Expanding How We Understand Youth Well-Being

#LiveAtUrban

Housekeeping

- Event is being recorded and the recording will be posted online afterward.

- Hide captions or adjust settings with the Live Transcript button.

- Speaker biographies are available on the Events page at Urban.org.

- Participants are muted. Type your **questions** and **comments** into the Q&A box.

- Please complete the survey at the end of the event.

- Engage with us online using #LiveAtUrban.

Today's agenda

- Youth research and engagement at Urban

- Publications and cross-cutting themes

- Overview of domains of youth well-being

- Example: economic stability

- Youth and Young Adult Well-being project

- Takeaways and action items

Youth Research and Engagement at Urban

- Notable bodies of work include
    - [Youth and the Safety Net](#) portfolio
    - [Transition-age youth with child welfare experience](#)
    - National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) [engaging youth with data](#)
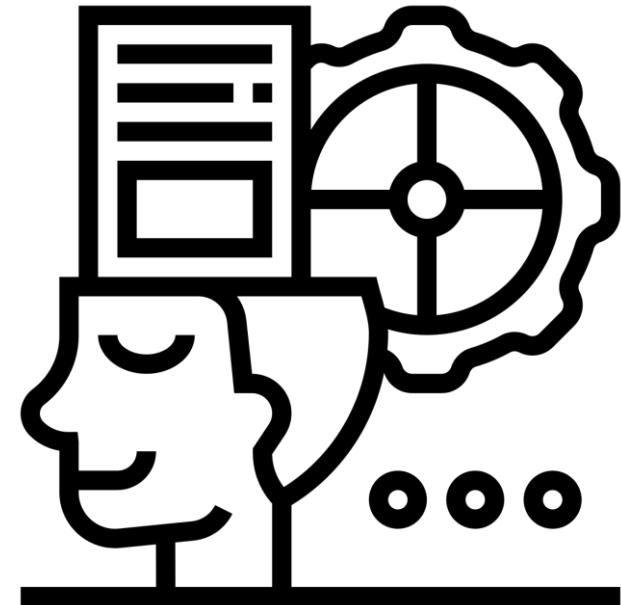
Suite of Products on Measuring Youth Well-being

- Domains of youth well-being and cross-cutting themes
    - **Report** with in-depth discussion and references
    - **Fact sheet** with an overview of domains
    - **Blog** with cross-cutting themes
- **Guide**: questions to help users think critically when using indicators and data
- **Data catalog**: description/links to national sources on youth

Cross-cutting Themes

✓ Include young people in developing concepts and measures.

✓ Center racial equity.

✓ Disaggregate data.

✓ Look beyond individual behaviors towards structural conditions.

✓ Focus on assets and strengths.

