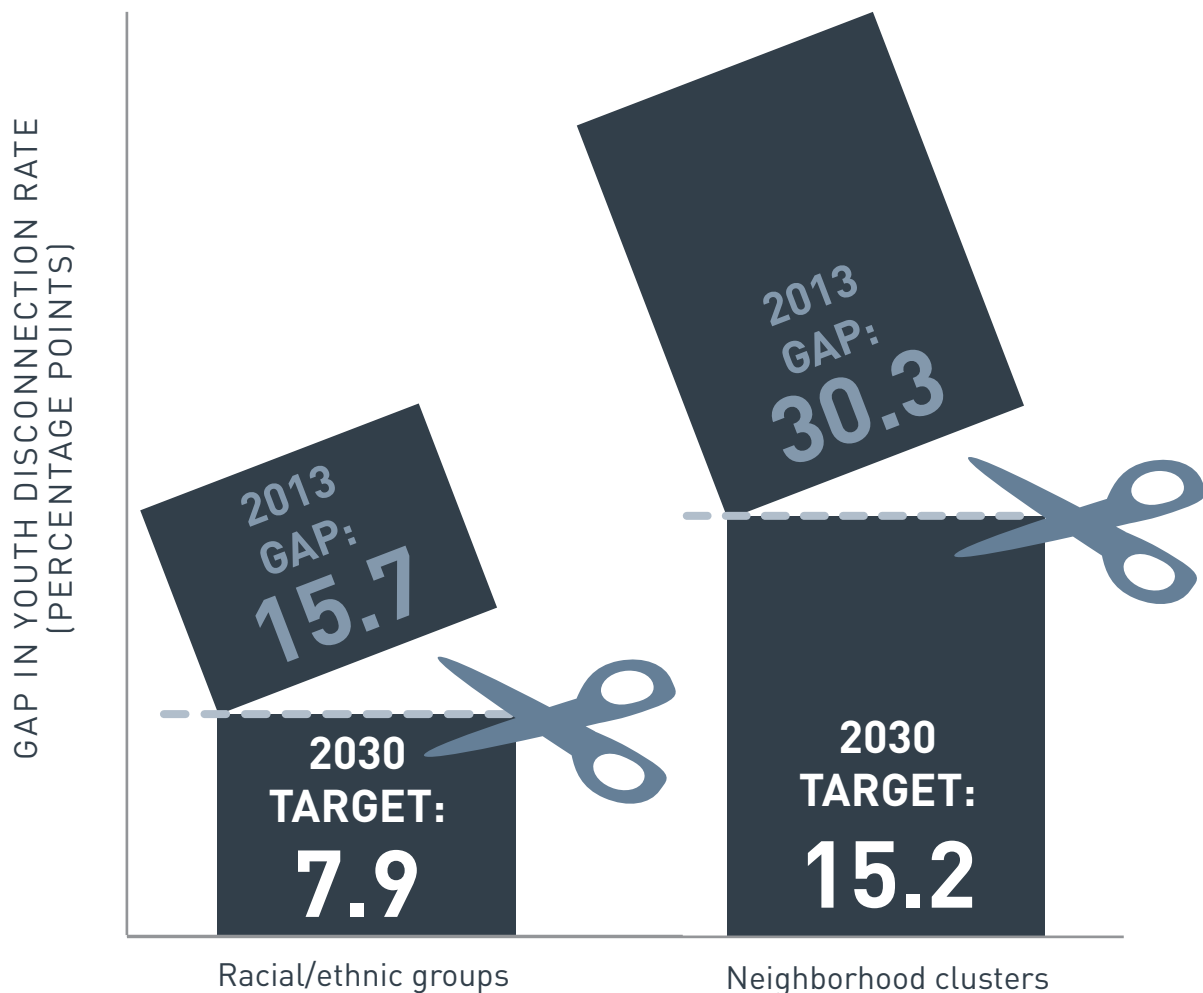


# HALVE THE GAP BY 2030

YOUTH DISCONNECTION  
IN AMERICA'S CITIES

## SEATTLE METRO AREA CLOSE-UP

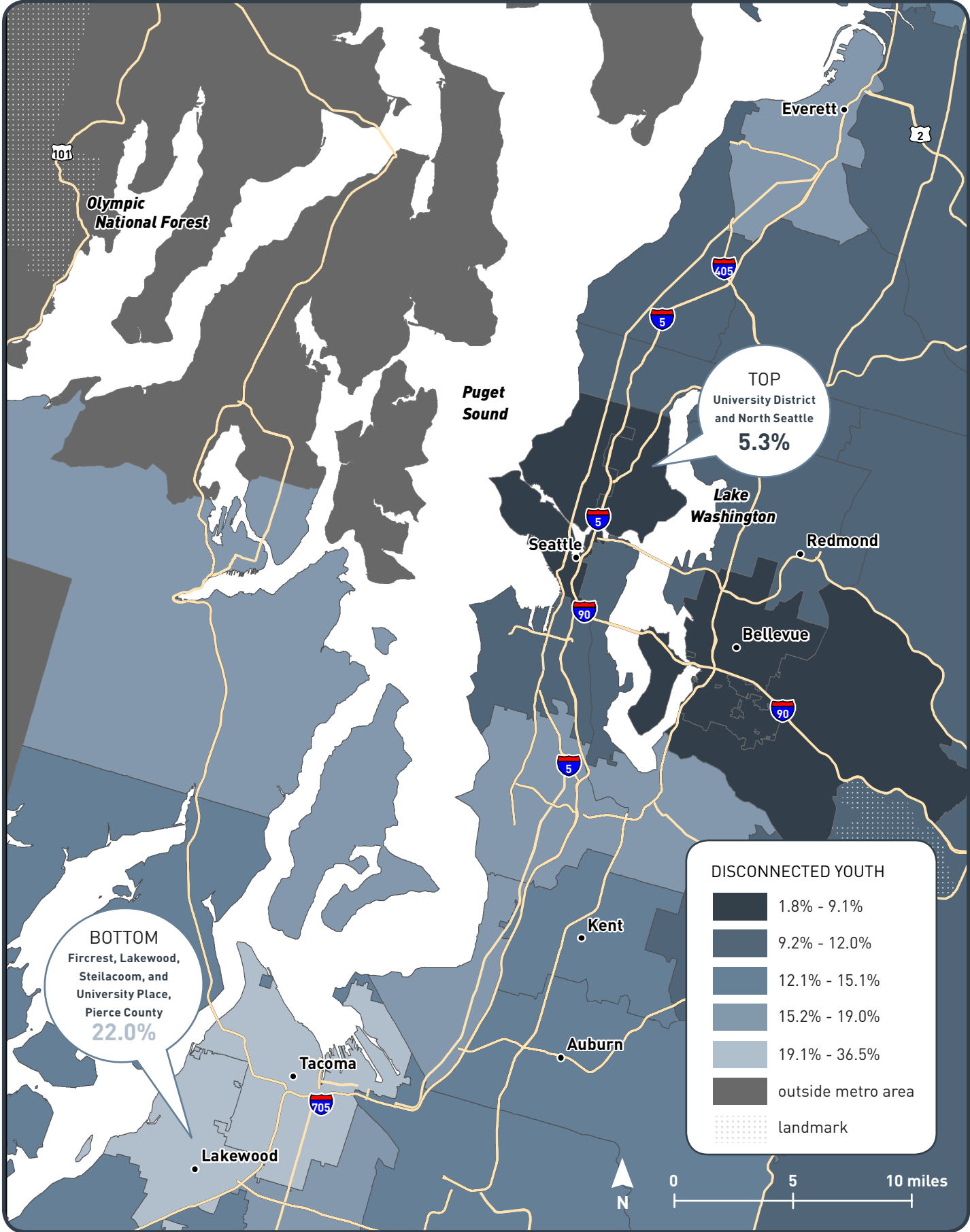
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# YOUTH DISCONNECTION IN THE SEATTLE METRO AREA



## About the Seattle 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 Seattle 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:** 5.97 out of 10

