



Douglas County Youth Initiative Report



Advisory Board

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- Douglas County Commissioner & DCYI Chair **Abe Laydon** and Special Projects Manager **Maureen Waller**
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Douglas County Youth Initiative Mission:

Support youth and encourage their contributions to the broader community . Effectively intervene with youth who are endangered by their decisions and/or situation. Support and expand opportunities for youth to express viewpoint
Programs of DCYI make sure to follow DCYI's values: youth are **involved**, **valued**, **productive**, **protected** and **healthy**

DCYI STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2024

INVOLVED

Youth Congress - direct access to youth

La Liga - direct access to youth

DC Youth Commission - valued and productive

DC Youth Forums: meeting local elected officials - direct access to youth; involved

DC Youth Leadership Summit April 2024 - direct access to youth

Plan mini Youth Congress events for middle schools / work with BOE to discuss implementation

VALUED

Outstanding Youth Awards - valued, protected

PRODUCTIVE

Recognizing and growing youth leaders - Youth Commission, Youth Congress

Hosting various programs to assist with current youth trends - Lunch-n-Learns

PROTECTED AND HEALTHY

WrapAround

Truancy Project

Teen Court Project / on-going discussions

Oasis/work with BOE to discuss

=NEW PROJECTS DISCUSSED



Youth Initiative Programs

- WrapAround
- Truancy Project
- La Liga
- Youth Awards
- Youth Congress
- Connections: Mental health action - DC Youth Forums
- DC Youth Commission



DCYI has two main programming areas: Youth Leadership/Youth Development *and* helping at-risk families via our WrapAround program

WrapAround: Saving Families, Saving Costs

- Free
- Voluntary
- Work with families with youth ages 5-21
- Work in the home for 12-24 months
- Working to keep kids, safe, healthy, and remain in the home
- Get to know the whole family PLUS their neighbors, friends, relatives, teachers, doctors, etc.
- Bring a TEAM together to assist families working through problems keeping them stuck, or if they are involved with an outside agency, such as courts, law enforcement, suspension, expulsion, etc.
- Clients: Self-referral or from an agency; mostly DCSD schools and Human Services/Child Welfare
- Review each family on a scale of 10 life domains to understand their needs and foster success
- Alternative to other systems
- Trained Facilitators work with families for 1-2 years, in their homes, to offer support, and to also model effective behavior techniques.
- When WRAP begins working, families present with a 60-70% involvement with significant stressors. On average, WRAP can reduce that to 25%.



WrapAround Families:

- 6th grader - trouble at home and school due to behavior concerns; WRAP helped family connect with Developmental Pathways, helped coordinate ABA in the home, and helped with parenting
- 10th grader - chronic medical condition, was referred to court for truancy, worked with family to advocate for youth's mental and physical health
- 7th grader - not attending school consistently, WRAP helped family understand that school was necessary for the success of the student



DCYI Programs

Truancy: DCYI utilizes WrapAround principals and methodology for youth in court for truancy. To note, DCYI WRAP has been doing this for the past 10 years and has recently hired a WRAP Facilitator to work with families in court. WRAP is successful and has helped numerous youth attend Job Corps, gain their GED, or return to school.

La Liga: Senior and Junior programs, provides soccer for Spanish speaking youth, providing free uniforms, equipment, connection, and comradery.



DCYI Programs

Outstanding Youth Awards: Spring

DCYI Advisory Board selects 10 outstanding youth who have overcome personal adversity and created positive change in their lives. Provides business, community and civic leaders an opportunity to honor youth that might not otherwise be recognized.

Youth Congress: Fall

Students work with community and elected officials to share their ideas and give feedback on issues pertaining to them. Held each year, high school students hear from subject matter experts on a variety of issues and then tackle these complicated problems. From unifying the teen curfew to growing opportunities to champion youth voice, students learn how challenging it is to problem solve and the difference they can make by working together.



DCYI Programs

Educational Series

DCYI hosts Lunch-n-Learns on a variety of topics. DCYI uses youth and community input to identify current issues and invite speakers. Topics: Autism, Mitigating Negative Behaviors, Prevention of Teen Suicide, and Drugs in our Community.



DC Youth Forums

Advisory Board Elected and Appointed leaders have prioritized speaking to youth. One of the best ways to do this, to hear the pros and cons, the gaps, and the needs, is to speak with youth directly, via “A Forum for Youth.” And where best to do this? In the schools where kids are! In 2022-23, Advisory Board members visited five schools to have casual and informative conversations with youth!

GREAT EXAMPLE OF PROVIDING YOUTH VOICE!

Stadium District Funding

Douglas County Youth Commissioners helped direct funding from the sale of the Denver Broncos. They recommended almost 1 Million Dollars in grants!

First, they worked on youth priorities to help establish a funding criteria. They established the following **Youth Priorities**:

- Mental Health
- Education/STEM
- Prevention/Mentoring
- Special Needs
- Arts, Recreation & Sports
- Vehicles/Buildings
- Agriculture



Douglas County Youth Commission students served on the panel for a Live Town Hall to discuss funding distribution. Students helped allocate almost \$1 million.