



LANCASTER, PA

# DISCONNECTED YOUTH STUDY

December 2023

# Contents

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Executive Summary..... | 1 |
|------------------------|---|

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Programming.....         | 1 |
| Coalition Building ..... | 1 |
| Funding.....             | 1 |

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Introduction..... | 2 |
|-------------------|---|

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Who are Disconnected Youth?.....             | 3  |
| Secondary Research and Document Review ..... | 5  |
| Methodology.....                             | 7  |
| Summary.....                                 | 8  |
| Data and Statistics.....                     | 11 |

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Community Survey..... | 37 |
|-----------------------|----|

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Summary.....                 | 37 |
| Community Survey Themes..... | 38 |

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Disconnected Youth Focus Groups..... | 39 |
|--------------------------------------|----|

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Summary.....                  | 39 |
| Youth Focus Group Themes..... | 40 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Youth Focus Groups and<br>Community Partners Themes..... | 42 |
|--|----|

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Recommendations..... | 44 |
|----------------------|----|

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Programming .....        | 44 |
| Coalition Building ..... | 44 |
| Funding.....             | 45 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Best Practices for Supporting<br>Disconnected Youth..... | 46 |
|--|----|

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)   |    |
| Youth Program Funding.....                       | 46 |
| Youth Hubs .....                                 | 47 |
| Third Places.....                                | 48 |
| Establish Youth Advisory Councils.....           | 48 |
| Mental Health.....                               | 49 |
| Boosting Employment Among Black Individuals..... | 50 |

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Limitations..... | 51 |
|------------------|----|

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Acknowledgments..... | 51 |
|----------------------|----|

|                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| Appendices..... | 52 |
|-----------------|----|

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Occupational Data .....                    | 52 |
| Community Based Organizations Survey ..... | 58 |
| Community Survey Respondents .....         | 61 |
| Youth Focus Group Consent Form .....       | 64 |
| Disconnected Youth Focus Group Guide.....  | 65 |
| Gift Card Acknowledgment Protocol.....     | 68 |

|                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| References..... | 69 |
|-----------------|----|

# Executive Summary

This study was commissioned by the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB) to gather qualitative and quantitative information on disconnected youth who reside in Lancaster County aged 16-24 who are neither in the workforce nor pursuing education.

The Lancaster, Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board Youth Committee, who is responsible for the oversight and the development strategies for young adults, partnered with TPMA to conduct a comprehensive study focused on barriers and deficiencies of the disconnected youth population in Lancaster County Pennsylvania.

The data collected and analyzed in this study include the demographics and attributes of disconnected youth including barriers that prevent disconnected youth from engaging in the workforce. Additionally, this study includes results of stakeholder engagement activities throughout Lancaster, which include community-based organizations (CBOs) and youth perspectives, who were actively engaged in this process, through a survey and focus groups.

Lastly, this report identifies themes and includes strategies and recommendations to address the most critical needs associated with Lancaster County's disconnected youth. This study aims to help guide the LCWDB to define strategies to reengage Youth in educational and occupation programs.

**Major key themes, key findings and recommendations detailed in this report are summarized.**

Key barriers to youth employment include transportation, childcare, and language barriers.

## Programming

Mental health and trauma-informed practices should be embedded in workforce development programming. Many of the stakeholders mentioned more support and attention should be given to issues related to mental health services for disconnected youth. Additionally, youth expressed that they want to be heard, they want to feel connected, but many times programs do not allow them to be heard. Youth hubs and youth advisory committees should be considered to bring young people's voices to the table. Because youth rely on relationships, connecting a few may open the door for other youth due to peer-to-peer interactions.

## Coalition Building

Intentional coordination, outreach, and resource-sharing, such as quarterly convenings to include key program leaders throughout Lancaster County. Many disconnected youths are already engaged with community-based organizations, a concerted effort to partner and recruit disconnected youth should be considered to leverage services offered by community-based organizations.

## Funding

While funding streams often have significant requirements, anything the LCWDB can do to lessen the burden of these requirements would help community partners take the most effective advantage of resources. Community partners who are currently working with the disconnected youth population expressed an interest in working with the LCWDB but expressed that there are many requirements associated with the funding. Training related to how WIOA funding works would be beneficial and helpful to community partners.

# Introduction

The Lancaster County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB) is interested in creating opportunities for young individuals across the county that have been underserved, also referred to as disconnected youth. To execute this study, the LCWDB has solicited the support of TPMA, an economic and workforce development consulting firm that works with communities to identify solutions and actionable strategies that support thriving communities.

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 defines the term “disconnected youth” as individuals aged 16 to 24 who are neither working nor in school. In 2012, the White House Council for Community Solutions coined the term “opportunity youth” to describe this population.<sup>1</sup> Opportunity youth can also be referred to as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

The term “Opportunity Youth” reflects optimism for finding a pathway to economic stability and by investing in their futures the term represents an immense opportunity for this specific population. Furthermore, by improving outcomes and investing in this population, businesses and communities can potentially benefit from employing quality talented youth and interrupt a multi-generational cycle of poverty for youth and their families.

Young people in school or working who are “connected” have a better chance at making the necessary connections to gain the resources needed to gain the confidence, behavioral skills, and cognitive skills to gain education and employment opportunities within their communities verses the circumstances and challenges that can be associated with disconnected youth. This study also explores the perspectives of those who are underemployed, meaning those who do not have enough paid work and/or want to close significant skill gaps.

To address issues associated with disconnected youth, WIOA has emphasized that workforce development boards should take an active approach within their areas to find solutions to help support youth not engaged in education or employment. An all-hands-on-deck approach is needed to engage and connect disconnected youth. This includes policymakers, community-based organizations, schools, and employers. Collaborative engagement between education, training, and employers is necessary to bridge the gaps faced by disconnected youth.

Additionally, this study aims to inform the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board policymakers, educators, and community leader’s ways to reduce youth disconnection and ways they can contribute to improving the life outcomes of disconnected youth in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

With the help of the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board’s Youth Committee, TPMA began by reviewing the existing documents and related prior research around the disconnected youth population, nationally and regionally.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/opportunity-youth#:~:text=Opportunity%20youth%20are%20young%20people,disconnected%20from%20school%20and%20work>.



# Who are Disconnected Youth?

According to WIOA, Out of School Youth (Disconnected) exist under the following (Table 1) criteria:<sup>2</sup>

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>IN SCHOOL</b>     | Part-time or full-time students who have attended school or college                            |
| <b>OUT of SCHOOL</b> | Not attending any school, A school dropout   |
| <b>WORKING</b>       | Those who had any full- or part-time work in the previous week or looking to gain a better job |
| <b>NOT WORKING</b>   | Unemployed not in labor force  |

Table 1: Source: WIOA Youth Definitions

According to data collected nationally, disconnected youth can be attributed to various circumstances. For example, some youth may have disabilities, or may be homeless, or involved with the juvenile justice or child welfare systems. The graphic below (figure 1) from Measure of America highlights the differences between disconnected and connected youth.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [TEGL\\_21-16.pdf \(dol.gov\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive/#::~text=YOUTH%20DISCONNECTION-,NATIONALLY,House%20Council%20for%20Community%20Solutions>.



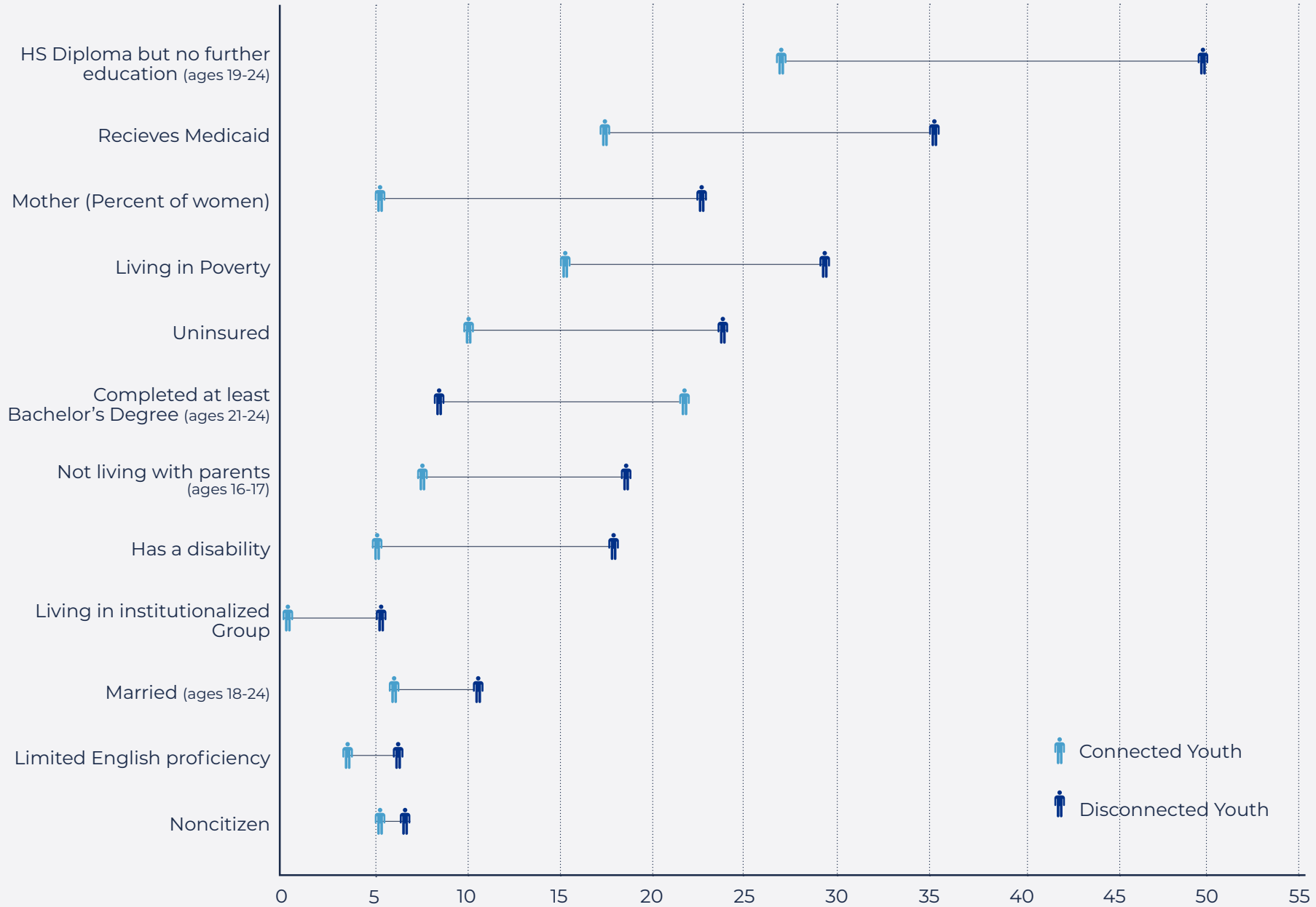


Figure 1: Source: Youth Disconnection in America (measureofamerica.org)

## Secondary Research and Document Review

To further understand the demographic makeup of Lancaster County, TPMA conducted secondary research through desktop and document review. TPMA also engaged with the Workforce Board by attending a community tour of Lancaster prior to holding focus groups. The purpose of the community tour was to better understand the different communities throughout the County and strategically locate focus group sites.

## Previous Work

Several efforts have been put forth to understand the needs of youth across the county. This report refrains from focusing on information included in these reports to avoid duplication of efforts. Practitioners carrying out youth initiatives across the county should examine all reports to develop a deeper understanding of the needs of youth across Lancaster County. A compendium of complementary reports is outlined below.





## Equity Profile

This profile outlines list of equity data across Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, emphasizing full inclusion of various demographic characteristics. It employs an equity indicators framework developed by PolicyLink and USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the county's equity status. Drawing data from regional sources, the profile acknowledges limitations in data disaggregation at the county level and encourages supplementing with local data and lived experiences for a more nuanced perspective. Recognizing inequities beyond race/ethnicity and nativity, the document underscores the importance of considering characteristics like income, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, and neighborhood in the pursuit of equitable growth.

This report presents numerous important findings; however, key findings from this 2019 report that are relevant to this 2023 study are as follows:

- The share of “disconnected youth” who are neither in school nor working has stayed the same since 1990, although youth of color have noticeably declined.
- Youth disconnection is slightly higher among young women than young men.
- Students of color are more likely to attend high-poverty schools.
- Child opportunity is the highest in the surrounding parts of the county immediately outside of the City of Lancaster and the northern regions of the county.

This report provides further insights into general county demographics, economic vitality and workforce information, education attainment, household data, health indicators, and information on justice involved populations.

## Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Since 1989, the Commonwealth has administered a survey targeting school students in grades 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th, aiming to understand their behavior, attitudes, and knowledge regarding alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and violence. Known as the ‘Pennsylvania Youth Survey’ or PAYS, this initiative is conducted biennially under the sponsorship of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

The data collected through PAYS fulfills two main objectives. First, it equips school administrators, state agency directors, legislators, and other stakeholders with vital insights into the evolving patterns substance use and associated behaviors. Second, the survey evaluates risk factors associated with these behaviors and identifies protective factors that act as safeguards. This valuable information empowers community leaders to allocate prevention resources strategically, focusing on areas where they can generate the most significant impact.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/Pages/Pennsylvania-Youth-Survey-\(PAYS\).aspx](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/Pages/Pennsylvania-Youth-Survey-(PAYS).aspx)

# Methodology

The introduction sets the stage for the study by highlighting the significance of the issue, its complexity, and the goals of the research. Furthermore, the methodology explores the challenges and barriers that disconnected youth experience. This study's methodology included a comprehensive community profile, surveying community organizations working with disconnected youth, and facilitating focus groups with disconnected youth.

## Surveys

TPMA developed a survey for community partners and community-based organizations (CBOs). The survey comprised closed and open-ended questions and was shared through targeted emails. The survey was opened in August 2023, and closed in October 2023. There were 32 total responses to the survey. Filtering responses for quality responses (i.e., full, reliable, and eligible responses from community partners and CBOs from the County), 31 responses were accepted for analysis.

## Focus Groups

TPMA engaged and conducted outreach to CBOs within the footprint of Lancaster County. Focus groups with disconnected youth were facilitated at The BenchMark Program, Lancaster Recreation Commission, Brightside Opportunities Center, The Mix, and Crossnet Ministries

Additionally, a virtual focus group was added to maximize participation due to the low turnout of the scheduled in-person focus groups. The study aimed to engage at minimum forty (40) disconnected youth. By adding a virtual option, the team was able to engage with additional participants. The total number of youth participants for the study was twenty-eight (28) virtual participants and twenty-five (25) participated in person for a total of fifty-three (53) total participation.

## Data Analysis

TPMA applied a mixed-methods approach in which multiple types of qualitative and quantitative data were collected, analyzed, and synthesized to increase the rigor of research methods and enhance the validity of conclusions. To strengthen the accuracy and credibility of qualitative analysis findings, TPMA relied on triangulation and internal collaborative inquiry discussions. By comparing findings throughout different data sources and using approaches that incorporate both evidence and negative evidence, TPMA created a more robust and dynamic depiction of program needs.

More information on data analysis, protocols and methods used can be found in the Appendix section of this report.

# Lancaster County Community Profile

## Summary

To understand specific populations of youth, it is important to understand the environment that they exist in. TPMA reviewed various data sources to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the landscape that young individuals in Lancaster County navigate. The information in this section should not be used to understand why trends are occurring, but rather to understand what is occurring. Understanding why would require a deeper analysis of local and regional policy and context.

This data section reviews key poverty statistics such as income by race, poverty by zip codes, and foreign-born populations in high poverty areas by zip code; workforce information focusing on industry and occupational information; employment and education statistics for youth aged 16 to 19; and housing information such as home values, monthly homeownership costs, gross rent, and more.

It is important to note that Lancaster County has a large Amish population across the county. Though data disaggregating Amish populations from other populations are difficult to find, recent reports highlight that this segment of individuals has been growing.<sup>5</sup> The behaviors of Amish populations should be considered when examining these data. For example, Amish populations tend to exit school earlier than other populations, typically around 8<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>6</sup> This information is likely to skew education statistics. Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, it was determined that the Amish youth population were not considered disconnected, due to factors associated within their own communities, customs, and practices.

Furthermore, in 2019, PolicyLink and USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute developed a report titled, “An Equity Profile of Lancaster County.” This report provides a comprehensive overview of key equity indicators related to demographic, economic, workforce, education, youth, and justice-involved data. Information from Equity Profile should be used to add additional context to data from this report.

<sup>5</sup> [https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/amish-population-in-lancaster-county-by-the-numbers-what-are-the-trends-q-a/article\\_616da2c8-683b-11e9-b425-f78a40cef5c1.html](https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/amish-population-in-lancaster-county-by-the-numbers-what-are-the-trends-q-a/article_616da2c8-683b-11e9-b425-f78a40cef5c1.html)

<sup>6</sup> <https://amishamerica.com/why-do-amish-only-go-to-school-until-8th-grade/>

## Poverty Data Key Findings

### **Ephrata, Lancaster City, East Lampeter, and Lancaster and West Lampeter Townships present Highest Rates of Disconnected Youth**

Measure of America calculated the youth disconnection rate for all the country's public use microdata areas (PUMAs), or areas with populations of at least 100,000 people. Ephrata, Lancaster City, East Lampeter, Lancaster Township and West Lampeter Township present the highest rates of disconnected youth, although each area was categorized as moderately connected.

### **Income for individuals of all races has been increasing, except for Black individuals**

Based on the examined time period, income for all racial groups has increased, by varying amounts, except for Black individuals. Groups that saw the highest income increases are Asian individuals, individuals of two or more races, and individuals identified as Other.

### **Areas of High Youth Poverty**

Poverty statistics present areas of high youth poverty including, but not limited to, zip codes in Kirkwood, Lancaster City, Willow Street, and Akron. .

### **Areas of High Foreign-Born Population Poverty**

Poverty statistics present areas of foreign-born populations living in poverty including, but not limited to, zip codes in Brownstown, Lancaster (city), Mountville, and Millersville.



## Workforce and Education Data Summary

Workforce Information in data were pulled to understand top growing occupations and industries across Lancaster County. It is important to acknowledge that a breadth of other occupations and industries across Lancaster County exist, and practitioners should focus on providing resources to areas that have high growth potential across the area, particularly those that pay competitive wages to young individuals.

### Many Youths are Employed in Low Wage Occupations

Based on occupational data, most young individuals are employed in food service occupations and other lower paying occupations such as Fast Food and Counter Workers, Waiters and Waitresses, Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop, Cashiers, Retail Salespersons, Home Health and Person Care Aides. While these occupations are important to supporting a local economy, many of them do not pay wages to support independent living based on housing data (included below) and they do not typically present career pathway opportunities.

### Several Industries are Expected to Grow

Several industries have seen consistent growth over the past several years and are expected to continue growing through 2028. These industries include General Medical and Surgical Hospitals, Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities, Other Commercial Equipment Merchant Wholesalers, Testing Laboratories, General Warehousing and Storage, and Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars.

### Youth School Enrollment Has Been Dropping

After reviewing data from 2011 to 2021, it appears that youth school enrollment has been decreasing. Based on the data provided, school enrollment is not a result of population decline as the number of youths not enrolled in school has been increasing. As mentioned earlier, this may be a result of growing Amish populations who tend to exit formalized education after 8th grade; however, other influences such as poverty, lack of access to basic resources such as food and shelter, and childhood trauma also tend to have negative impacts on school enrollment.

