



Safety & Belonging Work Group Meeting #2

Children & Youth Community Plan
March 25, 2026





Meeting Purpose

Map existing efforts across Alexandria and identify 1–2 priority strategy directions for Year 1 CYCP action planning.



Agenda

1. Welcome, Overview, & Introductions
2. Review prevention framework
3. Landscape mapping activity
4. Identify alignment, gaps, fragmentation
5. Select priority strategy directions
6. Confirm next steps



Work Group Arc

Meeting #	Shared Understanding	Map Existing Efforts & Identify Strategy Options	Prioritize & Design Actions	Finalize & Commit
When	March 2	Mar 2025	April & May	June
Purpose:	Ground ourselves in the problem, root causes, and vision.	Avoid duplication and surface strengths. Look at student recommendations & research packet	Choose 3-5 actions to accomplish in Year 1 of implementation	Prepare the action plan for the CYCP!
Focus/ Questions	- Youth voice - Data trends - Root causes (infographic) - What works (infographic)	- What is already happening? Who is doing what? - Where are gaps? - Which strategies align with root causes? - Which are feasible in Alexandria? - Which need coordination?	- Who does what? - What resources? - How will we measure?	- Confirm partners - Confirm metrics - Identify CYCP language - Plan first pilots
Outcome	Clarity about scope	Landscape map & drafted list of possible actions	Draft action plan	CYCP-ready content



What Works

A research packet with evidence-based approaches for guiding strategy development

How to Use This Packet

This packet is designed to support our upcoming work group session

During the meeting, we will use this packet to:

- Review evidence-based strategies
- Connect root causes, protective factors, recommended strategies from youth, and existing efforts
- Visualize the prevention system in Alexandria & map existing efforts in Alexandria
- Identify gaps and opportunities
- Begin identifying shared strategy directions

You do not need to read everything in advance!

This packet is a reference tool to support discussion and decision-making.



What Works to Strengthen Youth Safety & Belonging in Other Communities

Research on youth development and violence prevention shows that effective community strategies typically focus on four interconnected areas:

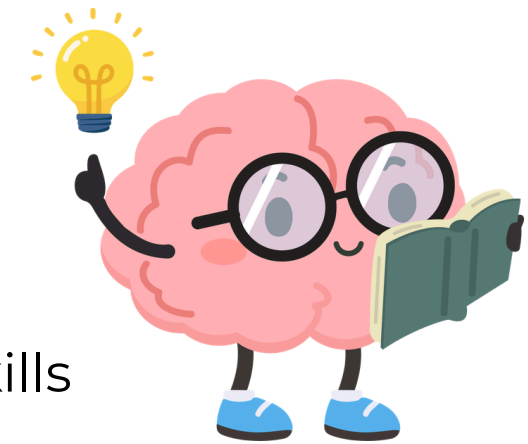
Strengthen Relationships (example)

- Mentoring programs
- Restorative practices
- Caring adult relationships
- Peer support systems



Strengthen Skills (example)

- Conflict resolution education
- Emotional regulation training
- Mental health literacy
- Communication and coping skills



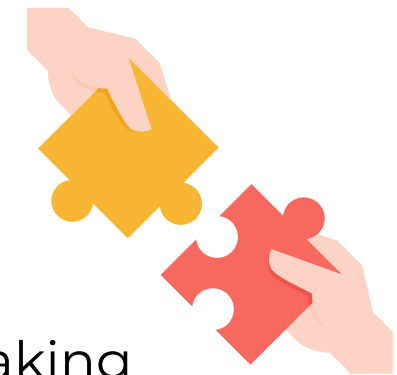
Strengthen Opportunities (example)

- Afterschool & enrichment programs
- Youth employment & leadership opportunities
- Arts, sports, & community activities



Strengthen Systems (example)

- Policies that prioritize prevention
- Community partnerships
- Staff trainings
- Youth engagement in decision-making



Prevention works when these strategies are combined. Communities across the country have implemented strategies that reduce youth violence and increase belonging. Let's take a look at some examples!

