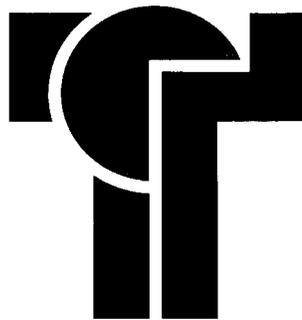


City of Tempe

**Mayor's Youth Advisory
Commission**

Youth Town Hall Report

2010



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 "Reading Rocks" program, which promoted the importance of reading to elementary school aged children. The project was very well received by Kid Zone students and we hope to continue "Reading Rocks" and other 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,

**Jevin Hodge, Chairperson
Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

**Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission
2009/2010 Officers**

**Jevin Hodge
Chairperson**

**Nicholas Gaitan
Vice Chairperson**

**Kaylee Wong
Administrative Recorder**

**Preston Long
Treasurer**

**Enrico Lage
Youth Town Hall Chairperson**

**Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission
2009/2010 Members**

**J'nnen Allsup
Francesca DiCesare
Jeff Darge
Maria Eller
Dirk Fenstermacher
Rafael Gutierrez
Amber Houser
Lauren Milovich
Ben Moffat
Anjali Nair
David Reynolds
Katrina Rodrigues
Kristen Rund
Marcos Souffle
An Tran**

Tempe City Council

Mayor

Hugh Hallman

Vice Mayor

Joel Navarro

Council Members

Robin Arredondo-Savage

Shana Ellis

Mark Mitchell

Onnie Shekerjian

Corey Woods

Tempe Youth Town Hall

Chairperson's Report

Presented by

Enrico Lage

Youth Town Hall Chairperson

February 11, 2010

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 thirtieth year to sponsor Youth Town Hall, which was held Wednesday, February 11, 2010 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 Stress/Coping** and two other groups discussed **Racism/Stereotypes**. The remaining two groups addressed **Teen Dating Violence**.

After enjoying welcoming comments by Mayor Hugh Hallman 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.

CITY OF TEMPE YOUTH TOWN HALL AGENDA

**Thursday, February 11, 2010
Westside Community Center
715 West Fifth Street**

- 8:15 - 8:45** **Registration** Front of Westside Community Center
Continental Breakfast provided
- 8:45 - 9:05** **Opening Session** Westside Community Center Gymnasium
- Welcome - Jevin Hodge, MYAC Chairperson
- Comments - Mayor Hugh Hallman, City of Tempe
- Instructions - Enrico Lage, Youth Town Hall Chairperson
- 9:10 – 11:45** **Committee Sessions** - Breaks will occur at the discretion of each committee.
- Committee A** - "Teen Stress/Coping - 1"
 Westside Community Center – Sunset Room
- Committee B** - "Teen Stress/Coping - 2"
 Westside Community Center – Riverside Room
- Committee C** - "Racism/Stereotypes- 1"
 Westside Community Center – Los Vecinos
- Committee D** - "Racism/Stereotypes - 2"
 Westside Community Center – Computer Lab
- Committee E** - "Teen Dating Violence -1"
 Westside Community Center – Lindon Park Room
- Committee F** - "Teen Dating Violence - 2"
 Westside Community Center – Art Room
- 11:45 – 12:35** **Lunch** – Provided to all participants at the Westside Community Center
Catered by Dilly's Deli
- 12:40 – 1:40** **Committee Sessions Resume - Discussion Wrap-Up**
- 1:45 - 2:10** **Closing Session** – Westside Community Center Gymnasium
- Committee Summaries**
Each committee representative will give a 3 to 5 minute summary.
- Closing Remarks** – Enrico Lage, Town Hall Chairperson

Teen Stress/Coping - 1

Discussion Group Summary:

Our group began by defining stress and were in consensus stress includes both physical and emotional reactions. Participants acknowledged they experience stress on a daily basis, that stress can be both positive and negative, and can produce different responses. Positive responses to stress include heightened motivation, enhanced performance, and internal expectations to excel. Negative responses to stress can result in anxiety, illness, depression, poor decision making, and drug and alcohol use. Teen participants felt most of their stress is the result of high expectations from their parents, family members, and others close to them. Additional stressors for teens include being overscheduled with activities and commitments, pressure to excel academically, pressure to fit in and be accepted by their peers, and media influences. Group members felt there was a need for teens to have more “down time” to participate in relaxing activities and to just have fun with family and friends.

