

Inviting emerging adults into the library: Lessons from El Paso's Centre Future



Indy Gonzalez
Centre Future,
Co-Founder



Kalina Gallardo
Centre Future,
Youth Fellow



El Paso Public
LIBRARIES

CENTRE FUTURE

WE THE (YOUNG) PEOPLE: A DECLARATION OF INTERDEPENDENCE

We are a new El Paso Public Library Program for 16 – 26 year olds who are not working and not in school!



#OPPORTUNITYYOUTH



[Opportunity Youth Data Dashboard](#)

Opportunity Youth:

16 – 24 year olds who are **not working** and **not in school** and have not done so in the past year

Age Ranges

- 16 – 18 (lowest)
- 19 – 21
- 22 – 24 (highest)
- 25 – 26

Top 5 Risk Factors in El Paso

1. 46% Youth Mothers
2. 26% People With Disabilities
3. 25% People with Only as HS Diploma
4. 24% Limited English Proficiency
5. 22% Receiving Medicaid

DANIEL INOSTROZA

University of Texas at El Paso,
Business Administration



KALINA GALLARDO

University of Texas at El Paso,
Creative Writing and Theatre



INDY GONZALEZ

University of Texas at El Paso,
Marketing



OUR HISTORY



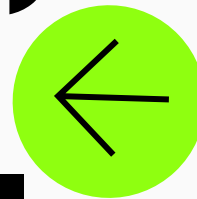
The Literacy Center:

The library is more than books.

- Career Online High School
- Center for Career Development
- WorkPLACE
- Digital Literacy

Newest Addition established
May 2024 the Re-Engagement
Center: Centre Future!

DISCONNECTED, BUT NOT ALONE.



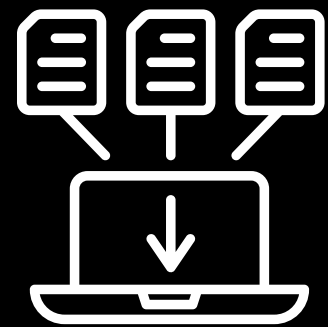
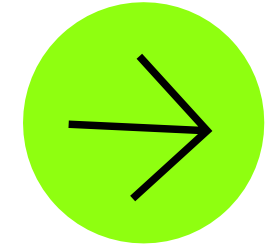
Individualized Service Plan (ISP)

There is no one single factor that causes disconnection to occur. As a program we strive to mitigate barriers and advocate for the youth who are ready to reconnect. Once we receive contact from the population, we schedule an intake appointment to assess the current circumstances of the individual.

After the initial appointment is completed, next steps are established, and a follow up appointment is scheduled.

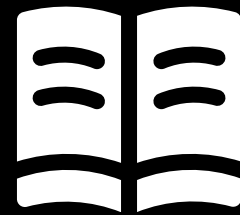


PEER MENTORSHIP



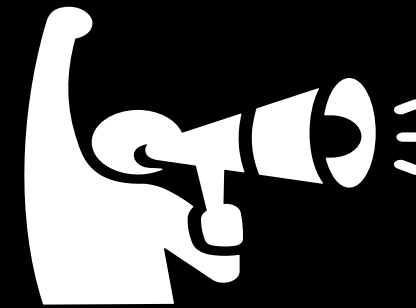
Initial Assessment

In the first appointment, we get to know the full story. We'll talk about housing, health, work experience, and anything else that helps us understand how to best support.



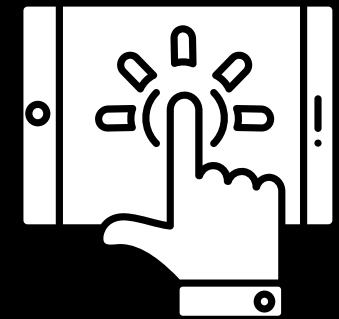
Future Planning

We want to make dreams a reality. Whether it's brainstorming the next step or building a long-term plan, the peer mentor is here to support. They get it!



Accountability

We are here to help the follow through. Your Peer Mentor checks in, keeps you focused, and walks with you every step of the way.



Resource References

We have connections to amazing community partners to help with housing, health, education, work and more!

REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING

JOB LAB

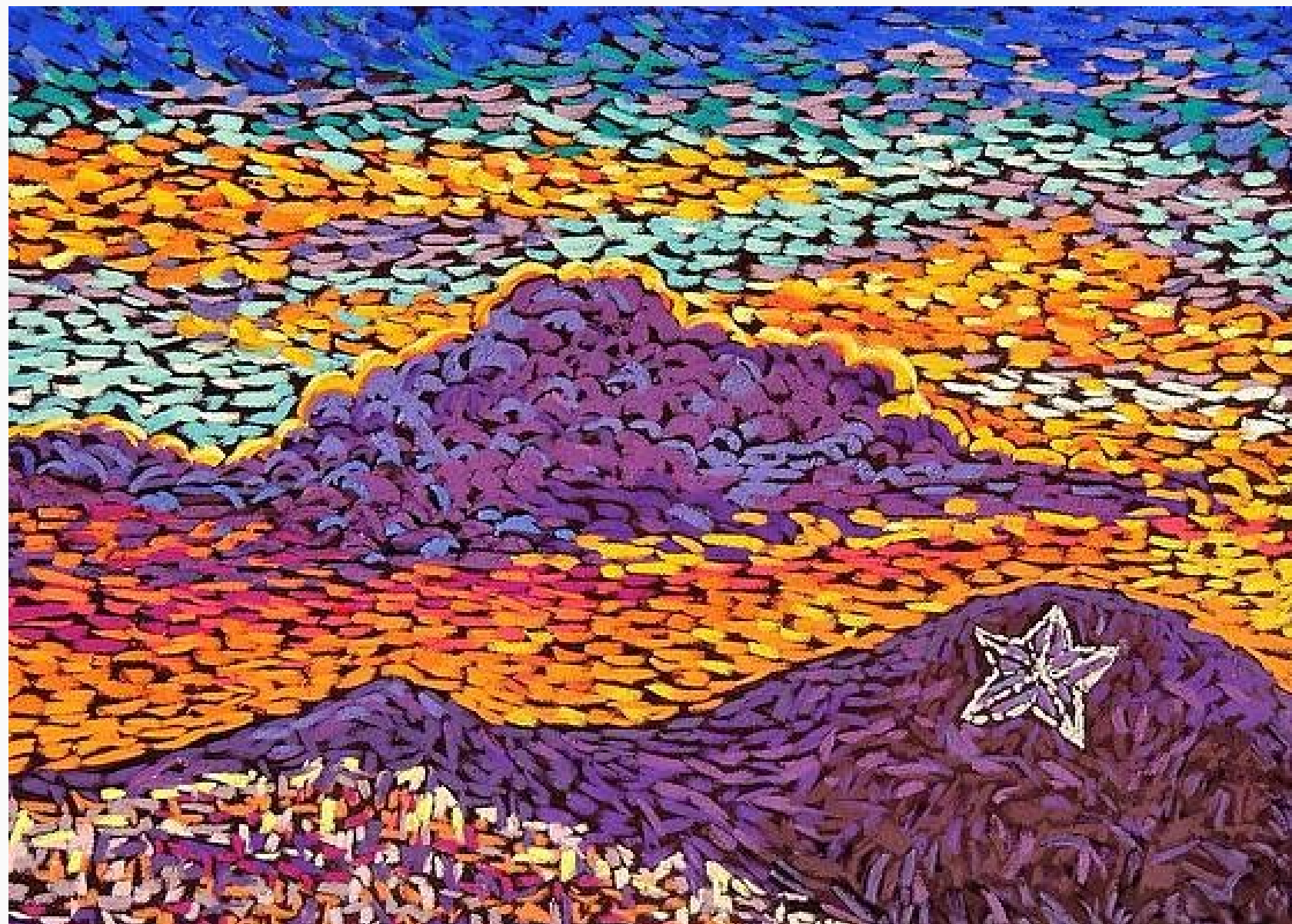
Job Lab is for young adults to begin and continue job and long-term career planning. Topics include career exploration, candidate preparation, workplace readiness,

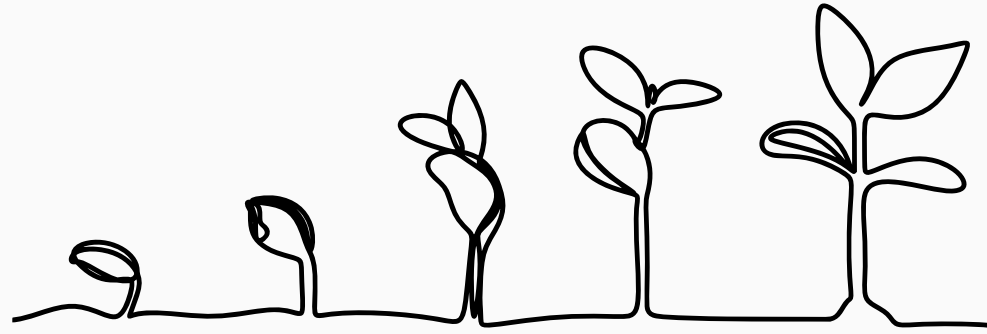
SKILL STUDIO

Skill Studio is for young adults to gain perspective and build skill in community utilizing library resources and external partnerships.