What Works in Other Communities



Strengthening Relationships: Mentoring & Supportive Adult Connections

Example: [Becoming a Man \(BAM\) Program](#) (Chicago, IL)

Chicago Public Schools partnered with the nonprofit Youth Guidance to implement BAM, a school-based mentoring and cognitive behavioral program for young men.

Results from a randomized study found:

- 45–50% reduction in violent crime arrests among participating youth
- Significant improvements in school engagement and attendance

The program focuses on mentoring relationships, emotional regulation, and decision-making skills.

Why it worked:

Students developed trusted relationships with adults and learned tools to manage conflict and stress.



What Works in Other Communities



Strengthening Skills: Conflict Resolution & Social Emotional Learning

Example: Restorative Justice in Schools (Oakland, California)

Oakland Unified School District implemented restorative justice practices across schools to address conflict and repair harm.

Results included:

- 87% reduction in suspensions at one high school
- Significant reductions in fights and classroom disruptions
- Improved student perceptions of fairness and belonging

Why it worked:

Students learned communication, accountability, and conflict resolution skills, while adults shifted away from punitive discipline.

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Oakland Unified School District

restorative justice

implementation guide

A Whole School Approach



What Works in Other Communities



Strengthening Opportunities: Afterschool & Youth Development Programs

Example: Boston After School & Beyond (Boston, MA)

Boston invested in expanding structured afterschool programming and youth employment opportunities.

Results:

- Youth participating in structured programs were less likely to engage in violence or risky behaviors
- Higher school attendance and academic engagement
- Increased connection to supportive adults

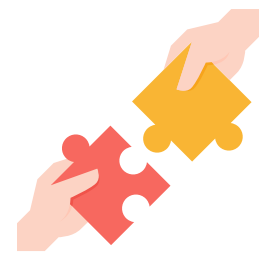
Why it worked:

Programs created safe spaces, positive peer groups, and meaningful activities during high-risk hours.



**Boston
After School
& Beyond**

What Works in Other Communities



Strengthening Systems: Youth Leadership

Example: Minnesota Youth Congress (Statewide)

A statewide body of youth leaders (ages 13–19) who advise the Governor, legislature, and state agencies. Youth identify priorities, conduct outreach, and influence policy decisions affecting young people.

Results:

- Youth-informed legislation and policy recommendations
- Increased visibility of youth priorities
- Strengthened civic engagement and leadership among youth
- Ongoing mechanism for youth voice in government decision-making

Why it worked:

Youth are embedded in formal decision-making structures, collaborating directly with policymakers while building skills in advocacy, research, and public speaking



MINNESOTA **YOUTH**
ALLIANCE WITH

Prevention Pyramid

Prevention Happens at Multiple Levels

Effective systems invest across all three levels.

Tier 3: Intervention

*for youth already involved
in violence or serious
conflict*

Examples:

- diversion programs
- therapeutic supports
- reentry supports
- intensive mentoring

Tier 2: Targeted Prevention

*for youth who are
at elevated risk*

Examples:

- mentoring
- conflict mediation
- violence interruption
- restorative practices
- case management

