



**City of Memphis; Tennessee  
Office of Youth Services and Community Affairs**



**Office of Youth Services**

**Mission Statement**

The Office of Youth Services promotes the beneficial development of the children and youth of the City of Memphis by attracting focused and continuing attention to their unmet needs. This mission is accomplished by facilitating the development and implementation of strategies that address such needs, primarily through strategic partnerships with youth-serving organizations, community organizations, the business community, educational institutions, governmental agencies, and, most important, with youth themselves.

The Office of Youth Services embraces the definition of youth development advanced by the Forum for Youth Development; this definition states:

“ Youth development is the ongoing growth process in which all youth are engaged in attempting to (1) meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded, and (2) to build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives.”

The Office of Youth Services encourages its partners to incorporate youth development principles in the design of the region’s youth programs, and to include youth development considerations and components in the region’s workforce and economic development programs. The office promotes the concept that youth development is the most essential component of both workforce development and regional economic development.

**Beliefs:**

- Every youth has the capacity to become a self-determined and productive participant in the educational, economic, social, cultural, political, judicial, and philanthropic affairs of the City.
- Every youth needs and is deserving of support, mentoring, and guidance in developing and executing a productive personal life plan.
- Youth that employ their time in life-affirming educational, recreational, and productive pursuits are much less likely to engage in personally destructive or criminal activities.
- It is the responsibility of the City’s citizens—individuals, corporate, governmental, academic, religious, and philanthropic—to provide our youth with opportunities for personal development.
- Any effort to reduce crime by youth and their involvement in the criminal justice system requires wide-ranging community participation.