CARE CORNER

Care Corner is a weekly rotation of professional providers to help navigate applications and benefits for physical and mental health support.





OUR GROWTH IN NUMBERS

Our Centre Future Candidates are acquired through Career Online High School submissions, sign ins, and events:

over
700
16 - 24 year olds!
since May 2024

1. In Centre Future

2. Career Online High School (COHS)

3. Programming

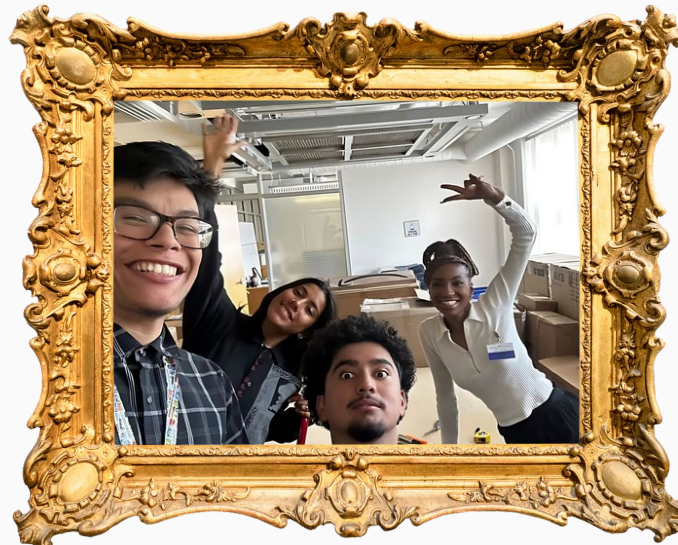
4. Instagram



“DAY ONE”
MAY 2024



EL PASO, TEXAS



“ WE FINISHED FURNISHING!”
JUNE 2024

“MAKING IT OFFICIAL” 2024



“TABLING AT THE MEXICAN CONSULATE”
SEPTEMBER 2024



SHOPPING FOR MATERIALS



“TABLING AT WINTERFEST”



SHOOTING CONTENT AT
ARMIJIO LIBRARY



“FROM LOGO TO MERCH”
JUNE 2024

2024

- TEENTOBER
- WINTERFEST
- DIA DE LOS MUERTOS
- TABLING AT MEXICAN CONSULATE
- PROJECT VIDA MARKET
- CITY COUNCIL HIGH SCHOOL POP UP



"TABLING AT THE MEXICAN CONSULATE"
SEPTEMBER 2024



"TABLING AT WINTERFEST"
JUNE 2024



"CENTRE FUTURE SPREADS THE
WORD AT CITY HALL"

DEC 2024



"DIA DE LOS MUERTOS" PARADE
OCT 2024

2025

- LEARN MORE ABOUT CYBERSECURITY MINER'S CYBERSECURITY CLUB
- EXPLORING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH CULTURE TEENS SUPPORTING TEENS
- FUEL YOUR FUTURE RIGHT COMMUNITY MEMBER (F, 26)
- BYSTANDER PREVENTION TRAINING- CENTER AGAINST FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE
- WHITE ELEPHANT- CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
- TINY DESK EL PASO- EL PASO BLACK ARTS ASSOCIATION



"MINER'S CYBERSECURITY CLUB SERIES ON CYBERSECURITY CAREERS"
JUNE 2025



EXPLORING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH CULTURE
TEENS SUPPORT TEENS (JUNE 2025)



WHITE ELEPHANT



BYSTANDER PREVENTION TRAINING
CENTER AGAINST FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE
JULY 2025



TINY DESK EL PASO
EL PASO BLACK ARTS ASSOCIATION

2026

- WHO AM I - POTLUCK & SELF EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES
- FIVE NIGHTS AT CENTRE FUTURE PREMIERE VIDEO GAME MOVIE SHOWCASE
- LISTENING PARTY- MUSIC SHOWCASE FOR YOUNG EL PASO ARTISTS
- JANUARY BIRTHDAY JAM - END OF MONTH BIRTHDAY THEMED CELEBRATION



WHO AM I POTLUCK GATHERING



FNAF THEMED SETUP



DANCE PARTY!

