



NLC REENGAGEMENT NETWORK 2023-2024 Census Report

A recent [Measure of America report](#) drew upon 2022 US Census data to document that some 4.3 million 16 to 24 year-olds (10.9 %) lack attachment to school or work. Disconnection from education and employment has a major impact on the lives of young people. A longitudinal [Measure of America](#) report found that by their thirties, people in school or employed throughout their teens and early twenties earned \$31,000 more annually, were 42% more likely to be working, 45% more likely to be homeowners, and 52% more likely to rate their health as good or excellent than those who experienced disconnection in their youth.

In the face of substantial disconnection concentrated in cities and towns, the nationwide NLC Reengagement Network formed in 2011 to provide peer learning and support on policy and practice. The 35 reengagement programs in the Network have several important functions. They reach out to and connect with OYYA; assess their educational and psychosocial needs; provide referrals to best-fit education, training, and employment options, as well as wraparound services; provide support to enroll in appropriate programs; and provide support to persist in education, training, or employment. Each reengagement center or program in the Network uses a customized operational model that best meets the needs of the community it serves. NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (IYEF) provides staffing for the Network as well as tools, resources, and peer learning opportunities, thanks to support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.



This report summarizes data from the 2023-24 school year provided in response to a census questionnaire by representatives of the National League of Cities (NLC) Reengagement Network in 20 states. Appendices provide methodological and other supplemental information

Top-line findings of the 2024 Reengagement Census include:

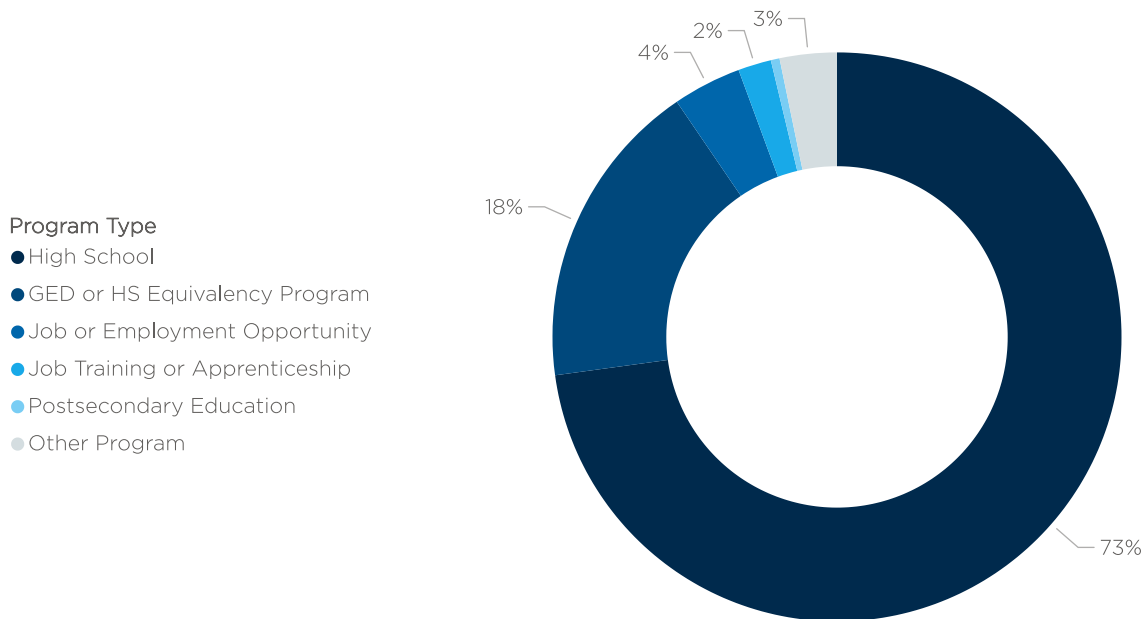
- ◆ **Outreach:** Reengagement Network programs surveyed reached out to at least 51,279 youth and young adults not connected to education or employment.
- ◆ **Intake:** 27,156 young people completed the intake process at a Network reengagement center or program.
- ◆ **Referrals:** Reengagement Network centers and programs placed more than 24,349 in education, job training, or employment.
- ◆ **Academic Progress & Graduation:** 12,657 made at least one type of academic or training progress during the year, with 4,922 obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent.
- ◆ **Variety across the country:** [Reengagement Network](#) members responding to the Census survey represent a wide range of efforts to connect youth and young adults to education and employment opportunities, from 24 local programs serving as few as 90, to three statewide efforts serving up to 14,500. Annual budgets range from \$150K to \$5M. Sites report staffing ranging from a single case manager/reengagement specialist to 150 staff serving an entire state, with average caseload size ranging from 5 to 227.