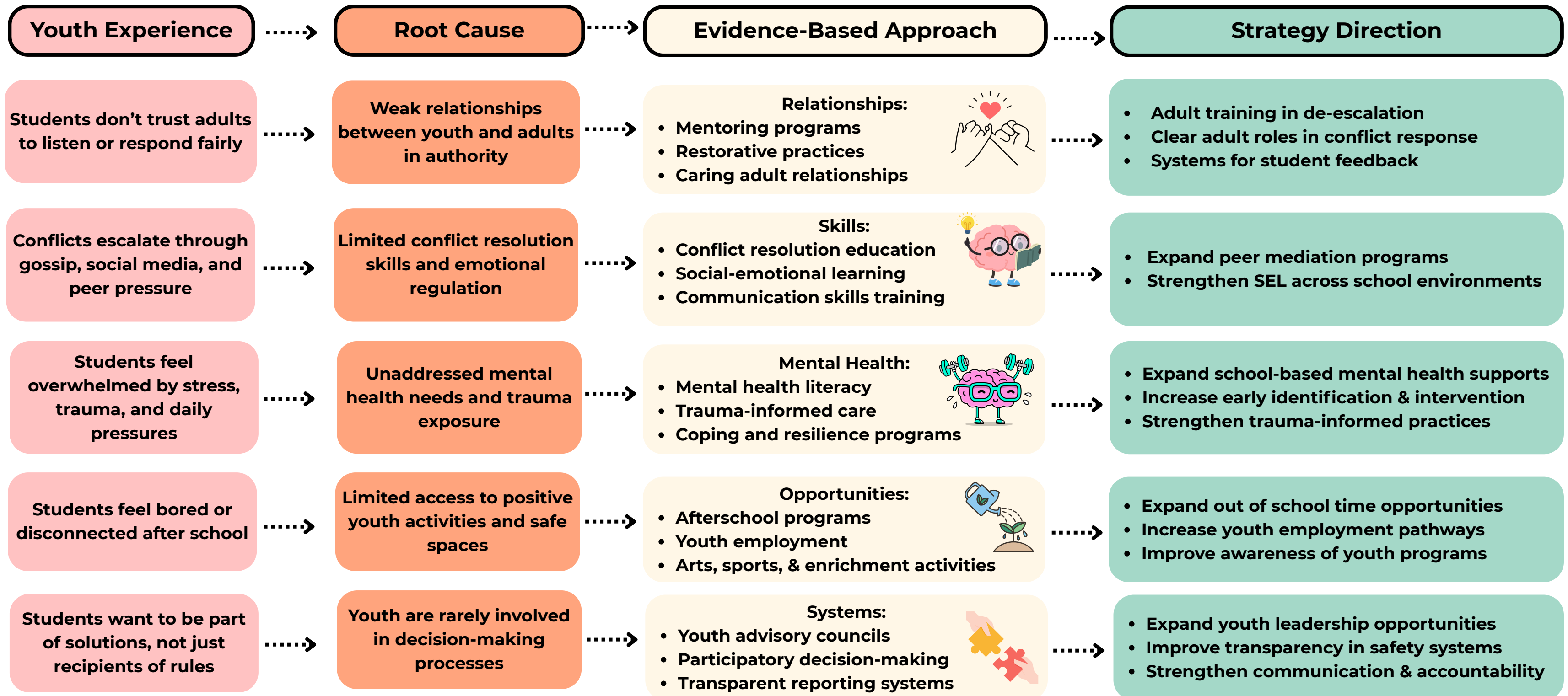
Tier 1: Universal Prevention

for all youth

Examples:

