City of Tempe

Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission

Youth Town Hall Report

2015

Dear Mayor and City Council:

This has been another productive year for the Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission (MYAC). The activities organized by MYAC have allowed Tempe's youth to contribute their ideas and assist in the continued development of our city. We would like to thank you for your on-going support of our Commission and its projects.

We have had a great time sponsoring MYAC events and projects this year. In February this year, we launched the C.I.T.Y. youth volunteerism initiative, which was a 2013 Youth Town Hall recommendation. We look forward to recruiting and supporting youth volunteers as much as we can with this effort.

In addition, our annual Town Hall allowed youth and community leaders to exchange ideas on issues concerning youth. A summary of the dialogue that occurred and recommendations made at Youth Town Hall are detailed in this report. These recommendations are the original ideas of Tempe's youth to solve problems our community faces.

On behalf of the Commission I would like to thank you again for your dedication and commitment to the youth of Tempe. The successes we have had could not have been achieved without your support.

Sincerely,

Zaria Guignard, Youth Town Hall Chair
Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission

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Tempe Youth Town Hall Report

Presented by

Zaria Guignard

Youth Town Hall Chair

The Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission sponsors Tempe's Youth Town Hall each year to bring teens and adults from the community together to discuss issues of concern to Tempe's youth and offer recommendations for practical solutions to these issues.

This was Tempe's 35th year sponsoring Youth Town Hall, held on Thursday, February 12 at the Westside Multigenerational Center. To ensure input from all sectors of our community, representatives from high schools, middle schools, service clubs, youth organizations, community centers, local businesses, the police department, and juvenile court were invited to participate.

Participants were divided into six discussion groups covering three topic areas. Two groups discussed "**Teen Prescription Drug Abuse**" and two other groups discussed "**Teen Gender Roles**." The remaining two groups addressed "**Underage Drinking**."

After enjoying welcoming comments by Mayor Mark Mitchell, participants met in their issue groups. They discussed their assigned topic by defining the problem and possible contributing factors. Groups then made recommendations for solutions and focused on those that were practical and could be easily implemented. Youth spokespersons from each of the discussion groups presented their committee's recommendations to all Town Hall participants in the closing general session. These presentations gave those in attendance the opportunity to gain understanding and insight from each other.

The Youth Town Hall Report is available to various agencies, organizations, schools and service clubs to review and use as a planning tool in our community. We hope that Youth Town Hall will continue to be a success and a model on how to effectively get input directly from youth on issues that impact them.

CITY OF TEMPE YOUTH TOWN HALL AGENDA

Thursday, February 12, 2015
Westside Community Center
715 West Fifth Street

8:10 - 8:30 **Registration** Front of Westside Community Center
Continental Breakfast provided

8:30 - 8:50 **Opening Session** Westside Community Center Gymnasium

Welcome-Tiffanie Cappello-Lee, MYAC Chairperson

Comments- Mayor Mitchell, City of Tempe

Instructions -Zaria Guignard, Youth Town Hall Chairperson

9:00 – 11:40 **Committee Sessions** - Breaks will occur at the discretion of each committee.

Committee A - "Teen Prescription Drug Abuse - 1"
Westside Community Center – Sunset Room

Committee B - "Teen Prescription Drug Abuse - 2"
Westside Community Center – Riverside Room

Committee C - "Teen Gender Roles - 1"
Westside Community Center – Los Vecinos

Committee D - "Teen Gender Roles- 2"
Westside Community Center – Teen Room

Committee E - "Underage Drinking- 1"
Westside Community Center – Lindon Park Room

Committee F - "Underage Drinking- 2"
Westside Community Center – Art Room

11:40 – 12:30 **Lunch** – Provided to all participants at the Westside Community Center
Catered by Dilly's Deli

12:35 – 1:40 **Committee Sessions Resume - Discussion Wrap-Up**

1:45 - 2:05 **Closing Session** – Westside Community Center Gymnasium

Committee Summaries: Each committee representative will give a 3 to 5 minute summary.

