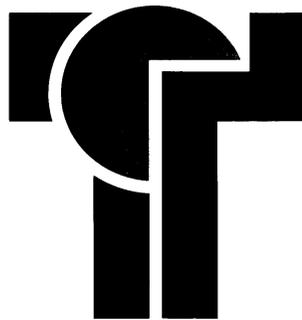


City of Tempe

**Mayor's Youth Advisory
Commission**

Youth Town Hall Report

2013



Dear Mayor and City Council:

This has been another productive year for the Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission (MYAC). 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.

The events sponsored by MYAC this year were very successful. We developed and provided the "Get Fit, Don't Sit Healthy Habits" project which promoted the importance being fit and healthy eating to elementary school aged children. The project was very well received by Kid Zone students and we hope to continue similar community service projects in the future.

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 facing our community.

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,

**Amanda Milovich, Chair
Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

**Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission
2012/2013 Officers**

**Jeremy Cappello Lee
Chair**

**Chris Vega
Vice Chair**

**Jesica Ast
Administrative Recorder**

**Will Morgan
Treasurer**

**Amanda Milovich
Youth Town Hall Chair**

**Dominic Bonelli
Community Service Project Chair**

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Raquel Camarena
Zaria Guignard
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Tempe City Council

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Tempe Youth Town Hall

Report

Presented by

Amanda Milovich

Youth Town Hall Chair

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

This was Tempe's thirty-third year to sponsor Youth Town Hall, which was held Wednesday, February 12, 2013 at the Westside Community 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 Healthy Relationships**” and two other groups discussed “**School Transitions and Career Planning.**” The remaining two groups addressed “**Teen Volunteerism and Civic Engagement.**”

After enjoying welcoming comments by then Mayor Mark Mitchell participants met in their issue groups. They began discussion of 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.

Teen Healthy Relationships - 1

Discussion Group Summary:

Our group began by identifying the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Characteristics of a healthy relationship include positive self-esteem, being unselfish and accepting of your partner, having trust and not being jealous, and maintaining your own individuality. Unhealthy relationships include physical and/or emotional abuse, being manipulative, creating low self-worth, and containing power imbalances. Our group was in consensus that education on healthy relationships needs to start in elementary school. The group also felt there is the need for stronger support networks between teens and positive adult role models. Teens in our group perceived teachers and counselors as focusing primarily on academics with not much regard for social development. However, teens in the group also felt that most teachers have strong insight into the relationships between their students and could be utilized to intervene in unhealthy relationships.

Recommendations:

1. Create a volunteer teacher support program at each school.

Each school could utilize a group of teachers who are willing to volunteer their prep period once a week to listen to students who are having difficulties and offer support and resources. The group of volunteer teachers would be provided on-site training by City Social Services staff and/or school counseling staff.

2. Develop and implement a peer outreach program.

Schools could develop an outreach program where peers educate peers on healthy relationships through informational workshops. A component of these workshops could be having teens who have overcome relationship struggles present their “real-life” scenarios, which would further encourage healthy relationships.

3. Include healthy relationship education in health class curriculums.

School districts could review their policies regarding health class curriculum and revise it to include education for teens about healthy relationships and the consequences of unhealthy relationships.

Teen Healthy Relationships - 1

**Facilitators: Kristen Scharlau
Jessica Ast**

**City of Tempe – Community Services
Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Serena Abouchar
Angelica Cota
Steven Garcia
Stephanie Granillo
Viridiana Borja Guerrero
Ashley Lara
Tiffanie Cappello Lee
Cassandra Leedom
Austin Long
Guadalupe Mabry
Adam Messer
Mary Mirizio
Julio Lara Padilla
Hailey Powell
Shimoli Shah
Riley Stanton

Tempe Preparatory Academy
Tempe High School
McClintock High School
McClintock High School
Laird School
Compadre Academy
Tempe Preparatory Academy
McClintock High School
Corona del Sol High School
Fees College Preparatory Middle School
Tempe High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Gililland Middle School
Ward Traditional Academy
Corona del Sol High School
Corona del Sol High School

Adult Participants

Kelly Alexander
Stephanie Armstrong
Jon Evans

Kyrene School District
Compadre Academy
City of Tempe Police Department

Teen Healthy Relationships-2

Discussion Summary:

Our group began by discussing different types of relationships and what constitutes a healthy vs. unhealthy relationship. Healthy relationships were defined as respectful, having trust, loyalty, commitment, positive communication, shared interests, humor, meaningful support, and honesty. Characteristics of unhealthy relationships include any physical or emotional abuse, controlling behavior, manipulation, neglect, as being one-sided, sexual abuse or sexual pressure. In addition to romantic teen relationships our group also focused on relationships with family and friends as the group felt unhealthy family relationships can contribute to unhealthy romantic and friend relationships. The group felt it was important to be able to recognize if you are in an unhealthy relationship and to be able to take steps to get out of it, or change it, if possible. Discussion also included the reasons people staying in unhealthy relationships, which can include fear, guilt, peer pressure, abuse, bullying, low self-esteem and possible loss of friends. Our group was in consensus that being able to set boundaries with others, establishing trust, having self-respect and most importantly, having a positive connection with a trusted friend, teacher, counselor or parent contribute to healthy relationships.

