

MHSOAC ANTI-BULLYING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Report by Youth Leadership Institute // February 2022



OVERVIEW

Youth Leadership Institute carried out youth engagement activities from December 2021 – to February 2022, including conducting one-on-one interviews with original MHSOAC ABAC youth advisors and expanding youth recruitment efforts. In addition, we collected demographic data from youth advisors by utilizing an online survey, and we gathered additional qualitative data from follow-up interviews with each of the youth advisors.

The demographic survey data helped guide recruitment efforts to grow the youth advisor cohort from 8 original members to 12 youth advisors. Additional recruitment efforts are ongoing. The youth advisor interviews were analyzed, and several key themes emerged. We have outlined the key findings from the youth interviews in this report, and we have outlined our recommendations for next steps.

METHODOLOGY

1. Demographic Survey

- We developed and implemented a youth survey designed to collect vital data on current youth advisor demographics.
- The online survey included 11 questions.
- 10 out of 12 youth advisors completed the demographic survey. The two youth who did not complete the survey were emailed three times to allow time for survey completion.
- We utilized findings from the online demographic survey to guide recruitment efforts.

2. Youth Interviews

- We scheduled and facilitated one-on-one interviews with 12 youth advisors to gather feedback on youth-developed content.
- Each interview was between 15 to 30 minutes.
- We analyzed qualitative data gathered from youth interviews and created a report to share key findings from the results of the interviews.



YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

- Age 16, 10%
- Age 17, 40%
- Age 19, 10%
- Age 20, 10%
- Age 25, 20%
- Age 27, 10%

Gender Identity

- Female, 66.7 %
- Genderfluid, 0%
- Genderqueer, 11.1%
- Male, 11.1%
- Transgender, 11.1%

Pronouns

- He/Him/His, 20%
- He/They, 10%
- She/Her/Hers, 60 %
- They/She/He, 10%

Ethnicity

- Asian, 60%
- Hispanic, Latino, 10%
- Mixed, 20%
- White, Non-Hispanic, 10%

**Data represents responses from 10 out of 12 youth advisors.*

***View Appendix I for survey questions.*



YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS, CONT.

Language Preference

- English, 100%

Additional languages spoken at home

- ASL, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, Sinhalese, Spanish, Vietnamese

Low-income (Eligible for free and reduced priced lunch)

- No, 55%
- Yes, 22.2%
- Not Applicable, 22.2%

California Counties Represented



- San Francisco County, 10%
- Santa Clara County, 30%
- Santa Barbara County, 10%
- Shasta County, 10%
- Los Angeles County, 30%
- Riverside County, 10%



**Data represents responses from 10 out of 12 youth advisors.*

***View Appendix I for survey questions.*

YOUTH INTERVIEWS

One-on-one interviews were conducted with 12 youth advisors. Key findings are as follows,

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

- Youth advisors identified **Instagram** and **TikTok** as the top two platforms for youth engagement, followed by Youtube, because these platforms prioritize visually engaging content.
 - "I feel like on [TikTok] it is more easy to engage with people since you're able to share more and you can comment and have discussions with many people," - Keila L., age 17.
 - "I get my information from Instagram. [Instagram] is the number one thing that I use and then TikTok," - Sophie S., age, 17

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Visuals First

Youth are drawn to **visually appealing content**. Youth describe visually appealing content as content that is easy to understand and has a thoughtful design.

- "Videos are really easy to help digest information for the first time. Especially for visual learners, it can be helpful to hear someone speak and see information in a video format," - Ashyah H., age 16.

Trusted Messengers

Youth are more likely to engage with content created by trusted messengers. Trusted messengers can either be individual content creators or organizations. Youth want to see an individual's or an organization's **qualifications** before engaging with the content. For individual content creators, having **first-hand experience with the topic is crucial** and **being a peer is also important**. For organizations, **a proven track record is vital**.

- "I trust people who bring their credentials to the table, but if it is a personal experience, specifically with bullying or mental health, then I think it's more important for it to come from peers," - Emily C., age 17



**Data represents responses from 12 youth advisors.*

***View Appendix II for survey questions.*

YOUTH INTERVIEWS, CONT.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT, CONT.

Youth Narratives

Youth advisors said they want to see **more youth narratives and peer-to-peer content** created. Young people said they do not see enough first-hand accounts of bullying and accessing bullying-prevention resources on social media platforms.

