



Community Health & Well-Being for Every New Yorker

YMCA of Greater New York
Strategic Plan 2026 - 2028

A healthier, engaged, and empowered New York is possible right now.

Let's get it done, together.

For nearly 175 years, the Y has been New York City's leading health and well-being nonprofit organization. With 24 branches and dozens of program sites across the five boroughs, we are committed to serving all New Yorkers, in every corner of our city. This historical moment presents real challenges as federal government support is shrinking and food and housing prices keep rising. Those challenges only make our mission more urgent.

The Y is a source of strength, support, and safety — our promise is that every New Yorker has a place to turn to, and a place for joy, no matter what. Y members lead fuller, healthier lives. Older adults find connection. Teens get the opportunity to lead. Children learn to swim. Neighbors work together to improve their communities.

Over the next three years, we will build on this legacy and the successes of our last strategic plan to focus on what our city needs most now: healthier, more engaged, and more empowered communities. Our strategic plan, **Community Health & Well-Being for Every New Yorker**, is bold, ambitious, and multi-faceted, just like the New Yorkers we serve. It continues the Y's work of building a stronger future for our city — with a determination that's uniquely us and uniquely New York.

OUR VISION

Active,
Engaged
New Yorkers
Building Stronger
Communities.

OUR MISSION

We're here for all
New Yorkers — to empower
youth, improve health,
and strengthen communities.



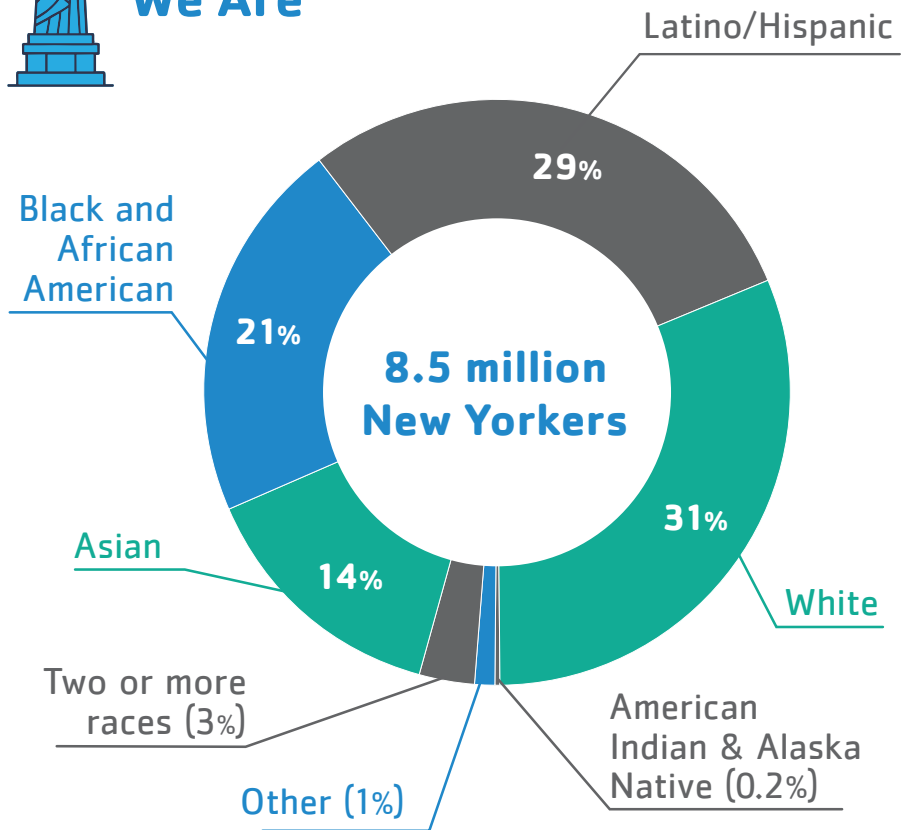
BY THE NUMBERS

Health & Well-Being in New York City

Our strategic plan priorities are shaped by the ongoing needs of the communities we serve.



