



Child
Friendly
Cities
Initiative

unicef 
for every child



Local Action Plan For Youth Child Friendly Cities Initiative

City of Decatur | Parks & Recreation Department





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Letter from the Mayor



Among the City of Decatur's greatest strengths is its rich history of robust community engagement in local governance. The City's 2020 Strategic Plan highlights the importance of youth participation in decision-making in pursuit of our Equity and Racial Justice and Civic Trust goals. Decatur's participation as part of the first cohort of communities in the United States to pursue recognition from UNICEF USA as a Child Friendly City is another step toward full engagement of all City residents in the future of the City of Decatur.

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative is an international effort to encourage communities to put the rights and needs of children at the forefront of decision-making, infrastructure design, and community services. The initiative brings together local stakeholders and UNICEF USA to create safe, inclusive and child-responsive cities and communities.

For the City of Decatur, CFCI is an opportunity to view the quality of life of all children in our city through a holistic lens in order to celebrate our achievements to date and to expand and enhance child participation and the well-being of every child in our community. The initiative also presents an opportunity to invite collaboration and partnership with a wide range of child-serving agencies and organizations in the City of Decatur and the metro Atlanta region.

I am delighted to see our Local Action Plan for Youth come to fruition as part of this project. I believe in the power of the young people of this community; our youth can facilitate building a better future for everyone in Decatur. I appreciate every young person who has participated in this process so far, but particularly the 28 teens who worked diligently to develop our first Local Action Plan for Youth. The value of your dedication and commitment to this community cannot be overstated. Thank you for contributing your time, your energy and your vision to this community's future.

The City of Decatur looks forward to implementing the CFCI Local Action Plan for Youth that reflects this vision and that supports the work of UNICEF USA in pursuing a more equitable world for every child and young person.

Sincerely,

Mayor Patricia "Patti" Garrett



INTRODUCTION TO CFCI & STRATEGIC TEAM



What is the Child Friendly Cities Initiative?

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) is UNICEF USA's road map for building safe, equitable, just, inclusive and child-responsive cities and communities around the world. The initiative uses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a framework to help local governments prioritize the needs of children and elevate the voices of youth in local governance and decision making.

UNICEF USA defines a child-friendly city as one that is committed to adopting a child rights approach to local governance. A child-friendly city ensures that the voices, needs and priorities of children are an integral part of public policies, programs and decisions. Thus, a "child-friendly city" is a city that is fit for all.

To receive official recognition by UNICEF USA as a Child Friendly City in the United States, a city or system of local governance must enter into a partnership with UNICEF USA by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. The city or county must undergo the CFCI Framework for Action as outlined by UNICEF USA and demonstrate that it has met UNICEF's global minimum criteria. That means the city or county has:

- Demonstrated results for children within the scope of several CFCI goal areas to ensure a comprehensive child rights-based approach
- Meaningful and inclusive child participation
- Demonstrated dedication to eliminating discrimination against children and young people in policies and actions by the local government, including in the CFCI



How did City of Decatur get involved in CFCI?

In 2019, a City of Decatur resident named Jeremy Cole participated in the City's Decatur 101 program to learn more about how the City works. Jeremy worked for UNICEF USA and felt that the work the organization was doing domestically might be a great fit for the City of Decatur. Jeremy approached Assistant City Manager Linda Harris to suggest that the City might be interested in an upcoming kickoff meeting about child rights work to take place in Jacksonville, Florida on May 6-7, 2019. Linda Harris reached out to the City's Children and Youth Services (CYS) Division leadership team to share information about the upcoming meeting. CYS director Claire Miller and assistant director Nancy Brune headed down to Jacksonville to learn about child rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and hear from presenters who were actively implementing youth-led efforts in Switzerland, Canada, Boulder, Colorado, Brooklyn, New York and many other communities around the country.

This was the beginning of Decatur, Georgia's involvement with the Child Friendly Cities Initiative. The Children and Youth Services (CYS) Division team saw clear alignment between the goals of CFCI and the work of CYS in providing safe, enriching places for children and youth to become engaged members of the community. CYS reached out to potential partners in the Decatur Housing Authority, the Decatur Education Foundation, and the school system, City Schools of Decatur. Every one of these partners immediately saw the value in the CFCI effort and said "yes" to joining the CFCI Leadership Team.

In January 2021, the Decatur City Commission approved a Memorandum of Understanding with UNICEF USA to pursue recognition as a Child Friendly City. Decatur became the sixth community in the United States to sign an MOU with UNICEF USA as part of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative.

Decatur CFCI Partners

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS	COMMUNITY PARTNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Youth Services • Decatur Active Living • City Commission • City Manager's Office • Public Works • Decatur Police Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decatur Education Foundation • Decatur Housing Authority • City Schools of Decatur • Beacon Hill Middle School Student Center • Decatur High School Student Center
CFCI TASK FORCE	YOUTH COUNCILS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Task Force is composed of youth, community members and individuals in local government at different levels, the nonprofit sector, volunteers and local businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CFCI Teen Leadership Team is composed of 28 teen residents of the City of Decatur • The Decatur Youth Council is made up of 17 teens selected from applicants to the City Manager's Office program each year.



Core Teams: Decatur Youth Council & Teen Leadership Team

Decatur Youth Council

At their September 2021 meeting, the 17 members of the Decatur Youth Council supported the Child Friendly Cities Initiative by selecting (and writing) survey items for the Community Assessments segment of the Situation Analysis. They selected 10 items for 5-8 year olds, 16 items for 9-12 year olds and 20 items for 13-18 year olds. The questions were identified under each of the five goal areas of CFCI and the top voted items were included in the final surveys which were administered in Spring 2022 at Decatur High School, Beacon Hill Middle School, two K-5th grade afterschool programs, five K-2nd grade afterschool programs, two 3rd-5th grade afterschool programs, and online for middle and high school students not attending City Schools of Decatur.

The inaugural DYC class was chartered in 2017. Members are appointed each year by the City Commission for a one year term. Over 57 students have participated, with three quarters serving for two or more years from four different high schools and one home-schooler.