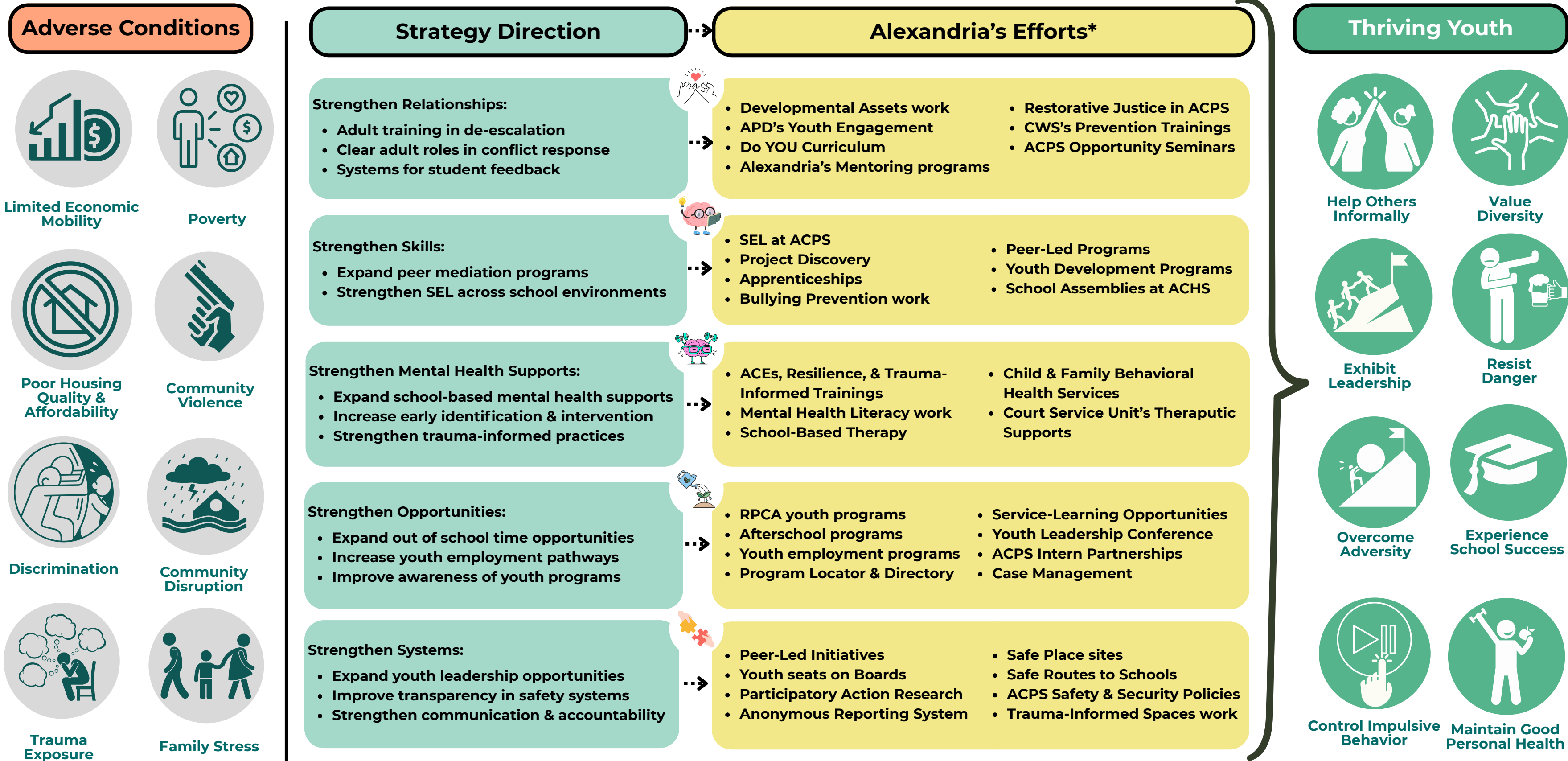
- school climate initiatives
- youth development programs
- afterschool programs
- social emotional learning