Who We Are



1. data.census.gov; 2. <https://tinyurl.com/nz2amef8>; 3. www.osc.ny.gov/files/press/pdf/report-22-2025.pdf; 4. www.cityharvest.org/child-hunger-data/; 5. <https://tinyurl.com/mu6mx6yb>; 6. <https://tinyurl.com/mun789pc>; 7. <https://tinyurl.com/zsrj9nrb>; 8. <https://tinyurl.com/2c8x6pmz>; 9. <https://tinyurl.com/rtejx8y8>; 10. <https://tinyurl.com/4hyxfyrs>; 11. https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG_Public/chirs/reports/#county

48%
of people ages 5 and older speak a language other than English at home — more than double the national average¹

44%
of the workforce are immigrants²

53%
increase in New Yorkers ages 65 and older in the last 20 years³

Food Security

25%
of children experience food insecurity⁴

89%
increase in food pantry visits by children and their families in the last 4 years⁴

Health

59%
of adults are overweight or obese⁹

Access to Swim

1 in 4
kids do not know how to swim⁵

NYC is surrounded by **520 miles of shoreline**⁶

Education

35%
of K-12 students are chronically absent¹⁰

45%
of high school seniors are chronically absent¹⁰

Community Engagement

57%
of New Yorkers feel lonely some or most of the time⁷

11%
of New Yorkers participate in neighborhood, school, or community groups⁸

Exercise

1 in 4
New Yorkers have not exercised in the past 30 days¹¹

At the Y, healthy means active, nourished, and safe.

New York City's more than 8 million residents face pressing and varied health and wellness challenges, including obesity, heart disease, diabetes, substance abuse, and social isolation. Every day, our members show us what's possible in the face of those challenges. We provide the tools and resources, and they bring the effort and action. In the weight room, pool, kitchen, fitness class, community market, counseling centers, and our gathering spaces, every member gets the chance to be who they want to be, with others who are doing the same. Here's how our focus on health will shape our efforts for the next three years.

“New Yorkers learn to swim here, because the Y is an environment where they can be comfortable and work with an instructor who listens and cares.”

— Hal, Chinatown Y Aquatics Director



OUR PRIORITIES

PREVENTIVE HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Healthy New Yorkers are active.

The Y helps our members set and achieve their wellness goals with a combination of trusted support and accessible resources. Sometimes those are strength and fitness goals that members work toward in our facilities and classes. Sometimes those are preventive health goals like controlling blood sugar, blood pressure, or weight through the Y's prevention programs and services.

Healthy New Yorkers are nourished.

Over the next three years, we will work hard to increase awareness of our Food Access and Nutrition programming. Y Community Markets provide free groceries and supplies to families at the Coney Island, North Brooklyn, Flushing, and Flatbush YMCAs. In the Northeast Bronx, the Y's Teaching Kitchen offers a range of free cooking and nutrition education classes for youth, older adults, and families. And we will continue to distribute hot and cold meals for free through our Y camp, afterschool programs, early childhood programming, and older adult programming. Because we are a part of the communities we serve, we're well positioned to set up food distributions at Y Community Schools and Y branches in response to evolving community needs.

WATER SAFETY & DROWNING PREVENTION

Healthy New Yorkers are safe.

With 520 miles of shoreline, one of the greatest threats to a New Yorker's safety is the water. With every swim lesson, the Y saves lives. From a 75-year-old grandfather who never learned to swim to a 7-month-old infant learning for the first time, we've been helping New Yorkers become confident swimmers for generations. In 2022, we founded the Citywide Lifeguard & Aquatics Task Force to address the city's severe lifeguard shortage and keep New Yorkers safe in the water. Now, we're expanding access to swimming lessons and crucial water safety education by making vital investments in our school swim partnerships, youth & adult aquatics programs, and our Citywide Aquatics & Lifeguard Task Force.



ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

The Y gives New Yorkers of all ages places to go and act with purpose.

People crave connection and engagement in local, physical spaces. For 175 years, the Y has been giving people a convenient place to come to and connect with intention, and that space has never felt more crucial than right now. What does it look like in practice? Teens huddled around a table working on a composting project. Neighbors coming together to register voters. Families, from grandparents to grandkids, volunteering together to improve their communities. At the Y, we know providing safe, reliable spaces and purposeful, collective activity can change lives, and so for the next three years, that's what we're going to do.

