



YOUTH MOVE CHANGE INITIATIVE
OVERVIEW

YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL

**YOUTH
MOVE
NATIONAL™**



YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL ABOUT US —

Youth MOVE National is a youth-driven, chapter-based organization dedicated to improving services and systems that support positive growth and development by uniting the voices of individuals who have lived experience in various systems—including mental health, juvenile justice, education, and child welfare.

THE YOUTH MOVE CHANGE INITIATIVE

The Youth MOVE Change Initiative (YMCI) is a program designed to enhance and expand the peer workforce with a specific intention to work in the field of mental health to address the unique needs of the youth of color and LGBTQIA2S+ youth. In partnership with the Upswing Fund, this initiative is designed to mitigate systemic challenges in barriers to care, reduce stigma around mental health, and provide education to youth and families. With this project, Youth MOVE National created a Youth Leadership Council, a Fellowship Program, and a training schedule to build the capacity of the peer workforce.

For complete portfolio of YMCI events & projects, please visit:
<http://www.youthmovenational.org/youth-move-change-initiative-overview>

KEY AREAS

The concept and value of “mental health” can be interpreted in a variety of ways; and it is important to look at these narratives across communities and cultures, especially in understanding why BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ young people may not be seeking mental health services.

PEER CONNECT TRAINING

In summer 2021 YMN partnered with six states to recruit for five Peer Connect Training cohorts. The states selected include Oklahoma, California, Maine, Florida, Utah, and South Carolina. Within each state, we identified community partners that included Youth MOVE Chapters to lead outreach and recruitment efforts at the local level. The YMN team developed marketing materials, applications for potential training participants, and hosted meetings providing support and welcoming feedback from each site. Throughout all partnership efforts, YMN ensured sites were aware that this initiative prioritized working with LGBTQIA2S+ and/or BIPOC youth.

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

YMN launched a fellowship program that provided an opportunity for 3 LGBTQIA2S+ and/or BIPOC young leaders to create and lead projects to inform the development of the youth peer workforce. Fellows met with YMN leadership weekly, individually and as a group, to further develop their efforts and to provide implementation support. The fellows’ responsibilities included creating actionable guidance to the field, joining panels and presentations as subject matter experts, and facilitating focus groups for youth and young adults with lived experience. Leaders selected to serve as Fellows were a combination of Black, immigrant, multiracial, and two disclosed LGBTQIA2S+ identities. Each fellow received \$30,000 for their time and commitment to this project.

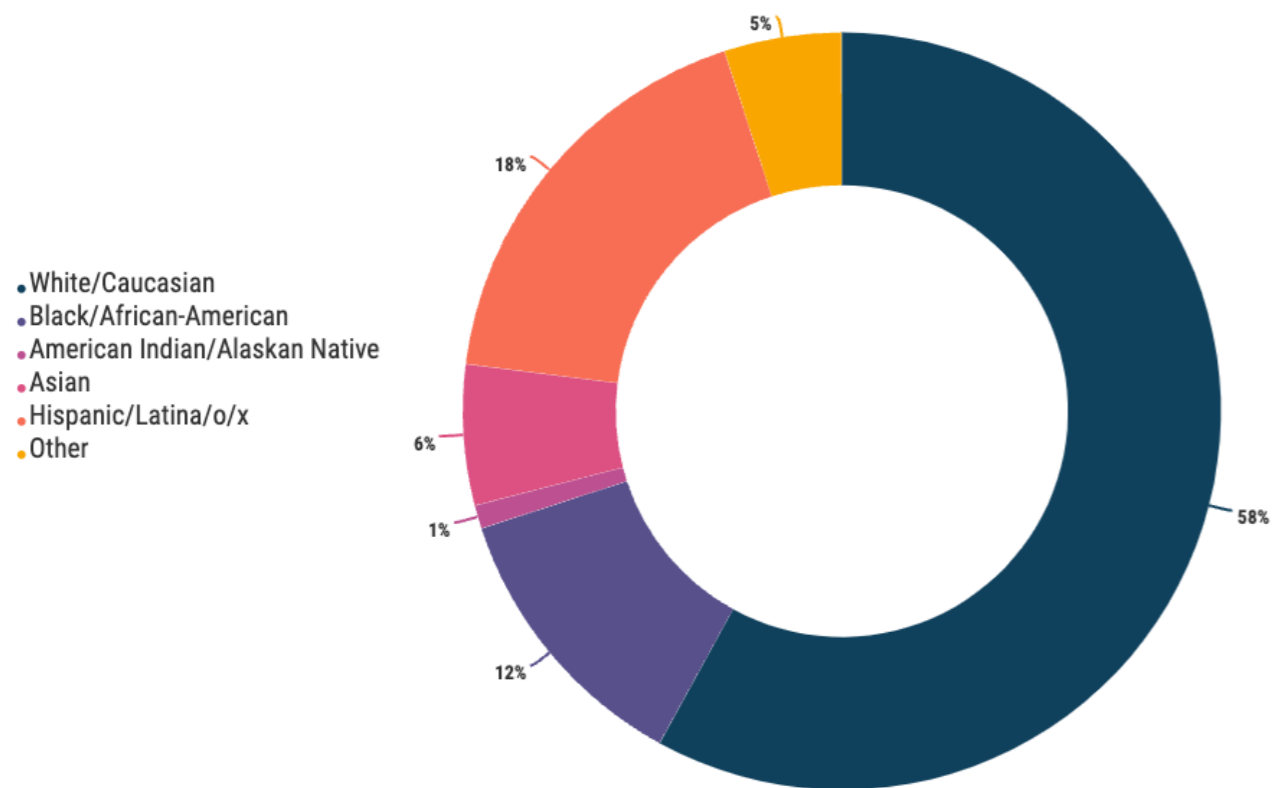
YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Youth Leadership Council (YLC) met monthly from May to September to review and provide feedback on the YMCI project. YLC members participated in a focus group exploring challenges LGBTQIA2S+ and BIPOC youth face within mental health programs. These discussions have contributed to the development of resources to improve LGBTQIA2S+ and BIPOC experiences with mental health programs.

