

# Young Women's Initiative Blueprint for Action:

Setting the Stage for Emerging Themes in Public Policy

Springfield, Massachusetts

**WOMEN'S FUND**  
*Leadership • Local • Shared*

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# Letter from the Women's Fund of Western MA

Dear Springfield community partners,

It is a great pleasure to present the Blueprint for Action to all audiences in the city of Springfield. The voices and leadership of twenty young women representing the intersectionality of the community including people of color, LGBTQIA+, differently abled groups, gender non-conforming peoples and many other groups that often are pushed to the margins are centered in this report which was created in partnership with the Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC), a leadership development program for young women. Throughout the academic year each of these young women stepped into their leadership by becoming comfortable with her power, her voice and her potential to change her world, Springfield and beyond.

From the beginning of this program we saw firsthand that these young women had something to say and much to share. They only needed a platform and exposure to more tools to amplify their voices. They formed four task forces to tackle: rape culture, the lack of women in leadership positions, easier access to health and wellness programs, particularly mental health services, and streamlined economic, community and workforce development access. We hope you will build upon the recommendations this amazing group has set forth. Together, we can build a world with equal access and opportunities for all, no matter one's gender.

WFWM Team

*The Women's Fund gives special thanks to Christine Monska for her role in shaping our YWI.*



## Section I: Introduction

# Overview and Framework The Young Women's Initiative Springfield, MA

## About

The Partnership for Young Women's Initiative (YWI): Springfield Partnership is a multi-sector, three-year pilot, with the goal to elevate the leadership of local young women (12-24 years old) to create a road map that will address the needs, programming, best practices, policies, and research that will build the pathways to economic prosperity for themselves, their families, and their community.

What we know from available data is that young people, and particularly young women, are leaving our region for perceived lack of economic opportunity. The YWI was piloted in Springfield, a city of about 160,000 people, over 60% of which identify as non-white. In addition, 40% of Hispanics in Springfield are under the age of 18. Two out of every five families are headed by a single mother. Springfield also has the third-highest poverty rate, and the highest child poverty rate, when compared with eight peer cities including Dayton, Ohio and Syracuse, New York.

While troubling, these statistics make the results of the YWI potentially transformative as a model for peer cities across the country. This project seeks to address this by putting the leadership of young women at the forefront.

That's what makes YWI different. With shared, co-created, key indicators – all sectors will be able to monitor progress, address challenges, and celebrate success. Not only will it show stakeholders how best to invest current resources, it will attract additional – and deserved – attention to the innovation happening in the city.

60% of population identify as non-white  
**más gente de color**  
**single mother**  
Two out of every five families  
are headed by a single mother.



# Overview and Framework

## The Young Women's Initiative Springfield, MA



Photo by Erin Long Photography

YWAC Graduates pose with Kalisha Dessources, Director of the National Collaborative of Young Women's Initiatives



The Young Women's Initiative kickoff took place October 18, 2017. Attendees were deeply moved by the powerful voices of the young women, who spoke about their future visions, dreams for Springfield, and their own personal and professional goals to change the world.

## Structure

The Women's Fund is well positioned to lead this type of effort in the community. As the host of the project, the organization will provide supervision, maintain vision and strategy, mobilize additional funding partners, and manage accountability of deliverables. The pilot is made up of two core groups:

1. Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC)
2. Steering Committee.

The Young Women's Leadership Advisory Council consists of up to 20 young women (12-24 years old) who will be selected by a competitive citywide nomination process.

- ▶ Through leadership development and mentorship relationships, these young leaders will help explore solutions, investigate barriers, and finalize recommendations.
- ▶ They will also participate in selecting grantees to implement recommendations.
- ▶ They will be encouraged to share their learning with their school and peer communities by launching philanthropy clubs or hosting workshops.

## 2018 YWAC Members

Ahviyauna Wellington  
Amiya Phillips  
Ariana Ramos  
Audrey Straw  
Bridget Bushey  
Brooke Days

Cheyenne Capella  
Emily Regan  
Inari Jade Higgins Barrett  
Karla Travieso  
Kiana Ramos  
Mattie Lou Marshall

Maya McCann  
Ramona Williams  
Rhayanna Shubrick  
Safiyah Bey  
Shaniah Mendez

# Overview and Framework

## The Young Women's Initiative Springfield, MA

The Steering Committee is comprised of up to 20 cross-sector leaders from education, elected office and government, business, philanthropy, and the nonprofit community.