“I came Wednesdays. Thursdays. Weekends. I did homework. Took SAT classes. The more I came, the more I liked it, and the more I saw what I want my life to look like.”

— Isha Jawara, West Side YMCA



OUR PRIORITIES

SAFE & ENGAGING SPACES

Engaged New Yorkers of every age have places to go.

At the heart of our mission for nearly 175 years is our insistence that every Y branch and program location is a safe community hub where all New Yorkers are welcome. Making people feel welcome also means having programs and spaces designed specifically for them — their age, their interests, their needs. Over the next three years, we'll be creating even more opportunities for New Yorkers to connect with focused and diverse programming for all ages:

- ▶ Early Education and Afterschool Programs
- ▶ Teen Programming on Weekday and Saturday evenings
- ▶ Programming for Older Adults
- ▶ New / Reimagined Facilities in Flushing, Greenpoint, and Chinatown

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

Engaged New Yorkers act with purpose.

At the Y, we build programs to promote community engagement and civic participation while advocating for local, state, and federal policies that advance our mission and provide resources for our communities. Y members discover that their voices can shape the decisions that affect their daily lives, and that their voices are necessary to make change for the better. We work to make laws, policy, and activism accessible, so that our members can work with purpose for themselves and their communities. That's why, in the years ahead, we've chosen to shape our work around the following key areas:

- ▶ Legislative Advocacy
- ▶ Strategic Partnerships & Coalitions
- ▶ Voter Registration & Civic Engagement



We give every New Yorker the tools they need for college, career, and connections.

Over nearly two centuries, the Y has been helping New Yorkers feel empowered to take the next step in their life, whether that's going to college, learning a new language, getting a job, or finding housing. With decades of proven impact, we know the key to moving forward is feeling prepared and feeling welcome. When you experience the support and resources of the Y, college, career, and just about anything else feel within reach. Over the next three years, we're going to put extra focus on our support of three important communities — teens, older adults, and immigrants — to make sure every New Yorker feels ready to succeed.

“La Y cambia vidas y yo soy la prueba viviente.”
“(The Y changes lives, and I’m living proof.)”

- Katty, New Americans Initiative



OUR PRIORITIES

CONNECTING TEENS

Empowering young people with preparation and experience.

At the Y, we're unapologetic in our belief that when young people succeed, their entire community benefits. We know that one teen reaching college can change the life of a family for generations to come. The Y designs programs like Teens Take the City, Rowe Scholars, Leaders Club, Teen Night Out, and even our SAT prep courses to help teens envision the future they want and the knowledge and confidence to move toward it. We'll also keep investing in New York's young people through our ACE Lifeguard Training Program, Summer Camp Counselors, Summer Training Programs, and Y local branches, because one of the biggest barriers to entering the workforce is simply getting hired for the first time. Our programs connect New York teens with the mentors, peers, resources, and experiences to feel ready for college, career, and anything else they can dream of.

OLDER ADULT PROGRAMMING

Empowering older adults with access and education.

Intergenerational connections are core to the Y's work, creating spaces and places where New Yorkers of all ages can connect, learn, and grow. The Y helps older adults improve their health and well-being by providing access to life-changing programs such as digital and financial literacy, caring for caregivers, and understanding healthy foods.

NEW AMERICANS INITIATIVE

Empowering immigrants and refugees with education and connections.

Throughout our organization's history, the Y has welcomed immigrants with open arms. Through our nationally-recognized New Americans Initiative model, New York's immigrants and refugees find their footing and lay the groundwork for futures full of possibility. Our dedication to newcomers will always be a part of our story, and, in this next chapter, we will amplify our support by investing in English as a Second Language classes, Adult Literacy Education, Workforce Development training, and a robust case management program that ensures New Americans Initiative participants connect with their needs, their goals, and each other.