OUR PARTICIPANTS

IF CENTRE FUTURE DIDN'T EXIST, HOW WOULD YOUR LIFE BE DIFFERENT?



F, 21

"Terrible. I would be lacking motivation, and optimism to start one what I want to do. Finding this place was what sparked my hope for what I wanted to do so long . I didn't have the money or supplies to do it on my own. Being here gave me faith. I have the resources, these people know what they're talking about, and they can help me do more than I could before. "

"I would have never gotten into the internship. Maybe, I would have never had the courage to leave a dangerous situation and maybe I would still be struggling. It was really hard for me to get a job because a lot of the listing were just "ghost jobs." Most of these jobs want experience, but I can't get the experience if they won't hire! Maybe, I would not have met all these nice people, like Ms. Chelsea, and you, and a lot of other people."



F, 19

OUR PARTICIPANTS

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FORWARD TO WHEN YOU VISIT CENTRE FUTURE?



F, 21

"I look forward to resources! The environment is really chill. I like being able to connect with nice people. It is an opportunity. The podcast room, the supplies you have, it needs to stay free!"

"Being able to find people who have been in the same situation as me, being able to talk about things that I can't tell a lot of people. It kind hurts sometimes! Finding the resources and being able to talk about what I want to do in my life has been really encouraging to keep going!"



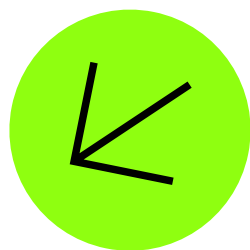
F, 19

CENTRE FUTURE

EST. 2024

EL PASO, TEXAS

OUR CHALLENGES



INTERNAL

- No Modern Technology
- Short Staffed
- Funding Constraints & Sustainability

EXTERNAL

- Limited access to transportation
- Lack of affordable or accessible healthcare
- Unstable housing or temporary living situations

CENTRE FUTURE

EST. 2024

EL PASO, TEXAS

OUR FUTURE

**ACTION
ITEMS OR
MILESTONES?**

SHORT TERM GOALS

- BY DECEMBER 31, 2025, SUPPORT 20 YOUNG ADULTS IN COMPLETING A BASIC CAREER PLAN THROUGH JOB LAB SESSIONS, INCLUDING CAREER INTERESTS AND NEXT STEPS.
- BY AUGUST 15, 2025, HOST 3 COMMUNITY-BUILDING EVENTS (E.G. GAME NIGHT, ART/CREATION LAB) ATTENDED BY AT LEAST 15 YOUNG ADULTS EACH.



CENTRE FUTURE

EST. 2024

EL PASO, TEXAS

OUR FUTURE

**ACTION
ITEMS OR
MILESTONES?**

LONG TERM GOALS:

- BY MAY 2026, AT LEAST 100 PARTICIPANTS WILL ATTEND A CENTRE FUTURE WORKSHOP, EVENT, OR 1:1 SESSION FOCUSED ON MENTAL HEALTH, CAREER, OR EDUCATION.
- CENTRE FUTURE IN ALL 14 LIBRARY BRANCHES BY DEC 2027



OUR ASKS

1

JOIN OUR WORKSHOPS & EVENTS: SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMMING BY ATTENDING OR VOLUNTEERING AT WORKSHOPS, TRAININGS, AND COMMUNITY EVENTS.

2

CONNECT YOUTH TO US:
REFER INDIVIDUALS WHO COULD BENEFIT FROM A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE SPACE AND LIFE-CHANGING RESOURCES.

3

COLLABORATE WITH US: EXPLORE WAYS OUR CITY'S DEPARTMENTS, BUSINESSES, OR ORGANIZATIONS CAN PARTNER WITH US TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH. **TECH, PROGRAMS- LAVARAGE CITY DEPARTMENTS TO COME IN AND PROVIDE INTERNAL SERVICES.** WITH THE CITY'S SUPPORT, WE WILL BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO MAKE A LARGER IMPACT IN THE FUTURE.

