



## **SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL'S MEASURE OF AMERICA PROGRAM REPORT REVEALS SIX STRAIGHT YEARS OF IMPROVEMENT IN RATES OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION IN AMERICA**

“More Than a Million Reasons for Hope” Shows Obstacles for Reconnecting to School and Work Faced Disproportionately by Young People of Color and Youth Living in Poverty

BROOKLYN, NY (March 19, 2018) -- [The Social Science Research Council's](#) (SSRC) [Measure of America](#) program has released its latest report on disconnected youth, teens and young adults ages 16–24 who are neither working nor in school, which shows a six-year improvement in the disconnection rate in the United States. However, challenges persist, especially for young people of color and people living in poverty.

The report, [More Than a Million Reasons for Hope: Youth Disconnection in the US Today](#), is newly published and will debut today at the Sixth National Reengagement Plus Convening in Philadelphia, sponsored by the National League of Cities, with local sponsors Philadelphia Youth Network and Project U-Turn, in partnership with the National Youth Employment Coalition and the School District of Philadelphia.

Measure of America has been tracking data on disconnected youth since 2008. “More Than a Million Reasons for Hope” is the latest in a [series of in-depth reports](#) it has published on the issue.

Among the report's key findings are:

- One in nine American youth are disconnected from school and the labor market today (11.7 percent), down from one in seven (14.7 percent) in the aftermath of the Great Recession.
- 1.2 million fewer young people are disconnected from school and the workforce, representing a 20 percent drop in the youth disconnection rate since 2010.
- The youth unemployment rate today is roughly half of what it was in 2010.

- Yet, despite the steady progress, 4.6 million young Americans remain disconnected from school and work.
- Although the youth disconnection rate dropped for all racial and ethnic groups between 2010 and 2016, those who remain disconnected are disproportionately people of color, live in poverty, and have barriers to employment like involvement with the criminal justice system.

According to the report, “the continued economic recovery, the sharp drop in the youth unemployment rate, and the highest high school graduation rate on record have together improved the fortunes of America’s young people.”

“Although the youth disconnection rate improved for all racial and ethnic groups between 2010 and 2016, the distance between the groups with the highest and lowest disconnection rates did not narrow appreciably,” said Kristen Lewis, co-director of Measure of America, will present the data. “Preventing disconnection and reengaging those whose ties to school have long since frayed requires proven, multipronged strategies, adequate resources, wraparound services, involving youth in planning programs that will serve them, and finally, patience, understanding, and a long-term commitment.”

“Measure of America has been a leader in data and analysis about this critical population since its first report on the topic in 2012,” said Alondra Nelson, president of the Social Science Research Council. “This report exemplifies the SSRC’s commitment to research on critical social issues that advances the public good and informs public debate.”

The work of Measure of America is guided by an Advisory Committee, which includes leaders at the vanguard in addressing the issue.

“Measure of America’s research has given the field – leaders from business, government, and nonprofits – valuable data and insights that helps us better understand the issues facing the country’s disconnected youth. These MOA reports allow us to make better-informed decisions and find solutions that work,” said Gail Gershon, Executive Director, Community Leadership, Gap Inc. and a member of the Measure of America Advisory Committee. “That makes this

research vital for the future well-being and prosperity of our country, our communities, and for these young adults who deserve the opportunity to fulfill their potential and achieve their goals.”

An interactive website with data by state, metro area, and race and ethnicity can be found at [www.measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive](http://www.measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive).

### **About the Social Science Research Council**

The Social Science Research Council (SSRC) is an independent, international nonprofit with the mission of mobilizing social science for the public good. Founded in 1923, the SSRC fosters research innovation, nurtures new generations of researchers, deepens inquiry within and across disciplines and sectors, and mobilizes necessary knowledge on important public issues. Based in Brooklyn, NY, the SSRC’s 22 programs span the US and the world. For more information on the SSRC and its programs, please visit [www.ssrc.org](http://www.ssrc.org).

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