Measures of Success



Healthy Communities

PREVENTIVE HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Health & Well-Being Programs

- Increase Fitness Center Essentials enrollment
- Increase participation in weight loss and blood pressure management programs

Food Access & Nutrition Education

- Increase knowledge of nutrition and food safety
- Increase pounds of food distributed
- Increase number of people served in community distributions & Y Community Markets

Counseling Services

- Increase number of people served

WATER SAFETY & DROWNING PREVENTION

- Increase in school swim partnerships
- All classes track skill attainment digitally by 2027
- Increase number served and spaces available (fee and non-fee programs)
- Increase number of Aquatics Task Force water safety school engagements

Engaged Communities

SAFE & ENGAGING SPACES

School-Age Child Care Programs

- Increase number of children served
- 100% of children enrolled in Y Afterschool participate in a minimum of 45 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week

Teens Programming

- Increase number served in teen programs (Teen Night Out, Saturday Night Lights, Leaders Club)
- Establish baseline percentage of youth who affirm Y is a place they feel safe

New/Reimagined Facilities (Flushing & Greenpoint, & Chinatown)

- Meet capital campaign fundraising goal
- Introduce new community programming

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

Legislative Advocacy

- Track number of engagements with civic leaders
- Sustained programmatic investment from external sources

Strategic Partnerships & Coalitions

- Sustained programmatic investment from external sources

Voter Registration & Community Engagement

- Increase number of voter registration and civic engagement events

Empowered Communities

CONNECTING TEENS

- Increase school partnerships in lifeguard training program
- Increase number served in youth employment programs
- Rowe Scholars maintain rates of 95% high school graduation and 85% college matriculation
- Increase in NYC civic knowledge for Teens Take the City participants

OLDER ADULT PROGRAMMING

- Increase number of older adults (65+) served across programs
- Increase number of participants improving digital literacy skills

NEW AMERICANS INITIATIVE

English as a Second Language (ESL)

- Increase percentage of participants who improve ESL skills

Adult Literacy Education

- Increase percentage of participants gaining knowledge

Workforce Development

- Increase percentage of participants with positive employment outcomes

Operational goals to support our strategic plan.

Growth

- Increase awareness of and engagement with the Y
- Cultivate a sense of belonging and achievement for all staff
- Strengthen financial diversity and stability to achieve future goals

Leadership

- Establish a career development framework to build expertise and promote advancement within our organization
- Broaden learning and development opportunities for all staff
- Deepen the effectiveness of staff and leadership engagements

Collaboration

- Work with community organizations and partners to ensure transitional housing remains aligned with our strategic direction and emerging community needs
- Enhance portfolio resiliency through strategic partnerships and investments
- Engage board members and leverage their expertise to support key programs

Innovation

- Invest in innovative technology solutions to optimize engagement and enhance member, participant, and staff experiences
- Utilize state-of-the-art infrastructure and software investments to ensure systems and data security
- Secure financial resources for portfolio revitalization and to sustain growth



OUR REACH IN NEW YORK CITY

BROOKLYN

- 1 Bedford-Stuyvesant YMCA
- 2 Coney Island YMCA
- 3 Dodge YMCA
- 4 Flatbush YMCA
- 5 Greenpoint YMCA
- 6 North Brooklyn YMCA
- 7 Park Slope Armory YMCA
- 8 Prospect Park YMCA

MANHATTAN

- 9 Chinatown YMCA
- 10 Harlem YMCA
- 11 McBurney YMCA
- 12 Vanderbilt YMCA
- 13 West Side YMCA

