Project: Youth

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Project & Goals

Develop strong community partnership and solidarity to address youth homelessness and youth injustice.

Create a central resource for youth experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, and other inequalities.

Collect data on youth protection orders and it's relationship to school transfers.

Critical Issue

As a sociologist and social justice and solidarity major and minor I have learned the intersecting affects of institutions and systems. This project tries to address the inequalities of the juvenile system while also addressing the environmental attributions that intersects within the juvenile system.

Partner Organization

TeamChild is a national non-profit law firm that protects the rights of youth that are in the jubilee system or at risk within the juvenile system. TeamChild also works to provide youth with education, healthcare, housing, and other sources for a successful life.

Mission

Project Youth aims to reduce youth homelessness in Spokane county. Through the organization "United Ways Anchor Community Initiative" This organization partners with several community partners. This includes the Youth Advisory Board, Volunteers Of America, and TeamChild. United Ways Anchor Community Initiative is currently in achieving it's goal of reducing youth homelessness by 40% by October of this year.

Project Youth also aims to provide data on youth within the juvenile system by using protection orders. Through this data collection Project Youth hopes to address inequalities such as race and gender within the juvenile system.

What I Learned

Coming into this project I had previously taken a class called Sociology of Education at Gonzaga. Through this class I was introduced to the importance of Education but also all the different intersecting factors of an individual's education experience. Through this project I was able to apply this previous knowledge into the real world. This project opened my perspective to how all the different intersecting inequalities are affecting youth. The importance of one's environment and access to internet rights such as food, housing, and clothing. How these facts bleed into one's education experience and how it can place at risk for the juvenile system. I have learned how to use my academic knowledge to inform and guide my passion for homelessness and food insecurity.

Outcomes

Through the work of everyone in United Ways Anchor Community Initiative the shared resources and work is currently on it's way of reducing youth homelessness within Spokane County by 40% by October of this year. By providing accessible resources and support systems to youth experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.

The current collection of data regarding youth protection orders and school transfers focuses on using data to demonstrates unfair sentencing within the juvenile system. While providing evidence of fair sentencing based on the individual's action and not other attributes such as race and gender.

Civic Perspective

I have witnessed the power of an community through the United Ways Anchor Community Initiative. That community building creates greater solidarity throughout the community. The power of community highlights the fast pace change that can be achieved through the work of partnership. While at the same time using the voices of the vulnerable to lead this change.

Personal Perspective

This project has incorporated my sociology major and social justice and solidarity minor into looking at issues such as the juvenile system and education system at the root level. Examining all the different intersecting factors that contributes to these institutions and the inequality within them.

Academic Perspective

Project Youth has incorporated previous academic theories and discussion on issues relating to homelessness, food insecurity, and the prison system. I have been able to see these theories and intersecting factors through this project. Which has allowed me to expand my academic knowledge with experience.