



Center for Thriving
Communities

*A YEAR OF—
ACTION*



Center for Children's Rights (CCR): Building Pathways to Possibility



» About our Community

- » CCR develops and fosters practices that center on being in community and building community with young people through the **State of Young People Collective (SOYP)**
- » SOYP is a healing centered justice movement of young people dedicated to creating spaces, places, and relationships that support, cultivate, and sustain youth well-being
- » SOYP engages youth as architects of their future and co-creators of pathways to possibility in our community

» Our Equity Action Lab Design Team and Leadership Team

- » **Teddy Williams**, State of Young People Collective, Youth Leader
- » **Sylvia Powell**, Success Gardening, LLC, Founder/CEO
- » **Temisha Hill**, Unified Community Investors, Founder/CEO
- » **Randall Jackson**, O.R.C.A., Owner and Project Manager
- » **Cheryl Virta**, NAMI, Operations Manager, Advocacy Liaison
- » **Abdul-Hai Thomas**, Youth Participatory Action Research, CCR Director
- » **Micayla Posivio**, CCR, Youth Engagement Coordinator
- » **Betsy Dobbins**, CCR, Executive Director

The Need

Jacksonville youth are resilient and need opportunities and access to (re)sources of health and well-being. Youth need to be valued as (re)sources of health and well-being.



Many Jacksonville youth navigate persistent toxic stress environments (PTSE) that impact their health and well-being:

- » 56% of high school-aged students report experiencing depression
- » 21% live at or below the poverty line
- » 13% experience food insecurity
- » Over 50% are not reading at grade level
- » Jacksonville youth have an 81% higher suicide rate than the state average

Some youth are isolated in geographic PTSEs that impact their access to health and well-being:

- » 41% of families in Health Zone 1 and 16% of families in health zone 4 live below the poverty line
- » One zip code in Health Zone 1 accounted for 20% of all homicides in 2023

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» Our Design Day

Our Design Day brought together key members of our Youth Action Series coalition:

- » State of Young People Collective youth leaders
- » NAMI representative
- » CCR team members

We met at a local community center in the heart of Health Zone 1, where the Youth Action Series held a culminating youth mental health summit in March 2024.

We catered food from a local Health Zone 1 entrepreneur.



» Your Driver Diagram

Create 2 additional SOYP
Hubs in JAX by 3/2026

Provide resources through
community wellness days (mental
and physical health equity)

P- Provide hands on experiential practices for participants
D- Implement garden, play, and mindfulness activities
S- Surveys reflect these activities as a take away
A- Adopt process for all CWDs



Randall Jackson
O.C.R.A

P- Provide hands on experiential practices for participants
D- Implement garden, play, and mindfulness activities
S- Surveys reflect these activities as a take away
A- Adopt process for all CWDs



Sylvia Powell
Success Gardening

Host 6 community wellness
days in target neighborhoods
(social and spiritual well-being)

P- Provide comfortable intake experience for participants
D- Collect info while people are in line to speed up process
S- Onsite registration improved drastically
A- Adopt process for all CWDs



Brooklyn Taylor
SOYP

Complete resilience-centered
surveys of participants
(community vital conditions)

P- Provide comfortable setting for moms with children to fill
out forms
D- Placed volunteers with moms with children to assist
S- Moms stated being "loved" and "cared" for
A- Incorporated a community feedback to help future events



Temisha Hill
Unified Community Investors

Focus on Health Zones
1 and 4 (root causes)

P- Provide a community event that is not focused on
programs or tabling
D- Implement days focused on activities and togetherness
S- Nearly 90% of participants described a sense of belong-
ing and improved mental health
A- Adopt process for all CWDs



Teddy Williams
SOYP

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»» What We Planned for Our Equity Action Lab: Community Wellness Days



- » Host 6 community wellness days (CWD) by October 2024
 - Partner with 2 additional youth groups and/or youth serving partners
 - **April** - AML Kids
 - **May** - Success Gardening
 - **June** - Inspire to Rise
 - **August** - Inspire to Rise
 - **September** - 2nd Mile
 - **October** - Unified Community Investors
- » Goals of CWD were to
 - **Support** intergenerational relationships.
 - **Facilitate spaces** to practice hands-on strategies for well-being (play, gardening, mindfulness).
 - **Create** connections to places where youth and other community members can continue to build connected community and access to resources.
- » Participants completed surveys about their experiences

»» What Happened: Our Community Wellness Days: A Practice Of, For, and With Community

- » Youth and our community partners have co-created spaces to cultivate community through intergenerational relationships, connection between accessible practices and mental-health well-being, and creating spaces and places of belonging

- » Community Wellness Days create opportunities for glimmers – those moments of joy, connection, in the everyday
- » Creating an individual and collective practice of noticing and receiving glimmers is an accessible way to promote positive mental health
- » Nearly 90% of CWD participants reported feeling a sense of belonging and improved feelings of health and well-being following participation



»» What We've Learned

- » Youth engagement and participation promotes mental health and well-being
- » Places to connect that include opportunities for gardening, nature, and space to play/move are important accessible strategies to support mental health and well-being
- » Intergenerational relationships and feeling a sense of belonging are critical for mental health and well-being



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» What We Plan to Change:

- » Scale to place and relationships - focus on hubs and supporting/enhancing/elevating opportunities through those partner organizations
- » Focus on facilitating spaces - identify key elements of CWD and embed into SOYP activities and opportunities
- » Formalize the Youth Action Series coalition to create ongoing opportunities for intergenerational opportunities and community-based well-being practices

» What's Next?

- » Building our two SOYP community Hubs!
 - Mt. Olive on Myrtle Ave (urban core)
 - Inspire to Rise on the westside
- » Co-creating intentional community gatherings with our young folks
 - 1st Saturdays
 - 3rd Saturdays
- » Deepening intergenerational relationships through activities that promote and practice strategies for mental health and well-being
 - Gardening
 - Restorative circles
 - Play and movement
 - Community service

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