Closing Remarks –Tiffanie Cappello-Lee, Youth Town Hall Chairperson

Teen Prescription Drug Abuse – 1

Discussion Group Summary

Our discussion focused on reducing teen prescription drug (Rx) abuse by raising awareness about this dangerous trend in Tempe. Often parents are not aware of the dangers and frequency of teen Rx drug abuse so they do not limit access to Rx drugs in their homes. Subsequently, parents are not able to educate their teens on the physical and emotional consequences for prescription drug abuse. In fact, many teens see these substances as less harmful than illegal drugs. As a result, teens can form dependency on Rx drugs and overdose on them. These overdoses can significantly harm or kill young people.

Recommendations:

1. **Create informational posters.**

   The City along with community partners could create informational posters on the dangers of Rx drug abuse and post them in doctor's offices around the city as well as common teen gathering places. These posters would both educate readers on the dangers of prescription drug abuse as well as encourage dialogue between parents and their children about this issue.

2. **Sponsor an "Rx Drug Safe Disposal" event.**

   The City in partnership with community organizations, such as Tempe Coalition, could sponsor an event that promotes the safe disposal of unused Rx drugs. The event would provide information on Rx disposal stations as well as educate on the dangers of Rx drug abuse. This event would draw attention to the issue of Rx drug abuse and also reduce availability of Rx drugs in Tempe.

3. **Host an "Rx Parent & Youth Town Hall."**

   The City and community organizations could host a Town Hall specifically on Rx drugs that educates the community on the prevalence of Rx drug abuse and encourages dialogue on this issue. Parents and youth could discuss Rx drug abuse in a non-threatening forum similar to the annual MYAC Youth Town Hall. This would provide an opportunity for Tempe youth and their parents to be more aware of this issue.

Teen Prescription Drug Abuse – 1

Facilitators: Isela Blanc **City of Tempe – Community Member**
Daniel Bish **Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Participants

Name	School/ Organization
Caitlynn Barnes	Maricopa Youth Council
Katherine Camberg	Tempe Preparatory Academy
Alicia Contreras	ICAN/ CCYSA
Andrew Curran	Corona del Sol High School
Diana Gomez	Fee's Middle School
Rick Horvath	Tempe Elementary School District #3
Victoria Lebario	Tempe High School
Madison Marrs	Ward Traditional Academy
Joslyn Murillo	Tempe High School
Anne Okrah	Corona del Sol High School
Marisa Putrasahan	Tempe Preparatory Academy
Madison Reddie	McClintock High School
Sabrina Robles	Tempe High School
Andrew Sherwood	Arizona House of Representatives
Faisa Warsame	Corona del Sol High School
Shekinah White	Tempe High School

Teen Prescription Drug Abuse – 2

Discussion Group Summary:

Our discussion focused on teen prescription (Rx) drug abuse in Tempe and the lack of community awareness around this trend. We defined Rx drug abuse as the overuse or misuse of prescription drugs. For example, teens often use an Rx drug that was not prescribed to them to get high or alleviate stress and/ or physical and emotional pain. There is a lack of education for both adults and youth around the social, emotional, legal, and physical consequences of Rx drug abuse and as a result, teens often assume that Rx drugs are "safer" than illegal drugs. Participants also reported they experience peer pressure to use these substances.

Recommendations:

1. **Provide on-line information on teen Rx drug abuse.**

   Often parents and youth are unable to attend meetings or presentations. The Tempe middle and high schools in partnership with the City and Tempe Coalition could develop a webpage with informational videos on teen Rx drug abuse. Posting videos on a webpage would provide information to Tempe families that they could access at their convenience.

2. **Create a "Prescription Drug Awareness/ Healthy Living Week."**

   Tempe middle and high schools could host a week of school assemblies, presentations, announcements, and activities to raise awareness about teen Rx drug abuse. This awareness week would provide the Tempe student community with knowledge about the dangers of Rx drug abuse and resources.

3. **Promote an existing "Rx Abuse Hotline."**

   The City, schools, and partner community agencies, such as the Tempe Coalition and Stand and Serve could promote the existing drug abuse hotline (www.drugabuse.com). Pencils with the hotline phone number inscribed on it and other promotional materials could be utilized. Promoting the hotline would provide support for teens and parents who are seeking more information and resources.