Teen Leadership Team

In September 2022, the first Decatur CFCI Teen Leadership Team was formed. All of the 28 applicants were Decatur High School students. The group of teen leaders included one 12th grader, five 11th graders, five 10th graders, and seventeen 9th graders. The Teen Leadership Team met every month from September 2022 through May 2023 for two hours at a time. The meetings included leadership development activities as well as Child Friendly Cities Initiative project activities. Over the course of the 2022-23 school year, the teen leaders gathered at City Hall to learn about and discuss personal experiences with the five goals of CFCI, evaluate the data collected through Community Assessments, and develop priorities and action steps. Participants who met attendance and participation guidelines received a stipend of up to \$400 in recognition of their contributions to the City. The culmination of the project was a presentation in May 2023 to the city commission of the draft Local Action Plan for Youth that the Teen Leadership Team developed over the course of the school year. In the 2023-24 school year, the Teen Leadership Team will focus on implementation of the year one goals in the Local Action Plan for Youth.



What is the Local Action Plan for Youth?

This document is City of Decatur’s Local Action Plan for Youth. The Local Action Plan (LAP) creates a roadmap for a three-year action plan to address five critical priorities identified by the Child Friendly Cities Initiative Teen Leadership Team in 2022-23. The LAP represents the next step in the CFCI process following a Situation Analysis to establish baseline information about the state of children in the City of Decatur community. Once approved by the city commission, the plan moves into the implementation phase.

CFCI Process



Conduct: Gather local government data and conduct a local situation analysis of child well-being, involving children and young people in the process.



Develop: Based on the findings of the situation analysis, work with community groups to develop a local action plan for children.



Support: Give guidance and support youth and community led projects.



Implement: Begin implementation of the plan with relevant local stakeholders, including children and young people.

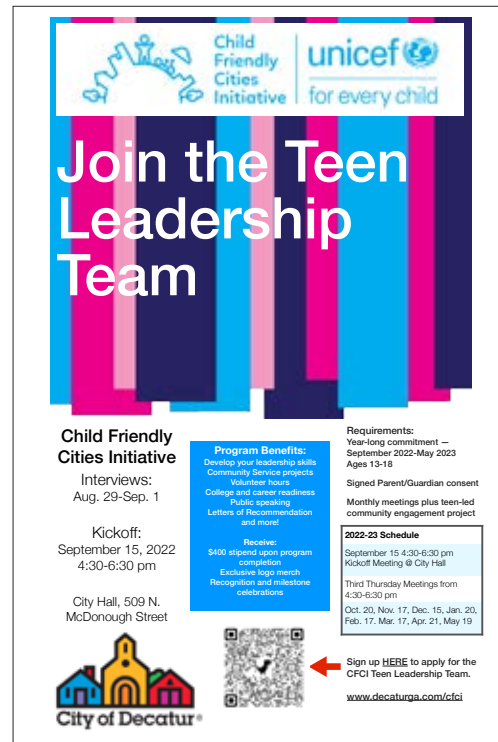


Monitor: After a statistically valid period of time, measure and evaluate the results of the local action plan and adjust as necessary.

Method for Developing the Local Action Plan

In September of 2021, the Decatur Youth Council came together and created a survey, using UNICEF's database, for each of the target groups. The identified target groups were children and young people in four grade ranges: K-2nd, 3rd-5th, 6th-8th and high school. In April of 2022, the surveys were posted for interactive voting at Beacon Hill Middle School and Decatur High School. 177 middle school students and 97 high school students shared their opinions. 275 K-2nd grade students and 127 3rd-5th grade students also gave their opinions through voting at nine after-school programs across the City. After the interactive voting closed, a total of 18 middle school students and 11 high school students met at Ebster Recreation Center and Legacy Park to tabulate the survey data and look for patterns and priorities. These results help guide the Decatur Local Action Plan's 5 priority areas.

In August of 2022, recruitment and marketing for a Teen Leadership Team (TLT) began and in September 2022, 28 Decatur teens formed the very first TLT.





Timeline of Activities

September 2021

Decatur Youth Council selects (and creates!) survey questions from a UNICEF database of questions for each target audience: K-2nd, 3rd-5th, 6th-8th and high school.

April 2022

Surveys are posted for interactive voting at Beacon Hill Middle School and Decatur High School. 177 middle schoolers and 97 high schoolers share their opinions. 275 K-2nd graders and 127 3rd-5th graders also gave their opinions through voting at nine after-school programs across the city.

April-May 2022

29 middle school and high school volunteers meet at Ebster Recreation Center and Legacy Park to tabulate the survey data and look for patterns and priorities.

August 2022

Recruitment and Marketing of Teen Leadership Team through middle and high schools

September 2022

Teen Leadership Team Kickoff Meeting with 28 Decatur teens

October 2022

Leadership Styles and 5 Goals of CFCI Discussion Part 1

November 2022

Levels of Listening, 5 Goals Part 2, Data Review and Priorities

Timeline of Activities

November-December 2022

Online survey of teens to evaluate
8 suggested priority areas

December 2022

Leadership Quotes Discussion, Selection
of Priorities for Local Action Plan

January 2023

Meeting with School Superintendent and
City Manager, Root Cause Analysis

February 2023

Team Agreements, 7 Habits 1 & 2,
Brainstorming Solutions

March 2023

7 Habits Let It Go!, Group Work
Local Action Plan Template

April 2023

Storytelling and Making the Case, Edit Local
Action Plan Draft, Develop Presentation Plan
for City Commission

May 2023

Present Local Action Plan for Youth to
City Commission & Celebration!

August 2023

Recruitment for Year 2
Teen Leadership Team

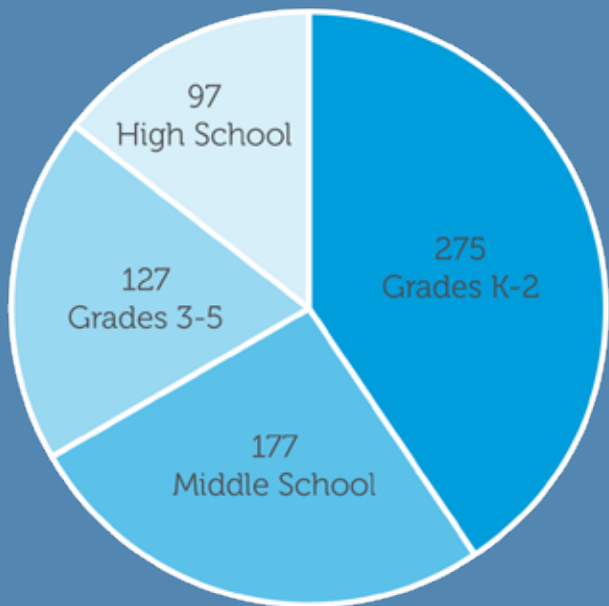
September 2023

Implementation begins!

