

The Youth Are Speaking...

THE RYSE
CENTER'S
LISTENING
CAMPAIGN



VISIONARY



FRANCISCO

*A VISIONARY HAS PASSION.
PASSION SPARKS THE URGE TO
ORGANIZE AND MAKE CHANGES
IN YOUR COMMUNITY.*



GAME CHANGER



SAMUEL

*TO BE A GAME CHANGER IT
TAKES PERSEVERENCE AND
A GREAT SENSE OF
CREATIVITY.*

LEADER



VICTORIA

*TO BE A LEADER IN THE FUTURE-
YOU MUST TAKE CHANCES. EXPECT
SET BACKS. ORGANIZE, PLAN, & GAIN ALLIES.
LEADERSHIP IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT.*

Listening Campaign
Share Out 2.0
Wednesday, May 18th, 2016



4-6-7 Grounding Exercise

Take 4 Deep breaths through your nose. At your own pace.

...

Inhale deeply and hold for 6 counts..

- 1.. 2.. 3.. 4.. 5.. 6

Exhale for 7 counts..

- 1.. 2.. 3.. 4.. 5.. 6.. 7..

Repeat if necessary

RYSE creates safe spaces grounded in social justice that build youth power for young people to love, learn, educate, heal and transform the lives and communities.



- Youth Empowered
 - A center
 - A home
 - A community
 - A movement

“RYSE gives youth the opportunity to learn from and befriend adults and other kids that show them that they can make a valuable contribution in their own way.”

+ Building Beloved Community

“Our goal is to create a beloved community and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Be kind and gentle (with y/ourselves and each other)
- Trust y/our feelings, mind y/our reactions
- What is said here stays here
- What is learned here leaves here
- When we disagree, we get curious
- When we agree, we stay curious
- Let's try to laugh together a few times





Intentions

- Share the Listening Campaign
- Consider the implications and opportunities for our work
- Inspire and cultivate a beloved community



*“When you enter positions of power, dream a little before you think.”
– Toni Morrison*

Current Conditions



- Many young people in Richmond grow up exposed to tremendous stressors bearing the burden of multiple, correlated health inequities.
- Chronic exposure to trauma, violence, and stress is highly associated with long-term, chronic health & public health burdens (ACE Study, 2006).
- Emerging research on trauma and adolescent development inform opportunities for better-informed policies, practices, and investments.

"Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects that must be saved from a burning building." - Paulo Freire



RYSE Listening Campaign

Framing and Methodology

Defining Trauma

- What is trauma?
- What does it look, feel, sound like?



Listening Campaign Goals

- (1) Understand the lived experience of Richmond youth burdened with multiple forms of violence and trauma
- (2) Inform effective community interventions & empowerment strategies
- (3) Create more empathetic & accurate assessment & response processes for youth healing from trauma





Guiding Questions

1. What types of violence and trauma exposure do young people identify, highlight, and prioritize?
2. What are the expressions of distress amongst youth exposed to violence?
3. What strategies of coping and support do young people utilize to increase their resilience or post-traumatic growth in the face of chronic trauma exposure?
4. Where do youth need more support from adults and systems providers? What type of support helps most?

+ Methods: process of data analysis

Three researchers engaged in open & focused coding of surveys

- Open coding of surveys
- Initial focused coding to identify categories and connections

Community
Conversations
Surveys (n=368)

Reflection process with youth & adults community workers

Focus Groups &
Targeted Interviews
(n=65)

- Focused coding of focus group transcripts & category refinement
- Further refinement through constant comparison with interview transcripts

- Identify and interpret linkages between categories
- Define theories of change where relevant
- Present initial results for community feedback & further analysis

Study Results

Constant comparison between data to clarify categories and emergent linkages + one independent coder

The first act of love is to listen. – P. Tillich



Findings and Offerings

Themes and Learnings



Key Themes

Trauma is...

