



CHILDREN & YOUTH COMMUNITY PLAN (CYCP) REPORT CARD



ALEXANDRIA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS ENSURING EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS TODAY AND TOMORROW

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4

This issue reports on the progress made on connecting youth to volunteer opportunities between April 2021 - September 2023

CYCP GOAL

All Children, Youth, and Families have Positive Experiences

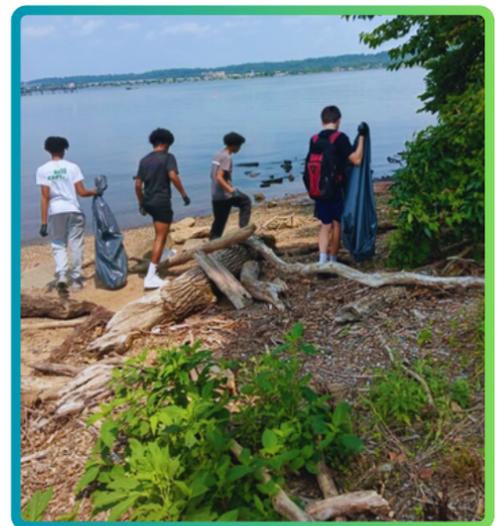
YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

This Report Card celebrates the **88 youth** who volunteered through [Volunteer Alexandria's Youth Engaged In Service \(YES\) program](#)! During the 2023 spring and summer breaks, BWI youth participants volunteered or visited nearly a dozen organizations in Alexandria. They contributed to various causes, including preparing for food distributions with ALIVE, picking up trash at Jones Point Park, volunteering at Friends of Guest House, and entertaining Seniors at St. Martin de Porres.

YES, formerly called Breaks with Impact (or BWI) is a program for youth to engage in their community through service, learn more about social issues facing Alexandrians and how organizations address those issues. YES uses a service-learning model, called P.A.R.E. (prepare, act, reflect, evaluate), which is designed to ensure that all participants have the information and support they need to get the most from their service experience. After their experience, most YES participants reported feeling more valued in the community and a sense of accomplishment through volunteering.

At a food pantry, students engaged with people who volunteered there regularly, stocked the pantry, bagged groceries, distributed lunch, and discussed what they saw. One student said it was "impactful because it will help those in need," while another volunteer said he "wasn't expecting to see the people that this program benefits." He saw individuals who have cars and jobs picking up groceries at a food pantry, countering the stereotypes he had prior to his YES experience.

A front desk volunteer from the St. Martin de Porres said the YES youth volunteers were "absolutely delightful" and "one of the best groups we've ever had."



RESULT

All Alexandria youth recognize the value of helping others

WHY THIS MATTERS

Service to Others - as defined as a young person serves in the community one hour or more per week - is Asset #9 of [Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets](#) that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. When young people help others, they report receiving a lot in return.

Serving others can help kids expand their worldview, grow their confidence, and show them that they can make a difference in the world. Youth who participate in service activities do better in school, feel more positive about themselves, and avoid risky behaviors (Moore, C. W., & Allen, J. P., 1996). Research also shows that young people who engage in community service once a week are more likely to respect others, and be helpful, patient, and kind. They are also more apt to value diversity, vote, have a positive work ethic, and grow up to be socially responsible adults. The contributions made by youth through volunteering not only benefit themselves, but they can also make a difference for society.

There are, however, many barriers that prevent young people from engaging in service. Studies have shown that youth from advantaged backgrounds, such as teens in families headed by two parents, were more likely to volunteer than were teens from other backgrounds (Moore, C. W., & Allen, J. P., 1996). Other factors that get in the way include not knowing how to get involved, competing demands, lack of organizational resources to support volunteering, lack of youth confidence, negative perceptions of community service, site location, age discrimination, complexity or ambiguity of the work/role, lack of inclusive practices, and more.



We can all do our part to encourage young people to recognize the value of helping others. The best way to do this is to be a role model (Penn State, 2022). Youth with multiple role models are more likely to volunteer, as are youth who have friends who volunteer.

