

Chicago Department of Family & Support Services

# YOUTH SERVICES STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO BOOK

2023 PROGRAM PORTFOLIO AND STRATEGIES





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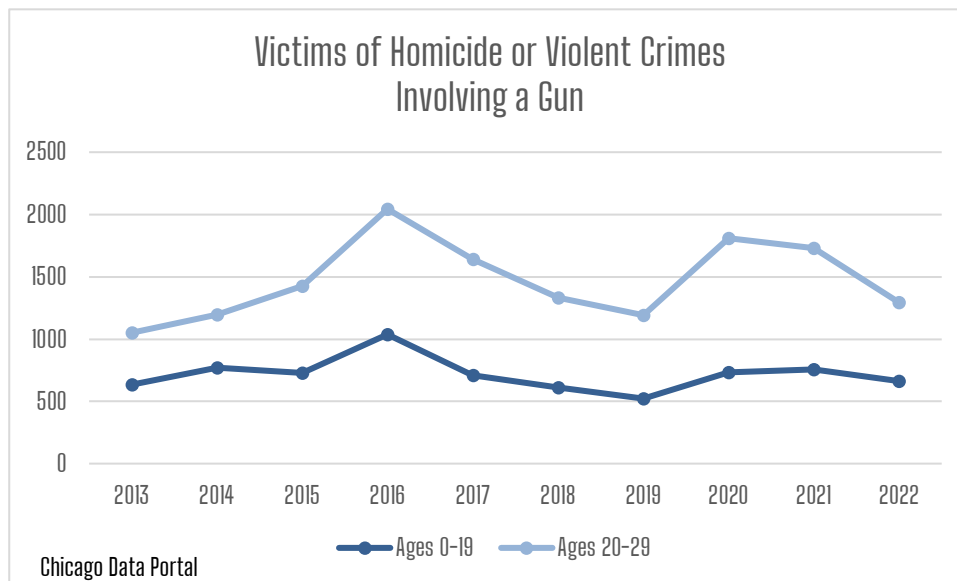
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# BACKGROUND

The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) Youth Services Division serves youth 6 to 24 years old with a portfolio of services designed to support them in reaching their full potential as community members, students and leaders, entrepreneurs, and career professionals. Through our Enrichment, Youth Employment, and Prevention and Intervention portfolios, programs and initiatives support improved skill building, relationship development, educational achievement, mentorship, and employment.

## Prevalence and Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Youth

Over the last three years, youth nationwide have been challenged by the profound health, economic, educational, and societal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. School closures and remote instruction have significantly impacted learning, academic achievement, and school engagement. Reduced social interactions have decreased self-esteem and increased feelings of isolation and anxiety, which has worsened the already alarming youth mental health crisis. Youth unemployment spiked during the pandemic, and while it has receded to near pre-pandemic levels, unemployment for youth ages 16-24 remains higher than other age groups. Startlingly, these social, emotional, and economic effects have been noted to cause secondary behaviors such as aggression, violence, and bullying. You can see the effects on gun violence in the chart below, which illustrates a spike in gun violence victimization in 2020 and 2021 among youth and young adults in Chicago.



According to Chapin Hall, rates of food and housing insecurity increased, with black youth and young adults reporting the most significant disadvantages<sup>ii</sup>. COVID exacerbated societal inequalities and has long-term implications for social and health outcomes. Furthermore, Black and Latinx youth and youth in low-income families face higher rates of unemployment than White youth and youth from more affluent households. Compared to before the pandemic, youth in Chicago are spending less time with their friends in person, less time outside and being physically active, choosing instead to connect with peers online<sup>iii</sup>.

## Federal and State Priorities

In 2021, the US Surgeon General released a report<sup>iv</sup> on Protecting Youth Mental Health in response to the effects of the pandemic on youth. Following this report, President Biden outlined a strategy to improve the landscape of mental health services and increase access for youth. The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act of 2022 led to increased funding for youth mental health services. In addition, President Biden announced a strategy to combat gun violence across the country. Part of this strategy is to increase investments in community violence interventions, including programming that connects people to wraparound services such as social, health and wellness, and economic supports. The strategy also aims to expand summer programming, employment opportunities, and other services and supports for teenagers and young adults.

The State of Illinois has also increased its investment in violence prevention as part of the Reimagine Public Safety Act (RPSA), a three-year approach to violence prevention that calls for research backed services like summer and afterschool programming, job training and placement, high-risk youth intervention services, violence interruption, case management, and more. In addition to the new investments from the RPSA, the Illinois Department of Human Services has committed to deepening existing youth development programs across the state.

## Local Landscape

These challenges are felt deeply in Chicago. The pandemic and its lingering effects have intensified the need for a comprehensive and data-driven approach to designing and implementing youth services. The effects of the pandemic have influenced DFSS to target youth who need services most, to increase the availability of wrap-around services, and to re-evaluate the way we measure successful outcomes. Youth themselves have persistently called for more youth-driven programming and access to spaces where they feel safe and a sense of belonging<sup>v</sup>.

In 2021, the City of Chicago launched the Community Safety Coordination Center (CSCC) to coordinate a comprehensive approach for addressing the root causes of community violence by implementing short and long-term strategies to rebuild the physical environment, create a thriving economy, and support residents in addressing their individual and family needs. DFSS is an active participant in the CSCC, providing expertise in youth violence prevention programming and services.

The needs of Chicago's young people—identified from community and youth feedback, gap analysis, and national and local best practices—are the key drivers in informing the development of the Youth Services Division's programming and continuously shape the division's priorities, goals, and the scope of services we provide. The division's efforts and resources are focused on the needs of Chicago's youth with an eye towards obtaining the greatest impact.