- The purpose of the steering committee is to provide thought leadership, as well as leadership development and mentorship opportunities for the young women on the Advisory Board. They will also help facilitate community outreach, help attract additional resources to the project, and assist with sequencing final recommendations.



## YWI Steering Committee

### Ann Burke

Vice President  
Western Mass. Economic Development  
Council

### Michael Clark

Senior Advisor and Director of  
Strategic Engagement  
Office of Senator Eric P. Lesser

### Dawn Creighton

Western Massachusetts Regional Director  
Associated Industries of Massachusetts

### Rep. José F. Tosado

Ninth Hampden District

### Dawn Forbes DiStefano

Chief Finance and Grants Officer  
Square One

### Pattie Hallberg

Chief Executive Officer  
Girl Scouts of Central &  
Western Massachusetts

### Denise Hurst

Springfield School Committee

### Justin Hurst

At-Large Member  
Springfield City Council

### Ronn Johnson

President/CEO  
MLK Family Services

### Chelsea Kline

Director of Arts and Humanities  
Women as Empowered Learners  
and Leaders (WELL) Program at  
Bay Path University

### Lydia E. Martinez-Alvarez

Assistant Superintendent  
Springfield Public Schools

### Rachel Parent

Chief Information Officer  
MassMutual Corporate Technology

### Suzanne Parker

Executive Director  
Girls Inc – Holyoke

### Dora Robinson

Retired President and CEO  
United Way of Pioneer Valley

### Marian Sullivan

Communications Director  
Springfield Office of the Mayor

### Samantha Washburn-Baronie

Deputy Director  
Massachusetts State Treasurer  
Deborah B. Goldberg, Office of  
Economic Empowerment

### Sarah Williams

Senior Vice President  
Head of Financial Risk at Global Atlantic  
Financial Group

# Overview and Framework The Young Women's Initiative Springfield, MA

## YWAC Goals:

- ▶ Create community for the group as they share stories, identify challenges, and work collectively to identify solutions for themselves and their communities
- ▶ Strengthen leadership and advocacy skills and empower young women to contribute to the dialogues, planning and advocacy that directly impact their experiences and the communities in which they live
- ▶ Build confidence to address fears of personal failure
- ▶ Address realities of structural racism, sexism, and gender bias
- ▶ Foster the development of partnerships and mentorships to empower young women to address structural barriers
- ▶ Learn financial literacy and empowerment tools to manage personal finances and apply them to community philanthropic activities
- ▶ Develop opportunities for the group to represent their voices in policy decisions
- ▶ Identify individual leadership contributions, opportunities to be an advocate, stay connected and organize





# Overview and Framework The Young Women's Initiative Springfield, MA

## Local Impact – National Framework

The Women's Fund is a founding member of The National Philanthropic Collaborative of Young Women's Initiatives (YWI), a dynamic collaboration of eight women's foundations committed to piloting a local project that will leverage public/private resources. By working on the local level, and tying into a national collaboration, we will help create a unified lens and consistent language with which to discuss the structural issues that stand in the way of young women's progress. We'll then use that lens and language to begin re-shaping the national policy and philanthropic agendas from which the issues of young women have been historically absent.

Collaborative members include:

Each Collaborative member conducts its own programmatic, research, leadership development, advocacy, and evaluation activities. In addition, the group will work together to produce coordinated research, public relations/strategic communications (including in-depth polling in Year One), evaluation, and convening activities. A National Director will reach throughout all localities, and will manage the group's activities, and the firms contracted to complete research reports, strategic communications work, and evaluations.





## Section II: Listening Sessions

# Listening Sessions

Throughout the summer of 2018 The Women's Fund staff conducted city-wide listening sessions in partnership with The Boys & Girls Club Family Center, Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts, Girls Inc. of Holyoke, the MLK Center, Partners for a Healthier Community, Take the Mic and the YWCA. We conducted the listening sessions to replicate the model that our National Philanthropic Collaborative of Young Women's Initiatives convened in 2015 through the White House Council on Women and Girls. The goal was to learn directly from young women – particularly young women of color – about their experiences and barriers to success.

