YOUTH POLICY LAB
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

At the University of Michigan, we are surrounded by some of the nation's leading experts on nearly every social challenge and, as a public institution, we are committed to applying that knowledge to the public good.

To our YPL supporters:

At the beginning of 2021, we were hopeful that the global COVID-19 pandemic would begin to wane and that access to safe and effective vaccines, along with other public health measures, would allow us all to return to some sense of normalcy by year's end. And while the spike in cases and deaths over the holiday season was devastating to see, we are again encouraged by the direction of case counts, hospitalizations, and vaccination uptake here in Ann Arbor.

Despite all of the continued challenges the Lab and our partners faced in the past year, we are proud of our accomplishments and are excited to share some of them with you in this report. From raising the funds for several new Data & Policy Fellowship positions to establishing multiple new statewide evaluation partnerships, the Lab exceeded our own expectations again this past year.

And as we look forward to what 2022 will bring, we anticipate further growth this year with at least four new staff joining the team and new projects and partnerships on the horizon. This growth will support our team as they continue to produce sound research and social policy insights in service of improving outcomes for Michiganders - all while adjusting to the changing conditions created by this global pandemic.

We are tremendously grateful for your continued support and are hopeful that you will stay on this journey with us in the year to come.

Best,

Brian Jacob
Co-director

Robin Jacob
Co-director
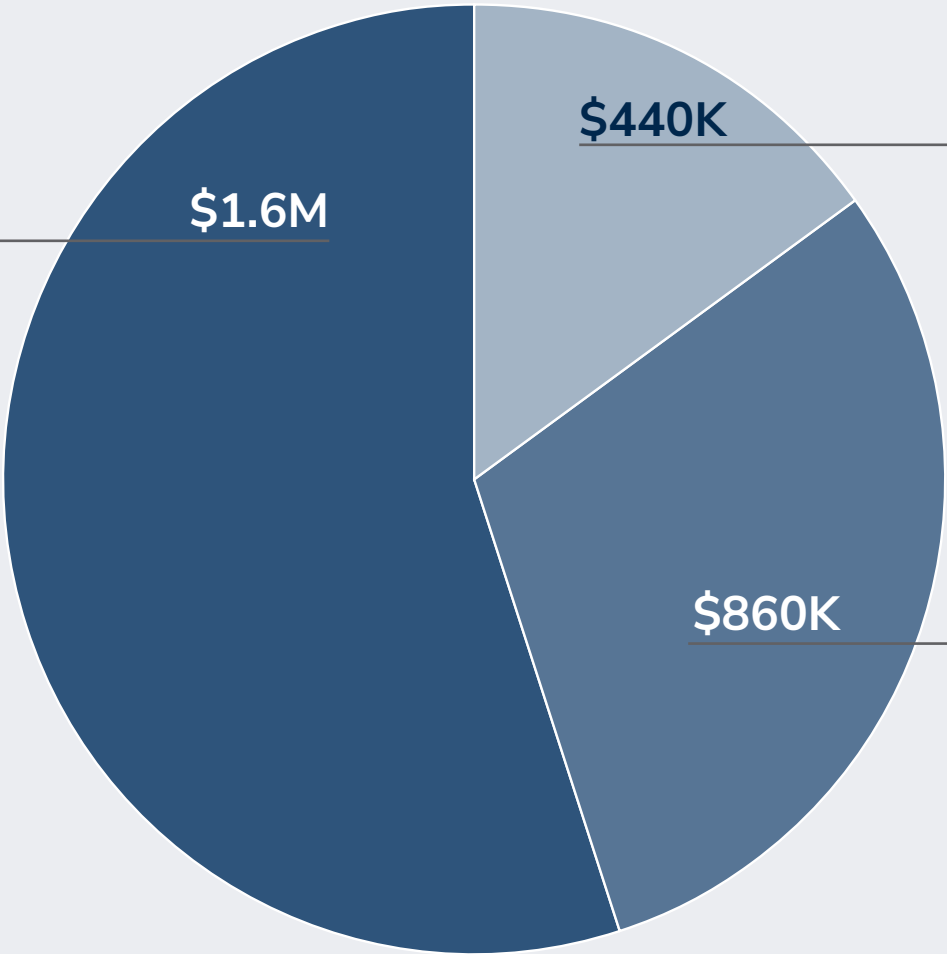
Andrea Plevek
Executive Director

OUR RESEARCH AT A GLANCE

FUNDED PROJECTS

The Lab received $2.9 million in new funding in 2021.

THRIVING ADOLESCENTS

$1.6M

Michigan Department of Education
Evaluating Project AWARE's impact on youth mental health service infrastructure in three Michigan communities.

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
TRAILS Sstate Wide Expansion: Evaluating the impact of the TRAILS program on student mental health and academic outcomes as it is rolled out across the state of Michigan.

State of Colorado
TRAILS Colorado: Evaluating the impact of the TRAILS program on student mental health and academic outcomes in three school districts in the state of Colorado.

TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD

$440K

Michigan Justice Fund	Michigan Data & Policy Fellow (Justice)
Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce	Detroit Regional Chamber Educational Attainment (Detroit Compact)
Kresge Foundation	Futures for Frontliners
Michigan Department of Education	Career and Technical Education

EARLY STARTS

$860K

Michigan Dept. of Health and Human Services	Healthy Moms Healthy Babies MIHP Pilot
	Strong Beginnings
Stranahan Foundation	High 5s Adaptation
Michigan Health Endowment Fund	Michigan Data & Policy Fellow (MIHP)

YOUTH POLICY LAB

Learn more at: youthpolicylab.umich.edu

WORK THAT IMPACTS MICHIGANDERS

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

In 2021, the Lab published various policy briefs and research findings, and continued research on upwards of 20 evaluations for our partners. Our findings will aid in strengthening programs that impact the futures of youth in Michigan.

