

# Labor Market Experiences among Not Working, Not-in-School Young Adults in Missouri

## Who are they?

Young adults ages 18 to 24 who are neither working nor in school.

## Why is this a problem?

Economic disconnection can have negative effects for both the individual and the broader economy. For example, it makes it harder for young adults to reenter the labor force and more difficult for employers to fill open job positions.

## How does it happen?

Barriers like a lack of access to affordable child care or transportation and difficulty getting or holding a job due to mental health challenges, disability or experience with the criminal justice system can impede young adults' participation in school or the labor force.



## Metro Area Young Adult Disconnection Rates



15.0%

Kansas City, MO-KS

13.9%

St. Louis, MO-IL

11.2%

Springfield, MO



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## Young Adult Disconnection Rates by Selected Demographic Characteristics

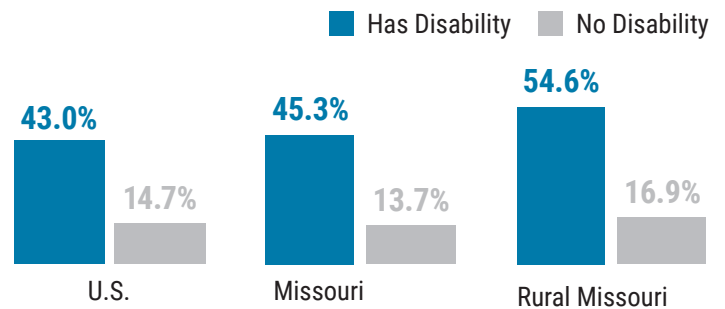


|                       | U.S.  | Missouri | Rural Missouri |
|-----------------------|-------|----------|----------------|
| <b>Total</b>          | 16.0% | 15.4%    | 19.2%          |
| <b>Race/Ethnicity</b> |       |          |                |
| White                 | 13.9% | 14.1%    | 20.3%          |
| Black                 | 21.4% | 21.7%    | 4.2%           |
| Hispanic              | 17.9% | 16.8%    | 14.2%          |
| Other Race(s)         | 15.7% | 15.6%    | 0.0%           |
| <b>Education</b>      |       |          |                |
| Some High School      | 21.9% | 18.6%    | 17.0%          |
| High School Diploma   | 24.3% | 24.8%    | 27.6%          |
| Some College          | 8.7%  | 7.0%     | 6.1%           |
| Bachelor's or More    | 10.8% | 8.1%     | 13.2%          |
| <b>Family Income</b>  |       |          |                |
| < \$25K               | 25.0% | 27.4%    | 40.8%          |
| \$25K to < 35K        | 21.1% | 20.6%    | 28.8%          |
| \$35K to < 50K        | 18.3% | 21.5%    | 22.7%          |
| \$50K to < 75K        | 15.4% | 14.4%    | 20.5%          |
| \$75K to < 100K       | 13.4% | 10.8%    | 7.8%           |
| \$100K to < 150K      | 11.5% | 9.5%     | 5.5%           |
| \$150K or More        | 10.0% | 6.2%     | 2.7%           |

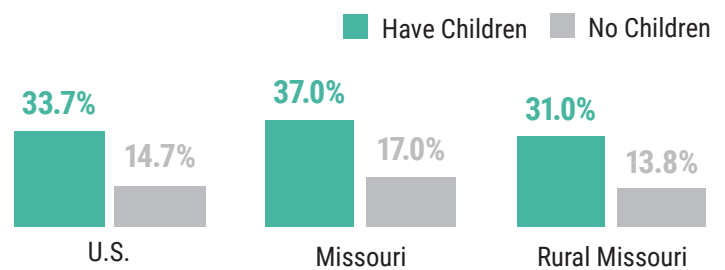
How to interpret: Out of all young adults in the U.S. with a high school diploma, for example, 24.9% of them are disconnected. Rural describes areas outside the state's metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas as identified in the Current Population Survey.

SOURCES: Current Population Survey microdata from January 2017 to June 2024 and Institute for Economic Equity calculations.

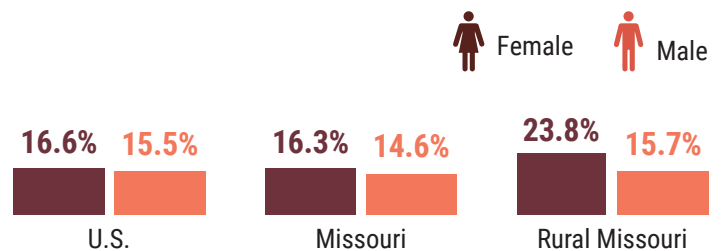
### Disability



### Children



### Sex



## Opportunities for Community Response

- **Create carpooling opportunities or offer shuttles to places of employment**
- Improve the child care ecosystem for families and providers
- Increase investment in and exposure to career pathways through experiential and project-based learning, internships, and career and technical education
- Promote a supportive environment for choosing employment directly out of high school
- Review accommodations for physical disabilities and mental health needs

- **Assess whether there are local, entry-level job opportunities that do not require work experience or a college degree**

**Let's Go Smart: Transportation Collaborative**, an initiative of Community Partnerships of the Ozarks, facilitates connections between people, jobs and the community through multiple modes of transportation across the greater Springfield area. It was created through the merger of the Transportation Collaborative, which grew out of the Impacting Poverty Commission, an initiative designed to prioritize transportation issues to lower poverty and build a stronger community, and Let's Go Smart, a subcommittee of Ozark Greenways founded to bridge the transportation gap and provide better access to the workforce.

Through the on-site construction training program **YouthBuild**, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and featuring DOL-approved apprenticeships, **Job Point** offers youths and young adults the opportunity to gain hands-on experience building affordable, single-family-style homes for low-income families in Columbia's most impoverished neighborhoods. YouthBuild students also work to improve local infrastructure through road and bridge construction projects as part of its highway maintenance and repair apprenticeship. Whether they are working to improve the community through service-learning opportunities or building toward their high school diploma equivalent, Job Point's YouthBuild program provides students an individualized learning environment that gives them the tools and support they need to succeed.