The young women who participated in the listening sessions discussed several barriers to their success. Key themes that arose were violence and safety, housing insecurity, feeling of personal failure, and community building, particularly for youth in the city. The YWAC curriculum was based on the content from the listening sessions with young women representing different geopolitical localities in Springfield.





## Listening Sessions

**If you could change one thing about your community, what would that be?**

**How would you do it?**

“Build homeless shelters for the homeless and get young kids off of the streets.”

“By giving homeless people food, more resources, jobs, and housing and getting more money from the state.”

“I would change the amount of programs for the youth.”

“Education, racism/bullying, more things to do in communities, public transportation.”

“Not a lot of supermarkets, food deserts/ environment deserts, more events for youth, community calendar/list of resources, representation-role models for young women of color, education disparities—don’t know how to navigate role models, language barrier—no connection between household and school.”

“Gather everyone—coalition of community to rise against racism, change starts with education as early as possible—if they feel like they have opportunities maybe no drugs/crime, things to do—lots of time to do nothing—other options, public transportation stigma.”

“I really hope that in the generation to come that all young girls look at themselves and describe themselves using only one word: unique.”

“Confidence! It does not matter where you were raised, how much money, etc...nothing can be done without it.”

“More support, empowerment movement, career support/advancement.”

## Section III: Young Women's Advisory Council Recommendations

# Task Forces

The YWAC participated in a consensus workshop<sup>1</sup> to determine the themes they wanted to analyze and address to increase gender equity in Springfield. Together, they identified four key groups and formed task forces to draft policy recommendations to present to their city.

## **Task Forces / Summary of Recommendations**

### **Women in Leadership**

- ▶ Encourage women to become aware of their abilities and realize that they too can change the world
- ▶ After-school leadership programs for girls in the public school system
- ▶ An increase of women in school curriculums in both English and History Classes

### **Rape Culture**

- ▶ Class in schools on consent/rape culture
- ▶ Clearer policies in schools for handling harassment in schools/public workplace

### **Health and Wellness**

- ▶ Mental health classes as a requirement in all schools
- ▶ Have safe space groups within schools

### **Economic, Community and Workforce Development**

- ▶ Create a City Resource Map for Youth and Family Services
- ▶ Expand hours of operation for public offices providing resources

<sup>1</sup> a ToP method that uses the ORID sequence of the Focused Conversation in a specialized way in order to help a group reach consensus on a question



# Women and Leadership Task Force



Maya McCann



Audrey Straw



Safiyah Bey



Mattie Marshall



Ariana Ramos

## Our Recommendations

- ▶ Support and empower community programs that address gender equity so women can see their abilities and realize that they too can change the world
- ▶ After-school leadership programs for girls in the public school system
- ▶ An increase of women in school curriculums in both English and History Classes

# Women and Leadership Task Force

## Recommendation

Support and empower more community programs that address gender equity so women and girls can see their abilities and realize that they too can change the world

## The Women and Leadership Task Force research:

Through our experience, corroborated by data collection and review of literature, we identified that there is a lack of women in leadership positions and young women are not provided with the skills or opportunities necessary to become leaders to the same degree as their male counterparts. We strive to contribute efforts to change this discrepancy for young women in Springfield by advocating for the creation or maintenance more all-women programs focused on leadership development.

Our research through a review of the literature, surveys and interviews confirms that there are not enough women in leadership due to a lack of opportunities, a lack of representation of female role models, and gender social pressure against having and using the skills seen as necessary to lead. Our surveys showed the following skills as being instrumental to female leaders obtaining leadership positions thrive in those positions and see themselves as leaders:

- ▶ Communication (listening, public speaking, communicating ideas and opinions)
- ▶ Working with others (team building, negotiating, conflict management)
- ▶ Managing others (facilitating, giving and receiving feedback, observing, analyzing, decision making)
- ▶ Mentoring Relationships
- ▶ We want to see more programs that build upon the skills listed above.

# Women and Leadership Task Force

## Recommendation

Create more after-school leadership programs for girls in the public school system<sup>1</sup>



There needs to be institutional changes to provide more opportunities, but women also need to receive more skills training so they can combat the social, cultural pressures and change the narrative of leadership. Our research confirms our concerns that there are not enough women in leadership due to a lack of opportunities, a lack of representation of female role models, and gender social pressure against having and using the skills seen as necessary to lead. The data has led us to deduce that while institutional changes are necessary, we should focus on developing in young women the skills that seem so critical for female leaders to have, and to develop those skills in large part through mentorship and partnership with other women.