DATA VISUALIZATION

The following data visualization displays the demographic information for participants across the Youth MOVE Change Initiative programs in comparison to the United States Census (2020). Our program's mission was to increase accessibility to training, professional development, and educational opportunities for these demographics. The data shows that YMCI was successful in engaging a higher % of our target population.

Census 2020

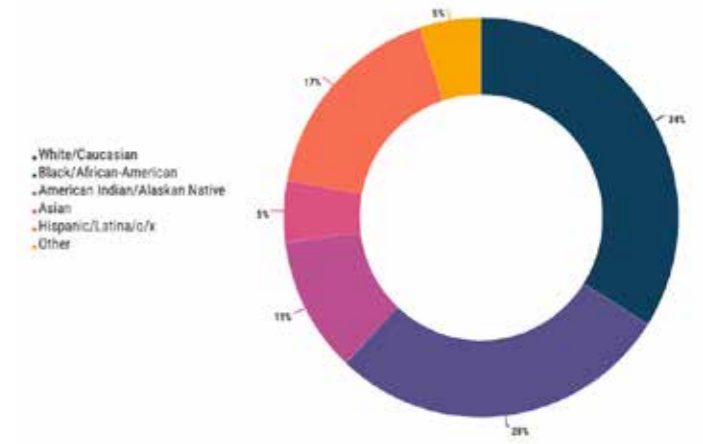


RACE

White Caucasian individuals made up the largest percentage (33.48%) of trainees followed by Black/African American (27.59%), Hispanic/Latino/a/x (17.24%), American Indian or Alaska Native (10.34%), Asian (5.17%), and Other individuals (5.17%). None of the trainees were Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders. 5 of the trainees were multiracial.

We crosswalked demographic data collected from training participants with race demographics from the 2020 Census. Doing so we found that there was an overrepresentation of young people from Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and multiracial communities and an underrepresentation of youth from white, Hispanic/Latino/a/x, and Asian communities.