Connecting Youth Voice to Solutions



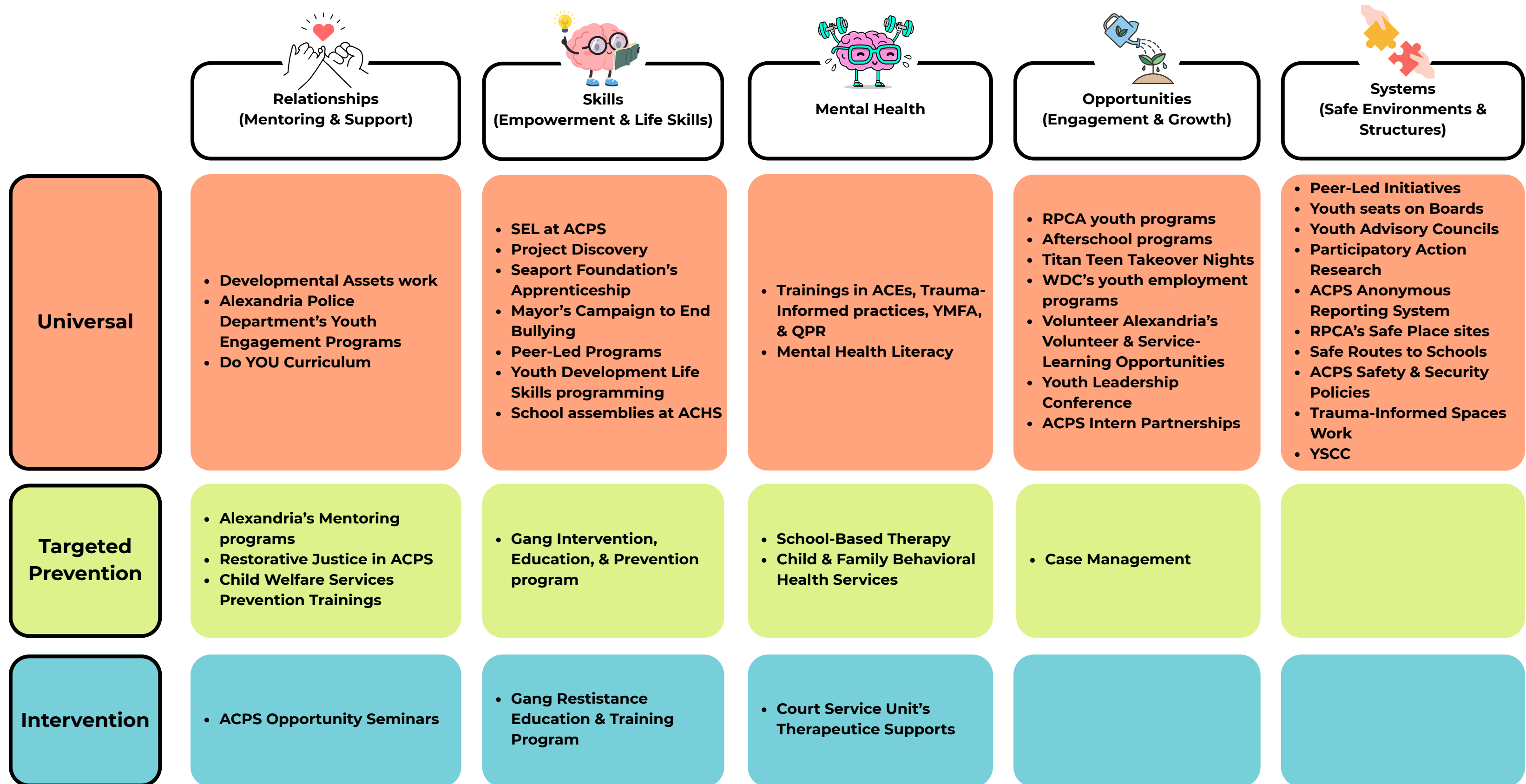
Alexandria Prevention System Map

This view shows how efforts are distributed across prevention levels and strategy areas.



**This is my attempt to capture the current ecosystem of safety and belonging efforts. You will have a chance to add more to it during a work group meeting.*

Map of Ecosystem of Safety & Belonging Efforts*



Landscape Mapping Activity



Step 1: Complete the Map.

Fill in programs, initiatives, and systems already operating in Alexandria that promote youth safety & belonging.

Step 2: Identify Gaps & Opportunities.

- **Alignment:** Where are we already investing the most effort?
- **Gaps:** Where do we have the fewest efforts?
- **Fragmentation:** Where are multiple efforts happening but not coordinated?
- **Opportunities:** Where could we strengthen impact through partnership?

Step 3: Prioritize.

Which areas feel most important to focus on first?

What We're Working Toward

This work group will identify 1-2 strategy directions to advance the next CYCP.