Youth want to see content related to:

- Youth narratives about experiencing bullying
- Youth accessing services and utilizing resources
- Youth experiencing the long-term effects of bullying
- Youth narratives from the perspective of a former bully and restorative justice practices

"Youth narratives are not talked about enough. For a lot of youth it can be hard to talk about being bullied, but encouraging people to start having those difficult conversations can be important. I also want to hear from someone who bullied others so we can prevent bullying in the future." - Ashyah H., age 16

Resources

Sharing **bullying prevention resources or aftercare resources** is a top priority for youth. Youth want to see content related to:

- Identifying service providers and resources specific to a community. Youth say sharing a phone number or website for a national or statewide line is "too generalized" and not specific enough.
- Connecting youth with culturally appropriate resources and service providers.
- Connecting youth with advocacy groups and opportunities to take action against bullying.

"I want to see more resources for my community. When I try to look for resources it's mostly just in the LA area. It's kind of hard to find support when it's not near you." - Keila L., age 17



**Data represents responses from 12 youth advisors.*

***View Appendix II for survey questions.*

YOUTH INTERVIEWS, CONT.

RACISM & BULLYING

Youth advisors said that language related to "anti-bullying" and "bullying prevention" content is too generalized. Instead, youth want to **make explicit connections between racism and bullying towards communities of color.**

Youth want to see:

- Content creators representing a variety of cultural backgrounds
- Educational content about experiencing racism, including content on experiencing microaggressions and internalized racism
- Mental health content that is culturally specific
- Content addressing mental health stigmas in communities of color
- Narratives about identity and race
- Support for the long-term effects of experiencing racism and targeting

"I think we need to have a space to honor how this project funding came about and to acknowledge the harm that was done to the Asian community, due to the rise in Asian hate crimes. The way that community is rising up is going to impact all these other communities. Uplifting one community doesn't mean that we're ignoring others, but when you uplift someone that is being harmed, you are also lifting everyone up at the same time."

- Matthew D., 25

"I want to see more content about the Asian American experience, and I want to see more educational content about the effects of racism and microaggressions on people of color. I would also like to hear more about internalized racism. For someone, it can be really hard to understand why you're feeling a certain way, but having people share their experience or sharing professional knowledge could be really helpful." - Sophie S., age 17

**Data represents responses from 12 youth advisors.*

***View Appendix II for survey questions.*



RECOMMENDATIONS

After analyzing the youth advisor interviews, our team recommends the following,

- 1 Develop content within these two content pillars:

Youth Narratives

First-person narratives, culturally-specific narratives, peer-to-peer support, content discussing the negative impact of experiencing bullying but also providing options for support

Mental Health Resources

Content highlighting community-specific resources and service providers, resources for both short-term and long-term support, culturally relevant resources and service providers

- 2 Partner with youth advisors to move from using general "anti-bullying" and "bullying prevention" language to using more specific language identifying the connections between racism and bullying towards communities of color within the MHSOAC social media project.

"If I could make my own content, it would help people feel connected. It would help people feel joy."
– Matthew D., age 25

"I would want people to come away feeling empowered and maybe have a new link they can go to for help." – Emily C., age 17

"I would create content that is related to my age group. I feel like having a teen-to-teen connection can be valuable to talk about these topics and see what we can do about it." – Ashya H., age 16

NEXT STEPS

Our team has concluded all youth interviews. However, youth recruitment activities are ongoing. The yli team has scheduled a youth advisor meeting for mid-March to reconvene the youth advisors, review the findings of this report and discuss content creation.

Contact

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APPENDIX I

Demographic Survey

1. Name
2. Email Address
3. Age
4. Gender Identity
 - a. Female
 - b. Gender Fluid
 - c. Gender Queer
 - d. Male
 - e. Transgender
5. Gender Pronouns
6. Ethnicity or Cultural Background
7. Language Preference
8. What language or languages do you speak at home? (Please specify)
9. Do you qualify for free or reduced lunch?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I do not know
 - d. Not applicable
10. What community do you represent (i.e. city, county)
11. When are you likely available to meet virtually during the next 3 months? (ex. Monday evenings, evenings during the week, etc.)

APPENDIX II

MHSOAC Anti-Bullying Social Media Survey

1. Where do you like to get your media/information?
 - a. Examples: Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok, YouTube, etc.?
2. What kind of content do you like the most?
 - a. Examples: Photos, Video, Written, Other
3. What kind of content do you trust the most?
 - a. Examples: Influencers, Organizations, Personal Narratives, Listicles (ex. BuzzFeed)
4. What kind of content do you think is missing from the conversation related to bullying/ bullying-prevention?
 - a. Examples: Youth narratives about mental health, direct links to services providers, etc.
5. What way do you most enjoy receiving advice/info/resources?
 - a. Examples: IG reels, IG stories, Twitter hyperlinks, TikTok videos, Other
6. What kind of content would you like to see from content creators and cultural ambassadors?
7. What other partners should we engage to support the social media work? (ex. Promotion, creation, etc.)
8. If you could create your own content, what would it be? What would it look like? What would it make you feel?