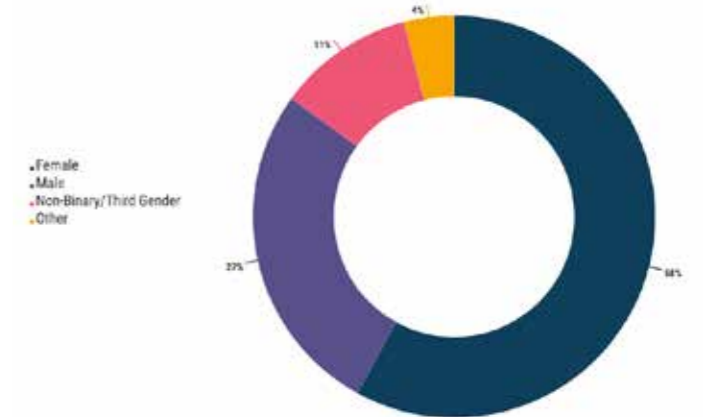
Race



GENDER

Over half (57.69%) of trainees were female while 26.92% of trainees were male, 11.54% were non-binary/third gender, and two individuals (3.85%) identified as other.

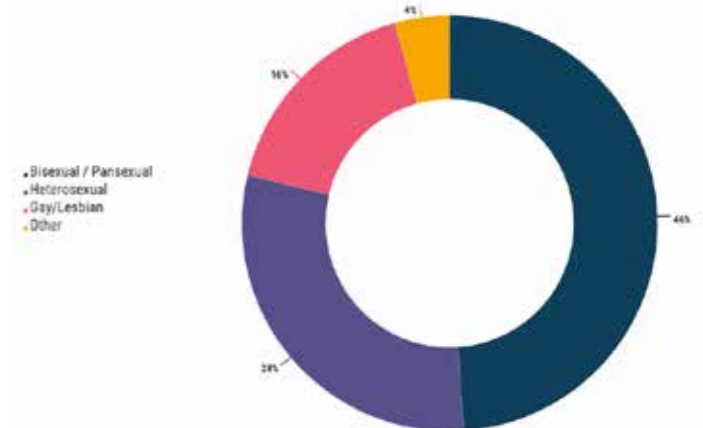
Gender



SEXUAL IDENTITY

Nearly half (45.1%) of participants identified as bisexual or pansexual while 27.45% were heterosexual/straight, 15.69% were gay/lesbian, 9.80% were other (e.g. queer, demisexual, omniseual, and polyamorous), and one person preferred not to share.

Sexual Identity



TIMELINE

MARCH 2021

- HIRED 2 NEW STAFF FOR YOUTH MOVE CHANGE INITIATIVE

APRIL 2021

- RECRUITED & INTERVIEWED YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL AND FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
- SELECTED PARTNERS FOR TRAINING RECRUITMENT

JUNE 2021

- YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL FOCUS GROUP
- ALTERNATIVES CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

JULY 2021

AUGUST 2021

- PEER CONNECT TRAINING

JANUARY 2022

- CERTIFIED 12 YOUTH IN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID
- ABLEISM 101 TRAINING

MAY 2021

- HIRED 3 FELLOWS
- RECRUITED YOUTH LEADERS FOR PEER CONNECT TRAINING

SEPTEMBER 2021

- YMCI FELLOWS LEAD YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

OCTOBER 2021

- DEVELOPED YMCI ONLINE LEARNING PRESENTATIONS

NOVEMBER 2021

- TRANS & ENBY FOCUS GROUP
- YOUTH SUMMIT

STATEMENT OF IMPACT

HOW YMCI IS MAKING WAVES

- Peer Connect Training
- Fellowship Program
- Professional Development, Coaching, & Workshops
- Connection Opportunities: Youth Summit, Focus Groups

The Upswing Fund for Adolescent Mental Health allowed YMCI to directly invest in LGBTQIA2S+ and/or BIPOC youth with lived experience. Participants of the YMN Peer Connect YPS training received a \$1000 stipend to support their participation. We recognize that many young people are unable to access training opportunities if they are seeking employment or currently employed in a role that does not offer paid time off or sick days. Similarly, we were able to pay three young adults to participate in the Fellowship program. In addition to direct payment, funds were able to support ongoing coaching and professional development opportunities which will enrich young people's skills and capacity., The skills and knowledge participants developed through this initiative will be relevant to whatever career pathway they choose.