Domains of Youth Well-being

Physical Health

Mental and Behavioral Health

Education and Learning

Economic Stability

Physical and Psychological Safety

Social Networks and Relationship

Community and Belonging

Sense of Purpose

Economic Domain – Traditional Measures

- Income

- Ability to meet basic needs

- Savings and debt

- In-kind benefits

- Employment

- Factors that facilitate work
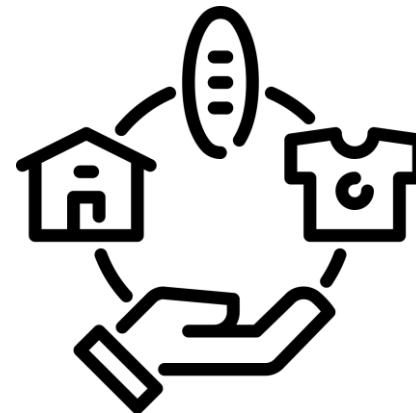
Debt Delinquency
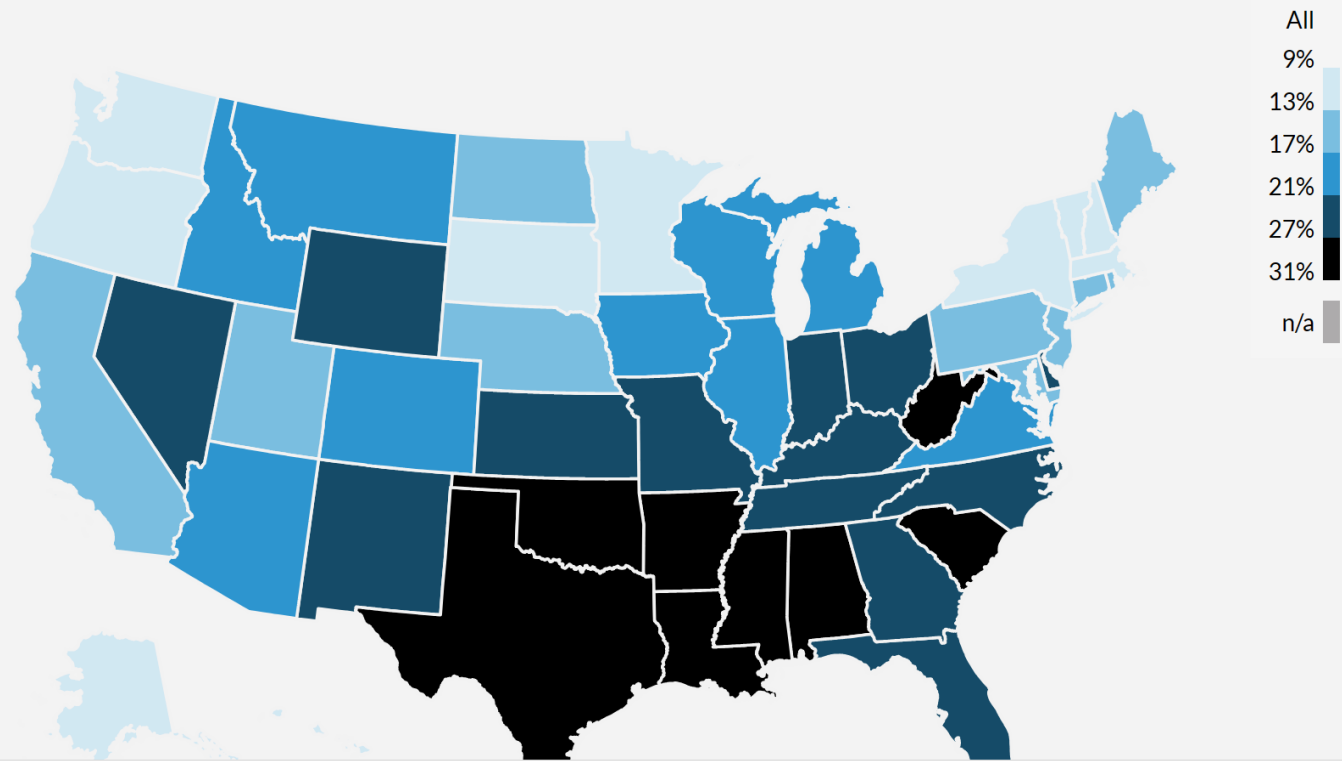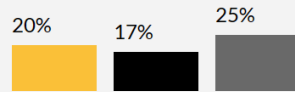
Currently viewing
Share of young adults with any debt in collections

All 🟨   White communities ⬛   Communities of color ◼

National

20%	17%	25%
🟨	⬛	◼

Share of young adults with any debt in collections

20%	**17%**	**25%**
All	White communities	Communities of color

Median debt in collections for young adults

$1,130	**$1,018**	**$1,264**
All	White communities	Communities of color

Share of young adults with medical debt in collections

10%	**9%**	**10%**
All	White communities	Communities of color

Share of young adult student loan holders with student loan debt in default

3%	**2%**	**4%**
All	White communities	Communities of color

Auto/retail loan delinquency rate among young adults

6%	**5%**	**9%**
All	White communities	Communities of color

Credit card debt delinquency rate among young adults

4%	**4%**	**6%**
All	White communities	Communities of color

All
9%
13%
17%
21%
27%
31%
n/a

Source: Urban Institute. 2023. "Debt in America: An Interactive Map."

Economic Domain - Emergent

- Ability to make choices and feel secure

- Measures benchmarked to a higher standard of living

- Critiquing capitalism and hustle culture

- Quality of employment and possibility of advancement

Good Jobs: A Working Definition

Economic Stability

- Stable, family-sustaining pay
- Sufficient, accessible, and broadly available benefits
- Fair, reliable scheduling practices
- Safe, healthy, and accessible working conditions

Economic Mobility

- Clear and equitable hiring and advancement pathways
- Accessible, paid training and development opportunities
- Wealth-building opportunities

Good Jobs

Equity, Respect & Voice

- Organizational and management culture, policies, and practices that:
  - are transparent and enable accountability
  - support a sense of belonging and purpose
  - advance DEIA*
  - and address discrimination.
- Ability to improve the workplace, such as through collective action or participatory management practices

*DEIA: diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

Source: Aspen Institute. 2022. "Statement on Good Jobs."

