



DIVISION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MARY & FRANCES YOUTH CENTER STRATEGIC PLAN



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Vision & Mission

Vision:

The Mary and Frances Youth Center will be a regional leader in promoting positive youth development.



Mission:

To foster the positive development and education of youth through innovative, sports-based programs that strengthen life skills, expand awareness and access to higher education opportunities, and empower adults to support positive youth development.

The mission is advanced through after-school and summer programs and through both the training of adults who support youth and the educational programming offered to caretakers and family members to strengthen positive youth development.

Goal 1: Advance Positive Youth Development

Objectives:

- Deliver high-quality, evidence-based programs that promote physical, social, and emotional well-being.
- Integrate innovative, sports-based approaches that engage elementary, middle, and high school youth from a variety of locations and backgrounds.



Metrics:

- 90% of program participants indicate increased awareness of higher education options.
- Track increased youth engagement in post secondary education exploration activities, with 90% of participants reporting greater understanding of college and career pathways.
- Using post graduation surveys, 75% of graduating high school participants will report being enrolled in postsecondary education or vocational programs.

Goal 2: Strengthen Youth Life Skills and Leadership

Objectives:

- Provide consistent opportunities for youth to build communication, goal-setting, self-awareness, relationship, and leadership skills.
- Elevate youth leadership skills by engaging participants in decision-making, peer mentorship, and program planning.



Metrics:

- At least **85%** of participating youth will report improvement in at least two targeted life skills as indicated by pre/post assessments.
- Establish a youth advisory council with representation from all participating community youth programs.
- At least 1 youth-led initiative or community projects completed annually.

Goal 3: Expand Access to Higher Education and Career Pathways

Objectives:

- Expose youth to college and career opportunities, including vocational opportunities, through campus visits, mentoring, and experiential learning.
- Build partnerships across the university to identify and remove barriers to postsecondary access.



Metrics:

- 90% of program participants indicate increased awareness of higher education options.
- Track increased youth engagement in post-secondary education exploration activities, with 90% of participants reporting greater understanding of college and career pathways.
- Using postgraduate surveys, 75% of high school graduates will report being enrolled in postsecondary education or vocational programs.

Goal 4: Empower and Train Adults Who Support Youth

Objectives:

- Provide professional development, certification, and networking opportunities for adults through the Richmond Youth Development Network.
- Build a community of practice that strengthens collaboration among youth-serving professionals.



Metrics:

- 200 adults trained annually through Richmond Youth Development Network workshops or courses.
- 90% of adult participants report increased knowledge and confidence in youth development practices.

Goal 5: Strengthen Strategic Partnerships Across VCU and the Commonwealth to Advance Positive Youth Development

Objectives:

- Foster cross-campus collaborations among VCU colleges, departments, and research centers to enhance youth programming, mentorship, and career exploration.
- Develop experiential learning opportunities that connect VCU students, faculty, and staff with youth participants through tutoring, sports leadership, and service-learning project
- Create clear pathways for youth to explore higher education and career options through exposure to diverse academic disciplines and university resources.

Metrics:

- Establish at least 2 formal partnerships per year across five years with VCU schools or departments (e.g., Education, Social Work, Health Professions, Arts, and Business) to support youth programs.
- Launch 3 university-supported initiatives annually that integrate MFYC programs with academic or service-learning components.
- At least 5 collaborative initiatives launched annually among partner organizations.



For questions, contact us.

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