

Youth First 2021 Report

[Youth First](#) is a collaborative effort to ensure that Northfield is a great place for all youth to live and grow up. It is a partnership between [Healthy Community Initiative](#) (HCI), the [City of Northfield](#), and [Youthprise](#), and it's a flagship initiative of Northfield Promise.

Founded in 2010 by the McKnight Foundation, Youthprise invests in the future of Minnesota by investing in youth. It works to reduce racial disparities in learning, economic opportunity, and health & safety.

Youth First has yielded exciting results since its formation in 2015! Here is an update on recent successes in 2021 and plans for 2022:

Youth on Boards



Youth on Boards offers a unique opportunity for youth to get involved in local government, make change, and have a voice.

- In **2021**, 106 Northfield-area youth (unduplicated count) served on 31 local boards, commissions, and committees. These included governmental boards and nonprofit organizations.

YouthBank

Northfield YouthBank is a youth-run grant-making initiative that provides more than \$25,000 in funds annually to projects led by local youth.

In **2021**, YouthBank:

- Awarded grants totaling \$25,272 to support youth-led efforts designed to meet local needs.
- Received 12 grant proposals totaling over \$46,000 in requested funding from Northfield area youth. Fifty-six youth were involved in developing and preparing those grant proposals, and 32 youth had their grant proposals funded.
- Involved 20 local youth on its leadership team.

Northfield Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention (N-ASAP)

A Northfield City Council-appointed commission, N-ASAP seeks to raise community awareness about local substance use and to make recommendations for community interventions to reduce youth use.

In **2021**, N-ASAP:

- Trained 545 local individuals to identify and respond to mental health concerns through evidence-based Teen (172), Youth (71), and Adult (302) Mental Health First Aid. Individuals who have participated in HCI's mental health training reported making a total of 1,019 referrals during the 2021 calendar year.
- Supported Rice County Chemical and Mental Health Coalition-led parent education initiatives that reached more than 4,000 households in Rice County.
- Trained 511 local beverage servers in Rice County in 2021 on safe serving practices, up from 185 in 2020.
- Collected 32,518 pounds of medication (program lifetime-to-date) through the Take It To The Box program.

Northfield Community College Collaborative (NCCC)

The Northfield Community College Collaborative partners with community colleges in Minnesota to offer their accredited courses and career pathway programs in a classroom setting in Northfield. Its mission is to provide a quality and accessible local community college option with support services that empower all students in Northfield to reach their college potential.

In **2021**, the NCCC staff:

- Partnered with 14 Minnesota colleges and universities
- Provided 3,632 individual academic advising contacts
- Supported 16 in-person classes and 230 online courses
- Helped students access \$259,000 in tuition assistance

Other **2021** numbers:

- 95% of participating students were first-generation college attendees, 83% were students of color, and 87% came from low-income families.
- The 85 students supported by the NCCC cumulatively earned 989 college credits.

Opportunity Reboot •

Opportunity Reboot supports high school graduation and career pathways for youth in Northfield and Faribault who face multiple risk factors.

In **2021**, the program:

- Served 160 local Opportunity Youth ages 14-24
- Provided academic support, job access, career readiness, postsecondary exploration, and support services
- Provided 6,736 mentor contacts to youth in the cohort

Goals for 2022

Youth on Boards

- Re-engage youth in community-wide endeavors through work on local area boards, commissions and councils
- Through the Mayor's Youth Council, work to engage all Youth on Boards participants around long-range planning for the city, including: pedestrian and bike trails, riverfront enhancement, and housing development.
- In fall 2022, hold candidate forums so youth are made aware of candidates' views on pressing issues

YouthBank

- Sponsor and execute two grant rounds this calendar year
- Train new team members on issues of racial justice and equity
- Support current projects in their implementation

Northfield Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention (N-ASAP)

- Implement a community-wide information campaign, "Talk. They Hear You," that focuses on parents' role in primary prevention
- Continue to learn about local partners and the work they're doing around prevention and harm reduction and how N-ASAP can support their work
- Train 300 students in Teen Mental Health First Aid
- Continue to educate the community on opiates, fentanyl, and vaping

Northfield Community College Collaborative (NCCC)

- Continue to expand the program through marketing and community outreach
- Expand the pathway options available to students, adding 2-3 additional pathways

Opportunity Reboot

- Provide academic and job support to more than 100 Opportunity Youth in Rice County
- Strive to ensure that at least 85% of participating youth re-enter or remain in school or secure stable employment
- Develop additional career pathway opportunities for participating youth