CYCP Safety & Belonging Work Group Action Plan (10.22.2026 DRAFT)

Strategic Direction 1: Adult Roles, Training & Accountability

Problem:	Students shared that they often struggle to trust adults to listen, respect their privacy, and respond fairly. Inconsistent rules, unaddressed concerns, and adults escalating conflicts can make seeking help feel risky or ineffective, leading youth to turn to peers instead.
Conditions we hope to see as a result of our work	All youth have caring adults they can trust to listen, respond respectfully, and provide support when needed.
Long-Term Strategy (#1):	We will strengthen adults' capacity to be trusted, caring, informed, and accountable to youth by increasing their knowledge of available resources, strengthening their relationship-building skills, and reducing barriers that prevent youth from connecting with caring adults and supports that help them feel safe.
Year-One Action (#1):	Coordinate with existing City, school, and community initiatives to improve how youth-serving organizations share information about programs, resources, and opportunities through communication channels that youth and families already use.
Year-One Action (#2):	Assess participation in existing trainings that help adults build supportive relationships with youth, identify groups of adults who are underrepresented, and test strategies to increase their awareness of and participation in these opportunities.

	Indicator	Data Source	Current	Desired Direction
Key Performance Indicators	Other adult relationships	Developmental Assets Survey	38%	Increase
	ACHS Students Feel Welcome at School	ACPS Climate Survey Dashboard	74%	Increase
	Caring School Climate	Developmental Assets Survey	36%	Increase
	Youth Safety	Developmental Assets Survey	39%	Increase
	Didn't attend school due to feeling unsafe	Youth Risk Behavior Survey	23%	Decrease
	Adults at ACPS Care About All Students	ACPS Climate Survey Dashboard	74%	Increase

Performance Measurements	**How Much Have We Done?** *What can we count to show how much work we completed?*	**How Well Did We Do It?** *What could we measure to assess whether the work was useful, timely, inclusive, or high-quality?*	**Is Anyone Better Off?** *How can we measure changes for students, partners, or the system because of our work?*

	Action 1: # of organizations consulted; # of communication improvements recommended/tested	**Action 1:** % of recommendations reviewed by relevant communication partners	**Action 1:** #/% of participating organizations reporting improved ability to share information with youth and families
	Action 2: # of trainings reviewed; # of training providers contributing data; # of outreach efforts tested	**Action 2:** % of trainings with participation data by adult role; % of targeted registrants attending	**Action 2:** #/% increase in participation among targeted adult groups

Action 1: Access to Communication Channels

Year-One Action (#1):	**Coordinate with existing City, school, and community initiatives to improve how youth-serving organizations share information about programs, resources, and opportunities through communication channels that youth and families already use.**

Activities/Steps *What do we actually need to do to move the Year-One Action forward? What are the first few concrete steps?*	Work Group Member(s) *Who will take the lead or help move each step forward?*	Prospective Partners *Who is already doing this work or needs to be involved? Who can help us understand the issue, make decisions, or take action?*	Possible Timeline *When should this happen? What needs to happen first, and what can happen later?*	Deliverables *What will we have completed, created, decided, or changed as a result? What will show that this step is done?*
Coordinate with existing efforts and communication leaders. Meet with the CYFCC Safety & Belonging Goal Group, ConnectingU partners, City Communications, ACPS Communications, and other relevant partners to learn what communication improvements are already underway. Clarify who is leading each effort and where this Work Group can contribute without duplicating activities.	Chelsea	CYFCC Goal Group ConnectingU partners, City Communications, ACPS Communications, and other relevant partners	Quarter 1	Summary of existing efforts, key partners, and agreed roles for the Work Group
Identify communication barriers experienced by youth-serving organizations. Coordinate with existing networks, including the YSCC and ConnectingU partners, to gather or compile information about which communication channels organizations use, which they cannot access, and what prevents them from reaching youth and		Existing networks, including the Youth Services Coordinating Council and ConnectingU partners	Quarter 1-2	Shared summary of communication platforms, access barriers, and opportunities for improvement

families. Use findings already collected before conducting additional outreach.				
Bring findings to the partners responsible for communication systems. Share identified barriers and potential solutions with the CYFCC Goal Group and relevant City/ACPS communications leads. Help determine which improvements are feasible and who has the authority to implement them.		CYFCC Goal Group & City/ACPS Communication leads	Quarter 2	Prioritized recommendations and identified implementation partners
Support a coordinated improvement effort. If requested by the lead partners, help test one improvement to how youth-serving organizations share information through existing channels. Gather feedback from participating organizations and use the findings to recommend next steps.		CYFCC Goal Group	Quarter 3-4	Partner feedback on the process and its usefulness