Placement in Education, Training, and Employment:

The vast majority of the 24,349 placements in education, training, or employment reported across 25 sites were in education - mostly at the secondary completion level - with placement in job training or employment much less common. See Figure 1 for figures and percentages.

FIGURE 1
Centers Placed Vast Majority of Youths and Young Adults in High Schools

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, BY PLACEMENT PERCENTAGE

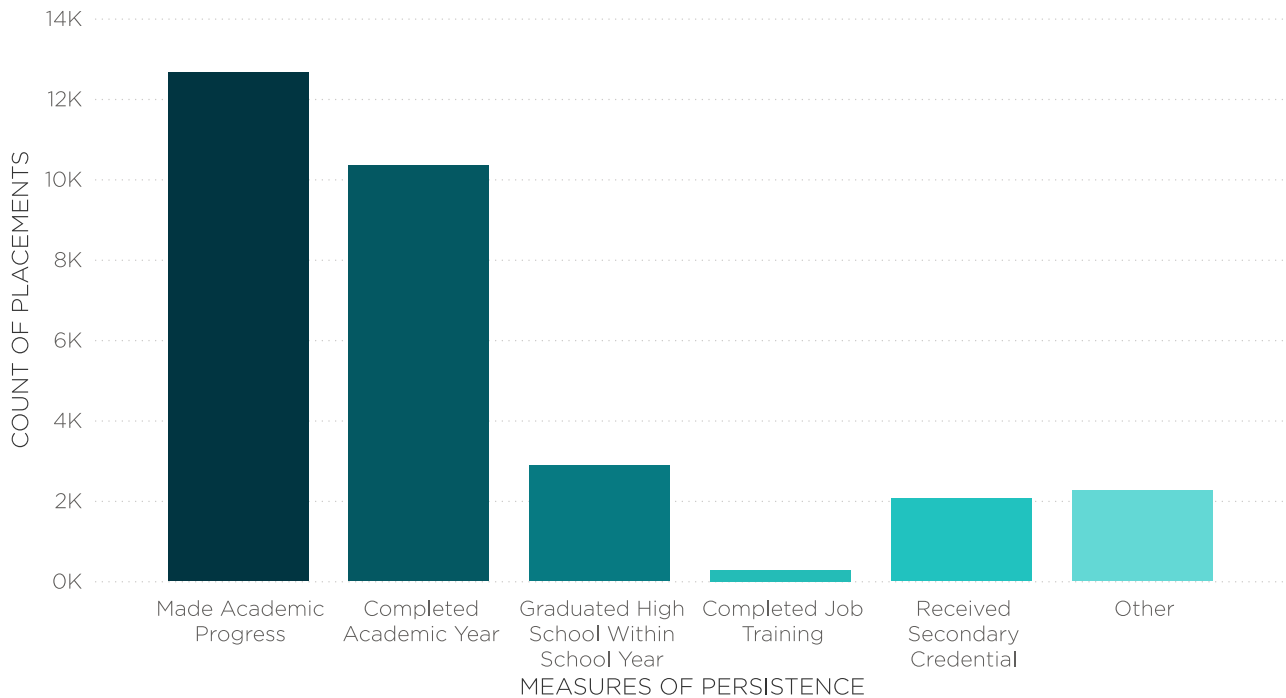


Source: NLC Reengagement Network Census Survey, 2023-24 School Year.
Note: 24,349 placements in education, training, or employment across 25 sites.

Persistence and Progress in Education or Training:

Figure 2 shows data from the 27 respondents about participant persistence and advancement in education or training – namely, that in 2023-24, 12,657 young people made overall academic progress, including by completing their academic year, graduating from high school or completing other credentials and training. NLC has developed a tool to help individual reengagement centers and programs even more accurately gauge the persistence rate of specific young people following placement, or “stick” rate; see Appendix C.

FIGURE 2
Most Placements Resulted in Academic Progress
PLACEMENTS IN EDUCATION OR TRAINING, BY MEASURES OF PERSISTENCE



Source: NLC Reengagement Network Census Survey, 2023-24 School Year.
Note: 12,657 young people were placed across 27 sites.

Outreach and Engagement:

The 24 Reengagement Network sites reporting on outreach indicated 51,279 young people received outreach from a center or program in 2023-24. Centers and programs used a variety of outreach methods, including contact via phone, text, email, zoom, social media, and flyers; in-person meetings at homes, schools, and community events; and contact via partner agencies. Reengagement Network members reported more than half – about 27,000 young people – completing the intake process and thus engaging with services and supports.