# FUNDING

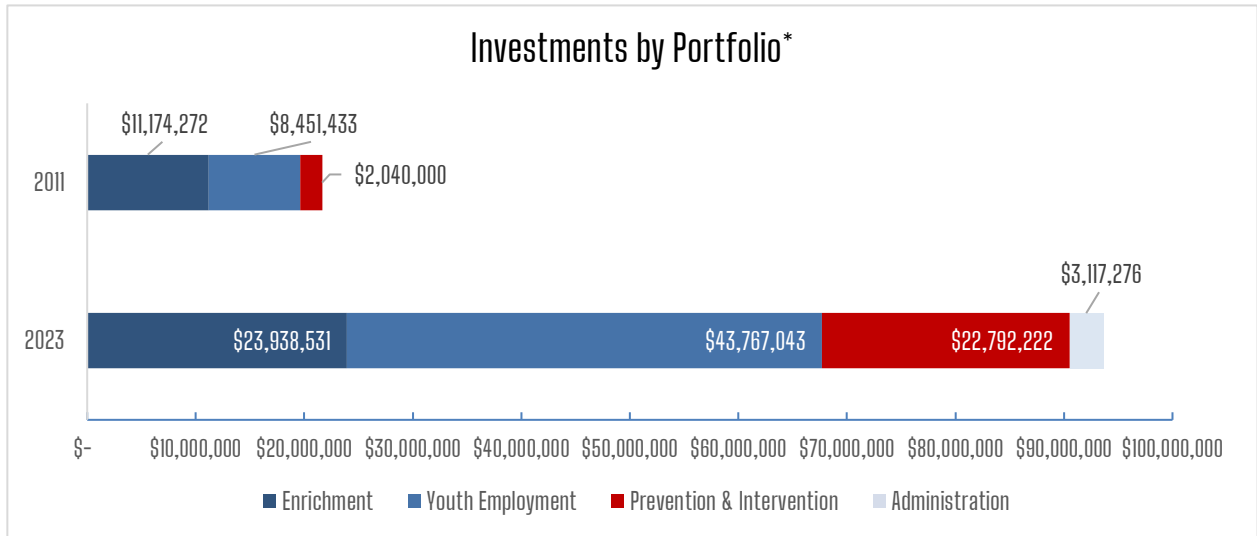


## How is Chicago Investing in Youth?

**2023 Total Investment \$90,497,796**

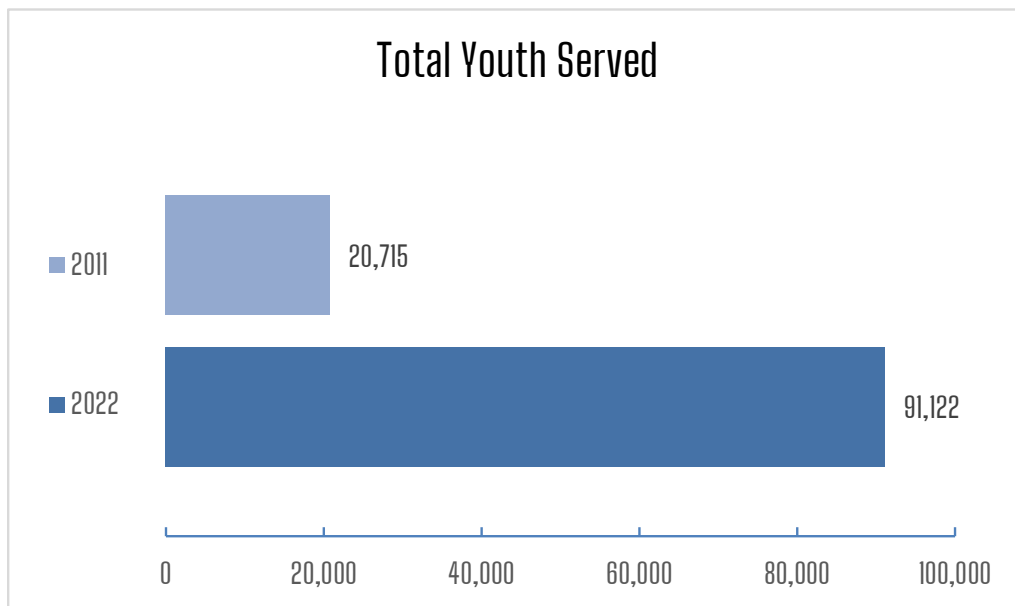
DFSS's current investments in youth services have grown significantly over the past 12 years, reflecting the City of Chicago's commitment to providing greater opportunities to at-risk youth and the department's equity-based approach to prioritizing groups who have the greatest needs due to being systematically disenfranchised. The department's commitment to youth services also benefits from \$97.5M in Chicago Recovery Plan funding which will be utilized through 2024.

You can see in the chart below the growth in investments within the Youth Services Division from 2011 to 2023. Total investments grew from \$21.6 million in 2011, to \$93.6 million in 2023, more than quadruple the 2011 total.



\*2011 staff salaries, fringe benefits, and other administrative costs are reflected in the total for each portfolio.

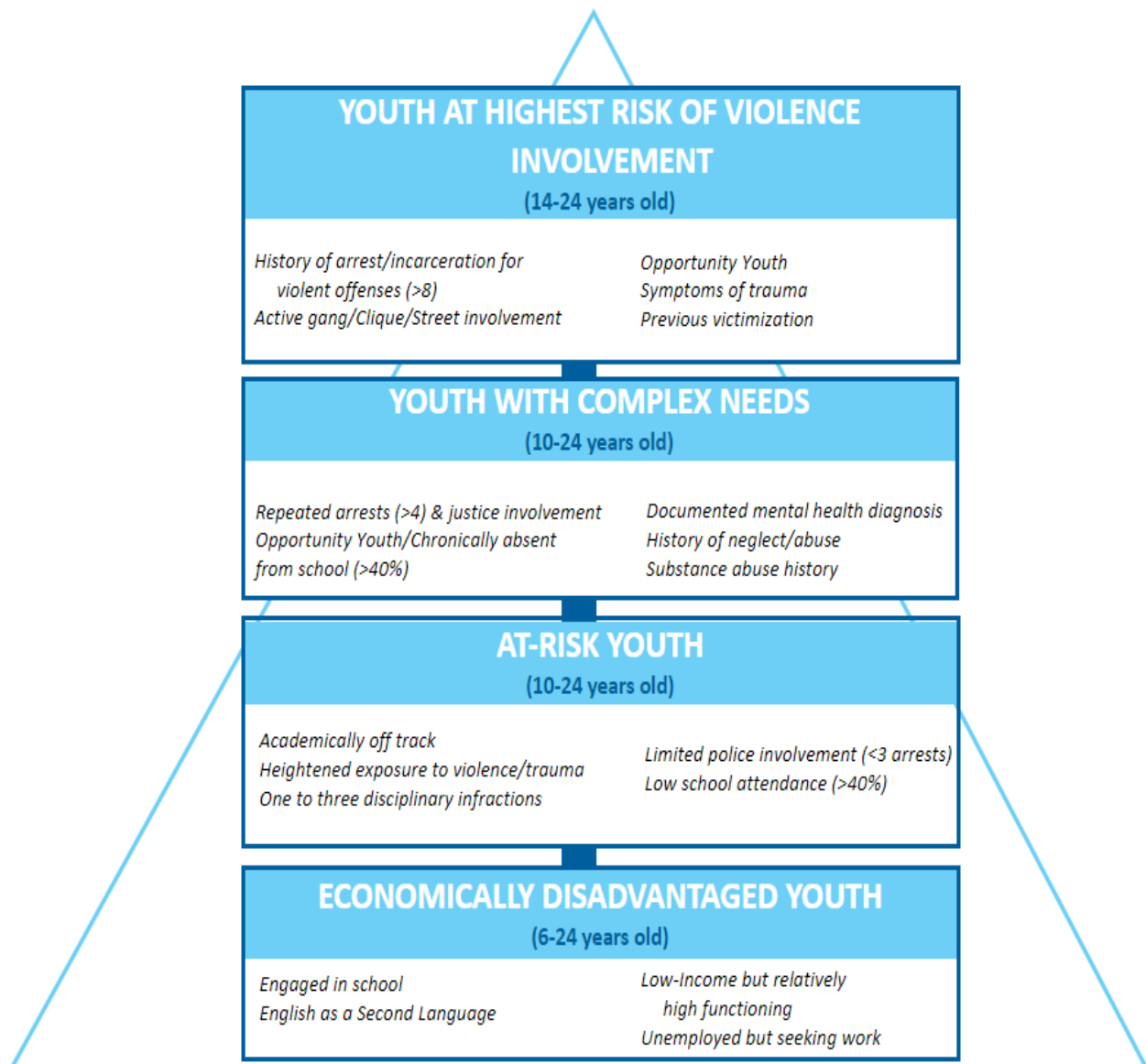
Due to the growth in overall investments over the past twelve years, DFSS has also grown its reach from serving 20,715 youth in 2011 to serving 91,122 youth in 2022, as illustrated in the chart below.



# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## Youth Intervention Philosophy

The “risk pyramid” below has allowed various stakeholders to establish a common language when discussing the needs of Chicago’s youth and how we serve and support them. As youth move up the risk pyramid, their needs change. Youth who are not connected to school, have been touched by the juvenile justice system, are experiencing homelessness, or require mental health assistance, will need more and different supports. Those youth at the top of the pyramid experience multiple and/or a severity of challenges. DFSS seeks to understand the evolving needs of Chicago’s youth and align our investments with those needs.





## Program Portfolios

The DFSS Youth Services Division programs are designed to support youth in reaching their full potential in their community, school, and work. As a social safety net for young people, DFSS pays careful attention to youth needs—identified from community and youth feedback, gap analysis, and national and local best practices—and the composition of their population to have the greatest impact. Building upon the City of Chicago’s history of providing human services for its most vulnerable residents, the Youth Services Division supports young people through programming in three distinct portfolios.



### Enrichment Portfolio

The Enrichment Portfolio provides structured, safe, and enriching activities for young people ages 6 to 21 outside of the classroom, during weekends, and while youth are on school breaks. Examples include academic support; career and vocational development; science, technology, engineering, arts, math (STEAM); arts and cultural activities; and sports. Research has found that out-of-school time programs foster protective factors in several ways, including providing children and youth with access to caring adults and by promoting their health and well-being. In 2023, 101 delegate agencies will deliver more than 300 programs across Chicago, serving over 10,000 youth ages 6 to 21.



### Prevention and Intervention Portfolio

The Prevention and Intervention portfolio serves youth ages 10 to 24 who may need more support because they are considered at risk, youth with complex needs, or at the highest risk of violence involvement. This can include youth that have exposure to violence, are disconnected from school, have been involved with law enforcement or the juvenile justice system, have unstable housing, or need mental health support. Prevention and Intervention programs also are focused on providing career training, juvenile justice programming, and reconnection to high school or a high school equivalency certificate. In 2023, Prevention and Intervention programs will be delivered by 60 delegate agencies across Chicago, serving over 22,200 participants.



