The Skillman Youth Development Strategy

If youth engage in high-quality youth development opportunities outside of the school day, they are more likely to graduate from high school prepared for college, work, and life. Skillman’s youth development strategy is designed to (1) build the infrastructure for a coordinated youth development system, (2) embed mechanisms to ensure accountability and capacity for quality and scale, and (3) build public will for youth development.

What is the Youth Development Opportunities (YDO) Survey?

The YDO Survey assesses the landscape of the programs available to youth in the Skillman Good Neighborhoods. The YDO is the third wave of a survey conducted every two years.

Why is data-driven programming important?

A robust youth development system offers high-quality programs to youth. The highest quality programs are those that benefit from an evidence base, as well as from evaluation and data that support continuous improvement.

What types of data are agencies tracking?

- Youth attendance: 99% (78)
- Youth surveys: 94% (72)
- School records: 68% (49)
- +: 66% (46)

How often are these data informing program improvements?

- Never: 77%
- Annually: 23%
- Quarterly: 15%
- Monthly: 0%
- Weekly: 0%

While many agencies track data, they often track on paper. This approach greatly limits agencies’ ability to efficiently use data to inform program improvement.

Are programs evaluated?

- Internally: 77%
- Externally: 23%

Are programs evidence-based?

- 2 in 5 (or 40%) of programs use evidence-based curriculum