

smart*fit*girls™ Melanin Magic

An adaptation of the Smart Fit Girls Program

Smart Fit Girls Melanin Magic Leadership Council – Nyla Pollard, Nia Pollard, Nyrema Pollard, Nielli Jenkins, Kendal Gomez, De'Neen Smith, Aminah Fard, Saabirah Muwwakkil,

Maisha J. Fields (Executive Director, Fields Foundation)

Chrissy A. Chard (Colorado State University, Graduate Program in Public Health)

What is Smart Fit Girls?

The mission of SFG is to empower girls to support one another and themselves in their pursuit of strength, both in body and mind.

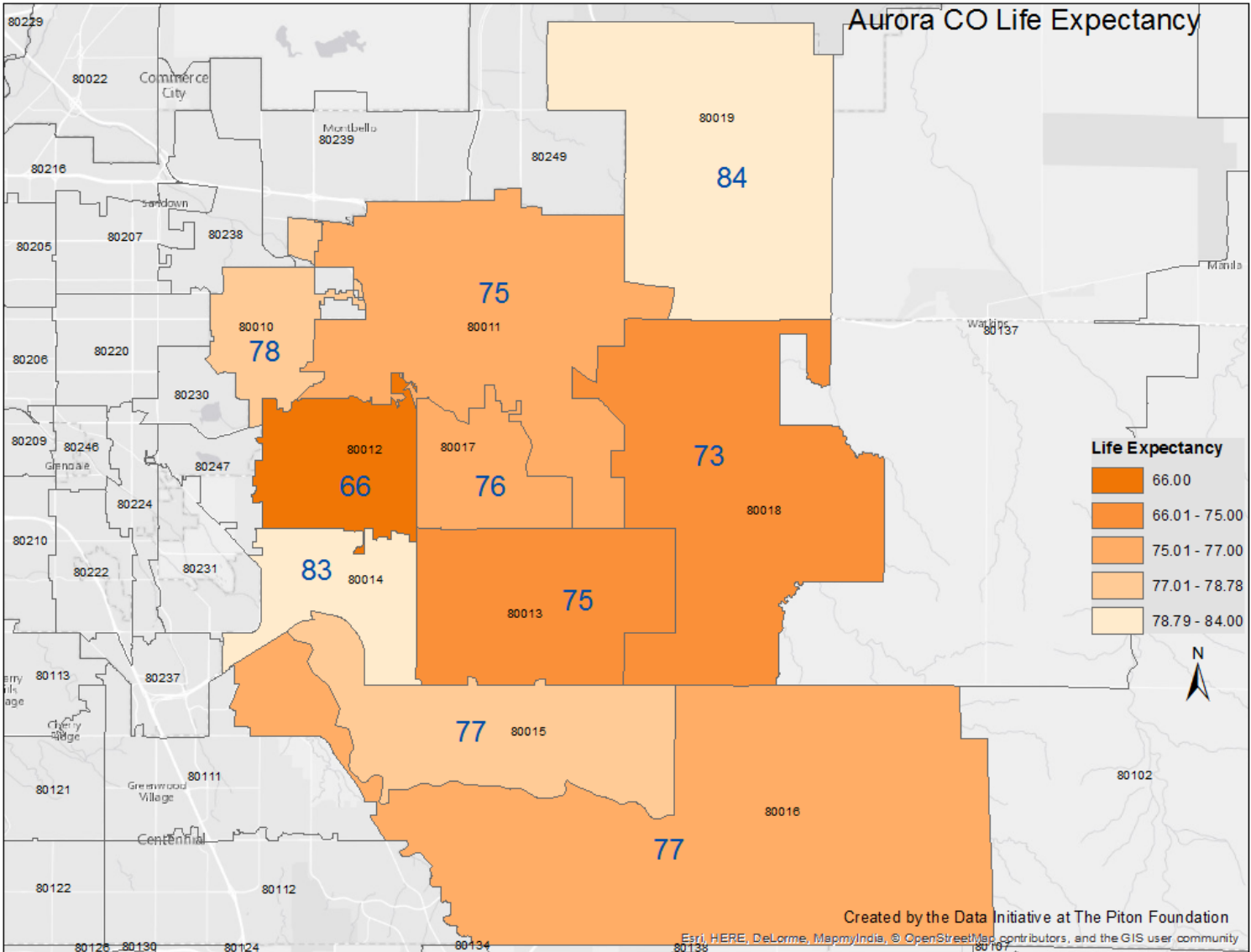


We envision a world where girls love all of who they are (inside and out) because we know that all girls are inherently strong, worthy and capable of greatness.

