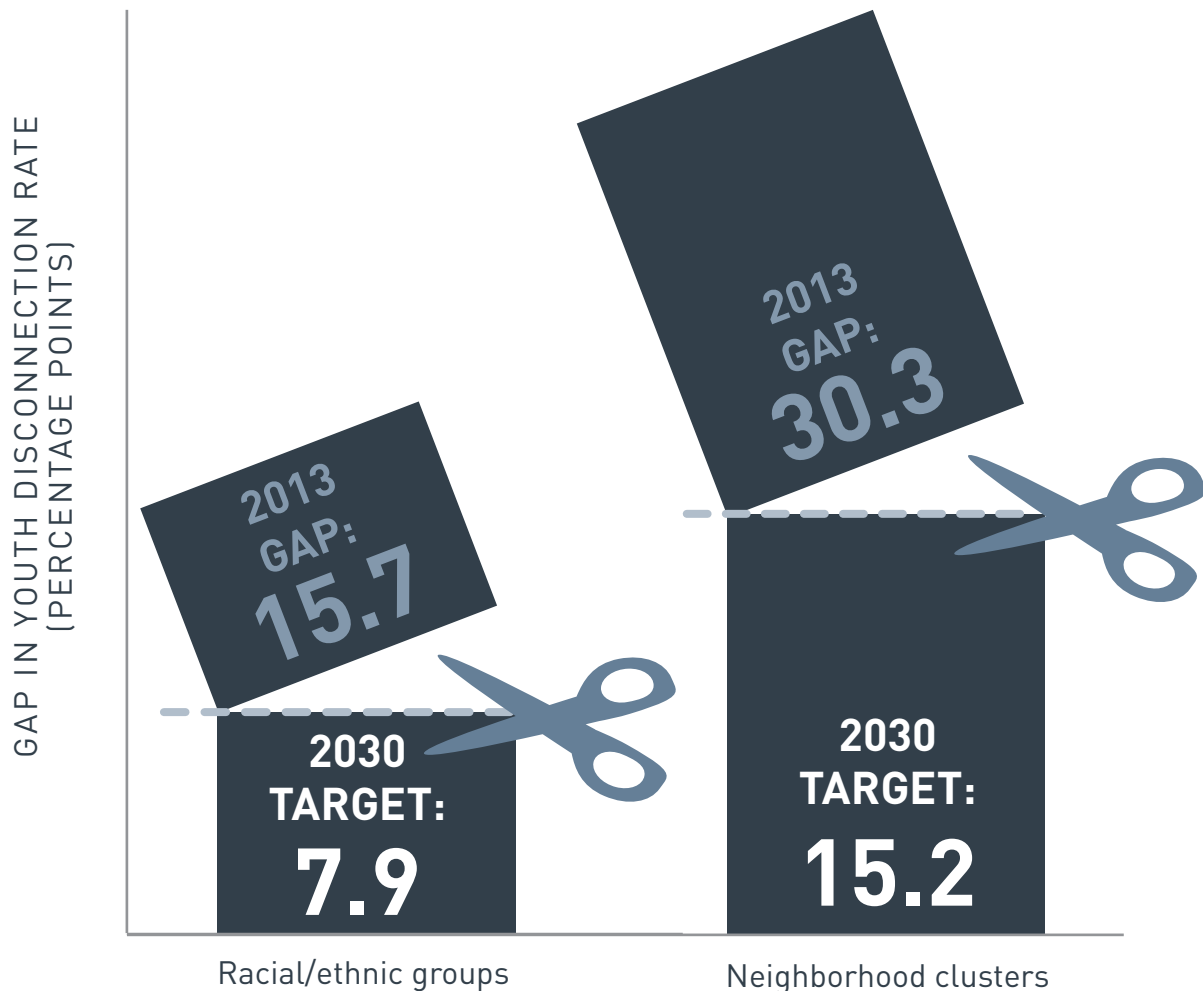


# HALVE THE GAP BY 2030

YOUTH DISCONNECTION  
IN AMERICA'S CITIES

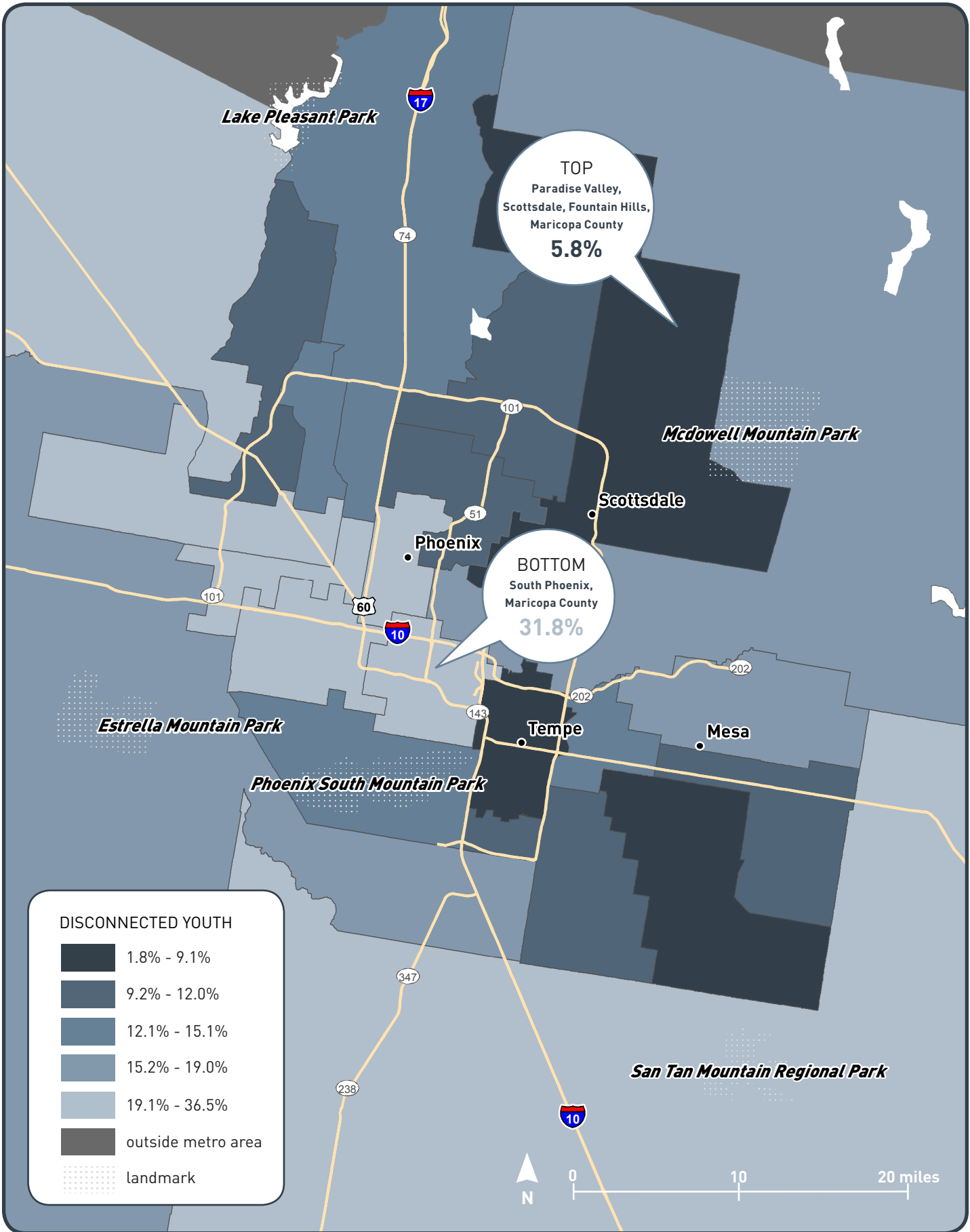
## PHOENIX METRO AREA CLOSE-UP

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## About the Phoenix 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 Phoenix 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:** 5.20 out of 10