- Pervasive, assumed, and multi-dimensional
- Organized through silencing and shaming
- Experienced with adults as unempathetic, judgemental, and punitive

Primary Coping Strategies

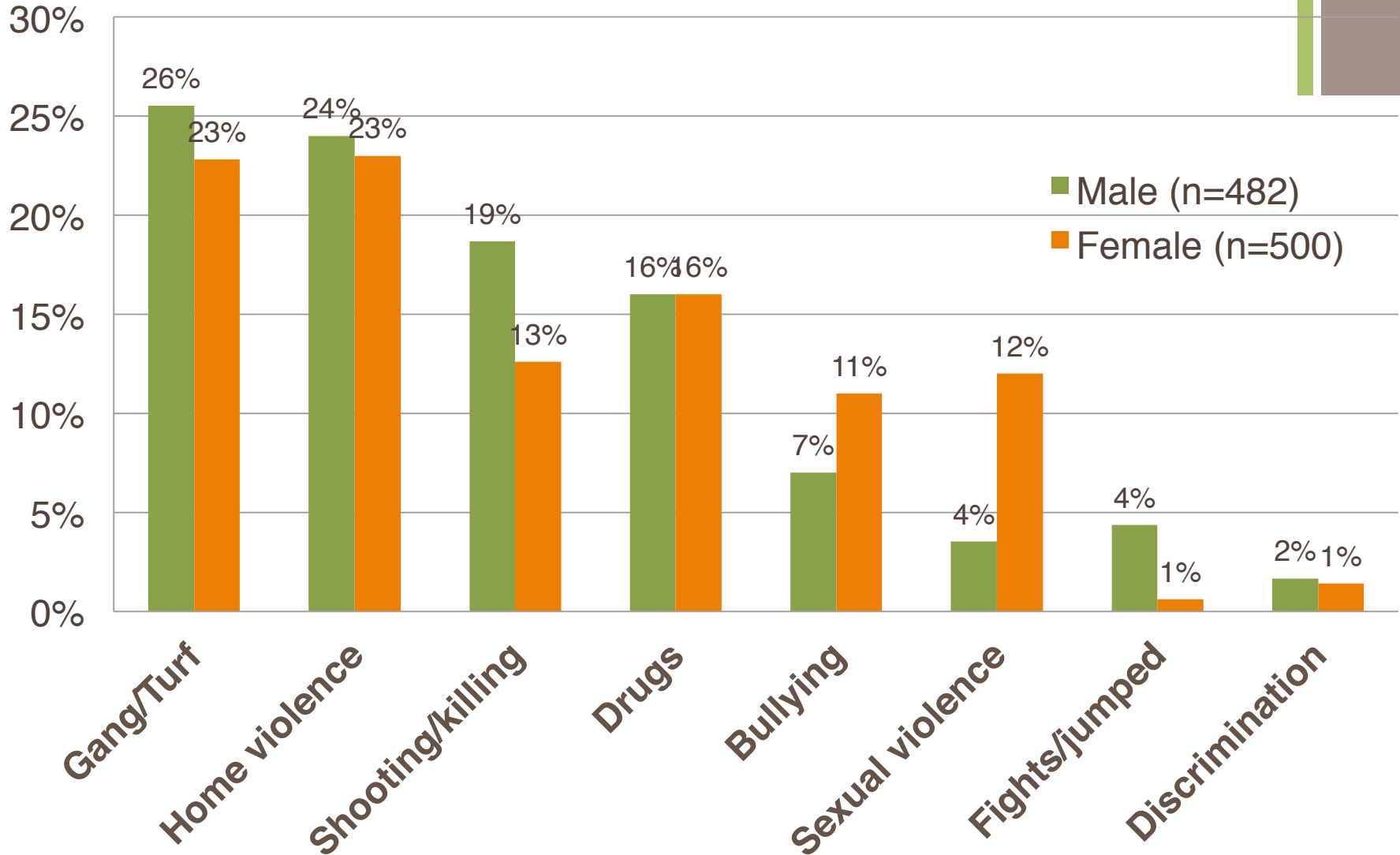
Youth Want & Need





(3) Most Impactful Forms of Violence

gender aggregated descriptive survey results





THE AMERICAN TEENAGER PROJECT

“My experience with violence is very brutal...

I grew up with violence as if it were my sibling.”

*-Angela Vargas, 14
(photo by Karen Tobar)*

+ How does violence impact young people?