Recommendations:

1. Increase school lunch periods by ten to fifteen minutes.

Teens felt they did not have enough time to relax during the school day and that a longer lunch period would provide time for them to socialize and catch up on projects. It would allow also students an opportunity to recharge and focus for the remainder of the day.

2. Provide a ‘Quiet, Safe Zone’ on school campuses for students.

Schools could provide a quiet, comfortable place on campus where students could unwind and relax. The space could be located in the library and would have a soothing atmosphere, with calm colors, music, art, and comfortable bean bag chairs. Students would utilize the space for stress reduction activities such as drawing, completing puzzles, reading, and writing poetry. Students could help design the space and it could be furnished through community donations.

3. Increase awareness of available family centered activities and events.

The group felt families that spend time together involved in fun activities have closer bonds and feel less stress. The City and the schools could collaborate to increase awareness of the variety of opportunities for family centered activities available in Tempe. This would include advertising events and activities in school newsletters, school marquees, school announcements, the city water bill, and the city website.

4. Establish “Task Managers” on school campuses.

The schools could work with community members and Arizona State University to place volunteers and interns in the schools to assist students with time management and other organizational skills. These individuals would help students stay on track with school assignments and other responsibilities which often pose stress in their lives.

Teen Stress/Coping - 1

**Facilitators: Mickie Berry
Francesca DiCesare**

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

Youth Participants

Halie Carpenter
Omar Elzayyat
Adeja Hall
Beth Hermanson
Destiny Hillis
Signory Mutach
Kendi Nordstrom
Myla Overstreet
Emily Pranger
Brandon Puig
Aleesha Toomire

Kyrene Middle School
McClintock High School
Tempe High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Boys & Girls Club/Tempe-Ladmo Branch
McKemy Middle School
McClintock High School
Compadre High School
Gililland Middle School
Marcos de Niza High School
Tempe High School

Adult Participants

Stephanie Harbour
Randy Lazar
Nejra Sumic
Nancy Taylor
Rochelle Wells

Compadre High School
Tempe Union High School District
Community Bridges
Center for Healing Play, Inc.
TESD Governing Board

Teen Stress/Coping - 2

Discussion Group Summary:

Our discussion group began by defining what stress means to them. The group was in consensus that stress can affect you both mentally and physically and can be positive or negative depending on how you react. The group then identified some causes of teen stress. These include the pressure to get good grades, to excel in sports and other activities, high expectations by parents, themselves, and others, and juggling multiple activities and responsibilities. Our group then identified good and bad stress and its consequences. Good stress includes being excited or passionate about things, which in turn can motivate individuals to try new things and to excel. Bad stress can lead to depression, physical illness, bullying, cheating, substance abuse, and other harmful behaviors such as self-mutilation. Our group concluded their discussion by identifying ways to effectively reduce and/or relieve stress.

Recommendations:

1. Provide student workshops and seminars that address stress and time management.

Schools could work with their counselors, their district, and community based organizations to provide stress and time management workshops and seminars that students could attend during lunch or after school. The main focus of these workshops or seminars would be to provide stress management tools that students could use immediately. In order to encourage lunch-time attendance lunch could be provided and either be donated by a sponsor or one of the school clubs could provide it for a small fee.