Action 2: Adult participation in trainings

Year-One Action (#2):	**Assess participation in existing trainings that help adults build supportive relationships with youth, identify groups of adults who are underrepresented, and test strategies to increase their awareness of and participation in these opportunities.**

Activities/Steps *What do we actually need to do to move the Year-One Action forward? What are the first few concrete steps?*	**Work Group Member(s)** *Who will take the lead or help move each step forward?*	**Prospective Partners** *Who is already doing this work or needs to be involved? Who can help us understand the issue, make decisions, or take action?*	**Possible Timeline** *When should this happen? What needs to happen first, and what can happen later?*	**Deliverables** *What will we have completed, created, decided, or changed as a result? What will show that this step is done?*
Identify existing trainings and gather participation information. Compile relevant trainings offered by City, school, and community partners that strengthen adults' ability to support youth. Work with training providers to identify available information about attendance, participants' roles (e.g., teachers, coaches, parents, mentors, youth workers), and repeat participation. Incorporate existing findings from ConnectingU rather than starting from scratch.		ConnectingU and Training providers	Quarter 1	Inventory of existing trainings, providers, audiences, and available participation data

Identify participation gaps and barriers. Review which adult groups are well represented, which are missing, and whether the same individuals repeatedly attend. Consult training providers and relevant partners about barriers such as awareness, scheduling, professional-development requirements, or difficulty sustaining participation. Review current marketing and recruitment approaches.		Training providers and relevant partners	Quarter 1-2	Summary of participation patterns, underrepresented adult groups, barriers, and outreach opportunities
Develop a targeted outreach approach. Work with training providers, ConnectingU partners, and relevant City/ACPS staff to select one underrepresented adult audience. Identify feasible ways to reach them through existing communication channels and training opportunities. Consider whether collecting consistent participant-role information across trainings would improve future monitoring.		Training providers, ConnectingU partners, and relevant City/ACPS staff	Quarter 2	
Select one improvement to test. Review the findings with participating training providers. Select one feasible improvement, such as reaching an underserved group of adults, incorporating youth perspectives into existing training, or improving how training effectiveness is assessed. Confirm which organization will implement the change.		Participating training providers	Quarter 3	Agreement on what to improve and a plan for integrating the recommended improvement
Test targeted recruitment. Partner with an existing training provider to promote one or more training opportunities to the selected adult audience. Track registrations, attendance, and, where feasible, continued participation to assess whether outreach is reaching new adults.		Training provider	Quarter 3	Completed outreach pilot and participation findings
Review results and recommend next steps. Determine whether the approach expanded participation among the intended audience. Share findings with training providers and partners, identify improvements, and recommend whether to expand the approach or explore training effectiveness and youth feedback in Year Two.		Training providers and partners	Quarter 4	Brief evaluation summary and Year-Two recommendations

Other potential activities:

- **Build on ConnectingU's experience.** Use existing recruitment and participation information, including whether registrants are parents, staff, or volunteers working with youth as a starting point.
- **Explore consistent participant information.** Training providers could consider asking a small set of common questions about participants' roles, helping identify who is and isn't being reached across opportunities.
- **Coordinate with ACPS early.** Teachers and school staff face professional-development constraints. ACPS would need to advise on feasible outreach, participation, and whether community trainings could eventually count toward professional-development expectations.
- **Look beyond one-time attendance.** Registration, actual attendance, and returning for additional training may tell different stories.
- **Year-Two Idea**: Explore whether existing training evaluations and youth feedback can help determine whether expanded adult participation translates into stronger, more supportive relationships with young people.

Ideas to keep for Future Years of Implementation:		
Policy around Expectations/qualities of caring adults • Create "Adult Expectations" standards or something equivalent • Work with ACPS to mandate certain trainings, like Developmental Assets • Create monthly initiatives that focus on key areas of safety & belonging across Alexandria programming	**Trainings** • provide trainings on services/resources to caring adults • Outreach to neighborhoods/populations who are historically not included in these workshops/trainings (English Learners, etc.)	**Youth Voice/Leadership** • Identify barriers (hear directly from youth) to having safe adults in their lives • Utilize youth advisory groups and current youth leadership programs to have students lead programming and activities to build belonging amongst students and staff.

Strategic Direction 2: Youth Leadership & Peer-Led Models

Problem:	Youth experience not feeling heard, valued, or taken seriously, particularly at school, feeling excluded from decisions that directly affect them, and frustration with the adult centric systems that silence them.
Conditions we hope to see as a result of our work	All youth have meaningful opportunities to partner with adults who listen, share decision-making power, and act on their input.

Long-Term Strategy(#2):	We will expand meaningful and equitable youth leadership by strengthening young people's opportunities and capacity to advocate, influence decisions, and lead alongside adults, while equipping adults and systems to share power and support authentic youth-adult partnership.
Year-One Action:	Strengthen existing youth advocacy opportunities, especially for young people underrepresented in traditional leadership spaces, by helping youth influence decisions that affect them and preparing adults to listen, respond, and follow through on youth recommendations.

