

NEW ORLEANS YOUTH ALLIANCE

FY 2019 - 2020

ANNUAL REPORT

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The New Orleans Youth Alliance (NOYA) was established in 2017 to support youth-serving organizations in the Greater New Orleans Area as they strengthen their programs and address the needs of young people and their families.

This report illustrates NOYA's impact from July 2019 to June 2020, despite an ever-changing landscape. During this time, NOYA fulfilled its mission through new and existing offerings, and we expanded our reach to local and national audiences.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, NOYA shifted its work to focus on advocacy for youth programs to help them access resources and stay apprised of information to help them plan their COVID-19 response. We also provided professional development on strategies to transition to virtual programming. As programs saw increases in mental health challenges for their young people and their staff, and as social unrest tied to racial injustice took center stage nationally, NOYA supported its partner organizations with Soul Rebels training and resources. As such, we were able to get 19 programs to complete equity audits and begin planning to make their organizations more equitable—NOYA trained numerous educators, social workers and youth development professionals on trauma-informed practices to help them support staff and young people experiencing trauma. NOYA has since shifted all programming to virtual platforms while maintaining community with our partner organizations.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

NOLA-YPQI



NOYA has made considerable strides in its work to improve the program quality of youth-serving organizations. For the fifth year of the New Orleans Youth Program Quality Initiative (NOLA-YPQI), NOYA worked to incorporate feedback from partner organizations in the collaborative to streamline the NOLA-YPQI process so that it was more manageable and responsive to their needs. As such, NOYA scaled back the number of assessments for each organization to once per year (to give organizations enough time to implement improvement plans), offered trainings

during three peak times a year that aligned with the schedules of youth development programs, offered communities of practice quarterly and with a syllabus, and offered coaching through three different models to accommodate the schedules and needs of the organizations. These changes and deep outreach to grassroots organizations helped NOYA to expand the number of organizations in the cohort, and diversify the types of organizations that are involved.

In response to the needs of youth and the organizations serving them, NOYA rolled out three new trainings: Engaging Youth with Exceptionalities, in collaboration with the Special Education Leader Fellowship; and the Soul Rebels Series: The Making of Trauma-Informed, Equity-Focused, Healing Justice Practitioners. Notably, the organization launched its first-ever Queer-Inclusive Youth Engagement training for youth-serving programs to address the gaps in inclusive policy, instructional practice and interactions between youth programs and participating LGBTQ youth. NOYA also partnered with the Greater New Orleans Foundation to launch a three-part Leadership Series for Youth Development Professionals. The series provided front-line staff with insight on the inner workings of youth development nonprofits, strategies to support their organization's mission and work, and information to elevate their performance in their respective roles.

36

**ORGANIZATIONS
SERVED**

52

SITES SERVED

NOLA-YPQI

9

SITE-SPECIFIC
TRAININGS

4,286

HOURS OF
PARTICIPANT
ENGAGEMENT

80+

YOUTH-SERVING
ORGANIZATIONS
REACHED*

642

PARTICIPANTS
TRAINED

53

TRAININGS
OFFERED

4.8

AVERAGE TRAINING
RATING OUT OF 5

55

PQA ASSESSMENTS
COMPLETED

SOUL REBELS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES



The Soul Rebels Professional Development Series is comprised of trainings, supports and tools to youth-serving programs that will develop a system of trauma-informed, equity-focused, healing-centered youth development programs. The Series includes a four-part training that introduces youth development professionals to three key concepts: equity, trauma-informed approaches and healing justice.

This year, NOYA completed the development of the Soul Rebels series as well as its accompanying tools and assessments. We launched our equity assessment this year, which has since been completed by 19 programs. We also worked with our Fellows to develop the Authentic Youth Engagement checklist for organizations and foundations, which strongly aligns with the equity focus of our Soul Rebels Series.

Through our Soul Rebels work, youth program organization staff have identified some elements of their practice and organizational structures that are hindering equity within their organizations. The assessment process that takes place during the trainings helped to illuminate some of those issues. With NOYA's support, organizations have identified the steps they can take to improve equity across their organizations.

508

**PARTICIPANTS
TRAINED**

19

**EQUITY
ASSESSMENTS
COMPLETED**

15

**TRAININGS
OFFERED**

4.7

**AVERAGE TRAINING
RATING OUT OF 5**

NOYA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIP

The NOYA Youth Leadership Fellowship prepares young people to assume leadership roles in the design, decision-making and implementation phases of systems, programs and initiatives impacting youth and their families in New Orleans.

