MEASURE OF AMERICA
of the Social Science Research Council

ZEROING IN ON RACE AND PLACE
YOUTH DISCONNECTION IN AMERICA'S CITIES

Zeroing in on Place and Race: *Youth Disconnection in America's Cities* builds on Measure of America's earlier work on the topic of youth disconnection to rank ninety-eight of the nation's one hundred most populous metropolitan areas—and racial and ethnic groups within those areas—in terms of the percentage of young people ages 16 to 24 who are neither working nor in school. This note describes the methods and definitions used to calculate these youth disconnection rates as well as other indicators presented in ***Zeroing in on Place and Race.***

Who Is Considered a "Disconnected Youth"?

Youth disconnection rates in this report are calculated by Measure of America using employment and enrollment data from the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) of the US Census Bureau. 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 who are actively looking for work are considered disconnected. 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.

Methods

Unless otherwise noted, all youth disconnection estimates presented in the report nationally and by metro area are from Measure of America's analysis of the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 2013. Demographic data for metro areas are from the US Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program (July 1st, 2013 population estimates) and from the 2013 ACS. The ACS is an annual survey conducted by the Census Bureau that samples a subset of the overall population. As with any data drawn from surveys, there is some degree of sampling and nonsampling error inherent in the data. Thus, comparisons between similar values on any indicator should be made with caution since these differences may not be statistically significant.

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In order to arrive at the percentage of disconnected youth, the total number of disconnected young people and the total number of young people overall are calculated for each metro area from the ACS Public Use Microdata Sample. **Not in school** means that a young person has not attended any educational institution and has also not been home schooled at any time in the three months prior to the survey date. **Not working** means that a young person is either unemployed or not in the labor force at the time they responded to the survey. Disconnected youth are young people who are simultaneously not in school and not working. This population cannot be estimated by simply adding the number of young people not enrolled in school to the number of young people not working because many students in this age range do not work and many young workers are not in school.

The employment and enrollment data needed to calculate youth disconnection for metro areas are not available directly by metro area from the ACS. Metro areas were built up by Measure of America from the Census Bureau's Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) that make up metro areas. In cases where a PUMA falls partially within two or more metro areas, it is included in the metro area where it shares the largest population. The data are from ACS 1-year 2013 from the "United States Population Records" file.

Due to changes by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in the definitions of metro areas, findings from this report for specific metro areas are not directly comparable to findings from Measure of America's two earlier reports on youth disconnection: ***One in Seven: Ranking Youth Disconnection in the 25 Largest Metro Areas*** and ***Halve the Gap: Youth Disconnection in America's Cities.***

Identifying the Largest Metro Areas

The US Census Bureau FactFinder provides a list of Metro Statistical Areas (MSAs) by population size. The population estimates used in this report were from the Factfinder of July 1st, 2013—to match the 2013 data in the report. The top one hundred MSAs include Madison, Wisconsin and Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville, Florida. But because the standard errors of the youth disconnection estimates for these two metro areas were too large to provide reliable estimates, these two MSAs are not included in this report.

Definitions

Disability. Disability status in this report refers to any enduring emotional, physical, or mental condition that makes everyday activities like walking, dressing, or remembering things difficult and restricts an individuals' ability to work or to perform basic required tasks without assistance. This is self-reported; individuals who report having such a condition in the ACS are counted as having a disability. Those who do not are counted as not having a disability.

Employment-to-Population Ratio. The Employment-to-Population Ratio is the ratio of the total number of people employed to the total population. When this indicator is shown as a percentage of youth ages 16 to 24 who are not in school, both the total employed and the total population are restricted to only those youth who are not enrolled in school.

Group Quarters. The US Census Bureau refers to people who live in any kind of non-household living arrangement as living in "group quarters". These can be *institutional* group quarters such as correctional or supervised medical facilities or *non-institutional* group quarters such as college or university dormitories, military bases, or group homes. One of the primary advantages of using the ACS as the data source for this research is that the survey includes young people living in both types of group quarters.

Metro Area. Metro areas used in this report are formally known as Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), geographic areas defined by the OMB and used by the US Census Bureau and other government entities. MSAs constitute counties grouped around an urban center and include outlying suburban and exurban counties from which a substantial percentage of the population commutes to the urban center for work.

