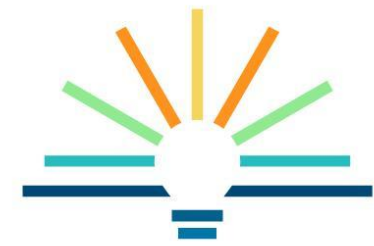


# Gentrification: Examining the Impact on Education

By Maritza Ortega



**EdSystems**

EDUCATION SYSTEMS CENTER *at*  
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



# Youth Action Research

# What is Youth Action Research?

Youth action research is a process for **empowering students to engage in research** that builds their own skills **while also contributing to a topic of importance to them.**

This model encourages a **dual-impact approach** by teaching students valuable research and presentation skills while contributing research to people and causes important to them.



# Why Youth Action Research?

**Broaden the definition of who can produce knowledge in our world**, recognizing not only professional adult researchers but also young people who are experiencing the issues they study.

**Equip young people with inquiry, evidence, and presentation skills** that are crucial for their growth as students and as proactive members of their schools and communities.

**Produce insights** into the challenges faced by young people based on their own experiences, as well as identify key resources to address these issues.

**Foster the sociopolitical development and psychological empowerment of young people**, enabling them to understand the underlying causes of community problems and to take motivated action.

[Berkeley YPAR Hub](#)

# Youth Action Research Experience

## Onboarding

Begin with the basics of investigative research to help students feel empowered in this area. Teach basic academic literacy and critical thinking skills first, then give students the space to utilize these skills to explore questions about their community.

## Topic Selection

Balance between topics that are important to your organization/your organization can mentor on and student interest.

# Youth Action Research Experience

## Engaging in Research

Allow students the space to explore the topic but check in to give guidance as needed. In check-in meetings ask a mixture of clarifying questions and probing questions to get them to expand on their findings.

As you engage in these conversations, show students how the skills they are gaining will continue to serve them.

## Contextualizing Research

Ensure that these experiences do not exist in isolation. Connect students with community stakeholders and ground their research in greater context.

# Youth Action Research Experience

## Presenting Research

Help students create a presentation of their research that would be most conducive to their action goals.

Allow them to practice and receive feedback. Focus on digital, written, and verbal essential skills.

## Taking Action

Help students identify the next best steps.

# Putting the Action in Youth Action Research

The *action* component is important.

*“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.” - [Berkley YPAR Hub](#)*

Students should feel empowered to use the findings to advocate for change in your community.



# Areas of Growth

## **Contextualization of research**

Connecting students with community stakeholders early on.

Ground their research in greater expertise and context.

## **Action**

Develop concrete plans for students to inform and contribute to solutions.



# Intentions

What we want you to take away from this presentation?

# Intentions

- Explore the impact of gentrification on education.
- To uncover how changes can significantly affect students' educational opportunities and outcomes in gentrifying neighborhoods.
- Shedding light on the complex relationship between gentrification and impacts on critical issues such as school funding, student displacement, etc.
- To help the audience gain an appreciation for the challenges faced by students in gentrifying neighborhoods.



**What do you know about gentrification?**

**How do you currently understand gentrification?**

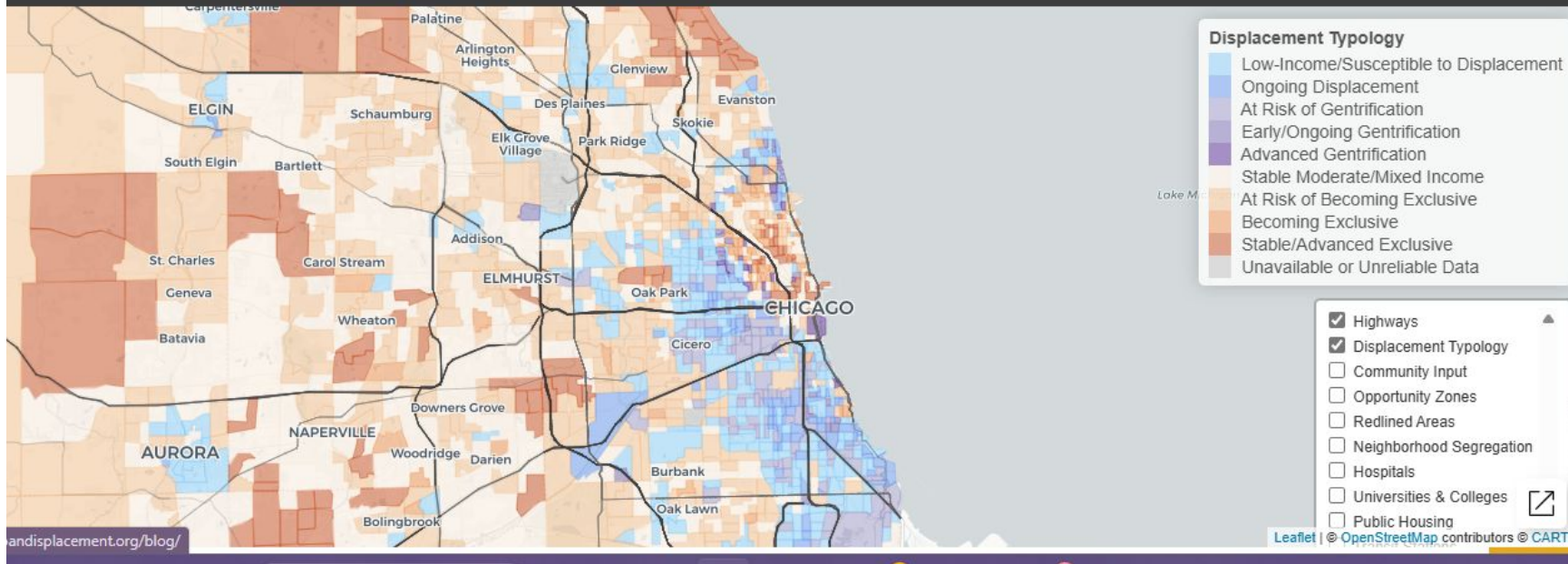
**What are some different ways gentrification may impact students?**