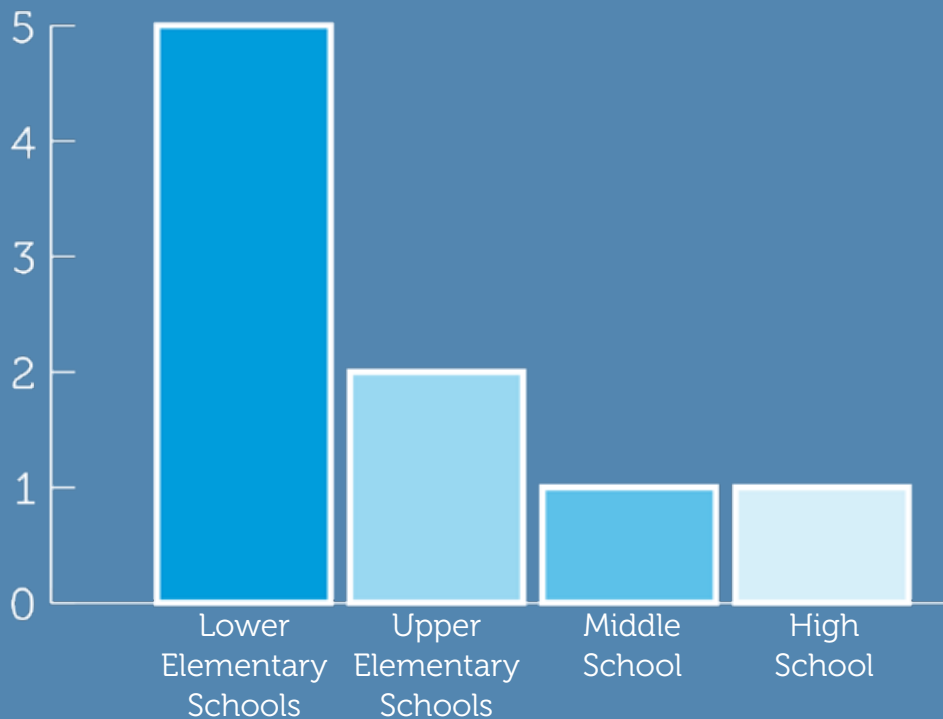


Target Groups

Youth Survey Participants by Segment



Schools in City Schools of Decatur System



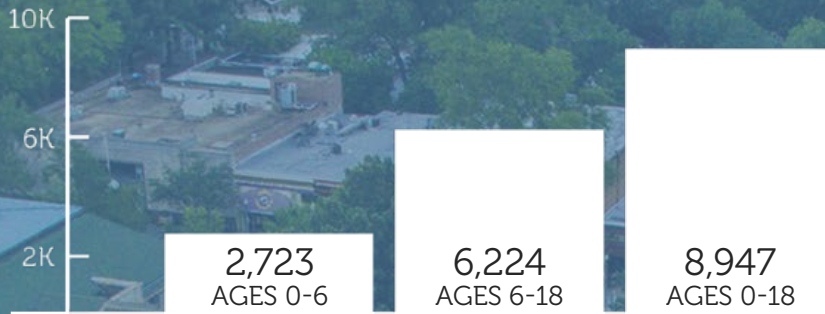
CITY OF DECATUR GEORGIA



CHILD EQUITY PROFILE 2020-2021 DATA

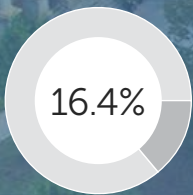
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CHILD POPULATION BY AGE RANGE

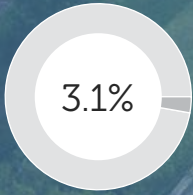


8,947
CHILDREN
AGES 0-18

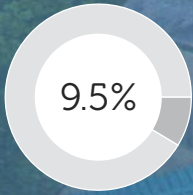
RACE AND ETHNICITY AGES 0-18



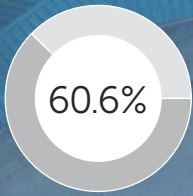
AFRICAN AMERICAN



ASIAN



HISPANIC OR LATINO



WHITE

4.7

SQUARE MILES



9

SCHOOLS



12

PARKS

3% IMMIGRANT/MIGRANT CHILDREN

521

CITY SCHOOLS OF DECATUR
STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR
FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH