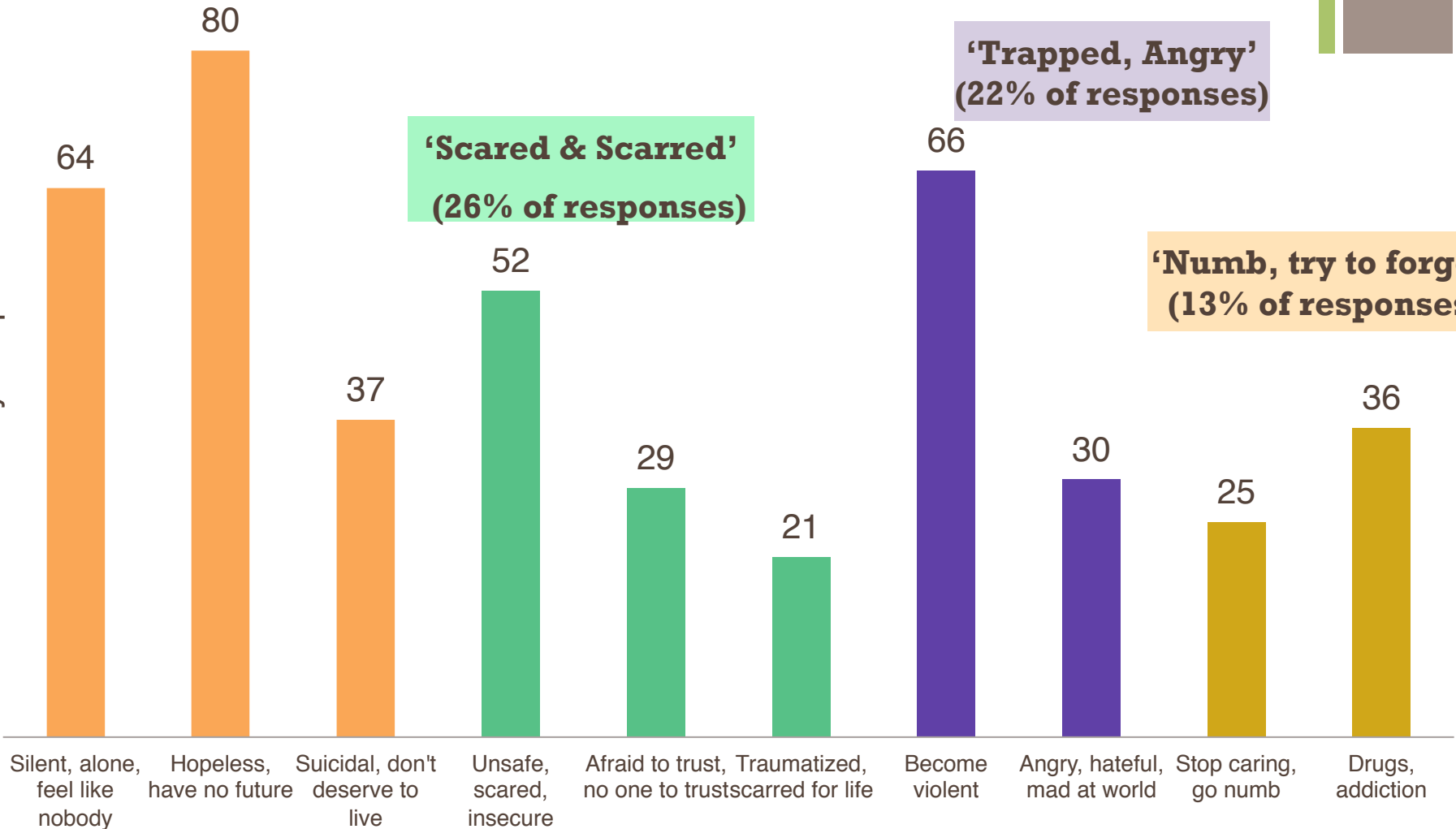
'Hopelessness'
(39% of responses)

'Trapped, Angry'
(22% of responses)

'Scared & Scarred'
(26% of responses)

'Numb, try to forget'
(13% of responses)