Furthermore, males have a higher likelihood of not being enrolled in school than females. This particular statistic may be skewed by practices among Amish populations because Amish populations tend to exit education after 8th grade, coupled with the fact that Amish populations across Lancaster have been growing.<sup>7</sup>

### Youth Unemployment Has Been Rising for Youth Not Enrolled in School

Overall, youth unemployment dropped between 2011 and 2021, particularly among youth who are enrolled in school and unemployed. However, the number of youths who are unemployed and not in school has steadily increased and the number of youths who are unemployed and not high school graduates has greatly fluctuated, but has not increased or decreased, overall, by a significant margin based on the sampled time period<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> [https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/amish-population-in-lancaster-county-by-the-numbers-what-are-the-trends-q-a/article\\_616da2c8-683b-11e9-b425-f78a40cef5c1.html](https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/amish-population-in-lancaster-county-by-the-numbers-what-are-the-trends-q-a/article_616da2c8-683b-11e9-b425-f78a40cef5c1.html)

<sup>8</sup> Trends related to youth unemployment can be found on pages 21 to 29.

## Housing Data Summary

Data examined throughout this section consists of 2011 to 2021 census data. This census data was pulled to examine long-term housing trends from a high-level perspective.

Given the state of housing affordability across the US, further resources should be examined to understand the current housing situation in Lancaster County. Notably, since January 2021 average rental costs across the U.S. have increased from \$1,639 in January 2021 to \$2,011 in September of 2023. However, rent in Pennsylvania has experienced one of the largest Year of Year decreases in rent (-4.5%).<sup>9</sup> This is a positive trend in housing affordability for Lancaster youth.

### Overall, Homeowners Have Become Less Cost Burdened by Housing Costs

As defined by HUD, cost burdened individuals are anyone paying 30% or more of their income on housing costs. Between 2011 and 2021 both individuals with mortgages and those residing in houses without mortgages have been spending progressively less of their income on housing costs<sup>10</sup>. This is a positive trend for families as they can direct more resources, financial resources in particular, to basic family needs and support for educational services. Lancaster County should continue current efforts to reduce the number of cost burdened households, especially as population continues to grow.

### Cost Burden for Renters Has Remained Flat

Though housing cost burden for homeowners has decreased, cost burden for renters has remained flat. The Lancaster Equity Profile highlights areas that experience the highest degrees of cost burdened homes including Denver, Ephrata, City of Lancaster, Willow Street, Lampeter, and areas west of Elizabethtown.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, nearly half of renters in Lancaster County are cost burdened. The number of individuals paying 30% to 34.9% of their income has stayed between 7.3% and 9.0% and individuals paying 35.0% or more of their income on housing has stayed between 38.6% and 43.4%.

These statistics are on par with the 2021 Pennsylvania state average of 38.6% of individuals paying 35% or of their income on rent costs and 7.3% of individuals paying between 30% and 34.9% of their income on rent costs. Regardless, young individuals tend to be renters as opposed to homeowners, specifically 52.4% of Gen Z are renters as opposed to homeowners and the population of Lancaster County is growing.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.rent.com/research/average-rent-price-report/>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr\\_edge\\_featd\\_article\\_092214.html#:~:text=HUD%20defines%20cost%2Dburdened%20families,of%20one's%20income%20on%20rent](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr_edge_featd_article_092214.html#:~:text=HUD%20defines%20cost%2Dburdened%20families,of%20one's%20income%20on%20rent)

<sup>11</sup> [An Equity Profile of Lancaster County, 2019. Written by PolicyLink and USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute.](#)

<sup>12</sup> [https://lanasteronline.com/features/home\\_garden/millennials-move-from-renting-to-owning-in-lancaster-county-the-shift-s-even-bigger/article\\_00a3b800-3d26-11ee-bd86-fb15ae586355.html](https://lanasteronline.com/features/home_garden/millennials-move-from-renting-to-owning-in-lancaster-county-the-shift-s-even-bigger/article_00a3b800-3d26-11ee-bd86-fb15ae586355.html)

# Data and Statistics

Located near the state capital, Lancaster County has a population of roughly 556,629 individuals that has been steadily increasing, nearly linearly, over the last 50 years. It is estimated the population has grown .7% over the last two years, whereas the Commonwealth's population has declined by a projected 0.2% (nearly 300,000). Lancaster County's youth populations are above the state average with 6.1% and 22.9% of persons under 5 years, and 18 years old, respectively, whereas the state reflects percentages of 5.2% and 20.2%.

In terms of race, the county is above the state average in White (88.8%), Hispanic or Latino (11.6%), and White alone, not Hispanic or Latino (80.2%) and below the state average in all other demographic categories, most notably Black or African American alone (5.6%)<sup>13</sup>. Lancaster County is underperforming compared to the rest of Pennsylvania educationally. 86.4% of individuals 25 years or older are high school graduates or higher and 29.7% of individuals 25 years or older have a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to the rest of the state, 91.4% and 33.1% respectively.

It is worth noting that Elizabethtown College estimated that the county's Amish population accounted for 33,143 residents in 2018, up 3.2% from the previous year and nearly 5% of the County's overall population demographic<sup>14</sup>. This population tends to be White, not Hispanic or Latino and typically exits the education system after eighth grade. Because this population is included in census data, it will likely skew some demographic statistics.

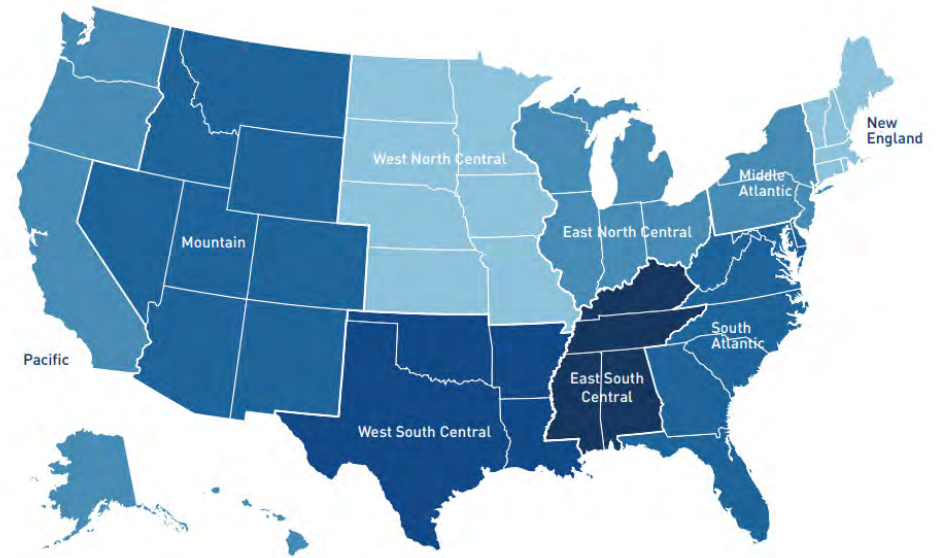


Figure 2: Source: Youth Disconnection in America (measureofamerica.org)

Pennsylvania is categorized in the Middle Atlantic region of the United States (Figure 2). According to Figure 3, this region ranks near the middle in terms of overall disconnection rate, with its overall percentage of youth disconnection at 12.4%. Of this percent, most are Black (19.7%), male (13.3%) youth.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the state of Pennsylvania ranks near the middle (24th) in relation to other states with 12.5% of disconnected youth. This equates to 161,800 disconnected youth in the state of Pennsylvania, 11.4% being men, 10.0% being women, 23.1% being Black, 16.3% being Latino, and 9% being White.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Pennsylvania State Demographic Statistics: White alone (80.8%), Hispanic or Latino (8.6%), White alone, not Hispanic or Latino (74.5%), Black or African American alone (12.2%).

<sup>14</sup> [https://lanasteronline.com/news/local/amish-population-in-lancaster-county-by-the-numbers-what-are-the-trends-q-a/article\\_616da2c8-683b-11e9-b425-f78a40cef5c1.html](https://lanasteronline.com/news/local/amish-population-in-lancaster-county-by-the-numbers-what-are-the-trends-q-a/article_616da2c8-683b-11e9-b425-f78a40cef5c1.html)

<sup>15</sup> [ADecadeUndone2021Update.pdf \(ssrc-static.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> [A Decade Undone: 2021 Update - Measure of America: A Program of the Social Science Research Council](#)

| Region               | Overall (%) | Men(%)      | Women (%)   | White(%)    | Latino (%)  | Black (%)   |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>United States</b> | <b>12.6</b> | <b>13.2</b> | <b>12.1</b> | <b>10.6</b> | <b>14.0</b> | <b>19.6</b> |
| West North Central   | 9.9         | 9.7         | 10.0        | 8.6         | 10.7        | 18.2        |
| New England          | 10.1        | 11.6        | 8.5         | 8.4         | 17.6        | 13.6        |
| South Atlantic       | 12.3        | 13.1        | 11.5        | 10.5        | 12.1        | 17.7        |
| Middle Atlantic      | 12.4        | 13.3        | 11.5        | 10.0        | 15.7        | 19.7        |
| Pacific              | 12.5        | 13.4        | 11.6        | 11.6        | 15.7        | 20.2        |
| East North Central   | 12.6        | 13.0        | 12.3        | 10.4        | 13.5        | 24.1        |
| Mountain             | 13.0        | 12.6        | 13.5        | 10.5        | 14.8        | 10.9        |
| East South Central   | 14.5        | 15.7        | 13.2        | 12.5        | 14.5        | 20.1        |
| West South Central   | 14.6        | 14.6        | 14.6        | 12.7        | 15.1        | 19.9        |

Figure 3: Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019.

In 2019, Measure of America calculated the youth disconnection rate for all the country's public use microdata areas (PUMAs), or areas with populations of at least 100,000 people. Further, the country's 2,400 PUMAs were organized into eight community types based on their youth disconnection and population density.<sup>17</sup>

These eight community types include opportunity-rich urban America, opportunity-rich suburban America, well-connected rural America, moderately connected urban America, moderately connected suburban America, struggling rural America, urban opportunity deserts, and rural opportunity deserts. Measure America's eight community types are detailed below, in order of average youth disconnection rate (Opportunity-Rich Urban America having the lowest rate, and Rural Opportunity Deserts having the highest).<sup>18</sup>



<sup>17</sup> [Public Use Microdata Areas \(PUMAs\) \(census.gov\)](https://www.census.gov/pums/)

<sup>18</sup> [Making the Connection: Transportation and Youth Disconnection - Measure of America: A Program of the Social Science Research Council](#)



Lancaster County consists of 4 total PUMAs (Table 2). The large majority of Lancasters PUMAs are suburban areas, with the other being urban. A list of Lancasters PUMAs and their community type, including their youth disconnection rates, are detailed in the table below.

Measure of America found that rural counties as a whole are considerably worse than more populous counties in terms of youth disconnection throughout the county. In completely rural counties, the average youth disconnection rate is much higher than the rate for counties in urban centers or for suburban counties.<sup>19</sup>

| County           | PUMA   | Area Type | Community Type       | Youth Disconnection |
|------------------|--|-----------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Lancaster County | Lancaster City, East Lampeter, Lancaster & West Lampeter Townships | Urban     | Moderately Connected | 14.5                |
| Lancaster County | (Northwest) Elizabethtown Borough                                  | Suburban  | Opportunity Rich     | 8.1                 |
| Lancaster County | (East) Ephrata Borough   | Suburban  | Moderately Connected | 14.9                |
| Lancaster County | (Southwest) Columbia Borough                                       | Suburban  | Opportunity Rich     | 6.8                 |

Table 2: Source: Youth Disconnection in America (measureofamerica.org)

<sup>19</sup> [More Than a Million Reasons for Hope: Youth Disconnection in America Today - Measure of America: A Program of the Social Science Research Council](#)





## Poverty Information

### Income by Race

Based on race, Asian individuals have the highest household income and rank third in average household income growth. Black individuals have the lowest average household income and rank the lowest in income growth over the last 8 years by a strong margin. Individuals identified as Other and Two or More Races, reflect the highest average household growth rates, 76% and 69%, respectively.<sup>20</sup> Table 3 and Figure 4 shows the average household income by race.

|                       | Asian    | Black    | Hispanic | Other    | Two Or More | White    | White Non-Hispanic | Grand Total |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|----------|--------------------|-------------|
| Average (2013 – 2020) | \$80,412 | \$51,494 | \$61,314 | \$59,895 | \$71,801    | \$68,967 | \$70,986           | \$68,566    |
| Growth                | 63%      | 10%      | 35%      | 76%      | 69%         | 20%      | 22%                | 30%         |

Table 3: Average Income by Race. Source: Data USA, 2023<sup>21</sup>

### Average of Household Income by Race

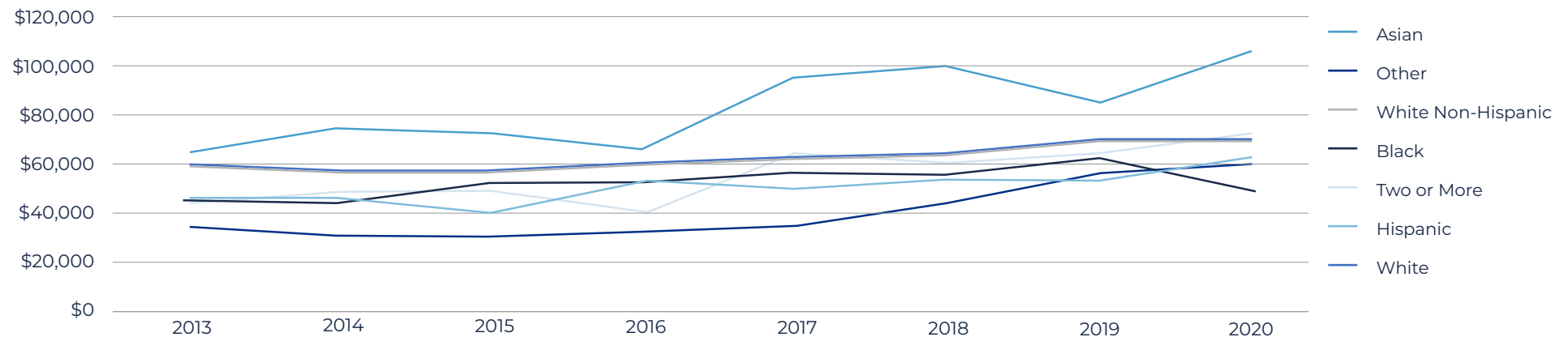


Figure 4: Average Income by Race. Source Data USA, 2023

<sup>20</sup> "Other" includes individuals who indicate their race as Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Other Asian, or other detailed Asian Responses such as Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, Thai, etc.

<sup>21</sup> [Data USA, 2023](#)

## Poverty by Zip Code

Poverty levels across Lancaster County vary. Table 4 and Figure 5 shows the top ten at highest poverty levels in Lancaster County. Lancaster (City), Paradise, Bainbridge, Columbia, and Akron present the highest levels of poverty across the general population and percentage of children under 18 in poverty. The 17606 zip code in Lancaster (City) has the highest overall poverty rate of 39.2% but lacks sufficient data on children under 18 in poverty). The 17536 zip code in Kirkwood, on the eastern premises of the county, reflects the highest level of children under 18 in poverty and ranks fifth in overall poverty (Table 5 & Figure 6).

### 10 Zip codes at Highest Poverty Levels

| ZIP   | ZIP Name                            | % Children Under 18 Poverty Level | Per Capita Income | % Poverty Level |
|-------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 17606 | Lancaster, PA (in Lancaster Co.)    | Insf. Data                        | \$24,906          | 39.2%           |
| 17551 | Millersville, PA (in Lancaster Co.) | 10.6%                             | \$27,629          | 24.5%           |
| 17504 | Bausman, PA (in Lancaster Co.)      | 0.0%                              | \$24,470          | 18.5%           |
| 17562 | Paradise, PA (in Lancaster Co.)     | 17.1%                             | \$28,096          | 14.1%           |
| 17536 | Kirkwood, PA (in Lancaster Co.)     | 24.5%                             | \$25,476          | 13.8%           |
| 17603 | Lancaster, PA (in Lancaster Co.)    | 20.1%                             | \$34,007          | 13.4%           |
| 17602 | Lancaster, PA (in Lancaster Co.)    | 14.1%                             | \$31,182          | 13.0%           |
| 17502 | Bainbridge, PA (in Lancaster Co.)   | 17.0%                             | \$37,745          | 12.9%           |
| 17512 | Columbia, PA (in Lancaster Co.)     | 15.3%                             | \$30,938          | 12.0%           |
| 17501 | Akron, PA (in Lancaster Co.)        | 17.2%                             | \$32,441          | 10.5%           |

Table 4: 10 Zip Codes at Highest Poverty Levels. Source: Lightcast 2023.3

### 10 Zip codes as % Children under 18 Poverty Level

| ZIP   | ZIP Name                             | % Children Under 18 Poverty Level | Per Capita Income | % Poverty Level |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 17536 | Kirkwood, PA (in Lancaster Co.)      | 24.5%                             | \$25,476          | 13.8%           |
| 17603 | Lancaster, PA (in Lancaster Co.)     | 20.1%                             | \$34,007          | 13.4%           |
| 17584 | Willow Street, PA (in Lancaster Co.) | 18.3%                             | \$42,326          | 8.9%            |
| 17501 | Akron, PA (in Lancaster Co.)         | 17.2%                             | \$32,441          | 10.5%           |
| 17562 | Paradise, PA (in Lancaster Co.)      | 17.1%                             | \$28,096          | 14.1%           |
| 17502 | Bainbridge, PA (in Lancaster Co.)    | 17.0%                             | \$37,745          | 12.9%           |
| 17512 | Columbia, PA (in Lancaster Co.)      | 15.3%                             | \$30,938          | 12.0%           |
| 17602 | Lancaster, PA (in Lancaster Co.)     | 14.1%                             | \$31,182          | 13.0%           |
| 17579 | Strasburg, PA (in Lancaster Co.)     | 13.6%                             | \$31,801          | 8.1%            |
| 17557 | New Holland, PA (in Lancaster Co.)   | 13.6%                             | \$30,912          | 7.4%            |

Table 5: 10 Zip codes at % Children under 18 Poverty Level. Source: Lightcast 2023.3

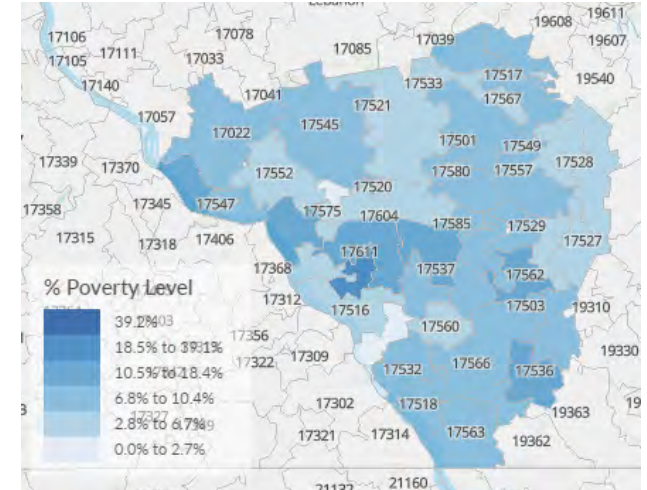


Figure 5: 10 Zip Codes at Highest Poverty Levels. Source: Lightcast 2023.3

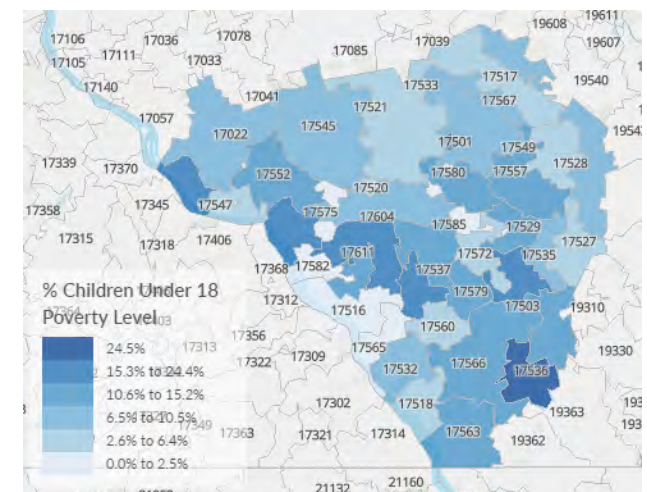


Figure 6. Source: 10 Zip Codes at Highest Poverty Levels. Source: Lightcast 2023.3

## Foreign Born Populations and Poverty by Zip Code

Lancaster County Community Indicators (Table 6) reflect steady growth of foreign-born population across the county albeit lower than state-wide percentages. Furthermore, foreign-born populations have seen higher growth rates in certain cities, townships, and boroughs across the county than others. Lancaster City saw the highest growth in foreign-born populations (13%), followed by East Lampeter Township (12%) then Millersville borough, Lancaster township, and Manheim township (10%).