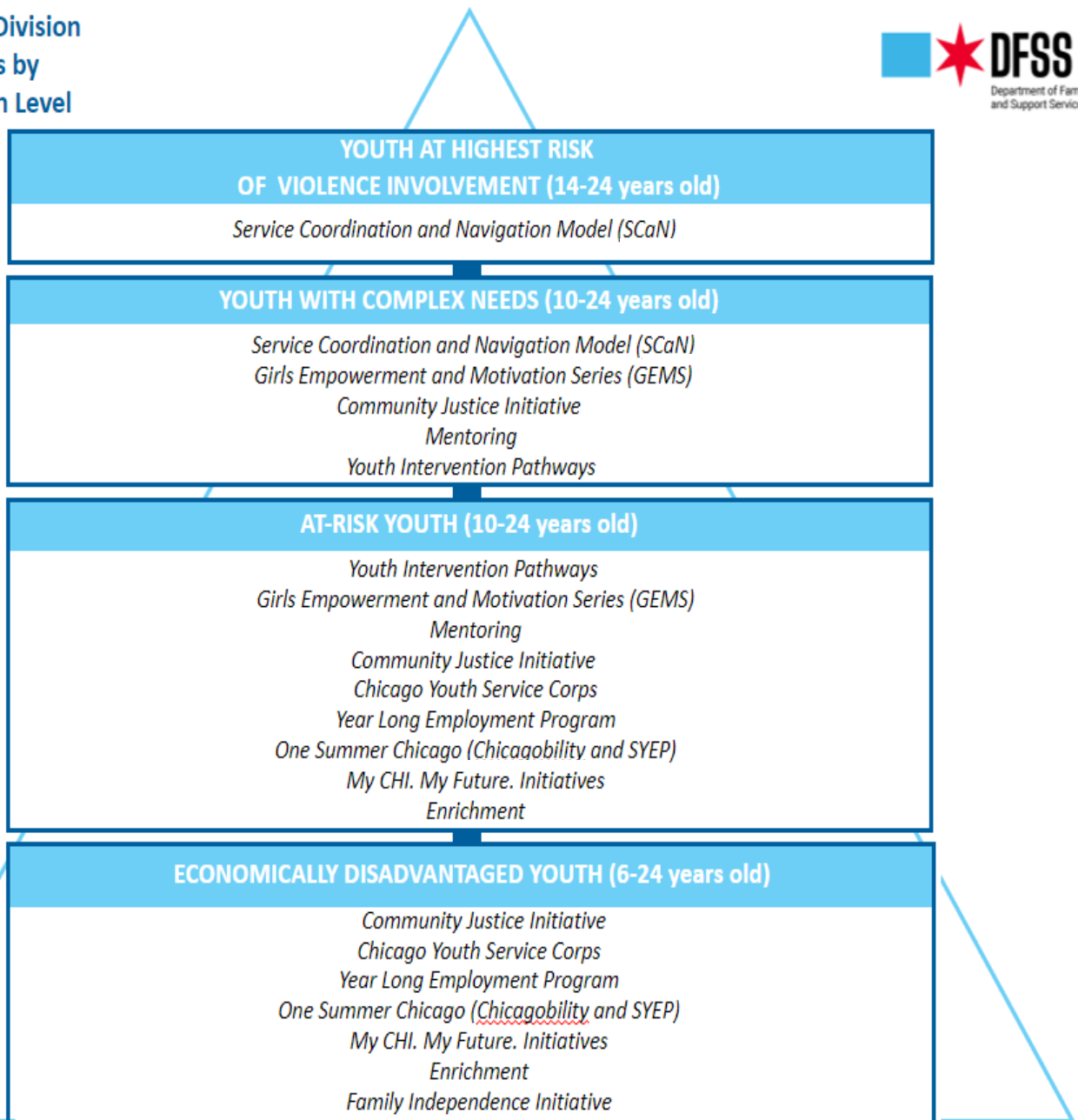
### Youth Employment Portfolio

The Youth Employment portfolio aims to equip young people in Chicago between the ages of 14 to 24 with the necessary skills and knowledge for their future careers through employment opportunities, career exploration, and service-learning programs. These programs aim to build work readiness, financial literacy, and leadership skills and facilitate positive high school and college transitions. One Summer Chicago (OSC) is the flagship program that provides paid job opportunities during the summer for young people aged 14 to 24. For ages 14 and 15, the program offers project-based learning and career exploration, while for ages 16 to 24, it offers subsidized employment and internship opportunities. In 2023, DFSS anticipates approximately 20,000 youth will be employed through OSC. DFSS has expanded beyond summer programming to provide year-round employment opportunities for 1,360 youth ages 16-24. In 2023, Youth Employment programs will be delivered by 55 delegate agencies across Chicago, serving approximately 20,000 youth ages 14 to 24.

## 2023 Program Initiatives by Risk Level

In light of historic patterns of racial and economic exclusion and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Chicago youth, the City of Chicago continues to fund programs and services for economically disadvantaged youth (our historic focus) while at the same time expanding services to youth who are higher on the risk pyramid.

### 2023 Youth Division Initiatives by Intervention Level



## Program Models

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### Enrichment Program Models

**CHA Enrichment Programs:** An initiative for residents of Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) properties ages 6 to 21. Programs implement safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging positive youth development activities reflective of the needs, interests, and goals of those young people and their communities. Approximately 400 young people participate annually in the program.

**Enrichment Programs:** These programs deliver high-quality out-of-school time experiences citywide that meet the needs of children and youth through safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging activities, especially for those who are in community areas where youth have had adverse experiences and have fewer opportunities to participate in activities. Programs must use a positive youth development framework that promotes learning, leadership, and positive peer-to-peer social connections.

- School Year:** 300 total program hours a year, including during winter and spring breaks and may include evening and weekend hours.
- Summer:** 120 total program hours a summer for at least 6 weeks and may include evening and weekend hours.
- Year Round:** 360 total program hours a year, including during winter, spring, and summer breaks and may include evening and weekend hours.

**My CHI. My Future. Initiatives:** These programs provide out-of-school community events for youth and families, youth employment opportunities for youth ages 16 to 24, and community engagement support in 19 community areas across the City, in partnership with the Mayor's Office. Positive relationships with caring adults, opportunities for economic growth, and activities that foster community connectedness are central to the My CHI. My Future. mission and have been proven to prevent violence among youth.

- The **Community Anchor Organization Initiative** provides support for anchor organizations to convene community-based organizations in 19 community areas, with the goal of strengthening local, youth-serving opportunity ecosystems.
- The **Micro-Grant Program** provides funding for a single delegate agency to distribute funding to community-based organizations in 19 community areas, with a goal of mobilizing and connecting young people of all ages to engaging and meaningful out-of-school time programming in their communities.
- The **Year-Round Safe Spaces for Youth** program will provide year-round programming for youth and families and youth employment opportunities for youth ages 16 to 24 in 19 community areas.



*One Summer Chicago Youth Participants paint a mural in Ogden Park*

## Prevention and Intervention Program Models

**Community Justice Initiative (CJI):** CJI is aimed at educating and providing resources to address legal challenges faced by many Chicago residents. CJI consists of “Know Your Rights” trainings, legal consultation or representation for qualified residents, and more.

**Family Independence Initiative (FII):** FII cultivates economic and social mobility for families by providing access to peer networks, facilitating goal setting, and accessing flexible dollars. FII has identified interested families with annual incomes below the local median income level primarily from communities targeted in the Invest South/West Community Improvement Initiative (Austin, Auburn Gresham, Englewood, Humboldt Park, Quad Communities, North Lawndale, New City, Roseland, South Shore, South Chicago) and in other communities on the south and west sides of Chicago. Families make a two-year commitment to work towards their goals.

**Girls’ Empowerment and Motivation Series (GEMS):** GEMS provides justice-involved girls ages 10 to 17 with at least one hour per week of facilitated group engagement sessions for three months and three months of post-program follow up. Participants have access to a range of supportive services based on individual need. The project also aims to increase the capacity of the juvenile justice system through comprehensive training opportunities and by assessing current administrative procedures to ensure gender-responsive elements are present.