**HD Index ranking:** 6th out of 24

**Total population:** 3,497,819

**Adult unemployment rate:** 8.3%

**Adults with at least bachelor's degree:** 37.1%

**Poverty rate:** 11.9%

**Youth unemployment rate (ages 16–24):** 19.9%

**School enrollment rate (ages 16–24):** 58.3%

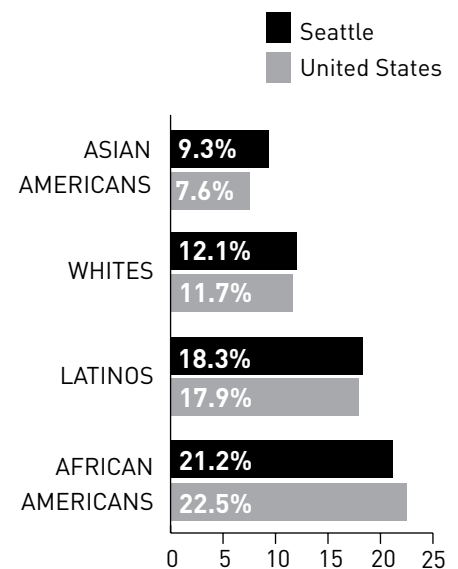
Sources: *Measure of America 2013-2014* and U.S. Census Bureau, 2011.

The **Seattle metro area** covers King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties in Washington State. Out of more than 437,000 young people ages 16 to 24 in greater Seattle, nearly 58,000 are neither employed nor in school, representing 13.2 percent of the youth across the region. Young residents of Seattle are slightly less likely to lack key connections than their national counterparts, and this rate places the Emerald City between Denver and Chicago in terms of youth disconnection.

### Youth Disconnection by Race and Ethnicity

Seattle is one of only five metro areas among the twenty-five largest in the nation in which all of the major national racial and ethnic groups—African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and whites—have communities sizeable enough to calculate youth disconnection rates for each group. Youth disconnection by race and ethnicity in Seattle follows the national pattern; Asian American young people have the lowest rates of disconnection, followed by whites, Latinos, and African Americans. For African Americans, the Seattle rate, 21.2 percent, is slightly better than the national rate; nonetheless, more than one in four African American young people in Seattle is disconnected. The disconnection rate for Latinos is 18.3 percent and for whites, 12.1 percent.

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



## Youth Disconnection by Gender

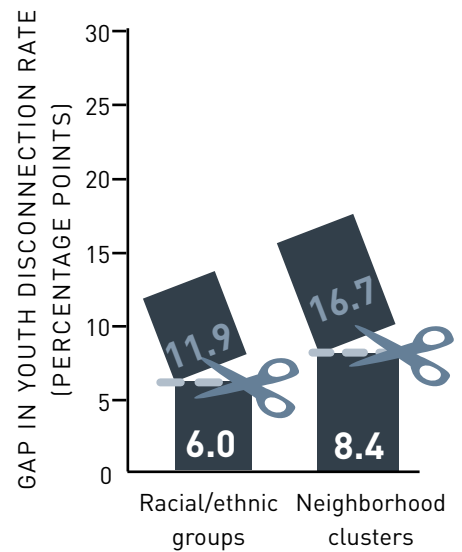
As in the country as a whole, in Seattle young men have higher rates of youth disconnection than young women, but young people of both genders experience a disconnection rate in the Seattle metro area that is somewhat lower than the national average. The difference is greater for male youth, who face a disconnection rate of 13.6 percent in the city and just over 15.0 percent nationwide, compared to 12.8 percent for young female residents of Seattle and 14.1 percent nationally. Of particular note is the very low proportion of young mothers in Seattle; just 2 percent of young women ages 16 to 19 have children of their own, a proportion lower than every major city except for Boston and San Francisco.

## Youth Disconnection by Neighborhood

The Seattle metro area is made up of twenty-six neighborhood clusters. Among these districts, youth disconnection rates range from 22.0 percent in Fircrest, Lakewood, Steilacoom, and University Place to 5.3 percent in the University District and North Seattle neighborhood. This variation of 16.7 between the lowest and highest rates of youth disconnection by neighborhood places Seattle among the cities with the smallest range of values across their metro areas.

Although there are certainly correlations between the racial and ethnic breakdown and the rate of youth disconnection in each of these neighborhoods, these trends are less stark in Seattle than in many of the other major US metro areas.

## Halve the Gap in Seattle



### Most Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
University District and North Seattle, WA	5.3
Beaux Arts Village, Issaquah, Mercer Island, Newcastle, and Sammamish, King County, WA	5.4
Ballard, Fremont, and Northwest Seattle, WA	7.7

### Least Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
Burien, Normandy Park, Sea Tac, and Tukwila, King County, WA	18.9
Tacoma, WA	20.4
Fircrest, Lakewood, Steilacoom, and University Place, Pierce County, WA	22.0