



The Aspen Institute drives change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the greatest challenges of our time.

YOUTH PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (YPAR)

Is an innovative approach to positive youth and community development in which young people are trained to conduct systematic research to improve their lives, their communities, and the institutions intended to serve them. YPAR is a cyclical process of learning and action – research is done not just for the sake of it but to inform solutions to problems that young people themselves care about.





THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

Forum for Community Solutions

The Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions promotes collaborative, community-based efforts that build the power and influence of those with the least access to opportunity. We support communities to come together to expand mobility, eliminate systemic barriers, and create their own solutions to their most pressing challenges.

Fresh Tracks is a program of the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions and the lead organizer of this project.



Fresh Tracks is a program of the Forum For Community Solutions, rooted in the healing power of culture and the outdoors for civic action. We envision a world where all people are working to advance social and environmental justice and overcome hate and racism. Fresh Tracks provides young Indigenous, Rural, and Urban leaders with cross-cultural community building skills, leadership development training, civic engagement opportunities, and resources for innovative youth and community-led action.



Youth and Young Adult Wellbeing Measure Project

with support from



THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

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**Sharing Cultures
Igniting Futures**



**How do culture, values and circumstances
nurture wellbeing for youth and young
adults?**



“Those closest to the pain must be closest to the power.” -Rep. Ayanna Pressley

“Those with the data have the power. “-Nanette Antwi-Donkor

In response, our goal is to support development of innovative wellbeing and healing measures developed by youth and young adults of color that incorporate their lived experiences through a participatory action research process.

Youth and Young Adults are leading the research and direction of the project.



The look and feel of Youth-Adult Partnerships in our work

- Address Ageism head on
- Acknowledge the value young people bring that is not based on number of years on the planet
- Share power
- Active listening
- Compromising
- Build on people's strengths and experiences they bring to the table
- Let anyone who has knowledge and expertise share and teach others in the research team





Project Overview

Well-being measures will be developed for each of the following cultural identity groups by young people:

- American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN)
- African American/Black (AA/B)
- Latinx/o/a





Project Overview

Each of the cultural identity groups is made up of:

- **Youth & Young Adult Design Team**
 - Between the ages of 18-25
 - Self Identify with one or more of cultural identity groups
- **Research Navigators**
 - Individuals with different yet complementary experience: one with credible experience in the (currently) dominant research paradigm and one with credible messenger influence and knowledge of culture centered ways of knowing and healing.
- **Peer Research Mentors**
 - 18-24, self identify with a cultural identity group, and brings experience with youth participatory action research, as participants or youth leaders

Project Overview - Our Story of Wellness

Catalyze 3 Design Teams and YPAR projects

African American, American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN), and Latinx

- 3-6: Youth and Young Adults (16 - 24)
- 3-5: Research Allies
 - 2-3: Adult Research Navigators
 - 1-2: Peer Research Mentors

Inquire

Design Team members for each affinity group build on culturally-grounded ways of knowing, develop YPAR plans, and collect data from peer networks to develop Wellness measures.

Make Meaning of the Data

- Dissect and deliberate the data within each cultural context
- Identify key patterns of common Wellness measures by team
- Identify any cross-team measures

Understand

Youth and young adults make meaning of the data based on their lived experiences, their history, culture, and aspirations.

