

youth will _



ANNUAL YOUTH SURVEY REPORT

2023

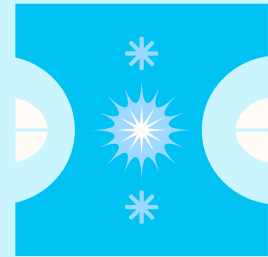
PREPARED BY
STAFF AND YOUTH

**youth
will _**

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Executive Summary



WHO ARE WE?

Youth Will is a local San Diego youth-led organization that fights for opportunities that allow youth to reach their full potential and live happy, healthy, and productive lives. Our work takes a regional approach to working with youth throughout the county, with a combination of in-class programs, grassroots organizing, and hybrid programming that incorporates professional youth development, organizing, and community outreach.

WHAT?

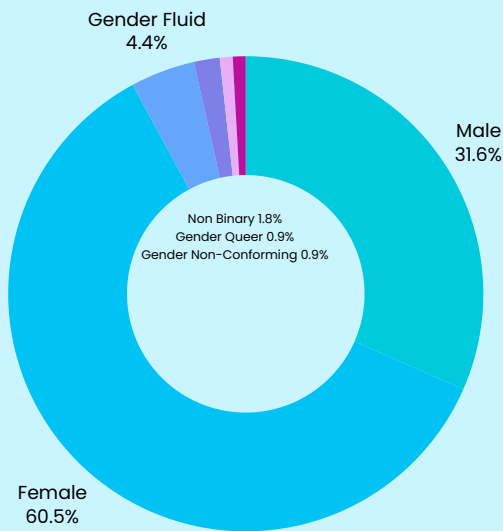
Youth Will sends the Youth Needs Assessment, annually to youth in San Diego County. The main purpose of our assessment is to understand the experiences and issues youth are facing regionally. We define youth those 25 and under of age. With the information we collect we create our campaigns and policy work. The feedback allows us to serve youth according to their needs. The Youth Needs Assessment summary will be continued below.

SURVEY

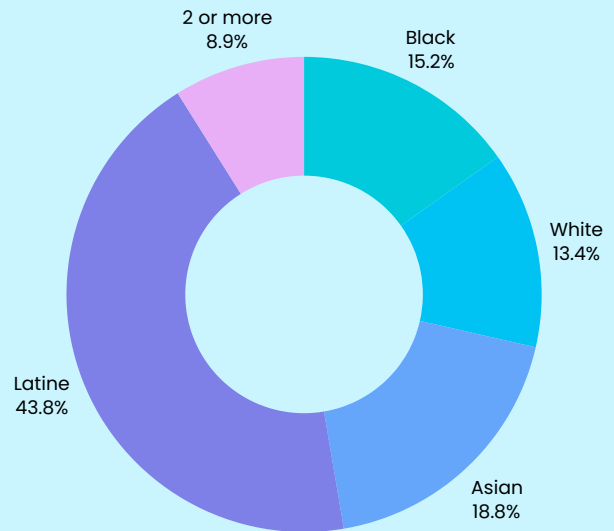
The focus areas for the 2023 survey were under relevant issues Youth Will gathered from past surveys. Such as following up with the repercussions of a pandemic and considering the political climate of the world.