This year, we concluded one cycle of the NOYA Youth Leadership Fellowship and launched another. Although the inaugural cohort completed their term as Fellows in 2019, they were engaged as consultants, trainers, board members and volunteers throughout 2020.



NOYA faced unprecedented challenges while running the NOYA Youth Leadership Fellowship for the second cohort, but the 2020 NOYA Fellows were committed to showing up each week to engage with community leaders, learn about policy and advocacy, and participate in numerous (virtual) decision-making tables, panels and focus groups.

The ultimate desired impact for the NOYA Youth Leadership Fellowship is that young people are involved in all major systems-level initiatives that impact youth and families. Our program is moving rapidly in that direction as we have had all of our Fellows from both cohorts serve as consultants on a number of systems-level initiatives with long lasting impacts. Our Fellows have been called upon to provide leadership on our local Functional Zero Opportunity Youth strategic planning, the City of New Orleans Youth Master Plan, in educational sessions with JP Morgan Chase and advising the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation on its funding priorities.

10

FELLOWSHIPS,
INTERNSHIPS, JOB
PLACEMENTS

5

BOARD
PLACEMENTS

11

LEADERSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES

7

CONSULTING
OPPORTUNITIES

9

SPEAKING
ENGAGEMENTS

25+

COMMUNITY
LEADERS
ENGAGED

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

NOYA has experienced a significant increase in community engagement, growing our engagement from over 600 people last year to more than 5,000 this year. Much of the engagement we've done has been at large scale events where we have presented our work nationally and regionally. Additionally, NOYA has grown our capacity through the NOYA Youth Leadership Fellows who represent our organization in a variety of roles, including speaking engagements on panels, as consultants and trainers, and in volunteer capacities.



5,000+
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS
ENGAGED

37
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENTS &
EVENTS

121
ORGANIZATIONS IN
YOUTH PROGRAMS
DIRECTORY

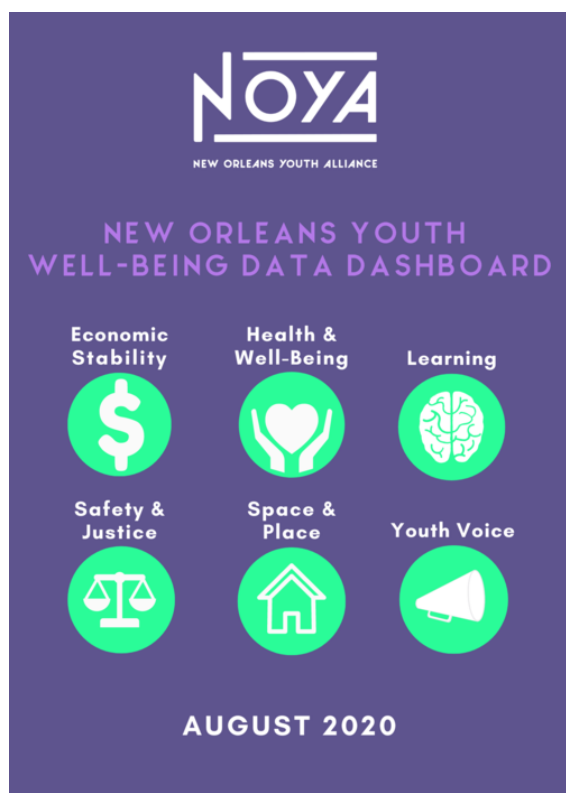
The New Orleans Youth Alliance also expanded its community engagement by developing the New Orleans Youth Programs Directory, a resource with over 100 listings of local youth programs serving children and youth in New Orleans from early childhood through age 24. The Directory is a useful tool for schools, young people, families and other stakeholders to gain valuable information about youth programs across the city. Print copies were distributed to local public libraries, NORD sites and by request.

