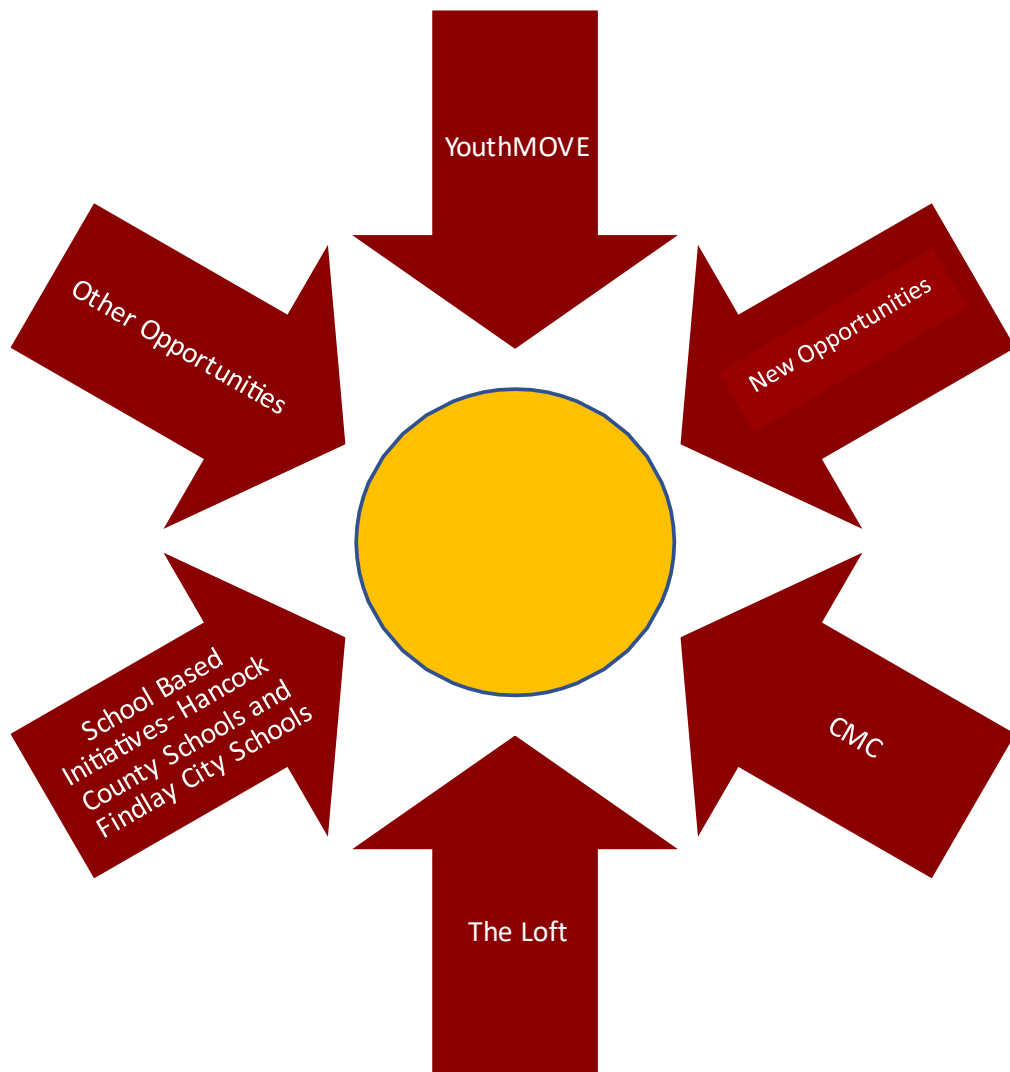


Hancock County Youth Engagement Resource Guide Spring 2021



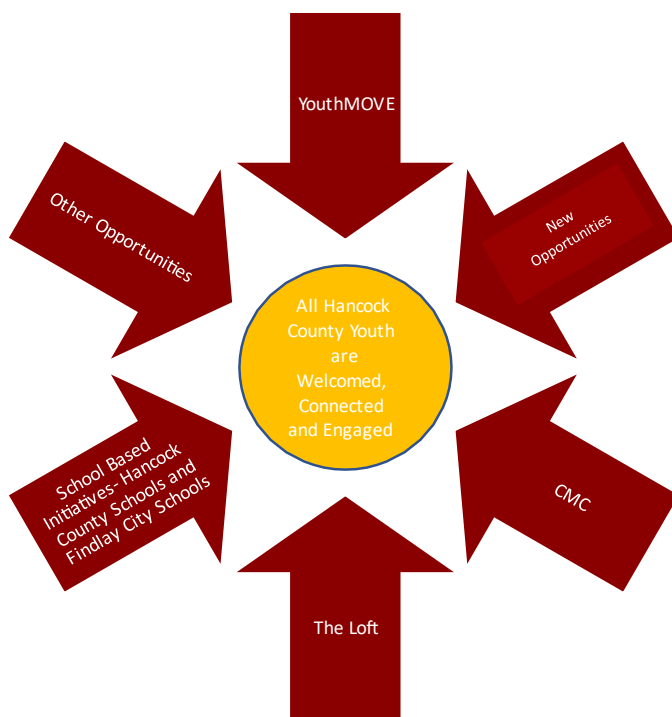
A Message to Partners Who Support Youth

During the fall of 2020, Hancock County youth and youth serving partners engaged in a collective planning process to discuss youth engagement opportunities in Hancock County and how those opportunities align to support all youth in the county. The four-meeting planning process included youth, youth initiative managers, agency executives, funders and school representatives.