Statistics: Demographics

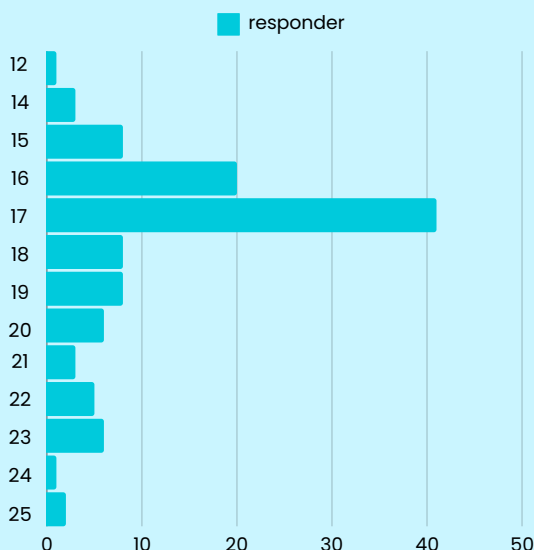
Gender Identity



Race

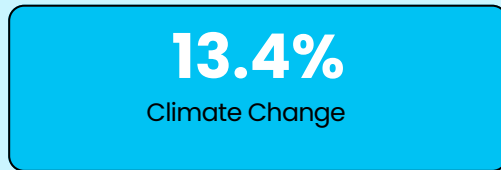
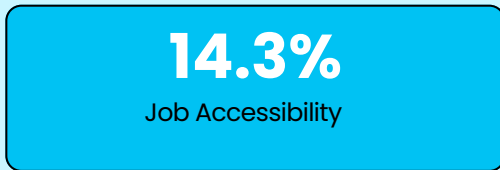
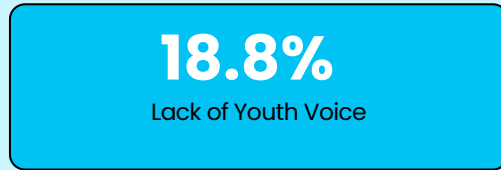
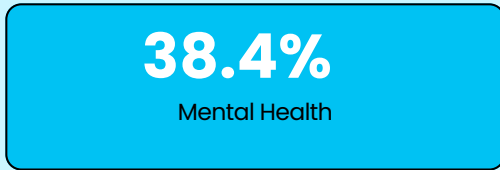


Age



In 2023, the survey got over 100 responses from youth across the 5 areas of San Diego County. There is 27 communities/cities represented by a youth voice in this survey and allows us to understand their upbringings and challenges they face contemporarily.

Main Concerns

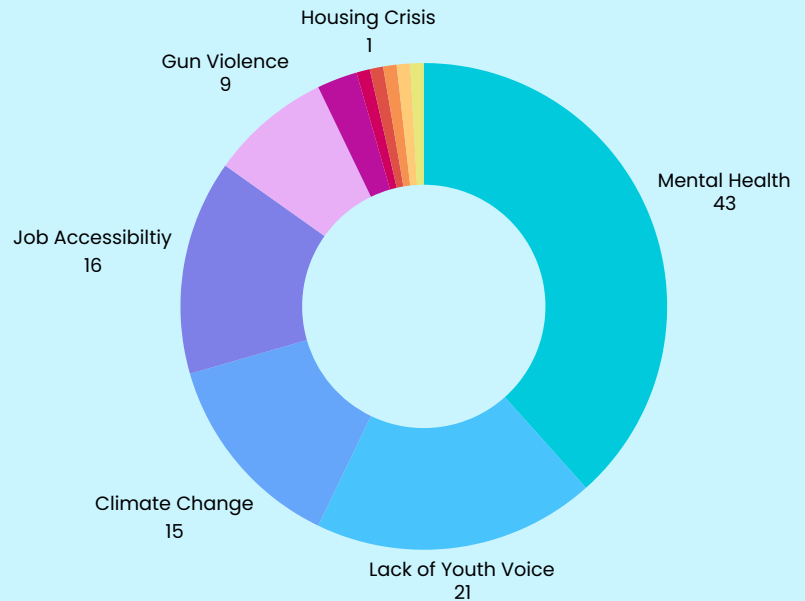


Why are the youth concerned ?

In 2023, young people expressed concern about numerous issues impacting them locally, particularly from a global perspective, due to a rise in sociopolitical awareness. Their primary concern was the lack of mental health resources and their inaccessibility. In this age of technology, these issues are highly relevant to youth, fostering empathy and making them acutely aware of their need for mental health support.

Additionally, young people reported feeling a lack of voice and power, ranking this as their second major concern. They believe that censorship in the media limits their ability to be heard, whether at school, home, or by government officials, leading to persistent issues.