Recommendations:

1. Provide a “Healthy Relationships” awareness campaign.

Schools could sponsor a student club that promotes and supports healthy relationships by developing and producing fliers, posters, school announcements, and possibly a video, to highlight and promote healthy relationships. Posters and fliers could be displayed throughout schools to bring attention to the larger issue, encourage dialogue, and provide youth with knowledge and resources. Schools districts could utilize tax donations from parents to fund the student club and campaign.

2. Provide middle and high school based prevention specialists.

Prevention specialists could be provided on middle school campuses and hours expanded at the high school campuses. These specialists would have a visible presence and be available to students who need support and referral to services. The prevention specialists could also assist in promoting the ‘Healthy Relationships’ campaign by offering workshops for students and parents.

3. Create a “Healthy Relationships” website and/or Facebook page.

The City of Tempe and the school districts could partner to develop a website and/or Facebook page that highlights healthy relationship topics, articles, and community resources. Student clubs and the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission could be involved in the development of the pages. Students could request topics and have them posted on the sites. This website would link to the City’s and schools’ websites and/or Facebook pages.

4. Provide community education workshops on relationships:

TUHSD’s No Parent Left Behind University and the tri-districts could sponsor workshops for youth and parents that offer information on healthy and unhealthy relationships along with resources. This would provide an opportunity for parents and youth to gain information, encourage discussion about relationships issues, and provide resource information.

Teen Healthy Relationships – 2

**Facilitators: Mickie Berry
Chris Vega**

**City of Tempe – Community Services
Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Rosalinda Acevedo
Savannah Davis
Erika Hochhaus
Jonathon Lauzun
Shaunio Nelson
Hannah Olsen
Josue Peña
Jade Pickings
Nicholas Richards
Kameron Ross
Kaytlyn St. Yves
Renzo Viccina
Hannah Watts

McClintock High School
Corona del Sol High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Compadre Academy
Kyrene Middle School College Preparatory
Connolly Middle School
Marcos de Niza High School
Tempe High School
Corona del Sol High School
Gililland Middle School
Tempe High School
Tempe Preparatory Academy
Corona del Sol High School

Adult Participants

Michelle Helm
Khalid Jenkins
Brenna Kimberlin
Tiffany Werner

TUHSD Governing Board
Kyrene Middle School
Compadre Academy
Compadre Academy

School Transitions and Career Planning -1

Discussion Group Summary:

Our group's discussion began by discussing some of the barriers youth face in transitioning from middle to high school and from high school to college or other career paths. We then identified some of the existing programs that assist students with school transitions and career planning. Our group was in consensus that there is a lack of awareness by students and their parents of existing programs and services. Consequently, many students do not take advantage of existing opportunities and can feel lost and alone following a transition. The group spent the duration of their time developing suggestions on how to improve successful school/life transitions.

Recommendations:

1. Utilize multi-media to increase awareness of existing programs and services.

Tempe schools could utilize school/district websites, Twitter, edmodo, and other electronic communication to provide information to students and parents on what to expect when experiencing school transitions, current programs and services, and future career opportunities. Teachers could also use websites and other social media to have stronger contact with their students. Hard copies could also be available for people without computers.

2. Sponsor "Career and College Days" for students.

The schools, the City, and local higher education institutions could partner to sponsor "college and career days" that would encourage students to think about their future and give them information available opportunities.

3. Implement programs that promote career planning in elementary school.

Existing programs, such as "No Excuses University" that promote learning, thinking about your future, and college readiness could be implemented or expanded upon beginning in early elementary school. This would increase students' awareness of their possible futures beginning at an early age.

4. Expand guidance counselor support for students.

The schools could explore expanding guidance counselors' services to enable middle and high school counselors to meet frequently with their students. This increased support would provide a stronger foundation for students' career planning.

