



RYISING TO THE CHALLENGE:

Youth-led radical inquiry emphasizing mental health support needs in schools.

RYSE
CENTER

Conocimiento



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TODAY'S FLOW:

- About RYSE
- Radical inquiry
 - As a tool for our organization
 - As a tool for our youth
- YPAR at RYSE – E4L, EJAR
- Marelyn's experience
- YPAR Project timeline & What's next?

OUR MISSION

RYSE creates safe spaces grounded in social justice for young people to *love, learn, educate, heal, and transform* lives and communities.

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BELIEFS | Our Organizational Assumptions

- None of us are free until Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, Youth of Color (BIYOC) are free.
- Risk taking is essential to liberation.
- Youth have a right to the freedom to have fun while growing emotionally, socially, artistically, and intellectually.
- Power is built when everyone is seen, heard, valued and has collective responsibility to our community.
- Love and sacred rage are integral to our liberation.
- Centering the lived experiences of Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, Youth of Color is central to our liberation.
- Healing is our birthright.



VALUES

Our Organizational Strategies



RACIAL EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE: We commit to multiracial, multigender, multiabled solidarity that names and centers the resilience, resistance, and leadership of people of color across all movements for justice.

CREATIVITY & PLAY: We create brave spaces where joy is celebrated, confidence is nurtured, and imagination is liberated.

SHARED POWER & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: We celebrate and unite different knowledge, experiences, and strengths among young people and adults.

YOUTH POWER: We cultivate a community where young people guide each other on a path of self-love, self-expression, belief-in-self, and resistance.

HEALING CENTERED: We respect and honor the wisdom of our lived experiences on journeys toward well-being

LOVE & RAGE: We love deeply and demand healthy, thriving lives for ourselves and our communities. Our Rage is rooted in Love.

SAFETY: We create spaces where one feels connected, protected, safe, and loved.



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THEORY OF LIBERATION

VALUES

- › Safety
- › Youth Power
- › Love & Rage
- › Shared Power & Relationships
- › Healing-Centered
- › Racial Equity & Justice
- › Creativity & Play

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.

BELIEFS

- › None of us are free until Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, Youth of Color are free.
- › Risk taking is essential to liberation.
- › Healing is our birthright.
- › Youth have the right to the freedom to have fun while growing emotionally, socially, artistically, and intellectually.
- › Power is built when everyone is seen, heard, valued, and has collective responsibility to our community.
- › Love & Rage are sacred and integral to our liberation.
- › Centering the lived experience of Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, Youth of Color is central to our collective liberation.

IMPACT

- › Young people feel loved, listened to, and powerful.
- › Built environments center the dreams, needs, power, and healing of our young people, our communities, and the land.
- › Systems are loving and just.



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RADICAL INQUIRY

An Example:

Smoking Causes:
Cancer, Heart Disease, Stroke, Lung Diseases,
Diabetes,
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Chronic
Bronchitis

Increases Risk For:
Tuberculosis, Eye Diseases, Problems of The
Immune System, Rheumatoid Arthritis.





RADICAL: relating to, or proceeding from a root

INQUIRY: a seeking or request for truth, information, or knowledge.



RADICAL INQUIRY:

Meaning, grasping and tending to the roots

Meaning, our work begins and ends with questions; it is iterative, incomplete

Meaning, we cannot see ourselves as separate from or done with our own healing, learning, growing — we are proximate, we are in community, we are listening

RADICAL INQUIRY AT RYSE

"RADICAL SIMPLY MEANS GRASPING THINGS AT THE ROOT."

- ANGELA DAVIS

RYSE's roots are Black, Indigenous and Young People of Color.