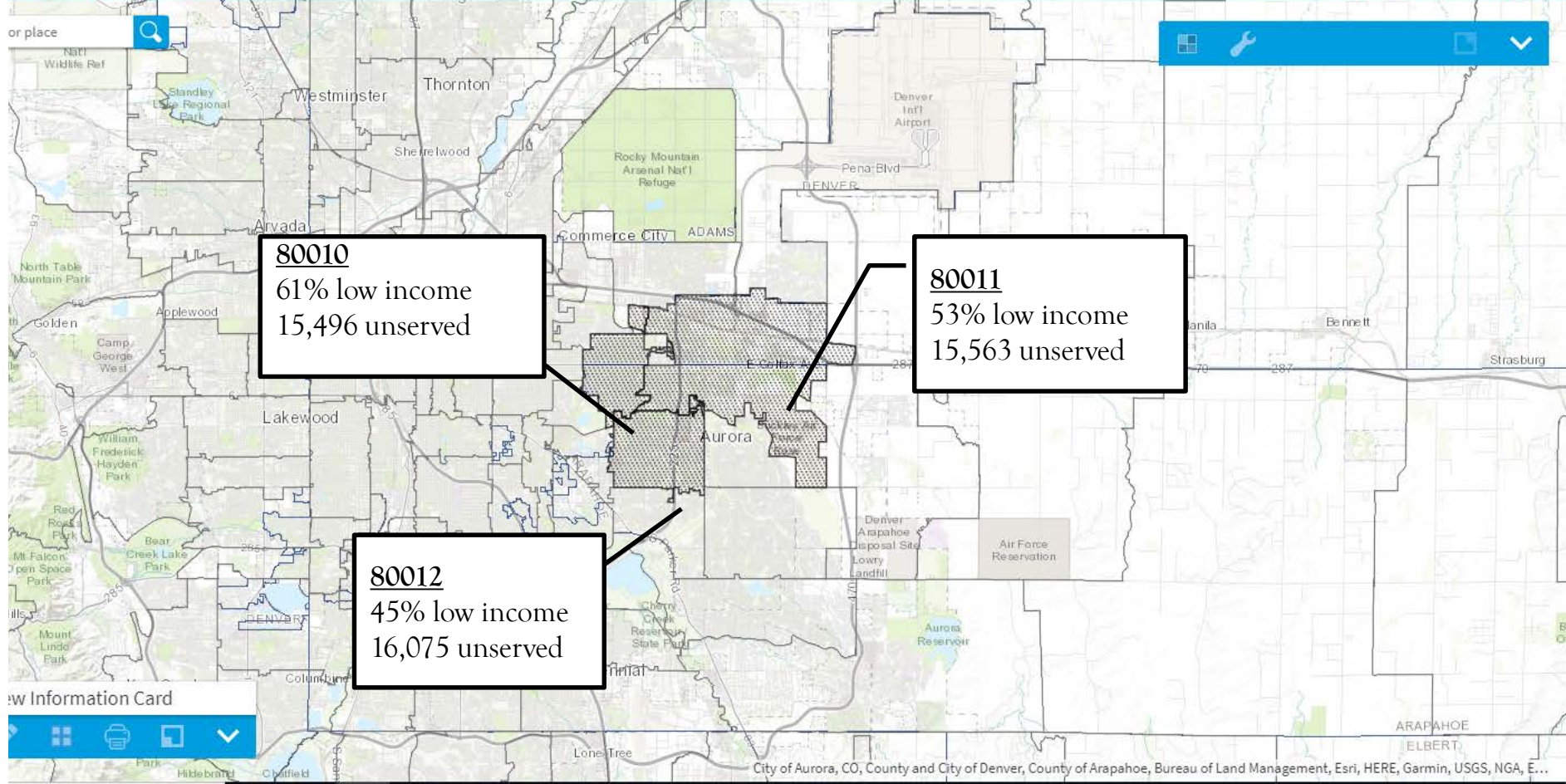
What is the Fields Foundation?



Average Life Expectancy in Aurora



Income and Primary Care Shortage in 3 Aurora Zip Codes



Partnership Development Grant.