Key Performance Indicators	**Indicator**	**Data Source**	**Current**	**Desired Direction**
	Community Values Youth	Developmental Assets Survey	20%	Increase
	Youth as Resources	Developmental Assets Survey	25%	Increase

Performance Measurements	**How Much Have We Done?** *What can we count to show how much work we completed?*	**How Well Did We Do It?** *What could we measure to assess whether the work was useful, timely, inclusive, or high-quality?*	**Is Anyone Better Off?** *How can we measure changes for students, partners, or the system because of our work?*
	# of youth/adults prepared; # of advocacy opportunities supported	% of youth reporting meaningful participation; % of recommendations receiving a documented adult response	% of youth reporting increased advocacy confidence and feeling heard and taken seriously by participating adults

Action: Advocacy capacity

Year-One Action:	**Strengthen existing youth advocacy opportunities, especially for young people who are underrepresented in traditional leadership spaces, while helping adults better support, listen to, and respond to youth advocacy.**

Activities/Steps *What do we actually need to do to move the Year-One Action forward? What are the first few concrete steps?*	Work Group Member(s) *Who help move each step forward?*	Partners *Who is already doing this work or needs to be involved?*	Timeline *When should this happen?*	Deliverables *What will we have completed, created, decided, or changed as a result? What will show that this step is done?*
Identify existing youth advocacy opportunities and opportunities for coordination. Review existing youth leadership programs, advocacy activities, decision-making forums, and youth-adult partnership trainings. Connect with organizations already engaging youth to identify opportunities for collaboration. Review existing youth recommendations before planning additional listening activities, and identify barriers that prevent underrepresented youth from participating.		Youth-serving organizations	Quarter 1	List of existing opportunities, potential partners, relevant youth recommendations, and participation barriers

Select an existing youth group and an issue they want to influence. Partner with an existing youth program or class to identify a recommendation or issue that young people want to advance. Connect with the adults or organizations responsible for decisions related to that issue. Confirm that those partners are willing to engage with youth and explain how their recommendations will be considered.		Existing youth program or class; Adults willing to listen & engage with youth advocates	Quarter 2	Youth advocacy opportunity, youth advocates, decision-makers identified, and expectations for adult response confirmed
Prepare youth and adults to work together. Connect participating youth with existing advocacy training, coaching, or other support appropriate to their goals. Provide participating adults with guidance or training on meaningful youth-adult partnerships, including listening respectfully, sharing decision-making opportunities, and responding to recommendations. Address participation barriers so underrepresented youth can take part.		Youth Advocates; Organization that provides advocacy training/guidance; Participating adult decision-makers	Quarter 2-3	Youth and adult preparation completed; participation supports identified
Support youth in advocating for change. Help young people bring their recommendations to the appropriate decision-makers through an existing meeting, forum, presentation, or other advocacy opportunity. Document what youth recommend and what adults agree to consider or do next.		Youth Advocates; Participating adult decision-makers	Quarter 3	Completed youth advocacy activity and documented recommendations
Close the feedback loop. Follow up with decision-makers and ensure young people receive a clear explanation of what happened to their recommendations, what can move forward, what cannot, and why. Where changes take longer, establish how youth will receive future updates.		Youth Advocates; Participating adult decision-makers	Quarter 3-4	Documented adult responses & commitments shared with participating youth
Learn from the experience and identify opportunities to expand. Ask participating youth and adults what worked, what barriers remained, and whether youth felt heard and able to influence decisions. Share lessons with other youth-serving partners and recommend improvements for Year Two.		Youth Advocates; Participating adult decision-makers; Youth-serving partners	Quarter 4	Youth and adult reflections, lessons learned, and Year-Two recommendations

Ideas to keep for future implementation:	
New roles for youth within existing structures • Involve youth leadership group in CHIP – community wide mental health focus area	**New Programs**

• Increase opportunities for PAs/YAs to lead and collaborate • Create more opportunities for youth voice/leadership within existing programs to promote different forms of leadership amongst all youth • ALX Beyond will offer Youth Voice workshop next year (Weikart Center for Program Quality Methods training) • Identify programs/organizations where youth could participate in leadership role/decision making discussions	• I'm not sure if this already exists, but when I was a freshmen in HS, I had a "Senior buddy" who acted as a my mentor for the first year. Perhaps advocating for something like this. • Add classes to the student gov't / leaders active group for peer support & regulation. If advisory exists in a school (it's been removed from some) use that time to allow peer support to reduce kids skipping class. • Teach them how to correct peer's behavior in a way that is not demeaning but encourages social safety. • For groups that exist - see if they can add meeting time and places