Teen Prescription Drug Abuse – 2

Facilitators: Rebecca Bond — **City of Tempe – Human Services**
Aemelia Morris — **Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Participants

Name	School/ Organization
Cynthia Adame	Laird Middle School
Daisy Araujo	Laird Middle School
Amaya Castillo	McClintock High School
Gabriela Centeno	Compadre Academy
Laurie Cruz	Tempe Elementary School District #3
Brian Fleming	Tempe Union High School District
Marisa Fuse	Tempe High School
Patricia Hillman	Tempe Elementary School District #3
Sandy Lowe	Tempe Union High School District Governing Board
Stefanie Martinez	Compadre Academy
Juan Mendez	Arizona House of Representatives
Bryan Olas	Corona del Sol High School
Raul Polanco	McClintock High School
Austen Pearce	Maricopa Youth Council
Yerikza Sandoval	Tempe High School

Mercedes Solarez	**Tempe High School**
Fowsia Warsame	**Corona del Sol High School**
Connor Will	**Tempe Preparatory Academy**

Teen Gender Roles – 1

Discussion Group Summary:

Our discussion focused on gender roles and stereotypes and how they contribute to low self-confidence among youth. Our group discussed how often our society's gender roles begin at birth with pink and blue blankets at the hospital and continue throughout a person's life through the encouragement of gender specific activities such as all-female dance crews and all-male varsity football teams. These formal and informal gender-specific expectations result in many students feeling pressured to conform. Many also do not feel safe or comfortable to express themselves or pursue their passions for fear that their peers and elders will not accept them. This is particularly painful for students who do not fit into accepted gender roles. The top needs we identified were educating parents and teens about gender roles and to provide safe, nonjudgmental, settings for all students to express themselves and pursue their passions.

Recommendations:

1. Create a peer mentorship program in the high schools.

This program would pair junior year high school students with freshmen as mentors/buddies. These mentors would have knowledge of the schools' extracurricular programs. The mentors would guide and encourage incoming freshmen to get involved in extra-curricular activities and to try new opportunities that they may not otherwise consider due to gender stereotypes.

2. Host a "Club Field Day."

Tempe middle and high schools could implement a club field day to help educate students about the wide range of opportunities available to them regardless of gender. School clubs and sports could showcase their activities on a school half day at the beginning of the school year. The purpose of the club day would be to encourage students to get involved in extracurricular/ club activities regardless of preconceived gender expectations.

3. Implement open houses that provide gender sensitivity information.

The schools, City, East Valley Gay/Straight Alliances, the Q-Network, and middle and high school clubs could partner to provide school-based open houses that include presentations on how gender stereotypes can negatively impact youth. The schools could advertise the open house by sending e-mails to all parents and students and include the information in a monthly newsletter to all families.

4. Create a "Gender Doesn't Define Me" awareness campaign.

Tempe middle and high schools could partner with the East Valley Gay/Straight Alliances (GSA's), Tempe high school GSA's, the Q-Network, and the Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission to sponsor this awareness campaign. The campaign could include a a "breaking stereotypes" video contest among middle and high school students. The winning video would be shown in classrooms during morning announcements, on the City's Channel 11, and at other venues.

Teen Gender Roles – 1

Facilitators: Hilary Cummings **Education Outside the Box**
Chris Moffitt **Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Participants

Name	School/ Organization
Michael Bernard	McClintock High School
Xingyu (Aimee) Cheng	Tempe Preparatory Academy
Samantha Corrales	Maricopa Youth Council
Kelly Flores Garcia	Tempe High School
Erin Granillo-Walker	McClintock High School
Alyssa Hollingsworth	Maricopa Youth Council
Na Talya James	Maricopa Youth Council
Heather Lozano	Maricopa Youth Council Adult Advisor
Sarah Swonder	La Frontera AZ EMPACT-SPC
Shelbi Vopnford	ASU Social Work Intern
Dianne Welling	Tempe Union High School District
Israel Carrizosa	Gilliland Middle School
Jamie Cohen	Corona del Sol High School
Ryan Emerson	Connolly Middle School
Ian Glaus	Ward Traditional Academy
Myana Hibbert	Connolly Middle School

