



THEORY OF LIBERATION

THE PROBLEM

West Contra Costa youth bear the burden of multiple health and social inequities. There is a harmful public narrative, promoted in both policies and the media, that youth of color are deficits, not assets, to the larger community.

OUR VISION

We envision strong, healthy, united communities where equity is the norm and violence is neither desired nor required, creating a strong foundation for future generations to thrive. A time and place where youth have opportunities to lead, to dream, and to love. Towards this vision, RYSE creates safe spaces grounded in social justice for young people to love, learn, educate, heal, and transform lives and communities.

IMPLEMENTATION

WHAT WE BELIEVE

- Risk taking is essential to liberation
- Love must be present for movement and transformation
- Centering the lived experiences of young people of color is central to our collective liberation
- Rage and resistance are key to healing and transformation

STRATEGIES

We practice this in all of the ways we do our work, including:

- Base- and Power-building
- Centering Creativity
- Healing-Centered
- Continuum of Direct Services to Systems Change
- Conducting Radical Inquiry

OUTCOMES

THE OUTCOMES OF OUR WORK

SYSTEMS TRANSFORMED

- No policy, investment, practice about young people of color without young people of color.
- Systems, both in policy and praxis are responsive to the priorities and needs of young people as defined by young people.
- Systems and adults responsible for young people are safe, loving, welcoming, and responsive.
- Systems takeover by next generation leaders committed to a platform for liberation in which cultural work and race are central.

YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL LOVED

- Young people have emotional, physical, political safety to acquire tools, skills, and resources they need to understand and change inequities.
- Young people construct their own narrative and those of their communities.
- Young people feel loved.



OUR CORE VALUES

How we hold ourselves accountable.

JUSTICE AND EQUITY

The RYSE Community promotes justice and disrupts injustice in our communities.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

The RYSE Community values young people as creative, powerful, and responsible community leaders.

SAFETY

The RYSE Community commits to safety so all young people feel comfortable and confident being themselves while broadening their horizons.

PARTNERSHIP

The RYSE Community embraces mutual trust and partnership between and among youth and adults, and believes in learning and making decisions together.

CREATIVITY

The RYSE Community fosters imagination, creativity, and innovation.

FUN

The RYSE Community has fun and celebrates together.

OUR PRINCIPLES

That which guides us in implementing our strategies.

YOUTH DRIVEN

Youth and adults working in a partnership where youth are respected and have authentic and equitable opportunities for leadership.

MULTIRACIAL SOLIDARITY

Multiracial solidarity creates power, healing, resistance, and moves us towards our collective liberation.

HEALING-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

Honoring the lived experiences of both youth and adults by engaging in relationships that center inquiry, connection, and healing.

RESISTANCE TO INJUSTICE

Reimagining a system/structure that recognizes our identity, agency, and self-determination.

INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Holding ourselves, our members, and our community accountable to our values and repairing and restoring when trust is broken.

DYNAMIC AND RESPONSIVE

Young people have changing needs, priorities, and interests, and in order to stay relevant, we prioritize youth voice as the driving force in determining our strategies.

LEAD WITH LOVE

Leading with love allows us to intentionally resist oppression interpersonally, organizationally, and within the larger community through resisting dominant narratives while creating alternative ways to affirm our existence.