

Perspectives on Mental Health

Youth Conducted Survey of SF Youth, July 2002

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Age:

- Age 12 (3)
- Age 13 (6)
- Age 14 (5)
- Age 15 (7)
- Age 16 (4)
- Age 17 (6)
- Age 18 (7)
- Age 19 (9)
- Age 20 (4)

2. Sex:

- Female (23)
- Male (28)

3. Ethnicity? (Multiple Choice)

- African American (16)
- Chinese (13)
- Filipino (3)
- Latino (7)
- White (7)
- Vietnamese (1)
- Japanese (1)
- Native American (1)
- Korean (1)
- Multiethnic (6)

4. Sexual Orientation? (Multiple Choice)

- Straight (48)
- Gay (2)
- Bisexual (1)

5. What issues &/or problems would you consider serious enough to seek help for? (open-ended)

- Drugs (12)
- Depression (7)
- No problem (7)
- Suicide (6)
- Abuse (3)
- Stress, Health, Self-esteem, parents, eating disorders, being “crazy,” and gang involvement: (2 each)

6. If you were experiencing stress or were dealing with an issue, would you seek help?

- Yes (36)
- No: (4)
- If no, why not: deal with stress on their own (15)

7. Are there any RESOURCES available at your SCHOOL where you could discuss these issues?
(open-ended)

- Yes (33)
- No (16)
- Unsure (2)

If Yes, please list them:

- Counselor (17)
- Peer resources (5)
- Hotline: (2)

8. Are there any resources in the community where you can discuss these issues?

- Yes (21)
- No (26)
- Unsure (2)

9. What kind of barriers would keep you from talking with someone about issues that are bothering you? (Multiple Choice)

- Afraid of being judged (26)
- Being embarrassed (24)
- Not wanting others to know your problem(22)
- Being scared (17)
- Do not know where to go (16)
- Others mentioned 1 time each: scared of overdramatizing issues, scared to ask for help because of lack of knowledge about issues, depiction of these issues by the media, stereotypes
Scared of being judged or categorized (1)

Note: Multiple barriers were mentioned by 26 youth.

10. Some people are ashamed or embarrassed about mental health issues (like depression, anxiety, loneliness, family conflicts, or low self-esteem). Why is this? (Open-ended)

- Embarrassed or worried by society (20)
- Low self-esteem (7)
- Childhood and/or parents (6)
- Privacy/Confidentiality concerns (5)
- Scared of being different (5)
- Scared of being teased (4)
- Stereotypes (2)
- Gossip (1)
- Media (1)

11. Who would you prefer to talk to about your problems? (Multiple Choice)

- Friend (30)
- Mother (22)
- Counselor (13)
- Father (11)
- Doctor (11)
- Other family (Sister/Brother/Cousin) (10)
- Teacher (3)

12. What kind of services at school would you like to have available so that you can speak about your feelings and problems? (Open-ended)

- Counselors (17)
- Support Groups (9)
- Peer Programs (6)
- Free and readily available programs (4)
- After-school programs (4)
- Would prefer not to use school-services (3)
- Self-esteem building programs (2)
- Church partnerships (1)
- Mentoring projects (1)
- Outreach programs (1)

13. What would you like this place to look? (Open-ended)

- Warm and cozy (11)
- Welcoming (7)
- Like Existing Services (5)
- Offer Computers and Video Games (5)
- Peaceful (4)
- Clean (3)
- Big (2)
- Private (1)
- Don't care (5)
- instead of having one center focus on all problems, have more centers focusing on few problems (something like that) (1)
- room with a lot of posters with youth (1)
- Staff that actually listen (1)

14. What do you think keeps youth from speaking to others about their problems? (Multiple Choice)

- Scared of being judged (33)
- Embarrassed (32)
- Do not want peers to know their problems (25)
- Fear/Scared (25)
- Do not know where to go (15)

15. What impression do you get from the words "mental health?" (Open-ended)

- Being crazy or having mental illness (15)
- In need of help (6)
- Someone who can't function properly/"slow" (6)
- Health of the mind (5)
- Feelings/emotions (5)
- Involving the mind (3)
- Someone lost or confused (3)
- Sickness (2)
- Special education (1)
- Inherited problems (1)
- Sad (1)
- Spiritual well-being (1)
- The state of your thoughts, feelings, and inner emotions having a certain type of physicalness, that it's also a part of your body (1)
- I think of my little brother because he is slow (1)