Coded Survey Response Rate

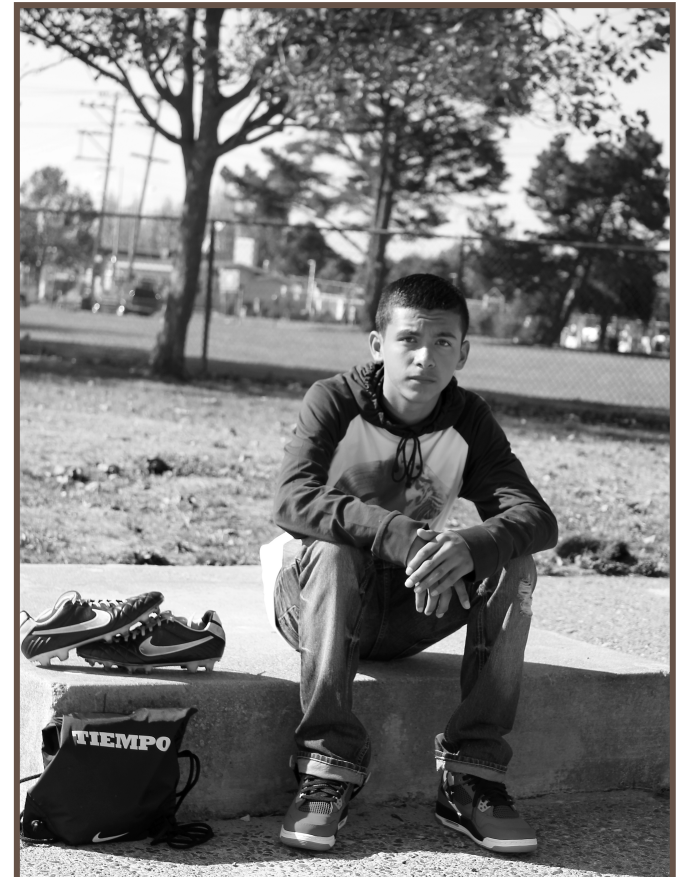




Young people deal with a lot of stress, responsibility, isolation, and lost love ones. Makes young people feel cautious, guilty, alone, angry, and sad.

‘The most impactful form of violence we suffer is silence.’

It makes them want to hurt whoever hurt/killed the person they knew/loved. It makes them angry and sad about everything





Key Themes

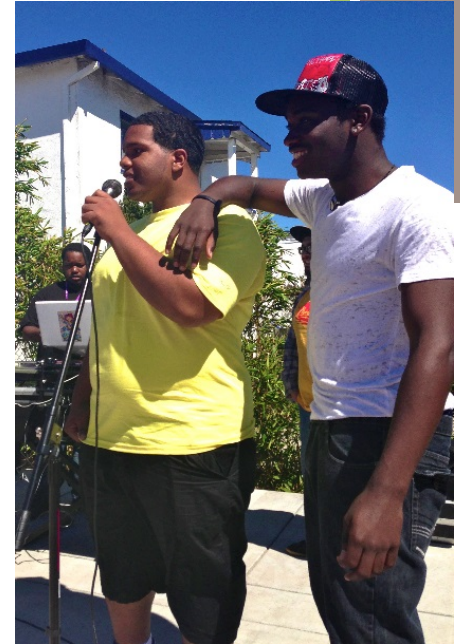
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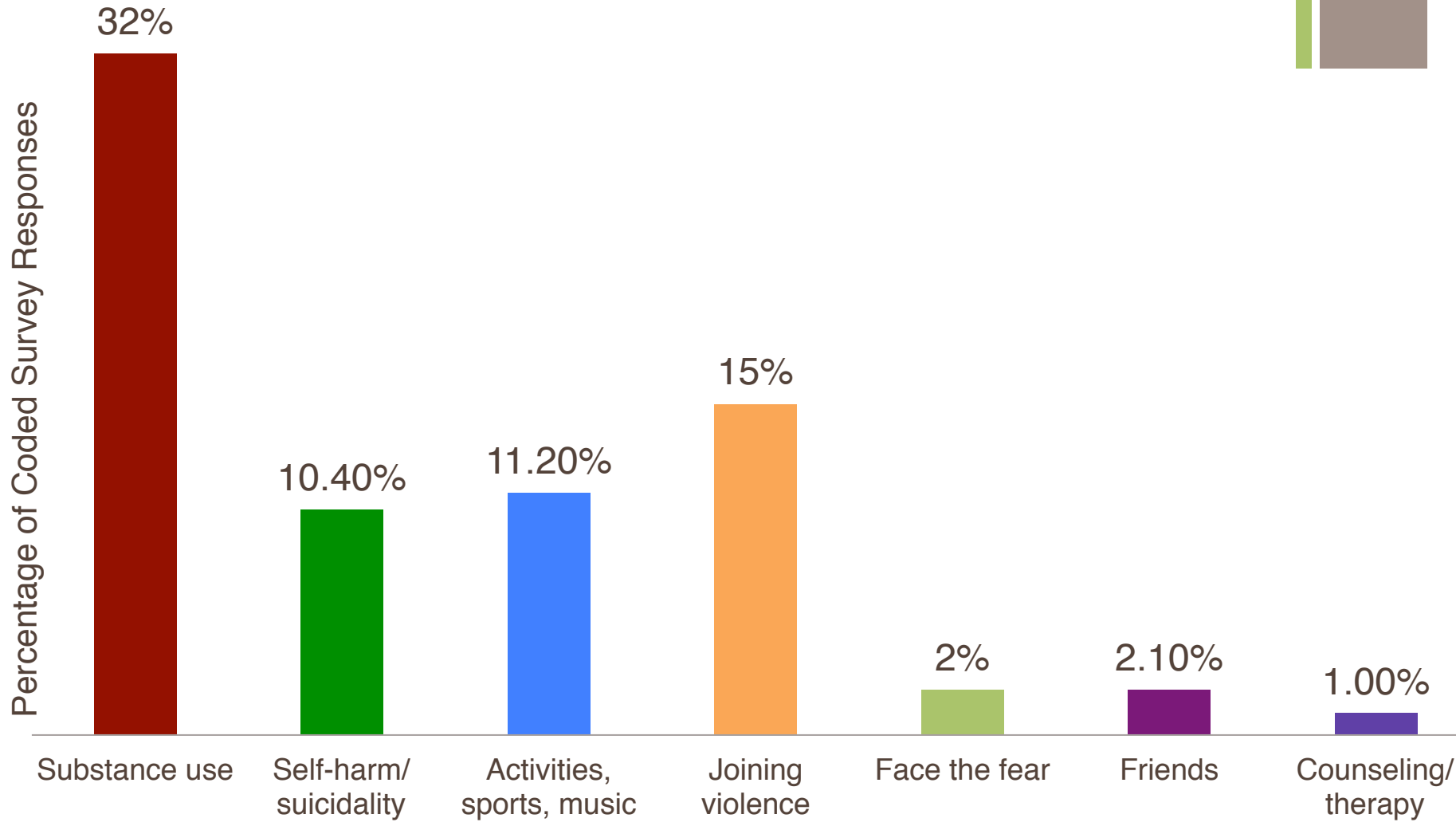
- Drugs and alcohol
- Facing the fear or running away
- Harm to self and others
- Seeking support was rarely mentioned

