



Background

Over the past several years, many communities have invested in considerable capacity-building and innovation to reach and reconnect youth who are *disconnected* from school and employment. While federal funding for much of this activity is retrenching, many of these communities continue to engage in this important work. CCRY Network is an outgrowth of those communities that started with the US Department of Labor's Youth Opportunity Movement and decided it was important to continue their cross-system work on behalf of disconnected youth and to network across communities to share lessons, innovations, and success stories. The network has since expanded to include communities that are invested in this youth population and the cross-systems solutions needed to ensure their education and economic success.

The network was formed to:

- Serve as a collective learning environment, promoting peer-to-peer exchange and hands-on assistance in implementing and expanding best practice especially in communities with high levels of youth distress,
- Serve as a communications vehicle to bring attention to the work and innovative practice that is occurring in communities across the country, and
- Have a collective voice and make input into state and federal policy on issues affecting disconnected youth in distressed communities.

Since 2006, the Network has convened semi-annually in host communities bringing teams to the forums to focus on issues, policies and strategies to enhance service delivery to vulnerable youth. CLASP serves as a convener and works with the communities to make the connections between federal policy and local practice. Many national organizations have been active in supporting the Network activities including the National Youth Employment Coalition, the US Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the Corps Network, and FHI360 (formerly AED).

Below is a selected list of activities and products of the CCRY Network and CLASP

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| January 2006 | Released – Learning from the Youth Opportunity Experience based on the survey of 22 Youth Opportunity Communities – the document captures the accomplishments and lessons |
| January 2007 | Released – Making the Juvenile Justice – Workforce Connection for Re-entering Young Offenders: A Guide for Local Practice – based on site visits and survey of communities working with the justice system |
| April 2007 | CCRY Network/CLASP and MNDY Joint Audio Conference on Sharing Youth Data Across Systems |
| June 2007 Hartford | Forum - Increasing Employer Engagement: Facing the Challenges and Realities with Hartford Chamber of Commerce and business and industry representatives |
| January 2008 Houston | Forum – Building the CCRY Network Employer Engagement Pipeline Model - presented the Employer Engagement Model at DOL session on expanding employer engagement |
| June 2008 Boston | Forum - Using the Workforce and Youth Development Delivery Systems to Serve Gang Involved Youth – showcasing Boston’s Interventions with Justice system |
| July 2008 | CCRY Network/CLASP and Municipal Network for Disconnected Youth Joint Audio Conference on Using Workforce Development Strategies to Reengage Youth |
| December 2008 | Released - Harnessing the Power of Advocacy: Massachusetts’ Efforts to Increase State Resources for Youth |
| January 2009 San Diego | Forum - Looking Forward: Moving the Youth Agenda with a New Federal Administration |
| June 2009 Philadelphia | Forum - Developing and Sustaining Cross-Sector Collaboration to Serve Out-of-School Youth –learning from the Philadelphia Youth Network’s Project U-Turn effort |
| January 2010 Baltimore | Forum – Follow the Money: What Communities Need to Know to Compete in a New Federal Funding Environment |
| February 2010 | Released – Building a Comprehensive Youth Employment Delivery System: Examples of Effective Practice |
| March 2010 Washington, DC | Capitol Hill Briefing and release – Building on the Legacy of Youth Opportunity: Implications for Federal Policy – representatives and youth from urban, rural, and native American communities briefed policymakers and congressional staff on the lessons and legacy at the 10 year anniversary of YO funding. |
| September 2010 Brockton | Forum – Benchmarking Progress on the Pathway to Labor Market Success – with Brandeis University and Northeastern University Center for Labor Market Studies |
| March 2011 Washington, DC | Forum - Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Out-of-School Youth: How Youth Program Providers are approaching this Challenge – mental health professionals and youth practitioners tackle the issues of trauma and healthy youth development |
| October 2011 Houston | Forum - Young Men of Color in Focus What does it take to change the landscape?- Solutions from the field and positioning communities for WIA reauthorization and the dropout recovery system |
| April 2012 Washington, DC | Forum - Raising the Local Profile on What’s Working for Disconnected Youth - Informed policymakers including representatives from the Office of Management and Budget, Interagency Work Group on Disconnected Youth, and Departments’ of Education and Labor |

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| <p>April 2013 Washington, DC</p> | <p>Forum - Reconnecting Our Youth: Maximizing Collective Community Impact The Role of National Policy, Local Leadership, and Innovative Practice – Communities exchange innovation in funding, policy, and practice, and have dialogue with national policymakers, federal staff, and funders.</p> |
| <p>April 2014 Washington, DC</p> | <p>Forum - Supporting Flagship Communities in Their Strategic Efforts to Advance Comprehensive Solutions for Disconnected Youth – Focus on youth career pathways and employer partnerships, and conversation with national partners including from the Interagency Workgroup on Disconnected Youth and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.</p> |
| <p>October 2014 Kansas City, MO</p> | <p>Forum - Developing Youth Education and Career Pathways in the Wake of WIOA Enactment – Communities discussed anticipated challenges and opportunities of the new WIOA law.</p> |
| <p>April 2015 Washington, DC</p> | <p>Forum – Expanding Opportunities for Low-Income and Out-of-School Youth: Strengthening Education, Career Pathways, and Work-Based Learning Strategies – Communities map out their specific career pathways initiatives and discuss the policies that support or pose barriers to strengthening programming.</p> |