Inquiry tools measure RYSE Values, Principles, and Outcomes as experienced by Young People



DATA AND LIBERATION AT RYSE



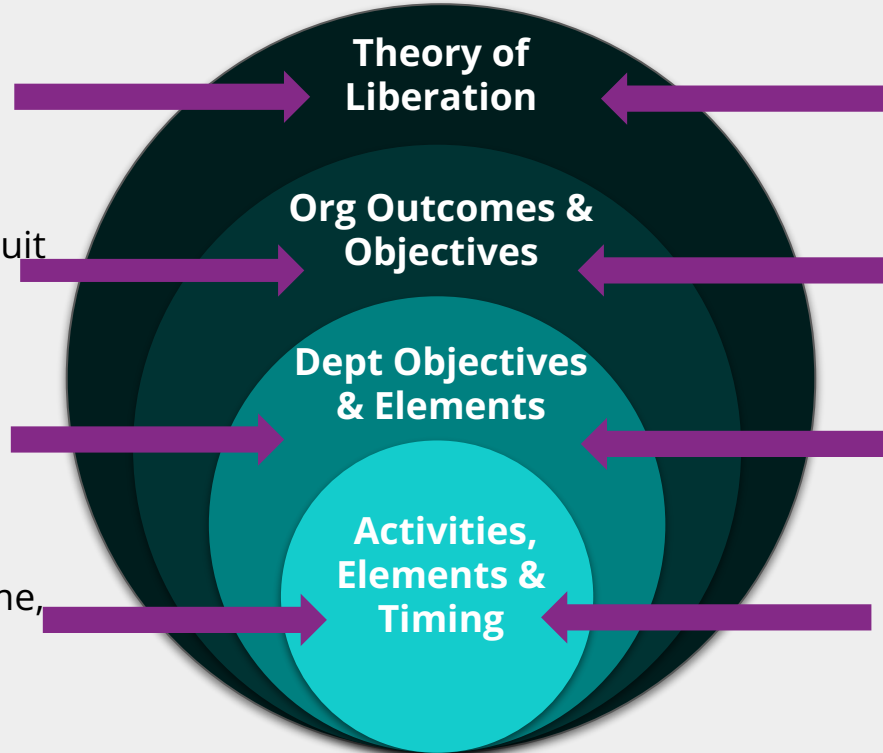
LAYERS OF LIBERATION

Vision, Values, Principles, Strategies - *all we do and are is our TOL*

What will happen in our pursuit and practice of the TOL.

How we practice, coordinate, and integrate our outcomes.

What we do, how we do, and how much - frequency, volume, timespan



Theory of Liberation

Org Outcomes & Objectives

Dept Objectives & Elements

Activities, Elements & Timing

KEY DATA TOOLS*

System LIT, Member LIT, Staff LIT, Partner LIT

Member LIT, Partner LIT, Staff LIT

Program LIT, Member LIT, Staff LIT, YouthServices

YouthServices, Case Management and Clinical Tracking Tools,

**radical inquiry strategy = these tools plus art, music, YPARs, house meetings, case review, formal and emergent processes and engagement...*

YPAR AT RYSE

youth:
AS A YOUNG PERSON, WHAT PERSPECTIVE
CAN YOU CARRY THAT MAKES YOUR PARTICIPATION
MEANINGFUL TO RESEARCH PROJECTS?

PARTICIPATORY
HOW CAN A GROUP'S PARTICIPATION IN
RESEARCH BE MEANINGFUL/HELPFUL?

WHY MIGHT IT BE IMPORTANT TO "EVALUATE
PROGRAMS, POLICIES & PRACTICES" THAT AFFECT YOUTH?

When addressing an issue, who
should be participating?

action
WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT
COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF
ACTION?

Research
WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO GET
COMMUNITY INPUT?





SELF DEVELOPMENT

The health, voice, and vision of youth are critical to a health and vibrant community. Yet, there exists a harmful public narrative characterizing youth as deficits. RYSE believes that young people are the experts of their own lives, best suited to determine their own needs, and be valuable contributors to public discourse on the future of the city. Together, youth leaders and adult allies envision a city where young people of color's priorities are met and the atmosphere of Richmond supports a next generation to thrive.



A TOWN HALL FOR WEST CONTRA COSTA STUDENTS, BY WEST CONTRA COSTA STUDENTS.

NOTE: THIS IS A YOUTH-LED AND YOUTH CENTERED TOWN HALL. YOUTH ORGANIZERS WILL LEAD, FACILITATE AND GUIDE CONVERSATIONS. OUR ASK IS FOR ADULTS TO COME READY TO LISTEN AND SUPPORT YOUTH.



YOUTH, PARENTS, TEACHERS, DISTRICT STAFF & COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE INVITED.