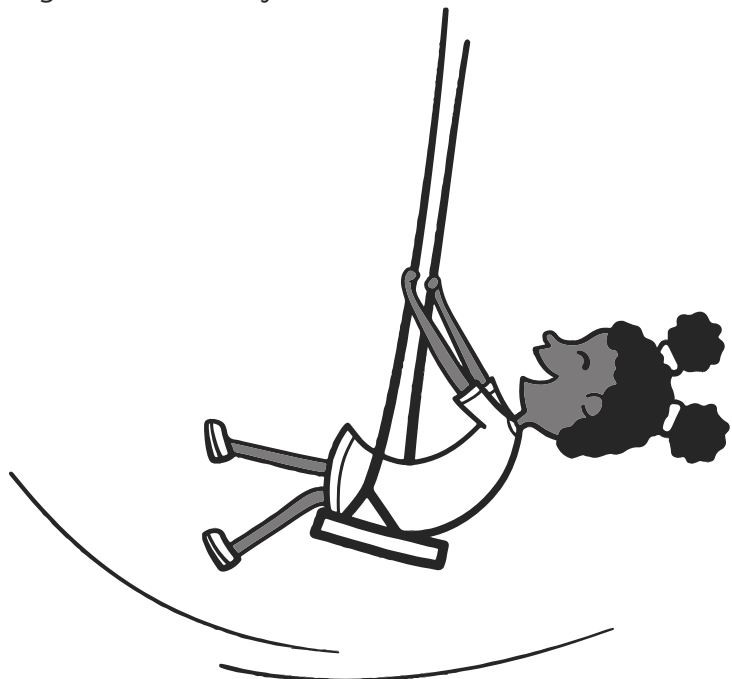
CFCI DECATUR VISION



Our Vision for a Child-Friendly Decatur

In the United States – and Decatur, Georgia is certainly no exception – we live in a culture that approaches children and teens as people to be managed and controlled, rather than as viable contributors to our communities and to society at large. We want to change that in Decatur. Children and teens are members of our community. The City of Decatur’s 2020 Strategic Plan, known as [Destination:2030](#), includes goals related to elevating youth voices in the Equity and Social Justice section of the plan. In order to achieve these goals, we must change the mindsets and behaviors of the adults in our community – parents, teachers, local government officials, service providers, and businesses. In 2022, Decatur’s mayor, Patti Garrett, was asked to speak on a national panel to answer the question “What do local governments need to do to prepare youth to participate in democracy?” Mayor Garrett’s answer? It’s not the youth who need preparing – it’s the adults.

Through the Decatur Child Friendly Cities Initiative, it is our hope that we can shift from a community that occasionally remembers to ask children and youth their opinions to one that makes no decisions about children and youth that impact them without meaningful, authentic engagement from children and youth in the decision making process. In the 4.7 square miles of incorporated city that is City of Decatur, Georgia, we are ambitious, bold and aspirational. We hope to impact every aspect of the community’s culture that touches the lives of children and youth to become a community that respects and elevates the rights of everyone – including our youngest community members.



Destination:2030

City of Decatur's 2020 Strategic Plan

The 2023 CFCI Local Action Plan for Youth in Decatur aligns very well with what is in the City of Decatur’s 10-year strategic plan known as Destination:2030

Here are some of those interconnections:

CFCI PRIORITY AREA	STRATEGIC PLAN THEME	ACTION ITEMS
Priority A: Increase Trust with Police	Equity & Racial Justice Civic Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » EQ.9 Update the Police Department’s Strategic Plan » EQ.12 Promote continuing community conversations » CT.01 Clearly assert the City’s responsibility to its citizens » CT.02 Continue to empower Decatur’s citizens
Priority B: Equitable and Inclusive City	Equity & Racial Justice Civic Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » EQ.12 Promote continuing community conversations » EQ.15 Update the Better Together Community Action Plan » EQ.18 Acknowledge and document Decatur’s entire history » EQ.21 Create a diversity, equity, and inclusion certificate program » EQ.22 Draw on local and national resources
Priority C: Mental Health	Equity & Racial Justice Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » EQ.22 Draw on local and national resources » EG.14 Follow human-centered design techniques » Mission Statement 3: Work together. Design and promote ample and ongoing opportunities for community engagement, collaboration, and regional, cross-sector partnerships.
Priority D: Environmentally Conscious City	Climate Action Equity & Racial Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » CA.11 Educate the community on true sustainability » CA.14 Empower youth activists » CA.16 Create a compost collection program » MB.02 Plan for the “10-minute neighborhood”
Priority E: Improve Public Spaces	Civic Trust Equity & Racial Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » EQ.02 Diversity events and festivals » EQ.10 Follow the Welcoming Standard » EQ.17 Make public spaces more welcoming » MB.02 Plan for the “10-minute neighborhood” » EG.11 Replicate successful public spaces
Children’s Participation	Equity & Racial Justice Civic Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » EQ.11 Work to make sure all voices are heard » EQ.12 Promote continuing community conversations » CT.03 Inspire civic responsibility » CT.07 Continue to involve youth in decision making

Overall Connections between the Child Friendly Cities Initiative and Destination:2030 Goals

EQ.14 Achieve recognition as a Child-Friendly City

EQ.22 Draw on local and national resources (reflected in local partnerships with DEF, CSD, DHA and national partnership with UNICEF USA)

For a full look at Destination:2030 visit: decaturn2030.com

The CFCI Local Action Plan also aligns with the five mission statements of the Destination:2030 plan

1

THINK HOLISTICALLY

Identify and leverage opportunities to create interconnected policies, programs and projects that achieve equitable outcomes across all community priorities.

2

CONFRONT CLIMATE CHALLENGES

Align our goals and practices to strengthen environmental sustainability and resilience in our city and region.

3

WORK TOGETHER

Design and promote ample and ongoing opportunities for community engagement, collaboration, and regional, cross-sector partnerships.

4

EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY

Define what success looks like, measure outcomes along the way, and tell our story.

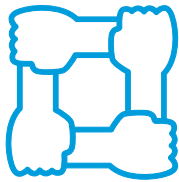
5

PIONEER INNOVATION.

Inspire ourselves and others by continuing to seek bold and creative solutions in planning and doing.

CFCI Goal Areas

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative provides a governance framework for building child-friendly cities and communities. The five goal areas below form the basis of this work. Under these goal areas, cities and communities can choose the areas to focus on, based on the needs and priorities of local children and young people. The City of Decatur's situation analysis included survey questions related to each of the five goal areas in order to identify needs and gaps.



Safety and Inclusion: Every child and young person is valued, respected and treated fairly within their communities and by local authorities.



Children's Participation: Every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account in public laws, policies, budgets, programs and decisions that affect them.



Equitable Social Services: Every child and young person has access to quality essential social services.



Safe Living Environments: Every child and young person lives in a safe, secure and clean environment.



Play and Leisure: Every child and young person has opportunities to enjoy family life, play and leisure.

Community Assessment Scorecard



CFCI Goal Areas:

Safety and Inclusion

Children's Participation

Equitable Social Services

Safe Living Environments

Play and Leisure

What Do Children and Young People Say?

