



RYSE's 2016 Trauma and Healing Learning Series

RYSE conducted our 3rd Annual Trauma and Healing Learning Series beginning May 2016. The series is designed to present and consider the impact of multiple forms of trauma and oppression on our growing young people, their families, and communities in order to build shared language and commitment to collective practice, mutual accountability, and support in implementing and sustaining trauma-informed, healing-centered approaches and practices. The trainings are geared toward those in the public health, social services, community-based programs, education, public systems and agencies, philanthropy, research, and others to gain new insights into trauma-informed community change, the impacts of personal and collective trauma on mental health, and strengthen successful practices working with trauma-exposed youth and communities. Trainings are open to stakeholders who serving Richmond and West Contra Costa, some conducted by RYSE, some by area expert trainers and partner agencies.

The series builds on and integrates the findings of RYSE's Listening Campaign, a community-engaged inquiry process designed to understand with more sensitivity, clarity, and empathy, the lived experiences of young people burdened with trauma exposure, marginalization, and histories of oppression. The LC engaged over 500 young people through a semi-structured research design¹. The results have been shared with hundreds of local, regional, and national stakeholders through the Series and other convenings and presentations including Facing Race, APHA, National Network for Hospital-linked Violence Intervention Programs, Kaiser National Diversity and Inclusion Conference, and others.

Our commitment with the Campaign is to act on the needs and insights that young people shared in order to create more effective community supports and services, as well as more empathetic and empowering systems, policies, practices, and investments that are equipped to respond to and address the experiences and impact of trauma, violence, coping, and healing. The Trauma and Healing Learning Series is a direct action engaging adults in collective learning, shared commitment, and coordinated and integrated practice across and between services and systems.

We have also produced a series of briefs that highlight our values in relation to what we heard in the Campaign and how our integrative model responds to what young people say they need and want and also provides recommendations for key fields and systems responsible for young people.

¹ RYSE partnered with faculty at the UC Berkeley School of Public Health to provide consultation on design, implementation and analysis

2016 Series: Building Beloved Community

May 18th - RYSE Listening Campaign Share Out 2.0

'We know we can't run the city- it's too complex- but our experience and our voices should count, especially because we're the most effected.' - Listening Campaign Participant, 2013

'The most impactful form of violence we suffer is silence.' -Listening Campaign Participant, 2013

'Some people are like 'I can't wait to get out [of Richmond] - I can't wait to go far' you know. But I feel like if people actually made an effort to try and change it- they make a movement towards changing it- I feel like Richmond would be a pretty cool place to live. We don't have a lot of like fun places to go to but we can always make something fun.' -Listening Campaign Participant, 2013

Three years ago, RYSE launched the Listening Campaign (LC), a community-engaged inquiry to better understand young people's experiences and articulations of trauma, violence, coping, and healing. We asked young people to describe such experiences, to share the impact on their lives and relationships, and what they need and want from adults.

We promised two things. One is that we would listen - without prescription and without judgement. Two is we would take what we heard to activate the necessary shifts in the current conditions, systems, and practices so that young people feel heard, seen, and loved.

Much has happened since the Campaign began including presenting, stewarding, and integrating what we heard into practice, policies, investments that build collective capacity to listen and lead with love.

- **RYSE's Own Practice:** The LC has resulted in changes at RYSE to better reflect and support the priorities, needs, and hopes of our members, and in our efforts to change the unjust conditions of harm, violence, and dehumanization they bear, including systems harms. *We will share our learnings and adjustments at the Share Out.*
- **Shared Learning Across Systems and Sectors:** The LC catalyzed the first Trauma and Healing Learning Series in 2014, focused on bringing together adults across various systems and sectors to cultivate shared learning, mutual support, and collective values and commitments to ensuring health, healing, and justice for our young people. *The Series has been attended by hundreds of adults from at least 100 organizations and agencies in Richmond and West Contra Costa, and with resounding benefit and value reported by participants.*
- **Youth-led Research and Advocacy:** The LC prompted a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) Project (conducted in partnership with Public Health Solutions) that has resulted in new programming at RYSE. ***A key finding revealed young people feel accessing substances such as marijuana is easier, and sometimes less harmful, than accessing adults for support.*** *Come to a Share Out to find out more and to lean into conversations about implications, obligations, and opportunities of these and other findings.*
- **Systems Change and Field-Building.** The LC data and process is being integrated into local and regional initiatives seeking to better understand and address the complexities, priorities, needs, and interests of young people in their communities. The LC is also building towards a more inclusive and justice-oriented framework of

social science research, social policy and investments, and programmatic approaches and interventions. *More details at the Share Out.*

Thursday, May 26th - Adolescent Development and Complex Trauma: Healing Ourselves and Our Organizations (featuring Dr. Joyce Dorado of UCSF HEARTS Program)

My experience with violence is very brutal...I grew up with violence as if it were my sibling." - Listening Campaign Participant

"What inspires me is being a part of young people doing something together...collaborating and coming together...meeting people from other sides of Richmond, folks who in another context I wouldn't talk to, but up in here we making music together." - Listening Campaign Participant

This interactive session will share how chronic stress and trauma affect us both as individuals and as organizations. We will share and learn what we can do to create more safe, empathetic, and healing organizations and systems, including how we fortify and deepen mutual support with each other.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Joyce Dorado, Co-Founder and Director of UCSF HEARTS Program will be presenting. AND, based on high demand from last year, we will be bringing back the panel highlighting local efforts to ground and inspire our collective work.