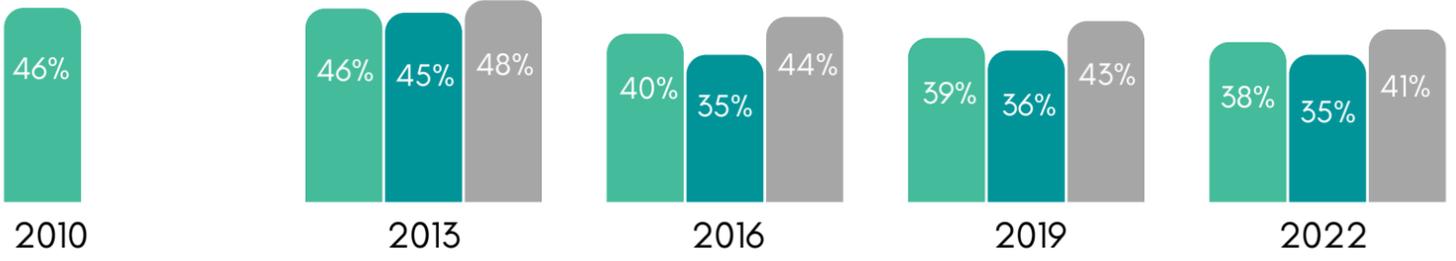
THE MORE ASSETS A YOUNG PERSON HAS, THE MORE LIKELY THEY WILL MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES AND GROW UP TO BE HEALTHY, CARING, AND RESPONSIBLE ADULTS

HOW WE ARE DOING

Service to Others

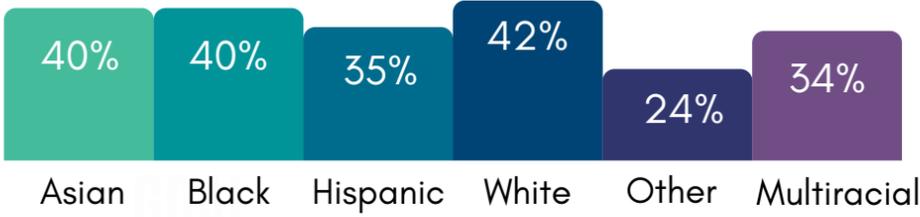
% of Alexandria City Public Schools students who report serving in the community one hour or more per week
 Source: Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth, 2010-2022

■ Total ■ Male ■ Female



Service to Others by Race/Ethnicity

Source: Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth, 2022



38% of students reported regularly volunteering in 2022, a **17%** decrease since 2010

CYCP STRATEGY

Strategy #41:
 Create more and expand opportunities for youth to volunteer in their community

CHAMPION



PARTNERS

- [ALIVE!](#)
- [Community Lodgings](#)
- [Dept. of Community and Human Services](#)
- [Friends of Guest House](#)
- [Friends of Mount Vernon](#)
- [Ivy Hill Cemetery](#)
- [Meade Memorial Church](#)
- [National Park Service](#)
- [Office of Emergency Management](#)
- [St. Martin de Porres](#)
- [Teen Wellness Center](#)

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Progress with connecting youth to volunteer opportunities:

1 Strategy, **2** Action Steps,
100% are in progress or fully implemented



WHAT DID WE DO?

To connect more youth to volunteer opportunities, Volunteer Alexandria:

Expanded and enhanced opportunities to volunteer by:

- Offering 16 youth volunteer days, including two 3-day program days.
- Offering 4 opportunities for elementary school students to volunteer.

Informed youth of the available volunteer opportunities by:

- Providing monthly newsletters specifically for youth and their families.
- Creating a [webpage](#) for youth to find volunteer opportunities easier.

HOW MUCH DID WE DO?



2021-Present

■ '21-'22 ■ '22-'23



HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

% of students said they are likely to volunteer again



IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

■ 2022 ■ 2023

85% **74%**
 Program participants said they feel more valued in the community after volunteering with Volunteer Alexandria

92% **91%**
 Participants reported they learned more about the issues facing Alexandrians

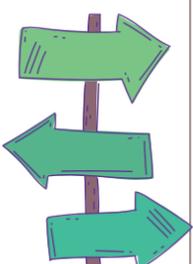
92% **95%**
 Youth learned how they can make their city a better place

90% **89%**
 Youth learned more about how nonprofits work to change Alexandria

WHERE WE ARE HEADED

Volunteer Alexandria plans to provide:

- Make-A-Difference Day & Family Volunteer Day in the Fall
- Sandwich-making for elementary school students
- Volunteer opportunities in the Winter, including the Toy Drive



RESOURCES



Looking for civic engagement opportunities and volunteer ideas? Check out Volunteer Alexandria's [webpage for youth!](#)