

Zip Code Project

*Reconnecting Youth,
One Zip Code at a Time*



www.azed.gov/zipcode

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Overview

The **Zip Code Project** is an initiative by the Arizona Department of Education dedicated to creating opportunities for disconnected youth ages 16-24 that are neither employed nor attending school, so that they can succeed in life.



1 in **5** young adults in Arizona are disconnected

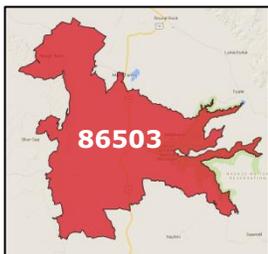
Community Solutions

The aim of the project is to generate *solutions for the Community by the Community*. **Community Groups of Action** composed of a diverse mix of community leaders will identify solutions to their local challenges.



Community Focus

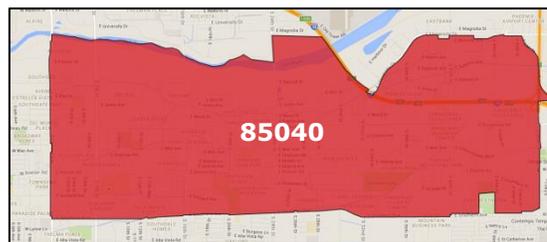
Four high needs communities were selected for the first cohort. The disconnected youth in each of the four selected Zip Codes face different barriers to education and workforce, providing the opportunity for community-specific solutions.



Chinle, AZ



Ajo, AZ



South Phoenix



Maryvale/West Phoenix

What is the Zip Code Project?

The Zip Code Project is an initiative by the Arizona Department of Education dedicated to assisting disconnected youth ages 16-24 that are neither employed nor attending school. The goal is to find them opportunities so they can succeed in life. This vulnerable population needs our greatest attention. Unfortunately, the numbers of disconnected youth are increasing. Nationally one in seven youth ages 16-24 are disconnected; while in Arizona that number is a staggering one in five. The negative effects are felt across the economy, society, and the criminal justice system.

The Zip Code Project will develop Community Boards of Action in each target zip code to help these youth find educational or workforce opportunities and resources, provide referrals to important services, and secure grant funding. The Zip Code Project aims to help lead Arizona in the mission to overcome and end youth disconnection; one young person at a time.

For more information, please
visit our website at:

www.azed.gov/zipcode



Source: Flickr/ via Derek Mindler (CC BY 2.0)

Who are Disconnected Youth?

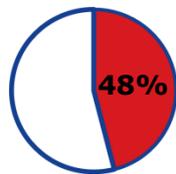
Disconnected Youth /diskə'nektəd yōōTH/

Define: Young people ages 16 to 24 who are neither working nor in school.

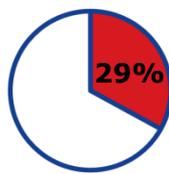
See also: opportunity youth

Associated with: homelessness, school dropout, juvenile justice, teenage pregnancy, running away, mental or physical disability, immigration status and more.

The term 'disconnected' youth can sometimes be misinterpreted as just high school dropouts or those unable to find work. This is not always the case. There are many disconnected youth who have received their high school diploma or equivalent, but are not continuing their education or working.



Received high school diploma or equivalent



Dropped out of high school

Determine if an individual is considered "Disconnected Youth"

Y N

1) Are they between the ages of 16 and 24?

- If yes, move to question number 2
- If no, they are not considered "disconnected youth"

Y N

2) Are they currently attending school? (K-12 or post-secondary)

- If yes, they are not considered "disconnected youth"
- If no, move to question number 3

Y N

3) Are they currently working?

- If yes, they are not considered "disconnected youth"
- If no, **this is a disconnected youth!**

Disconnected youth are a diverse population. The reasons for disconnection have been attributed to many factors, such as:



Homelessness / Runaways



Teenage Pregnancy



Mental or Physical Disability



Immigration Status



Juvenile Justice

Disconnected Youth Statistics

US Disconnected Youth Fiscal Impact



More than **\$25 Billion** annually

Dropout Impact on Arizona



Each dropout produces **\$421,280** in economic losses over their lifetime.

Disconnection Rate



1 in 7 nationally



1 in 5 in Arizona

Source: Measure of America and Arizona Mayors Education Round Table



Zip Code Project Selection Criteria

To better serve the disconnected young people of Arizona, establishing target areas was critical. By targeting the high need areas of the state, we will have greater impact. This includes high density Native American populations, rural communities, and urban communities within Arizona. Using these geographic areas, specific criteria was established to select the initial zip codes.