**Mentoring:** The Mentoring program provides in-school and out-of-school support for youth with complex needs ages 12 to 24 to help them transition successfully into adulthood. The mentoring program provides cohort-based, trauma-informed mentoring for 45 hours annually. Mentoring offers youth critical emotional, cognitive, and behavioral support through consistent interaction to promote their social, emotional, and cognitive growth into adulthood. Youth who engage in mentoring experience a safe space, a strong relationship with a caring mentor, and understand and grow their social and emotional competence.

**Service Coordination and Navigation Model (SCaN):** SCaN is a strengths-based, youth-driven program model that connects young people at the highest risk of violence involvement with the services that meet their individual needs. Youth are paired with a navigator who provides comprehensive support to help youth identify and accomplish individualized goals by connecting them to programs, services, and benefits necessary to build a stable pathway to success. SCaN operates in 31 communities and serves youth ages 14 to 24 at the highest risk of violence involvement.

**Youth Intervention Pathways (YIP):** The Youth Intervention Pathways program provides up to 90 days of case management support for youth who have had interactions with police. Services are offered citywide to youth ages 10 to 17 that have been referred by police in any Police District. The YIP program is built on a restorative, trauma-informed framework that prioritizes and fosters youth agency, wraparound family supports, and social-emotional skill building. YIP replaces the Juvenile Intervention and Support Center (JISC), which ceased operations in May 2023.



*Youth participant at 2019 Project Innovation showcase*

## Youth Employment Program Models

Youth employment programs are an investment in our city's future economy and workforce that equips young people with the skills needed to positively impact their communities. The DFSS Youth Employment program models all fall under the umbrella of **One Summer Chicago** (OSC) flagship program. Since the launch of OSC, the DFSS has expanded youth employment beyond summer through the following program models.

**Chicagobility:** Chicagobility is the first steppingstone of career exploration and summer work opportunities within One Summer Chicago. Youth ages 14 and 15 receive a paid stipend for their participation in 120 hours of project-based activities and career exploration over the course of six weeks. At least 50% of participating youth identify with one or more of the program's at-risk population groups.

**Chicago Youth Service Corps (CYSC):** CYSC is a year-long civic leadership program that provides young Chicagoans with the opportunity to build leadership and life skills through activities that make a positive impact in their communities. Participants analyze problems in their community, and then research and implement solutions to those problems. Founded as a six-week program in 2020, CYSC has expanded to serve more than 880 participants each year, all of whom earn \$15.40 per hour for up to 460 hours over 40 weeks. At least 40% of participating youth identify with one or more of the program's at-risk population groups.

**Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP):** SYEP is a six-week program that provides youth and young adults with job placement or specialized training opportunities during the summer months. Youth ages 16 to 24 earn \$15.40 per hour for 20 hours each week over a six-week period. At least 50% of participating youth identify with one or more of the program's at-risk population groups. SYEP's specialized training programs include the following:

- Augmented Reality:** The Augmented Reality program is designed for participants to build a solid foundation in using AR fundamentals using Reality Composer. Reality Composer is a powerful tool that allows students to create in 3D, transforming how students learn and connect with the world around them using Augmented Reality.
- Economic Awareness Council (EAC):** EAC trains "Peer Money Mentors" to lead financial capability orientations for young people to learn about banking, saving and direct deposit. OSC's Money Mentor outreach program is one of the largest in the country.
- Everyone Can Code Internship Program:** This internship program is designed as a work-based learning opportunity in which technology professionals mentor small groups of aspiring coding students through hands-on, project-based activities. Employer projects are scoped out to facilitate candidate matching and to prepare interns with tools for success in their internship. Participants also develop soft skills, such as collaboration, creativity, communication, leadership, and responsibility, along with problem-solving, analytic thinking, and core technical skills.
- Game Design:** In this program, participants are guided to develop their creative voices to effect change and introduce ideas to others. The six-week intensive focuses on journaling and self-exploration to create graphic design, games, and interactive experiences. Participants learn how to create games and explore graphic design.

- **iOS Training Program:** The iOS training program is designed for participants to build a solid foundation in programming fundamentals using the Swift programming language. Participants gain practical experience with the tools, techniques, and concepts needed to build a basic iOS app. They also learn user interface design principles, which are fundamental to programming and app design. For their capstone projects, individual participants begin by developing ideas on how to solve community problems, then move towards a team structure to develop working prototypes. Each team presents their work in a culminating student app showcase.
- **Northwestern TunePad:** The TunePad project combines elements of musical performance with computer coding. The tournament-style event elevates coding to the level of performance art in a unique competition that is equal parts musical performance, spoken word festival, freestyle rap battle, robotics club, and hackathon. As participants learn, they expand their resumes with marketable skills in Python computer programming, data analysis, digital signal processing, music technology and more. No prior music or computer programming skills are required.
- **Photography for All:** A program designed to give youth who are visually impaired new outlets to express their artistic ability while gaining the independence and confidence to carry them successfully through life. It also provides the opportunity for participants to stretch their imaginations and engage with art in ways previously inaccessible to them.
- **Video Program:** This documentary filmmaking intensive is designed to provide all essential skill sets for a job in film: pre-production, camera operation, lighting, sound, and video editing. Participants receive extensive training while exploring the power of their personal narrative. Working in small teams, participants create an original short documentary.

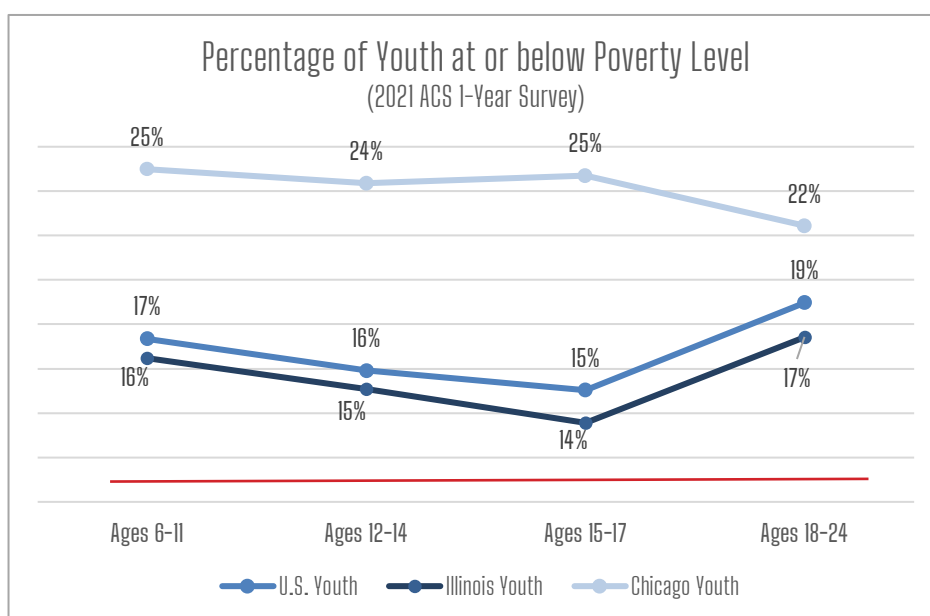
**Year Long Employment Program:** This career transition program provides training, work readiness skills, and access to paid work-based learning opportunities and skills attainment programs for youth ages 16 to 24. The goal of this program is that each youth participant will transition to employment, an apprenticeship, postsecondary education, or enlist in the military by the end of the program. Youth work 10-20 hours per week and earn \$15.40 per hour for 40 weeks (6 weeks during the summer, 34 weeks year-round).



Youth Participants at the One Summer Chicago, Everyone Can Code & Create Showcase

## Youth Program Participant Demographics

At the root of many social challenges facing youth in Chicago today is poverty. The chart below, of the percentage of youth at or below the poverty level in the US, Illinois and Chicago, illustrates this challenge. Youth in Chicago have higher rates of poverty compared to both the US as a whole and the state of Illinois. The poverty rate for youth in Chicago hovers around 25% for all age groups, however the poverty rate dips to 22% for youth ages 18-24 in Chicago. This contrasts with the US and Illinois which see increased poverty rates for youth ages 18-24. You will find additional breakdowns of demographic data for youth in Chicago and youth participants in DFSS programming below.



