

# The Y-PLAN Six Essentials

McKoy, D., Eppley, A., & Buss, S. (2022). *Planning Cities with Young People and Schools: Forging Justice, Generating Joy (1st ed.)*. Routledge.



**BASIC NEEDS**  
Attend to  
First Things First

## 1. Basic Needs: Attend to First Things First

Violence, displacement, and instability impede young people's ability to feel secure, but safety and stability are the foundation of a just and joyful city. Before planning for the future, we need to ensure that the basic needs of all residents are met today.



**MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING**  
Listen and Share  
Across Boundaries

## 2. Mutual Understanding: Listen and Share Across Boundaries

Listening to diverse young people, validating their experiences, and integrating their voices and insights into action plans for just and joyful cities will help cultivate the mutual understanding that is indispensable for young people and adults to learn from and with each other.



**TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS**  
Cultivate Genuine  
Connections

## 3. Trust and Relationships: Cultivate Genuine Connections

Taking the time needed to develop trust and build genuine relationships capable of driving intergenerational collaboration and partnerships is key. Working together won't always be easy, but it's important to embrace the tensions and persist.



**POWER  
OF ALL AGES**  
Engage Across the  
K-12 Spectrum

#### **4. Power of All Ages: Engage Across the K-12 Spectrum**

Elementary and secondary students offer unique insights and equally important visions, but engagement processes in urban issues often overlook youth, especially the youngest. Engaging across the entire age spectrum deepens discourse and cultivates civic capacity.



**RESPONSIBILITY**  
Professionalize  
Partnerships with  
Real Tools

#### **5. Responsibility: Professionalize Partnerships with Real Tools**

Rigor and authentic practices are empowering. Rather than engaging young people with “window dressing,” introduce real tools, terms, practices, and responsibilities to participants of all ages. Maintain high expectations of young people, and make sure that adults and young people hold each other accountable.



**CONNECTIVITY**  
Bridge Gaps Between  
Disparate Networks

#### **6. Connectivity: Bridge Gaps Between Disparate Networks**

Young people have the desire and capacity to connect diverse groups, but they are often excluded from networks of power. Structuring their access to people and places of power enables young people to leverage their ability to serve as actors and connectors.