

Issues Facing Young Women and Girls

Catalyst Endowment Fund

Young women and girls of color in our region are facing challenges that were present before COVID-19, but have become increasingly pervasive and difficult to overcome. **In Hartford:**

40%

of Latina women live in poverty.¹



Black and Latina girls are suspended or expelled at **3-5x** the rate of their white counterparts.²



6% of Latina women & **16%** of Black women have a college degree.³

During our current health crisis, area nonprofits found that people of color, specifically women and girls, are facing more obstacles than any other demographic in many aspects of their lives, such as:

- Homelessness
- Limited access to quality healthcare
- Interruption of education
- Increased domestic violence
- Increased anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and mood disorders⁴

Young girls, particularly in urban settings like Hartford, struggle with distance learning due to several factors including: language and technology barriers, gaps in special education services and increased basic human needs.

On average, 20% of Hartford students are not participating in learning week-to-week (neither virtual nor tech-free), according to the district's student activity reports.⁵

Inconsistent access to and lack of facility with technology during prolonged school closures will deepen disparities in educational outcomes between young girls from low-income families and their classmates.⁶

Additionally, Connecticut's "Stay Safe, Stay Home" campaign presents increased challenges for young girls:

- Young women and girls who were victims of domestic violence prior to the pandemic are forced into close proximity with their abuser(s).
- Young women and girls who witness violence in their youth face the generational impacts of domestic violence.⁷

"... sometimes being home is very toxic for me. School was my place to escape, eat my lunch and study until it gets dark outside."

Now, it is vital that data is collected to pinpoint the most significant impacts of COVID-19 on young women and girls of color. Without intervention, the social, emotional and educational obstacles of the pandemic could have a negative effect on young women and girls of color for years to come.

1. [Aurora Foundation](#)

3. [Aurora Foundation](#)

5. Rebecca Lurye, "[On average, 20% of Hartford students are not participating in virtual learning week-to-week. Now school leaders are trying to find a solution.](#)" *Hartford Courant*, June 01, 2020.

2. [Datahaven](#)

4. & 7. Collected via survey by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

6. Jacqueline Rabe Thomas, "[Two districts, two very different plans for students while school is out indefinitely.](#)" *CT Mirror*, March 19, 2020.



Catalyst
Endowment
Fund