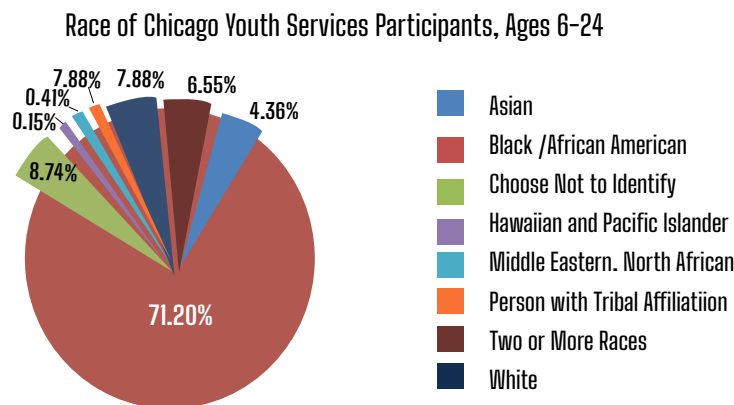
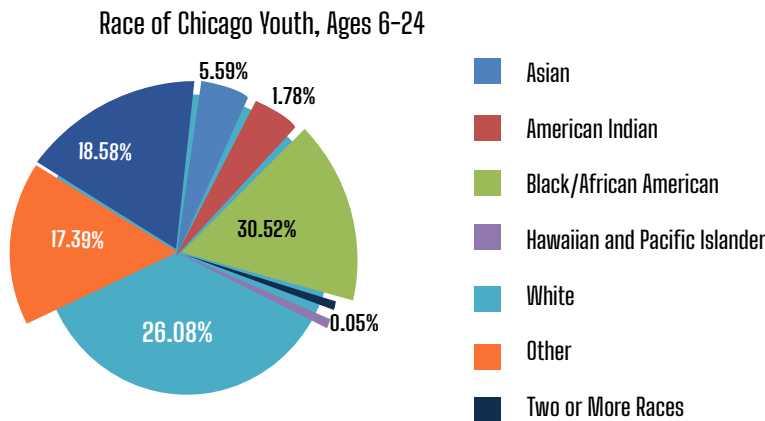
According to the 2021 American Community Survey, over 17% of Chicagoans live below the poverty line. While the overall poverty rate has improved, these gains mask differences by race and age. Nearly a quarter of all Chicago's youth ages 6 to 24 and nearly a third of Chicago's Black youth live in poverty. DFSS uses such data to help inform its investment strategies. The tables below illustrate that not only is the poverty rate higher in Chicago compared to the US, but the effects of poverty are also disproportionately felt by youth of color, particularly Black youth. This one of the key drivers of who DFSS targets for our programming, which aims to provide a safety net to young people and equip them with the skills and opportunities to reach their full potential.

### Youth Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, United States Compared to Chicago

Race	United States Youth, Ages 6-24			Chicago Youth, Ages 6-24		
	Total Population	Below Poverty Line	Poverty Rate	Total Population	Below Poverty Line	Poverty Rate
All Races	77,192,968	13,345,546	17.3%	587,564	140,106	23.8%
White Alone, Non-Hispanic/Latinx	41,321,454	5,647,950	13.7%	153,216	23,162	14.3%
Black Alone	10,234,000	2,814,007	27.5%	179,310	59,051	32.9%
Hispanic / Latinx	19,510,635	4,077,273	20.9%	228,693	48,313	21.1%

Youth Services Division program participants come from a range of backgrounds and from all areas of Chicago. The median youth participant is an African American, non-Hispanic/Latinx youth age 16 or 17, from either the West side or South side of Chicago. You can see a full demographic breakdown of 2022 youth participants compared to the population of all Chicago youth, in the charts below.

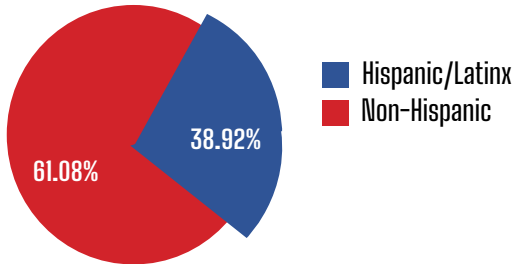
Compared to the general youth population of Chicago, Youth Program participants are more likely to be Black/African American. Of the general population, 30.5% are Black/African American, compared to 71.2% of Youth Program participants.





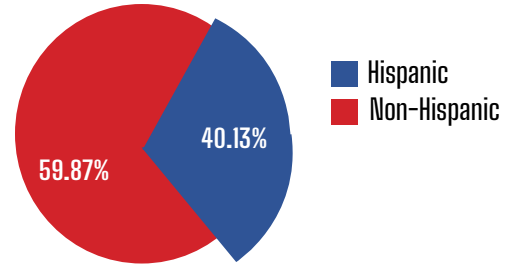
In contrast, the ethnicity of Youth Program participants is fairly similar to the overall youth population of Chicago. Of the general population, 38.9% of youth are Hispanic/Latinx, compared to 40.1% of Youth Program participants.