Establish and Measure Community Wellness

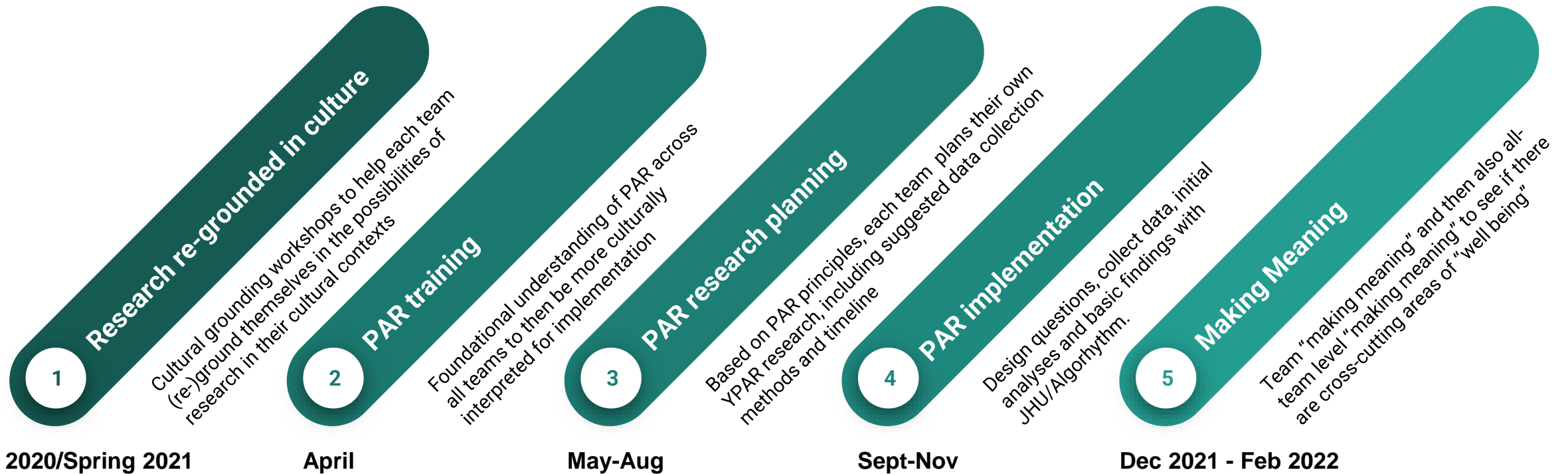
- Establish and disseminate Wellness measures
- Data activates investment in wellbeing and policy changes

Act

Youth and young adults develop practices and policies that help young people thrive, using Wellness data to document change over time.



Project Overview To-Date



- Each affinity group has their own workshop.
 - Fall 2020 - African American
 - Spring 2021 - LatinX
 - May 2021 - AIAN

- PAR training by CUNY, multiple weekends in April

- Based on workshops, teams plan their research on question of "what does wellbeing mean in our community"
- Propose ideal methods and timeline

- Implement PAR project based on feedback

- Each team "makes meaning" of their own data (Dec-Jan)
- Bring insights to all-teams meeting for "making meaning" (Feb 2022)
- Reflect and plan forward

