



Youth Service Departments

Erika Clesi, Policy Research Fellow
Office of the City Clerk

Youth Service Departments

- What is a Youth Service Department?
- Examples of Youth Services in Gainesville
 - Reichert House
 - Brave Overt Leaders of Distinction (B.O.L.D.)
 - Youth and Community Resource Unit (YCRU)
 - Parks Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department (PRCA)
- Nationwide Examples of Youth Service Departments
- Risks and Benefits

What is a Youth Service Department?

- A youth service department typically offers and manages opportunities for youth to develop their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities.
- Implementing a consolidated youth service department in the City of Gainesville will bring Gainesville's existing youth service initiatives together, therefore streamlining the services offered to Gainesville youth. Streamlined services will offer youth a better opportunity to become involved.
- The City of Birmingham, the City of New Haven, the City of Tallahassee, the City of Chicago, New York City, and the U.S. Department of Labor offer insights into how a youth services department could be structured in the City of Gainesville.

Youth Services in Gainesville

- Reichert House

The Reichert House is an after-school program designed for young men who need assistance in making the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Operated in a paramilitary fashion, the Reichert House has a middle school and separate high school component.

- Brave Overt Leaders of Distinction (B.O.L.D.)

The Brave Overt Leaders of Distinction (B.O.L.D.) program began in 2010 to aid young men between the ages of 16-24 who need professional guidance in addressing their life situations and circumstances. The B.O.L.D. program offers community resources and services for the intervention and/or prevention of criminal activity and/or incarceration.

Youth Services in Gainesville

- Youth and Community Resource Unit (YCRU)

The Alachua County Sheriff's Office has a youth and community resource unit (YCRU) which is dedicated to serving its youth on multiple levels through education, outreach, and innovative programs. The YCRU has a community policing approach which allows for greater non-confrontational contacts between our deputies and citizens.

- Parks Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department (PRCA)

The City of Gainesville has a Parks Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department (PRCA) dedicated to providing services to youth, like camps, and team summer programs meant to enrich the lives of youth. The Parks Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department began in 1960 as the City of Gainesville's Recreation Department.

A background image showing a close-up of several hands of different skin tones stacked on top of each other in a circular formation, symbolizing unity and support. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent rectangle containing the title and list.

Nationwide Examples of Youth Service Departments

- The City of Birmingham

The City of Birmingham, Alabama Mayor's Office Division of Youth Services (DYS) currently serves youth in Birmingham's 99 neighborhoods, 23 communities, and 9 city council districts.

- The City of New Haven

The City of New Haven Youth Services Department (YSD) seeks to ensure that all New Haven youth are aware of and have access to positive opportunities to meet their basic needs to be safe, cared for, valued and independent, and to build skills and competencies that will allow them to thrive and contribute to society. Programs and initiatives that YSD offers include learning hubs, seasonal camps, sports & recreation, youth services bureau, youth connect, youth violence prevention initiative, and youth at work.

Nationwide Examples of Youth Service Departments

- The City of Chicago

The City of Chicago has a youth services division offered through its Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) which serves youth aged 6-24 through the Chicago Youth Service Corps Portfolio, Enrichment Activities Portfolio, One Summer Chicago Portfolio, and Prevention and Intervention Portfolio.

- New York City

New York City (NYC) offers youth services through its Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), which include after school programs, job and internship opportunities, cornerstone programs, and beacon programs.

Nationwide Examples of Youth Service Departments

- U.S. Department of Labor

The U.S. Department of Labor has a youth services division responsible for coordinating all youth-related workforce programs including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Formula, YouthBuild, and Reentry Employment Opportunities. These programs serve young adults aged 16-24 that face a variety of barriers to employment and provide leadership to the workforce system and grantees, policy direction and guidance, support for program administration, and technical assistance.

Risks/Benefits Analysis

Risks

- Moving existing youth programs out of their current departments into one centralized Youth Services Department (YSD) may require additional funding or reallocation of resources.
- May require office space, staffing reassignment, and/or new hires.

Benefits

- May allow the City to tell its story concerning the opportunities the City provides youth better
- May increase participation in City youth programs
- May allow better continuity between programs
- May allow a more equitable alignment of resources for programming
- May allow the addition of new programming
- May allow additional staff to cultivate programs and community partnerships



Discussion

Gainesville.
Citizen centered
People empowered