Juan D. Martinez Pineda (Zapoteca/The Cloud People)

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FRESH TRACKS

EST. 2015

YOUTH LED REVOLUTION

Defining Wellbeing

Wellbeing is the journey to achieve balance in everyday life - juggling school and work, family and friends - the wants and needs, amongst financial constraints. Wellbeing is a consideration towards being at peace with the multiple pressures. Wellbeing is also the liberation of intergenerational and individual trauma from racism - recognizing that these factors are at the root cause for the lack of wellbeing.

Introduction

1. How does culture, values and circumstances nurture the well-being for youth and young adults?

2. Who gets to define wellbeing and measure it?

"Those closest to the pain must be closest to the power. Those with the data have the power. "

In response, our goal is to support development of innovative well-being and healing measures developed by youth and young adults of color that incorporate their lived experiences through a participatory action research process.

Youth and Young Adults are leading the research and direction.

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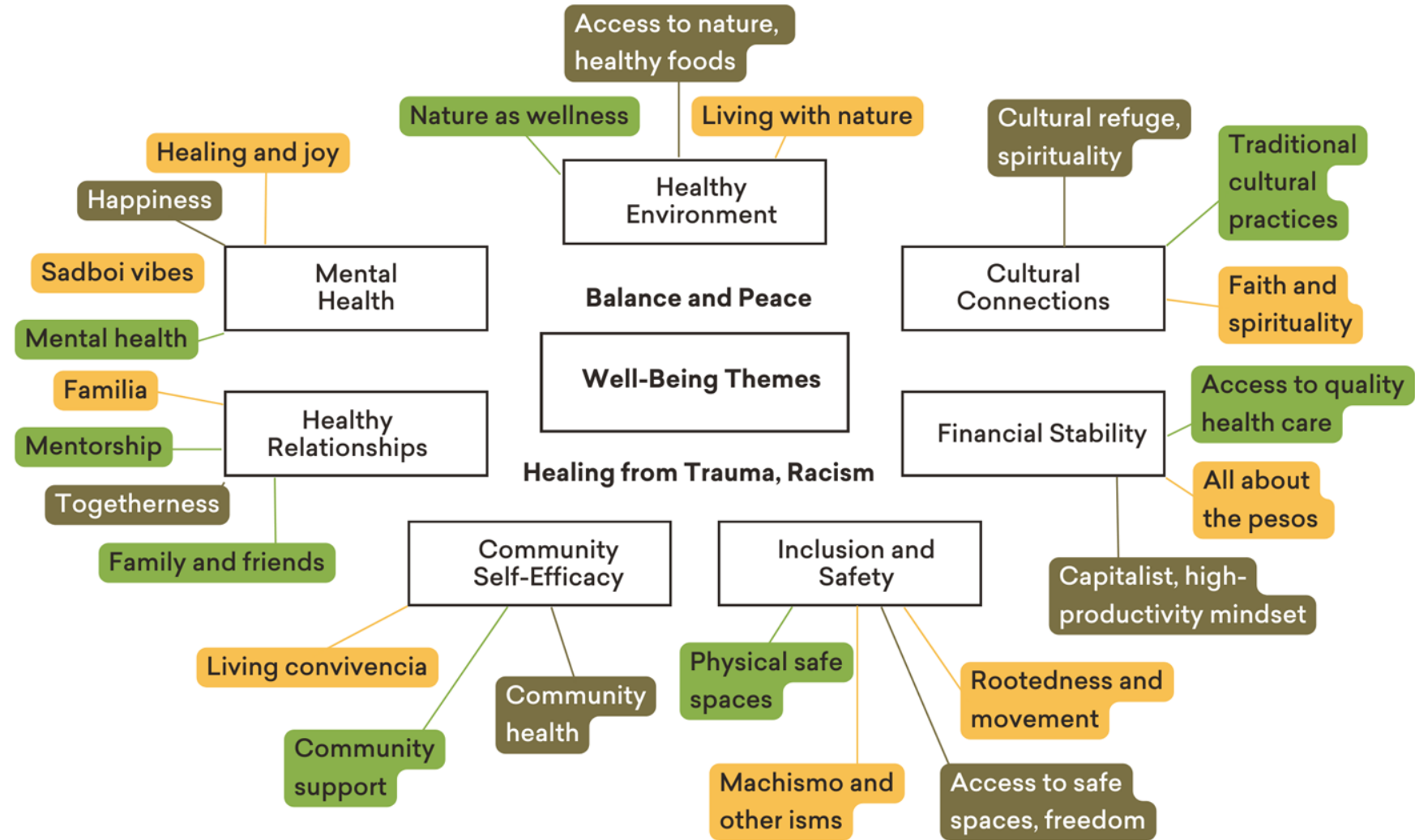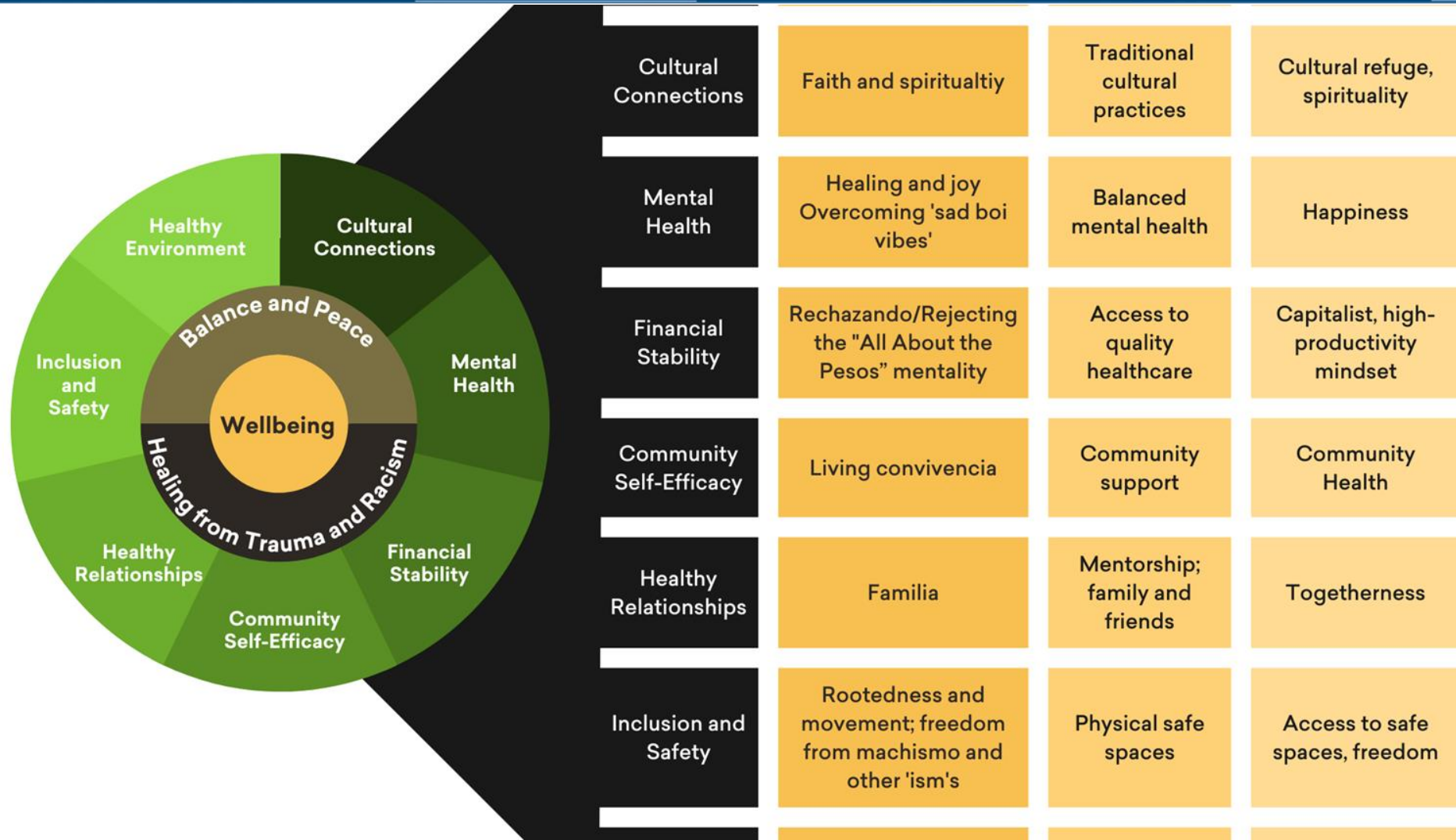
Sharing Cultures
Igniting Futures
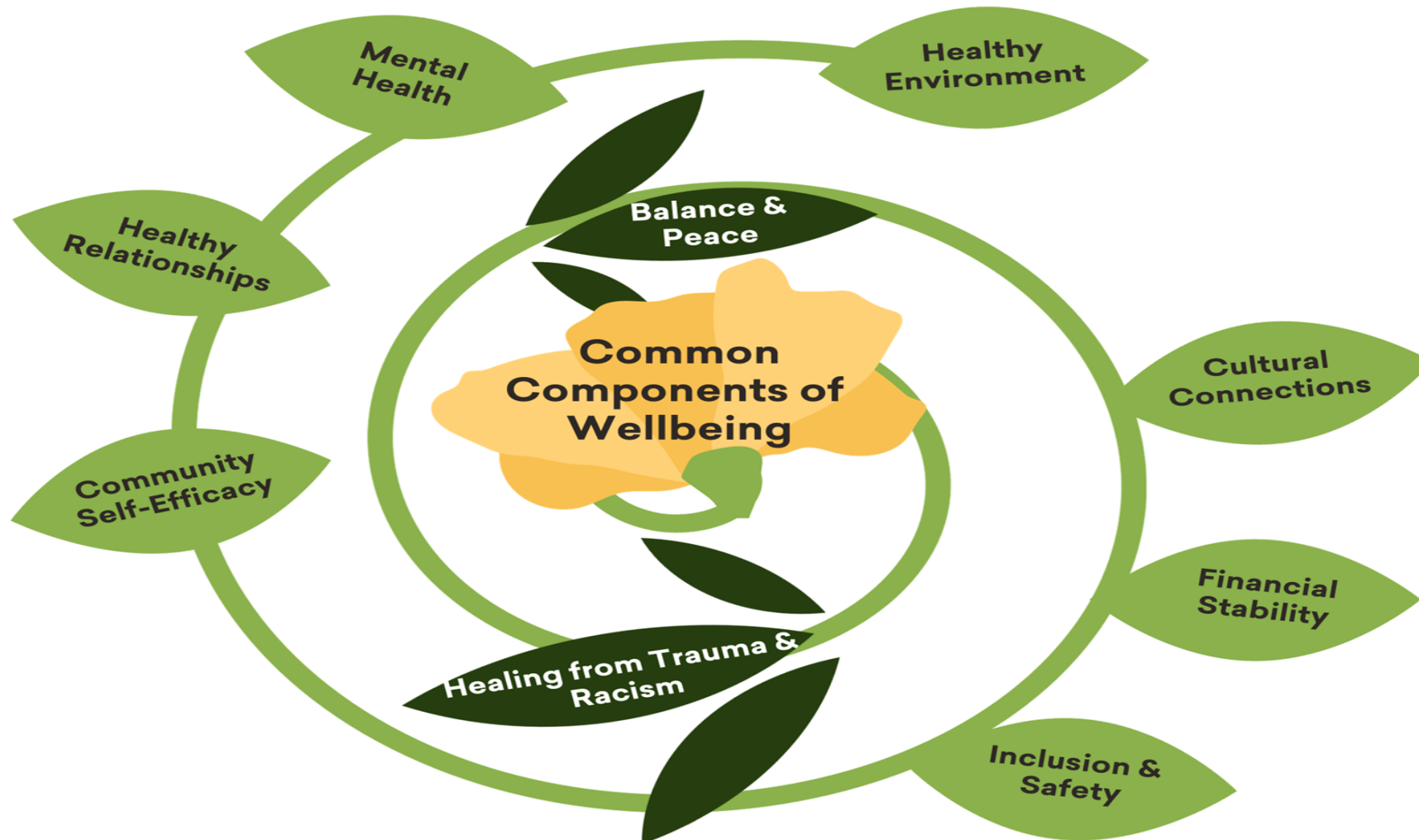
Project Overview

