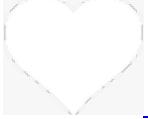
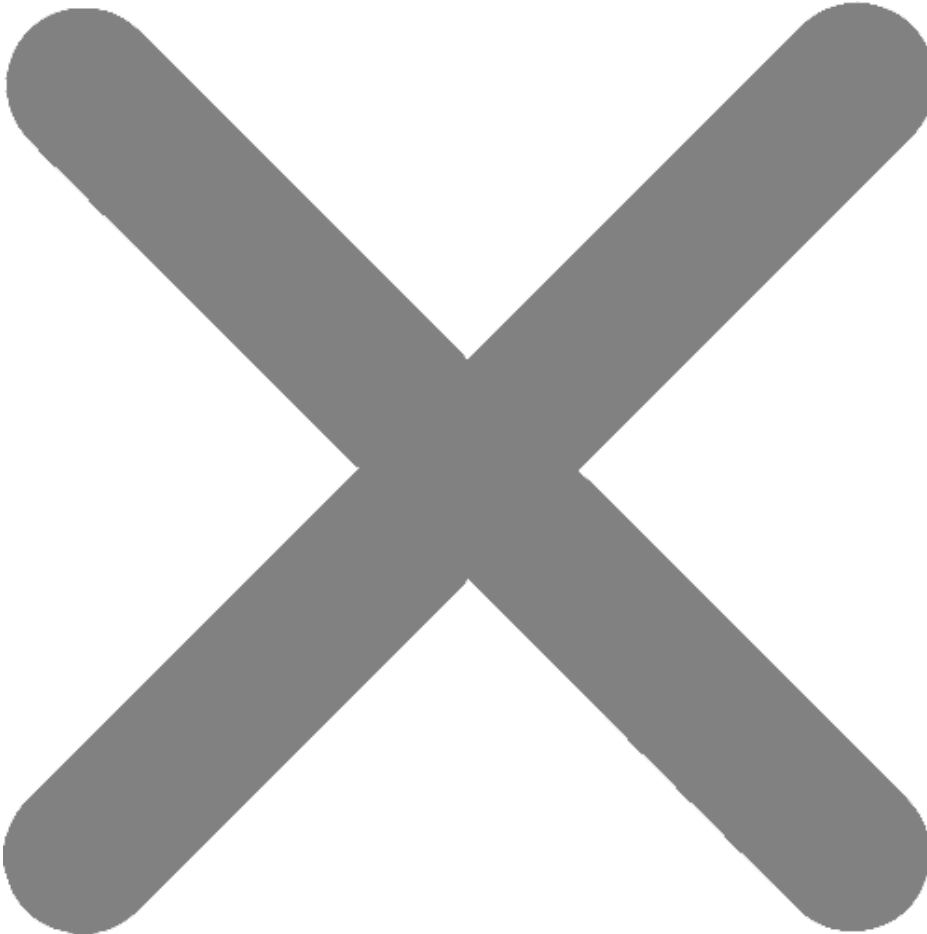


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July 6, 2022

West Lafayette passes resolution declaring racism a public health crisis

[Benjamin Thorp](#)



Article origination [WBAA News](#)





Dr. Greg Loomis and his two former students, Austin and Kylee Darden, speak on behalf of the resolution.

Ben Thorp/WBAA

West Lafayette passed a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis during its city council meeting on Tuesday.

The city joined Tippecanoe County and Lafayette, which approved similar resolutions last month, spurred on by area Human Rights Commissions and the local health department.

Tippecanoe County Health Officer Dr. Greg Loomis says action has to follow the passage of the resolution.

“One of the first things I’m going to do is start some diversity and inclusion training at the health department,” he said. “We’ll be one of the first health departments in the entire state to do DEI training. I’m working with Purdue on that and hopefully, we’ll get that underway shortly.”

Loomis brought two of his former students to speak on behalf of the resolution – Austin and Kylee Darden, both medical students.

Austin said that, as someone who frequently does volunteer work in West Lafayette, the racial disparities are hard to miss.

“It’s pretty glaring, some of the disparities in this community,” he said.

The resolution outlines a litany of health and economic inequalities in the region including things like higher infant mortality rates and lower household incomes between white and Black residents.

