

On Saturday, October 7th, the San Joaquin Pride Center held their annual Youth Empowerment Summit (YES) at the Central United Methodist Church in Stockton, California. This year’s theme urged youth, “If you’re Broke’n, Get to Cope’n.” The full day YES itinerary included guest speakers, performances, a keynote speech by Lange Luntao, lunch provided by Chipotle, and informational breakout sessions for both youth and adults; 90 youth and 100 adults registered for the conference and there were 20 volunteers.

Youth Surveys

Towards the end of the summit, youth were asked to fill out an evaluation form which asked them to respond to questions that centered on their opinions about the summit among other topics. Of the youth that completed this survey, almost six in ten (58.5%) identified their gender as ‘female,’ over a quarter (26.4%) identified as ‘male,’ 3.8% identified as ‘transgender male,’ 3.8% as ‘non-conforming,’ and 7.5% noted ‘other.’ In regard to sexual identity, nearly one in three (32.1%) identified as ‘straight,’ 26.4% identified as ‘bisexual,’ 24.5% as ‘pansexual,’ 7.5% as ‘gay,’ 3.8% as ‘asexual,’ 3.8% as ‘other,’ and 1.9% identified as ‘lesbian.’ With respect to ethnicity, just over half (51.9%) listed ‘Hispanic/Latinx,’ 21.2% noted ‘White,’ 15.4% ‘Asian,’ 11.3% ‘multiracial,’ 9.6% ‘Black/African American,’ and 9.6% noted ‘other,’ and 3.8% noted ‘Alaska Native/American Indian.’ [See Table 1]

Youth were asked what school they attended and what grade they were in; Table 2 details their responses. With regard to school, youth were also asked a few questions about their school’s environment. When asked if their school has a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), about six in ten students (58.8%) stated ‘yes,’ with one in five (20.6%) indicating ‘no,’ and another 20.6% stating ‘I don’t know’ (Figure 1). Of those that did have a GSA, 68.0% noted being involved, 8.0% stated they were ‘kind of involved,’ and 24.0% noted not being involved (Figure 2).

Table 1. Demographics

Gender Identity	Count	%
Female	31	58.5%
Male	14	26.4%
Transgender Male	2	3.8%
Non-conforming	2	3.8%
Other	4	7.5%
<i>Gender-fluid</i>	1	1.9%
<i>Questioning</i>	3	5.7%
<i>I don't know yet</i>	1	1.9%

Sexual Identity	Count	%
Gay	4	7.5%
Lesbian	1	1.9%
Bisexual	14	26.4%
Straight	17	32.1%
Asexual	2	3.8%
Pansexual	13	24.5%
Other	2	3.8%
<i>Romantic</i>	1	1.9%

Ethnicity	Count	%
Alaska Native/American Indian	2	3.8%
Asian	8	15.4%
Black/African American	5	9.6%
Hispanic/Latinx	27	51.9%
White	11	21.2%
Other	5	9.6%
<i>Asian/Indian</i>	1	1.9%
<i>Biracial</i>	1	1.9%
<i>Human</i>	1	1.9%
<i>Irish/Portuguese</i>	1	1.9%
Multiracial	6	11.3%

Table 2. School Information

Schools	Count	%
Edison High School	11	21.2%
San Joaquin Elementary	8	15.4%
Stagg High School	7	13.5%
Rio Vista High School	5	9.6%
Children Home of Stockton (CHS)	3	5.8%
Stockton Collegiate	4	7.7%
East Union High School	2	3.8%
SECA	2	3.8%
Cleveland Elementary	1	1.9%
Delta Charter	1	1.9%
Millswood Middle School	1	1.9%
Non-public school (one.Program site)	1	1.9%
one.Vision	1	1.9%
Sierra Middle	1	1.9%
Stockton High	1	1.9%
Stockton Unified School District	1	1.9%
Venture Academy	1	1.9%
Vincent Shalve Academy	1	1.9%

Grade	Count	%
Second	1	2.0%
Fifth	1	2.0%
Seventh	1	2.0%
Eighth	9	17.6%
Ninth	2	3.9%
Tenth	8	15.7%
Eleventh	19	37.3%
Twelfth	10	19.6%

Six in ten youth (59.6%) strongly agreed or agreed that there is a positive school climate towards LGBTQ+ youth with 30.8% noting 'no opinion' and 54.7% indicated that they 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that their school is a safe space for LGBTQ+ students with 34.0% noting 'no opinion.' When presented with the statement, 'There is an issue at my school with bullying that is targeted towards LGBTQ+ youth, there were mixed responses: 7.7% stated they 'strongly agree,' 21.2% noted they 'agree,' 30.8% noted they 'disagree,' 7.7% noted they 'strongly disagree,' and 21.2% noted 'no opinion.' Over 6 in 10 youth (62.3%) noted that 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that people can express their individuality at their school with 28.3% marking 'no opinion'. The high majority of youth (86.3%) stated that they 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that there is a supportive adult they can speak to at their school, if needed. [See Table 3]

Youth in attendance were also asked about different items they may have learned at the Summit. An average of 94.2% of youth strongly agreed or agreed that they learned new coping skills, healthy alternatives to deal with challenging situations, how to overcome challenges in positive ways, and new information about the LGBTQ+ community (Table 4).