High-level of foreign-born population (Table 7) density corresponds with high levels of poverty in certain areas. Particularly, Lancaster (city), Millersville, and Ephrata have both high poverty and foreign-born population density. Additionally, Lancaster (city), Millersville, Leola, and Ephrata reflect high levels of children under 18 and foreign-born populations. Policy makers and service providers should use this information to direct resources for service provision in high-density locations of Lancaster County.

### Foreign-Born Population

| Location         | 2000 | 2007-2011 | 2012-2016 | 2017-2021 |
|------------------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Pennsylvania     | 4%   | 6%        | 6%        | 7%        |
| Lancaster County | 3%   | 5%        | 5%        | 6%        |
| Lancaster City   | 7%   | 10%       | 10%       | 13%       |

### Other High Foreign Born Population Areas (above the county average of 6% in 2017-2021)

| Location               | 2000 | 2007-2011 | 2012-2016 | 2017-2021 |
|------------------------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| East Lampeter township | 5%   | 6%        | 6%        | 12%       |
| Millersville borough   | 3%   | 3%        | 5%        | 10%       |
| Lancaster township     | 5%   | 6%        | 9%        | 10%       |
| Manheim township       | 5%   | 8%        | 8%        | 10%       |
| Quarryville borough    | 1%   | 5%        | 4%        | 8%        |
| East Cocalico township | 4%   | 3%        | 4%        | 7%        |
| Denver township        | 2%   | 2%        | 2%        | 7%        |
| Ephrata borough        | 5%   | 8%        | 3%        | 7%        |

Table 6: Source: Lancaster County Community Indicators 2023

## Foreign Born Populations and Poverty

| ZIP Name                    | % Foreign-Born Population | % Poverty Level | Per Capita Income | % Children Under 18 Poverty Level |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Brownstown, PA - 17508      | 20.0%                     | 2.8%            | \$38,366          | 0.0%                              |
| Lancaster, PA - 17602       | 13.0%                     | 13.0%           | \$31,182          | 14.1%                             |
| Mountville, PA - 17554      | 9.3%                      | 6.0%            | \$34,997          | 0.0%                              |
| Lancaster, PA - 17601       | 8.9%                      | 5.1%            | \$47,179          | 6.5%                              |
| Millersville, PA - 17551    | 8.8%                      | 24.5%           | \$27,629          | 10.6%                             |
| Lancaster, PA - 17603       | 8.7%                      | 13.4%           | \$34,007          | 20.1%                             |
| Denver, PA - 17517          | 6.0%                      | 6.8%            | \$32,009          | 5.2%                              |
| East Petersburg, PA - 17520 | 5.6%                      | 6.9%            | \$34,165          | 5.2%                              |
| Ephrata, PA - 17522         | 5.3%                      | 7.6%            | \$32,609          | 9.3%                              |
| Leola, PA - 17540           | 5.3%                      | 8.4%            | \$28,906          | 11.4%                             |

Table 7: Foreign Born Populations and Poverty. Source: Lancaster County Community Indicators 2023

## Workforce Information

### Industry Information

The table below reflects top ten growing industries across Lancaster County from 2017 to 2023 by number of jobs added (Table 8). All of the top growing industries, other than Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars and School and Employee Bus Transportation reflect salaries above the County's per capita income of \$35,609, based on 2021 Census data<sup>22</sup>. Natural gas distribution, commercial banking, and general medical and surgical hospitals rank among the top three industries in compensation for the area.

Many of these areas are expected to continue to grow from 2023 to 2028 (Table 9). Industries that add the most jobs between 2017 and 2023 are expected to continue adding the highest number of jobs include General Medical and Surgical Hospitals, Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities, Other Commercial Equipment Merchant Wholesalers, Testing Laboratories, General Warehousing and Storage, and Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lancastercountypennsylvania,PA/POP645221>

## 6 Digit 2017-2023 Industry Table Lancaster by 2017-2023 Change

| NAICS  | Description   | 2017<br>Jobs | 2023 Jobs | 2017 - 2023<br>Change | 2017 - 2023%<br>Change | 2023 Employment<br>Concentration <sup>23</sup> | Avg.<br>Earnings Per<br>Job |
|--------|---|--------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 493110 | General Warehousing and Storage                         | 6,096        | 8,354     | 2,259                 | 37%                    | 2.70   | \$57,567                    |
| 622110 | General Medical and Surgical Hospitals                  | 7,814        | 9,227     | 1,412                 | 18%                    | 1.16   | \$95,124                    |
| 423440 | Other Commercial Equipment Merchant Wholesalers         | 178          | 1,154     | 975                   | 546%                   | 11.94  | \$80,732                    |
| 624120 | Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities  | 2,303        | 3,278     | 975                   | 42%                    | 0.83   | \$38,237                    |
| 423110 | Automobile and Other Motor Vehicle Merchant Wholesalers | 623          | 1,474     | 850                   | 136%                   | 6.52   | \$77,083                    |
| 541380 | Testing Laboratories                                    | 1,617        | 2,398     | 781                   | 48%                    | 7.99   | \$73,362                    |
| 522110 | Commercial Banking                                      | 1,733        | 2,441     | 708                   | 41%                    | 1.07   | \$104,220                   |
| 311352 | Confectionery Manufacturing from Purchased Chocolate    | 133          | 837       | 704                   | 528%                   | 15.22  | \$70,186                    |
| 221210 | Natural Gas Distribution                                | 62           | 758       | 696                   | 1129%                  | 3.98   | \$130,699                   |
| 722515 | Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars                    | 1,085        | 1,756     | 671                   | 62%                    | 1.08   | \$19,521                    |
| 485410 | School and Employee Bus Transportation                  | 661          | 1,306     | 645                   | 98%                    | 4.12   | \$30,832                    |

Table 8: 6 Digit 2017-2023 Industry Table Lancaster by 2017-2023 Change. Source: Lightcast 2023.3

<sup>23</sup> Employment Concentration reflects the level of employment in an area relative to the U.S. 1 is perfectly proportional, anything over reflects higher levels of concentration, anything below is lower levels of concentration.



## 6 Digit 2023-2028 Industry Table Lancaster by 2023 – 2028 Change

| NAICS  | Description  | 2023 Jobs | 2028 Jobs | 2023 - 2028 Change | 2023 - 2028 % Change | 2028 Employment Concentration | Avg. Earnings Per Job |
|--------|--|-----------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 622110 | General Medical and Surgical Hospitals                   | 9,227     | 10,057    | 830                | 9%                   | 1.23                          | \$95,124              |
| 624120 | Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities   | 3,278     | 3,852     | 573                | 17%                  | 0.83                          | \$38,237              |
| 621610 | Home Health Care Services                                | 2,180     | 2,618     | 437                | 20%                  | 0.86                          | \$54,738              |
| 423440 | Other Commercial Equipment Merchant Wholesalers          | 1,154     | 1,578     | 424                | 37%                  | 16.03                         | \$80,732              |
| 541380 | Testing Laboratories                                     | 2,398     | 2,820     | 422                | 18%                  | 9.27                          | \$73,362              |
| 721110 | Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels                 | 2,832     | 3,225     | 393                | 14%                  | 1.24                          | \$32,235              |
| 493110 | General Warehousing and Storage                          | 8,354     | 8,746     | 392                | 5%                   | 2.59                          | \$57,567              |
| 722511 | Full-Service Restaurants                                 | 7,583     | 7,946     | 363                | 5%                   | 0.83                          | \$27,024              |
| 722513 | Limited-Service Restaurants                              | 5,670     | 6,005     | 336                | 6%                   | 0.78                          | \$22,069              |
| 722515 | Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars                     | 1,756     | 2,090     | 334                | 19%                  | 1.12                          | \$19,521              |
| 621111 | Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists) | 5,745     | 6,079     | 334                | 6%                   | 1.23                          | \$128,890             |

Table 9: 6 Digit 2023-2028 Industry Table Lancaster by 2023 – 2028 Change. Source: Lightcast 2023.3

## Occupational Information

The tables below provide data for top occupations for youth age demographics from age ranges 14 to 18, 19 to 21, 22 to 24, and 25 to 34. Each table displays the top 10 occupational codes by number of individuals employed from the specific age demographics mentioned previously. As expected, youth ages 14 to 18 work in occupations that generally reflect occupations in service industries such as Fast Food and Counter Workers, Waiters, and Waitresses, Cooks (in Restaurants), Food Servers (not in Restaurants), and Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers.

For the 19 to 21 age demographic several of the occupations, particularly those that typically exist in the food service industry, remained prevalent. However, several other jobs were added, including Office Clerks, Construction Laborers, Customer Service Representatives, Nursing Assistants, and Carpenters to emerge. All four of these occupations earn over the per capita income of \$35,609, based on 2021 Census data.

The prevalent occupations of the 22 to 24 age group is similar to the 19 to 21 age group; however, the Carpenter occupation is replaced by the Home Health and Personal Care Aids occupation. This job makes less than the \$35,609 per capita income.

The demographic group, ages 25 to 34, are not considered youth based on our metrics. However, practitioners and employment support agencies can review these jobs to better understand high demand occupations across the county. Based on the data, many of the occupations for this group are consistent with former groups. Particularly, 8 occupations including Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, (Hand), Stockers and Order Fillers, Home Health and Personal Aids, Customer Service Representatives, Retail Salespersons, Office Clerks (General), Fast Food and Counter Workers, and Cashiers are all occupations that existed among previous age group demographics. Three new occupations that appear include Registered Nurses, General and Operations Managers, and Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers.

## YOUTH AGED 16 TO 19

While the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), and related workforce programs, report youth as being individuals between the ages of 16 to 24, these census data reflect a smaller segment within the 16 to 24 age demographics. For the purposes of the section below, we review data reflective of youth aged 16 to 19 to understand trends across the county as they relate to employment and education status. It is worth noting that these data do not disaggregate by any demographic factor other than youth who identify as female and youth who identify as male.

This section examines the number of youths employed, unemployed, and not in the labor force against youth enrolled in school, not enrolled in school, and youth that are not high school graduates. Youth that are employed has an intuitive definition – the number of youths that have a job. Unemployment is defined as an individual, in this case a youth, who does not have a job, but is actively looking. Conversely, an individual who is not in the labor force is not actively looking for a job. Youth not enrolled in school includes both high school; college or university; and those who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET).

## Youth in School and Not Working

The number of youths aged 16 to 19 who are not in school or not working in Lancaster County has remained mostly flat from 2011 to 2021. The number of females not in school reached a high of 1073 in 2020 and a low of 777 in 2017. The number of males reached a high in 2018 of 1066 and a low in 2011 of 907. However, the number of males not in school or not working have been decreasing over the past five years, whereas the number of females has been increasing (Figure 7).

### Not in School and Not Working

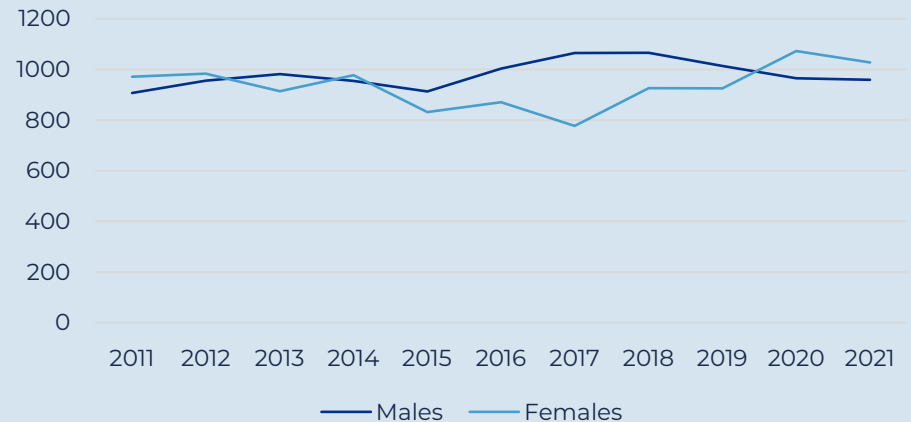


Figure 7: Youth in School and Not Working. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

**Youth School Enrollment**

Since 2011, the number of youths in school has steadily decreased, whereas the number of youths not enrolled in school has steadily increased. The number of males and females enrolled in school are essentially the same. However, there are more males not enrolled in school than there are females not enrolled (Figures 8 & 9).

**Enrolled in School**

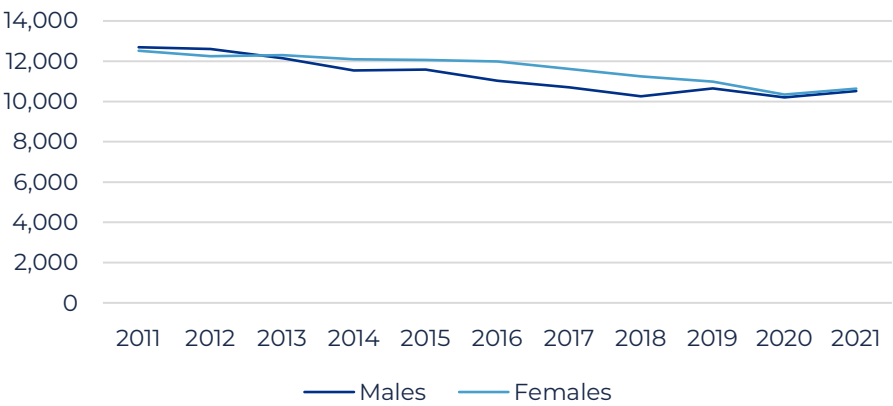


Figure 8: Youth School Enrollment. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

**Not Enrolled in School**

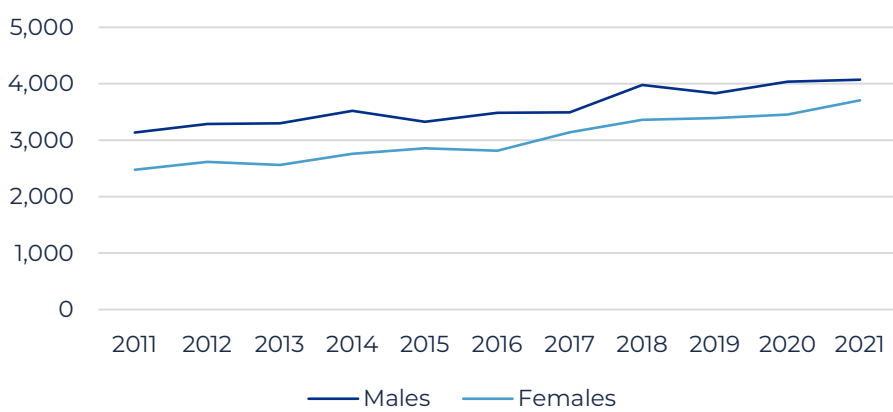


Figure 9: Not Enrolled in School. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The number of youths employed and enrolled in school has not increased substantially from 2011 to 2021; however, it has fluctuated. Both females and males were comparatively high in 2011, sitting at 4,864 and 4,365, respectively. Those numbers dipped to lows of 4,478 and 3,540 in 2014 but have since increased to new highs of 5,164 for females and 4,916 for males in 2021 (Figure 10).

### Employed and Enrolled in School

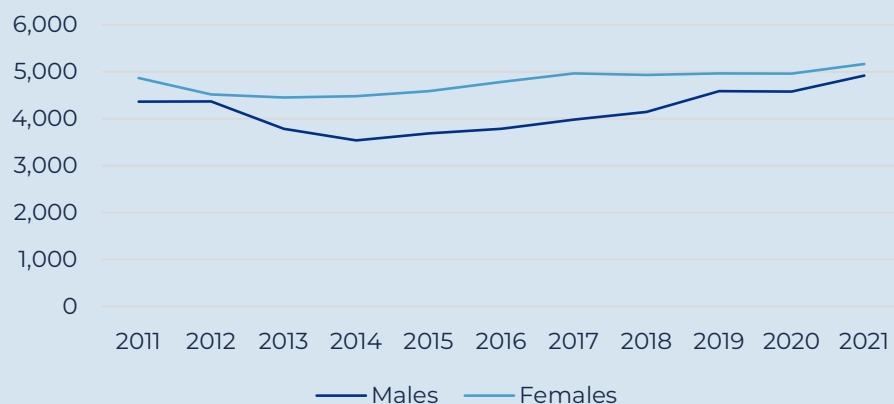


Figure 10: Youth Employment and Enrolled in School. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

The number of youths employed and not enrolled in school among both female and male populations have increased steadily from 2011 to 2021. In 2011, the number of female youths that were employed and not in school was 677. That number nearly doubled to 1,281 in 2021. Similarly, the number of male youths that were employed and not in school was 1,136. That number grew to 1,496 in 2021.

### Employed and Not Enrolled in School

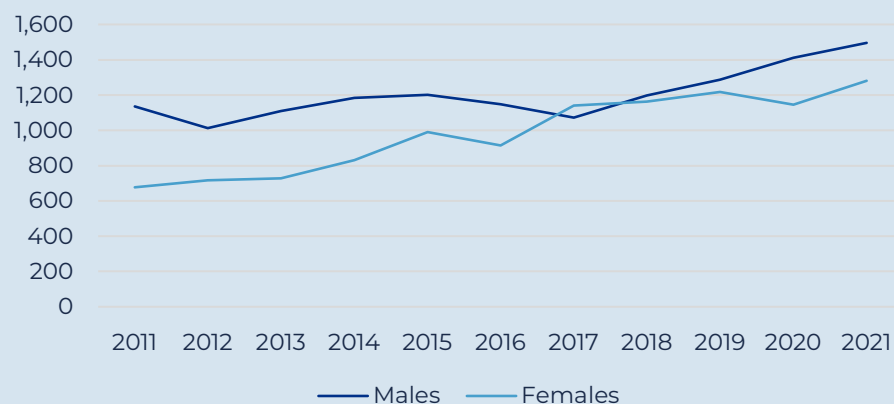


Figure 11: Employed and not Enrolled in School. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

The number of youths that are not high school graduates but are employed has been growing since 2011. In 2011, the number of females that fit into this category was 827. This number grew by over two-thirds to 1,398. Similarly, the number of males that were employed and not high school graduates in 2011 was 1,093. This number grew to 1,618 in 2021 (Figure 12).

