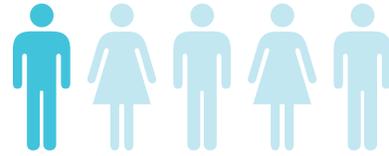


OPPORTUNITY YOUTH PROFILE

HOW MANY OPPORTUNITY YOUTH?

20,000

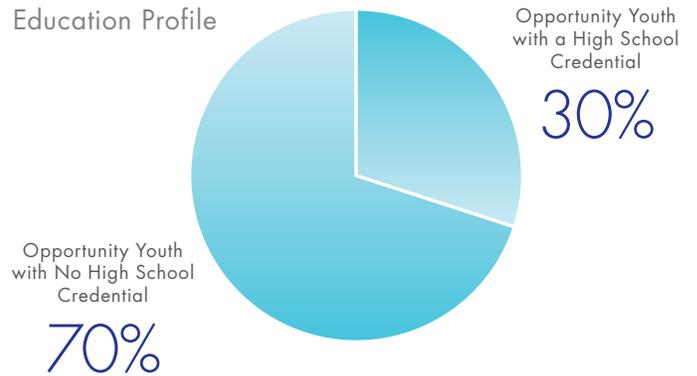
One in Five 16–24 Year-Olds
Not Enrolled in School or Work



NOTE: This opportunity youth definition focuses on ages 16–24. It is important to note that some youth leave school prior to age 16, and they are not reflected in these estimates.

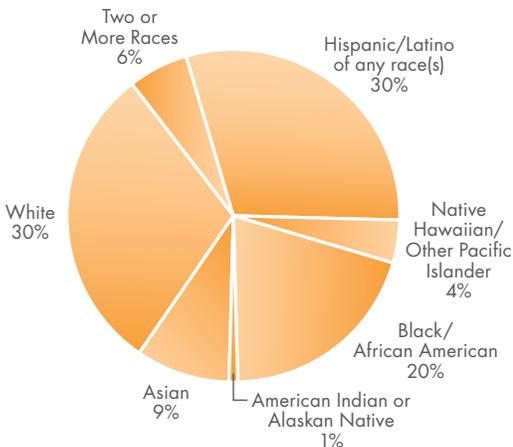
An estimated one-fifth or 20% of all youth ages 16–24 in the Road Map region are “opportunity youth” — meaning they are not enrolled in school or work. We estimate that over two-thirds of opportunity youth left school without a high school credential. Just under one-third completed a high school credential but have not connected to postsecondary education or living-wage work.

Education Profile



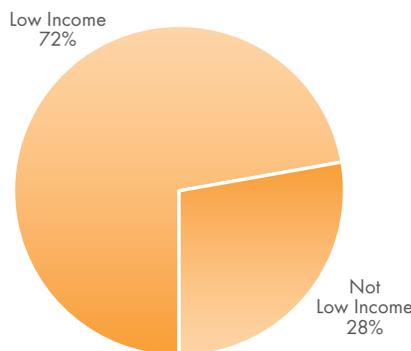
WHO ARE OUR OPPORTUNITY YOUTH?

Racial/Ethnic Profile



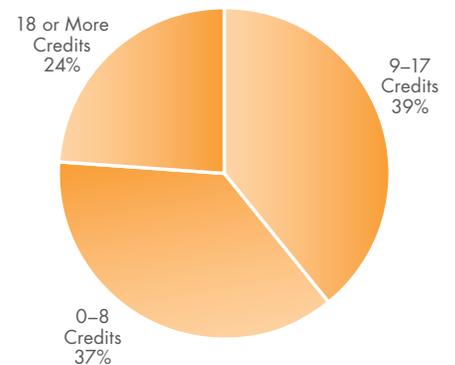
About half of our Opportunity Youth are Hispanic or African American. One third are White students.

Income Status



Nearly three quarters come from a low-income background.

Credits Earned



Most youth who leave high school without a credential are significantly credit deficient. However one quarter have 18 or more credits when they leave.



The Road Map Project region encompasses seven school districts: Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle (South Seattle only) and Tukwila. More information about the Road Map Project Opportunity Youth Initiative is available at www.roadmapproject.org/oy

Data sources: Opportunity youth prevalence was estimated using OSPI’s student level database (2012-13 data), as well as Census data on 16-24 year-olds in the Road Map Region, Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates of unemployment rates by age and educational attainment level, and other national estimates of opportunity youth prevalence. Demographic descriptions of opportunity youth were based on OSPI’s student level database, using 2012-13 records.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BE AN OPPORTUNITY YOUTH?

In addition to prevalence, it is important to consider proportions. Some sub-groups are much more likely to be Opportunity Youth than others.

Homeless youth are more than twice as likely as their non-homeless peers to be opportunity youth.

Low-income youth are twice as likely as their non-low-income peers to be opportunity youth.

English language learner (ELL) students are more likely than their non ELL-peers to be opportunity youth.

Youth of color — Hispanic, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Black youth — are much more likely than their White peers to be opportunity youth.

FACTORS BEHIND DISENGAGEMENT

A variety of factors, including historical and structural inequality, influence why young people become opportunity youth. Young people themselves, who participated in focus groups through the King County Youth Advisory Council and the Washington Student Oral Histories Project, suggest key factors include:



Family challenges and responsibilities that result in competing priorities



School factors (academic challenges, lack of support, negative labels, lack of trust)



Limited access to and information about alternative options

“ I eventually dropped out because the bills weren't getting paid. I knew I could pay the bills. I wanted to step up...”

Source: Quote is from a youth interviewed for this national *Don't Call them Dropouts* report: <http://gradnation.org/sites/default/files/DCTD%20Final%20Full.pdf>

“ I had a lot of anxiety about my ability to do the work... I felt pretty hopeless about my situation, and in my junior year again I missed such large chunks of school that I finally just dropped out completely.”

Source: Quote is from a WA state youth interviewed for the *WA Student Oral Histories* study http://www.wsohp.org/uploads/1/0/1/5/10157286/part_one_rev_7_30.pdf

“ What good is having all these programs if no one knows about them. We don't even know what there is to choose from or how to get there.”

Source: local youth who participated in KC Youth Advisory Council focus group.



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