SERVICE GAPS

in Youth Programming in L.A.

The Citywide Youth Development Strategic Plan highlights key **service gaps** identified through research, provider interviews, and youth feedback:

- **Limited Job and Career Prep** – Youth lack access to well-paying jobs, internships, and personalized workforce programs tailored to their diverse goals and needs.
- **Inadequate Mental Health Support** – There is a shortage of culturally competent mental health professionals in schools and community-based organizations.
- **Scarce Mentorship** – Sustained, high-quality mentorship opportunities that build youth resilience and social networks are lacking.
- **Insufficient Housing for Youth** – Transition Age Youth (TAY) face a persistent housing crisis, with Black youth disproportionately affected.
- **Safety Concerns** – Many youth feel unsafe in their neighborhoods due to poor infrastructure and a lack of secure gathering spaces.
- **Transportation Barriers** – Inadequate transportation prevents youth from accessing school and community programs.
- **Weak Transition Support** – Youth require more guidance to navigate key life stages, such as transitioning from school to work or between educational levels.
- **Lack of Safe, Drop-In Youth Spaces** – Few youth centers offer welcoming, walk-in access; many require burdensome intake processes that deter participation and limit the building of trust.
- **Food Insecurity** – Many youth and families face hunger, but service providers often lack funding to address basic nutritional needs.
- **Limited Out-of-School Enrichment** – Cuts to arts, sports, and after-school programs reduce engagement and access to positive, structured activities.
- **Insufficient Academic Support** – Youth, especially first-generation college aspirants, often lack the necessary academic resources and guidance to succeed.
- **Unaffordable Childcare and Early Education** – Limited access to affordable early learning and care widens educational and economic gaps.
- **Digital Inequity** – Many young people lack reliable internet access and devices, which restricts their ability to participate in digital learning and services.