Employed and Not a HS Graduate

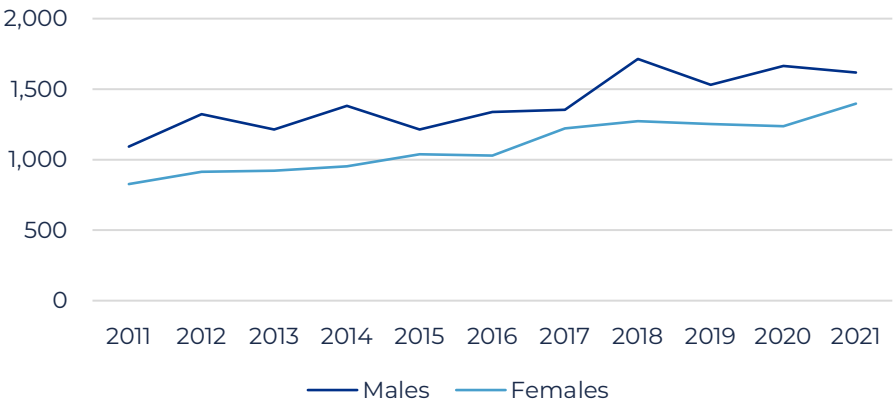


Figure 12: Employed and Not Enrolled In School. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021





## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

The number of unemployed youths who are enrolled in school has drastically decreased from 2011 to 2021. In 2013, the number of females and males within this demographic peaked at 936 (females) and 1,778 (males), respectively. This number has dropped substantially, particularly for male populations, reaching 341 in 2021. The number of females unemployed and enrolled in school dropped to 461 in 2021 (Figure 13).

### Unemployed and Enrolled in School

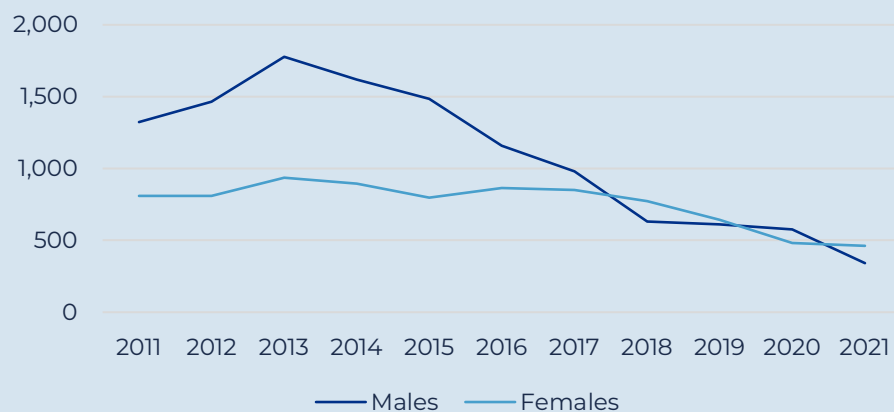


Figure 13: Unemployed Youths and Enrolled in school. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

Conversely, the number of females and males unemployed and not enrolled in school have steadily increased. In 2011, the number of females from this group was at 120 and this number grew to 332 in 2021, surpassing male populations. The number of males from this group was at 171 in 2011 and grew at a lower rate, to 269, in 2021 (Figure 14).

### Unemployed and Not Enrolled in School

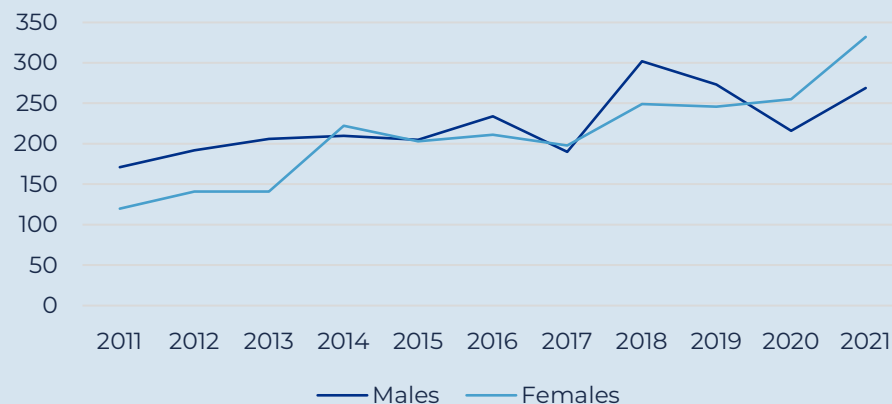


Figure 14: Unemployed and Not Enrolled in School. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

The number of youths who are unemployed and not high school graduates has generally decreased but fluctuated from 2011 to 2021. Among female populations, this number peaked in 2012 at 192 individuals and reached a low in 2017 and 2018 of 5 individuals. Since then, this number has risen to 90 individuals in 2020 and 92 in 2021. Among male populations, this number has been cut in half from its high in 2012 of 84 individuals, down to 38 individuals in 2021 (Figure 15).

Unemployed and Not a HS Graduate

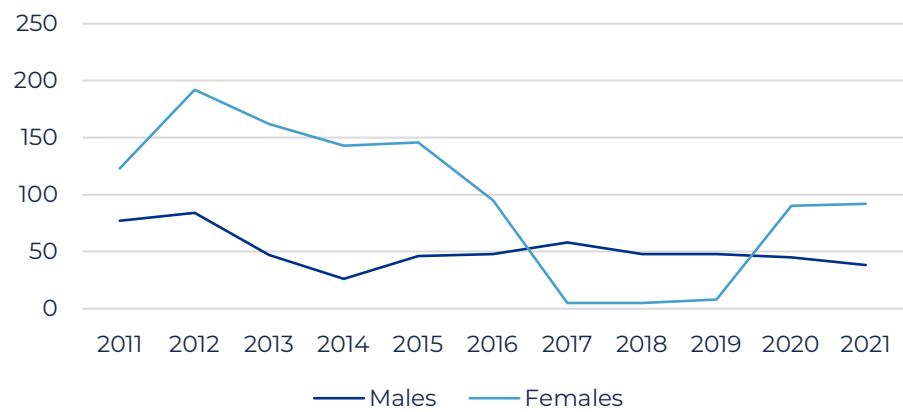


Figure 15: Unemployed and Not a High School Graduate. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021



## YOUTH NOT IN THE LABOR FORCE

The number of youths that are not in the labor force and are enrolled in school steadily declined over the examined period. In 2011, the number of females in this demographic was 6,842. This number dropped to 5,017 in 2021. Similarly, the number of males in this demographic was 7,004 in 2011 and dropped to 5,265 in 2021. This group accounts for the highest number of individuals not in the labor force (Figure 16).

### Not in the Labor Force and Enrolled in School

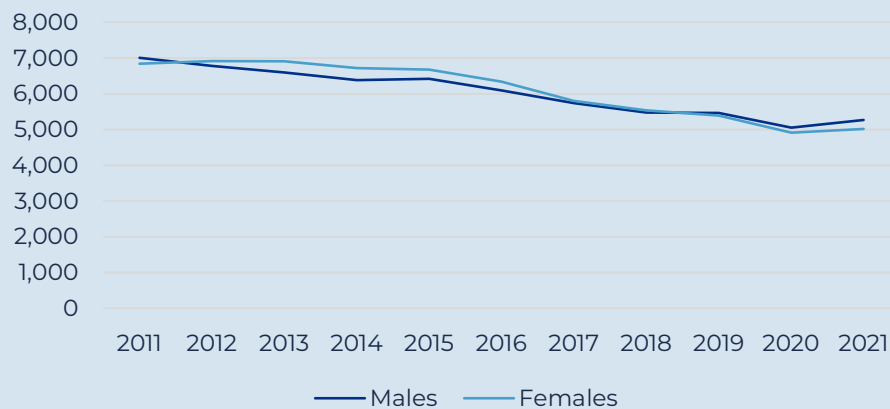


Figure 16: Number of Youth Not in the Labor Force. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

The number of females not in the labor force and not enrolled in school has remained relative flat over the examined time period starting at 186 in 2011, fluctuating as high as 243 in 2014 and as low as 162 in 2016; however, was at 196 individuals as of 2021. Conversely, males from this demographic have risen. This group was at its lowest point in 2011 at 186 and reach a peak in 2017 of 375 individuals. This has dropped to 294 individuals in 2021. This group accounts for the lowest number of individuals not in the labor force (Figure 17).

### Not in the Labor Force and Not Enrolled in School

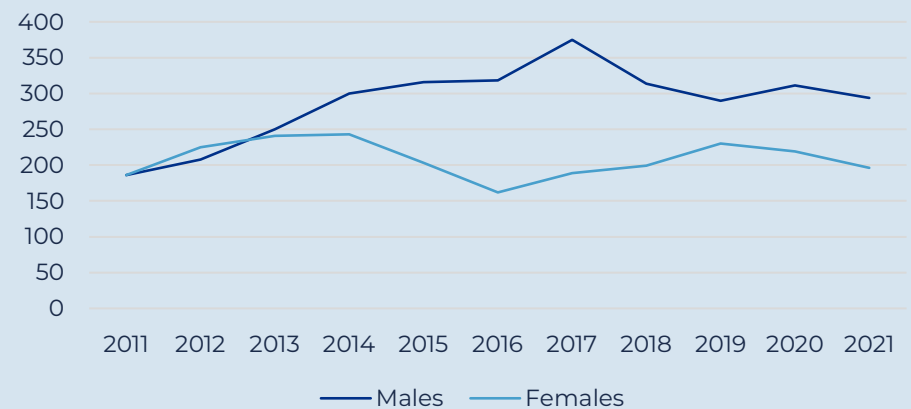


Figure 17: Number of Youth Not in Labor Force and Not Enrolled in School. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021



The number of individuals that are not in the labor force and not high school graduates fluctuated from 2011 to 2021. In 2011, female individuals saw a peak of 543, then dropped to a low of 279 in 2015. Since then, the number of females from this group rose to another peak of 509 in 2020 but dropped by 101 to 408 in 2021. Males from this demographic, on the other hand, have generally decreased. In 2011, they reached a peak of 473 individuals, then reached a low point of 346 in 2015. That number crept up to 442 in 2017, but slightly decreased between 2018 and 2021 (Figure 18).

Not in the Labor Force and Not a HS Graduate

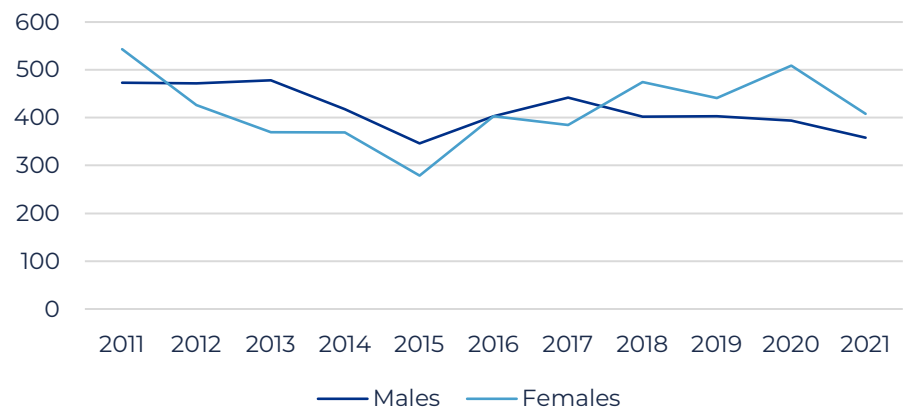


Figure 18: Number of Youth Not in Labor Force and Not a HS Graduate. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021



## Housing

From high rent and home purchase prices to aging and dilapidated housing stock, communities all across the country are experiencing housing challenges. As youth and young adults transition from high school and/or college, it is important that they have adequate affordable housing options. The section below will highlight key housing trends across Lancaster County. This section should be used to understand the landscape of housing across the county and inform opportunities to connect young adults to housing options that meet their needs.

### Households

Since 2011 the number of households and number of occupied housing units have steadily increased with a sharp rise from 2019 to 2021. Conversely the number of vacant housing units rose slightly from 2011 to 2015 but has been dropping at an accelerating rate since 2018. Furthermore, the percentage of homes that are occupied has increased nearly 1% since 2011 (Figures 19, 20, & 21).

### Households and Occupied Households

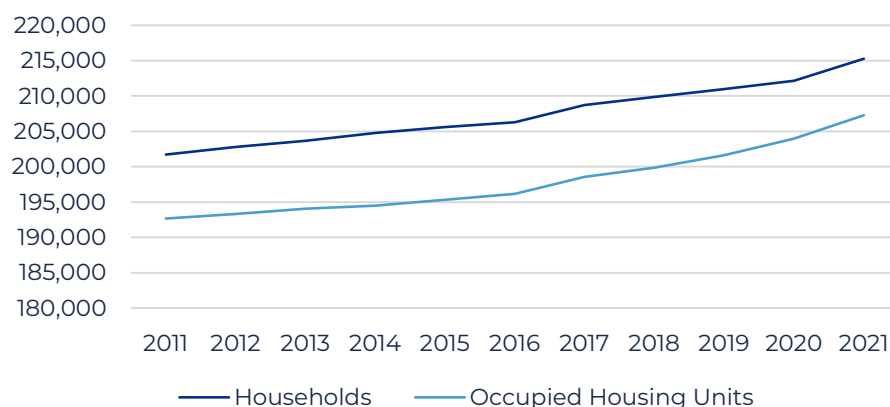


Figure 19: Households and Occupied Households. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

### Vacant Housing Units

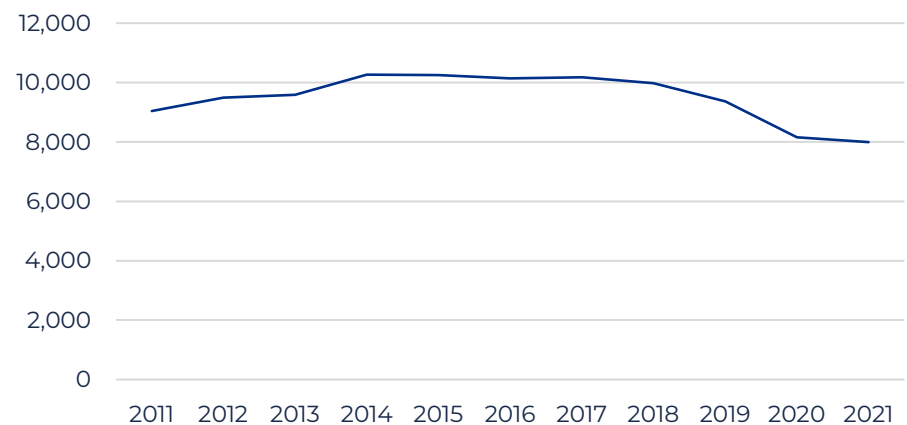


Figure 20: Vacant Housing Units. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

### Occupied vs Vacant Housing Units

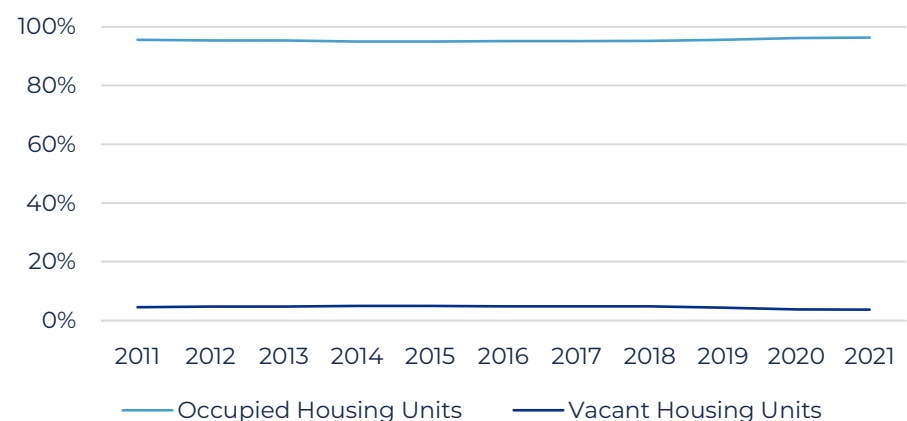


Figure 21: Occupied vs. Vacant Housing. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021



## Home Values

Lancaster County has a range of housing options. Homes ranging from \$200,000 to \$299,999 make up the largest representation of housing stock across the county and are increasing in proportion. In 2011, houses within this range represented 27.1% of the housing stock and that number swelled to 34.5% in 2021. Similarly, homes within the \$300,000 to \$499,999 price range have increased by 7.7%. Another notable trend is that homes valued at less than \$50,000, \$50,000 to \$99,999, \$100,000 to \$149,999, and \$150,000 to \$199,999 have all decreased over the past 10 years (Figures 22 & 23).

## Home Value

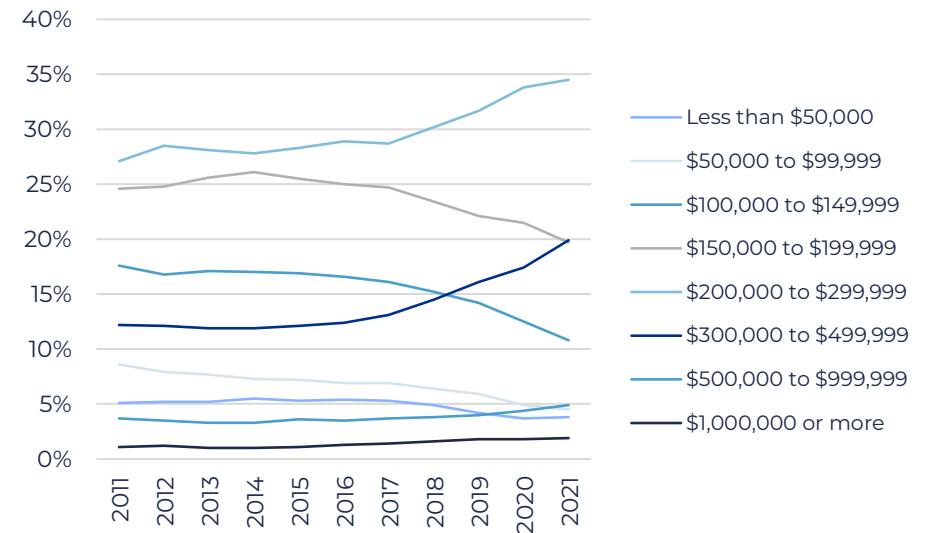


Figure 23: Home Values. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

## Home Values

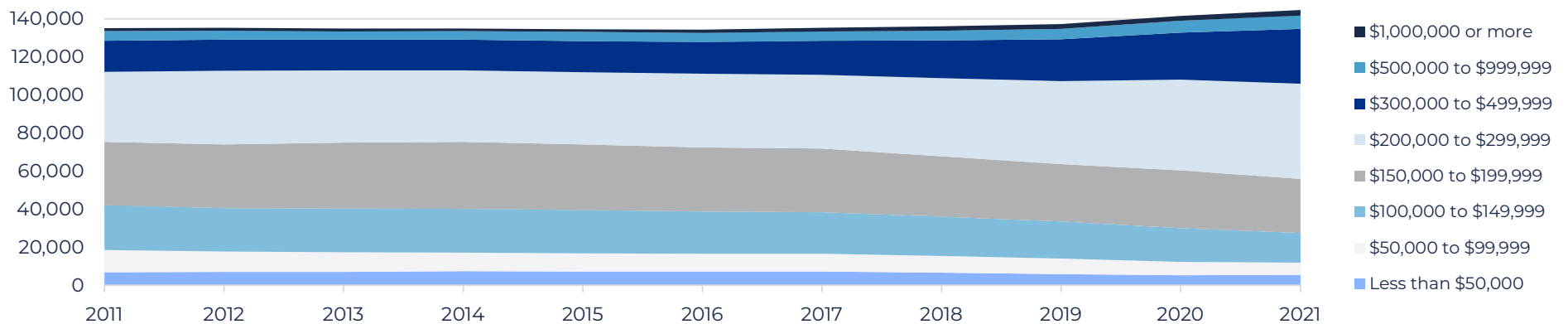


Figure 22: Home Values. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

## Monthly Homeownership Costs as a Percent of Household Income<sup>24</sup>

Selected monthly home-ownership costs as a percent of household income (SMOCAPI) is a metric that can be used to view the number of households at, above, or below cost burdened by associated housing costs. Families or individuals are considered cost burdened when their housing costs exceed 30% of their income. As a result, these individuals tend to be living near or below the poverty line.