Community Engagement Pilot Program (CE-Pilot)

“Partnering with a Community of Color to Create a Culturally Responsive Program: smart*fit*girls™”



Colorado Clinical and Translational
Sciences Institute (CCTSI)

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

North Star.

”If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

-Lilla Watson, Aboriginal elder, activist and educator from Queensland, Australia.

Principles of Community Based Engagement

- The story of “self”, the story of “us”, with a historical context
- Shared power dynamics
- Preserving authenticity
- Valuing individual and collective community voice
- Using place-based strategies
- Being fluid
- Intentionality cultivates trust
- Capacity building is different from colonization



Having a strengths-based lens.

Doubting/discrediting youth

- “I have a niece and all she cares about is her cellphone.”

Set-up for failure

- “The last time I tried to get youth involved, they didn’t show up.”

Decorative programming

- “Maybe we could have them help us with the food drive we’ve been wanting to do.”

Discourse of “surprise”/Exceptionalism

- “Wow, you are so articulate for an 8th grader”

- How do we leverage their expertise with technology?
- How can we provide support/infrastructure to set girls up for success?
- What important community issue do girls want to get mobilize around?
- We know that girls are inherently brilliant.

Program Goals.

1. **Establish a Leadership Council**
2. Establish a common agenda for the project and a plan of action
3. Use storytelling and focus groups to explore and identify barriers to physical activity and positive self-esteem
4. Review and adapt the SFG curriculum to tailor it to their population
5. Outline the Pilot Project grant application

Why establish the Leadership Council?



Why Smart Fit Girls Melanin Magic?



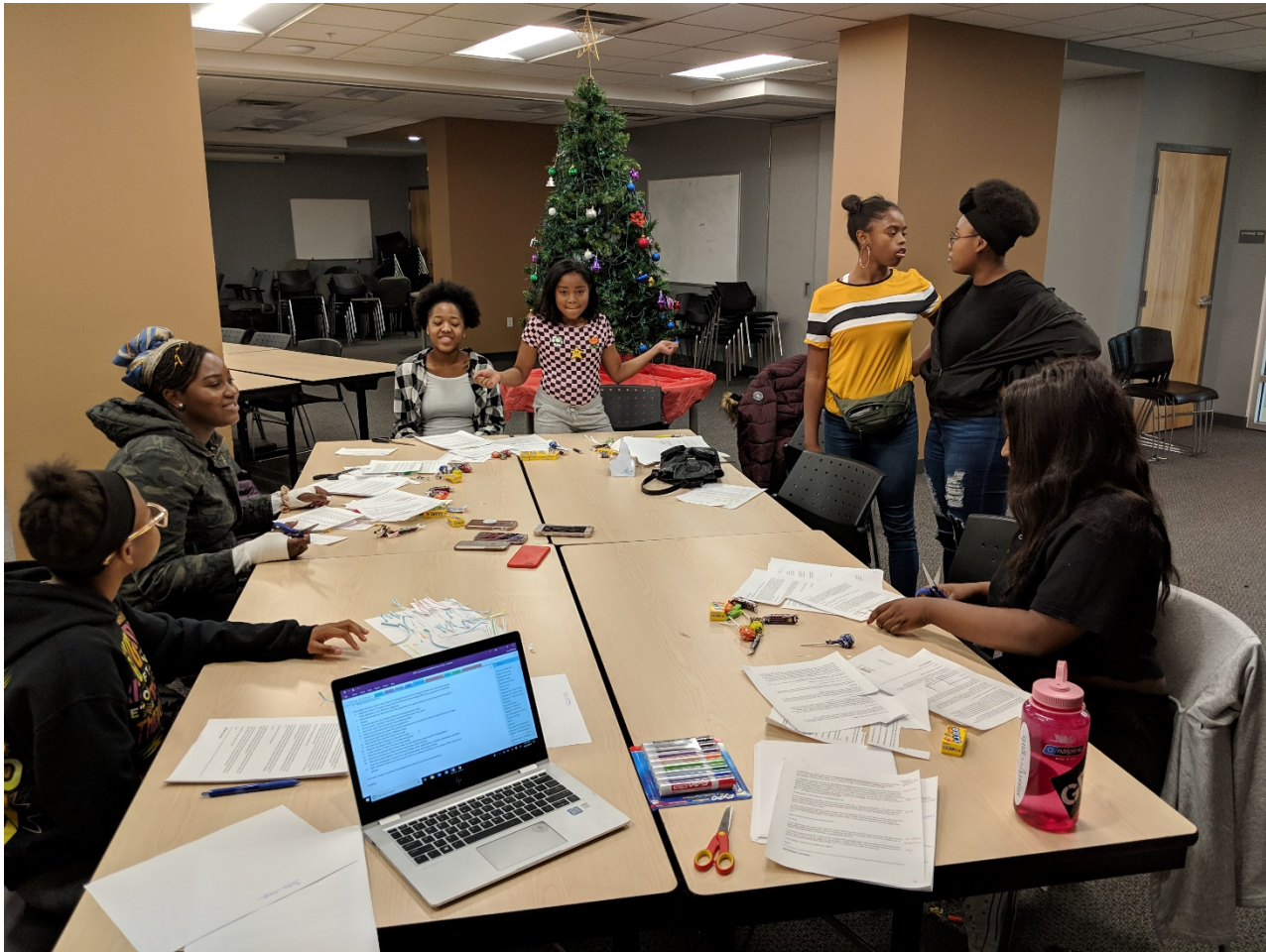
Why Melanin Magic?