80% Have friends who are different from them
54% Feel safe from being teased or bullied
72% Feel safe at school
40% Can share ideas about things that matter to them in their city
63%* Feel it's safe to walk or ride a bike in their community
**18% of DHA survey respondents feel safe to walk or ride a bike*
DHA = Decatur Housing Authority

K-2nd Grade Children

58%* Trust police officers and other security guards in their community
**0% of DHA survey respondents trust police officers or other security guards*
41%* Believe girls and boys are treated equally in their community
**0% of DHA survey respondents believe girls and boys are treated equally*
53% Feel safe at school
70%* Have adults who they feel safe talking to about their problems
**0% of DHA survey respondents have adults they feel safe talking to about their problems*
68% Know where to get mental health care services
42%* Feel it's safe to walk or ride a bike in their community
**0% of DHA survey respondents feel safe to walk or ride a bike*
51% Feel the places for play in their community can be used by children with physical disabilities

3rd-5th Grade Children

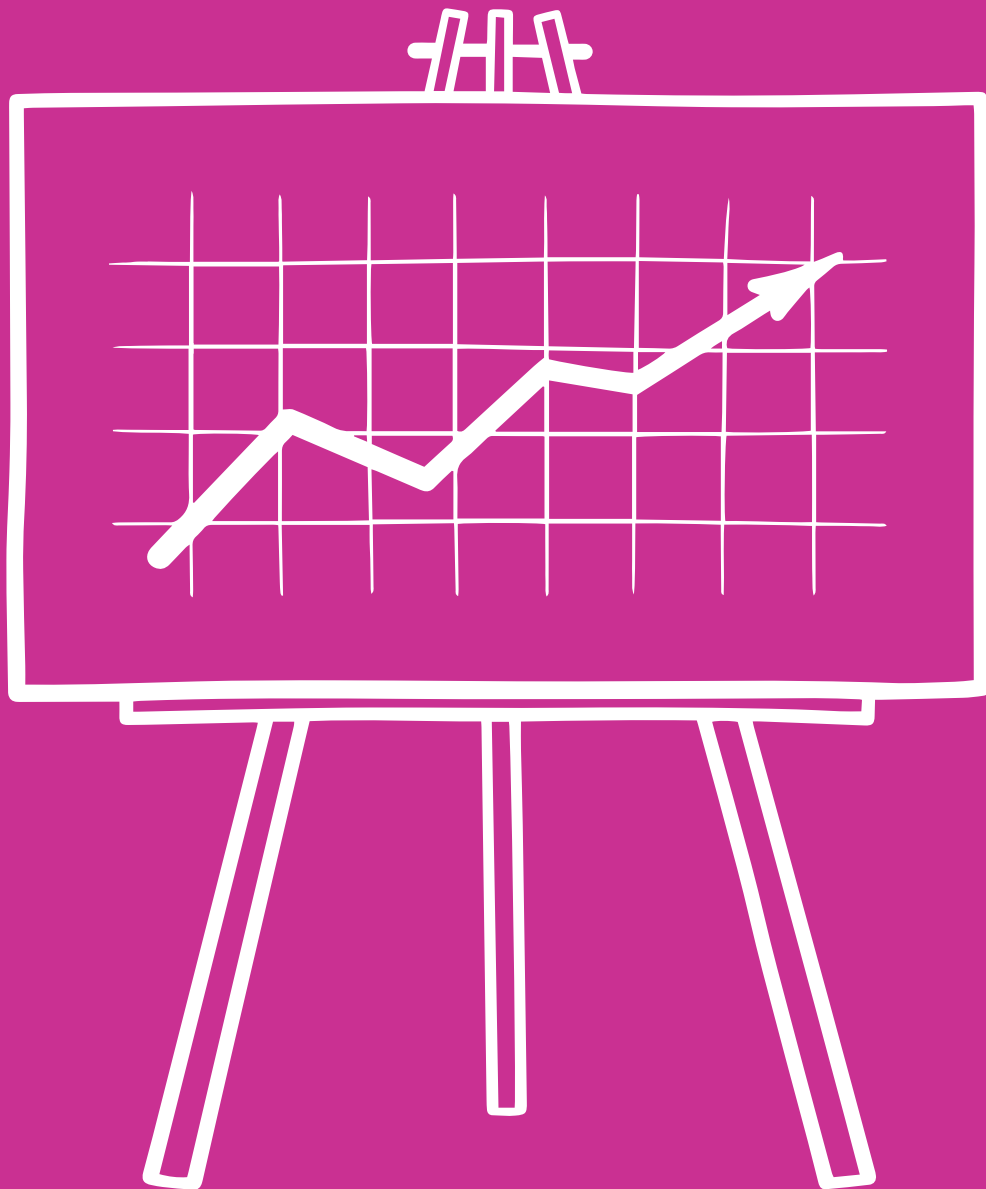
47% Trust police officers and other security guards in their community
20% Feel girls and boys are treated equally in their community
49% Feel safe at school
62% Have adults who they feel safe talking to about their problems
18% Feel adults act on their views and priorities for change in their school, community or city
31% Feel they have meaningful opportunities to give their opinions about school decisions
64% Know where to get mental healthcare services
63% Feel it's safe to walk or ride a bike in their community
43% Feel the places for play in the community can be used by children with physical disabilities

Middle School Students

18% Feel that all young people, regardless of their gender, are treated equally in their community
47% Feel safe from being bullied by other children at school or online
40% Feel safe at school
48% Have adults who they feel safe talking to about their problems
16% Feel they have meaningful opportunities to voice their ideas and concerns about decisions that affect them in their city
77% Feel it's safe to walk or ride a bike in their community

High School Students

CFCI LOCAL ACTION PLAN DECATUR



Local Action Plan Priority Areas



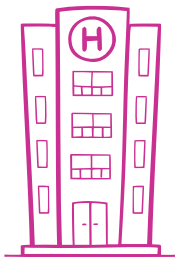
Priority A: Increase Trust with Law Enforcement

Increasing trust with law enforcement helps create a community where all children and young people are valued, respected and treated fairly by local authorities.



Priority B: Equitable and Inclusive City

All young people regardless of background including race, gender and religion are treated equally.



Priority C: Mental Health: Access & Awareness

Having access and awareness to mental health resources ensures that every child and young person has access to quality essential social services.



Priority D: Environmentally Conscious City

Becoming a more environmentally conscious city creates a safe, secure and clean environment for children and young people.



