Attitudes of Legacy Foundation *On The Table* Youth Participants
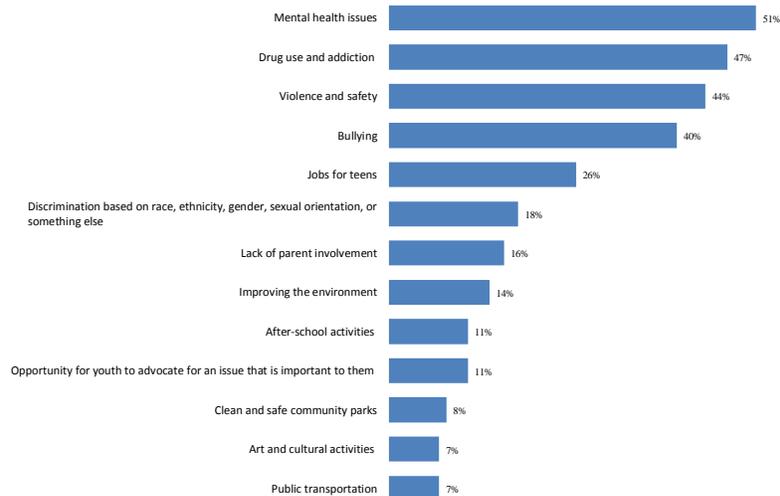
2019 Legacy Foundation *On The Table* youth participants who completed the post-conversation survey have clear priorities for issues facing youth that they would like their community to address, as well as views on how to best tackle them.

Issues facing youth in their community: Mental health issues, drug use and addiction, violence and safety, and bullying are the most pressing issues facing youth that they would like their community to address.

- ✓ They identify mental health issues (51%) as the foremost issue facing youth that they would like their community to address, followed by drug use and addiction (47%), violence and safety (44%), and bullying (40%).
- ✓ Jobs for teens (26%) are a second-tier priority.
- ✓ Those concerns are followed by racism and discrimination (18%), lack of parental involvement (16%), and improving the environment (14%).
- ✓ Female youth and 15- to 19-year-olds are most likely to prioritize mental health issues and addiction.
- ✓ There are some variations in perspectives on key issues among racial and ethnic groups.
  - o Hispanic youth prioritize mental health issues, drug use and addiction, violence and safety, and bullying above other issues facing youth.
  - o African-American youth rank violence and safety, jobs for teens, and mental health issues as top youth issue priorities that they would like the community to address.
  - o White youth place the highest priority on drug use and addiction, mental health issues, and bullying.
  - o Hispanic and white youth are more likely than African-American youth to prioritize drug use and addiction, mental health issues, and bullying as issues facing youth that they would like the community to address.
  - o African-American youth place a higher priority than Hispanic and white youth do on addressing jobs for teens, after-school activities, and clean and safe parks.

THREE Most Important Issues Facing Youth that I Would Like My Community to Address

Issue	%
Mental health issues	51%
Drug use and addiction	47%
Violence and safety	44%
Bullying	40%
Jobs for teens	26%
Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or something else	18%
Lack of parent involvement	16%
Improving the environment	14%
After-school activities	11%
Opportunity for youth to advocate for an issue that is important to them	11%
Clean and safe community parks	8%
Art and cultural activities	7%
Public transportation	7%

Youth perspectives on how to address key community issues: Youth participants were asked to prioritize potential approaches to resolve three key issues facing youth in their community: a) drug use and addiction, b) bullying, violence, and safety, and d) career opportunities.

In order to address drug use and addiction among teenagers in their community, youth are most likely to think it is important to offer mental health resources to those dealing with addiction (54%), and 39% think it is most important to offer more supportive services for parents who are addicted.

✓ Youth also value providing more options for alternative recreational /extracurricular activities (39%).
✓ Among the five ways to address drug use and addiction tested, youth place the lowest priority on developing a student-led committee to create anti-drug programs (29%) and establishing more policing and stricter enforcement for dealing with drugs in schools and in the community (29%).
  o Female youth and 15- to 19-year-olds place a slightly higher priority than do male youth and those under age 15 on offering mental health resources.
  o White and Hispanic youth prioritize offering mental health resources for *community teenagers* dealing with addiction above offering more supportive services for *parents* who are addicted, while African-American youth place a similar priority on both. African-American youth also place a higher priority than do white and Hispanic youth on providing more options for alternative recreational /extracurricular activities.

In order to address bullying, violence, and safety among teenagers in their community, youth prioritize offering community programs, through which youth and police can work together to build better relationships (49%), as well as creating programs that address violence against minority groups, including immigrants and the LGBTQ community (44%).

✓ Second-tier priorities include creating student-led anti-bullying programs (34%), offering programs that address gun violence (31%), and making exterior improvements to make their community safer (30%).
  o Community programs to build better relationships between youth and police are prioritized across youth.
  o Creating student-led anti-bullying campaigns is more important to white youth than African-American and Hispanic youth.
  o Female, white, and Hispanic youth place a higher priority than male and African-American youth on creating programs to address violence against minority groups of immigrants and the LGBTQ community.

In order to improve career opportunities for teenagers in their community, youth rate offering more internship opportunities for high school students (54%) as the top approach, followed by offering mentoring programs that connect youth with local business owners (45%) and showcasing local industries through an annual career expo for $9^{th} – 12^{th}$ grade students (40%).

✓ Smaller proportions of youth prioritize providing more vocational class options within high schools (31%) and offering courses on starting your own business (23%).
  o Among the five approaches tested, Hispanic and white youth place the greatest importance on offering more internship opportunities for high school students.
  o African-American youth prioritize showcasing local industries through an annual career expo for $9^{th} – 12^{th}$ grade students above the other four approaches.

On September 25 and 26, 2019, the Legacy Foundation hosted its 2019 On the Table *conversations with youth in association with its partners in Lake County, with generous support from the Knight Foundation. Legacy Foundation estimates that approximately 1,021 youth participated in the conversations. This memo presents findings among 350* On the Table *youth participants whose parents provided consent to the Legacy Foundation or its partners and completed the post-conversation, online survey.*