Improving Michigan's Maternal + Infant Health

Principal Investigator: Robin Jacob

With funding provided through Governor Whitmer's Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies initiative, YPL is evaluating the effectiveness of a pilot program to allow MIHP provider agencies to bill for additional services and care coordination for families with high levels of need for basic services. The pilot program launched in June 2021, with over forty MIHP agencies currently participating.

Detroit Student's College Pathways and Outcomes

Principal Investigator: Robin Jacob

YPL supports the Detroit Regional Chamber's Detroit Drives Degrees (D3) initiative as a strategic data partner. In an analysis of high education pathways and outcomes in Detroit, we find that: College enrollment among Detroit high school graduates declined between 2010 and 2018, yet full-time and 4-year enrollment increased; Detroit high schools offer a wide range of college-supportive resources; Academic preparation is only one barrier to college success. Students report financial concerns, lack of transportation, and family responsibilities as equally large obstacles to postsecondary success.

Career Technical Education in Michigan- Students with Disabilities

Principal Investigator: Brian Jacob

Findings show that while students with disabilities (SWD) participate in career and technical education (CTE) at roughly the same rate as other students, they are less likely to complete a program. That said, those who do complete a program are significnatly more likely to graduate high school compared to SWD who never participate. This report highlights strategies that local districts can pursue to help increase the number of SWD who complete CTE programs.

NAF Students in Detroit

Principal Inviestigator: Brian Jacob

NAF partners with high-needs communities to improve outcomes for students by implementing NAF academies - small learning communities within existing high schools. In an analysis of NAF in detroit, YPL found that NAF students perform better on grade 8 math and reading tests, and they significantly perform their peers in high school outcomes even when accounting for differences in student characteristics.

Addressing the Youth Mental Health Crisis in Detroit

Principal Investigator: Robin Jacob

Working with the TRAILS program at the UM Depression Center, YPL published a comprehensive needs assessment of mental health in Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD). Findings show that a large portion of students across DPSCD experience substantial symptoms of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation; and many have experienced traumatic events. Several groups of students are particularly vulnerable. YPL and TRAILS are working with DPSCD to build school-based mental health services for students based on the findings of this needs assessment.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Long-Term Effects of Enhanced Early Childhood Math Instruction
MDRC

Co-Authors:
Robin Jacob, Shira Kolnik Mattera, Cullen MacDowell, Pamela Morris

Early math enrichment experiences can lead to lasting gains for children across a variety of outcome domains, even years later. The findings suggest that high-quality early math instructional practices could make a difference, particularly for children with the greatest need.

Mental Health Needs in a Large Urban School District: Findings from a Web-based Survey
Health Services Research Journal

Co-Authors:
Robin Jacob, Megan Foster Friedman, Katja Robinson

Findings from a 2019 needs assessment conducted by TRAILS/YPL in the Detroit Public Schools Community District will be published in the Health Services Research journal in June 2022. The paper reports that DPSCD students experience symptoms of depression and anxiety at rates higher than national averages, and over one-third of students whose symptoms indicate a need for mental health care are not accessing it. **These findings have been used to shape the development of comprehensive school-based mental health supports in DPSCD.**

Kindergarten in a Large Urban District
Educational Researcher

Co-Authors:
Mimi Engel, Robin Jacob, Amy Claessens, Anna Erickson

Early learning experiences are important for shaping educational experiences. Findings from classroom observations conducted in a large urban school district indicate that kindergarteners in lower income schools spend more time on reading and mathematics and experience more non-instructional time than their peers in higher income schools. They also spend substantially less time being physically active and have fewer opportunities to choose their own activities. As part of a larger partnership with this district, we have shared these findings and are working with them to increase opportunities for high quality learning experiences for all students.

Michigan Data & Policy Fellowship

Project Managers: Megan Foster Friedman, Jeremy Guardiola

The Youth Policy Lab has expanded our Data & Policy Fellowship Program with three new funded fellowship positions for the 2022 - 2024 cohort:

1. The Michigan Justice Fund is supporting YPL to place a fellow in the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity (MDLEO) who will identify and advance policies and programs that improve employment and training outcomes for individuals involved in the justice system in Michigan.

2. The Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation is supporting a new Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) fellowship to focus on ways to better align and integrate home visiting programs, with the ultimate goal of improving maternal and infant health, as well as early childhood outcomes.

3. The Michigan Health Endowment Fund is supporting a fellow who will build upon the work of YPL's inaugural MDHHS fellow that focused on quality assessment and improvement within the Maternal & Infant Health Program (MIHP).

Michigan Justice Fund

M&MFisher — Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation

MICHIGAN HEALTH ENDOWMENT FUND

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

MDHHS — Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

University of Michigan Youth Policy Lab
5201 Institute for Social Research
426 Thompson St
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

734-647-8829
🐦 @YouthPolicyLab
youthpolicylab.umich.edu

Youth Policy Lab

The University of Michigan Youth Policy Lab helps community and government agencies make better decisions by measuring what really works. We're data experts who believe that government can and must do better for the people of Michigan. We're also parents and community members who dream of a brighter future for all of our children. At the Youth Policy Lab, we're working to make that dream a reality by strengthening programs that address some of our most pressing social challenges.

We recognize that the wellbeing of youth is intricately linked to the wellbeing of families and communities, so we engage in work that impacts all age ranges. Using rigorous evaluation design and data analysis, we're working closely with our partners to build a future where public investments are based on strong evidence, so all Michiganders have a pathway to prosperity.

Support the Youth Policy Lab's efforts to use data for good.

YOUTH POLICY LAB

Learn more at: youthpolicylab.umich.edu