CONNECTED WITH 140 YOUTH DURING THE YMCI PROJECT

62 YOUTH TRAINED DURING PEER CONECT

"I FEEL IF YOU'RE TALKING TO SOMEONE THAT CAN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, THEY'RE NOT REALLY GOING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH"

LESSONS LEARNED

THE CONCEPT AND VALUE OF “MENTAL HEALTH” CAN BE INTERPRETED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS; AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT THESE NARRATIVES ACROSS COMMUNITIES AND CULTURES, ESPECIALLY IN UNDERSTANDING WHY BIPOC AND LGBTQ2S+ YOUNG PEOPLE MAY NOT BE SEEKING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

["MENTAL HEALTH" IS] "REALLY STIGMATIZED, ESPECIALLY IN MY TRIBAL COMMUNITY, THEY JUST DON'T. IT'S A LOT OF THINGS THAT WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, LIKE GENERATIONAL TRAUMA, THAT WE JUST DON'T TALK ABOUT IT...SO THAT'S KIND OF HOW IT IS, FOR PEOPLE IN MY TRIBAL COMMUNITY TO JUST GO AND TALK ABOUT IT, MOVE PAST IT, REGARDING YOUR 'MENTAL HEALTH'... A LOT OF LOSS OF OUR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE GOES HAND-IN-HAND WITH HOW WE ARE 'MENTALLY ILL,' I GUESS."

ENSURE LGBTQIA2S+ & BIPOC REPRESENTATION IN MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Many of the young people involved in YMCI affirmed the importance of having someone with similar or shared lived experiences as providers. This peer connection makes seeking help easier. Young people also emphasized the importance of this representation being visible within all levels of staff and leadership.

YMCI APPROACH

Recruitment across all YMCI opportunities was intentionally exclusive to BIPOC & LGBTQ2S+ youth and young adults

CREATE ACCESSIBLE SPACES AND PROVIDE ACCOMODATION MEASURES ACROSS ALL EFFORS

Prioritizing accessibility is also prioritizing safety. Not all young people are in environments that promote discussion on emotional wellness, provide an understanding of peer support, or are affirming to LGBTQIA2S+ identities. Some may live in environments where the only access to technology is not in a private space without the use of headphones.

YMCI APPROACH

YMCI provided questions around accessibility needs/ accommodations on registration forms and enabled closed captions for all training, workshops, focus groups, and fellowship/council meetings

LEVERAGE FUNDING TO DECREASE BARRIERS TO WORKFORCE ENTRY FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Many young people are unable to access training and other professional development opportunities if they are actively seeking employment or currently employed in a role that does not offer paid time off or sick days. Providing compensation for young people to participate in learning opportunities can significantly increase recruitment and retention, as well as an ultimately more diverse workforce. By lowering barriers to participation, we anticipate an expansion of the youth peer workforce which adequately reflects the communities being served.

YMCI APPROACH

YMCI Fellows were compensated \$30,000
YMCI Peer Connect trainees were compensated \$1,000 for completing training

PRIORITIZE LGBTQIA2S+ & BIPOC REPRESENTATION WITHIN YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM (CONSULTANTS, ETC.)

Hire staff and consultants that reflect the communities you aim to serve in order to ensure that youth and young adults involved in your project are able to connect and identify with the lived experiences of your team.

YMCI APPROACH

All YMCI Project Staff identified as young adults with lived experience across youth-serving systems, and all training, workshops, and fellowship/council meetings were facilitated by LGBTQIA2S+ and/or BIPOC youth

PROVIDE ONGOING TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Young people currently employed within the field of YPS and/or other mental health roles should be able to integrate their learnings into their current work, while also gaining knowledge and skills that can open up different opportunities for professional advancement (i.e. promotions, job shifts, advisory council, professional network broadening)

YMCI APPROACH

YMCI provided both live and pre-recorded coaching workshops centering on topics requested by training participants

Provided online modules with coaching webinars and companion worksheets addressing diverse topics

UTILIZE VIRTUAL PLATFORMS & INTENTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS TO EXTEND OUTREACH & INCREASE GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY

Developing and facilitating virtual spaces created more opportunities for young people across the United States to join the training, workshops, and events. This offers a valuable form of peer support and professional learning, especially for BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+ youth.

YMCI APPROACH

YMCI recruitment strategies included identifying a community partner serving youth and young adults, to help promote and increase the visibility of our opportunities within historically underserved communities.

All opportunities to engage in YMCI efforts were completely virtual, resulting in an engagement with over 150 youth across 16 states and the District of Columbia. We even had some international representation!

YOUTH MOVE

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FOR MORE INFO ON YMCI <<
& OTHER YOUTH MOVE
NATIONAL PROGRAMS, PLEASE VISIT:
WWW.YOUTHMOVEONATIONAL.ORG