Referral to Other Supports and Services:

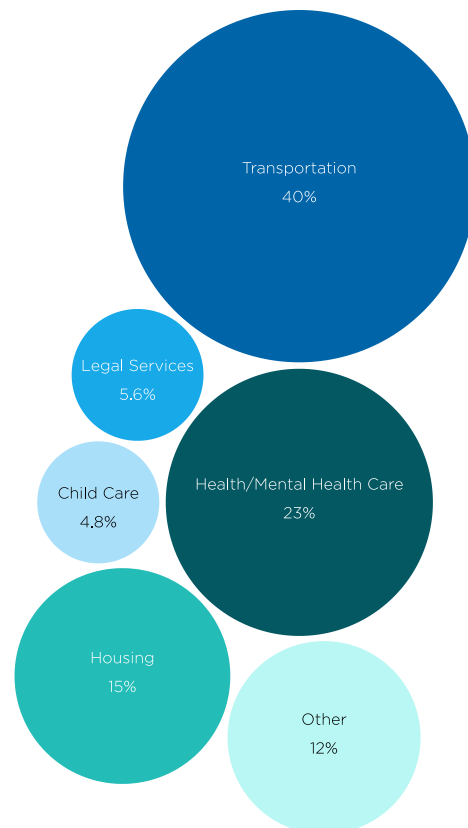
Twenty-four respondents submitted data on the number of young people that their programs referred to supports and services in addition to education, training, or employment placements. The most common support service referrals reported included:

- ◆ Transportation – 39.9% of all referrals,
- ◆ Health/mental healthcare – 23.4% of all referrals, and
- ◆ Housing – 14.6% of all referrals.

In addition, some programs/centers indicated they made referrals to legal services (5.6% of all referrals), child care (4.8% of all referrals), and various other support services (11.7% of all referrals).

FIGURE 3
Transportation, Health, Housing
Led Support & Service Referrals

REFERRAL TO OTHER SUPPORT AND SERVICES, BY PERCENT OF REFERRALS



Source: NLC Reengagement Network Census Survey, 2023-24 School Year.

NLC Reengagement Network Centers and Programs

NLC Reengagement Network members represent a broad range of centers and programs operated by school districts, community-based organizations, cities and counties, state departments of education, community colleges, and community collaboratives and partnerships. As to scale, member sites' annual operations enroll from 90 to more than 1,700 youth and young adults in community-wide programs and 320 to 14,500 in the three multi-site statewide efforts. Each site or network connects youth and young adults to a range of programming, including high school completion in both traditional and alternative schools, GED or high school equivalency exam preparation, adult education, post secondary education, job training and apprenticeship, and actual employment opportunities.

This year's Reengagement Census included optional questions, answered by about half of respondents, which provided the following operational information about members:

- ◆ Sites report annual budgets ranging from about \$150K to \$5M.
- ◆ Reengagement Network sites employ as few as a single case manager/reengagement specialist in a local school district, to 150 working across a state. They report caseloads ranging from 5 for a newly established program to 227 for a districtwide program served by one staff person. Removing the few outliers, the average reported case manager-to-young person ratio is about 1:41.
- ◆ Network members use a wide variety of software to gather data on their participants. These include: simple spreadsheet applications (e.g., Excel, Google Sheets); case management/customer relationship management tools (e.g., Apricot, Casebook, CharityTracker, Cityspan, MyOneFlow, nFocus, Salesforce, Social Solutions ETO); K-12 education platforms (e.g., Infinite Campus, Synergy); local information technology systems (e.g., Homeless Management Information System); and electronic health record systems (e.g., myEvolv).

Appendix A: Census Background and Context

The NLC Reengagement Network

The [National League of Cities \(NLC\) Reengagement Network](#) supports city leaders and their partners to improve outcomes for the millions of youth and young adults 16-24 years old who are not in school or working, also known as Opportunity Youth and Young Adults (OYYA). This Network, comprised of a growing number of sites across the country (35 as of January 2025), promotes the sharing and adoption of policies and practices that reengage disconnected youth and young adults, improve support systems, and remove obstacles to educational advancement.

Reengagement Network Census

NLC periodically undertakes a Census of Reengagement Network centers and programs to update our understanding of the scope of activity across the Network. The last Census took place in 2017.

