In 2009 there were approximately 38,000 Marion county (Clendenning, Stucky, and Wright, 2009) youth under the age of 25 who exhibited factors for contact with the Department of Children Services (DCS) or juvenile justice (Witesman, 2006). The number of youth underserved is significantly larger than the number of youth being served by DCS or juvenile justice indicating gaps in services provided to Marion County children and youth (Anderson et al., 2006). Clendenning, Stucky, and Wright, (2009) further share that existing youth services in Marion County provide prevention services such as recreation and enrichment, character education, and parent involvement. The least widely provided intervention services are tutoring, literacy, and family preservations.

The Specific Environment
Per the 2012 Indiana Black Expo report, in 2010, Indiana’s 200,000 Black youth made up 11.2% of Indiana’s youth population. The percent of Black Hoosier families headed by single mothers (57.7%) is more than double that of all families (24.5%), a gap that has persisted for 10 years. Between 2000 and 2010, the percent of Black Hoosier children living in poverty increased over 29%. In 2012, 15.2% Black children in Indiana (41.7%) were living in poverty than Black children nationally (36.2%) (p. 7-8). In 2013, the Department of Corrections reported that 32.6% of the juvenile offender populations were black males. Per the Indiana Dept. of Corrections, approximately 40.6% of African American juvenile offenders returned to the Department of Correction, a higher rate than any other major race or ethnicity. From 2011-2013,

In the 2008 National Assessment of Educational Progress the reading scores of African-American boys in eighth grade were barely higher than the scores of white girls in fourth grade. In math, 46% of African-American boys demonstrated "basic" or higher grade-level skills, compared with 82% of white boys (Kirp, 2010).

The Indiana Black Expo (2015) reports that in 2014, a smaller share of African American students graduated on time than did students of other races in all but three of the 11 Marion County school districts. The four-year graduation rate for black students among the 11 Marion County districts was just 85.3%, compared with 88.4% of the total student population.