Youth Want & Need





How do young people cope with violence?



+ You feel hopeless, trapped, angry... like you're dying, slowly. **You just dealing with death on a day-to-day basis.**



Some people after a while, they don't even cry...

But like, this is home. Where else am I going to go?



- “What am I feeling now?”
- “What am I thinking now?”
- “What do I need at this moment?”
- “How am I breathing?”
- “What do I want for myself in this moment?”



“I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept.”

-Angela Davis



Key Themes

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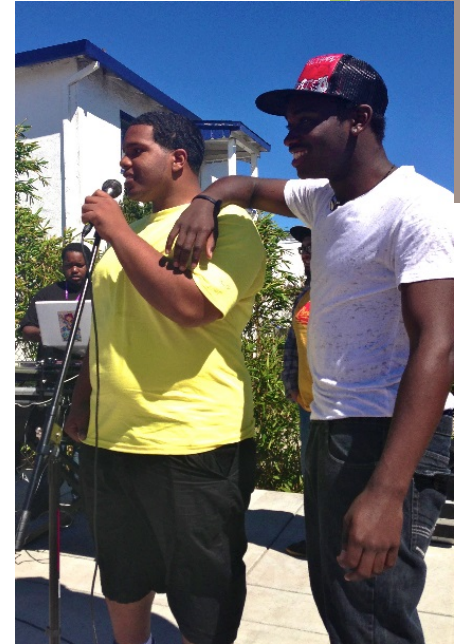
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Youth Want & Need

- Someone to listen and care
- Alternatives to what they see
- Opportunities to lead and learn