**HD Index ranking:** 15th out of 24

**Total population:** 4,252,078

**Adult unemployment rate:** 8.6%

**Adults with at least bachelor's degree:** 28.5%

**Poverty rate:** 17.4%

**Youth unemployment rate (ages 16–24):** 20.1%

**School enrollment rate (ages 16–24):** 57.3%

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

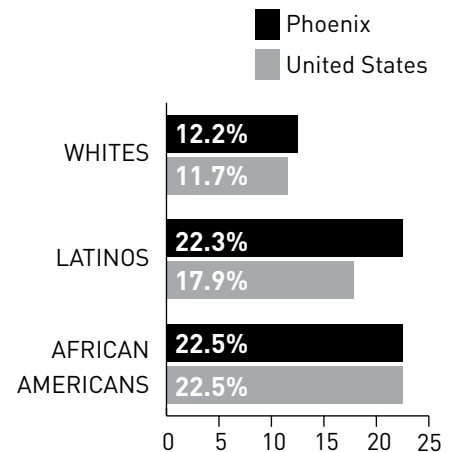
The **Phoenix metro area** is composed of two Arizona counties, Maricopa and Pinal. The youth disconnection rate in the greater metropolitan area is 17.2 percent, nearly equal to the rate in Charlotte, North Carolina. Over 93,000 young adults ages 16 to 24 are disconnected from both school and work.

### Youth Disconnection by Race and Ethnicity

African Americans, Latinos, and whites all have very distinct stories concerning youth disconnection in Phoenix. While the relatively small Phoenix African American population experiences a rate of disconnected youth exactly equal to the national average for African Americans, 22.5 percent, both Latinos and whites suffer rates greater than the national averages for their groups. The racial and ethnic disconnection gap is 10.3 percentage points.

Although in Phoenix the rates among both Latinos and whites remain lower than that of African Americans, just as they do nationally, the Latino disconnection rate in Phoenix is in fact the second highest rate for Latinos among the largest twenty-five metro US areas at 22.3 percent. Phoenix is behind only Philadelphia, where almost a quarter of young Latinos are neither in school nor in work. Latinos make up almost twice the percentage of the population in Phoenix that they do in the country as a whole—29.9 percent. The difference between the rates of youth disconnection for whites in Phoenix and whites nationwide is less notable, at only .5 percent.

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



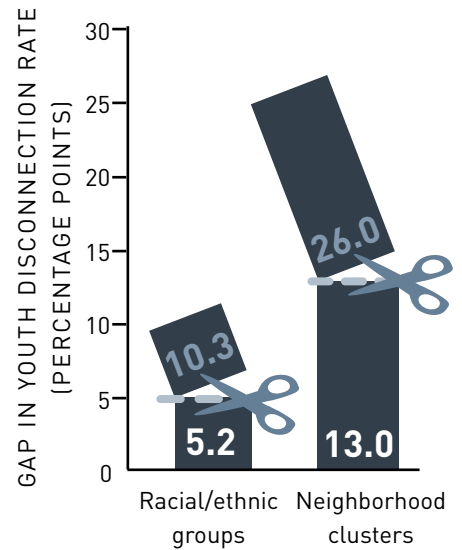
## Youth Disconnection by Gender

While young men outnumber young women among disconnected youth nationwide, this pattern does not hold in Phoenix. Young women have a slightly higher rate of disconnection than young men—17.7 percent as compared to 16.6 percent. Because there are more male youth in the city than female, this figures translate into numbers of disconnected youth that are very similar in real terms for each gender. Just over 46,000 young women are not connected to either school or work, and approximately 47,000 young men fit this description.

## Youth Disconnection by Neighborhood

The Phoenix metro area is made up of twenty-three neighborhood clusters. Among these districts, there is significant variation in terms of the rate of disconnected youth. The values in the areas with the lowest and highest rates of disconnected youth are separated by 26.0 percentage points. In the neighborhood of South Phoenix, almost one out of every three youths is not connected to either school or work, while in Paradise Valley, Scottsdale, and Fountain Hills only one in every seventeen is adrift. South Phoenix has a disconnection rate that is the seventh most severe rate of the nearly nine hundred neighborhoods included in this study. The three Phoenix area neighborhoods with the highest rates of youth disconnection experience rates far greater than any other areas of the city.

Halve the Gap in Phoenix



### Most Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
Paradise Valley, Scottsdale, Fountain Hills, Maricopa County, AZ	5.8
Gilbert through Queen Creek/Chandler Heights, Maricopa County, AZ	8.0
North Tempe to North Chandler, Maricopa County, AZ	8.7

### Least Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
Gila and Pinal Counties, AZ	29.5
Estrella, Maricopa County, AZ	31.6
South Phoenix, Maricopa County, AZ	31.8