Priority E: Improving Public Spaces

Improving public spaces ensures that every child and young person has the opportunity to enjoy family life, play and leisure.

Priority: Increase Trust with Law Enforcement

Increasing trust with law enforcement takes into account two of CFCI's goal areas. CFCI Goal Area 1 states that every child and young person is valued, respected and treated fairly within their communities and by local authorities. CFCI Goal Area 2 states that every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account in public laws, policies, budgets, programs and decisions that affect them. According to the Community Assessment Scorecard only 53% of respondents expressed that they trust police and security guards in their community. Less than 1 in 3 or 31% of respondents felt like they had a voice in community and school decision making and only 17% felt like they had a voice in city decisions.

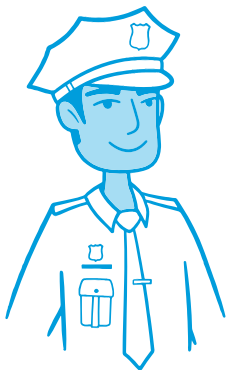
During the Teen Leadership Team workshops, young people recommended increasing trust with law enforcement by; building relationships with local police, implementing a community service day and creating a town hall structure including Q&A with police and members of the community.

What issue are we trying to solve?

In our community we believe that the level of trust with law enforcement and younger residents is not where we want it or need it to be. We chose this topic because we believe that we have the right to feel safe when speaking to officers about experiences regarding subjects such as race, equity, sexual violence, and more, without fear of blame, discriminatory treatment, or unjust violence.

What do we want to accomplish?

We want to increase trust and build relationships with law enforcement in our community by engaging students in activities that may touch on difficult topics. For younger students and residents this would include increasing trust through activities such as games, touring police stations, and regular Q&As. For older students this would look like a thorough community conversation with Q&A



on a regular schedule regarding harder and more serious topics such as the decreasing of tension between officers and people of color. For the community we strongly encourage officers to take part in community events such as cultural celebrations, community gatherings, and actively take part in town hall meetings throughout the year.

How do we want it to look?

In a perfect world people are not afraid to talk to law enforcement about difficult topics in our community.

Who do we want this to impact?

The target audiences include the youth and City of Decatur residents as well as members of law enforcement and people who work or spend time in Decatur. We also hope to engage the Board of Education and the City Commission.

How will we accomplish our goals?

Our group plans to have a sit down meeting with law enforcement in Decatur for Q&As. We also plan to encourage law enforcement to have a fun day with the younger kids in 2023-2024. We hope that law enforcement will continuously be a part of town hall meetings in the future to be able to answer community member's questions.

How will we measure our success?

We hope to create a minimum of 10 hours of sensitivity training for officers in the City of Decatur. We would like to see law enforcement participate in community events and increase the frequency they attend town hall meetings.

	STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTING INDIVIDUALS	RESOURCES	RESULTS
ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relationships with local police • Implement a community service day • Create a town hall structure of Q&A with police and members of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decatur Police Department • Teen Leadership Team (TLT) • Adult Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Commission • Police Chief • Budget • City Schools of Decatur • DHA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 hours of completed sensitivity training for law enforcement • Two town halls held with police • Increasing the number of attendees at town halls annually
<p>TIMELINE: Year 1 - Police Q&A & community participation • Planning sensitivity trainings Year 2 - Implementation of sensitivity trainings</p>				

Priority: Equitable and Inclusive City

Building an equitable and inclusive city takes into account many of CFCI's goal areas. CFCI Goal Area 1 states that every child and young person is valued, respected and treated fairly within their communities and by local authorities.. CFCI Goal Area 2 states that every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account in public laws, policies, budgets, programs and decisions that affect them. According to the Community Assessment Scorecard only 27% of respondents agreed that there was equal treatment in their communities. At the high school alone, this number dropped to 18%—fewer than 1 in 5 students.

During the Teen Leadership Team workshops, young people recommended building an equitable and inclusive city by; hosting an international night out, holding a career fair focusing on Black, Indigenous, and people of color owned businesses, cultural sensitivity training for educators and having a cultural diversity focused spirit week in schools.

What issue are we trying to solve?

Young people are treated differently based on their background including race, gender, and religion. There is a lack of trust between people and they don't see eye to eye because of cultural differences. These inequities and unfair treatment stem from the deeper history from people before us: systemic racism, history, gender beliefs, religion, bandwagon influenced by others, and lack of knowledge.

What do we want to accomplish?

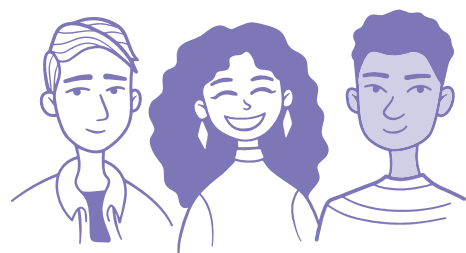
- Cultural training for educators
- International night out to learn about each other's cultures and religions
- Cultural/spirit week highlighting the three topics (race, gender, religion)
- Career fair

How do we want it to look?

We want all City of Decatur students to come together and have a better understanding of different races, cultures, religions, and beliefs. To have a safe place to be who they are and share parts of their lives that are important to them with others and build a stronger understanding of cultural differences.

Who do we want this to impact?

City of Decatur students, parents, faculty, and staff.



How will we accomplish our goals?

A partnership development team will work with us to accomplish our goals. Then we will put out all of our ideas and present our plan. After, we would begin working on our marketing plan, spreading the word to students and the community, and go on to implement our solutions.

For our International night out we will have people from different races and cultures attending. It is our hope that this event will grow bigger each year. Year one we are striving for 30 people and hope to double in size the following year.

Spirit week will be a school event where we come up with ways to shine a light on different cultures that are not well known or talked about. The first time we do this we will only expect for a couple of students to participate so that we can see our pros & cons. We want to do this twice a year.

The Career fair is an opportunity for African American professionals to connect with African American students and speak with them about different career choices. This will be twice a year to allow our youth to hear from a variety of professionals who look like them. We expect 15-20 African American students to attend in the beginning and hope to double attendance each time we host it.

How will we measure our success?