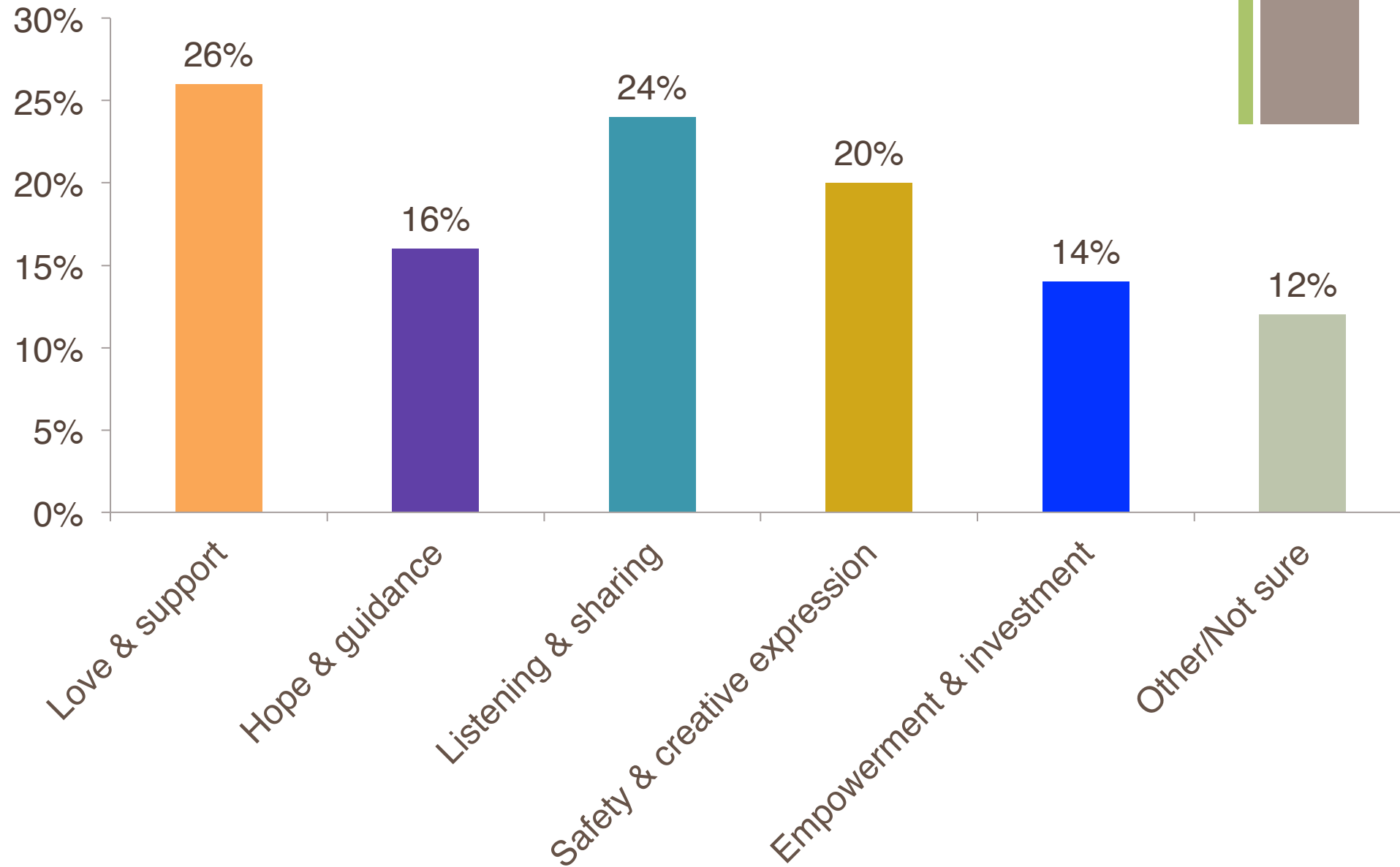


+ Emergent Themes: youth agency & power

‘We know we can’t run the city- it’s too complex- but our experience and our voices should count, especially because we’re the most effected.’



+ What do young people in Richmond need most?