Grace Leito	**Kyrene Middle School**
Moses Monclova	**Tempe High School**
Jazzmyn Sells	**Tempe High School**
Andrea Stoica	**Corona del Sol High School**
Quenta Strong	**Tempe High School**
Jeremiah Tsosie	**Laird Middle School**
Angela Zurhaar	**Fee's Middle School**
Elizabeth Zyriek	**Marcos de Niza High School**

Teen Gender Roles – 2

Discussion Summary:

Our group began by defining what gender roles mean to them. The group was in consensus that gender roles are the socially constructed behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender inequalities were defined as social pressures and conventions that prevent youth from taking part in activities and pursuing careers that are typically viewed as gender specific. Parents, teachers, and peers often unconsciously reinforce gendered expectations. Our group identified limited training for educators, parents, and youth on gender roles, the media's portrayal of gender roles which create stereotypes, and a lack of funding to provide gender awareness education as contributing to the problem.

Recommendations:

1. **Incorporate gender role education into school curriculum.**

   Tempe Elementary School District #3 could add books and exercises into the district's curriculum to educate children on gender awareness. By doing so, children and their parents would be better educated on the subject of gender equality and establish fewer gender-specific expectations of themselves and others.

2. **Create and implement educator training programs.**

   The school districts could implement gender awareness presentations into already existing programs for teachers and staff. This would provide teachers with greater awareness of gender roles and how they may be unaware of their own gender bias when working with students.

3. **Sponsor a "Co-ed Field Days."**

   The City of Tempe and the schools could partner with Gay/Straight Alliances to sponsor co-ed sports field days that encourages Tempe youth to participate in a variety of physical activities regardless of their gender.

Teen Gender Roles – 2

Facilitators: Mickie Berry **City of Tempe – Human Services**
Andrea Lara-Garcia **Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Participants

Name	School
Chuck Cahoy	Tempe City Attorney's Office
Eden Castellanos	Maricopa Youth Council
Tayler Everts	Corona del Sol High School
Tyler Haggerty	Kyrene Middle School
Justice Harasha	Connolly Middle School
Emily Hartzler	Tempe Preparatory Academy
Khalid Jenkins	Kyrene School District
Bianca Martinez-Mason	Gilliland Middle School
Clara Moffitt	Tempe Preparatory Academy
Emma Moriarty	Tempe Preparatory Academy
Hannah Olsen	McClintock High School
Richard Ortiz	Maricopa Youth Council Adult Advisor
Desani Pittman	McClintock High School
Jackson Rothermel	Tempe High School
Suzie Rzegocki	ASU Social Work Intern
Sadie Scheufler	Corona del Sol High School

Carlos Stinson-Maas	**Connolly Middle School**
Jacob Torregrossa	**Ward Traditional Academy**
Alberto Valenzuela	**Connolly Middle School**
Rochelle L. Wells	**Tempe Elementary School District #3 Governing Board**
Angela Yang	**Corona del Sol High School**

Underage Drinking – 1

Discussion Summary:

Our discussion group began by discussing some of the consequences of underage drinking, including the impact on the adolescent developing brain, the danger of alcohol poisoning from binge drinking, and other short and long term health and social problems that impact not only the user, but also their family members and the community at large. The normalization of alcohol use by celebrities and in our media, peer pressure, and a lack of awareness of the problem were identified as contributing to underage drinking. Our group then focused on how to increase awareness of the dangers of underage drinking and to help those impacted by it. The group was in consensus that parents and teens are often unaware of existing information and resources and that there is also a need for more youth resources and services that are youth created and driven.

Recommendations:

1. **Provide a youth led support group.**

   The Tempe Coalition and the City could partner with existing youth groups involved with underage drinking prevention to provide a youth led alcohol awareness support group. The group would be staffed by an adult counselor. The group could also provide information on underage drinking via social media such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

2. **Promote the Tempe Coalition's website and expand to youth audiences.**

   The existing Tempe Coalition website, which includes presentations, videos, and resources to educate parents and others on underage drinking, could be strongly promoted by the schools and in our community as many is unaware of it. In addition, existing youth groups involved in underage drinking prevention efforts could provide input on how to effectively expand this website to also target youth audiences.