STUDENTS AND YOUTH ORGANIZERS WILL SHARE NEEDS, EXPERIENCES, AND HIGHLIGHT ACTION STEPS NEEDED TO SUPPORT STUDENT'S HEALTH AND WELLNESS AS THEY LIVE THROUGH THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19, SHELTERING-IN-PLACE AND DISTANCE LEARNING.

For more information contact Diana Diaz: diana@rysecenter.org

West Contra Costa Youth-Led Town Hall

**THURSDAY, APRIL 30
3:00PM-5:00PM**

RSVP Link:

<https://bit.ly/WCCYouthLedTownHall2020>

Responses from Youth Survey

Respuestas de la Encuesta de jóvenes

Complete the following sentence:

"Sheltering in place sounds like _____, feels like _____, and looks like _____."

Sheltering in place sounds overwhelming, feels like a lot, and looks alright.

Prison, I can't escape, not fun

Shelter in place sounds like it is unnecessary, feels like the idiotic decisions of politicians more concerned about keeping their office than the public good, and looks like it is going to drive our economy into another great depression

a prison sentence, suffocating, smoking every night

a war, how animals are caged in, less of a population exists.

Fun at first, hell, hell

Quiet, time doesn't move, my room



R.O.N.A

Resilient Youth Organizing Now & Always



Top Row: Ashley Ake, Deysi, Melissa Flores | Bottom Row: Ruth Reyes, Emily Bolanos, Marelyn Gonzalez

EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION

(E4L) Mission Statement:

We are the Education for Liberation Cohort. Together, we are developing our youth leadership skills through a series of storytelling, healing and educational justice workshops. Our mission is to learn about how to challenge our inequitable school system & become peer educators for other youth in our community. As a collective, we learned about YPAR and used these skills to learn from youth in WCCUSD about how school and the immediate surroundings impact their mental health. Our ultimate goal is to gather information that will support students and school staff in creating a safer and equitable learning environment.

CREATING A FOUNDATION FOR EYL

Education
for
Liberation
Internship



2020-2021

TRUST & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LEADERSHIP

HEALING CENTERED

YOUTH POWER

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INTERACTING LAYERS OF TRAUMA AND HEALING



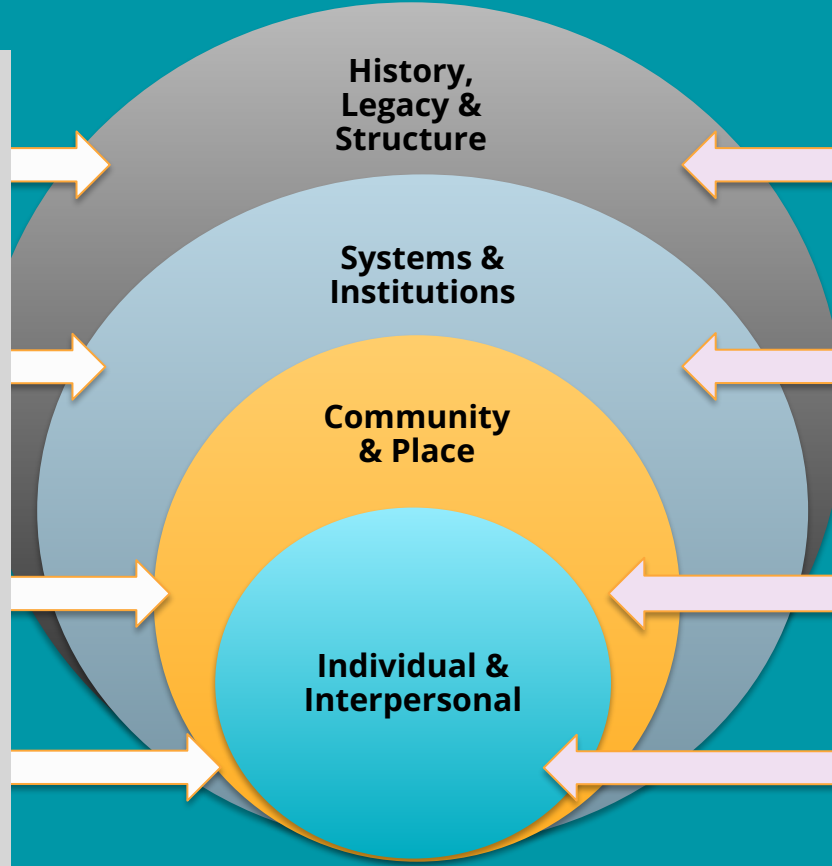
Dehumanization and Distress

Nation Building by Enslavement, Genocide, Colonization, Economic Exploitation, Resource Extraction, White Supremacy, Patriarchy...