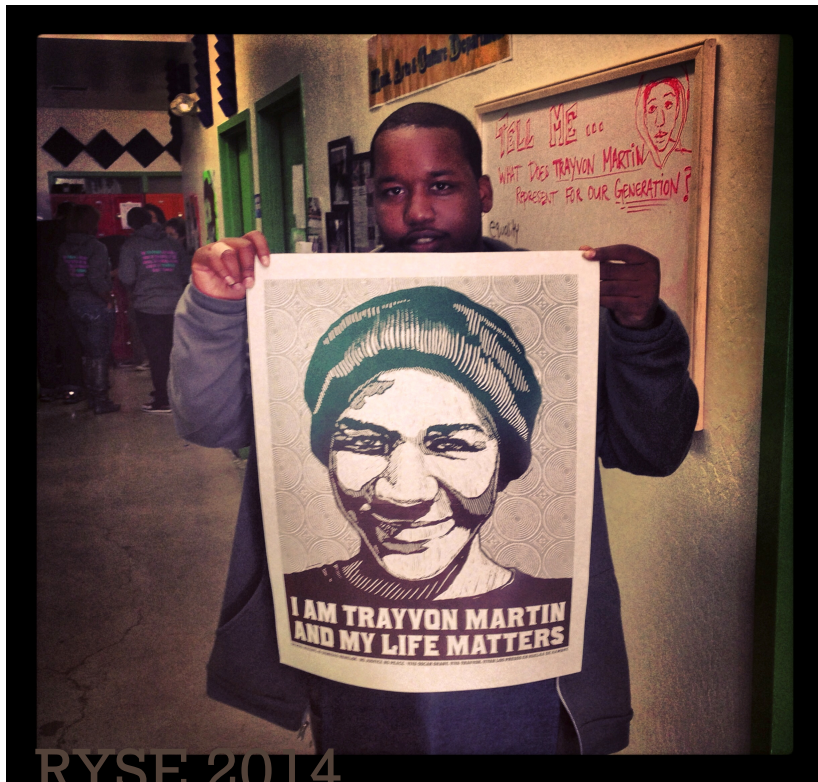


THE AMERICAN TEENAGER PROJECT

- Some people are like ‘I can't wait to get out [of Richmond] - I can't wait to go far’ you know. But I feel like **if people actually made an effort to try and change it- they make a movement towards changing it- I feel like Richmond would be a pretty cool place to live.** We don't have a lot of like fun places to go to but we can always make something fun.
- *- Dalia Ramos, 18 years old*

+ What inspires me is being a part of young people doing something together... collaborating and coming together.

Another thing that inspired me is... meeting people from other sides of Richmond, folks who in another context I wouldn't talk to, but up in here we making music together.



RYSE 2014



And knowing that, okay it's going to take us to do that.

It's going to take your wits and your talent and your charisma and your love, and your consistency to go out there and make that first step.



Creating Beloved Community



➤ **Work across roles and systems**

- Remembering we are accountable first and foremost to young people/students
- Engage in partnerships and healthy struggle

➤ **Acknowledge and address the social ecologies of violence**

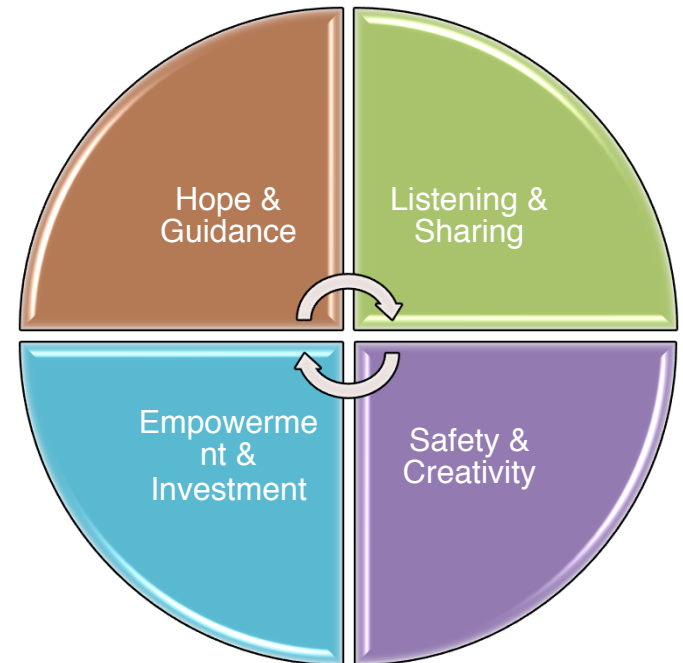
- Naming and validating young people's experiences
- Fostering SEL AND socio-political development

➤ **Avoid simplistic moral frames**

- Victim vs. perpetrator modalities
- Good vs. bad behaviors or symptoms
- Zero tolerance policies

➤ **Heal ourselves, together**

- Includes self-care AND collective healing .
- Discuss our wounds, make repairs
- Listening and witnessing each other



- Mentors & guides
- Examples of what's possible
- Setting limits from loving place

- Someone to listen without judgment
- Trusted relationships w/ peers & adults
- Knowing I'm not alone