3. **Provide more volunteer opportunities for peer-to-peer education on underage drinking.**

   The schools, the City, MYAC, Tempe Coalition, and youth groups already involved in underage drinking prevention efforts could partner to recruit and train youth volunteers to provide peer education on underage drinking.

Underage Drinking – 1

Facilitators: Jennifer Leon **City of Tempe – Community Services**
Tiffanie Cappello–Lee **Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Participants

Name	School
Jason Bautiste Pejay	Gilliland Middle School
Richard Delgado	McClintock High School
Ryan Huerta McWhirter	Connolly Middle School
Zariah Jenkins	Corona del Sol High School
Kelsie Kelly	Marcos de Niza High School
Faith Marken	Marcos de Niza High School
Aliyah Montanez	Compadre Academy
Christina Moon	Corona del Sol High School
Grant Oliver	Corona del Sol High School
Erick Rodriguez	Gilliland Middle School
Debi Schaefer	Tempe Municipal Court
Lynette Stonefeld	Tempe/Kyrene Commitment to Schools
Haley Strauss	Marcos de Niza High School

Underage Drinking – 2

Discussion Summary:

Our group initially focused on the consequences of underage drinking, which can include a range of health and social problems. The group was particularly concerned that youth don't always think about the long-term negative impact underage drinking can have on them. For example, youth can jeopardize their future education and career opportunities by posting pictures on-line of themselves consuming alcohol and participating in other risky behaviors while under the influence of alcohol. The group felt that often youth have a limited idea of what their life goals and passions are and this can contribute to them not considering how underage use can have long-term consequences for them. Peer pressure to drink, especially at parties, boredom, and a lack of alcohol free activities for youth were also identified as prevalent reasons why youth use alcohol.

Recommendations:

1. **Sponsor alcohol-free community events for youth.**

   Existing youth groups/clubs could partner with the schools and City to plan and implement these alcohol-free events. They could include entertainment such as attending movies and sports events, participating in karaoke, and volunteer opportunities. The events would be held on a regular basis and rotate between Tempe high schools so youth can widen their circle of friends and feel more connected to the Tempe community.

2. **Implement "Find Your Passion" Days.**

   School student councils in partnership with the Tempe Coalition and other community organizations could create and implement school-based events that encourage students to explore what is important to them and to think about how underage drinking can interfere with their aspirations. "Find Your Passion Day" could consist of an assembly each semester at Tempe high schools that includes a guest speaker on underage drinking and is followed by an exhibit consisting of school clubs, activities, and possible careers.

3. **Launch a "Challenge Yourself to Lower Statistics" alcohol awareness campaign.**

This campaign would focus on lowering underage drinking statistics, such as reported thirty day use by Tempe teens and would reach both teens and parents. Information on underage drinking could be provided through monthly school newsletters, school automated phone calls and email blasts to Tempe families, brightly-colored posters in school hallways, and presentations on underage drinking. Existing youth groups could be involved in the campaign in order to effectively reach their peers

Underage Drinking – 2

Facilitators: Jeremy King City of Tempe – Community Services
Alexis Blanc Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission

Participants

Name	School
Gloria Ayala	Tempe High School
Larry Baggs	City of Tempe Police Department
Christine Busch	Tempe Elementary School District # 3
Steve Delgado	McClintock High School
Kerstin Marie Early	Ward Traditional Academy
Jeremy Edmonds	Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department
Alexander Enoch	Kyrene Middle School
Dara Gibson	Tempe Community Council- Tempe Coalition
Carmela Guaglianone	McClintock High School
Michelle Helm	Tempe Union High School District Governing Board
Michael Jones	Gilliland Middle School
Sophie Kniaz	Tempe Preparatory Academy
Antoine Lewis	Gilliland Middle School
Irma Martinez	Tempe High School
Rushini Randemya	Marcos de Niza High School
Isabel Rodriguez	Connolly Middle School

Carter Sampson	**Tempe Preparatory Academy**
Andrew Scheidecker	**McClintock High School**
LauraWang	**Corona del Sol High School**