The Task Force found that there are some pre-existing after school programs that at least in part address the lack of women in leadership.

- ▶ **Teen Leadership Academy**, led by Girls Inc.
- ▶ **Women in Leadership** is a leadership training program for middle school girls at Sabis International Charter School. This program was created by YWAC graduates Audrey Straw, Kiana Ramos, and Bridget Bushey.
- ▶ **Chestnut Academy Bold Futures Mentoring Program** led by Girls Inc.
- ▶ **Alfred Z. Zanetti Montessori Magnet School Through Informed and In Charge** program led by Girls Inc.

Currently, the majority of programs available for young women in the community are through organizations that are not affiliated with schools. This leads to a lack of available transportation for these young women. Some programs also ask for money, which also is a disadvantage to some girls. Having more programs be school based opens up these programs to girls of all demographics.

### A call to action for others to lead

We need more clubs like these in the school system. It will not only improve the school systems by having a more vibrant and confident community, but also with society itself because there will be a more diversified group of people running the government and the inner workings of society.

<sup>1</sup> Section provided by Audrey Straw, a 2018-2019 YWAC cohort graduate



# Women and Leadership Task Force

## Recommendation

An increase of women in school curriculums in both English and History classes



Springfield schools do not have enough curricula including women, especially women of color. Some recent studies suggest “students that see examples of people who look like them in curricula tend to perform better academically. If we don’t require or strongly encourage states and districts to be more inclusive, we’ll end up with a history curriculum that doesn’t reflect the diversity of today’s students, and I suspect that will be a harmful thing given the evidence we have.”<sup>2</sup>

Advocate for updated curricula that includes more women, particularly women of color. Institutionalize professional development for teachers showcasing how to implement inclusive curricula into their classrooms.

## Additional Recommendations:

- ▶ Support for young women who aspire to be leaders
- ▶ Have a women’s empowerment studies class in high schools
- ▶ More STEM programs for young girls

<sup>2</sup> Weingarten, E. (2018). The Fight to Include More Women in Teaching Materials. [online] The Atlantic. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/06/is-this-the-end-of-the-crusade-for-gender-equal-curricula/530493/> [Accessed 2 Nov. 2018].

# Rape Culture Task Force



Inari Jade Higgins Barret



Ramona Williams



Cheyenne Capella



Emily Regan

## Our Recommendations

- ▶ Class in schools on consent/rape culture
- ▶ Clearer policies in schools for handling harassment in schools/public workplace

## Video

🔗 **Watch Ramona Williams speak at the 2018 United State of Women Summit** - May 5, 2018



<https://youtu.be/PKD2cluRmsE?t=26m40s>



# Rape Culture Task Force

## Recommendation

Class in schools on consent/rape culture



We believe that in Springfield and across the globe, not enough young people are aware of or understand what rape culture is and how it affects them. Rape culture is commonly associated with victim blaming, denial of widespread sexual assault, objectification of women and the trivialization of rape, such as in college party themes, stand-up comedy routines or films.<sup>3</sup>

In a list of the top ten most dangerous cities under 200,000-population category, Springfield, MA is listed as number six.<sup>4</sup> In 2016, [City-data.com](https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Springfield-Massachusetts.html) gathered statistics from other public sources that state Springfield had 86 rapes per 100,000 people.<sup>5</sup> There are a few programs working to combat sexual assault and domestic violence, but we see a lack of programs talking about how to deal with the environment that makes sexual assault a regular occurrence.

Create and support more afterschool programming, educational series or workshops and/or media campaigns about rape culture while creating a safe place for sexual assault victims in the program and raise awareness. Another goal is to provide a clear definition of rape culture for all students involved.

3 [Insidehighered.com](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/11/07/students-urge-colleges-define-rape-culture-their-sexual-assault-policies). (2018). Students urge colleges to define 'rape culture' in their sexual assault policies. [online] Available at: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/11/07/students-urge-colleges-define-rape-culture-their-sexual-assault-policies> [Accessed 2 Nov. 2018].

4 Insurance Journal. (2018). Most Dangerous Cities in U.S. Ranked by Crime Data. [online] Available at: <https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2016/01/28/396750.htm> [Accessed 2 Nov. 2018].