Youth disconnection is based on two critical aspects: unemployment and not attending school. Data from those two areas were collected for the 16-24 age group. Once this data was aggregated, weights were placed on the two data elements and created an overall score for each zip code. The “not attending school” data element was weighted higher than unemployment due to the Arizona Department of Education’s mission to ensure every child has access to an excellent education.

After compiling the data and calculating the scores, four zip codes were selected to participate in the Zip Code Project. In the Chinle region, the zip code 86503 was selected for the high need Native American population. The rural community of the zip code 85321, which surrounds the town of Ajo, was also selected. Two zip codes in the urban areas of South and West Phoenix were selected, 85040 and 85031 respectively.

Nearly half of the 16-24 year olds that reside in the Chinle area do not attend school. More than half of this population is not working. This is just one example of the critical nature of this project and the vulnerable populations the Zip Code Project will serve.

The following criteria were used to select the target zip codes:

- Geographic Areas/Population Type
 - High Density Native American population
 - Rural community
 - Urban communities
- Within those areas, the following criteria was used to select the target zip codes:
 - Percent of 16-24 year olds who are unemployed
 - Percent of 16-24 year olds not attending school



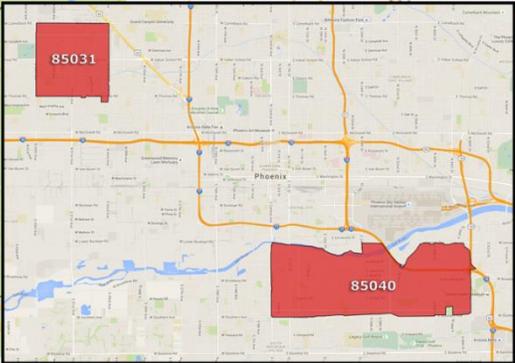
Selected Zip Codes

86503
(Chinle, AZ)
High Density Native American Population

County: Apache
1,816 16-24 Year Olds
70% Unemployed
47% Not In School

85031
(Maryvale/West Phoenix)
Urban Population

County: Maricopa
5,425 16-24 Year Olds
31% Unemployed
43% Not In School



85321
(Ajo, AZ)
Rural Population

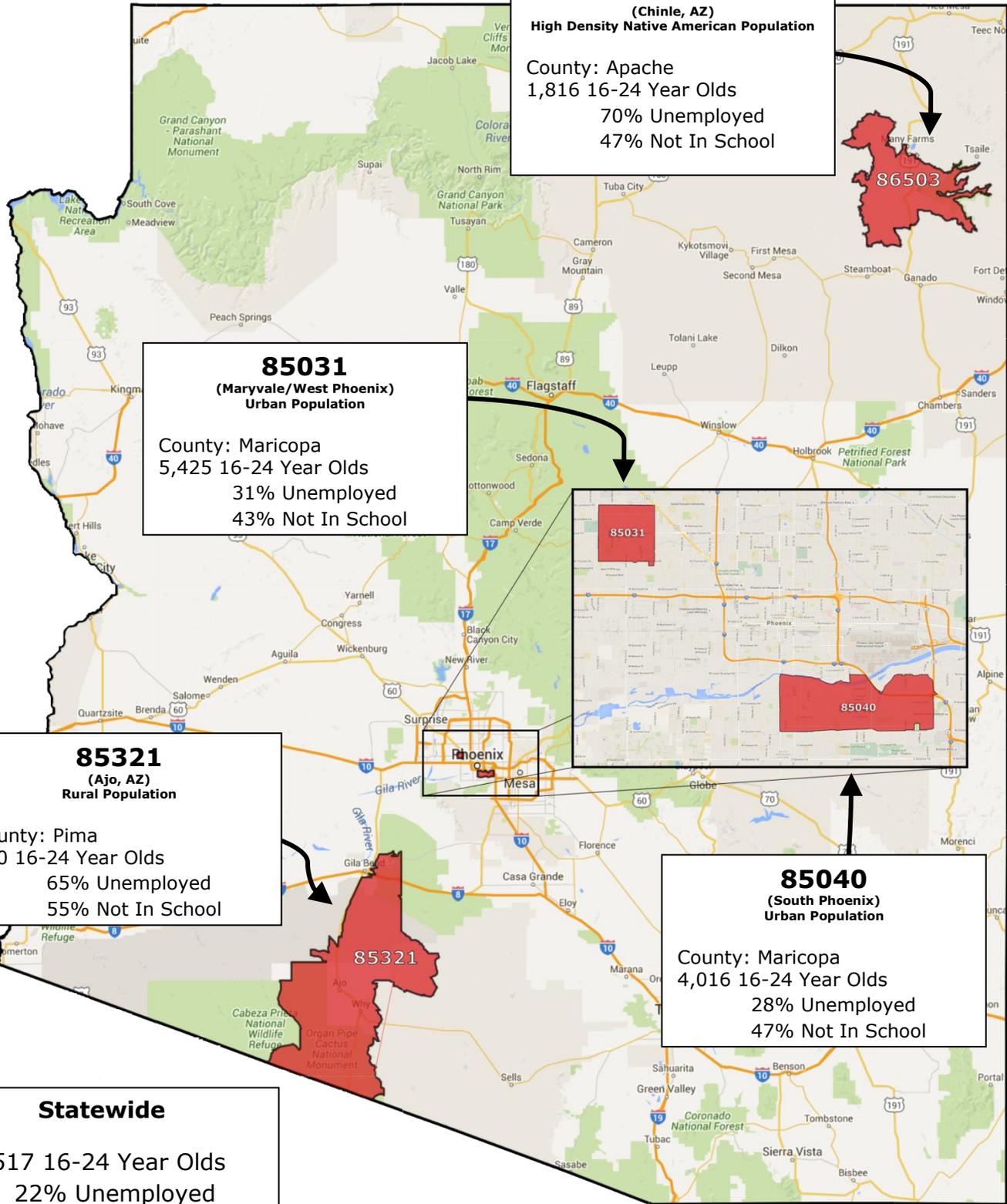
County: Pima
500 16-24 Year Olds
65% Unemployed
55% Not In School