As the visual below indicates, partners agreed that the goal is to ensure that all Hancock County youth are welcomed, connected and engaged. Partners agreed that youth engagement is not one size fits all. Instead, it is essential to have many diverse opportunities for youth to be involved. While some youth want to get involved as leaders or engage in long term projects, others may want to join an effort where they can hang out with peers and participate in activities that allow them to attend as often or as little as their time allows. At the same time, some youth may need connection to positive adults through a mentoring program, while others want to

connect with peers who have similar experiences or challenges including trauma or other difficult events in their lives. Some youth may want to build leadership skills, serve as advocate, or pursue career interests. Some youth want to explore the arts, play video games with peers, or just hang out in a safe place.

Understanding the diverse wants and needs of Hancock County youth, partners work collectively to ensure that each young person in Hancock County has an opportunity to be involved in programs that are exciting, allow youth to pursue their interests, and have fun with their peers.



This resource guide intends to equip parents and adults who work with youth with the information they need to know what the opportunities are and know how to connect kids to those opportunities.

How Partners Can Use the Resource Guide

- Promote the opportunities to your followers through social media.
- Distribute copies to key community partners working with children and families, including schools, public health agencies, family therapists, foster care, scout leaders, coaches, media representatives, faith communities, and policymakers.
- Use the Resource Guide as a topic for discussion at an upcoming meeting including staff meetings, parent meetings, youth group meetings or community planning meetings.
- Share this guide with folks that work with youth as an avenue to connect youth who may be demonstrating early risk behaviors including treatment providers, school disciplinary officers, and programs like MRSS.
- Provide copies of this guide to those who regularly connect with parents including employers, faith communities, and pediatrician offices.
- Use the information in the Resource Guide when developing your own media kits, press releases, and other public awareness tools.
- Make the resource available in the community. Don't forget those places where families frequent including the farmers market, libraries, and places of worship.
- Share the guide at youth meetings including student council, youth groups at local churches, and volunteer service groups. Youth have shared that in-person discussion about these opportunities is key.
- Present to all 7th grade and 9th grade health classes.

For additional support regarding the Resource Guide, please contact Zach Thomas at zthomas@yourpathtohealth.org, or any of the youth partner organizations listed in the Resource Guide.

Planning Partners include: Hancock County Board of Alcohol, Drug Addition & Mental Health Services; Family Resource Center, NAMI Hancock County, FOCUS Wellness & Recovery Center; Findlay City Schools; Hancock County Schools; Hancock County Youth; Children's Mentoring Connection

Hancock County Opportunities for Youth



We believe strongly that youth are the leaders of today, not tomorrow; all youth should be equal partners in the process of change; and that youth can motivate others through their voices of experience.

YouthMOVE is a monthly youth-led group devoted to improving services and systems to support youth inclusion, mental wellness, positive supports and healthy transition (ages 16-25). YouthMOVE empowers youth to advocate for themselves and live healthy, meaningful lives.

YouthMOVE members work as a diverse collective to unite the voices of youth while raising awareness around youth issues. We advocate for youth rights and voice in mental health and the other systems that serve them, for the purpose of empowering youth to be equal partners in the process of change.

When and where: YouthMOVE meets the 2nd Monday of every month at The LOFT (128 E. Crawford St. 4th Floor)

How to get involved: Email Brittany Schindler at brittany@namihancockcounty.org, or call 567-525-3435

YouthMOVE is provided by NAMI Hancock County. namihancockcounty.org/programs



We believe that youth need a place to just be. At the LOFT, all are welcomed with no expectations and no stress. Just a place where you can be you.

The LOFT is place for youth (ages 13-18) to be themselves and connect with other young people from diverse backgrounds and similar life experiences. The LOFT offers support for youth impacted by mental health, addiction and/or trauma-related issues.

When and where: The LOFT is located at 128 E. Crawford St. 4th Floor. It is open Monday through Friday from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM. No need to sign-up, just show up and hang out for a while.

How to get involved: No need to sign-up or be invited. Just show up. All are welcomed. For more information contact Torri Williams at torri@focusrwc.org or call 419-423-5071

The LOFT is operated by FOCUS Recovery and Wellness Center. focusrwc.org



It is our vision that every qualified child will be actively engaged in a mentoring relationship designed to enhance their personal growth as competent, caring and confident individuals.

Volunteers and children work together in an asset-building relationship in the areas of growth and development, prevention, life-skills, problem solving and decision making. **Youth with mentors** have increased the likelihood of going to college, better attitudes toward school, increased social and emotional development, and improved self-esteem.

When and where: Mentoring schedules are developed to meet the needs of the mentor and mentee.

How to get involved: To become a mentor or to be matched with a mentor, contact Stacy Shaw stacy@hancockmentors.org or call 419-424-9752

Mentoring is provided by the Children's Mentoring Connection (CMC). www.cmchancock.org



Youth LGBTQ+ Support Group

Our vision is to create a Findlay that welcomes all walks of life no matter what age, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity.

This time is intended to allow space for our local youth (13-18) to meet other folks of similar ages and discuss the issues that are affecting them. This will be available in-person and online.

LGBTQ+ Group is provided by LGBTQ Spectrum of Findlay.

How to get involved: Visit www.https://spectrumoffindlaylgbt.org/events/, email Jas Bradley at jbradley@spectrumoffindlaylgbt.org, or contact@spectrumoffindlaylgbt.org



A program designed for students to gain valuable experience and develop crucial leadership skills.

How to get involved: Visit WWW.FindlayHancockChamber.com/HYL

Hancock Youth Leadership is provided by the Hancock County Chamber of Commerce.

ENGAGE is a youth council with the purpose of promoting service-learning, youth philanthropy, and civic engagement. ENGAGE is for youth who possess a strong passion and commitment to their community and serving others

How to get involved: Visit <https://www.findlayymca.org/schoolage/school-age-arts-humanities-leadership/>

Engage is provided by the Findlay YMCA.