Since 2011, the number of homes spending less than 10% (for homes without a mortgage) and less than 20% (for homes with a mortgage) of their income on housing costs has increased in both individuals with and without a mortgage. These groups also represent the highest number of homes by a wide margin. For homes with a mortgage, all other groups declined or remained flat from 2011 to 2021 other than homes paying 20% to 24.9%. All other groups for homes without a mortgage have remained flat other than groups paying 35% or more, which have declined.

<sup>24</sup> Both Stacked Area Charts and Line Charts were included in the subsequent section to help readers better visualize data. It is worth noting that Figures 24 and 25 reflect the same information, as well as Figures 26 and 27, Figures 28 and 29, and Figures 30 and 31.

## Housing Units with a Mortgage

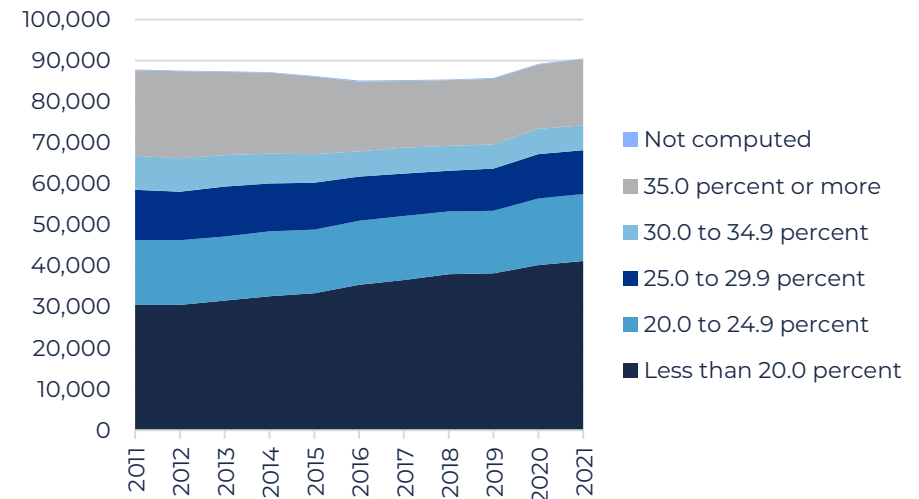


Figure 24: Housing Units with a Mortgage. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

## Housing Units with a Mortgage

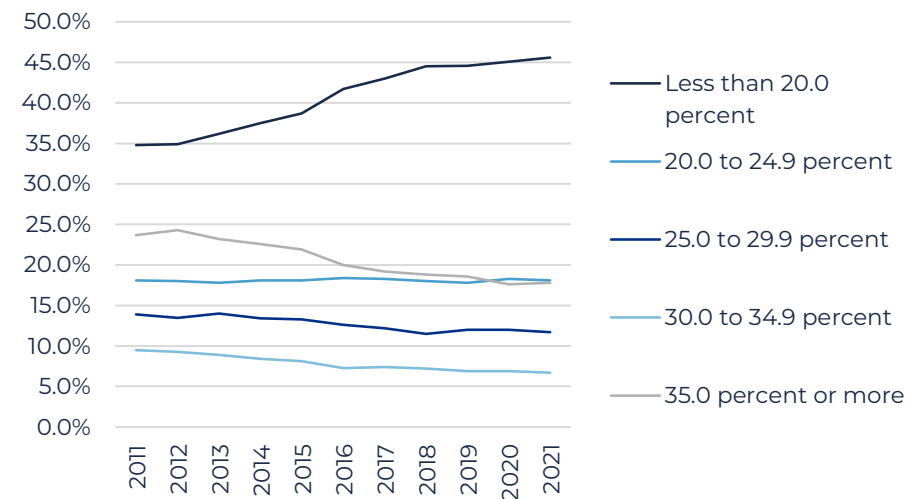


Figure 25: Housing Units with a Mortgage. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

Housing Units without a Mortgage

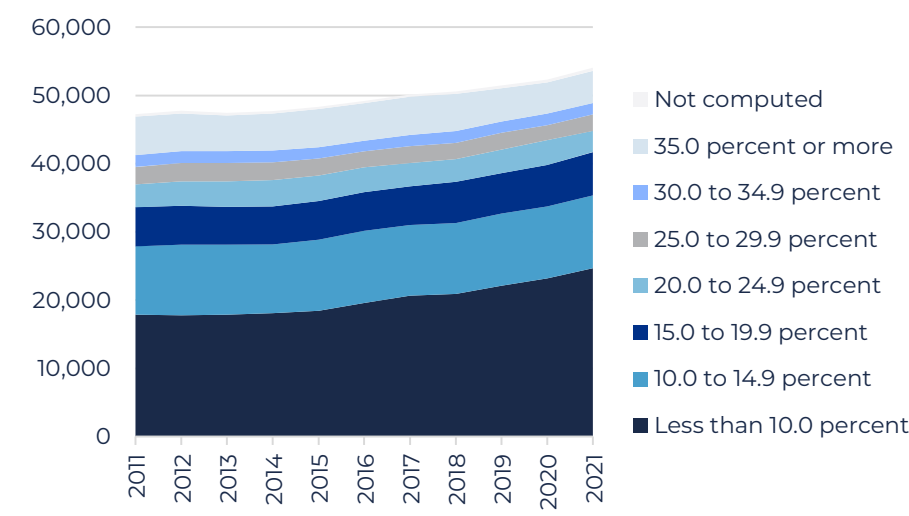


Figure 26: Housing Units without a Mortgage. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

Housing Units without a Mortgage

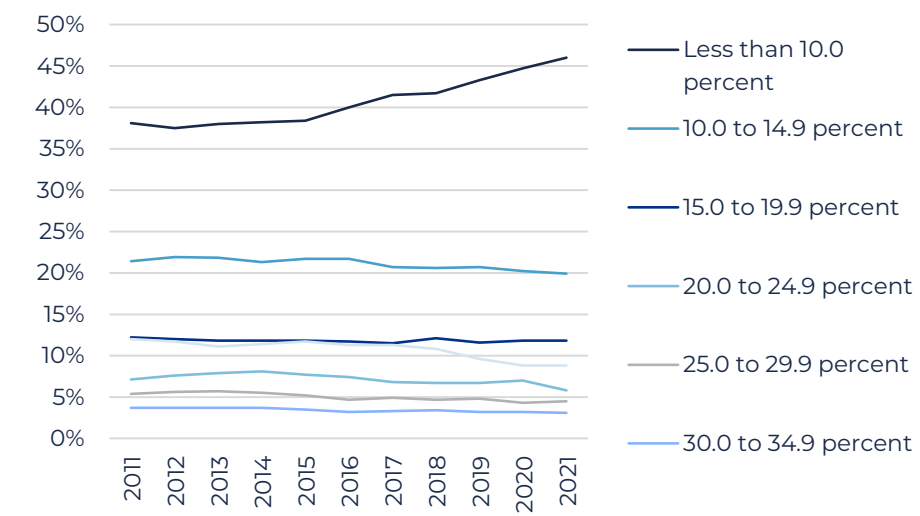


Figure 27: Housing Units without a Mortgage. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021



## Gross Rent

Gross rent indicates how much individuals are spending per month on home rental expenses. Lancaster County has high proportions of individuals paying between \$500 to \$999 and \$1,000 to \$1,499 for rent. However, the group paying \$500 to \$999 in rent, which has dropped 18.8% from 2015 to 2021, appears to be decreasing at the rate of individuals paying between \$1,000 to \$1,499, which has increased 10.6%, and individuals paying \$1,500 to \$1,999, which has increased 7.2%. All other groups have remained relatively flat although the group paying less than \$500 has decreased and all other groups, those paying \$2,000 and above, have increased (Figures 28 & 29).

## Gross Rent

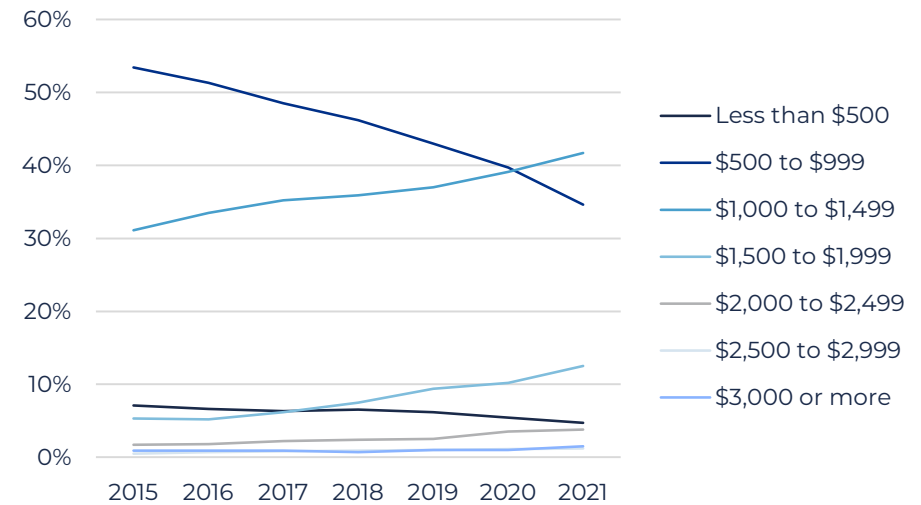


Figure 29: Gross Rent. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

## Gross Rent

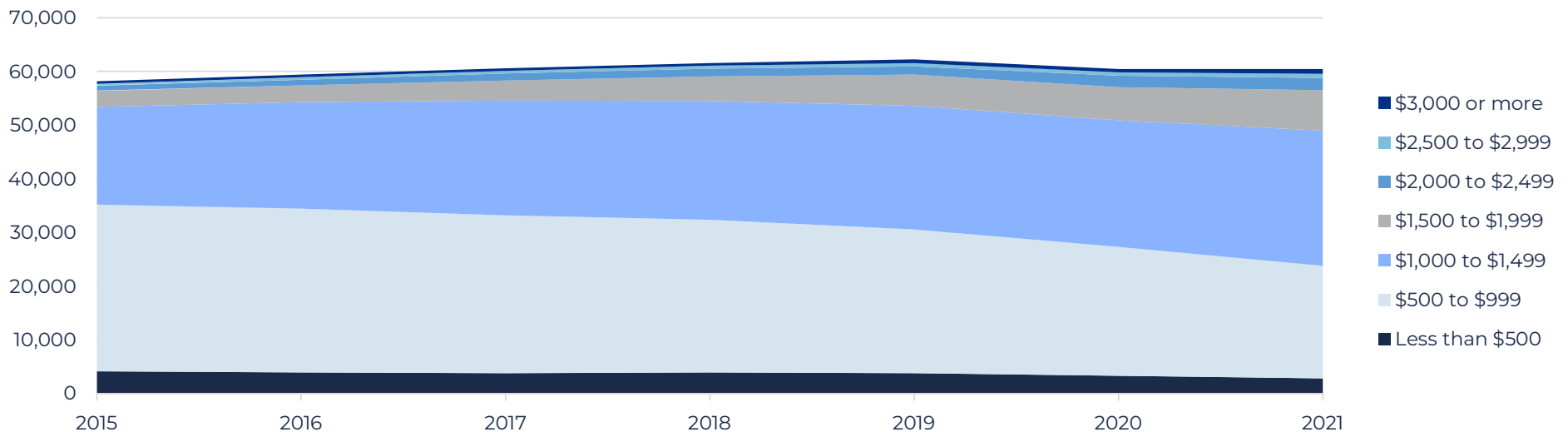


Figure 28: Gross Rent. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

## Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

Gross rent as a percentage of household income (GRAPI) serves as a metric to assess the proportion of individuals who are either paying rent below, at, or above the threshold of being cost-burdened by their housing expenses. Families or individuals are considered cost burdened when their housing costs exceed 30% of their income. As a result, these individuals tend to be living in or near poverty.

Individuals paying 35% or more of their income on rent make up the largest group, accounting for 38.6% of renters in 2021. The number of individuals paying this amount grew to a high of 43.4% in 2014 but has since dropped to 38.6%. All other groups have remained relatively flat, staying within 1-1.5% changes from 2011 to 2021 except for individuals paying less than 15% which grew from 12.1% in 2011 to 15.2% in 2021 (Figures 30 & 31).

## Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

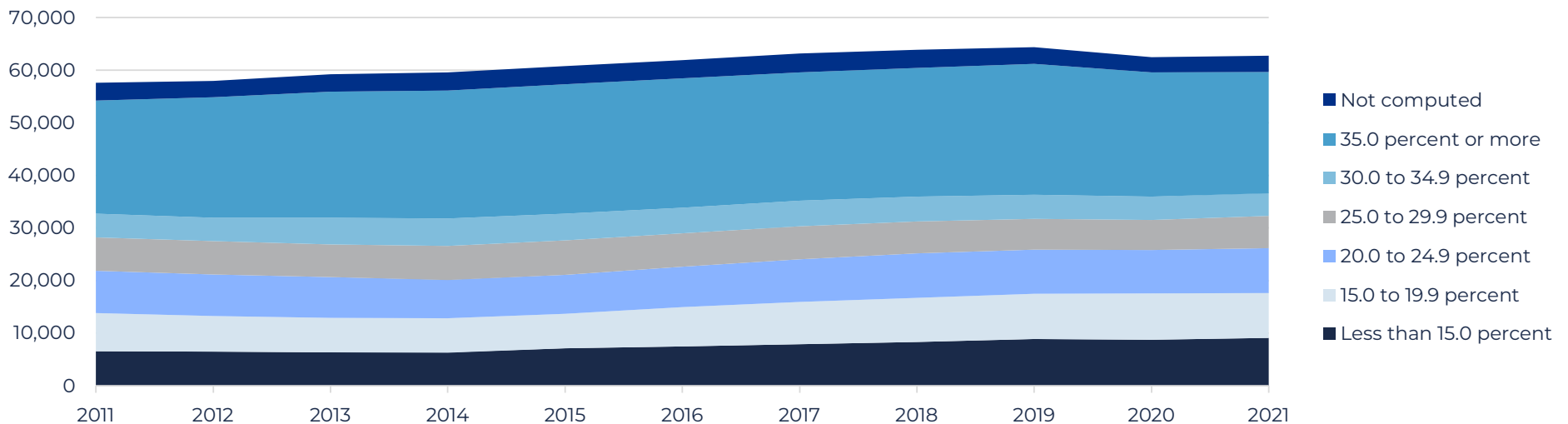


Figure 30: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021

## Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

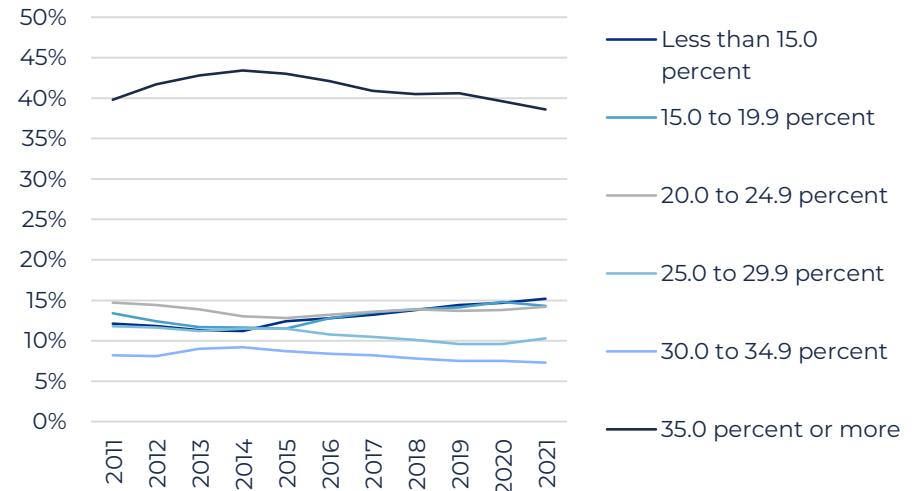


Figure 31: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate Data Profiles 2021



# Community Survey

## Summary

TPMA gathered a robust list of community agencies and partners throughout Lancaster County through research and prior Lancaster County Workforce Board partnerships and conducted an online survey inquiring about the needs and desires of disconnected youth. This approach targeted partners who hold close relationships with the disconnected youth. The results of the survey provided insights into the nuanced barriers and challenges that youth face. By asking community partner participants to respond to statements on a range from strongly agree to strongly disagree, TPMA aggregated the results to understand the most important barriers for disconnected youth from the perspective of community agencies.

There were 29 responses to the survey from 20 unique organizations. All respondents except one stated that they serve within the community of Lancaster County. Most respondents (21) identified their organization as an education or training provider. Other responses included direct service provider (5), funder (1 response), employer (3 responses).

Survey participants specified their neighborhoods or areas served as suburban, rural, and urban, with some expressing uncertainty. The distribution across these categories was even, with six respondents each for suburban, rural, and urban focuses. However, seven respondents were unsure about their specific area of focus.

Sixteen organizations represented in the survey data were identified as serving 16–18-year-old individuals, and 14 specified serving 19–24-year-old participants.



# Community Survey Themes



**Community partners highlighted the challenge of peer-based and family-based trauma, emphasizing the difficulty of accessing mental health services.**

With over half of respondents strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing that obtaining mental health services is challenging, community partners underscored the need for more accessible services to address the identified issues of peer-based and family-based trauma, as indicated by the surveyed participants. The respondents emphasized that providing trauma-informed services would be beneficial for disconnected youth.



**In Lancaster County, transportation, childcare, and language barriers pose obstacles for disconnected youth seeking and maintaining employment.**

Sixty-eight percent of participants agree, and an additional 26% strongly agree that childcare services serve as a hindrance to employment. In terms of transportation and language barriers, most partners agree that these components affect the ability to seek out and maintain employment. Community partners concur on the inaccessibility of these crucial elements causing barriers to sustainable employment opportunities.



**Partners recognized that the difficulty in accessing resources, coupled with limited funding, hampers youth from receiving necessary assistance to achieve success. Attraction and retention is successful when partners pour support and care into their participants.**

To create sustaining change within the community, partners noted that youth would benefit from more resources, and more coordinated efforts are needed to successfully navigate alleviating barriers for young people. A substantial 95% of community partner respondents identified the lack of awareness about where to find resources as a barrier to youth employment. Creating awareness of programs and resources among youth is a necessary step in the success of programs. Partners were asked to identify different ways they outreach to individuals including social media, emailing parents, word of mouth, through school, and CareerLink. Community partners also noted different ways youth felt compelled to reach out to and continue with services. This included various methods including word of mouth, desperation (one community partner mentioned that they see youth get connected when “they have a strong need for support i.e. pregnant, food insecurity, experiencing homelessness”), incentives, and peer influences. To retain participants, agencies highlighted different strategies they utilize. One-on-one mentor support and a sense of belonging are the top responses from partners. Being “learner centered” and “family centered” are important successful retention strategies along with ensuring the participant is building life skills and the skills needed for career opportunities. Forty-seven percent of respondents disagree that adequate funding is available, so partner organizations would benefit from more targeted outreach efforts coupled with increased funding. Community partners are prevalent in Lancaster County and are engaging with youth every day. More funding would allow for these organizations to more effectively service youth.

# Disconnected Youth Focus Groups

## Summary

TPMA worked with the Lancaster Workforce Development Board to build a strategy for reaching out to disconnected youth most directly through community partners who work with them every day. Physical flyers [Figure 32] were distributed to all the community partners and used for advertising on social media. A \$40.00 gift card was provided to every participant who participated in the youth focus groups. The incentive proved helpful in recruiting youth for the focus groups.

While many of the youth we spoke with were connected in some way, the young people we engaged provided insights from lived experience that correlated with disconnected youth circumstances.

