

Denver's Child & Youth Friendly City Initiative

Core Focus: A Community-Wide Conversation About What Makes, Or Will Make Denver a Child and Youth Friendly City

Inspired by innovative efforts around the world to create healthy, high-functioning cities for all, Denver's Child & Youth Friendly City Initiative aims to:

- ensure children and youth have a *voice and are decision makers* in their communities and in Denver,
- strengthen people and places that make children and youth feel recognized and valued in Denver, and
- ensure that Denver supports the healthy development of children and youth.

Core Focus: A Community-Wide Conversation Campaign

Creating a child and youth friendly Denver requires the long-term engagement and commitment of a broad array of citizens. Over the next 9 months (April to December 2007), the core focus of the Initiative is to document thousands of community conversations about what makes, or will make, Denver a child and youth friendly city. Working with organizations and individuals throughout Denver, we will:

- Gather 10,000 voices.
- Create opportunities for meaningful conversations and involvement at every level of the community.
- Collect information about existing resources and relevant data about Denver's children, youth and families.

Key features of the Community-Wide Conversation Campaign:

- Youth will be actively involved in every aspect of the campaign.
- Conversations focused on a few key questions about what makes or will make Denver a child and youth friendly city will take place in hundreds of natural connecting places throughout the city, and community members can also participate online.
- The dynamic, youth- and adult-facilitated process will create a continual feedback loop, providing opportunities for people to share their voice, receive information, engage in deeper conversation, learn what others are doing, identify their own action steps, share their stories, inspire more conversations, and stay connected to the ongoing community-wide conversation.

Background on Denver's CYFC Initiative:

In June 2006, representatives from the Mayor's Office for Education and Children, Assets for Colorado Youth, and the Children, Youth and Environments Center for Research and Design at the University of Colorado at Denver launched the Denver CYFC Initiative, inspired by the principles of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC guarantees young people the right to supportive environments and opportunities to make their voices heard in matters that affect them. We are working with key stakeholders from around Denver to implement the CYFC Initiative, including the Honorable Mayor John Hickenlooper, Denver Public Schools Superintendent Michael Bennet, and other Denver leaders. By forming a broad-based coalition of public and private partners, we aim to unify and strengthen Denver's efforts to provide healthy, safe, and caring environments for young people, and, by extension, all residents of Denver. This Initiative will not only benefit Denver's children and families, but will also help the city attract and retain the workforce essential to the city's long-term well-being.

To get involved in the Campaign, or for more information, contact:

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A child and youth friendly city is a city that is friendly to all.