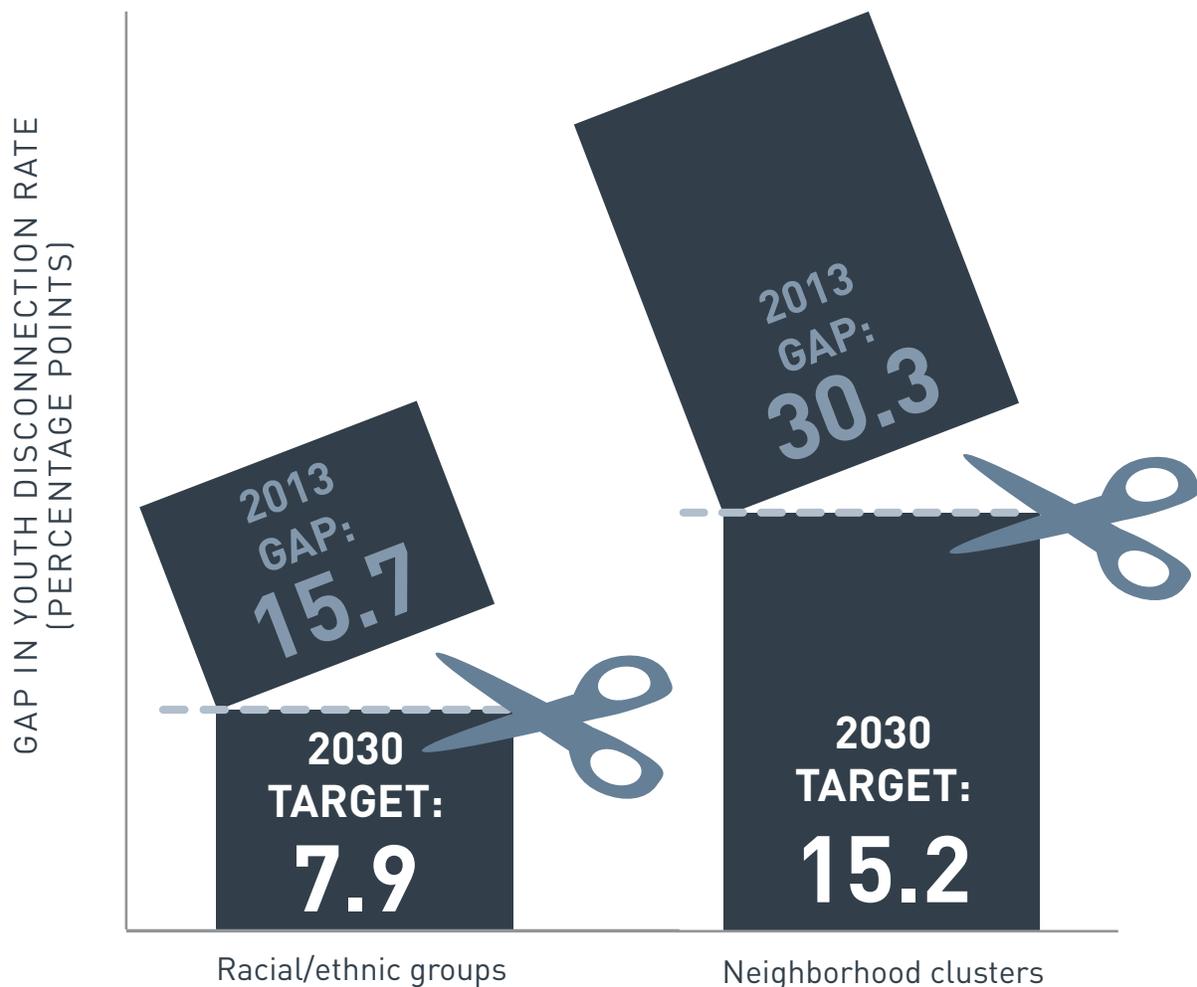


# HALVE THE GAP BY 2030

YOUTH DISCONNECTION  
IN AMERICA'S CITIES

## SAN DIEGO METRO AREA CLOSE-UP

KRISTEN LEWIS and SARAH BURD-SHARPS

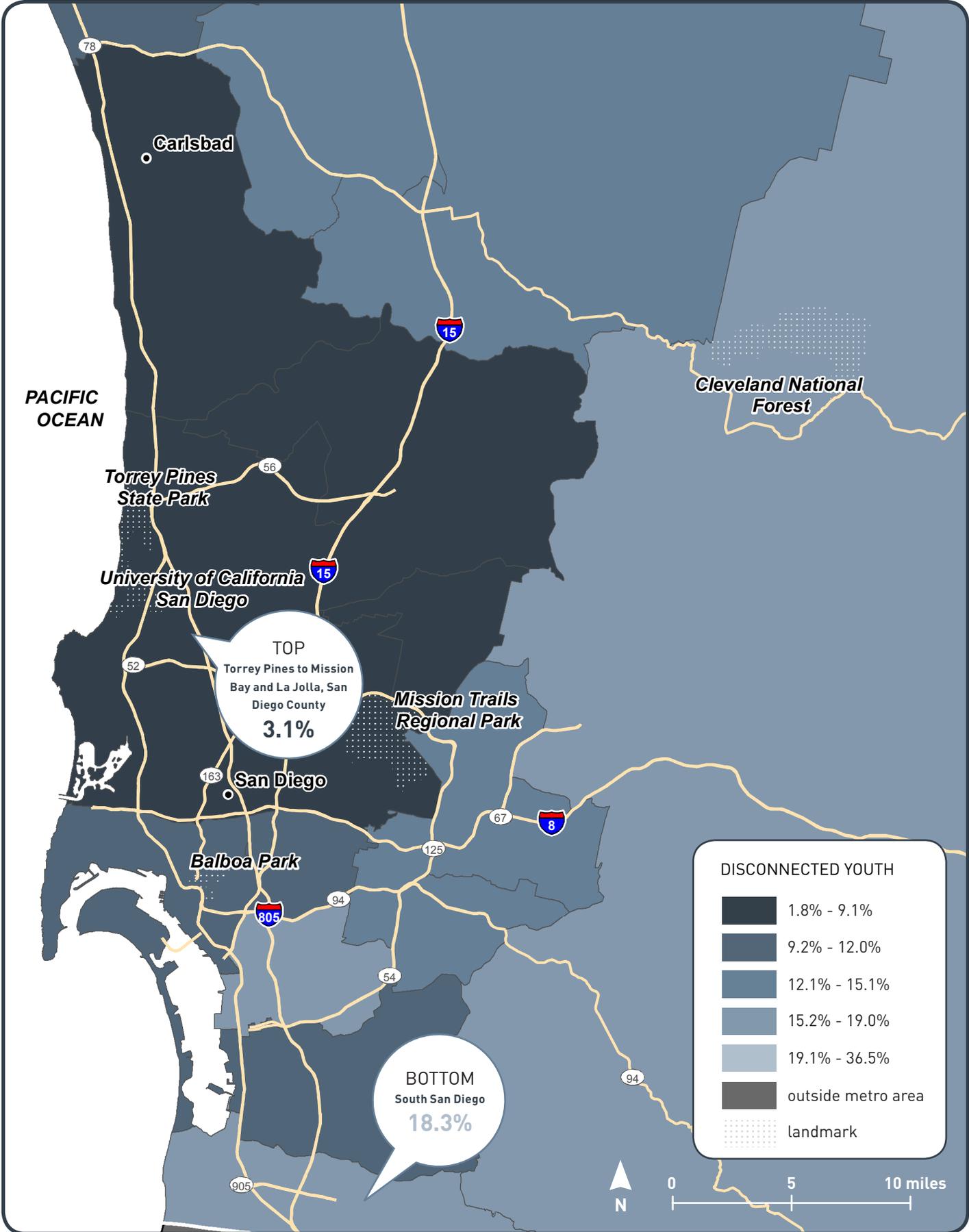


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# YOUTH DISCONNECTION IN THE SAN DIEGO METRO AREA



## About the San Diego Metro Area Close-Up

This document is an excerpt from *Halve the Gap by 2030: Youth Disconnection in America's Cities*. It portrays in detail the landscape of youth disconnection in the San Diego Metro Area, with a map of the metro area; identification of the neighborhood highs and lows; youth disconnection rates by race, ethnicity, and gender; and key well-being indicators to provide context.

## Who Are Disconnected Youth: Definition and Data Sources

**Disconnected youth are people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither in school nor working.**

Young people in this age range who are working or in school part-time or who are in the military are not considered disconnected. Youth disconnection rates in this report are calculated by Measure of America using employment and enrollment data from the 2011 American Community Survey (ACS) of the US Census Bureau. For further details, see the Note on Methods and Definitions.

Several official data sources exist that can be used for calculating youth disconnection. As a result, researchers working with different data sets, or different definitions of what constitutes disconnection, arrive at different numbers for this indicator. Measure of America uses the ACS for four reasons: (1) it is reliable and updated annually; (2) it allows for calculations by state and metro area as well as by the more granular census-defined neighborhood clusters within metro areas; (3) it includes young people who are in group quarters, such as juvenile or adult correctional facilities, supervised medical facilities, and college dorms; and (4) it counts students on summer break as being enrolled in school.



**Measure of America**, a project of the Social Science Research Council, provides easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding well-being and opportunity in the United States and to stimulate fact-based dialogue about issues we all care about: **health**, **education**, and **living standards**. The root of this work is the human development and capabilities approach, the brainchild of Harvard professor and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.

Human development is about improving people's well-being and expanding their choices and opportunities to live freely chosen lives of value. The period of young adulthood is critical to developing the capabilities required for a full and flourishing life: knowledge and credentials, social skills and networks, a sense of mastery and agency, an understanding of one's strengths and preferences, and the ability to handle stressful events and regulate one's emotions, to name just a few. Measure of America is thus concerned with youth disconnection because it stunts human development, closing off some of life's most rewarding and joyful paths and leading to a future of limited horizons and unrealized potential.