Focus groups were hosted at Benchmark, The Rec Center, Brightside, Akron Community Church, and The Mix from November 1-3, 2023. Benchmark drew eighteen (18) youth, Brightside one (1), and The Mix included seven (7) participants. Unfortunately, none of those registered for The Rec Center or Akron Community Church attended. An additional virtual focus group with twenty-six (26) participants was held November 9 via Microsoft Teams to accommodate participants' various barriers that might have impacted their ability to participate in person at the above locations. As mentioned in the methodology section, the total number of youth participants for the study was twenty-eight (28) virtual participants and twenty-five (25) participated in person for a total of fifty-three (53) total participants.

Focus group data was analyzed through a combination of inductive and deductive coding to generate themes across participant responses and group discussion. The themes generated from this analysis are described below and used in combination with survey analysis to develop findings and recommendations.



Figure 32: Focus group promotional material.



# Youth Focus Group Themes



**Youth want teachers to treat them with care and show up authentically in the classroom to help them succeed.**

When discussing their experience of school and teachers in particular, participants contrasted teachers who “go through the motions” with those who “are themselves” and “care” about their students. One participant had a particularly negative experience with a teacher from long past, which clearly still impacted their relationship to teachers and school in general. Another mentioned navigating relationships with teachers who pay less attention to students falling behind, communicating a sense that teachers have given up on that student: “I was getting behind and the teachers weren’t on it...some just prefer to help others even though you’re struggling...they won’t see that you’re trying in their eyes.” Another student said, “And they give you kind of this attitude where, like, you’re not as important as the other people and that kind of reflects on us because we don’t want to try anymore in their class.” This reciprocal pattern may contribute to low student engagement and increased risk for becoming disconnected.

When asked to describe what it looks like for a teacher to care, one student said, “I think someone that remembers what you said like a week ago...like, they care about you, not just doing their job,” and another mentioned how the teacher brings their own personality to the classroom. Participants also expressed wishing teachers were more aware and responsive when a student was not getting good grades or struggling. One student said, “I think that they need to understand that... we be tired...we go through hard times too, just like them.” Another said, “I would say good teacher is ready to support and also show me those directives that I need, especially when I’m down.” Teachers who bring their whole selves to the classroom and reflect that holistic attention to struggling students contribute to more positive and supportive experiences for young people and could prevent disconnection.



**Young people want teachers, counselors, and workforce partners to validate their larger dreams and aspirations and help them find options related to those.**

One student emphatically spoke with agreement from other participants about counselors/advisors being dismissive of their interests such as basketball and music and instead pushing them to give up on those as career options and think of other pathways. This student said, “My counselor pushed me not to pursue my dreams, but be more realistic, that turned me away.” Similarly, another student mentioned things being “dumbed down...because higher ups don’t care to believe in their students.” Many of the young people we spoke with mentioned physical activity and artistic expression as core interests. These ranged from “working out at the gym” and playing various sports, to music and photography, which one student got involved with when his grandmother shared a camera she purchased. These pursuits are rooted in some of the important relationships that disconnected youth do have. While becoming an NBA player or a famous musician is rare, skills and careers related to those industries are available. The work that one community partner is doing to support young people through these interests came through during the focus group at this location. For example, beyond the core physical fitness programming coupled with academic and career coaching this organization provides, administrators put up a sign to protect artwork done by a young person on a whiteboard and allowed them to continue working on it for weeks to come.



### **Youth are willing to work for decent pay and want employers to treat them as whole people.**

The young people we spoke with in focus groups emphasized the value of work for decent pay and were quite willing to put up with less-than-ideal conditions if the money was good. One participant said to the laughing agreement of others, “If I’m working for money and my checks are good, like yeah, I’ll kiss up to you.” Another student said, “I would look forward to seeing my one manager and my two friends. I looked forward to the check at the end of the week.” Other students described the value of work in “being independent” and learning skills, while another participant emphasized the importance of care and investment by employers: “If you can get a job that cares about you and wants you to grow, STAY.”

However, many participants noted negative experiences that made them feel less than human in the workplace: “I worked at Amazon, a living hell. I was treated more like a number. Nobody cares.” When asked what they wished employers understood about them another student said, “I wish my manager understood that I’m a kid and that I have school.” Multiple participants cited times when employers would keep them too late (even illegally late) or be inflexible when they had school to balance as well. Other participants discussed struggles when looking for work, like employers “ghosting” them: “I had one interview at McDonalds and never got a call back. It feels like I don’t matter.” Again, being respected and treated as whole people who have lives outside of work that may include challenges, and understanding that young people do care about meaningful, appropriately paid work was important for participants.



### **Social relationships at school and work can be a source of motivation and support but can also be anxiety-inducing and difficult to navigate.**

Participants mentioned that they liked seeing their friends at school and work (if they did work with friends) and other participants who were no longer in school recalled socializing with friends as a positive thing about school that they missed. Other students noted special relationships with teachers that provided motivation to stay in school was helpful. However, some students mentioned being bullied by others or just having difficulty getting back into socializing after schools were shut down was a challenge.

One participant’s work experience dramatically shifted for the worse when a new manager took over at their workplace, which ultimately prompted them to quit. However, they still frequent that location since they were friends with their coworkers. Some participants mentioned employers who were condescending, interpreted employee input or opinions as disrespect, or did not demonstrate understanding for their need to balance work and school. Other students noted positive traits in employers: “She’s like, I understand...treats you like a person.”

While high school and young adulthood are often difficult socially overall, friends are also some of the most important people in disconnected young people’s lives, yet the isolating effects of the pandemic coupled with other forms of social exclusion can compound social anxiety and difficulty maintaining positive connections.



# Youth Focus Groups and Community Partners Themes



## **Both community partners and young people communicated the importance of relationships.**

Community partners highlighted the importance of relationships and connections in response to open-ended questions about motivation, retention, and most needed services. One community partner said, “Young people need networks, mentors...” Many other community partner respondents also cited mentorship as important. Other community partners mentioned “frequent check-ins” “personal connections,” and “Being intentional about cultivating relationships.” This is consistent with the emphasis in the focus group themes that socializing motivates young people at school and work, and relationships with supportive adults can be critical to success. Young people, especially those who experience trauma, bullying, or social isolation/anxiety, need ways to establish and maintain positive relationships with caring peers and adults as a foundation for success. For already disconnected youth, the focus group participants’ descriptions of both demotivating and motivating interactions with teachers and employers can be applied to how older adults engage with disconnected youth in additional settings, including as community-based organization staff. For community partners, relationships are also important among other organizations, with several mentioning a need for better coordination and communication throughout the youth-serving and workforce ecosystem.



## **Mental health and trauma are some of the most significant issues impacting disconnected youth as directly expressed by community partners, but also implied through young people’s discussion of their challenges and stressors.**

This is related to the above need for positive social relationships, but trauma and poor mental health can damage or prevent the cultivation of positive social networks for young people. One focus group participant said to the agreement of others, “Trust is a big word. I don’t trust a lot of people.” Young people who have experienced significant trauma struggle with trust, which is crucial for maintaining supportive relationships. Other participants mentioned social isolation and anxiety as challenges they faced. Community partners clearly see the importance of these foundational issues as demonstrated in open-ended responses ranking key impactful circumstances for disconnected youth and responses to most needed services. In tandem with basic relationship-building, additional support is necessary for many disconnected youth to deal with childhood trauma and ongoing traumatic circumstances that post significant challenges to re-engaging in school or work.



**Key barriers to youth employment include transportation, childcare, and language barriers.**

Community partners, throughout their work with disconnected youth, clearly identified the challenges that youth have related to necessary functions for employment. The lack of access to reliable transportation directly affects an individual's experience getting to work on time every day. Reliable, affordable childcare, according to partners, is a barrier to young parents, causing financial instability and the inability to keep a steady job. The language barriers individuals have with employers create difficulty in obtaining employment.



**Community partners, while some felt that there was enough adequate programming, agreed that there exists a lack of awareness and access to programming.**

Community partners have the tools to help with successful programming for individuals, but the individuals do not know where to go to receive the supportive services they need. Partners agree that a more collaborative approach would help address individual needs.



# Recommendations

## Programming

- Mental health and trauma-informed practices should be embedded in workforce development programming. These efforts can be supplemented with support from local nonprofit agencies who provide basic need services such as access to food, affordable housing, financial literacy training and sense of belonging.
- Black individuals and families have not experienced the same wage and income increases as individuals from other demographics. Programs, particularly those focused on equipping individuals and families with high earning careers, should be leveraged and focused on supporting Black individuals.
- Young individuals across the county primarily work in low-wage occupations. Better efforts around assisting and establishing career pathways for in-demand occupations for growing and emerging industries should be prioritized. Digital capabilities and understanding of socio-emotional situations, among other key skills, will be required for individuals to participate in the workforce. Practitioners should engage local and regional employers to better understand what other skills young individuals will need to participate in the workforce.

## Coalition Building

- The WDB and community partners should work closely together to address access and awareness to programming through intentional coordination, outreach, and resource-sharing, such as quarterly convenings to include key program leaders throughout Lancaster County. Meeting should focus on resource sharing LCWDB updates. These efforts should be focused on high poverty and disconnected areas highlighted in the community profile section including Kirkwood, Willow Street, Akron, Ephrata, Lancaster (city), East Lampeter, Lancaster (township), and West Lampeter Township. Priority efforts of the coalition should focus on placing youth in higher paying occupations, increasing youth school enrollment, Black youth and Black families, and wrap around services to support youth. Brownstown, Lancaster (City), Mountville, and Millersville have high degrees of foreign-born populations who live in poverty. While translation services are important to include in all service delivery, it should be prioritized in these communities.
- Continued feedback from a committee made up of young people with lived experience relevant to reaching urban and rural opportunity and disconnected youth would provide ongoing feedback for the WDB in their efforts to serve this population more effectively in the long-term.



# Funding

- Support and strengthen prior existing community partners and their programs that have established footprints in their areas of expertise.
- Expand funding into assistance with employment barriers such as transportation efforts, childcare services for parents and families.
- Support for school districts – Possibly the use of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Funding to help support school programs. TANF funding can help educators and support workforce development efforts for youth (14-24) who are still attending school and or youth considered disconnected. TANF can support high schools and adult education programs who are connected to the disconnected community. Such training can include youth mentorship, soft skills, and an introduction to career pathways.
- The LCWDB should consider informational sessions with community partners to discuss what the eligibility requirements are for the services and how community partners can assist in recruitment efforts.



# Best Practices for Supporting Disconnected Youth

Based on the study findings about challenges disconnected youth face in connecting to employment and/or training, programming recommendations for Lancaster County's disconnected young adults have been identified through a reviews of best practice research to identify programs and approaches with some level of demonstrated effectiveness in helping disconnected young adults reconnect to school and/or work.

## Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Program Funding

According to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) youth program, local boards and their youth councils/committees can use TANF youth funding to enhance workforce investment funding and extend the availability of high-quality workforce development activities to low-income youth.<sup>25</sup> Use of TANF funding can help partner organizations and or community organizations provide the necessary programs that will align with the needs of the local workforce development board. Youth who participate are eligible and can be recruited (before becoming disconnected) into the out-of-school youth program.

The use of TANF funds may serve youth ages 12 through 24 but are not required to serve all ages within that range. It is up to local boards to determine the age groups in which they will serve. The use can be a leveraging of funding and close the gap between connected and disconnected youth by working with community-based organizations and school districts to build an active coalition network to help support youth.

<sup>25</sup> [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\) Youth Development Program \(YDP\) \(pa.gov\)](#)





# Youth Hubs

Because of the geographical landscape in Lancaster, PA and due to the vast difference in suburban and urban populations, the LCWDB should consider a system of neighborhood hubs to conduct outreach and engage youth: There are various ways to use a hub-and-spoke model, giving workforce boards the flexibility to implement this model within their staffing and funding restrictions. For example, workforce boards could coordinate with various stakeholder organizations within each community (e.g., libraries, community centers, and partner organizations) to reserve a room or space for the same day and time weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly<sup>26</sup>. One staff member would then work from that space at that designated time and day, increasing access for the youth in that county area. One staff member would then work from that space at that designated time and day, increasing access for the youth in that county area.

In a review of the literature on the hub-and-spoke model, Social Care Research Associates found examples of different implementations of the hub-and-spoke model. These were found in children's centers, including overseas organizations, holistic health initiatives for young people (e.g., healthy living centers), mental health services (including early intervention and emergency services), and physical health services.<sup>27</sup>

he most important aspect of this model is to bring services and access to all areas of the county and to increase the presence of staff within different communities. While there are challenges associated with the hub-and-spoke model (e.g., congestion at hubs, overextension of spokes, staff dissatisfaction at spokes, or transportation disruptions<sup>28</sup>), the model is widely used and has demonstrated its success in multiple fields. With the number of organizations of all types implementing a hub-and-spoke model, roadmaps and best practices can be found to promote its effectiveness.

For example, The Commission on Substance Abuse Treatment Delivery (CSAT) outlines the questions that need to be raised before implementing the model. While focusing on the general design of the hub-and-spoke system, conversations “on what should be expected of “hubs,” what should be expected of “spokes,” and how care is coordinated between the two” must be discussed.

In addition to the youth hubs, according to a study conducted by [Social Policy Research Associates](#). Six of the eight respondents said they hope virtual case management continues, or will consider this as an option, beyond the pandemic. As one agency administrator described, not all services must occur in person. Thus, providers could at least offer virtual options for youth based on their communication preferences.<sup>29</sup> Since COVID-19, there are many perspectives on the best way to reach youth. Furthermore, as we emerge from an almost inclusive virtual environment, there is still an expectation that a combination of in-person and virtual services should occur. Virtual services would thus enable these youth to continue accessing the provider's support. This could include implementing a hub-and spoke model with a combination and coordination of virtual services such as a kiosk model which the LCWDB is in the process of implementing.

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26 [One-Stop Operations Guidance for the American Job Center Network \(dol.gov\)](#)

27 [Effective-approaches-to-Hub-and-Spoke-service-provision\\_final-report-25-09-14.pdf \(alexiprject.org.uk\)](#)

28 [The hub-and-spoke organization design: an avenue for serving patients well | BMC Health Services Research | Full Text \(biomedcentral.com\)](#)

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29 [Supporting disconnected youth during the COVID-19 pandemic: Experiences from the field \(dol.gov\)](#)

## Third Places

A third place is a term developed by sociologist Ray Oldenburg. Third places refer to a space where individuals spend their time outside of school or work and home.<sup>30</sup> In youth development, third places can help young individuals establish a sense of community, discover role models and mentors, develop new skills, and meet socialization needs.

The LCWDB should work with local community agencies to establish third places for youth in the community and connect with them to help improve workforce outcomes. An example of where this is already being done is Benchmark.

Benchmark was founded in 2014 with a mission to serve Lancaster's underserved youth through free exercise classes and creating a safe and positive space. Benchmark can boast numerous stories of having positive impacts on young people in the community and helping them find promising career opportunities. LCWDB can compound Benchmark's efforts by working with similar organizations, helping them expand their outreach efforts, and combining resources to serve Lancaster youth.

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30 ["Third Places" as community builders by Stuart M. Butler and Carmen Diaz](#)

## Establish Youth Advisory Councils

Youth voices matter, specifically youth who are disconnected. Involving youth as partners can increase youth participation and involvement in initiatives and priorities of the youth committee. The youth advisory council, Youth Advisory Councils (YAC) is a youth engagement strategy used by programs and organizations to positively incorporate youth voices and help build the capacity of youth participants.<sup>31</sup>

### Examples of Youth Advisory councils:

- [Youth Advisory Boards - Young Invincibles](#)
- [Eight Successful Youth Engagement Approaches | Youth.gov](#)

In addition to youth advisory councils another effective way to recruit and engage youth is to coordinate a youth listening session. Involving disconnected youth, especially for youth-oriented programs can increase awareness of the needs in Lancaster County.

### Examples of Youth Listening sessions:

- [Durham Youth Listening Project Report 2021 by DurhamOfficeOnYouth - Issuu](#)
- [Hope-Youth-Listening-Report.pdf \(hope-community.org\)](#)

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31 [YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL\\_8 STEPS final.pdf \(youthpower.org\)](#)

# Mental Health

Although mental health awareness and services have been identified as a need. The prevalence of mental health has escalated since COVID-19. Workforce professionals, particularly those who work with youth should be aware of the different aspects of mental health. In addition, to understanding the different aspects of mental health, workforce professionals should make a concerted effort to partner with agencies who provide services as a mechanism of support and recruitment into programs provided by the LCWDB.

As a resources and best practice Pennsylvania has a guide specifically for workforce development professionals. The tool is a comprehensive kit that has resources that help workforce practitioners while engaging youth who may be disconnected. This tool kit can be a valuable resource for assisting, maintaining, and engaging those who may need additional assistance. <sup>32</sup>



# Boosting Employment Among Black Individuals

Black families and individuals experienced the lowest rate of wage growth among all racial demographic groups in Lancaster County. Therefore, it is recommended that the LCWDB takes an intentional approach at boosting employment and earning outcomes among Black families. Bookings reports six policies that can boost employment for Black men:

- Reducing racial segregation in neighborhoods and schools:
- Boosting early work experience for young Black men:
- Creating more and better college credentials:
- Reducing crime and incarceration rates through researched approaches
- More help for returning citizens to work
- Subsidizing jobs, particularly for Black men who suffer from disabilities and other work barriers<sup>33</sup>

Many of these policy changes can be expanded to support all Black individuals across the county. While it would be a worthwhile pursuit to implement all of these strategies, capacity for workforce development boards can be limited. The workforce board should work toward implementing these recommendations if feasible. However, based on findings from youth engagement, a few of these initiatives should be prioritized:

## **Reducing racial segregation in neighborhoods and schools:**

Several youths who were interviewed mentioned that they felt “othered” by teachers and administrators. Facilitating efforts to reduce racial biases should be executed to prevent these negative experiences among youths.

## **Creating more and better college credentials:**

Youth who participated in the focus groups highlighted that they were not sure what they were doing after school, and they did not look forward to working for any reason other than money. Creating better college credentials that lead to careers of interest should be made a priority.

## **Boosting (positive) early work experience for young Black men (and individuals):**

Several youth reported complications with their employers from breaking child-labor and curfew laws to biases and discriminatory practices. The workforce development board should prioritize identifying, facilitating, and maintaining positive youth employment experiences, particularly among Black populations.

# Limitations

As with any study, limitations to the chosen methods are acknowledged and addressed to the extent possible within the design. The limitations to this report include the following, broken down by each analysis method:

## **Partial and Biased Findings:**

Qualitative and perceptual research methods offer valuable insights but are, by nature, partial and biased. To attempt to address this limitation, TPMA took advantage of an opportunity embedded in mixed methods evaluations – the triangulation of data. Triangulating results from multiple sources, such as comparing findings from surveys and focus groups, creates more credible evaluation results and is considered critical to the validity and reliability of findings.

## **Researcher Extrapolation:**

Analyses conducted with an interpretive analytical framework can lead to researcher extrapolation where interpretation may go too far beyond what is present in, and supported by, data. To address this, TPMA used internal collaborative inquiry; through presenting findings among the research team for elaboration, corroboration, and modification.

# Acknowledgments

During this project, the Lancaster Workforce Development Board youth committee members provided guidance and assistance through recurring meetings and individual communication. The LCWDB youth leadership team was also integral in connecting TPMA to community-based organizations to host focus groups with disconnected youth to be facilitated by TPMA. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the youth committee leadership for hosting a community tour for TPMA to understand the different demographics throughout Lancaster County better.