Thursday, June 9th - Understanding ACEs with Dr. Vincent Felitti (co-sponsored with the Contra Costa Trauma and Resilience Leadership Group)

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study is gaining traction and attention across fields of child development, public health, primary health, philanthropy, and research. This landmark epidemiological study looked at how biopsychosocial experiences in childhood affected adult chronic disease, mental illness, and experiences with violence. This study has caught up to and validates centuries of community-known and community-grown evidence and practice to name, understand, and heal from the physical, social, emotional, and relational impacts of childhood adversity and harm. Dr. Felitti will share the process by which the study came to be, and the powerful learnings and insights on the impact of listening and bearing witness to treat and heal.

Wednesday, June 29th - Gender Justice, Trauma, and Healing

"I've experienced violence because of my sexuality. It's hard being black and gay and in addition being a woman makes things even more difficult. Because of my sexuality, I've experienced sexual violence because people are afraid about what they don't understand." S.G (17)

"I never feel like I'm enough because I am not cis, straight, or white... The hardest issue in my life is how I perceive myself and how I am judged by a standard that is meant to erase me. Being around other people that share my identity helps me move past that." - J.R. (18),

At a recent City Council meeting, young people spoke passionately, declaring "pride month is about being comfortable with who you are," and "It makes me feel like my city supports me when I see the rainbow flag being flown." Fierce young people are leading the way and

shifting the narrative of what it means to be an LGBTQ young person of color in their community. This session of RYSE's Trauma and Healing Learning Series will explore the impact of gender identity formation and gender violence on trauma and healing for young people of color, and sharing healing-centered approaches that promote gender justice. RYSE will also share results of our Youth Participatory Action Research Project on school climate and safety for LGTBQQ students, an inquiry that engaged close to 600 young people. The session will be led by Brian Villa, RYSE Lead Community Health Coordinator and [Erica Woodland, LCSW](#).

July 21st – Non-violent and Restorative Communication: An approach to active listening, healing relationships, and beloved community

Young people are in pain. What do they need? They need love. So be love.” - Donté Clark, RYSE Staff and Richmond's Poet Laureate

"That's all nonviolence is - organized love." - Joan Baez

RYSE works to shift the conditions of inequity and dehumanization of young people in our community. Our aim is to transform and create systems that effectively respond to and meet their priorities, needs, and interests. Towards this aim, and in response and resistance to the insidious systems harms that young people experience, we hold and cultivate a beloved community that meets young people where they are, supports them in where they want and need to go, stays brave and loving with them and on their behalf.

RYSE's framework, approach, and practice of non-violent and restorative communication is a direct response to what we heard in the Listening Campaign - for adults and the systems we represent to be more loving, empathetic, and responsive to the daily and dynamic realities of young people's lives. We will share what led us to more intentionally integrate this approach with young people, staff, and partners, and the ways in which it is applied. There will be time to practice and try on the tools of this approach. This session will be led by Shanté Lewis, LPCC and Joe Kim of RYSE's Community Health Department.

August 4th and 5th – Racing ACEs (ensuring racial justice is at the center of trauma-informed approaches and practices)

Racing ACEs will convene selected representatives working at the nexus of racial justice and healing trauma, where we will build relationships and commit to integrating racial justice as a central tenet and standard of trauma-informed approaches. Racing ACEs will hold and lift up racial justice through an intersectional lens, connected and tied to liberation movements for gender justice, LGTBQQ justice, economic justice, immigrant justice, as well as movements for reparations and truth and reconciliation of state-sponsored and state-sanctioned violence.

September 9th - Black and Brown Lives Matter: Revealing the Psychic Wounds of Racial Oppression (featuring Dr. Kenneth Hardy)

This workshop will explore the often invisible and significant connections between inequity, racial oppression, and trauma. It facilitated space for critical reflection and tender conversation about the explicit and implicit mechanisms and transmissions of racial injury, the impact of such injury on mental and emotional health for young people of color, and the opportunities and actions we can take organizationally and collectively to heal, restore, and reconcile these wounds.

Learning Series Key Outcomes

At least 225 individual stakeholders from over 70 organizations and agencies in West Contra Costa participated in the Trauma and Healing Learning Series local sessions.

In each local session of the Trauma and Healing Learning Series:

- At least 96% of participants in each session report increased understanding of trauma-informed youth development.
- At least 98% feel more informed about what young people have expressed as needs and wants from adults to help them address the ways trauma and violence shows up in their lives.
- At least 96% of participants indicated interest in shared commitment to trauma-informed policy and interest in continued participation in the learning series and connected opportunities for change.
- At least 98% of participants indicated they would recommend the session they attended to a peer or colleague.
- Across all sessions, at least 98% report the sessions they attended encouraged and/or challenged their thinking in one or more of the following areas: racial oppression, mental health, adolescent development, trauma, and/or healing.

Select quotes from Series participants:

"From resilience to resistance, from doing support work out of fear to more out of love - Sharing campaign with other funders - I love when attendees share with large group, especially such vulnerable staff, a rare space."

"... I just always get so inspired and motivated learning in community with folks at RYSE. Ya'll put so much intention into everything you do and I'm so grateful to be in partnership in community with you."

"Your presentation adds a sense of urgency to the work. It brings into sharp focus all the things we need to work on to give the youth a better future, within ourselves, and our agencies."

"I would absolutely recommend the Share Out for everyone...of any age. The focus is supportive, and acknowledges our situation as it is -- with ways to make us all more adept at dealing with it."

RYSE is so successful at creating authentic, safe spaces for exploration and discovery. I love coming to these events. It is also able to remain youth-centered, youth-driven while engaging adults in education and community.

Workshops like this one should be mandatory for all City staff.

Helpful in terms of facilitating healing conversations among youth, but also helpful for thinking about facilitating healing conversations among staff. If we can model good communication that will help youth feel safe.

Participating in the casework example gave me even more respect for the depth and complexity of the work that RYSE does. The team approach totally makes sense! Kudos to all of you for what you do every day, and the integrity of the models you use!!!!!!