During a discussion of the resolution, council president Peter Bunder raised a question many have been asking following the passage of similar resolutions in Lafayette and Tippecanoe County: what will actually change?

“How do we take what is a fine statement and make it applicable to the bureaucracy, the two big bureaucracies, that we’re talking about here. Purdue University and the city of West Lafayette,” he said.

Statewide, only a handful of other jurisdictions have declared racism a public health crisis. These include Indianapolis, Evansville, and St. Joseph County.

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Tags: [racism](#) [West Lafayette](#) [Tippecanoe County](#)

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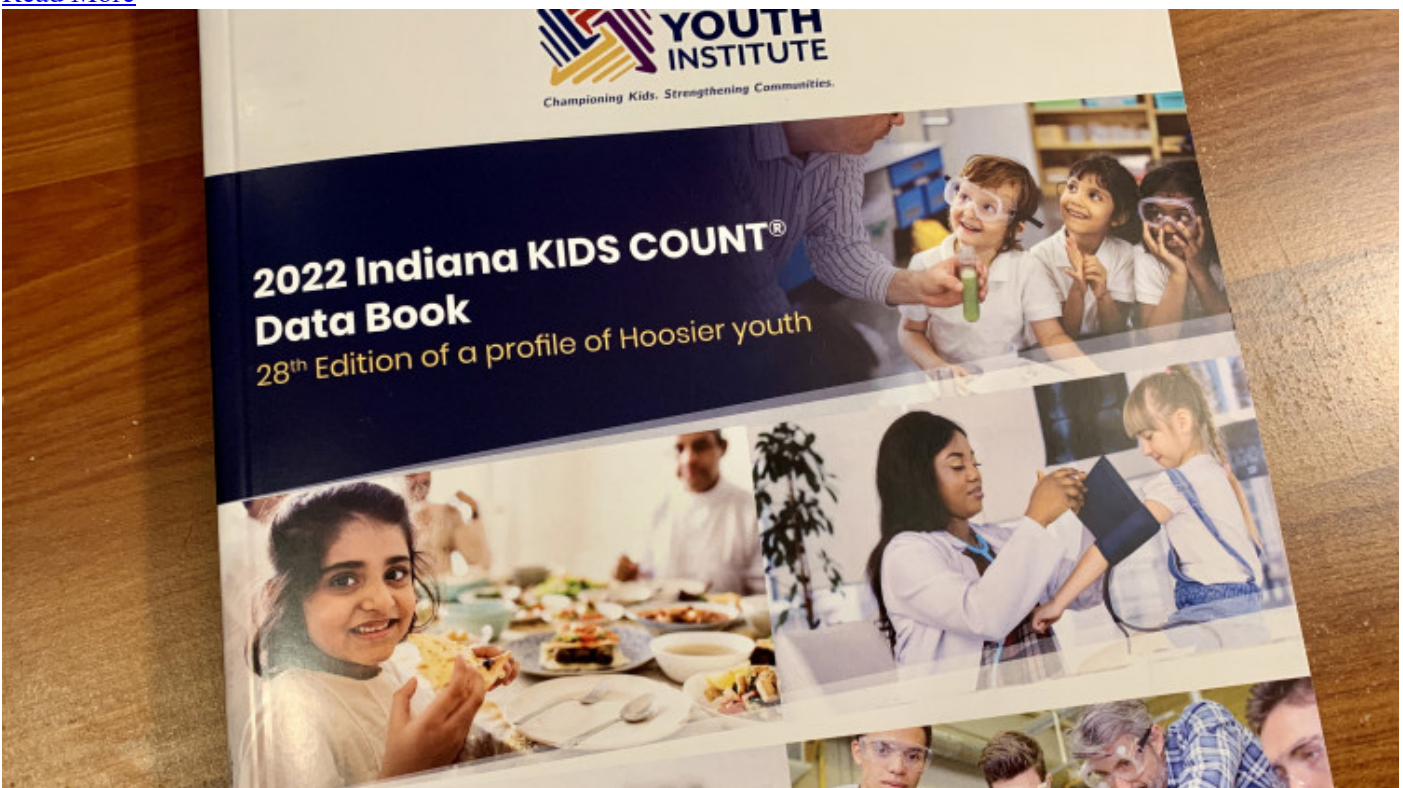


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