Thank you to the several organizations that participated in the community-based survey. Additionally, along with the leadership team on the youth committee, community-based organizations assisted TPMA's efforts in recruiting disconnected youth to participate in focus groups and helped to return pertinent information. The voices of disconnected youth in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania would not have been successfully captured without these organizations and individuals' hard work and social capital. Thank you to all participants who contributed knowledge and expertise to this project.



# Appendices

## Occupational Data

### 14-18

| SOC     | Description  | 2017<br>Jobs | 2023<br>Jobs | 2017 -<br>2023<br>Change | 2017 -<br>2023 %<br>Change | Avg.<br>Annual<br>Openings | 2023<br>Employment<br>Concentration | Avg.<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Annual<br>Earnings | Automation<br>Index | Current<br>Year Age<br>14-18 | Current<br>Year Age<br>19-21 | Current<br>Year Age<br>22-24 | Current<br>Year Age<br>25-34 |
|---------|--|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 35-3023 | Fast Food and Counter Workers                              | 6,024        | 6,205        | 181                      | 3%                         | 1,496                      | 1.07                                | \$12.04                    | \$12.40                      | \$25,787.53                  | 130.8               | 2,070                        | 949                          | 523                          | 863                          |
| 41-2011 | Cashiers   | 5,668        | 5,670        | 2                        | 0%                         | 1,208                      | 1.03                                | \$12.39                    | \$11.44                      | \$23,797.31                  | 105.5               | 1,357                        | 1,009                        | 502                          | 810                          |
| 35-3031 | Waiters and Waitresses                                     | 4,273        | 3,577        | -697                     | -16%                       | 861                        | 0.96                                | \$14.83                    | \$13.92                      | \$28,947.57                  | 129.8               | 739                          | 617                          | 434                          | 730                          |
| 53-7065 | Stockers and Order Fillers                                 | 6,395        | 7,948        | 1,553                    | 24%                        | 1,416                      | 1.65                                | \$16.98                    | \$16.92                      | \$35,185.30                  | 112.3               | 703                          | 888                          | 687                          | 1,635                        |
| 41-2031 | Retail Salespersons  | 8,498        | 6,826        | -1,672                   | -20%                       | 1,123                      | 1.07                                | \$17.05                    | \$13.66                      | \$28,421.73                  | 93.4                | 616                          | 833                          | 576                          | 1,119                        |
| 35-9031 | Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop   | 763          | 794          | 31                       | 4%                         | 211                        | 1.14                                | \$12.00                    | \$11.26                      | \$23,413.14                  | 117.8               | 424                          | 141                          | 52                           | 50                           |
| 53-7062 | Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand     | 6,649        | 6,948        | 299                      | 4%                         | 1,116                      | 1.35                                | \$18.73                    | \$17.73                      | \$36,870.28                  | 117.2               | 397                          | 627                          | 608                          | 1,652                        |
| 35-2014 | Cooks, Restaurant  | 1,926        | 1,971        | 45                       | 2%                         | 387                        | 0.82                                | \$15.03                    | \$14.33                      | \$29,797.87                  | 125                 | 318                          | 168                          | 126                          | 369                          |
| 35-3041 | Food Servers, Nonrestaurant                                | 940          | 1,121        | 182                      | 19%                        | 218                        | 2.62                                | \$12.89                    | \$12.90                      | \$26,831.13                  | 118.7               | 268                          | 154                          | 77                           | 141                          |
| 39-3091 | Amusement and Recreation Attendants                        | 637          | 832          | 195                      | 31%                        | 234                        | 1.38                                | \$11.70                    | \$10.78                      | \$22,422.98                  | 108.1               | 260                          | 142                          | 68                           | 86                           |
| 35-9011 | Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers | 1,149        | 735          | -415                     | -36%                       | 183                        | 0.95                                | \$12.38                    | \$11.87                      | \$24,681.90                  | 130.6               | 237                          | 80                           | 41                           | 88                           |

## 19-21

| SOC     | Description  | 2017<br>Jobs | 2023<br>Jobs | 2017 -<br>2023<br>Change | 2017 -<br>2023 %<br>Change | Avg.<br>Annual<br>Openings | 2023<br>Employment<br>Concentration | Avg.<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Annual<br>Earnings | Automation<br>Index | Current<br>Year Age<br>14-18 | Current<br>Year Age<br>19-21 | Current<br>Year Age<br>22-24 | Current<br>Year Age<br>25-34 |
|---------|--|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 41-2011 | Cashiers   | 5,668        | 5,670        | 2                        | 0%                         | 1,208                      | 1.03                                | \$12.39                    | \$11.44                      | \$23,797.31                  | 105.5               | 1,357                        | 1,009                        | 502                          | 810                          |
| 35-3023 | Fast Food<br>and Counter<br>Workers                                | 6,024        | 6,205        | 181                      | 3%                         | 1,496                      | 1.07                                | \$12.04                    | \$12.40                      | \$25,787.53                  | 130.8               | 2,070                        | 949                          | 523                          | 863                          |
| 53-7065 | Stockers and<br>Order Fillers                                      | 6,395        | 7,948        | 1,553                    | 24%                        | 1,416                      | 1.65                                | \$16.98                    | \$16.92                      | \$35,185.30                  | 112.3               | 703                          | 888                          | 687                          | 1,635                        |
| 41-2031 | Retail<br>Salespersons   | 8,498        | 6,826        | -1,672                   | -20%                       | 1,123                      | 1.07                                | \$17.05                    | \$13.66                      | \$28,421.73                  | 93.4                | 616                          | 833                          | 576                          | 1,119                        |
| 53-7062 | Laborers<br>and Freight,<br>Stock, and<br>Material<br>Movers, Hand | 6,649        | 6,948        | 299                      | 4%                         | 1,116                      | 1.35                                | \$18.73                    | \$17.73                      | \$36,870.28                  | 117.2               | 397                          | 627                          | 608                          | 1,652                        |
| 35-3031 | Waiters and<br>Waitresses  | 4,273        | 3,577        | -697                     | -16%                       | 861                        | 0.96                                | \$14.83                    | \$13.92                      | \$28,947.57                  | 129.8               | 739                          | 617                          | 434                          | 730                          |
| 43-9061 | Office Clerks,<br>General  | 7,088        | 5,249        | -1,839                   | -26%                       | 816                        | 1.15                                | \$19.54                    | \$18.18                      | \$37,818.25                  | 102                 | 179                          | 353                          | 333                          | 879                          |
| 47-2061 | Construction<br>Laborers   | 3,056        | 3,165        | 110                      | 4%                         | 367                        | 1.31                                | \$22.97                    | \$20.86                      | \$43,385.71                  | 131.9               | 173                          | 335                          | 270                          | 668                          |
| 43-4051 | Customer<br>Service Reps   | 3,963        | 4,647        | 684                      | 17%                        | 725                        | 0.94                                | \$19.65                    | \$18.25                      | \$37,959.48                  | 96.4                | 170                          | 288                          | 356                          | 1,146                        |
| 31-1131 | Nursing<br>Assistants  | 3,414        | 3,170        | -244                     | -7%                        | 515                        | 1.38                                | \$17.33                    | \$17.67                      | \$36,744.56                  | 97                  | 53                           | 260                          | 270                          | 751                          |
| 47-2031 | Carpenters   | 3,438        | 3,213        | -225                     | -7%                        | 342                        | 1.85                                | \$24.92                    | \$22.44                      | \$46,684.52                  | 125.9               | 104                          | 259                          | 260                          | 695                          |

## 22-24

| SOC     | Description  | 2017<br>Jobs | 2023<br>Jobs | 2017 -<br>2023<br>Change | 2017 -<br>2023 %<br>Change | Avg.<br>Annual<br>Openings | 2023<br>Employment<br>Concentration | Avg.<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Annual<br>Earnings | Automation<br>Index | Current<br>Year Age<br>14-18 | Current<br>Year Age<br>19-21 | Current<br>Year Age<br>22-24 | Current<br>Year Age<br>25-34 |
|---------|--|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 53-7065 | Stockers and Order Fillers                             | 6,395        | 7,948        | 1,553                    | 24%                        | 1,416                      | 1.65                                | \$16.98                    | \$16.92                      | \$35,185.30                  | 112.3               | 703                          | 888                          | 687                          | 1,635                        |
| 53-7062 | Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand | 6,649        | 6,948        | 299                      | 4%                         | 1,116                      | 1.35                                | \$18.73                    | \$17.73                      | \$36,870.28                  | 117.2               | 397                          | 627                          | 608                          | 1,652                        |
| 41-2031 | Retail Salespersons                                    | 8,498        | 6,826        | -1,672                   | -20%                       | 1,123                      | 1.07                                | \$17.05                    | \$13.66                      | \$28,421.73                  | 93.4                | 616                          | 833                          | 576                          | 1,119                        |
| 35-3023 | Fast Food and Counter Workers                          | 6,024        | 6,205        | 181                      | 3%                         | 1,496                      | 1.07                                | \$12.04                    | \$12.40                      | \$25,787.53                  | 130.8               | 2,070                        | 949                          | 523                          | 863                          |
| 41-2011 | Cashiers   | 5,668        | 5,670        | 2                        | 0%                         | 1,208                      | 1.03                                | \$12.39                    | \$11.44                      | \$23,797.31                  | 105.5               | 1,357                        | 1,009                        | 502                          | 810                          |
| 35-3031 | Waiters and Waitresses                                 | 4,273        | 3,577        | -697                     | -16%                       | 861                        | 0.96                                | \$14.83                    | \$13.92                      | \$28,947.57                  | 129.8               | 739                          | 617                          | 434                          | 730                          |
| 43-4051 | Customer Service Reps                                  | 3,963        | 4,647        | 684                      | 17%                        | 725                        | 0.94                                | \$19.65                    | \$18.25                      | \$37,959.48                  | 96.4                | 170                          | 288                          | 356                          | 1,146                        |
| 43-9061 | Office Clerks, General                                 | 7,088        | 5,249        | -1,839                   | -26%                       | 816                        | 1.15                                | \$19.54                    | \$18.18                      | \$37,818.25                  | 102                 | 179                          | 353                          | 333                          | 879                          |
| 31-1128 | Home Health and Personal Care Aides                    | 5,236        | 5,845        | 609                      | 12%                        | 980                        | 0.83                                | \$14.21                    | \$13.52                      | \$28,120.65                  | 93.6                | 49                           | 242                          | 310                          | 1,161                        |
| 47-2061 | Construction Laborers                                  | 3,056        | 3,165        | 110                      | 4%                         | 367                        | 1.31                                | \$22.97                    | \$20.86                      | \$43,385.71                  | 131.9               | 173                          | 335                          | 270                          | 668                          |
| 31-1131 | Nursing Assistants                                     | 3,414        | 3,170        | -244                     | -7%                        | 515                        | 1.38                                | \$17.33                    | \$17.67                      | \$36,744.56                  | 97                  | 53                           | 260                          | 270                          | 751                          |

## 25-34

| SOC     | Description  | 2017<br>Jobs | 2023<br>Jobs | 2017 -<br>2023<br>Change | 2017 -<br>2023 %<br>Change | Avg.<br>Annual<br>Openings | 2023<br>Employment<br>Concentration | Avg.<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Annual<br>Earnings | Automation<br>Index | Current<br>Year Age<br>14-18 | Current<br>Year Age<br>19-21 | Current<br>Year Age<br>22-24 | Current<br>Year Age<br>25-34 |
|---------|--|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 53-7062 | Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand | 6,649        | 6,948        | 299                      | 4%                         | 1,116                      | 1.35                                | \$18.73                    | \$17.73                      | \$36,870.28                  | 117.2               | 397                          | 627                          | 608                          | 1,652                        |
| 53-7065 | Stockers and Order Fillers                             | 6,395        | 7,948        | 1,553                    | 24%                        | 1,416                      | 1.65                                | \$16.98                    | \$16.92                      | \$35,185.30                  | 112.3               | 703                          | 888                          | 687                          | 1,635                        |
| 31-1128 | Home Health and Personal Care Aides                    | 5,236        | 5,845        | 609                      | 12%                        | 980                        | 0.83                                | \$14.21                    | \$13.52                      | \$28,120.65                  | 93.6                | 49                           | 242                          | 310                          | 1,161                        |
| 43-4051 | Customer Service Reps                                  | 3,963        | 4,647        | 684                      | 17%                        | 725                        | 0.94                                | \$19.65                    | \$18.25                      | \$37,959.48                  | 96.4                | 170                          | 288                          | 356                          | 1,146                        |
| 29-1141 | Registered Nurses                                      | 4,871        | 4,822        | -49                      | -1%                        | 314                        | 0.91                                | \$37.16                    | \$37.51                      | \$78,015.82                  | 85.3                | <10                          | 27                           | 210                          | 1,143                        |
| 41-2031 | Retail Salespersons                                    | 8,498        | 6,826        | -1,672                   | -20%                       | 1,123                      | 1.07                                | \$17.05                    | \$13.66                      | \$28,421.73                  | 93.4                | 616                          | 833                          | 576                          | 1,119                        |
| 11-1021 | General and Operations Managers                        | 3,520        | 6,013        | 2,493                    | 71%                        | 814                        | 1                                   | \$53.76                    | \$45.17                      | \$93,945.71                  | 82.2                | <10                          | 27                           | 97                           | 1,075                        |
| 53-3032 | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers                | 4,734        | 5,440        | 706                      | 15%                        | 733                        | 1.39                                | \$26.14                    | \$24.19                      | \$50,313.75                  | 110.1               | 31                           | 103                          | 148                          | 887                          |
| 43-9061 | Office Clerks, General                                 | 7,088        | 5,249        | -1,839                   | -26%                       | 816                        | 1.15                                | \$19.54                    | \$18.18                      | \$37,818.25                  | 102                 | 179                          | 353                          | 333                          | 879                          |
| 35-3023 | Fast Food and Counter Workers                          | 6,024        | 6,205        | 181                      | 3%                         | 1,496                      | 1.07                                | \$12.04                    | \$12.40                      | \$25,787.53                  | 130.8               | 2,070                        | 949                          | 523                          | 863                          |
| 41-2011 | Cashiers   | 5,668        | 5,670        | 2                        | 0%                         | 1,208                      | 1.03                                | \$12.39                    | \$11.44                      | \$23,797.31                  | 105.5               | 1,357                        | 1,009                        | 502                          | 810                          |

## Students With Disabilities - Number and Percent of Students Enrolled in Special Education (by School District)

| Location                               | Data Type | 2009 - 10 | 2010 - 11 | 2011 - 12 | 2012 - 13 | 2013 - 14 | 2014 - 15 | 2015 - 16 | 2016 - 17 | 2017 - 18 | 2018 - 19 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Lancaster--Cocalico SD                 | Number    | 494       | 484       | 472       | 457       | 469       | 477       | 481       | 517       | 544       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 14.80%    | 14.70%    | 14.70%    | 14.40%    | 15.10%    | 15.60%    | 15.80%    | 16.80%    | 17.80%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Columbia Borough SD         | Number    | 294       | 286       | 278       | 286       | 295       | 312       | 324       | 345       | 378       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 21.40%    | 21.00%    | 20.30%    | 20.20%    | 21.30%    | 22.00%    | 23.00%    | 25.20%    | 29.10%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Conestoga Valley SD         | Number    | 513       | 525       | 500       | 519       | 558       | 562       | 605       | 648       | 672       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 12.60%    | 13.10%    | 11.70%    | 12.00%    | 12.70%    | 12.90%    | 13.80%    | 15.10%    | 15.70%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Donegal SD                  | Number    | 435       | 412       | 382       | 382       | 396       | 403       | 458       | 478       | 500       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 15.30%    | 14.60%    | 13.20%    | 13.10%    | 13.60%    | 13.70%    | 15.10%    | 16.00%    | 16.40%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Eastern Lancaster County SD | Number    | 386       | 342       | 355       | 380       | 373       | 378       | 392       | 420       | 456       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 11.90%    | 11.00%    | 11.50%    | 12.00%    | 11.70%    | 11.90%    | 12.50%    | 13.80%    | 14.50%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Elizabethtown Area SD       | Number    | 513       | 508       | 477       | 479       | 508       | 516       | 526       | 559       | 564       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 12.80%    | 12.70%    | 12.00%    | 12.00%    | 12.90%    | 13.10%    | 13.30%    | 14.50%    | 14.70%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Ephrata Area SD             | Number    | 572       | 606       | 640       | 688       | 712       | 704       | 706       | 756       | 779       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 14.10%    | 14.70%    | 15.30%    | 16.20%    | 16.80%    | 16.80%    | 16.80%    | 18.10%    | 18.80%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Hempfield SD                | Number    | 1,124     | 1,101     | 1,047     | 1,052     | 1,044     | 1,049     | 1,110     | 1,144     | 1,151     | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 15.90%    | 15.70%    | 15.00%    | 15.10%    | 15.20%    | 15.40%    | 16.20%    | 16.60%    | 16.90%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--La Academia CS              | Number    | LNE       | LNE       | LNE       | LNE       | LNE       | 27        | 34        | 36        | 36        | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 14.80%    | 13.40%    | LNE       | LNE       | LNE       | 13.80%    | 18.20%    | 16.70%    | 18.00%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Lampeter-Strasburg SD       | Number    | 466       | 431       | 395       | 386       | 376       | 374       | 361       | 385       | 425       | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 14.50%    | 13.60%    | 12.70%    | 12.40%    | 12.10%    | 12.20%    | 11.90%    | 12.60%    | 13.70%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Lancaster SD                | Number    | 2,106     | 2,023     | 1,995     | 1,987     | 2,001     | 1,970     | 1,860     | 1,887     | 1,943     | NA        |
|  | Percent   | 18.90%    | 18.40%    | 18.40%    | 18.30%    | 18.50%    | 18.00%    | 17.20%    | 17.20%    | 17.90%    | NA        |



| Location                       | Data Type | 2009 - 10 | 2010 - 11 | 2011 - 12 | 2012 - 13 | 2013 - 14 | 2014 - 15 | 2015 - 16 | 2016 - 17 | 2017 - 18 | 2018 - 19 |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Lancaster--Manheim Central SD  | Number    | 450       | 423       | 380       | 352       | 378       | 351       | 387       | 424       | 439       | NA        |
|                                | Percent   | 15.70%    | 14.40%    | 12.80%    | 11.90%    | 12.70%    | 12.20%    | 13.20%    | 14.30%    | 14.40%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Manheim Township SD | Number    | 656       | 680       | 669       | 651       | 621       | 606       | 600       | 627       | 704       | NA        |
|                                | Percent   | 11.30%    | 11.50%    | 11.20%    | 11.00%    | 10.70%    | 10.50%    | 10.40%    | 10.90%    | 12.10%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Penn Manor SD       | Number    | 867       | 846       | 855       | 844       | 874       | 902       | 906       | 926       | 906       | NA        |
|                                | Percent   | 16.80%    | 16.40%    | 16.60%    | 16.60%    | 17.10%    | 17.60%    | 17.60%    | 17.50%    | 17.10%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Pequea Valley SD    | Number    | 314       | 307       | 296       | 310       | 298       | 332       | 298       | 308       | 327       | NA        |
|                                | Percent   | 17.60%    | 17.70%    | 17.30%    | 18.10%    | 18.00%    | 20.30%    | 18.80%    | 20.00%    | 21.40%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Solanco SD          | Number    | 474       | 501       | 494       | 470       | 473       | 485       | 554       | 585       | 590       | NA        |
|                                | Percent   | 12.70%    | 13.40%    | 13.30%    | 12.60%    | 13.00%    | 13.50%    | 15.70%    | 16.50%    | 17.10%    | NA        |
| Lancaster--Warwick SD          | Number    | 635       | 579       | 516       | 518       | 461       | 463       | 466       | 473       | 497       | NA        |
|                                | Percent   | 14.00%    | 12.90%    | 11.70%    | 11.70%    | 10.70%    | 11.10%    | 11.10%    | 11.40%    | 12.10%    | NA        |

# Community Based Organizations Survey

The Lancaster County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB) has contracted TPMA as an external, independent agency to conduct a study on regional disconnected youth. “Disconnected youth” refers to young individuals aged 16 to 24 who are neither working nor in school, often labeled as “opportunity youth” or NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). For the purposes of this study, we are also including those who are underemployed, meaning those who do not have enough paid work and/or are desiring to close significant skill gaps.