5 [City-data.com](https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Springfield-Massachusetts.html). (2018). Crime in Springfield, Massachusetts (MA): murders, rapes, robberies, assaults, burglaries, thefts, auto thefts, arson, law enforcement employees, police officers, crime map. [online] Available at: [http://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Springfield-Massachusetts.html](https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Springfield-Massachusetts.html) [Accessed 2 Nov. 2018].

# Rape Culture Task Force

## Recommendation

Clearer policies for handling sexual harassment in schools/public workplace

Although the Springfield Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook does address sexual harassment in schools or at a school-sponsored events, the definition does not include rape culture<sup>6</sup> and young women see a lack of implementation of the policy.

The policy defines sexual harassment as follows: "Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual attention (verbal or physical) from anyone with whom the student may interact while receiving an education in school or at school-sponsored activities."<sup>7</sup> Although rape culture is not specifically identified in the definition, there should be a move to include the definition and also a series of consequences for students promoting the behavior that breeds sexual harassment. For example, "slut shaming" or trivializing an act of physical or verbal sexual harassment.

Although Springfield does have a policy for responding to sexual assault, young women report that the policy is often not implemented properly. From their collective experience, young women noted several accounts of personal experiences in school where they were sexually harassed, they told a teacher or appropriate adult according to the policy and "nothing" happened. More research needs to be commissioned to determine the magnitude of these collective experiences shared in different settings and groups. More research needs to be done to improve the implementation process of the sexual harassment complaints.

<sup>6</sup> Parent and Student Handbook. (2018). [ebook] Springfield, MA: Springfield Public Schools, p.17. Available at: [https://www.springfieldpublicschools.com/parents/opt\\_out\\_forms](https://www.springfieldpublicschools.com/parents/opt_out_forms) [Accessed 2 Nov. 2018].

<sup>7</sup> Parent and Student Handbook 17.

# Rape Culture Task Force



Springfield Public School Parent/Teacher Handbook states:

*If you believe that you have been the victim of sexual harassment by another student, or if you have any questions about this issue, seek the help of an adult whom you trust, such as a teacher, counselor, your parent or guardian, or one of the building administrators. Every report of sexual harassment will be investigated by an administrator and a written record of the investigation will be filed with the principal. If it is determined that a student has sexually harassed another person, the consequences to the offending student shall include one or more of the following: parent conference; apology to the victim; suspension; referral to legal authorities; recommendations to the School Committee for expulsion from school.<sup>8</sup>*

## **Additional Recommendations:**

- ▶ Invite girls to speak on this issue
- ▶ Change the dress codes



## Health and Wellness Task Force



Amiya Phillips



Bridgett Bushey



Shaniah Mendez

Ahviyuana Wellington

### Our Recommendations

- ▶ Mental health classes as a requirement in all schools
- ▶ Have safe space groups within schools

“The Health and Wellness Task Force aims to raise awareness about mental illness to young women of color and reduce stigma about getting help. As young female students in the school system, we have seen firsthand that mental illness is a pressing issue in schools, and we are aiming to promote mental health and reduce stigma for young women of color.”



# Health and Wellness Task Force

## Recommendation

Mental health classes as a requirement in all schools

Young women of color in Springfield, Massachusetts are not getting enough information on the subject of mental illness. Often women experience more mental health problems than men. According to the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, 20% more young women feel sad or hopeless.<sup>9</sup> Based on our collective experience, the school system lacks enough qualified counselors to support the mental stability of the student body. The school system focuses more on academics rather than the health of a student. Only 34% of students reach out to their school psychologists/counselors.<sup>10</sup> Young people should be at a point where they feel more comfortable reaching out to adults within their school community.

New York and Virginia both require public schools to offer classes on mental health. Virginia's policy was spearheaded by students who saw this as a national issue. More research needs to be completed on how best to implement this in Springfield.

<sup>9</sup> The Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts (2018). Mental Health Inequities Among Springfield Teens Preliminary findings from the 2017 Youth Health Survey and forthcoming 2018 Springfield Health Equity Report. Springfield: The Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts.

<sup>10</sup> The Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts.