We will measure our success by continuing to grow the number of diverse attendees for each event yearly. We will conduct surveys throughout the school year to monitor how students are feeling about diversity and inclusion. We expect educators to be trained in cultural sensitivity and racial equity and inclusion.

	STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTING INDIVIDUALS	RESOURCES	RESULTS
ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting an International Night Out • Holding a career fair focusing on BIPOC businesses • Cultural sensitivity training for educators • Cultural diversity focused spirit week in schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership development team • Teen Leadership Team (TLT) • City Staff • School Staff • Parents & Families • Decatur children & youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City staff such as Stacy Green and Greg White • DHA Staff such as Corey Bivens • Parents • Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to different cultures by growing the number of attendees at each event yearly • Continuous polling on how students feel about D&I • Trained educators in cultural sensitivity
<p>TIMELINE: Year 1 - BIPOC professional career fair • Spirit week in schools • Planning for INO Year 2 - Implementation of educator trainings • International Night Out</p>				

Priority: Mental Health: Access and Awareness

Access and awareness to mental health services takes into account CFCI's Goal Area 3; Equitable Social Services. CFCI Goal Area 3 states that every child and young person has access to quality essential social services. CFCI Goal Area 2 states that every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account in public laws, policies, budgets, programs and decisions that affect them. While according to the Community Assessment Scorecard 64% of respondents agreed that they were aware of mental health services, the TLT felt more could be done outside of a school setting.

During the Teen Leadership Team workshops, young people recommended to improve access and awareness to mental health services in so far as; increasing the number of counselors available in schools, creating a mental health resource office outside of school hours, access to mindfulness activities and increasing awareness in the community on where to find these resources.

What issue are we trying to solve?

The lack of access and awareness of mental health resources in the community. According to a 2021 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 29% of high school students experience poor mental health.

What do we want to accomplish?

We want to create infrastructure at the rec centers or other community partner location, with trained people to provide counseling to students in grades 6-12, and their friends and family.



How do we want it to look?

A student center style mental health office out of the rec centers or other community partner location as a resource for students to use after school (4pm-8pm), plus a virtual option for more flexibility. A brochure to communicate where to get help both in and out of school. Hiring and training of more counselors and educators to address student stress and mental health issues. Supportive group activities like yoga, meditation, board games, and art therapy.

Who do we want this to impact?

Students in grades 6-12

How will we accomplish our goals?

(1) Create brochure to inform Decatur, (2) Create a detailed presentation, (3) Partner with Decatur Parks and Recreation Department or other community partners.

How will we measure our success?

We will create a mental health resource awareness campaign using various touch points and track our effectiveness by taking annual polls. Success would be a decrease in the percent of students who report poor mental health and an increase in utilizing the resources available. Our main success will be the creation of a mental health office out of a rec center or other community partner location.

	STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTING INDIVIDUALS	RESOURCES	RESULTS
ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of counselors available in schools • Create a mental health resource office outside of school hours • Provide access to mindfulness activities • Increase awareness in the community on where to find these resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Schools of Decatur • Decatur Parks & Recreation Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decatur Parks & Recreation Department • More counselors for schools • NAMI - DeKalb County office • Space at Decatur Recreation Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track engagement for a mental health awareness campaign • Percentage of students reporting poor mental health decreases • Creation of a mental health office outside of the school setting
<p>TIMELINE: Year 1 - Planning for mental health services outside of school Year 2 - Implementation of mental health services outside of school</p>				

Priority: Environmentally Conscious City

Becoming a more environmentally conscious city takes into account two of CFCI's Goal Areas. CFCI Goal Area 2 states that every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account in public laws, policies, budgets, programs and decisions that affect them. CFCI Goal Area 4 states that every child and young person lives in a safe, secure and clean environment. According to the Community Assessment Scorecard only 38% of respondents agreed that their community was clean. 31% of respondents felt like they had a voice in community and school decision making and only 17% felt like they had a voice in city decisions.

During the Teen Leadership Team workshops, young people recommended becoming a more environmentally conscious city by; the creation of a city-wide composting project, and forming partnerships with local conservation and environmentally friendly groups in and around Decatur.

What issue are we trying to solve?

Lack of focus and action towards the restoration of our environment and the education of our fellow community members. We would like to bring to light the significant food waste households and schools produce. We would like to keep compostable material out of landfills where instead of breaking down and being emitted into the atmosphere as methane, a greenhouse gas that's over 25 times worse than carbon dioxide, it is used to benefit the environment.

What do we want to accomplish?

To start a city wide composting initiative by utilizing the city's goal of creating a 10-minute neighborhood and establish a composting system where neighborhoods would be zoned to a local park within walking distance that has



composting bins. Community members will collect their compostable materials and bring them to the bins at their designated park.

How do we want it to look?

We would like to have composting systems located in the parks where community members can drop off their compost. We want to work with the City Schools of Decatur to reduce food waste in schools and encourage the schools to compost as well.

Who do we want this to impact?

We want to impact the current and future generations of the Decatur community.

How will we accomplish our goals?

We plan to activate partnerships to educate city residents about food waste and the emissions that waste creates that is damaging to our environment. We would like to develop new environmentally sustainable initiatives to change the behavior of community members and the school system.

How will we measure our success?

We will measure our success by the number of city residents reporting annual participation in the compost program and the number of compost stations in active use by the end of the first year of implementation. Furthermore, we want the community to be able to see the impact that they've made, and have residents be more knowledgeable about the environment. Environmental welfare is a leading issue for everyone and by providing resources we can encourage people to make a positive impact.

	STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTING INDIVIDUALS	RESOURCES	RESULTS
ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City wide composting • Conservation • Education outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Works Department • City Schools of Decatur • Teen Leadership Team (TLT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decatur Parks & Recreation Department • Scott Park Community Garden • Food Well Alliance • Environmental Sustainability Board • Decatur Cares About Climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City-wide composting program • Education about food waste and composting benefits
TIMELINE: Year 1 - Implementation of composting program				

Priority: Improving Public Spaces

Improving public spaces for children and young people takes into account two of CFCI's Goal Areas. CFCI Goal Area 1 states that every child and young person is valued, respected and treated fairly within their communities and by local authorities. CFCI Goal Area 5 states that every child and young person has opportunities to enjoy family life, play and leisure. According to the Community Assessment Scorecard 45% of respondents felt that their community had accessible play areas. While 68% agreed they have access to play & leisure spaces, only 25% of high school students surveyed believe that children with physical disabilities had safe, accessible places to play in their neighborhood that it wasn't accessible to youth of all abilities. In 2020 the American Communities Survey reported that 2.6% of children with disabilities or developmental delays reside in Decatur. That's around 232 children that would directly benefit from an inclusive, accessible playground.