# Definition of Gentrification

A process of neighborhood change that results in the **displacement of poorer households** as wealthier households move in.

# Gentrification in the Chicago Region

## Chicago – Gentrification and Displacement



The [Urban Displacement Project](#) researches gentrification, displacement, and exclusion to promote equitable urban development through actionable knowledge and policy recommendations. It also advocates policymakers with tools and training, fostering a new generation of leaders dedicated to equitable development.



# Categories of Impact

We are going to explore the impact of gentrification on **education** through exploring how **finances, health, and safety** impact students' experiences in school.

# Education Effects of Gentrification

- **Enrollment Declines:** As neighborhoods gentrify, their public schools tend to lose students. This may be because gentrification displaces some families, while new entrants don't have children or are skeptical of neighborhood schools.
- **Increase in School Choices:** Likely due to the skepticism of neighborhood schools, new charter or private schools are likely to launch.
- **Increase in college completion rates:** Students who can stay in the area benefit from increased educational opportunities, reflected in metrics like college completion. This is specifically true for students with less-educated guardians.

## Student Impact Example

In Pilsen, Chicago, displacement resulted in under-enrolled schools. The Pilsen Alliance started in 2014 to support Pilsen community and successfully fought against the closure of four schools in 2015.

## Student Impact Example

Greenlee Elementary (CO) experienced a significant enrollment drop, from 400 students in 2014 to 278 in 2018. Principal Sheldon Reynolds attributed the decline to academic struggles and gentrification, leading to displacement and rising rents.



# Financial Effects of Gentrification

- **Increased Financial Insecurity:** Residents often experience heightened financial insecurity due to rising living costs and rent, which may outpace their income growth.
- **Displacement Risks:** There is a constant threat of displacement as housing becomes unaffordable, exacerbating financial instability.
- **Decreased Access to Affordable Services:** As neighborhoods gentrify, affordable local services such as childcare and community resources may diminish, further straining residents' finances.

## Student Impact Example

When rents rise, families often depend on their young adult children to contribute to costs—which makes it difficult for the student to move out for college.

## Student Impact Example

Changing school districts can have a negative impact on high school graduation rates.

## Student Impact Example

Students who are young parents may have to leave school if they cannot find childcare.

# Health Effects of Gentrification

- **Mental Health:** Gentrification can lead to increased stress and anxiety among residents due to fear of displacement, loss of social networks, and changes in community dynamics. The uncertainty and instability associated with potential eviction and rising rents can severely affect mental well-being.
- **Physical Health:** The displacement and housing instability caused by gentrification can result in physical health issues. People may be forced to move to areas with fewer health resources, or they might experience homelessness, leading to a higher risk of chronic conditions and infectious diseases.
- **Access to Healthcare:** As neighborhoods gentrify, the influx of wealthier residents can drive up the cost of living, making it difficult for long-time residents to afford healthcare services. Additionally, gentrification may lead to the closure of local clinics and health services that cater to low-income populations, but may also lead to the opening of new centers.

## Student Impact Example

The recent Belmont Cragin Health Center that was built near my house making that easy access to not only me but to nearby Prosser High School and the Hanson Park Elementary School.

# Safety Effects of Gentrification

- **Increased investment in neighborhood infrastructure:** Increased investments into better lighting, enhanced public spaces, easier access to libraries, study spaces, and safer campus routes can potentially create safer environments and improve the overall educational experience for students.
- **Crime Rates:** Gentrification may lead to a decrease in overall crime rates, but it can also result in an increase in specific types of crime, like property crime such as burglary and theft. This shift in crime dynamics can impact students by affecting their sense of security and well-being within their educational environment.
- **Destruction of established communities:** Gentrification-induced displacement of long-term residents can gradually destroy established social networks and community unity. Social control mechanisms that are crucial for neighborhood safety can impact students by disrupting support systems and networks essential for their educational and social development.

## Student Impact Example

My high school in West Humboldt/Hermosa is near a park and shops. As a student, I experienced shootings at the park and a lockdown following a nearby bank robbery.

## Student Impact Example

A new condo in my neighborhood was built between two other houses, where kids used to play soccer or trampoline, etc. There is no space now for those activities.



# What Can We Do?

- **Enhance counseling and support services** to address emotional and cognitive effects of violence exposure.
- **Integrate curriculum** that addresses social justice, community change, and resilience-building to empower students.
- **Forge partnerships with community organizations** to provide resources and advocacy for students and families affected by gentrification.
- **Advocate** for policies that promote affordable housing, neighborhood stability, and equitable educational opportunities for all students.
- What else?

# Thank You!

*A special thank you to social studies teacher!*