“Having this program named Melanin Magic now there’s something that specifically caters to me. Like this whole center point is African-American people and just the beauty of us and just how we’re just like, great.”

Program Goals.

1. Establish a Leadership Council
2. Establish a common agenda for the project and a plan of action
3. **Use storytelling and focus groups to explore and identify barriers to physical activity and positive self-esteem**
4. Review and adapt the SFG curriculum to tailor it to their population
5. Outline the Pilot Project grant application

The Process.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Protective Factors – PA improves mood

“Exercise makes me feel like I’m getting my life together. For some reason right after I exercise I’ll be like okay this is it. I’ll start doing that, start doing that...it makes me feel really good about myself.”



Barriers to being active

“I just feel like I want the end result faster like if I go to the gym I’m like I just did all this work and I don’t see it on like the scale. I just want to see like what I put into it. I want to see like that work.”



SELF-ESTEEM

Protective Factors - Positive Affirmations

“Well when I want to boost my confidence I say ‘you’re a beautiful Black queen, and like you’re here for a purpose and God has a purpose for you’ Yeah, I say that to myself multiple times.”



Being in predominantly white spaces has a negative impact on SE

“It could impact self-negativity in a sense, seeing nobody else that looks like you, teachers don’t look like you, then no groups that you could go to to express yourself, being bullied about what you look like, how you have to keep on answering questions about your hair, teachers pushing you down and thinking that you’re not as smart as other kids, not thinking that you live around here, around the school that you go to, just because of how you look.”



BODY IMAGE

Comparison to an unachievable beauty ideal

“Because I feel that there is almost like a standard or a bar for how a girl’s body is supposed to look like and I feel that every single time I try I’m like right below it, but I haven’t met it. I don’t fit the standard. I can’t reach the bar no matter how many times I try. I get real close to it and then I end up not getting it, so I feel completely utterly terrible.”



Importance of hair

“Black people’s hair, like that’s where our pride is, you know we always have like five different hairstyles. And you know when our hair looks good we feel good.”