2. Establish “Teen Talk” programs in the schools.

Regularly scheduled small group sessions called “Teen Talk” in the schools would give teens that become overloaded with stress a way to effectively address it. The program could have prescheduled topics on teen issues such as communicating with parents, dating and relationships, and time management. The program could be staffed by the school counselor, ASU Counseling graduate students, or school based prevention counselors.

3. Offer workshops for parents on effective communication with their teens.

These workshops would provide parents with a healthy, positive understanding of parent/teen roles and how to effectively communicate with their teens. The workshops would offer communication tools that parents could utilize immediately following the workshop. The workshops could be provided school counselors, community based organizations, and ASU Counseling Program graduate students.

Teen Stress/Coping – 2

**Facilitators: Dawn Oliphant
J'nnen Allsup**

**City of Tempe – Human Resources
Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Layton Alcala
Siche-Karace Bell
Bianca Brown
Deánna Burrell
Leah Claus
Ibrahim Halloum
Natasha Laikona
Quiniesha Milton
Conor Prindiville
Patricia Rañola
Ambria Woods

Marcos de Niza High School
Tempe High School
McClintock High School
Corona del Sol High School
Kyrene Middle School
McClintock High School
Tempe High School
Boys & Girls Club-Tempe/Ladmo Branch
Kyrene Middle School
Connolly Middle School
Boys & Girls Club-Tempe/Ladmo Branch

Adult Participants

Jon Evans
Maria Holmes
Sean McDonald
Meredith Mechenbier
Mindy Udall
Susan Voirol

Tempe Police Department
Association for Supportive Child Care
Compadre High School
City of Tempe-Social Services
Connolly Middle School
Tempe Union High School District

Racism/Stereotypes - 1

Discussion Summary:

Our group began by identifying the similarities and differences between racism and stereotypes and why they exist. The group felt there were a number of factors that contribute to existing stereotypes and racism. Society's failure to promote positive images of differing cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds was identified by the group as a huge issue. Teen cliques and the lack of integration between them were also identified as a problem. The group felt many school personnel have not received adequate training on how to effectively deal with racism and stereotyping within the schools. Our group then focused on some of the consequences of negative stereotypes and racism and was in consensus it can prevent individuals from reaching their full potential. The group felt there is a need to promote available resources and to implement additional programs and strategies to address racism and stereotypes.

Recommendations:

1. Establish mandatory training for all school staff.

Each school could include as part of their existing personnel training a section on how to effectively address racism and stereotypes. The training should include students' perspectives on racism, awareness, and tolerance and also focus on preventing stereotyping in the classroom.

2. Establish school "Awareness Days."

Schools could establish a weekly "Awareness Day" that includes a teambuilding activity or event that will reduce barriers between school cliques and encourage students from different social groups to interact with each other. The "Awareness Days" could be organized by student clubs with assistance from faculty advisors.

3. Offer cultural awareness workshops and school open houses.

Workshops could be provided at schools that promote cultural awareness, tolerance, and acceptance. Schools could also sponsor community open houses that showcase different cultures represented in their student population. These open houses would promote positive images as well as address the negative perceptions some people have regarding schools, other cultures, and teenagers.

4. Offer a city-wide multicultural club.

A city-wide multicultural club could be established that consists of youth and community members. Its purpose would be to discuss issues surrounding racism and stereotypes, to develop programs and other strategies to address these issues, and to highlight successes in our community.

Racism/Stereotypes - 1

**Facilitators: Matt Torres
David Reynolds**

**Communities in Schools
Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission**

Youth Participants

Talia Barnes
Gabrielle Butler
JuanPablo DeLeón
Lilian Engel
Fahim Firoz
Amanda Milovich
Shamari Okeani
Ferris Saad
Nicholas Wagner
Alyssa Williams
Jessica Wochner
Jacob Zárate

Marcos de Niza High School
Compadre High School
Corona del Sol High School
Kyrene Middle School
McClintock High School
Corona del Sol High School
Tempe High School
McClintock High School
McKemy Middle School
Tempe High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Connolly Middle School