School Transitions & Career Planning - 1

Facilitators: Lily Villa **City of Tempe – Community Services**
Mohammad Halloum **Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Alberto Balbuena	Fees College Preparatory Middle School
Jahnessa Crawford	McClintock High School
Ellie Griffin	Ward Traditional Academy
Heidy Guzman	Tempe High School
Dakota Jorgeasen	Compadre Academy
Wyatt Larson	Corona del Sol High School
Bella Macias	Kyrene Middle School College Preparatory
Jacqueline McIntosh	Tempe Preparatory Academy
John Patterson	Corona del Sol High School
Sayanne Reed	Gililland Middle School
Dayanara Rubio	McClintock High School
Alejandro Schugurensky	Tempe High School
Amie Troutt	McClintock High School
Isarel Zaldivar	Marcos de Niza High School

Adult Participants

Jeremy Edmonds	Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Dept.
Amanda Hamm	Kyrene School District
Linda Littell	Tempe Union High School District (TUHSD)
Diane Welling	Tempe Union High School District (TUSD)
Rochelle Wells	TESD Governing Board

School Transitions and Career Planning -2

Discussion Group Summary:

Our group's discussion focused on the challenges youth face in transitioning from middle school to high school and from high school to college or other career paths. We also discussed the resources and options available when making decisions about careers. The group talked about the resources that they are aware of as well as ideas they thought could assist in making life transitions easier. The consensus of the group was that many resources are available, but students often are not aware of them. One of the main concerns was that middle school students are not given complete information on all their choices for attending high school. The consequences of poor transitioning are that students may be unprepared and have fewer options.

Recommendations:

- 1. Provide a wider range of information to middle school students about high school options.**

The Tempe Union High School District could create a booklet or provide a link that would give middle school students and parents information about all the high schools in the district rather than focusing on the "feeder school." Students and families would then be encouraged to look at all the programs and make the best high school choice for that student.

- 2. Offer more information about careers and options other than college.**

There can be a lot of pressure for high school students to focus on college and many either can't or don't want to choose that path. High schools could have a "Career Fair," much like college fairs, where vocational opportunities and military service would be featured.

- 3. Involve peer mentors.**

Schools could assist students in thinking about transition issues by inviting alumni to return and speak with students about the challenges they faced and how to work through them. This would assist both middle and high school students as they prepare for the next level.

4. Establish a group of volunteers to assist with college applications.

Many students and families are overwhelmed with the college application/financial application process. Some parents may have language barriers and therefore be unable to assist as much as they would like. The City of Tempe, perhaps through the Library, or partnering with the Tempe Union High School District, could recruit adult volunteers who would be willing to mentor students and families through the application process.

School Transitions & Career Planning – 2

**Facilitators: Rebecca Bond
Rocky Camarena**

**City of Tempe – Community Services
Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Alexander Fragoso Aguilar
Bianca Barrandey
Alexis Blanc
Wyatt Calandro
Ruston Clyne
Darian Green
Lyubov Kapko
Kayla Phillips
Aaron Reed
Allison Rivera
Tobias Salcido
Kameren Silas
Manas Subbaraman

Larid School
Corona del Sol High School
Tempe High School
Ward Traditional Academy
Kyrene Middle School College Preparatory
Connolly Middle School
Tempe Preparatory Academy
Tempe Preparatory Academy
Marcos de Niza High School
Tempe High School
Compadre Academy
Gililland Middle School
Corona del Sol High School

Adult Participants

Laurie Cruz
Mark Wertsching

Gililland Middle School
Maricopa County Juvenile Probation

Teen Volunteerism and Civic Engagement – 1

Discussion Summary:

Our discussion group began by identifying challenges related to volunteerism/civic engagement. The group felt that sometimes volunteers do not feel valued and/or appreciated by those they are volunteering for and they do not understand how their volunteer work as a positive impact. These factors can lead to disillusionment and can deter teens from future volunteering activities. Teens in our group expressed a desire to be actively involved in their community but they often do not follow through due to other time constraints, including participation in school related activities. The group also suggested that teens may feel pressure to not volunteer if their peers view civic engagement as “not cool”. The group thought civic engagement would increase if teens could work alongside their friends, combining social time with giving back to their community. After identifying barriers, our group then focused on developing some possible solutions to them that would encourage teens to become more involved in their community.

Recommendations:

1. Sponsor a high school volunteer project competition.

An annual competition could be established where a Saturday during the year would be designated for each school to complete a community volunteer project. This competition would encourage civic engagement and also provide an opportunity for students to come together with friends. A trophy could be awarded to the high school with the most student volunteers (based on the # of volunteers / # of students in school). The trophy would rotate from year to year and would have a small plaque with the school name and year it was awarded.