Ethnicity of Chicago Youth, Ages 6-24



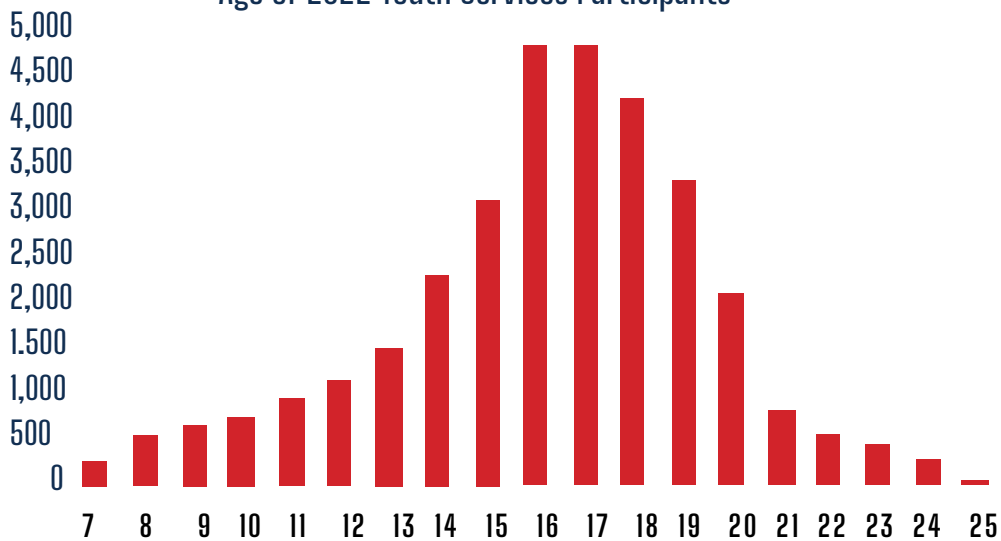
2021 ACS 1-Year Survey

Ethnicity of 2022 Youth Services Participants



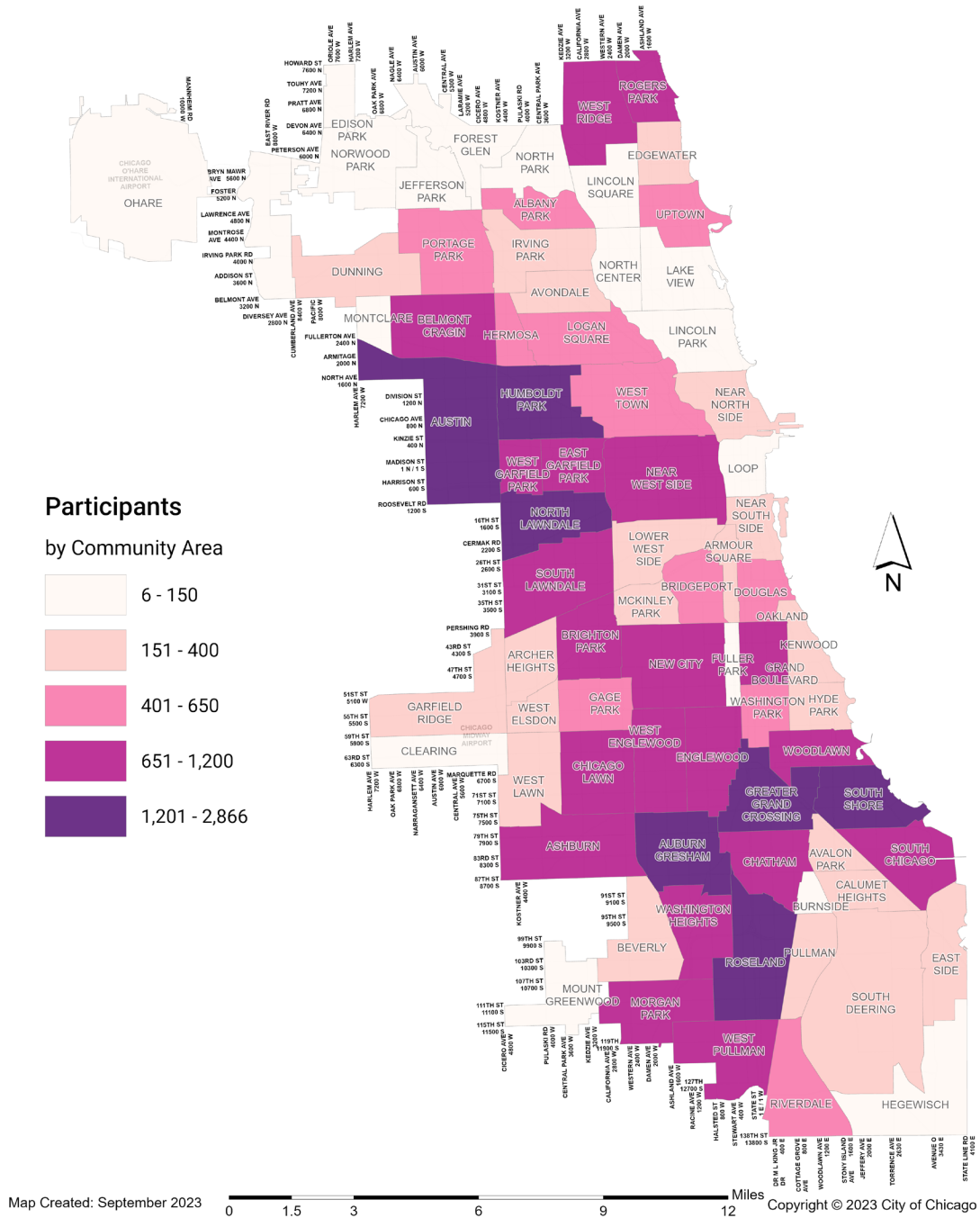
Though Youth Services Division programming is open to youth ages 6-24, the majority of youth participants in DFSS programs fall within the ages of 14-19 years old. You can see a complete breakdown of youth participants' ages in the chart below.

Age of 2022 Youth Services Participants



The map below represents the residential addresses of 43,870\* Youth Services Division program participants in 2022. Lower participant numbers in some Community Areas depend on many factors, including lower population density and unknown addresses.

## 2022 Youth Services Program Participants by Community Area



\*Map excludes CJI participants, MCMF event attendees, and Skilled Trades Fair participants, where addresses are not collected.

# MEASURABLE GOALS

## Target Populations

As a component of DFSS's Commitment to Outcomes, each of the Youth Services Division's program models aims to specifically identify and prioritize groups that have the greatest need for services. Some programs require 40% or more of opportunities be directed to youth identifying with one or more of the groups listed below:

- Youth with a disability.
- Youth who are English as a Second Language learners.
- Youth who are enrolled in Chicago Public Schools Level 2, Level 3, and Options schools.
- Youth who are experiencing homelessness or are unstably housed.
- Youth in the foster care system and/or transitioning out of care.
- Youth who are justice involved (e.g., parole, probation).
- Opportunity Youth (ages 16-24 who are out of school and not working).
- Youth who are pregnant and/or parenting.

Youth Services Division staff work with stakeholders serving these population groups—including Chicago Public Schools, the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, Juvenile Probation, other DFSS program divisions, and more—to promote awareness of program opportunities and coordination to support enrollments. DFSS staff monitor program-level enrollment data to ensure agencies meet target population requirements and provide technical assistance when needed, including connections to recruitment and referral partners.



Youth Participants at the December 2022 Chicago Youth Service Corps Showcase

## Commitment to Outcomes

Over the last several years, DFSS has transitioned to a results-oriented and data-driven approach to delivering services. DFSS seeks to clearly describe, measure, and report on outcomes; use these outcomes to support decision-making; and drive greater collaboration within DFSS as well as between DFSS and the delegate agencies we fund. The Youth Services Division works with partners and stakeholders to develop an outcome-driven framework and service models that focus on whether youth are actually better off after receiving services, versus simply tracking how many youth participate in programs.

### **Youth Services Division programs are focused on the following goals:**

1. Youth Services programs will increase access to education, employment, and supportive services that assist in the achievement of youth-identified goals.
2. Youth services programs will support the development of protective factors including positive developmental relationships with adults and peers, intellectual development, emotional regulation, and a sense of safety.
3. Youth services programs will maximize enrollment and sustained participation (i.e., retention and completion) by youth, including meeting the programs' target population goals.

### **A representative sample of the Youth Services Division's 2022 program outcomes includes:**

- 86% of youth participating in 2022 Youth Services Division programs reported a positive developmental relationship with an adult or peers.
- 93.4% of youth participating in the Chicago Youth Service Corps in 2022 reported a growth in civic-minded attitudes and behaviors and 92.3% reported a growth in leadership development.
- 81% of youth participating in 2022 youth employment programs reported growth in work readiness skills for continued employment, including gaining new skills, exploring their interests, developing a clearer idea of what they want to do, and being challenged to try new things.
- 74% of youth participating in 2022 Enrichment programs reported learning a new skill or an increase in their skills after their program experience and 81% reported feeling a sense of belonging in their programs.
- 58.4% of youth participating in the 2022 and 2023 Service Coordination and Navigation program reported a growth in their sense of safety, which exceeded the goal of 50%.

Youth Services Division staff regularly monitor performance data at the agency, portfolio, and program level. This data informs progress reports, site visits, and discussions with DFSS leadership related to attendance, dosage, and completion goals, such as:

- 75% of youth in the Enrichment and Mentoring programs will meet the required program dosage.
- Average daily attendance of youth in Enrichment programs will be 80%.
- 55% of youth in SCan and 75% of youth in Youth Intervention Pathways will be successfully connected to additional supportive services (e.g. employment/vocational training, physical health and wellness, education, mental or behavioral health, legal, or housing) that assist in achievement of youth-identified goals.
- 85% of Chicagobility and SYEP youth will successfully complete  $\geq 95\%$  of available program hours (retention) and 95% will complete  $\geq 75\%$  of available program hours (retention).
- 20% of youth placements in Corporate Partnership jobs will be long-term opportunities.
- 80% of youth participating in the Mentoring program will report a growth in their social and emotional competencies.
- 75% of youth in the Youth Intervention Pathways program will demonstrate an increase in social emotional skills and 85% will sustain education or employment supports if identified as a targeted goal.

## Active Contract Management

The Youth Services Division prioritizes continuous improvement and the effective use of data to support agencies meeting their goals and the needs of their youth and communities. Agency staff across program models are required to attend quarterly active contract management sessions and learning cohorts, where program data is analyzed and discussed, peer-to-peer support is encouraged, and insights are gleaned to drive impactful changes to programming. Additionally, the Youth Services Division provides training and professional development sessions addressing youth development topics such as trauma-informed practices, youth mental health, building youth leadership, and centering youth identity and voice, which are identified as priorities by DFSS and delegate agency staff.

# 2023 AND BEYOND - LESSON FROM COVID-19

## CHICAGO YOUTH SERVICE CORPS

In the summer of 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chicago Youth Service Corps (CYSC) was created to offer youth aged 16 to 24 the opportunity to develop their leadership and life skills through civic engagement activities that have a positive impact on their communities. The program's core values include strengthening communities through civic leadership, collaborating to achieve greater impact, continuous learning, valuing youth-led advocacy, embracing public service, and fostering safe environments that celebrate diversity. In 2022, DFSS expanded CYSC into a year-round program that provides 880 young people with paid opportunities to work up to 460 hours per year, earning \$15.40/hour. Visit [cysc.mychimyfuture.org](https://cysc.mychimyfuture.org) for more information.

## VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

In 2022, as DFSS delegate agencies returned to in-person programming, the Youth Services Division provided guidance and support to ensure the safety of participants and smooth program operations. DFSS, delegate agencies and young people continued to utilize technology to expand program engagement and efficiency, including planning virtual meetings, workshops, and events. DFSS will continue to offer flexibility where appropriate and necessary, so that youth can fully engage in programming, for example, allowing One Summer Chicago youth to work from home if they are exposed to COVID, so that they can continue to earn their wage or stipend.

## MY CHI. MY FUTURE. MOBILE APP

Launched in May 2022, the My CHI. My Future. (MCMF) mobile app is a significant resource designed to help teens find out-of-school programs, events, resources, jobs, and more. The first of its kind nationwide, the MCMF app connects individuals to a network of over 250 community organizations and City departments and provides a live list of opportunities that fit youth's age, interests, and location. Teens using the app can share programs with friends over text and social media. Community organizations can also add their youth opportunity information and publish immediately to both the My CHI. My Future. website and app. The app is available on the iOS App Store and Google Play Store and, to date, has been downloaded more than 17,200 times. Visit [explore.mychimyfuture.org](https://explore.mychimyfuture.org) for more information.



Commissioner Brandie Knazze and Deputy Commissioner Chadra Lang at Project: VISION Event

# 2023 AND BEYOND – CHICAGO RECOVERY PLAN INVESTMENTS FOR YOUTH

In response to the negative impacts of COVID-19, the City of Chicago has developed an equity-based investment strategy to catalyze a balanced economic recovery and long-term growth, with a total investment of \$1.2 billion through 2024.

Through the Chicago Recovery Plan, the Youth Services Division has been allocated \$97.5 million to support youth opportunity programs, violence prevention programs, and assistance to families, most of which will sunset at the end of 2024.

Program	Description	Allocation
Youth Opportunity Programs	Funding allows DFSS to expand three youth employment programs under the umbrella of One Summer Chicago (Chicagobility, Summer Youth Employment Program, and Chicago Youth Service Corps), as well as funding for the My CHI. My Future. Safe Spaces for Youth program.	\$53.8M
My CHI. My Future.	Funding allows DFSS to develop and implement three MCMF community strategy initiatives: the Year-Round Safe Spaces for Youth, Community Anchor Organizations, and Micro-Grants programs.	\$11.2M
Service Coordination and Navigation (SCaN)	Funding allows DFSS to expand the SCaN program to serve youth at the highest risk of violence involvement in 31 Chicago Community Areas.	\$5.1M
Youth Intervention Programs	Funding allows DFSS to expand citywide Mentoring programs for youth with complex needs, year-round employment opportunities for at-risk youth, and additional support services.	\$14.4M
Youth Justice Diversion	Funding allows DFSS to launch the Youth Intervention Pathways program which provides up to 90 days of coordinated community services for youth that have contact with law enforcement.	\$10M
Community Justice Initiative	Funding allows DFSS to expand “Know Your Rights” trainings, legal consultations and/or representation, and connection to additional support services.	\$3M
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$97.5M</b>

# 2023 AND BEYOND - OPPORTUNITIES

The Youth Services Division has invested significantly in the development and expansion of programming to match the needs of Chicago youth. Among other goals, new initiatives support community-driven planning and long-term career development. DFSS is also committed to analyzing performance and evaluating programs in order to make recommendations about how best to sustain programming beyond the end of CRP funding. Challenges and opportunities for 2023 are described below.

## OPPORTUNITIES

**Building Safe Spaces for Youth:** In Summer of 2023, Community Anchor Organizations will convene local, grassroots, youth-serving organizations and individuals towards the goal of developing a community plan focused on creating safe spaces and increasing engagement opportunities for youth. The overarching goal of the initiative is to strengthen youth ecosystems and deepen networks for agencies in 15 Community Strategy Regions across Chicago, addressing the impact of COVID-19 on under-resourced communities through coordinated community-based approaches.

**Expanding Pathways to Employment:** To expand employment opportunities beyond summer and provide access to long-term career pathways, the Youth Services Division launched year-round employment and Corporate Partnerships programs for youth ages 16-24. The Chicago Youth Service Corps, Year Long Employment Program, and My CHI. My Future. Safe Spaces for Youth programs support 1,705 young people with year-round employment through DFSS delegate agencies. The Corporate Partnership program is a collaboration between DFSS and local businesses committed to investing in the city's future workforce. Partners hire youth for opportunities ranging from internships to seasonal placements or permanent positions, based on the needs of the employer. All programs provide young people with access to education, internships and workforce training in high demand fields. Year-round career focused youth employment programs are an investment in our city's future economy that will cultivate the next generation of skilled and dedicated professionals.

**Addressing Youth Housing Needs:** In 2020, the City invested \$5 million in the Flexible Housing Pool (FHP) to expand housing interventions for youth experiencing homelessness. Youth-dedicated FHP resources were used to test a non-time limited housing model (a tailored package of housing subsidies and supportive services) with transition to Permanent Supportive Housing as needed, to serve youth experiencing homelessness and previously or currently involved with other systems. The FHP partnered with the Youth Services Division's Service Coordination and Navigation (SCaN) Program, seeking to service ScaN youth that are at the highest risk for violence involvement. As of December 31, 2022, 332 youth-led households have been housed through the Flexible Housing Pool. With an additional \$6.6M investment of CRP funding, DFSS will continue to strengthen the safety net for youth at the highest risk of violence by providing housing and ongoing case-management support for an additional 88 youth each year through 2025.



# 2023 AND BEYOND - CHALLENGES

## CHALLENGES

While the pandemic is winding down, the data indicates that the demand for youth services is still higher than pre-pandemic levels. The sunsetting of pandemic funding could mean major changes for the way services are funded and delivered. The Youth Services Division is continuing to look for ways to ensure that youths' needs are still met.

**Fiscal Funding Cliff:** The Youth Services Division has been able to expand services to youth with the current CRP investments through 2024. Once this funding expires, these programs will sunset and leave youth without access to these opportunities. Over the next two years, the Division will continue to evaluate the programs that have been expanded and demonstrate the impact of not being able to support them starting in 2025. Additionally, the Youth Services Division will look for new funding opportunities to fill this anticipated gap, while also advocating for continued, sustainable funding from both state and federal sources.

**Non-Profit Capacity Building:** The needs of many Chicago youth and young adults have grown in complexity as a result of factors including increased community violence, exposure to trauma, and the impact of the pandemic on educational outcomes. This requires that youth-serving organizations have capacity to provide connections to an increasingly wide range of support services. Simultaneously, many community organizations face significant staff shortages and an ongoing need for training to ensure they are able to provide high quality programming that is responsive to the needs of the youth they serve. The Youth Services Division supports agencies through virtual and in-person capacity building workshops and learning cohorts that address topics ranging from trauma-informed practice to youth mental health, building safe spaces for youth, and continuous quality improvement. Additionally, site visits and performance review meetings aim to build a shared understanding among delegate agency leadership and program staff about current performance, address any barriers to success, and ultimately support a shared commitment to achieving the programs' outcomes. More investment is needed to continue building capacity among small, indigenous organizations that serve youth.

**Strengthening Youth Readiness for Employment:** As we work to expand youth employment opportunities through corporate partnerships, we must also ensure youth are trained and work-ready to meet the needs and expectations of the employer. Investing in education and training programs that allow youth to earn a credential of economic value in high-demand areas will make them more attractive to employers. To ensure youth have access to future employment opportunities including apprenticeships, we want to help them earn stackable credentials, at minimum a high school diploma or GED and going beyond that to meet the evolving needs of the Chicago workforce. We also ask that the business community in Chicago step up to meet this moment by investing in young people through paid jobs, training opportunities, and working together to build the pipeline for the city's future workforce. These efforts will only benefit the business community by building a stronger and higher skilled workforce that can meet the evolving needs of our city's economy.