# Health and Wellness Task Force

## Recommendation

Have safe space groups within schools



According to the Safe Space Network, "A Safe Space is a place where anyone can relax and be able to fully express, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, religious affiliation, age or physical or mental ability."<sup>11</sup>

How does a community benefit from having a Safe Place program?<sup>12</sup>

- ▶ Youth can access help before their situation becomes a crisis
- ▶ Safe Place provides opportunities for unique partnerships and collaborations between businesses and social service entities
- ▶ Part of a national effort – a broad safety net for youth
- ▶ Provides a way for children and teens to access help when and where they need it
- ▶ Sends a powerful message that young people are valued

### Additional Recommendations:

- ▶ School assemblies/after school activities
- ▶ Get people to open their eyes to the situation and sponsor an awareness group
- ▶ More positive awareness in the media
- ▶ Public Service Announcements
- ▶ Funding for more school counselors
- ▶ Have teachers be more aware of mental health signs
- ▶ More Surveys
- ▶ Learning Circles

<sup>11</sup> Ellen Kazembe, R. (2018). 5 Reasons Why Safe Spaces Are Important On Campus | Fresh U. [online] Freshu.io. Available at: <https://www.freshu.io/rudo-ellen-kazembe/5-reasons-why-safe-spaces-are-important-on-campus> [Accessed 2 Nov. 2018].

<sup>12</sup> Kazembe 1.

# Economic, Workforce and Community Development Task Force



Karla Travieso



Brooke Days



Kiana Ramos



Rhayanna Shubrick

## Our Recommendations:

- ▶ Create a City Resource Map for Youth and Family Services
- ▶ Expand hours of operation for public offices providing resources



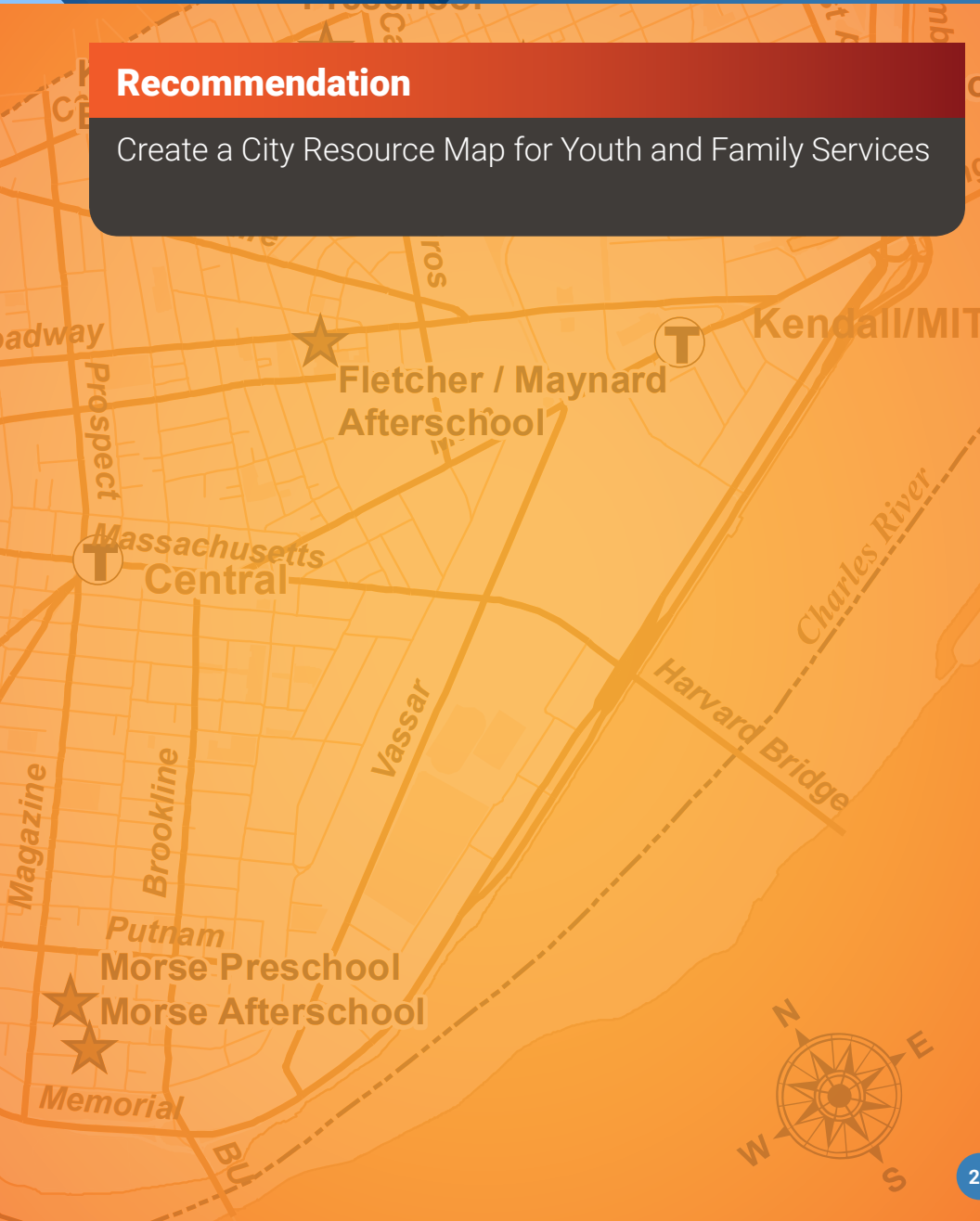
# Economic, Workforce and Community Development Task Force