## KEY WELL-BEING INDICATORS

**HD Index:** 5.66 out of 10

**HD Index ranking:** 9th out of 24

**Total population:** 3,138,183

**Adult unemployment rate:** 8.8%

**Adults with at least bachelor's degree:** 33.7%

**Poverty rate:** 15.1%

**Youth unemployment rate (ages 16–24):** 18.5%

**School enrollment rate (ages 16–24):** 58.2%

Sources: *Measure of America 2013-2014* and U.S. Census Bureau, 2011.

The youth disconnection rate in the **San Diego metro area** is 12.2 percent, fourth best in the nation. San Diego has the lowest youth disconnection rate of California's four largest metro areas. The San Diego metro area, which encompasses all of San Diego County, has a disconnection rate 2.4 percentage points lower than the national average; about 56,000 young people are neither in school nor working.

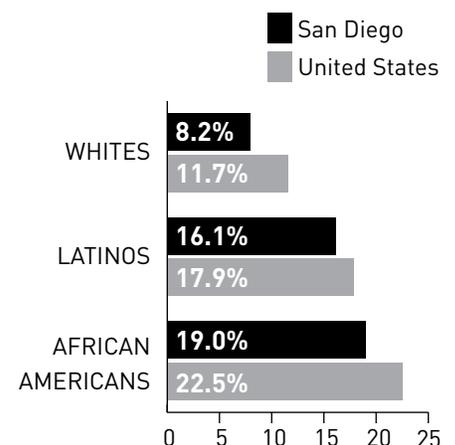
### Youth Disconnection by Race and Ethnicity

Variation in disconnection rates in the San Diego metro area by race and ethnicity follows national trends, but in each case, San Diego has better-than-average outcomes. Whites have the lowest rate of disconnection, 8.2 percent, followed by Latinos with a rate of 16.1 percent, nearly double that of their white counterparts. African American young people have the highest rate of disconnection at 19 percent. In other words, whereas fewer than one in ten white youth is likely to be disconnected, nearly one in five African American young people is disconnected. The number of Asian Americans in San Diego in this age range is too small for reliable calculations.

### Youth Disconnection by Gender

While nationally young men are slightly more likely than young women to be disconnected (15.1 percent versus 14.1 percent), the pattern in San Diego is reversed and the gap is wider. Young women are significantly more likely to be disconnected than young men—14.8 percent as compared to 10.1 percent. Nearly 6,000 more young women than men are not working and not in school. This pattern also appears in Portland,

**How Do Racial and Ethnic Groups Compare to Each Other and to Their National Counterparts?**



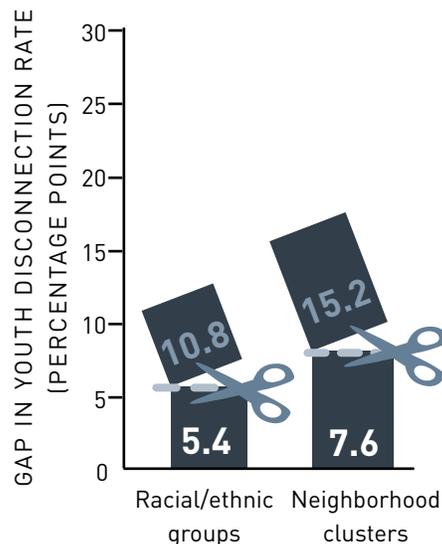
Houston, and Dallas. While this reversal from the national trend may be due to a number of factors, all of these metro areas, except for Portland, have a larger Latino population than the cities that follow the national trend. Latinos are the only major racial and ethnic group where women are, on average, considerably more likely to be disconnected than young men.

### Youth Disconnection by Neighborhood

The San Diego metro area is made up of sixteen neighborhood clusters. Youth disconnection ranges from a low of 3.1 percent in Torrey Pines to Mission Bay, which includes the community of La Jolla, to 18.3 percent in South San Diego. This is not the most extreme range among major US cities (in Chicago and New York, the highs and lows are separated by some 30 percentage points), yet in a relatively small metro area, this six-fold difference is considerable.

The two least connected neighborhoods, National City and South San Diego, are among those with the largest share of Latinos in their population. Conversely, San Diego’s three most connected neighborhoods have the smallest Latino populations. Interestingly, the East County area to the east of San Diego proper, with the third highest rate of disconnection (17.1 percent), has a majority white population. In this part of San Diego County, only 22 percent of adults have at least a bachelor’s degree, compared to 34 percent of adults in the San Diego metro area overall. Adult education levels are a strong predictor of youth disconnection.

### Halve the Gap in San Diego



### Most Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
Torrey Pines to Mission Bay and La Jolla, San Diego County, CA	3.1
Poway, CA	5.8
Encinitas, CA	7.0

### Least Connected Neighborhood Clusters

NEIGHBORHOOD	RATE OF YOUTH DISCONNECTION (%)
East County, San Diego County, CA	17.1
National City, San Diego County, CA	18.0
South San Diego, CA	18.3