

Community Building Curriculum Overview



Overall Objective: Youth will explore what it means to build community in order to be leaders for justice. Youth will learn more about the diversity and individual strengths within their own group and the importance of having diverse talents and strengths when building community. Youth will teach each other about the communities they are part of in Memphis and the strengths of each community. Youth will understand how individuals' strengths, combined with other assets in a community, can work together to create change and bring a community together. Youth will explore how the strengths in their communities can be activated to create change.

Guiding Questions:

- What are community, leadership, and justice?
- What does it mean to build community?
- What are some examples of how people in Memphis have built community and created change?
- What are community assets?
- What assets are in different communities in Memphis?
- How do you use strengths already in the community to help create change?
- How can youth bring together the strengths in their community to create change?

Key Concepts:

- **Creating change** and **advancing justice** should start in your own community.
- **Community** can be defined by geography or common interests/shared values.
- **Community assets** can be individual strengths, institutions (nonprofits, schools, government entities), associations (church groups, neighborhood watch, neighborhood associations), infrastructure (roads, buildings), or businesses. They are anything that you see as positive (or those things that have the potential to be positive) in your community.
- **All communities have strengths** that can be activated to make community improvements. In order to build and improve community, you should always start with the strengths that can be built upon to address the issues in the community (do not start with weaknesses in the community).
- **Communities** are made up of individuals who must build relationships and work together to use their collective strengths to make meaningful change.
- All **communities** are unique, and issues are best addressed by people in the community who know its strengths and weaknesses.

CORE STANDARDS Alignment

The BRIDGES Connect Curriculum has been aligned with the Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCRAS). All learning activities within the Connect Curriculum support and assume shared responsibility for attaining the standards. While it is necessary for youth and educational leaders to devote significant time and effort in various educational settings to attain these standards, participation in the BRIDGES Connect Curriculum will enhance students' knowledge and skills necessary for success in this endeavor. In addition, since the Connect Curriculum is inextricably linked to social justice and action issues embedded within race, ecology, economics and education, the learning activities intentionally promote the following College and Career Dimensions and youth's ability to:

- *Comprehend and Critique Significant Human/Social Issues
- *Build Strong Content Knowledge
- *Gain Self-Awareness
- *Demonstrate Independence as well as Collaboration
- *Respond to Particular Audience, Task, Purpose & Discipline
- *Value Evidence as Basis for Analysis, Opinion, Implications, Action
- *Use Technology and other Digital Media Strategically and Capably

In addition, participation in the Bridges Connect Curriculum offers a unique and critical opportunity for urban youth to develop, make a commitment to and demonstrate community leadership through academic pursuit, advocacy, and activism.