Systemic Subjugation of BIPOC by Interacting Policies & Systems: (Capitalism): Broken Treaties, War on Drugs, Mass Incarceration, Criminalization of Poverty & Survival, Anti-Immigrant/Imperialist Policies, Redlining and Gentrification, Climate Violence, Harmful Media Narratives ...

Atmospheric Distress that includes Interpersonal, Family, Community Violence & Exposure; Sexual Exploitation/Gender Violence, Displacement, Lack of Safe Passage and Spaces; Lack of Green Spaces, Underinvestment, Oversurveillance...

Embodiment and Expression of Distress through Personal Traumatic Experiences; Bullying/Gender Violence, Family Systems Stressors, ACEs, Shame and Blame, Generational Transmission...



Liberation and Healing

Collective Liberation by Truth & Reconciliation, Reparations, Redistribution, Open Borders/No Borders, Multi-racial Solidarity, Gender Justice, Just Transitions...

Lead with Love and Justice by Healing-Centered & Restorative Practices, Listening Campaigns, Collective Care, Identity Affirming, Adaptive, Responsive, and Proximate, Land and Power-sharing (Nothing about us without us)...

Build Beloved Community by Radical Inquiry, Popular Education and Culture Building, Celebration and Affirmation; Healing Spaces, Land Acknowledgement, Arts & Expression, Base & Power-Building...

Honor Resilience and Fortitude by Listening & Validating, Processing/Integrating Personal Traumatic Experiences, Family Healing, Tailored Supports & Opportunities, Loving Connections To Each Other and The Land; Loving, Predictable Structure...

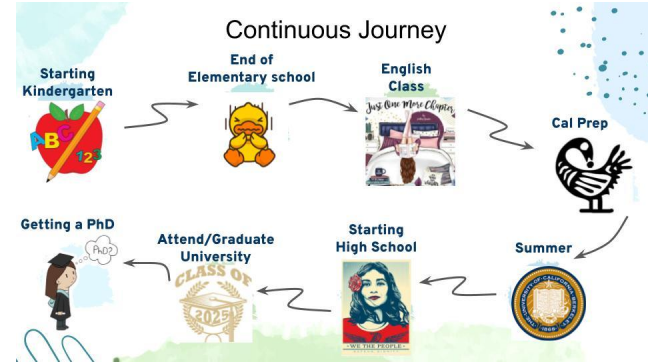
IDENTITY & INTERSECTIONALITY

- Community Altar
- An Organizer self-portrait
- Conocimientos
- Educational Life Maps
- Identities & Intersectionality
- Intergenerational Trauma
- Healthy Boundaries/relationships
- Introduction to Organizing
- What's going down in our schools (SOUL)
- Identities & the pyramid of power
- Mental Health & Wellness



Conocimientos

1. Where do you find home?
2. What communities are you part of?
3. What are the mottos that you live by?
4. Where are your people from?
5. Where are you from?
6. What inspires you?
7. What do you do to chill?
8. What does solidarity look like to you?
9. When did you first understand your own racial identity?
10. What's one thing the rest of the group would be surprised to learn about you?



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WHY YPAR?

1. YPAR allows us to **SOLVE** a **PROBLEM TOGETHER** — people experience things differently and may see different things as the problem.
2. YPAR allows us to gather **INFORMATION** about the problem **AS A GROUP** — when everyone looks at things from their unique perspectives, you get a better, more accurate picture.
3. YPAR allows us to **ANALYZE** the information **TOGETHER** and decide if it makes sense.
4. YPAR allows us to decide **WHERE** we want to **MAKE A DIFFERENCE**, and where we will be able to make a difference (with individuals, in families, in schools, in systems such as health care, among friends and peers, etc.).
5. YPAR allows us to USE the information **TO MAKE SOMETHING BETTER** — advocacy works better in a group; a crowd of voices is louder than one person shouting alone.
6. YPAR allows us to evaluate the information together to see what the next steps are.