## 2023 DFSS DELEGATE AGENCY PARTNERS

A Knock at Midnight, NFP  
A Safe Haven Foundation  
Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago  
After School Matters, Inc.  
Albany Park Community Center Incorporated  
Alternative Schools Network  
Alternatives Inc.  
Arab American Action Network  
Asian Human Services, Inc.  
ASE Holistic House  
Aspira Inc. of Illinois  
Association House of Chicago  
B.U.I.L.D. Incorporated  
Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council  
Better Boys Foundation dba BBF Family Services  
Beyond the Ball NFP  
Big Brothers-Big Sisters of Metropolitan Chicago  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago  
Breakthrough Urban Ministries, Inc.  
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council  
Carol Robertson Center for Learning  
Casa Central Social Services Corporation  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago  
Catholic Youth Ministry Center at Morgan Park HS  
Center for Companies that Care  
Centers for New Horizons, Inc.  
Central States SER, Jobs for Progress, Inc.  
Centro Romero  
CHAMPS Male Mentoring Program-Chirise  
Chicago Center for Arts and Technology, Inc.  
Chicago House and Social Service Agency  
Chicago Training Center  
Chicago Urban League  
Chicago Youth Boxing Club, Inc.  
Chicago Youth Centers  
Chicago Youth Programs, Inc.  
Chicago-Lawndale Amachi Mentoring Program  
Children's Home & Aid Society of Illinois  
Chinese American Service League, Inc.  
Chinese Mutual Aid Association, Inc.  
Christopher House  
CircEsteem Inc.  
Claretian Associates Inc.  
Community Assistance Programs  
Community Development Institute  
Community Education Network DBA It Takes a Village Family of Schools  
Community Television Network Project  
Enlace Chicago  
Envision Community Services  
Erie Neighborhood House  
Family Independence Initiative  
Family Matters, Inc.  
First Defense Legal Aid  
Free Spirit Media, NFP  
Gads Hill Center  
Gary Comer Youth Center, Inc.  
Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana,  
Girls in the Game  
Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation  
Greater West Town Community Development Project  
Guitars Over Guns Organization, Inc.  
Heartland Human Care Services, Inc.  
Holy Family Ministries  
Howard Area Community Center  
Ignite Org  
Inner-City Muslim Action  
Institute for Latino Progress dba Instituto Del Progreso Latino  
Julie and Michael Tracy Family Foundation DBA Urban Autism Solutions  
K.L.E.O. Community Family Life Center  
Kipp Schools Chicago  
Kuumba Lynx  
Lawndale Christian Legal Center  
Lawrence Hall  
Le Penseur Youth & Family Services, Inc.  
Life Directions  
Little Black Pearl Workshop  
Logan Square Neighborhood Association  
Lost Boyz Inc.  
Male Mogul Initiative Inc. NFP  
MAPS Corps  
Marillac St. Vincent Family Services Inc. DBA St. Vincent DePaul Center

Metropolitan Family Services  
Metro Squash  
Midwest Asian Health Association (MAHA)  
Mikva Challenge  
National Museum of Mexican Art  
New Life Centers of Chicagoland, NFP  
Noble Network Charter School  
Northwestern University Settlement Association  
One on One  
Options for Youth  
Phalanx Family Services  
Pilsen Little Village Community Mental Health Center, Inc.  
Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, NFP  
Project Exploration  
Project Restore Initiative LLC  
Project Syncere  
Project Vision  
Puerto Rican Cultural Center  
Pui Tak Center  
Reflections Foundation  
RefugeeOne  
Rincon Family Services Roseland Youth Center  
SGA Youth & Family Services, NFP  
Simple Good  
Sinai Community Institute  
Skyart, NFP  
South Shore Drill Team & Performing Arts Ensemble  
South Side Help Center, Inc.  
St. Joseph Services, Inc.  
Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village  
The Catholic Bishop of Chicago -  
Holy Cross Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish  
The Catholic Bishop of Chicago - St. Agatha  
The Catholic Bishop of Chicago - St. Sabina  
The Children's Place  
The Community Builders  
The Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago  
The Hana Center  
The Puerto Rican Cultural Center  
The Salvation Army  
The Urban Alliance Foundation, Inc.  
Think Outside Da Box

Together Chicago  
Towers of Excellence  
Trinity United Church of Christ Child Care Center, Inc.  
True Star Foundation  
UCAN  
Union League Boys and Girls Clubs  
Universal Family Connection  
Universidad Popular  
University of Chicago  
Urban Growers Collective  
Urban Initiatives Inc. NFP.  
Urban Male Network  
Urban Warriors Youth Community  
Vietnamese Association of Illinois (V.A.I)  
WestCare Illinois, Inc.  
Westside Health Authority  
XS Tennis & Education Foundation  
Young Men's Christian Association of Chicago  
Young Men's Educational Network  
Youth Advocate Program Inc.  
Youth Guidance  
Youth Outreach Services  
YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago

# THOUGHT PARTNERS

The Youth Services Division engages with a range of stakeholders and partners to ensure that youth programs are informed by current and relevant data and through continuous quality improvement processes. A few of our thought partners are listed here:



**Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago Youth Data Collaborative:**

The Youth Data Collaborative (YDC) is a learning partnership of researchers and practitioners from youth-serving organizations focused on using data to improve the lives of children, youth, and communities. Chapin Hall and YDC provide data-driven insight that drives program design and evaluation.



**Digital Youth Network at Northwestern University (DYN):** DYN is a project that supports organizations, educators, and researchers in learning best practices to help develop youths' technical, creative, and analytical skills.



**Praxis Institute:** Praxis Institute helps partners integrate theory and practice into high-quality programming to empower community members to be agents in the creation of their individual and collective wellbeing. The institute builds and helps translate 21st century skills of young people towards personal, community and economic success.



**Urban Labs Crime Lab:** As part of the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, the Urban Labs Crime Lab partners with civic and community leaders to identify, test and scale programs and policies with the greatest potential to improve human lives.

## ONE SUMMER CHICAGO PARTNERS

One Summer Chicago brings together government institutions, community-based organizations, and employers to offer employment and internship opportunities to youth and young adults ages 14 to 24. DFSS's youth employment program models—Chicagobility, Chicago Youth Service Corps, and Summer Youth Employment Program—are supplemented by programs offered by the group of citywide partners listed below.



**Chicago Housing Authority (CHA):** Offers the neighborhood youth corps, counselor-in-training, filmmaking for girls, game, and graphic design, learn and earn, movie and TV script writing and safe summer peace ambassador programs. Eligibility: Citywide, ages 13-24, current public housing resident.



**Chicago Park District (CPD):** Employs youth across 232 parks, 77 pools and 26 miles of the lakefront. Positions include lifeguards, park maintenance and recreational activity posts, such as program staff and camp counselors. Eligibility: Citywide, ages 16-21 (16-24 for special recreation).



**Chicago Public Library (CPL):** Interns work closely with branch staff to support art and STEM activities and programming, various patron computer needs, branch tours and outreach, as well as having a chance to co-design/facilitate programs. Eligibility: Citywide, ages 14-21, currently enrolled in CPS.



**Chicago Public Schools (CPS):** Employs youth who participate in their Career and Technical Education programs as well as other programs including academic competition, diverse learners, and Chicago Police and Fire Training Academy. **Eligibility:** Citywide, ages 16-21, current high school students.



**Chicago Transit Authority (CTA):** Offers over 200 high school students a paid internship based on its STEAM program model. CTA also offers paid internships to more than 80 college students representing 30 colleges and universities. **Eligibility:** Full-time student enrolled in a college or university.



**City Colleges of Chicago (CCC):** Provides employment opportunities for 150 CCC students and graduates. Participants are placed across the seven City College locations in addition to partnerships with several community organizations. **Eligibility:** Current CCC students or recent graduates, ages 18-24.



**Cook County Forest Preserves:** The youth outdoor ambassador program will place youth at different Forest Preserves divisions; including, resource management, outreach education, community outreach, office of the superintendent and the police department. **Eligibility:** Countywide, ages 16-24 (Cook County residents).



**Lincoln Park Zoo:** Offers opportunities for youth to work alongside zoo scientists to serve as interpreters on zoo grounds, informing guests about animal science and conservation. **Eligibility:** Cook County, ages 16-24.

Additional support and partnership for One Summer Chicago is provided by:



Citi Foundation



JPMORGAN CHASE & Co.



For more information about One Summer Chicago, please visit [onesummerchicago.org](http://onesummerchicago.org).



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