NLC launched the 2024 Census by developing a short questionnaire, updated from the version used in 2017. In December 2024, NLC sent the questionnaire to the 33 Reengagement centers and programs in the Network operating between July 2023 and June 2024. Twenty-seven completed the survey, an 82% response rate. Analysis of the data took place in early 2025, culminating in this report summarizing the results. View a list of the 2024 Census survey questions [here](#).

See Appendix B for a list of respondents. Due to local circumstances, a few long-standing Reengagement Network programs historically serving large numbers of young people were unable to complete the questionnaire this year. For this reason, survey data presented in this report underestimates the scale and impact of outreach and engagement efforts nationwide. Not all respondents completed all survey questions. One responding center provided information for only one-third of the 2023-24 year as they had just opened. This report extrapolates their information to a full year assuming linear change for programming information.

In an attempt to streamline the 2024 Census questionnaire for ease of completion, NLC did not request the detailed programmatic data required to calculate a Network rate of persistence after placement in education, training, or employment, or “stick rate.” Appendix C offers a “stick rate” formula individual programs and centers may use to understand persistence.

Acknowledgments and Resources

Andrew Moore, NLC’s Director of Youth and Young Adult Connections, oversaw all aspects of the Census. Nancy Martin and Kate O’Sullivan, Principals at NK Solutions, provided support to NLC Reengagement Network members as they completed the survey, analyzed the data, and authored this report. Christine Baker-Smith, NLC’s Director of Research provided research design and implementation guidance and supported in the writing of this report.

For the latest research on effective reengagement approaches, see Education Northwest’s [What Works in Reengaging Young Adults](#) case brief featuring findings from qualitative and quantitative studies published in 2023 and 2025.

To receive periodic resource emails, the latest national news, and to connect with other experts in the field, [join the Reengagement Network](#).



Appendix B - List of Respondents

Beaverton School District - Passages Reengagement, Beaverton, OR

Boston Public Schools - Re-Engagement Center, Boston, MA

Buffalo Futures, Buffalo, NY

Chicago Public Schools - Student Outreach and Re-Engagement Centers (SOAR), Chicago, IL

Colorado Youth for a Change, Denver, Colorado

Des Moines Public Schools - SUCCESS, Des Moines, IA

Direction Diploma (D2) Center, Omaha, NE

Elevate 361 Young Adult Reengagement Center, Corpus Christi, TX

Fast Forward Re-Engagement Center, Dayton, OH

Gresham-Barlow School District Connections, Gresham, OR

Hartford Navigation Hub Pilot, Hartford, CT

The Book Works, Louisville, KY

The Spot: Young Adult Opportunity Center, Louisville, KY

Minneapolis Public Schools - We Want You Back, Minneapolis, MN

Monroe Harding, Nashville, TN

MoCo Reconnect, Montgomery County, MD

The Reengagement Center - New Orleans Youth Alliance, New Orleans, LA

NXT Level Youth Opportunity Center, San Antonio, TX

Youth Development Oregon (YDO) Reengagement, State of Oregon

School District of Philadelphia - Re-Engagement Center, Philadelphia, PA

Portland Public Schools - Reconnection Center, Portland, OR

Re-engage Dubuque, Dubuque, IA

ReEngage Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ

TEMPO - City of Tallahassee, Tallahassee, FL

Goodwill of Southern Arizona - Youth Reengagement Centers, Tucson, AZ

Washington Open Doors Youth Reengagement, State of Washington

Washoe County School District - Re-Engagement Intervention Program, Washoe County, NV

Appendix C: Persistence or “Stick” Rate Calculation Worksheet

The persistence or “stick” rate at which opportunity youth and young adults (OYYA) remain reengaged following placement in education, training, or employment, may be defined as the percentage of students who, at the end of the time period measured, either:

1. have completed an education or training program
or
2. continue to participate in education, training, or employment.

We encourage individual reengagement centers and programs to calculate their own stick rates using the formula below or another more specifically tailored to their program. In the past, NLC has calculated an average stick rate *in education programming* of about 80% across Reengagement Network sites. Because reengagement programming varies widely across sites, it may be that the most useful comparison is changes in stick rates for one center or program *over time*.

Stick Rate Calculation

Time Period Used for Calculation: _____

OYYA who received a secondary or postsecondary credential or completed job training during the time period = _____ (A)

OYYA at the end of the time period who remain enrolled in education or training and/or employed at end of time period = _____ (B)

A + B = _____ (C)

Total # OYYA placed in education, training, or employment during the time period = _____ (D)

C/D x 100 = _____ % = Stick Rate