85040
(South Phoenix)
Urban Population

County: Maricopa
4,016 16-24 Year Olds
28% Unemployed
47% Not In School

Statewide

828,517 16-24 Year Olds
22% Unemployed
32% Not In School



Source: United States Census Bureau 2010 and the American Community Survey (ACS) 2014



Community Groups of Action

Purpose of the Community Groups of Action:



- Identify community-specific relatable concerns, issues, or areas of growth
- Identify solutions to the concerns, issues, or areas of growth
- When possible, assist the Zip Code Project in implementing the identified solutions

Community Sectors Invited:



Education:

- Middle Schools
- High Schools
- Charter Schools
- Community Colleges
- Universities
- Private Colleges
- Adult Education



Local Business:

- Small Businesses
- Corporations
- National Chains
- Sports Teams



Non-Profit:

- Local Charity
- Food Banks
- Social Assistance
- Grant Funders
- Community Health Centers



Elected Officials:

- Tribal leaders
- Mayors
- State Representatives
- State Senators
- City Council Members
- County Superintendents



Government Services:

- DES Offices
- Libraries
- Community Centers
- One Stops



Family:

- Biological Parents
- Adoptive Parents
- Foster Family
- Sibling Caretakers
- Extended Family

Time Commitment:



Core Group



1.5 Hours /
Month*



Sub-Committees



TBD**

* For the first six months. The group can vote to keep the schedule or modify per the needs of the community.

**Sub-committees shall meet on a schedule decided upon by committee members at the start of such committee. It is suggested to meet at least monthly.

Additional Resources

MCESA

Maricopa County Education Service Agency



Opportunities for Youth

Connecting youth with meaningful education and career opportunities.

Vision: Harness the power of cross-sector collaboration to create a comprehensive system of opportunity that re-engages our Valley's disconnected youth.

Mission: Youth will be successfully re-engaged and on track for success in college, career, and life.



Visit them at: Education.maricopa.gov/connect



Mission: Our mission is to provide easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding well-being and opportunity in America and to stimulate face-based dialogue about the issues we all care about.



Visit them at: measureofamerica.org



Opportunity Nation is a bipartisan, national campaign comprised of more than 350 cross-sector organizations working together to expand economic mobility and close the opportunity gap in America.

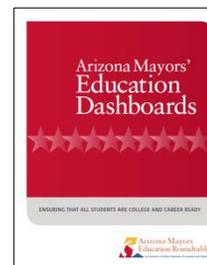
Mission: Opportunity Nation's mission is to restore the promise of the American Dream by ensuring that all Americans – regardless of where they were born – have the opportunity to thrive.



Visit them at: opportunitynation.org



The Arizona Mayors Education Roundtable, a WestEd initiative, brings together mayors of Arizona's larger cities, district superintendents, and their key staff to share data, evidence-based and promising practices, and programmatic strategies that can help address local challenges affecting students' educational and career success.



Visit them at: azmayors.org