Public Use Microdata Areas. Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) are sub–state geographic units designated by the US Census Bureau. PUMAs have populations of at least 100,000 and generally less than 200,000 residents.

Race and Ethnic Groups. Racial and ethnic groups in this report are based on definitions established by the OMB and used by the Census Bureau and other government entities. Since 1997, this office has recognized five racial groups and two ethnic categories. The racial groups include Native Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders, and whites. The ethnic categories are Latino and not Latino. People of Latino ethnicity may be of any race. In this report, members of each of these racial groups include *only non-Latino members of these groups.* Measure of America recognizes that Native Americans and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders constitute two of the five racial groups recognized by the OMB. However, due to the very small population sizes of these groups in most metropolitan areas, and the even-smaller population of those ages 16 to 24, we cannot present reliable estimates of youth disconnection for these groups. In addition, for this same reason, we are unable to present estimates for some of the four major racial ethnic groups for some metro areas. These are denoted in the report's tables with a blank.

Cost of Disconnected Youth in 2013

We estimate that in 2013, the most recent year for which data are available, the 5.5 million disconnected youth cost **$26.8 billion** in direct social assistance. This figure sums the four most direct costs recorded for disconnected youth: incarceration costs, Medicaid, public assistance payments (PAP) and Supplemental Security Income payments (SSIP).

COST TYPE	COSTS IN 2013 ($ IN MILLIONS)
Incarceration	11,192
Medicaid	12,366
Public Assistance Payments (PAP)	741
Supplemental Security Income payments (SSI)	2,490
Total	26,789

These figures were arrived at using the following sources:

Incarceration. The number of disconnected youth in prison, estimated from the 2013 ACS Public Use Microdata Sample as the total institutionalized population, 357,732, and the average annual cost per inmate of $31,286, calculated by the Vera Institute.[1] This figure includes only costs incurred for the state prison population. The cost of disconnected youth in city and county jails is not accounted for in this calculation.

Medicaid. The number of disconnected youth receiving Medicaid benefits, estimated from the 2013 ACS Public Use Microdata Sample as 1,635,432, and the average Medicaid expenditure cost of $7,750, calculated using annual Medicaid expenditure estimates from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Office of the Actuary, National Health Statistics Group, 2010 data.

Public Assistance Payments and Supplemental Security Income Payments. The total amount received by disconnected youth, calculated from the 2013 ACS Public Use Microdata Sample.

Segregation and Disconnected Youth.

The conclusion about the impact of concentrated racial segregation in metro areas on youth disconnection (see page 16 of the report) was arrived at using a mixed-effects multi-level logistical regression. The model predicts the likelihood that a young person is disconnected taking individual and metro-area level characteristics (and their interaction) into account. The dependent variable is the percentage of disconnected youth. The independent variables at the metro-area level are the percentage of poor youth, the percentage of black youth, and William H. Frey's white-black Index of Dissimilarity for metro areas. Frey's Index was used to quantify the level of segregation in a metro area.[2]

The Dissimilarity Index measures the difference in the location of blacks and whites across neighborhoods within the same metro area. The Index scale ranges from zero to 100 with zero indicating the highest level of integration and 100 indicating the highest level of population segregation. The Index value can be interpreted as "the percentage of one group that would have to change neighborhoods to be residentially distributed exactly the same as the other group."[2] The relative size of the minority group within a metropolitan area does not affect the Index statistic. Frey calculated Index values for ninety-seven of the ninety-eight metro areas that form the basis of this report. Individual characteristics accounted for in the models include race and gender.

At the individual level, we include a binary variable for black youth. Finally, a variable is included to capture the interaction between Frey's Index and the black individual. The output suggests that the higher the level of white-black segregation within a metro area, the higher the likelihood of youth disconnection for blacks and the lower the likelihood for white youth disconnection. The percentage of blacks in the metro area is not a significant predictor of youth disconnection, once we control for the level of white-black segregation.

[1] Henrichson, Christian and Ruth Delaney. "The Price of Prisons: What Incarceration Costs Taxpayers." Vera Institute of Justice, January 2012. http://www.vera.org/pubs/special/price-prisons-what-incarceration-costs-taxpayers.
[2] Frey, William H. "The New Metro Minority Map". Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program. August 2011.