



**MYCOM**  
*My Commitment. My Community.*

what do  
an alarm clock,  
library books,  
and a night spent  
gazing at the  
stars have  
in common?



MyCom delivers positive experiences to kids in our community.



For many of us, these objects and experiences help shape who we become. We learn to be responsible with every buzz of the morning alarm. We learn to empathize with others because of the diverse people and places we find in our favorite books. And, we learn about the power of imagination by standing in awe of the sky and dreaming of becoming an astronaut.

As young people, we are influenced not only by parenting at home and education at school, but also by experiences in the community. In Greater Cleveland, many of our young people crave the caring adults and positive experiences they need to learn new things and reach their full potential. Research shows that the influence of caring adults and positive life experiences can reverse rising rates of high school dropouts, teen pregnancy, and gang violence. It can increase the likelihood for teens to graduate, work, and contribute to their communities.

A community must share responsibility for the development of its youth. As the saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child."

MyCom is a youth movement in Greater Cleveland in which we demonstrate our commitment to our young people as the future of our community.

# About MyCom

In 2006, the Cleveland Foundation undertook research to identify and evaluate existing programs and services for youth in Greater Cleveland. Based on its findings, the foundation convened many key community partners to create an effective system to support our young people. The Cuyahoga County Commissioners stepped up early and in a big way, with \$3.4 million and a commitment to manage day-to-day operations of MyCom through its Family and Children First Council.

Today, this youth movement – MyCom – aims to inspire and prepare Greater Cleveland's young people, kindergarten through graduation, to reach their full potential and become good citizens.

It exposes kids to a variety of activities and experiences that allow them to explore new interests and learn new skills. It connects them to a network of caring and committed adults – teachers, mentors, employers, and others – who offer guidance and encouragement.

MyCom prepares Greater Cleveland's young people to enter early adulthood with the ability to foster healthy relationships throughout their lives and the skills to compete in a global economy.

# MyCom's Core Services benefit youngsters to young adults



MyCom supports young people with programs and services that inspire and prepare them to lead good lives. MyCom's innovative approach helps to "connect the dots" for young people and their families by making it easy to find and access a variety of services all through their youth.

By coordinating with strong community partners, MyCom can offer employment opportunities, out-of-school-time activities, neighborhood resources, and special help during school transitions to kindergarten, middle school, high school and beyond.



### *Youth Employment and Career Development*

Through Youth Opportunities Unlimited, MyCom gives young people a chance to explore careers and develop new interests while gaining real experience. Employment opportunities help thousands of kids learn responsibilities and skills required to succeed in a job.

### *Out-of-School Time*

From practicing teamwork on the basketball court to discovering their inner Beethoven at music camp – kids need fun and engaging experiences outside the classroom to broaden their interests and develop important life skills.

MyCom partners with Starting Point to provide lots of free-time opportunities, from recreation to tutoring to community involvement.

### *Neighborhoods*

The easier it is to access programs and services, the more likely young people will take advantage of them. Working with the Center for Community Solutions, MyCom connects young people and their families to the resources and opportunities right in their own neighborhoods.

### *School Transitions*

It's not easy to make a big change. For kids, major changes happen almost every four years – going from home to kindergarten, elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to college or the work place.

To help young people feel confident and prepared during these times, MyCom teams with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health to provide youth transition support. With an initial focus on kindergarten, MyCom recently developed a public awareness campaign for early school registration and distributed kindergarten information kits to children in Cuyahoga County.

# MyCom: My Commitment. My Community.

The issues facing Greater Cleveland's youth population affect us all. Too few young people in our community graduate from high school or are prepared to continue their education or obtain meaningful work. Our region needs a highly educated and skilled work force if we are to attract and retain jobs here. It is critical to a thriving local economy.

We know that young people prosper when they have positive parenting, education, and experiences in their lives. MyCom's role is to deliver positive experiences to kids in our community.

If the success of our community depends upon the success of our young people, then we must all commit to act now. We must commit to preparing young people to lead productive lives by giving them a chance to explore interests, build skills, and foster healthy relationships.



We must all  
commit to investing  
in the future  
of our community  
by supporting our  
young people today.

# How MyCom Works

MyCom coordinates the work of many community partners to deliver programs and services to young people – from youngsters to young adults – in Greater Cleveland. These partners are committed to providing kids with the positive experiences and caring adults they need to reach their full potential.

To better understand the issues affecting young people in Greater Cleveland, MyCom engages youth leaders throughout the community. Together with the Partnership for a Safer Cleveland, MyCom gives them a voice in the planning process. This approach allows for the design of programs and services that meet real community needs.

MyCom is funded by several community partners, including the Cleveland Foundation, the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Saint Luke's Foundation and the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland. Also, lead advocacy partner, Voices for Ohio's Children, helps MyCom secure critical public funding. MyCom, with its funders, is committed to developing sustainable resources to support young people in Greater Cleveland.

# MYCOM

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# How You Can Make a Difference



## MYCOM

If you are committed to supporting young people in our community, you can help in many ways.

Your support as a donor, mentor, employer, or friend means that you bring positive experiences and a caring spirit to young people in our community – and you never know when that support might change a young person's life.

Please consider joining with MyCom to live out your commitment to our community.

### Individuals

- Be a caring adult in a child's life
- Donate to the Cleveland Foundation's Youth Fund
- Volunteer to be a Big Brother, Big Sister, tutor, or mentor
- Help students at your local high school complete college applications
- Sponsor summer camp for one young person
- Participate in a local school's Career Day

### Businesses

- Offer internships or summer work experiences to youth
- Direct charitable contributions to the Cleveland Foundation's Youth Fund
- Provide a job shadowing experience for kids ages 12 to 18
- Donate in-kind products or services
- Engage colleagues in a youth-focused service project
- Distribute information about MyCom to your employees
- Schedule MyCom to make a presentation to your board or senior management team

### Foundations

- Support MyCom with grantmaking
- Become a MyCom funding partner
- Incorporate MyCom principles and outcomes into youth-related grantmaking
- Spread the word about MyCom
- Connect new youth initiatives to MyCom