YPAR PROCESS

1. Political Education
2. Introduction to YPAR
3. Defining the problem
4. Identifying the research question & what method(s) can be used to answer the question.
5. Data collection.
6. Collective analysis of the data.
7. Draw conclusions (Findings)



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LET'S TALK ABOUT SELF-CARE NEEDS

EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION

We are conducting interviews to get a better understanding on a high school student's mental health

IF YOU ARE INTERSTED CLICK THE LINK BELOW FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS

<https://bit.ly/2Rxge84>

EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION

How do immediate surroundings and the community of high school student's impact their mental health?

Please fill this survey to your best ability.
The survey will take less than 5 minutes.

The purpose of this survey is to collect data around the mental health of high school students in the WCCUSD.

The survey will be anonymous.

Deadline to fill out the survey is May 28th.

Information for this survey will be used to improve the resources given to the schools in the district.

DONE BY STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS



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LINK(english):

<https://tinyurl.com/ytrxuw9j>

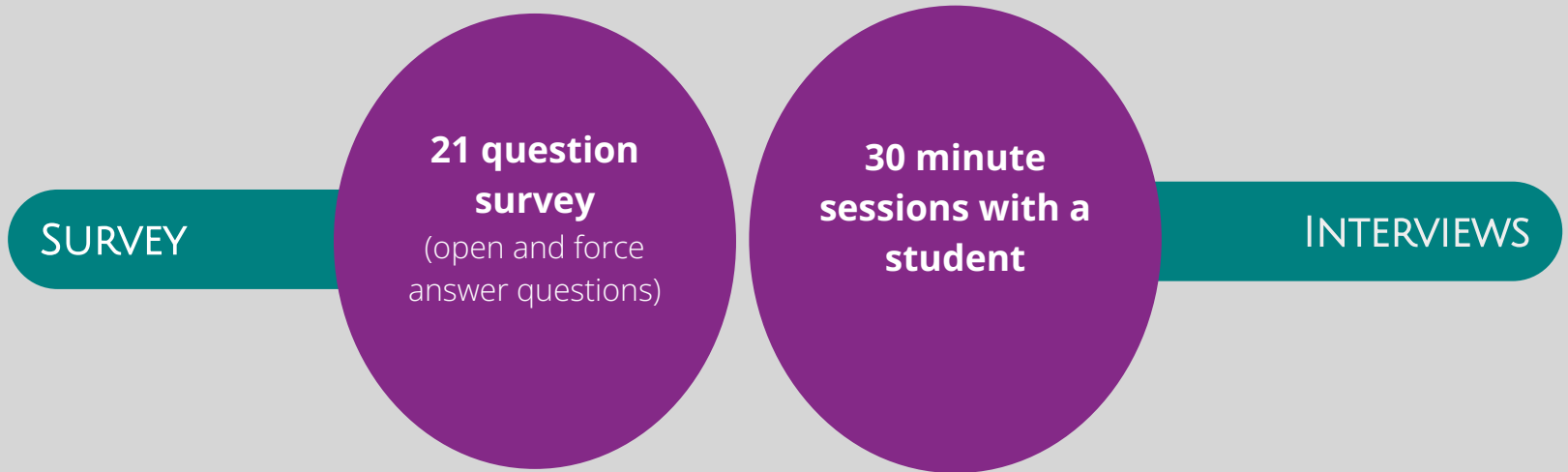
LINK(spanish):

<https://tinyurl.com/34jmhz4m>

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Sharing on social media and with friends; emailing educators in the area to share with students!

We received over 200 responses !



Personal Questions

Present Feelings Wheel

- How are you coming into this space? What is something fun or exciting you did today?
- What does your daily routine look like? Is it the same every day? Does it change often?
- What do you do for fun?
- When you are feeling upset how do you take care of yourself?
- What are some accomplishments that you have completed?
 - Ex. cooking a meal for the first time, presenting in front of your class, art pieces,
- How easy/difficult is it for you to identify how you're feeling?
- How does your home situation affect you personally and/or academic life?
- When you are in need of emotional support, where or who do you go to?
- Do you know of any self-care practices?
 - For example number hotline, journaling, talking to a friend, or even watching a movie
- Are there any self-care strategies that you practice or would like to learn more about? Which ones?