QUEENS

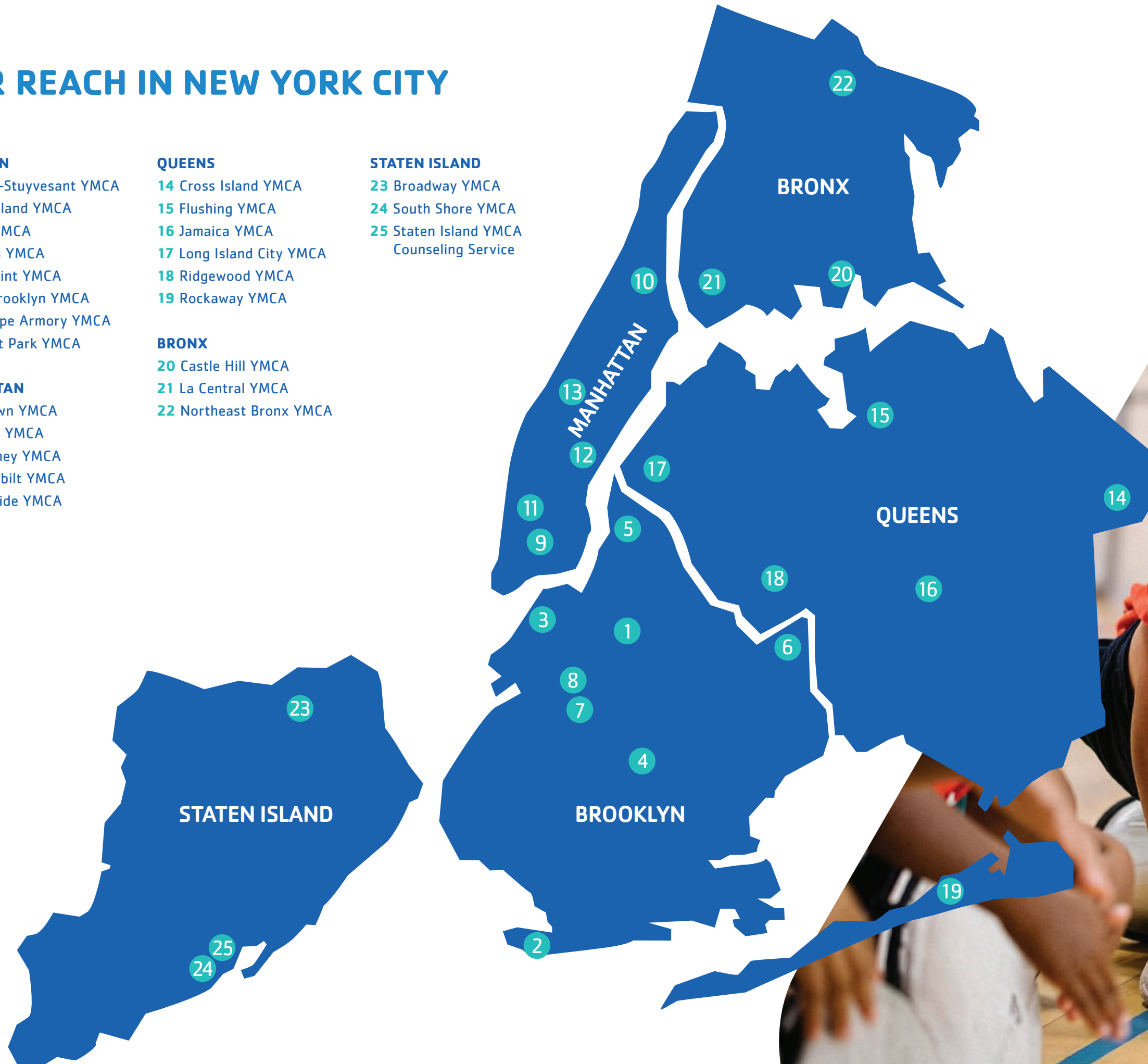
- 14 Cross Island YMCA
- 15 Flushing YMCA
- 16 Jamaica YMCA
- 17 Long Island City YMCA
- 18 Ridgewood YMCA
- 19 Rockaway YMCA

BRONX

- 20 Castle Hill YMCA
- 21 La Central YMCA
- 22 Northeast Bronx YMCA

STATEN ISLAND

- 23 Broadway YMCA
- 24 South Shore YMCA
- 25 Staten Island YMCA
Counseling Service



JOIN US

Find Your Place at the Y

Across New York, the Y is where communities come alive. With your help, we can take this strategic plan off the page and into the everyday lives of New Yorkers.

Find your local Y branch and get involved:
www.ymcanyc.org

Support our mission and your community:
www.ymcanyc.org/give

Find us on
[f](#) [@](#) [v](#) [d](#) [in](#)



Download this report and learn more at
ymcanyc.org/strategicplan

“We feel like new people, like we can be ourselves.”

– Robert and Leson
Y Afterschool program





**YMCA OF GREATER
NEW YORK**