Adult Participants

Bobbie Cassano
Lauren Johnson
Linda Littell

Tempe Community Council
Community Bridges
Tempe Union High School District

Racism/Stereotypes - 2

Discussion Summary:

Our group began by first defining racism and stereotyping. The group then focused on factors that perpetuate racism and stereotypes. Our group felt the media and entertainment industry, which includes music, television, and movies, and the internet play a part in promoting racism and stereotypes both within our community and globally. Group participants were in consensus that racism and stereotypes are perpetuated through the pretext of 'jokes,' the existence of social cliques, and through individual apathy. The group also felt a lack of understanding of racial, ethnic, and cultural differences and perspectives contributes to racism and stereotyping. Our group concluded by identifying some ways to effectively address racism and stereotypes.

Recommendations:

1. Provide student education on racism and stereotypes through dramatic skits.

The group felt dramatic presentations are an effective way to engage audiences. A theatre group that works with children and teens could provide dramatic skits that highlight the negative impact of racism and stereotypes and also illustrate strategies individuals can utilize to address stereotyping and racism. These skits could be provided at special school assemblies and other school events.

2. Establish a community-wide multicultural event.

There are a number of existing cultural events within the schools and community that could be coordinated or expanded upon to provide one large community-wide event. This event would highlight a variety of cultures and could include food, music, dance, and art. The event would promote awareness and acceptance of different cultures at a community level and could be sponsored by community and school groups and local businesses.

3. Provide public service announcements.

The schools and the City could provide public service announcements (PSA's) that discourage stereotyping and promote acceptance. A youth contest could be held to create the PSA's, which could be shown in school classrooms and on Channel 11.

Racism/Stereotypes – 2

**Facilitators: Tricia Gilman
Preston Long**

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

Youth Participants

Hasana Abdul-Quadir
Te`Onie Abram
Eddie M. Acosta
Cynthia Casanova
Ivan Flores De La Cruz
Gabrielle Dotson
Olivia Garcia
Jesus Gonzalez
Noor Halloum
Charles Hider
Jacob Hill
David McKaig
Jake Merdich
Jackie Peña
Oscar Ramirez-Rivera

McClintock High School
Boys & Girls Club-Tempe/Ladmo Branch
Tempe Top Youth Leaders
Tempe High School
Connolly Middle School
Corona del Sol High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Gililland Middle School
McClintock High School
Boys & Girls Club-Tempe/Ladmo Branch
Compadre High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Kyrene Middle School\
Tempe High School
McKemy Middle School

Adult Participants

Jayson Matthews
Luis Morales
Nancy Rodriguez

Tempe Community Council
Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc.
Tempe Municipal Court

Teen Dating Violence - 1

Discussion Summary:

Our discussion group began by defining teen dating violence. The group determined there are five types of violence associated with dating: physical, verbal, mental/emotional, sexual, and cyber. Youth and adults in our group were easily able to identify and discuss the physical, verbal, and mental/emotional aspects of teen dating violence but the group was overwhelmed with the sexual and cyber violence that is increasingly affecting teens and tweens. The group felt as technology continues to develop so does accessibility to cyber space and more teens are being exposed to violence via the internet and cell phones. Our group then identified some of the negative consequences of teen dating violence. These consequences include low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, unwanted sexual encounters, isolation, low grades, and dysfunctional relationships. After intense discussion the group came up with some possible solutions to address teen dating violence.

Recommendations:

1. Provide brochures on domestic violence and resources in public restrooms.

If a teen is in a violent and/or controlling relationship the public restroom might be their only refuge where they can obtain lifesaving information. Domestic violence brochures should be placed in all middle school and high school restrooms as well as in restrooms in local teen hangouts, such as movie theaters and malls.

2. Educate parents on teen dating violence.

Information on teen dating violence could be distributed via the internet, school websites, mailers, and school newsletters. This would increase parents' awareness about teen dating and dating violence and give them tips on how to talk with their teens about these topics.