Pandemic

- What are some words that describe how the pandemic makes you feel?
- During this pandemic, do you think you have learned more about yourself? If so what have you learned?

School

- What are some words that describe your experience with distance learning?
- Have teachers been supportive during Distance learning? How?
- What challenges do you find with Distance learning?
- What could be improved about Distance learning?
- What are some things that you think your school did well during Distance learning?

School in the Future

- How do you feel about returning to normal in person learning? Is it something that you feel excited or anxious about?
- How can teachers/staff support you as we transition back into in-person instruction?
- Would you appreciate it if teachers would reserve a few minutes to check in with the class? Ex. Similar to how we checked in for this meeting

INTERVIEWS

3 youth participated in 30 minute conversations with E4L members to discuss, in more detail, their mental health, feelings about the pandemic, and their experience with distance learning.

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Youth Social Emotional, Mental Health, and wellness in WCCUSD

This survey has the purpose of collecting data around the mental health of high school students in the WCCUSD. More importantly, it will help us hear other high school students experiences.

All information shared in this survey will be used to improve the resources given to the schools in our district.

Responses students share will be kept anonymous.

If you can please share this survey with others, every response counts!

English Version Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ytrxu9j>
Spanish Version Link: <https://tinyurl.com/34jmbz4m>

deysi.chacon29@gmail.com (not shared) [Switch account](#)

* Required

What is Mental Health?

Definition made by us: Mental Health is our psychological, emotional, and social well-being that can affect the way we think, feel, interact with others, and cope with stress.

School *

Choose

SURVEY

Over 200 youth completed a 21 question survey. The survey asked youth about their knowledge of mental health, access to mental health support in schools, and the impact the pandemic has had on their personal mental health and wellness.

Knowledge

Mental health is our psychological, emotional, and social well-being that can affect the way we think, feel, interact with others, and cope with stress.

1. Based on our definition (written above), what does mental health/wellness mean to you? *
There is no wrong answer.

Short answer text

2. How often do you check in with someone about how you're feeling? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Regularly

3. How often does someone else check in with you about how they are feeling? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Regularly

When developing the questions for the survey, youth took into consideration:

- Length of question
- Language Accessibility
- Vocabulary
- Word Phrasing



MARELYN



- Introduction, how and when I got involved with RYSE
- My role(s) at RYSE
 - E4L
 - EJAR
 - EJAR Fellow
- My experience as a researcher



Education Justice Action Research (EJAR) Mission Statement:

EJAR creates spaces in which youth that are marginalized can reckon with their own desires, labor power, and learning in order to determine the means by which they will meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of themselves, their families, and their communities. EJAR members have developed projects based on their findings which centers around the mental health needs of their peers and community.

DATA ANALYSIS AND ACTION VISIONING

Synthesizing & Summarizing
the Data

3 "buckets" - based on the site outline

1 Findings *key points*
what themes & patterns are you noticing? What is your evidence for that pattern?

2 Highlights *key quotes*
#s, written responses, themes that surprised you, that stick in your mind

3

- Gathering data
- Reading responses and looking at charts
- Thinking about how we want to present the data/responses
 - -i.e conferences, presentations, paper, website