Hope & Guidance

Listening & Sharing

What young people want and need

Power & Investment

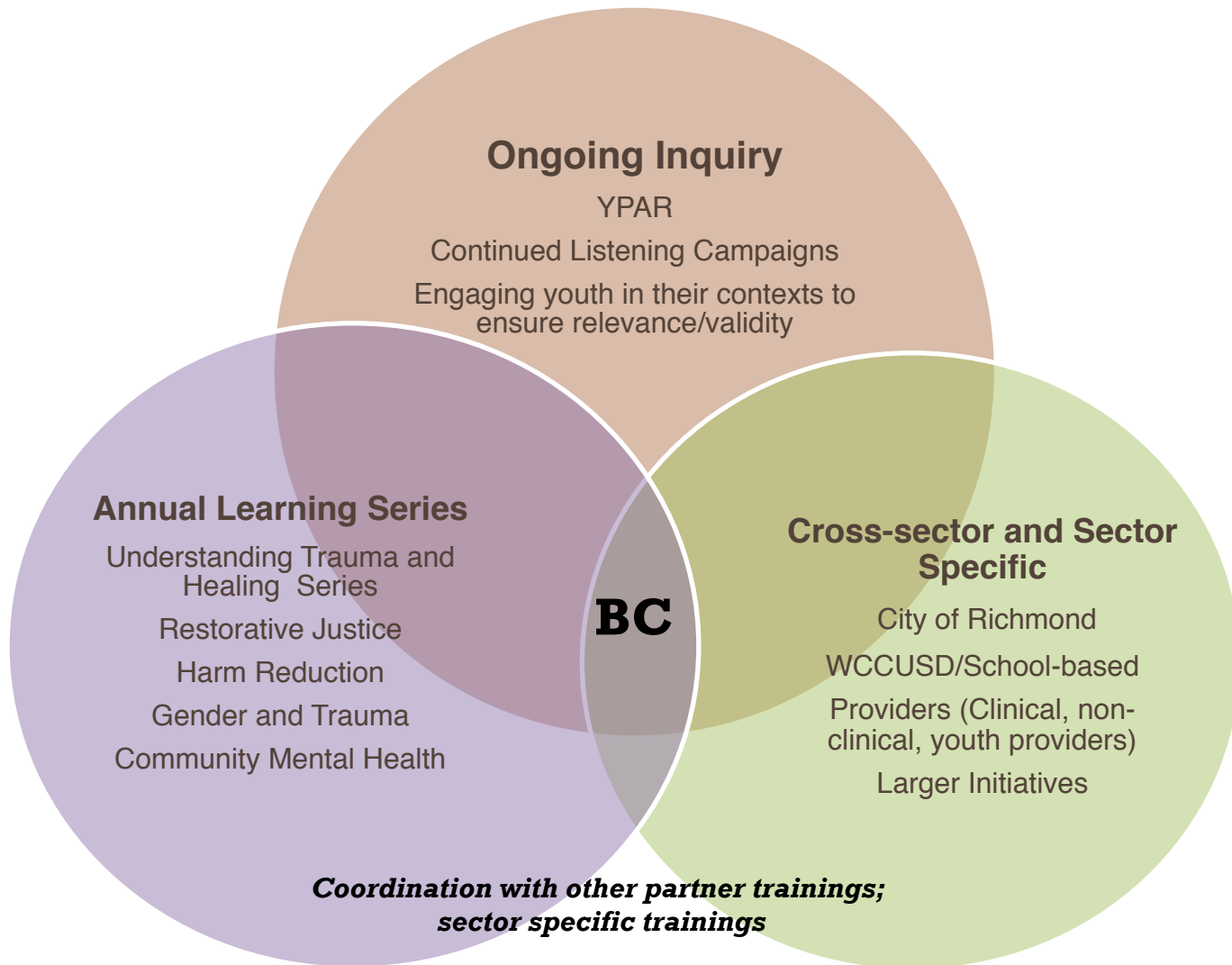
Safety & Creativity

- More resources
- Reducing structural violence
- Reducing punitive policies

- Safe spaces
- More youth programs
- Alternative activities to become engaged in

Building a Beloved Community (BC):

responsive healing-centered systems



BC: Create a coordinated system of cross-sector stakeholders to meaningfully address and respond to acute, chronic, and historical trauma and violence, and the immediate and underlying conditions of inequity.



Our goal is to create a beloved community and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Thank you for attending the Share Out!

Remember to be kind and gentle with yourself and each other