

Children Youth and Families Collaborative Commission
Annual Report
July 2024 – June 2025

The mission of the Children Youth and Families Collaborative Commission (CYFCC) includes providing advice, advocacy, and pertinent information to Alexandria City staff, City Council, School Board, and other relevant entities in order to influence policy and decisions that result in better outcomes for children, youth, and families in Alexandria. Within these guidelines, the Children Youth and Families Collaborative Commission membership completed the following activities during the fiscal year 2025 (FY25).

Goals for 2024-2025

- 1) Make better use of the data that is collected and provided to commissioners, specifically:
 - a. The CYFCC will engage with the strengths and shortcomings highlighted in the 2023 Annual Report as well as periodic Progress Reports provided
 - b. The CYFCC will encourage timely data collection, review, and reporting to foster accountability among organizations serving children and youth in Alexandria
- 2) Attend to racial and ethnic disparities by centering on core values related to diversity, equity, and inclusion:
 - a. by facilitating listening sessions with youth and with a diverse array of families
 - b. by facilitating a listening session with families of children with special needs
 - c. by targeting the most troubling 'gaps' in access, resources, and outcomes across racial and ethnic groups;
 - d. by engaging a more diverse membership on the Commission itself.
- 3) The Commission will provide a forum within its regular meetings for Goal Group discussions, aimed at addressing gaps and need areas identified, leading to the CYFCC providing to the City Council a set of prioritized recommendations, including budget implications, based on our work as outlined above.
- 4) The Commission will actively partner with the Alexandria Health Department and Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria to support the Community Health Assessment process and subsequent Community Health Improvement Plan and to assist the Department of Community and Human Services' efforts to create the next Five-Year Children and Youth Community Plan for 2025-2030.

Summary of Accomplishments

1. The CYFCC led community conversations focused on the final year (and conclusion) of the Child and Youth Community Plan (CYCP), a five-year strategic plan initiated in 2021 which aimed to encourage City leaders and invested community partners to focus energy and coordinate activities in support of key goals and objectives.
 - CYFCC support staff and commissioners facilitated a listening session with parents of youth in the “Youth In Progress” (YIP) program at Minnie Howard in August 2024, with more than 100 participants (youth and their families).
 - CYFCC support staff and commissioners also facilitated more than 100 youth listening sessions that aimed to obtain feedback from children and youth on their experiences relative to CYCP goals. More than 1,000 youth participated.
2. Identification of critical issues in the most recent data collected relevant to the CYCP (within Goal Groups, in particular)
 - Goal Group #1: focused on support for families with special needs children, which led to a presentation in April 2025 by organizations within the ALX community who serve families, with opportunity for discussion and feedback from CYFCC commissioners and guests.
 - Goal Group #2: focused on racial disparities and on the need for robust Out of School Time programs (aka “Third Spaces”), which led to a panel of outstanding presenters sharing with the CYFCC their work in the community. Presenters included representatives from:
 - i. Casa Chirilagua
 - ii. Cornerstone Craftsman
 - iii. James Parker, middle school athletic director (ACPS)
 - iv. Youth in Progress (YIP) program participants
 - Goal Group #3: focused on data within the Annual report showing that youth feel less connected, less heard, and less engaged - especially in volunteer activities, leading to a presentation by community leaders focused on civic engagement among youth in schools and in the community at large.
3. Continued advocacy efforts through the following actions:
 - researching issues of critical importance to children and youth
 - inviting the Deputy City Manager Alethea Predeoux to speak to our Commission
 - tracking / corresponding with City Council on budget issues
 - follow-up on Youth Stipends (operationalizing and implementing the City Council’s decision from the previous year).
4. Established a coordinated system and calendar to oversee the activities and accomplishments of groups responsible for implementing the Children and Youth Community Plan
 - Encouraged / provided time for our subcommittees (Goal Groups) to take the lead on coordinating presentations and communicating with stakeholders
 - Incorporated information gleaned from presentations into advocacy efforts
5. Continued (for a second consecutive year) the Champions of Children Awards

Ceremony (which was on hiatus during the pandemic) in June 2025 to honor those individuals who have made a significant and positive impact on Alexandria's children and youth during the past year.

Leadership

- Angela Green was elected to serve as the Chair for the 2025-2026 year.
- Noraine Buttar and the Department of Community and Human Services acted as the staff liaison to CYFCC during the 2024/2025 year.