YPAR

DATA ANALYSIS AND ACTION VISIONING

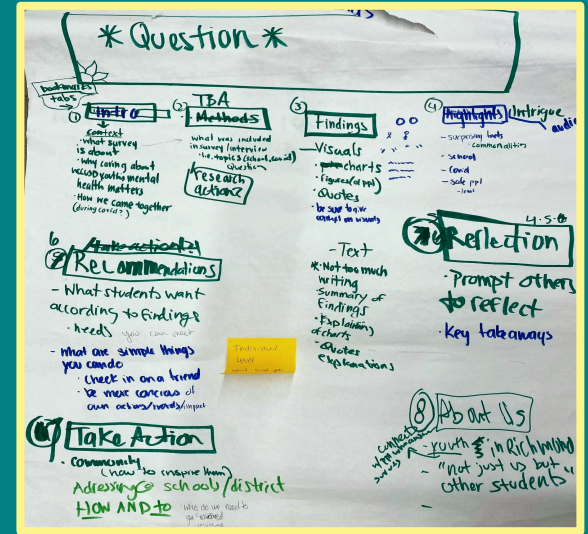
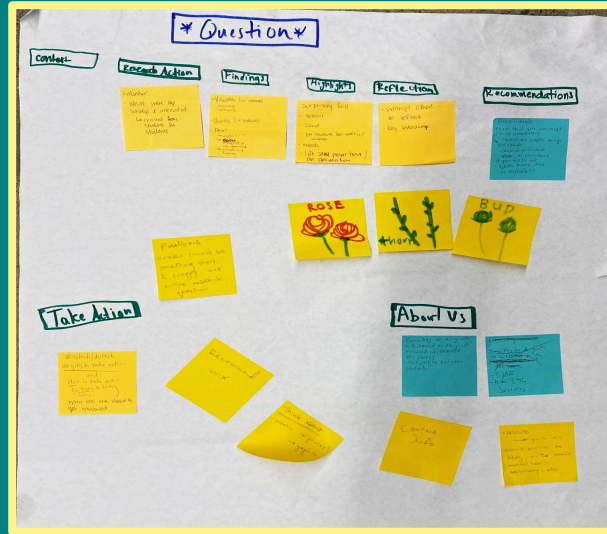
What key takeaways do you want others to experience when reviewing the research?

mental health wellness of our students as a foundation for students in high school

Take action mental health education

What are the key findings from the research? What are the key findings from the research? What are the key findings from the research?

- trust / relationships w/ staff
- cultural experience / competency of staff (white ppl)
- safety → presence of police in front counselor's office



RYSEEJAR.COM

How do the surroundings of high school students impact their mental health?

[Home](#)

[Research Action](#)

[Findings](#)

[Highlights](#)

[Reflection](#)

[Recommendations](#)

[Take Action](#)

[About Us](#)

How do the surroundings of high school students impact their mental health?

About Us

We are members of the RYSE Youth Center in Richmond, California who worked on this project as Education Justice Action Research (EJAR) interns in the Education for Liberation cohort. Having lived and attended school in Richmond also amidst the pandemic, we sought to shine a light on students' experiences that impact their mental well-being and the effectiveness of how schools address these issues.

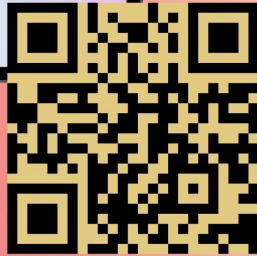
EDUCATION JUSTICE ACTION RESEARCH



Check out
the following
pages:

[Home](#)
[Highlights](#)
[About Us](#)

In 2021 we conducted a YPAR project in which we surveyed and interviewed students from the WCCUSD area. On our website you can find more information regarding how and why we conducted our YPAR and learn more about us.



CHECK OUT
WHAT WE
HAVE SO FAR!

PROJECT TIMELINE

E4L

EJAR

SPRING 2020

- Reflect on issues impacting youth
- Brainstorm research question



SPRING 2021

- Brainstorm research methods
- Carry out research



SUMMER 2021

- Strategize data analysis methods
- Action visioning



FALL 2021

- Review research
- Data analysis
- Draft website design



SPRING/SUMMER 2022

- Website development
- EJAR Cohort development
- EJAR Fellow onboarded



PROJECT TIMELINE

FALL 2022, SPRING 2023 & THE FUTURE

- New EJAR cohort onboarded with support from EJAR Fellow.
- Data Analysis trainings
- Website development
- Develop strategies for sharing the website
- DLCAP & other organizing cohorts utilize data collected from the survey to make recommendations for school budgets.
- EJAR Fellowship continues



CURRENT EJAR COHORT MEMBERS

From Left to Right: Giovanni Espinosa, Mexli Matias, Deysi Chacon, Stefani Quilter, Maria Ocampo, Marelyn Gonzalez





E4L & EJAR
Youth Organizers

Highlights about E4L/EJAR shared by youth in RYSE's Seasonal LIT Survey:

"I strongly agreed with these statements because E4L was nothing like I've ever experienced. I feel like I learned about actual social issues and more about the kind of system that surround us including schools which do not teach students the right kind of history."

"E4L has taught me more in a short period than my education system has in years."

"It taught me how to make a workshop. How to socialize with people I've never talked to before. It reinforces a sense of community/family."

"I learned more about intersectionality."