In order to make the New Orleans Youth Programs Directory more widely accessible, NOYA launched an online version which can be accessed at nolayoutprograms.org. The website features robust search capabilities that allow users to filter results by age/grade served, zip code, and program types. Each program page includes contact information for programs, location and program descriptions. This tool has helped to raise our profile as an organization and helped us to expand our reach to organizations that had not previously been engaged.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This year, we also released the New Orleans Youth Well-Being Data Dashboard, a collection of data that shines a light on how young people are faring in the city across six priority areas:

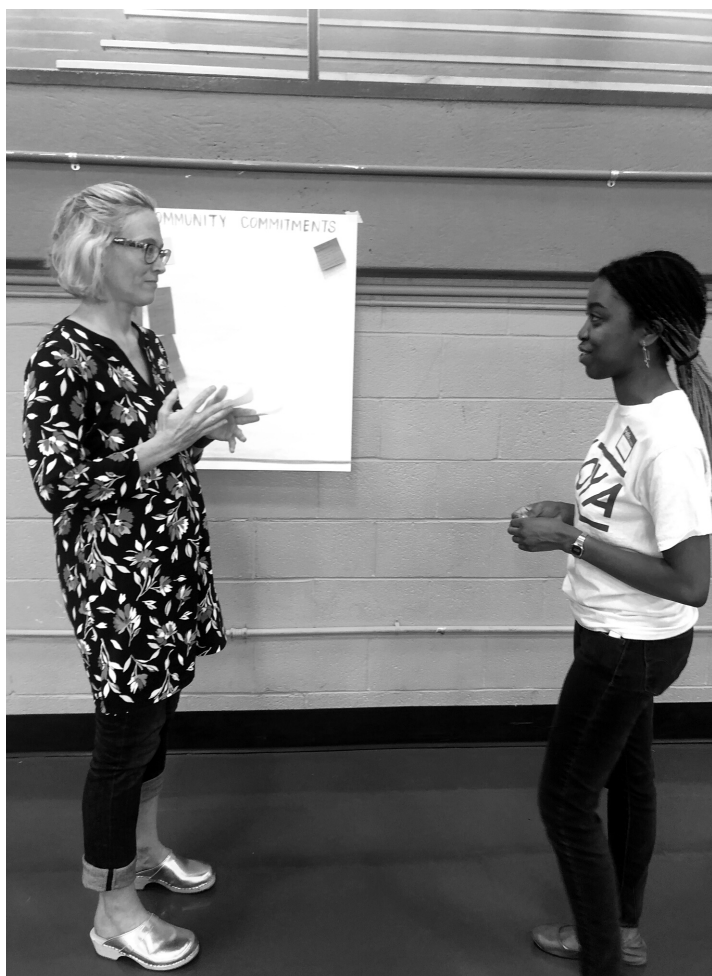
- **Economic Stability:** The economic well-being, economic equity and quality of life for children and families in New Orleans
- **Health and Well-Being:** The physical and social emotional health of children in New Orleans
- **Learning:** The academic achievement, college and career readiness and experiences of children and youth in New Orleans public schools
- **Safety and Justice:** The safety, protection and treatment of children in New Orleans, particularly within the juvenile and criminal justice systems
- **Space and Place:** The physical environment in which children and their families live, including community assets
- **Youth Voice:** The civic engagement and empowerment of youth in New Orleans, especially their opportunities to lead and inform systems and programs that impact children and their families



NOYA has presented this data to a number of key stakeholders including the New Orleans City Council Smart & Sustainable Cities Committee, the Children & Youth Planning Board and at the Greater New Orleans Foundation's Webinar: "How Educators and Nonprofit Organizations Are Providing Supports for Youth."

This tool is a useful resource for advocacy, fund development and policy development concerning youth and families in New Orleans. The New Orleans Youth Well-Being Data Dashboard is designed to help answer the question "How are the children doing?" in our infinite quest to make sure that "ALL the children are well!"

TAKEAWAYS



Even with the disruption that COVID-19 brought to our work, we still were able to keep our partner organizations engaged and invested in examining their program quality, this time through the lens of equity. Everything we do is in direct response to the needs and requests of the programs we serve. We take great care in soliciting feedback from our partners to ensure that our program design aligns with their needs and capacity and we respond with urgency. We make data driven decisions using program evaluations, focus groups and other related data and are transparent about every decision we make. It helps significantly with buy-in and ensures that we model the tenets of program quality we promote to our organizations. We also work really hard to build community by nurturing our relationships, building connections between programs, directing resources to our program partners and advocating on their behalf.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our funders who make this work possible!

The Aspen Institute
Baptist Community Ministries
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
Greater New Orleans Foundation
Greater New Orleans Funders Network
Institute for Mental Hygiene
JPMorgan Chase Foundation
Laureus Sport for Good Foundation
United Way of Southeast Louisiana
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

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