

## Youth Culture

### **Intro IDEA 67 The disconnect of urban youth: Indianapolis as among the worst for youth engagement**

According to “One in Seven: Ranking Youth Disconnection in the 25 Largest Metro Areas” ([www.measureofamerica.org/one-in-seven/](http://www.measureofamerica.org/one-in-seven/)) an astonishing 14% of those 16 to 24 is neither working nor in school--5.8 million young people in all. As their peers lay the foundation for a productive, fulfilling adulthood, these disconnected youth find themselves adrift at society's margins, away from the structures that confer knowledge, skills, identity, and purpose.

- With 15.8% of its youth ages 16–24 disconnected, our Indianapolis metropolitan area consistently ranks low--**ranking 78 worst out of 98** major cities (*in the worst 20%*)
- Indiana Congressional District 7 **ranks 401 worst out of 436** (*in the worst 10%*) with 19.7% of youth ages 16–24 disconnected

The cost is high for affected individuals--and for Marion County as a whole. Lack of attachment to the anchor institutions of school or work at this stage of life can leave scars lasting a lifetime, affecting everything from earnings and financial independence to physical and mental health, and even marital prospects. And, last year alone, youth disconnection across the US cost taxpayers \$93,700,000,000.00 in government support and lost tax revenue.

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<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/The-disconnect-of-urban-youth-Indianapolis-as-among-the-worst-in-America-for-youth-engagement.pdf>

### **Intro IDEA 68 The disconnection between the Civil Rights Generation and the Hip Hop Generation which can effect urban education and urban violence**

Many Marion County educators, pastors, and community leaders are critical of youth who see being Black as speaking slang, braided hair, loud rap music, sagging pants, and skewed hats. Some of these professionals say that blackness is knowing Black history and appreciating African values, not dressing like a gangster. Right or wrong, this disconnects hip hop from older generations.

Those concerned with reducing crime and violence must realize that progressive hip hop culture functions as the voice of resistance for America's Black youth, providing a blueprint for the possibilities of positive social change for the entire society—helping America live up to its promise of liberty and justice for all.

### **IDEA 68 The disconnection between the Civil Rights Generation and the Hip Hop Generation which can effect urban education and urban violence**

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Disconnections-between-the-Civil-Rights-Generation-and-the-Hip-Hop-Generation-which-can-effect-urban-education-and-urban-crime-and-violence.pdf>

***Intro* IDEA 69 Hip hop culture is central to appreciating the identities of Marion County Black youth because it is an essential pathway to understanding their struggles, realities, and possibilities**

The actions coming out of *OpportunINDY* need to be explicit about the connections between racial justice and economic justice. This discussion is particularly important because Marion County Black youth bear the brunt of racist economic policy and juvenile justice practices.

Hip hop culture is a major way urban Black youth and their neighborhoods respond to oppression through the often unacknowledged strength, resilience, and resistance that emerges from alienation.

The experiences of Marion County urban youth are often shaped by economic isolation, poverty, and a struggle to survive the trappings of urban ghettos. The power and gravitas of hip hop culture is that it validates, legitimizes, and celebrates experiences of violence, pain, fear, love, and hope that for urban youth are overlooked in mainstream America.

To seriously discuss working with Black urban youth to decrease local violence and crime, respecting the inseparable relationship between Black youth identity and hip hop culture is *foundational*.

Simply stated, the day-to-day struggles and authentic identities of post-modern urban youth must be central in the development of any reform strategy. This is done by:

- 1) validating and affirming Black youth identity, and
- 2) thinking of Marion County youth culture as an asset, not a liability

*The misguided purpose of public education including charters*

On one hand, public education is pushed as a vehicle for social mobility and quality of life. Yet on the other hand, it represents *mis-education* and a tool to reproduce social inequalities. In many instances, Black Marion County students know this instinctively. Their identities are constructed in resistance to public education, so some chose to dis-engage and/or drop out.

**IDEA 69 Hip hop culture is central to appreciating the identities of Marion County Black youth because it is an essential pathway to understanding their struggles, realities, and possibilities**

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Hip-hop-culture-is-central-to-appreciating-the-identities-of-Marion-County-Black-youth-because-it-is-an-essential-pathway-to-understanding-their-struggles-realities-and-possibilities.pdf>

***Intro* IDEA 70 Understanding the political engagement of Black youth in their schools and neighborhoods: Expanding on the ideas of Dr. Shawn Ginwright**

Many organizations and individuals are concerned with how to get urban youth more involved in activism. “More involved” is used because to many today’s urban youth seem less involved when compared to 1960s Civil Rights or Black Power movements. Yet, according to Prof. Ginwright, this is not the case.

IDEA 70 also implies that if the *OpportunINDY* initiative is to make a difference, providing recreational activities to keep youth off the streets, or tutoring to keep them in school, or providing jobs though significant, *is simply not enough*.

These policies/programs can ignore the political reality our Indy youth regard and are keenly aware of due to the Internet and global youth/hip hop culture. We cannot forget rap music acts as “the Black CNN” for youth here, and now around the world. Many of the young people of Marion County, now politically conscious by nature, question why they have to shed their politics when entering school, or local community and recreational centers.

The *OpportunINDY* initiative must face this question and its controversial answers if it wants to significantly reduce crime and violence in Indianapolis.

**IDEA 70 Understanding the political engagement of Black youth in their schools and neighborhoods: Expanding on the ideas of Dr. Shawn Ginwright**

**<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Understanding-the-political-engagement-of-Black-youth-in-their-schools-and-neighborhoods-Expanding-on-the-ideas-of-Dr.-Shawn-Ginwright.pdf>**