Each of the cultural identity groups is made up of:

- **Youth & Young Adult Design Team**
  - Between the ages of 18-25
  - Self Identify with one or more of cultural identity groups
- **Research Navigators**
  - Individuals with different yet complementary experience: one with credible experience in the (currently) dominant research paradigm and one with credible messenger influence and knowledge of culture centered ways of knowing and healing.
- **Peer Research Mentors**
  - 18-24, self identify with a cultural identity group, and brings experience with youth participatory action research, as participants or youth leaders

Cultural Connections	Faith and spiritualtiy	Traditional cultural practices	Cultural refuge, spirituality
Mental Health	Healing and joy Overcoming 'sad boi vibes'	Balanced mental health	Happiness
Financial Stability	Rechazando/Rejecting the "All About the Pesos" mentality	Access to quality healthcare	Capitalist, high-productivity mindset
Community Self-Efficacy	Living convivencia	Community support	Community Health
Healthy Relationships	Familia	Mentorship; family and friends	Togetherness
Inclusion and Safety	Rootedness and movement; freedom from machismo and other 'ism's	Physical safe spaces	Access to safe spaces, freedom

Project Overview - Our Story of Wellness

Catalyze 3 Design Teams and YPAR projects

African American, American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN), and Latinx

- 3-6: Youth and Young Adults (16 - 24)
- 3-5: Research Allies
  - 2-3: Adult Research Navigators
  - 1-2: Peer Research Mentors

Inquire

Design Team members for each affinity group build on culturally-grounded ways of knowing, develop YPAR plans, and collect data from peer networks to develop Wellness measures.

Make Meaning of the Data

- Dissect and deliberate the data within each cultural context
- Identify key patterns of common Wellness measures by team
- Identify any cross-team measures

Understand

Youth and young adults make meaning of the data based on their lived experiences, their history, culture, and aspirations.

Establish and Measure Community Wellness

- Establish and disseminate Wellness measures
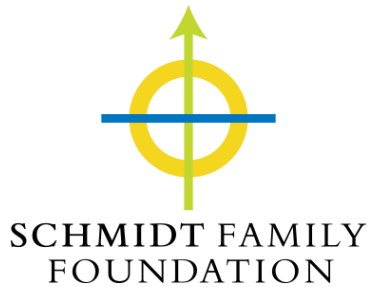- Data activates investment in wellbeing and policy changes

Act

Youth and young adults develop practices and policies that help young people thrive, using Wellness data to document change over time.

Partners

Centers For American Indian and Alaska Native Health at Colorado School of Public Health

Contact Juan D. Martinez Pineda to learn more or connect with at juan.martinez@aspeninstitute.org

Social Media
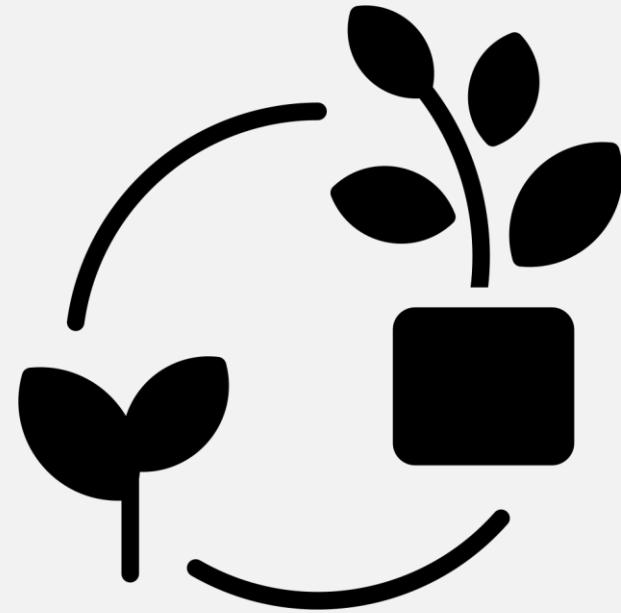Instagram - freshtracks_
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How can we help young people thrive?

Takeaways

❖ Policy and practice will benefit from centering youth perspectives and racial equity in measuring well-being.

❖ The domains of well-being are interconnected; programs should think holistically about their contributions.

❖ The field needs more exploration beyond traditional conceptions to consider new ideas about well-being.

Action Items for Your Own Efforts

❖ Consider what domains you have included.

- Are there ones that are missing?

❖ Reflect on who is defining youth well-being.

- What are ways to involve young people at different stages?

❖ Review your assumptions in using indicators.

❖ Are there cultural differences that you should take into account in thinking about youth well-being?

Action Items for Your Own Efforts (continued)

❖ Be thoughtful about secondary data sources.

- Use our guide to reflect on strengths, weaknesses, and supplemental data.

❖ How can you participate in improving the data available about young people?

- Advocate to local, state, and federal governments to responsibly share more and disaggregated data.

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We'd love to hear from you by email after the event!

❖ How are you using the publications?

❖ What components are most useful to your work?

❖ Where would you like to have deeper exploration?

❖ Email the Urban authors at nnip@urban.org.

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