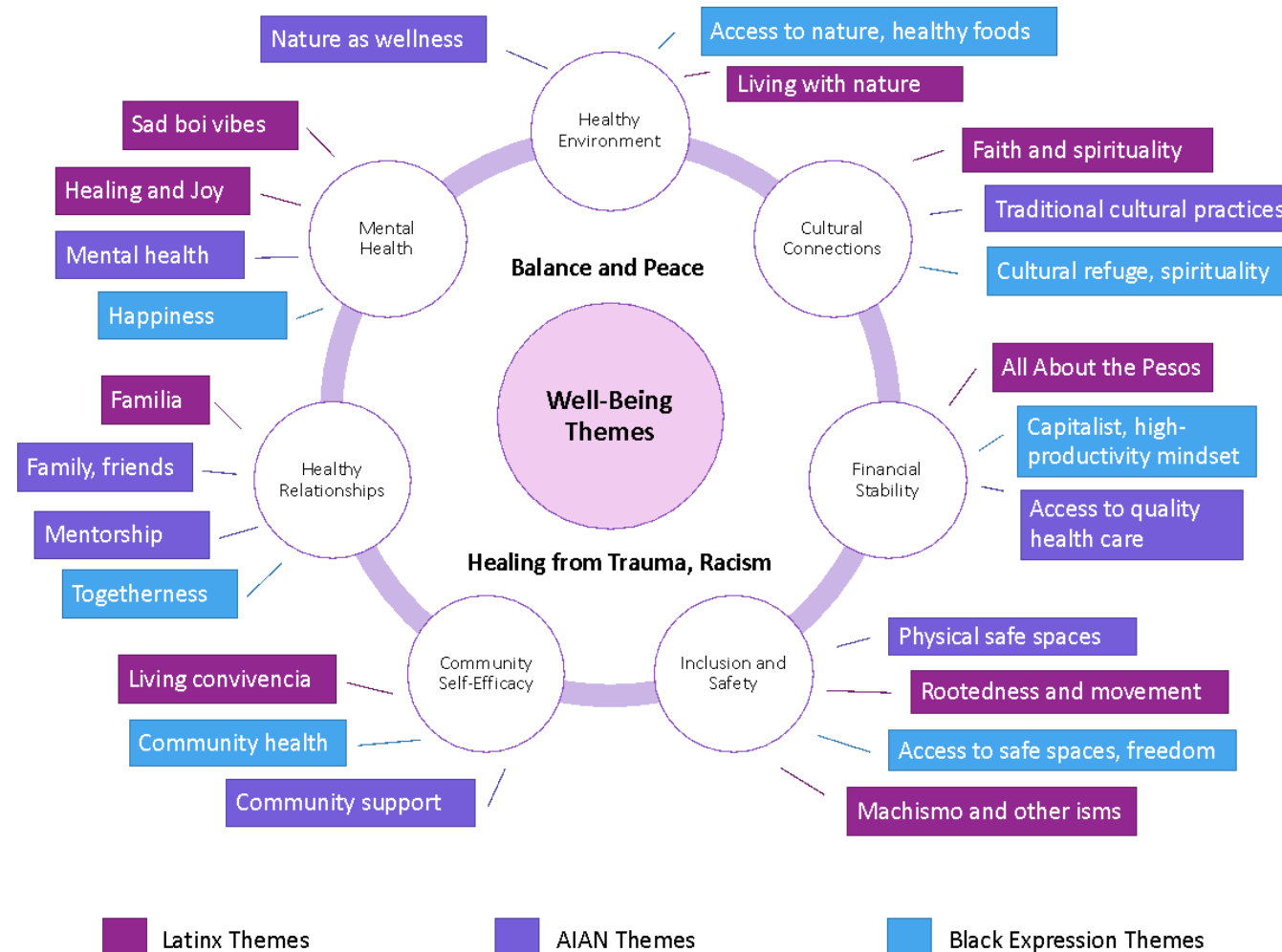
Phase I: 2/12 Meeting



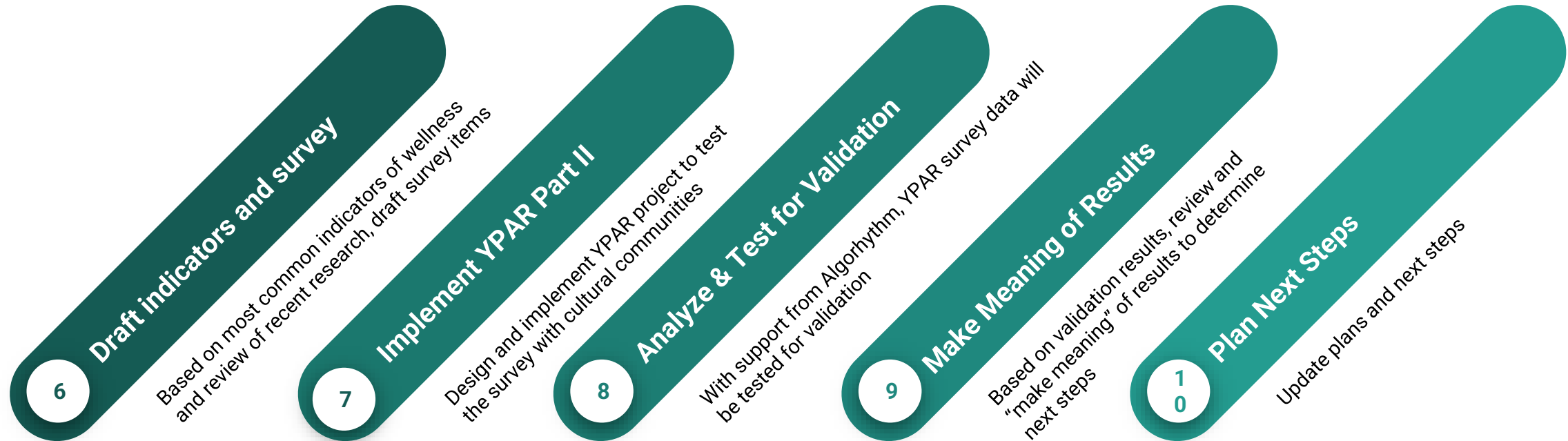
CORE THEMES



Phase I Summary



Phase II: Project Timeline Going Forward - 2022



Feb - May 2022

- JHU present recent research on wellbeing measures for young people (March)
- At least one team will start to draft wellness measures

June - Aug 2022

- Draft wellness surveys
- Plan and conduct second YPAR project to test wellness measures across the country and age ranges

Aug - Sept 2022

- Analyze data for validation across age and gender
- Identify recommendations for tweaks

Oct - Nov 2022

- Review results and "make meaning" of why/why not areas of measure are or are not validated
- Specifically, identify what could strengthen the measure

Dec 2022

- Based on 6-9, plan possible next steps for final version and/or steps to re-test certain measures (possible 3rd YPAR project)

Partners



Centers For American
Indian and Alaska Native
Health at Colorado School
of Public Health

INTERGENERATIONAL
CHANGE INITIATIVE

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