2. Launch C.I.T.Y (Concrete Impacts by Tempe Youth) campaign to promote teen civic engagement.

The C.I.T.Y campaign could include a Facebook page that encourages teen civic engagement, allows charitable organizations to post volunteer opportunities and also allows teens to post pictures of their volunteer activities. A competition where schools could each create a music video related to civic engagement could be held to launch the campaign. The videos could be posted to the Facebook page and the winner could be determined by the highest number of likes. This campaign could also include the proposed high school volunteer project competition. The winners of the music video and the volunteer project could be featured on Tempe Channel 11.

3. Provide information to organizations on how to successful engage teen volunteers.

The City or a community based organization could develop a tip sheet for organizations on how to effectively engage teen volunteers. These tips would include suggestions on how to let teens know their volunteer work has a positive impact on others and that their work is valuable. The tip sheet could also encourage organizations to recruit high school students utilizing the C.I.T.Y Facebook page. A similar tip sheet could also be developed for teens.

Teen Volunteerism & Civic Engagment- 1

**Facilitators: Isela Blanc
Dominic Bonelli**

**Tempe Community Council
Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Tanner Bunkelmann
Shaye Busse
Luis Chavez
Esar Divinagaùà
Maria de Jesus Lugo Gutierrez
Katerina Liong
Kelsey Mandell
Paul Messer
Ben Moffat
Christopher Moffitt
Tomas Murua
Elliot Nester
Joshua Putrasahan
Jacqueline Torres

Ward Traditional Academy
Corona del Sol High School
Marcos de Niza High School
McClintock High School
Laird School
Kyrene Middle School College Preparatory
Corona del Sol High School
Tempe High School
Tempe High School
Tempe Preparatory Academy
Fees College Preparatory Middle School
Connolly Middle School
Tempe Preparatory Academy
McClintock High School

Adult Participants

Kathy Espinoza
Debbie Schaefer
David Schauer

TESD Governing Board
Tempe Municipal Court
Kyrene School District

Teen Volunteerism and Civic Engagement – 2

Discussion Group Summary:

Our group began by discussing what volunteerism and civic engagement mean to them. We were in consensus that both strive to improve the quality of life in a community and that volunteerism is one form of civic engagement. Our group then identified some of the personal benefits of volunteerism and civic engagement. These include improved self-esteem and social skills, a greater awareness about social problems, and the satisfaction of helping others. The group then identified the top issues impeding youth involvement: a lack of communication about existing opportunities and the lack of incentives to volunteer. Last, the group discussed existing opportunities to volunteer, and how to leverage those opportunities with community support to promote and increase teen volunteerism and civic engagement in the City.

Recommendations:

1. Establish a high school elective course on volunteerism and civic engagement.

The Tempe Union High School District could work with its schools to develop an elective course that introduces the concepts of volunteerism and civic engagement and its importance. The course could include existing volunteer opportunities within the City, and even require a certain number of volunteer hours required to receive school credit.

2. Provide opportunities to enhance student G.P.A. through an honor's course that incorporates community service and civic engagement with a government course.

Individual high schools could develop an Honors course combining the principles of community service and civic engagement with civics and government class. This would offer motivated students an opportunity to apply concepts learned in the classroom to the real world, through volunteer service.

3. Provide school assemblies and school video announcements that promote volunteerism and opportunities.

The City, community organizations, and the schools could partner to provide an annual school assembly that promotes volunteerism and civic engagement. School video announcements on volunteerism and existing opportunities could also be implemented. Local community leaders and non-profit workers could be utilized in both the assembly

and video announcements. Not only would they inspire students, but it would allow leaders in the non-profit sector an opportunity to reach out to potential volunteers.

Teen Volunteerism & Civic Engagement - 2

**Facilitators: Tricia Gilman
Jeremy Cappello Lee**

**City of Tempe – Community Services
Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Trina Begay
Justin Bench
Anthony Giandiletti Jr.
Hadley Griffin
Jazin Hodge
Umair Khohlar
Rosalie Martinez
David Morgan
Melissa Ortega
Mandri Randeniya
Kevin Soria
Raneem Tohaibeche
Eric Vallanueva

Compadre Academy
Kyrene Middle School College Preparatory
Tempe Preparatory Academy
McClintock High School
Conolly Middle School
Marcos de Niza High School
Tempe High School
Corona del Sol High School
McClintock High School
Fee College Preparatory Middle School
Gililand Middle School
Corona del Sol High School
Tempe High School

Adult Participants

Larry Baggs
Patricia Hillman

Tempe Police Department
Fees Middle School