LESSONS WE'RE LEARNING

smart*fit*girls™
Melanin Magic

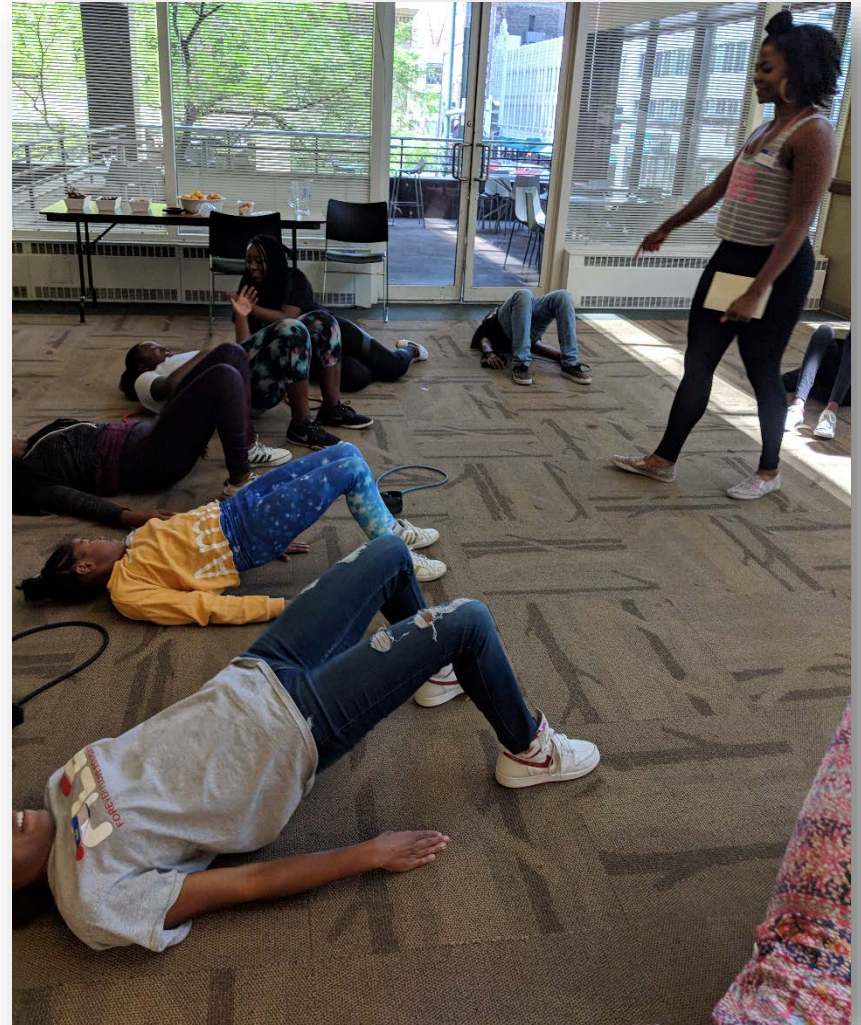
It's about so much more than the project goals.

“We have become increasingly aware of the strengths, gifts and expertise of one another... when people are able to operate in their gifting or desired area of performance the outcome is more authentic, with a greater reflection of depth, quality and substance. The outcome is a greater experience for our participants.”

- Topazz McBride, Program Leader

How we spend our time and resources.

- Self-reflection and self-care
- Ally is a VERB
- Education
- Consultants and experts
- Food and supplies



How we spend our time and resources.

Your body is not an ornament or decoration for consumption.
You owe no one an explanation.

You don't need to wait until you "fix" or "change" anything to
walk into every room with confidence — like you own the
place.

Confidence is an inside job.

Always hold your head high, Queen.

Sincerely — your favorite [#BlackUnicorn](#)

How we spend our time and resources.



Involving the girls in every step.

- Agenda setting
- Presentations
- Manuscript preparation
- Grant writing
- COACHING!



Next Steps.

- Youth-led program adaptation and delivery
- Exploring and defining how girls want to activate
- Expand - build out spaces where girls of color feel affirmed
- FUNDING



Acknowledgements.

- Smart Fit Girls
Melanin Magic
Leadership Council
- Topazz McBride,
Psychotherapist
- Deborah Fard, JSTEM
Institute
- Jasmine Crane,
Therapist
- Tameka Brigham, APS



Questions?

smart*fit*girls™



smart*fit*girls™

WHAT IS SFG MELANIN MAGIC?

smart*fit*girls™

How we spend our time.

iamchrissyking You never have to apologize for your body.

Thick thighs

Thighs that don't touch

Wide hips

Narrow hips

Big boobs

Original member of the itty, bitty, titty committee

Long Hair

Short hair, don't care

Sculpted and lean

Juicy and round (and everything in between)

Big booty Judys

Team little booties need love too

Naturally curly and dope

Pressed, permed, and dyed

Your body is not an ornament or decoration for consumption.

You owe no one an explanation.

You don't need to wait until you "fix" or "change" anything to walk into every room with confidence — like you own the place.

Confidence is an inside job.

Always hold your head high, Queen.

Sincerely — your favorite #BlackUnicorn

Hi ladies! Other Chrissy wrote a beautiful poem this week that I thought you might like:) Let me know if anyone doesn't have Instagram and I'll share it differently

https://www.instagram.com/p/Bln-BOGBZGX/?utm_source=ig_share_sheet&igshid=xira9rpnsfnj



Tap to load preview