4

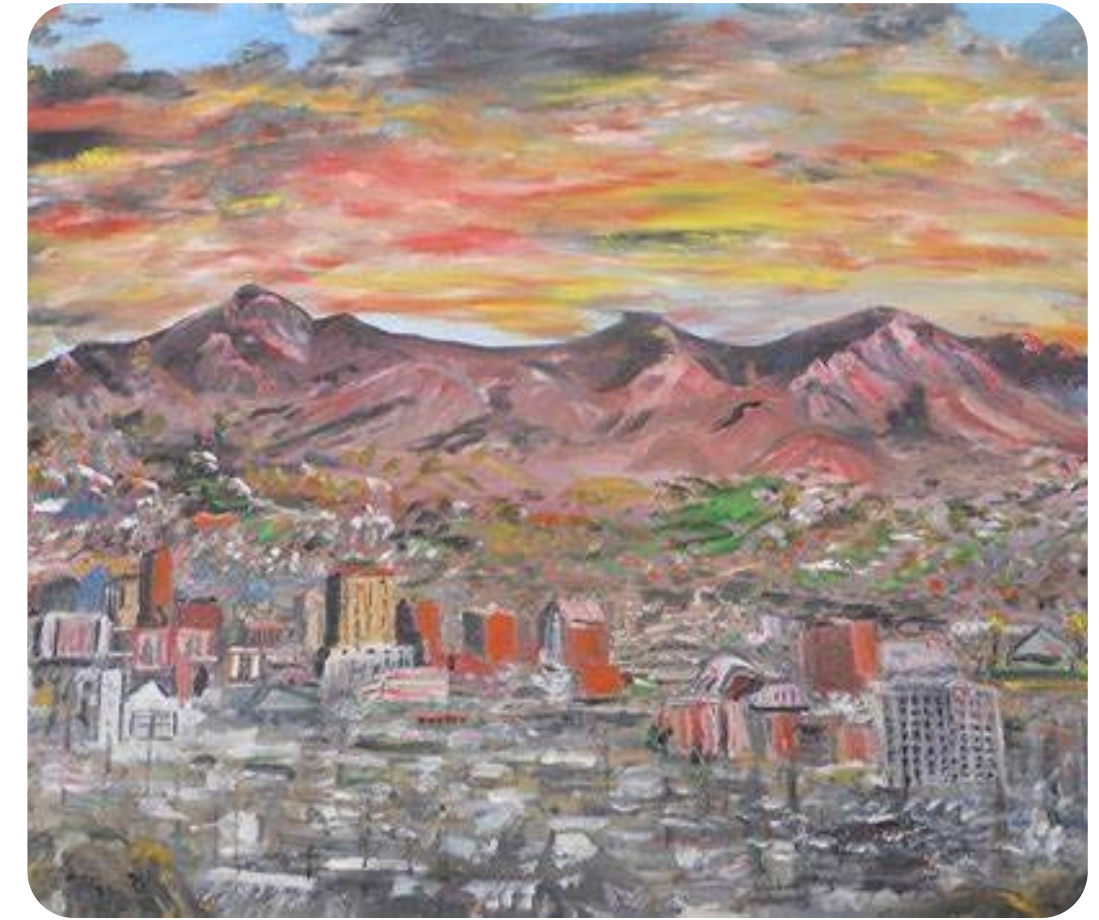
VISIT OUR SPACE: SEE OUR CENTER IN ACTION. MEET THE YOUTH WE SERVE, TALK WITH STAFF, AND EXPERIENCE FIRSTHAND THE IMPACT WE'RE MAKING.

5

BRING AWARENESS HELP AMPLIFY OUR MISSION. SHARE OUR WORK WITH YOUR NETWORKS, COLLEAGUES, AND ON SOCIAL MEDIA. INVITE OTHERS TO LEARN MORE.

OUR PARTNERS

- Workforce Borderplex Solutions: Nextforce
- Breakthrough 915
- NAACP
- COEP Parks and Recreation
- COEP Streetcar
- EP County Commissioner 4
- El Paso Internship Office
- United Way
- Center Against Sexual and Family Violence (CASFV)
- El Paso Black Arts Association
- Love Letters EP
- Minero Magazine
- UTEP Student Organizations
 - Miner's Cybersecurity Club
 - Digital Media Production Association
 - FOSS
 - Google Developer Student Club
- EP Originals
- DeLaStory
- ESC 19



CENTRE FUTURE @ El Paso Public LIBRARIES

Know a young person who might be interested in peer mentoring?



"Get to Know Me Form"
breakthrough915.org/centrefuture

Do you work with Opportunity Youth in any capacity and want to connect with us for:

- Tabling at your space
- Enhanced Library Cards
- Career and Life Readiness Workshops
- Presentations
- Virtual Webinars

Email: CentreFuture@elpasotexas.gov



INSTAGRAM