During the Teen Leadership Team workshops, young people recommended to improve public spaces in so far as; building more inclusive playgrounds, and encouraging more family and community events for youth.

What issue are we trying to solve?

The lack of access to fun and exciting activities for kids of all abilities in Decatur, the lack of inclusive, accessible playgrounds.

What do we want to accomplish?

We want to create a large wheelchair-accessible playground and start an annual family event focused on kids.



How do we want it to look?

We would like kids of all abilities in Decatur to have access to fun and exciting activities as evidenced by wheelchair accessible playgrounds in the city and an annual kids festival to look forward to.

Who do we want this to impact?

We want the playground to appeal to people of all ages, including adults, and the festival to focus on kids aged 1-13.

How will we accomplish our goals?

Wheelchair Accessible Playground: (1) research, (2) getting city permission, (3) applying for grants and funding, (4) finding a plot of land, and (5) finding a contractor.

Festival: (1) obtaining city permission, (2) setting a date and time, (3) finding a location, (4) identifying available funding, (5) finding sponsors, (6) finding volunteers, and (7) finding vendors, games, activities, and musicians.

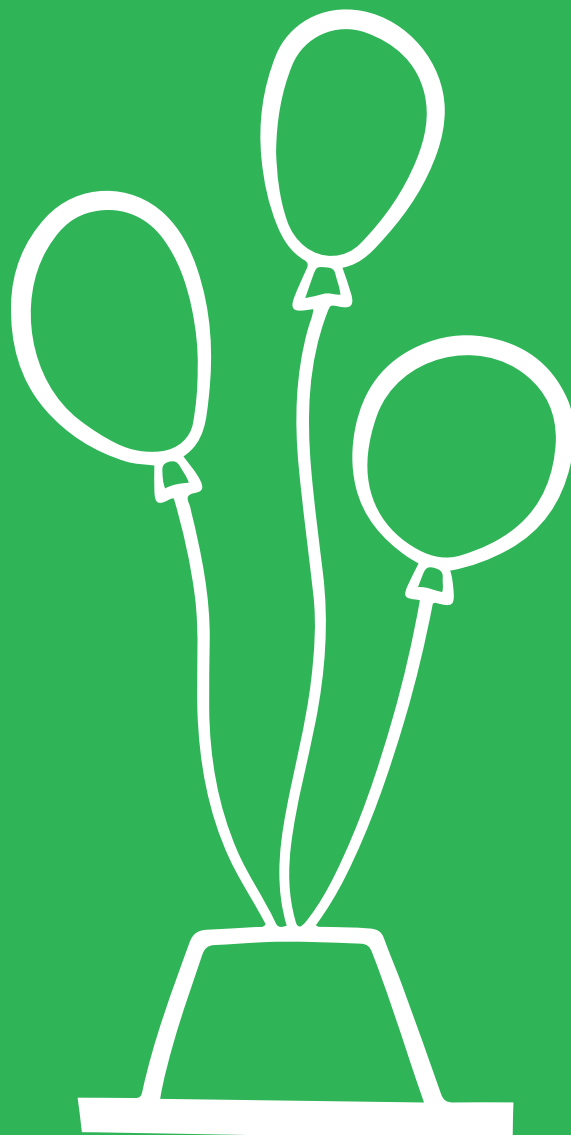
How will we measure our success?

We will measure our success by the completion of a wheelchair-accessible playground; ten people enjoying the playground.

More than three-hundred attendees at the festival, ten or more vendors, fifty volunteers, and a fun and enjoyable experience for all community members to have on an annual basis.

	STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTING INDIVIDUALS	RESOURCES	RESULTS
ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase inclusive, accessible playgrounds for all • Host a community event for youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members and leaders of the Teen Leadership Team • Decatur Parks & Recreation Department • City Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money • Contractors • Workers • Volunteers • Land/Space • Vendors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new fully inclusive, fully wheelchair-accessible playground • An annual festival for children with 300 attendees the first year
TIMELINE: Year 1 - Planning for inclusive playground • Planning for festival Year 2 - Implementation of inclusive playground Year 3 - Implementation of children's festival				

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Thank you!

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative is a fundamentally local initiative which relies upon the time, energy and passion of partners and community members to be successful.

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Teen Leadership Team

Mohamed A.

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Chloe H.

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Astrid J.

Harper J.

Yeo-Eun (June) L.

Allister L.

Neve M.

Riley M.

Anderson "Andie" P.

Justin P.

Simri R.

Sacadiyo S.

Chloe S.

William S.

Josephine T.

Samuel W.

Elias Y.

Children and Youth Groups

Decatur Youth Council

DHA S.T.A.R. program participants

Clairemont Animal Crackers

Glennwood Animal Crackers

Westchester Animal Crackers

Winnona Park Animal Crackers

Oakhurst Animal Crackers

Fifth Avenue Whiz Kids

Talley Street Whiz Kids

Middle and high school student volunteers and survey participants

Thank you!

City Commission

Patti Garrett, Mayor
Tony Powers, Mayor pro tem
Lesa Mayer, Commissioner
Kelly Walsh, Commissioner
George Dusenbury, Commissioner

Partners

Decatur Education Foundation
Decatur Housing Authority
City Schools of Decatur
DHS Student Center & Dianne Andree
BHMS (RMS) Student Center & Sabrena Shields
Children and Youth Services Division
Active Living Division
City Manager's Office
Community and Economic Development
Public Works

CFCI Leadership Team

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Doug Faust, Decatur Housing Authority
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Bryan Smith, community member
Becky Payne, community member
Sara Baldauf, community member
Greg White, Active Living Director
Nancy Brune, Children & Youth Services Assistant Director
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