Figure 1. Does your school have a GSA?

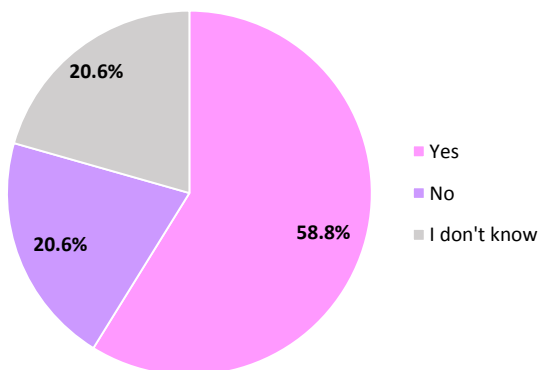
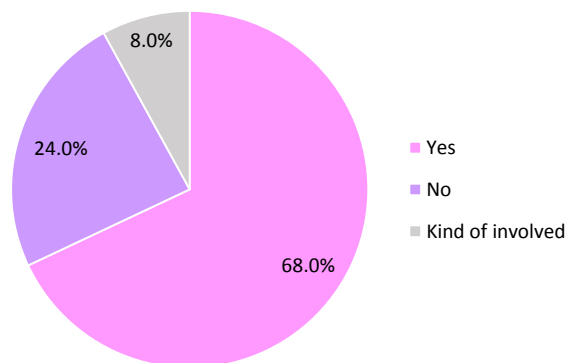


Figure 2. If yes, are you involved in your school's GSA?



“I learned that meditating is a good coping skill.”

– Youth YES Attendee

Table 3. School Environment Questions

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
There is a positive school climate towards LGBTQ+ youth.	52	32.7%	26.9%	9.6%	0.0%	30.8%
My school is a safe space for LGBTQ+ students.	53	32.1%	22.6%	11.3%	0.0%	34.0%
There is an issue at my school with bullying that is targeted towards LGBTQ+ youth.	52	7.7%	21.2%	30.8%	7.7%	21.2%
People can express their individuality at my school.	53	28.3%	34.0%	5.7%	3.8%	28.3%
If needed, there is a supportive adult I can speak with at my school.	51	64.7%	21.6%	3.9%	2.0%	7.8%

Table 4. Learning Centered Questions

I learned...	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
New coping skills at the Summit.	49	69.4%	22.4%	2.0%	0.0%	6.1%
Healthy alternatives to deal with challenging situations.	53	64.2%	28.3%	0.0%	0.0%	7.5%
How to overcome challenges in positive ways.	53	66.0%	30.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%
New information about the LGBTQ+ community at this Summit.	53	66.0%	30.2%	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%

Table 5. Summit Centered Questions

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
I would recommend this Summit to a friend.	53	77.4%	20.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
I felt a sense of community at this Summit.	53	67.9%	30.2%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%
I feel more confident after attending this Summit.	47	67.9%	30.2%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%

Almost all youth (98.1%) noted that they ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that they would recommend this Summit to a friend, that they felt a sense of community at the Summit, and that they felt more confident after attending the summit (Table 5).

Youth were also asked three qualitative open-ended questions centering on their school and the Summit itself. The following page details the responses to each question from the youth who participated in the survey.

98.1% of youth 'strongly agree' or 'agree' they would recommend the YES Summit to a friend

What more can your school do to be a safe space for LGBTQ+ students?

- Start/add a GSA (7)
- Support groups for LGBTQ+ (4)
- Be supportive and aware of LGBTQ+ as a community (7)
- Campaigns and posters (3)
- Other (4)
 - Be kind
 - Support others
 - Stand up to bullying
 - Help others express their feelings

If you learned something new to help with coping, please note what this is:

- Breathing (5)
- Meditating (4)
- Art (3)
- Exercise (3)
- Yoga (3)
- Free expression (2)
- Positivity (2)
- Other (6)
 - "Everything was new."
 - Mirror exercises
 - Health
 - Open up to friends
 - "I learned that there are way more ways of coping with your problems."
 - "I don't know."

What was your favorite part about the YES Summit?

- People (12)
 - Meeting new people
 - Talking with peers
- Workshop activities (11)
 - Art activity
 - Appearance activity
 - Yoga activity
 - Learning coping skills
- All of it (5)
- Other (7)
 - Facilitator
 - Food
 - Fun
 - Ice breaker
 - Positivity
 - Q&A panel
 - The second group activity