## Recommendation

Create a City Resource Map for Youth and Family Services

In Springfield, there are not enough resources that are easily accessible for low-income families. According to [census.gov](https://www.census.gov), 28.7% of the people living in Springfield live under the poverty line.<sup>13</sup> Although there are many government-funded and private organizations addressing resource insecurity, many people lack access to information, time allotment, transportation or other barriers.

The Springfield Department of Health and Human Services should offer a community resource guide that maps different areas in the city and services covered through the Department and community organizations. It should be offered in both Spanish and English. The city of Cambridge, MA has successfully implemented an interactive document with contact information and resources for all groups.



<sup>13</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/springfieldcitymassachusetts/PST045217>

# Economic, Workforce and Community Development Task Force

## Recommendation

Expand hours of operation for public offices providing resources

Many government offices are only open for a limited time in the day and are far apart from each other. When creating programs more consideration needs to be taken in order to ensure that the programs cater to the people in need rather than the people running the programs. Although many organizations are working to address easier accessibility to all resources, more needs to be done in order to help resource insecurity in Springfield.

For example, the Springfield Department of Transitional Assistance is only open 9am-5pm Monday through Friday. If people accessing their services are part of the large population that work then they may not be able to physically advocate for themselves. More research needs to be conducted about the percentage of working low-income people who access services and survey them to determine the best hours and venue for accessing vital services. The research also needs to be catered to youth ages 18-24 who may have other obstacles or barriers.

## Video

🔗 **Watch the 2018 YWAC Graduation** - May 30, 2018



<https://youtu.be/p-mICS7fLqs>





## Section IV: Broad Recommendations for a More Gender Equitable City and Society for Both Women and Girls

# Broad Recommendations

The YWAC identified additional areas where they would like to address barriers to success for all people. The following list consists of the language the young women used to describe issues they see in their communities that not only affect youth, but the rest of the city. More research needs to be conducted to form concrete action items to address in the future. These young leaders are beginning to build their policy advocacy skills.



Institute affirmative action/  
gender aware hiring in leadership  
positions in the public sector



Create or amplify police task  
force in charge of handling  
assault/harassment cases



Increase funding to public  
services so they can bring in  
more people to help



Provide resources in accessible  
areas like libraries and  
senior centers



Increase support for women  
currently in leadership positions



Destroy the stigma surrounding  
mental illness



Cut the prices on feminine  
hygiene products



Provide more free workshops to  
families that lack resources



Lessen the pay gap



Create legislation to make care  
more affordable/accessible



Promote more programs like food  
pantries and clothing drives



Loosen requirements to receive  
resources



Provide incentives for companies  
that hire/promote women to  
leadership positions



Create more clinics that provide  
resources such as birth control  
and help with pregnancy



Make SNAP benefits and pantries  
more accessible



Distribute packets in public areas  
for families to tell them where  
they can get resources

## Video

### Amiya Phillips on what she has learned in YWAC



## Section V: Citations

- City-data.com. (2018). Crime in Springfield, Massachusetts (MA): murders, rapes, robberies, assaults, burglaries, thefts, auto thefts, arson, law enforcement employees, police officers, crime map. [online] Available at: <http://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Springfield-Massachusetts.html> [Accessed 2 Nov. 2018].
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