This survey is one of multiple ways we are collecting information on experiences of disconnected youth in Lancaster County. You have been selected to complete this survey because you have been identified as a disconnected youth service provider in Lancaster County.

The survey asks about services for youth and young adults, challenges these individuals and community partners face, and services that should be provided. Your responses on this survey will guide the Workforce Development Boards’ program planning and help service providers better assist young adults in the county.

By selecting “Next,” you agree to take the survey. You may stop the survey at any time but can only take the survey once. The survey is expected to take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary, and your responses will be kept anonymous, unless you choose to provide your contact information below. Answers you provide will NOT be tied to your organization or name in reporting and NO information/data will be sold to third parties.

If you have any questions about the survey or the research study, please email Mary Byrd, Youth Coordinator for LCWDB at [mbyrd@lanastercountywib.com](mailto:mbyrd@lanastercountywib.com).

Thank you for your important insight.

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (not required)

Email \_\_\_\_\_ (not required)

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ (not required)



**Counties You Serve: (Select all that apply.)**

- Lancaster
- Berks
- Lebanon
- Dauphin
- Perry
- Cumberland
- Franklin
- Adams
- York
- Chester
- Delaware
- Montgomery
- Bucks
- Philadelphia
- Lehigh
- Northampton
- Schuylkill

**Which of the following best summarizes what type of organization you represent? (Select all that apply.)**

- Funder/Grantmaker
- Direct Service Provider (e.g., mental health, housing, food assistance, etc.)
- Education or Skills Training Provider
- Other (Please specify.)

**Do you have programs or services directly serving disconnected youth (ages 16-24, under/unemployed, not in school/training)?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**What age range do you primarily serve? (Select all that apply)**

- Under 16
- 16-18
- 19 -24
- 25 and older
- (If only “25 and older” selected, will end survey at this point).

**How would you characterize the neighborhood or area where the young people you primarily serve reside or spend the majority of their time?**

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban
- Unsure

**Is your organization dedicated to addressing the needs of young people from particular demographic segments? (Select all that apply.)**

- Race
- Gender
- Ability or disability
- LGBTQ+
- Parenting teens
- Education level
- Religion
- Juvenile justice-involved
- Current or former foster care system-involved
- My organization does not focus on providing services to any particular demographic segment.
- Other (Please specify.)

**Please respond to each statement. Be sure to answer each question as it pertains specifically to disconnected youth (ages 16-24, under/unemployed, not in school/training). (Matrix: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree)**

- Knowing where to go to find resources to meet their needs is a barrier to employment.
- Educational attainment is a barrier to employment.
- Language proficiency is a barrier to employment.
- Childcare services are a barrier to employment.
- Meeting transportation needs is a challenge.
- Meeting housing needs is a challenge.
- Meeting food needs is a challenge.
- Paying bills on time is a challenge.
- Accessing mental health services is a challenge.
- Maintaining proper hygiene is a challenge.
- Access to technology and/or mobile/wireless connectivity is a challenge.
- Family-based trauma is a challenge.
- Peer-based trauma is a challenge.
- Many are relocating outside of Lancaster County.

**Please put the above in order from most to least important.**

**Please respond to each statement.**

**Be sure to answer each question as it pertains specifically to disconnected youth (ages 16-24, under/unemployed, not in school/training).**

**(Matrix: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree)**

- Disconnected youth have ample options for education and training programs.
- Disconnected youth have quality options for education and training programs.
- Lancaster County and partner organizations receive adequate funding to support disconnected youth.
- Disconnected youth services are coordinated among community organizations (e.g., referrals and warm handoffs).
- Educators, parents, employers, and community organizations have access to programs designed for disconnected youth.
- Services offered to disconnected youth are also offered to family members.
- Services offered to disconnected youth are also accessible to family members.
- Disconnected youth benefit from trauma-informed services and education.

**Please explain your answers above.  
(Comment box)**

**Please list the platforms your organization uses to advertise/promote services for disconnected youth. (Comment box.)**

**How do young people initially become motivated to connect to services, in your opinion? (Comment box)**

**What strategies have you used to retain disconnected youth in programming? (Comment box)**

**How have you seen the need to serve youth change over the course of your involvement? (Comment box)**

**How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect your work? (Check all that apply)**

- We stopped providing in-person services.
- We were essential workers.
- I switched to working from home and providing services remotely.
- The COVID-19 pandemic did not affect my work.
- Other (Please explain.)

**What are other ways, if any, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your programs or services? (Comment box)**

**What services would help meet disconnect youth's needs that are not currently available? (Comment box)**

**Is there anything else you would like us to know about disconnected youth in Lancaster County? (Comment box)**

**Would you be willing to be part of a casual conversation about your survey responses and experiences as an organization serving young people in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania?**

- Yes
- No

**As part of this project, we are reviewing relevant documents and reports related to disconnected youth. Do you have any reports, program data, or other documents you think are relevant that you would like to share to help inform this study?**

- Yes
- No

Thank you for your participation!

# Community Survey Respondents

| Organizations                               | Count of Responses |
|---|--------------------|
| AMES REESE Inc.                             | 1                  |
| Boys & Girls Club of Lancaster              | 1                  |
| CAP   | 2                  |
| CNH Industrial LLC                          | 1                  |
| Donegal School District                     | 1                  |
| Eckerd connects                             | 1                  |
| Garden Spot High School                     | 1                  |
| Harrisburg Area Community College           | 1                  |
| Icare                                       | 1                  |
| ILAP Caoching and Training                  | 1                  |
| Job Corps                                   | 1                  |
| Junior Achievement of South Central PA      | 1                  |
| Lancaster County Career & Technology Center | 1                  |
| Lancaster-Lebanon IU13                      | 2                  |
| MANTEC                                      | 1                  |
| Millersville University                     | 2                  |
| NuPaths                                     | 1                  |
| School District of Lancaster                | 2                  |
| Steps to Success, Inc                       | 1                  |
| The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon   | 1                  |
| The Mix                                     | 2                  |
| The Pivotal Group                           | 1                  |
| Touchstone Foundation                       | 1                  |
| Tritarr                                     | 1                  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                          | <b>29</b>          |

| Row Labels                 | Accessing mental health services is a challenge. | Accessing mental health services is a challenge. |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Strongly agree             | 11   | 55.00%   |
| Agree                      | 7  | 35.00%   |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 2  | 10.00%   |
| (blank)                    |  | 0.00%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>20</b>  | <b>100.00%</b>                                   |

| Row Labels                 | Childcare services are a barrier to employment. | Childcare services are a barrier to employment. |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Agree                      | 13  | 68.42%  |
| Strongly agree             | 5   | 26.32%  |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 1   | 5.26%   |
| (blank)                    | 1   | 0.00%   |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>19</b>                                       | <b>100.00%</b>                                  |

| Row Labels                 | Lancaster County and partner organizations receive adequate funding to support disconnected youth. | Lancaster County and partner organizations receive adequate funding to support disconnected youth. |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Disagree                   | 9  | 47.37%   |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 7  | 36.84%   |
| Agree                      | 2  | 10.53%   |
| Strongly disagree          | 1  | 5.26%  |
| (blank)                    | 1  | 0.00%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>19</b>  | <b>100.00%</b>   |



| Row Labels                 | Peer-based trauma is a challenge. | Peer-based trauma is a challenge. |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Agree                      | 12                                | 60.00%                            |
| Strongly agree             | 5                                 | 25.00%                            |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 3                                 | 15.00%                            |
| (blank)                    |                                   | 0.00%                             |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>20</b>                         | <b>100.00%</b>                    |

| Row Labels                 | Family-based trauma is a challenge. | Count of Family-based trauma is a challenge. |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Agree                      | 12                                  | 60.00%                                       |
| Strongly agree             | 7                                   | 35.00%                                       |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 1                                   | 5.00%  |
| (blank)                    |                                     | 0.00%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>20</b>                           | <b>100.00%</b>                               |

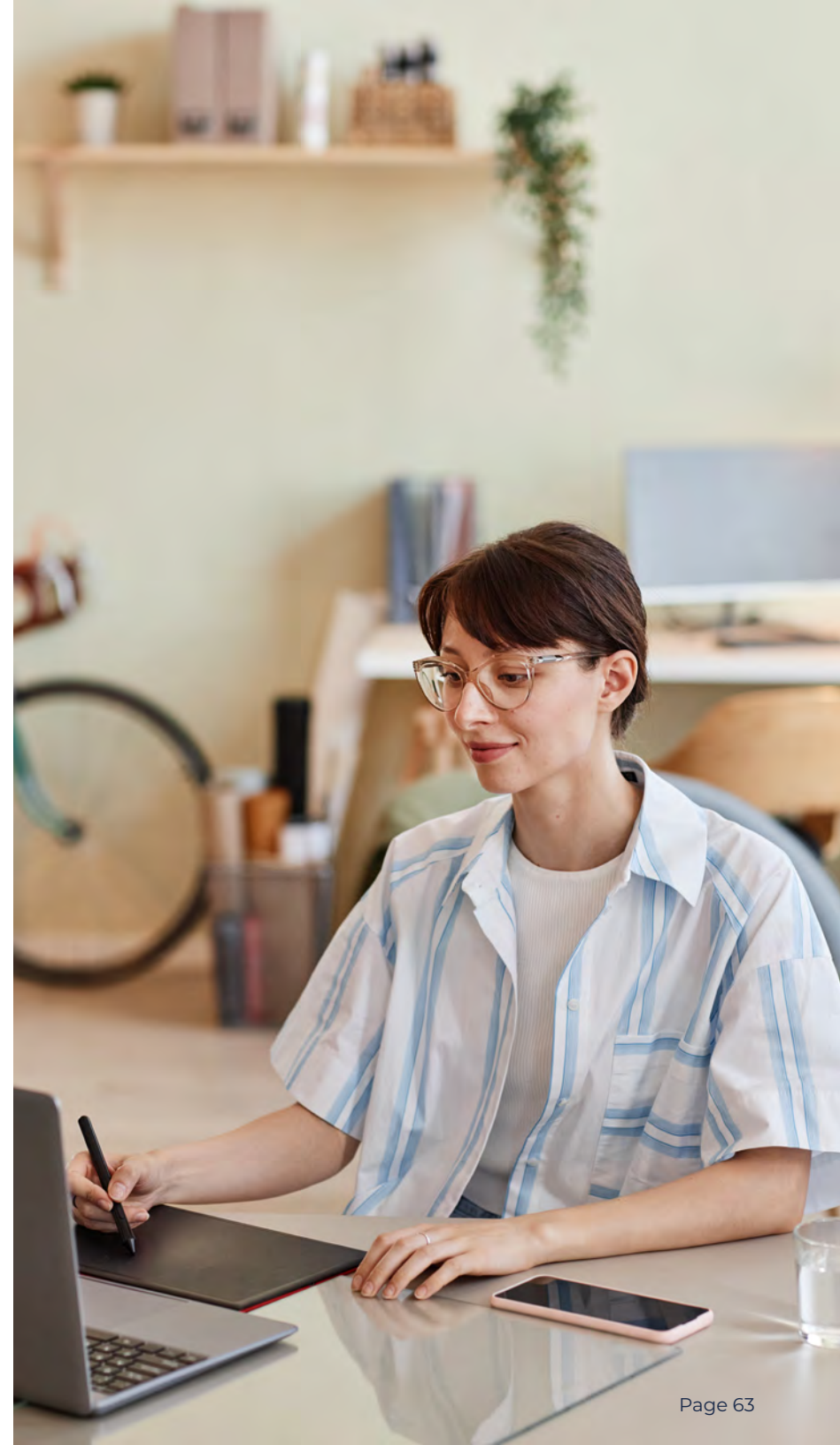
| Row Labels                 | Knowing where to go to find resources to meet their needs is a barrier to employment | Knowing where to go to find resources to meet their needs is a barrier to employment |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Agree                      | 11   | 50.00%   |
| Strongly agree             | 10   | 45.45%   |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 1  | 4.55%  |
| (blank)                    |  | 0.00%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>22</b>  | <b>100.00%</b>   |

| Row Labels                 | Meeting transportation needs is a challenge. | Meeting transportation needs is a challenge. |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Agree                      | 11   | 55.00%                                       |
| Strongly agree             | 6  | 30.00%                                       |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 2  | 10.00%                                       |
| Disagree                   | 1  | 5.00%  |
| (blank)                    |  | 0.00%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>20</b>                                    | <b>100.00%</b>                               |

| Row Labels                 | Meeting housing needs is a challenge. | Meeting housing needs is a challenge. |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Agree                      | 8                                     | 42.11%                                |
| Strongly agree             | 7                                     | 36.84%                                |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 3                                     | 15.79%                                |
| Disagree                   | 1                                     | 5.26%                                 |
| (blank)                    |                                       | 0.00%                                 |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>19</b>                             | <b>100.00%</b>                        |

| Row Labels                 | Language proficiency is a barrier to employment. | Language proficiency is a barrier to employment. |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Agree                      | 9  | 40.91%   |
| Strongly agree             | 7  | 31.82%   |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 5  | 22.73%   |
| Disagree                   | 1  | 4.55%  |
| (blank)                    |  | 0.00%  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>22</b>  | <b>100.00%</b>                                   |

| Row Labels                 | Disconnected youth benefit from trauma-informed services and education. | Disconnected youth benefit from trauma-informed services and education. |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Agree                      | 8   | 47.06%  |
| Strongly agree             | 5   | 29.41%  |
| Disagree                   | 2   | 11.76%  |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 2   | 11.76%  |
| (blank)                    |   | 0.00%   |
| <b>Grand Total</b>         | <b>17</b>   | <b>100.00%</b>  |



# Youth Focus Group Consent Form

TPMA is trying to understand the experiences and needs of young adults in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. We've been hired by the Lancaster Workforce Development Board to gather insights from you all to improve their work.

## What is the reason for the study?

We're trying to better understand why young people might become disconnected from school or work, the things in their way that keep them from school or getting a job, and how young people make ends meet. This information will help the Workforce Board and organizations to better serve young adults who aren't in school or working.

## Why did we ask you to participate in the study?

You are 16-24 and are not in school or work or may have a job but are looking for something more. By joining in this discussion, you'll help the research team understand the unique experiences of disconnected young adults in Lancaster County.

## What will we ask you to do?

We would love for you to share your experiences as part of a small group of young people that will take about 30 minutes. You and the other young people can share your experiences at school and out of school, at work and outside of work, and anything that you feel like we should know to understand your wants and needs for yourself and your community.

## What are the risks and discomforts?

You will not be forced to answer any questions you don't want to answer and nothing you say will be tied to you by name. During focus groups, the research team will follow a question guide and urge other young people to keep anything discussed confidential; however, we cannot guarantee that other focus group participants will not share any information that is discussed. Any information we collect in this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be shared only with your permission or as required by law.

## Consent Statement

I understand my participation in this study is my choice and that I can stop participating in the focus group at any time, for any reason, with no consequences.

I understand that my answers to these questions will only be seen by the TPMA research team.

I understand that my name will not be in any reports or presentations and that my information will be securely handled.

I understand that the risks and benefits of participating in this study are very small.

I know that if I have any questions about the study or my personal rights, that I can contact Mary Byrd, Youth Coordinator by email at [mbyrd@lanastercountywib.com](mailto:mbyrd@lanastercountywib.com) or Dr. Ben Wilson, TPMA Senior Advisor, at 814-860-6348, or by e-mail at [bwilson@tpma-inc.com](mailto:bwilson@tpma-inc.com)

## I do want to join in the focus group

## I do not want to join in the focus group

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For Student 16-17 Years of age:  
Parental/Guardian Signature

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## I give permission to join in the focus group

# Disconnected Youth Focus Group Guide

## Lancaster Disconnected Youth Focus Group Guide

[May use a confidential card for students to fill out the following: age (16-17, 18-21 & 22-24), sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity, education, employment status]

Hey everyone! My name is [facilitator] and this is [notetaker]. We just want to talk to you today about your experiences with school and work. We're going to use the responses we get from you all to help Lancaster County better help young people. We're going to ask you some questions, but please know that everything you share here today will not be repeated. We ask that you also do not repeat any personal information shared within this group.

After this meeting, we'll make the information you share with us general and not identified with you. We hope that you feel comfortable sharing your thoughts and experiences with us because it's so important that your voice is heard. **You are the expert in your own experiences!** If there are any questions that you don't feel comfortable answering, you don't have to, and if at any point you don't want to be here anymore, you are completely free to leave.

At the end of our conversation, we have gift cards for each of you, so make sure you get them from us before you leave! You will just need to sign a very brief form saying that you actually got the gift card.

Before we get started, do you have any questions for us?

To make sure our notes are right, we'd like to record, is that okay?  
[HIT RECORD]

### Introductions

To start off we would love to get to know everyone a little better. Please:

Introduce yourself (specify they don't have to share their name if they do not want)

Let us know how you heard about this opportunity.

Tell us the last song/artist you listened to OR most recent fun thing you did OR something you are proud of.

[Facilitators share first so participants don't have to break the ice.]

Thanks for sharing! Now, we'll dive in to get your thoughts on school, work, and life in general. Remember there are no right or wrong answers, and just feel free to jump in.

### Daily Life

**Who do you live with? How would you describe your home (the place, the people, your role there)?**

**What do you like to do? What are you interested in?**

**Prompt:** What were some of the things you did this week? Who do you normally hang out with most days?

**Follow up:** Where in the community do you spend most of your time? Why? Where are places you avoid in the community? Why?

## School

**Think of the last time you were in school regularly. How would you describe that day or week or semester?**

**What were some of the reasons you stopped going to school?**

**Prompt:** What was most challenging or frustrating about school?

**Prompt:** What was not so bad about school? / Was there anything you liked about school?

**Follow-up:** How did people or organizations interact with you while you were in school and what was that like?

**What do you wish teachers and schools understood about you and your friends/family?**

**What support do you think is most important for young people to stay in school, or that might have helped you stay in school, even if they don't exist yet?**

**Follow-up:** What is unhelpful or what might make it less likely for you to want to go back to school?

## Work

**Think of the last time you were working regularly. How would you describe that day or week?**

**What were some of the reasons you stopped working or had trouble finding the work you wanted?**

**Prompt:** What was most challenging or frustrating about working/getting work?

**Prompt:** What was not so bad about work/looking for work?

**Follow-up:** How did people or organizations interact with you while you were working or looking for work and what was that like?

**How has COVID affected your work or looking for work?**

**Follow-up:** What, if any, effect has COVID had on finding work you're interested in?

**What do you wish employers understood about you and your friends/family?**

**Who do you feel can help you find and keep a job?**

**Follow-up:** Do you feel like you can trust people or organizations to help you? Who do you trust?

**What resources do you think are most important for young people to succeed at work/getting work, or that might support you, even if they don't exist yet?**

**Follow-up:** What is unhelpful or what might make it less likely for you to want to work or look for a job?



## Conclusion

Is there anything else that you want to share or make sure we get?

Thank you so much for talking with us! Hearing your feedback and experiences is so valuable. Before you leave, please make sure you get your gift card!



# Gift Card Acknowledgment Protocol

Lancaster County Workforce Development Board Gift Card Recipient Form

Event (Purpose of Gift Card): Lancaster Youth Focus Groups

Gift Card Type: VISA    Gift Card Amount: \$40.00

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have received the gift card above.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please Note: The total number of gift cards for this study was fifty-three (53).



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