3. Establish student clubs that promote healthy relationships.

High schools could provide after-school clubs that promote healthy relationships. The clubs could be run by students and facilitated by adults and would include on-going discussions about teen dating and healthy relationships. The clubs would both educate participants on healthy relationships and dating violence and provide support services.

Teen Dating Violence - 1

**Facilitators: Isela Blanc
Lauren Milovich**

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

Youth Participants

Nada Elzayyat
LaShauna Gary
Samantha Golden
Alexandra Jimenez
John Magaña
Joseph Ochoa
Alexus Purnell
Rocio Raman
Gissell Rubio
William Villanueva
Anissa Woods

McClintock High School
Tempe High School
Kyrene Middle School
Compadre High School
Corona del Sol High School
Marcos de Niza High School
McKemy Middle School
Tempe High School
Compadre High School
Gililand Middle School
Boys & Girls Club-Tempe/Ladmo Branch

Adult Participants

David Claridge
Derek Hoffland
Rick Rager
Kristen Scharlau

Tempe Police Department
Tempe Union High School District
Tempe Municipal Court
City of Tempe – CARE 7

Teen Dating Violence - 2

Discussion Summary:

Our group began by defining teen dating violence. They were in agreement that teen dating violence goes beyond physical harm and includes emotional abuse as well as controlling and manipulative behavior. The teen participants felt teen dating violence is more common than many adults realize and it is often hidden from parents and school personnel. The group was in consensus there are many causes of dating violence, including poor parent/other adult role models, mistaken beliefs about healthy relationships, and personal issues revolving around fear, power and control. The group felt that while media coverage of celebrity dating violence can highlight the issue many teens may not understand the real consequences of dating violence, which range from physical and emotional harm to legal ramifications. Awareness and prevention were agreed to be of primary importance in addressing teen dating violence.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a peer mentor program.

The schools' counselors or local agencies could develop workshops that train young people to become peer mentors specializing in teen relationships and violence. Since young people are often initially more comfortable going to their peers versus adults for information and advice these mentors would be able to provide support and refer to professional resources as needed.

2. Create a video about teen dating violence.

A City of Tempe board or commission or local agency could sponsor a video competition to increase teen dating violence awareness. The video could be shown as a public service announcement on Tempe Channel 11, other local channels, and in movie theaters prior to the main feature.

3. Increase awareness of existing resources.

There are a number of existing resources that address teen dating violence. School announcements, drama club presentations, ads, signs, and web-based resources that publicize these existing resources would help teens and their parents become more aware of the existence and prevalence of teen dating violence.

4. Incorporate teen dating violence information in school health class curriculums.

A session on domestic violence and teen dating violence could be included in student health curriculums. Adding this component would raise awareness about the issue, ensure teens

learn about early warning signs of abusive relationships, and assist them in developing healthy relationships.

Teen Dating Violence - 2

**Facilitators: Rebecca Bond
Maria Eller**

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

Youth Participants

Annabel Aguilar
Francesca Callicotte
Christina Cuevas
Chantinique Dancy
Pablo Gonzalez
Lindsay Griffith
Rebecca Kimbrell
Ruby Sapien
Caroline Tate
Demetrius Todd
Meghana Vig

Gilliland Middle School
Connolly Middle School
Tempe High School
Boys & Girls Club-Tempe/Ladmo Branch
McClintock High School
Marcos de Niza High School
Compadre High School
Tempe High School
Corona del Sol High School
Marcos de Niza High School
McClintock High School

Adult Participants

Judi Morgan
Margaret Mountain
Bronwyn Paes

Tempe City Attorney’s Office
Tempe High School
TUHSD-Adolescent Pregnancy & Parenting
Program

The Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission would like to extend a special thanks to the East Valley Boys and Girls Club - Tempe/Ladmo Branch. Their assistance in hosting this year's Youth Town Hall at the Westside Community Center contributed to the event's success.