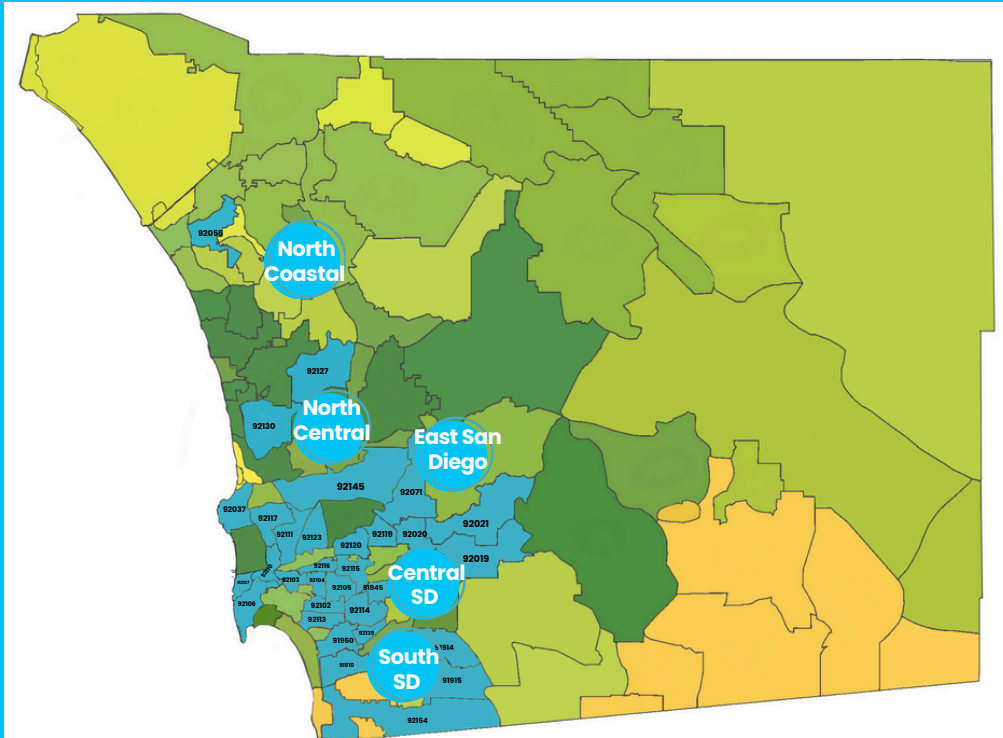
Many of the surveyed youth come from low-income communities in San Diego, a city with some of the highest rent rates in the country. As more young people enter the workforce, job accessibility and economic security remain significant concerns.



However, young people are seeking better opportunities and job positions, but many employers require experience that these youth have not had the opportunity to gain. This creates additional hurdles for them in accessing better opportunities.

Lastly, the youth highlight climate change as one of their significant concerns. They feel its effects and see its impact on their communities in South San Diego County. Climate change remains a major topic in the news and media, and young people feel that only a few individuals in power have the ability to promptly address and reverse its impacts.

Community Highlights



2023 Prezi, Youth Needs Assesment Map

Communities where Youth engagement is found:

- Bay Park
- Black Mountain Ranch
- Carmel Valley
- City Heights
- El Cajon City
- El Cajon (Sycuan)
- Fleet Ridge
- Hillcrest
- Kearny Mesa
- La Jolla
- La Mesa
- Lake Murray
- Lemon Grove
- Logan Heights
- Midway District
- Mira Costa
- Mt Hope
- National City
- North Park
- Northwest Chula Vista
- Otay Mesa
- Otay Ranch
- Paradise Hills
- Point Loma Heights
- Rolando
- Santee
- Serra Mesa
- Skyline

2023 Prezi, Youth Needs Assesment Map

Community Highlights

Youth perspectives in the County of San Diego

In the assessment, we asked youth to highlight their primary concerns within their communities. The map on the right illustrates these concerns, categorized into the following options: lack of youth voice, lack of jobs, housing issues, mental health concerns, and gun violence.







Mental health emerged as a significant concern, with youth linking it to pressures from academics, social life, and their environments. Additionally, there were notable worries about the accessibility of mental health services, particularly in communities of concern, where youth observe a high need for assistance.

Youth also reported experiencing a lack of youth voice, indicating that even those who are highly engaged in their communities feel they lack platforms to be heard. This assessment was conducted solely among youth, reflecting their perspectives rather than those of traditionally engaged constituents. Young people often voice their concerns through non-profits and programs, but they hope their elected officials and representatives at all levels will listen to them.

The youth were limited to these options because they have consistently identified these areas of concern in previous years. The lack of jobs was a prominent issue, as youth have expressed that the economy and employment opportunities are not improving. Additionally, the issue of gun violence underscores the direct impact of gun use and prevalence on youth, particularly those living south of Interstate 8. Together, these insights provide a clear picture of the critical issues facing youth in their communities.



Although the icons don't reflect most of their individual responses, the youth are also concerned about the global environment and the uncertainty of their future. Additionally, they highlighted housing as a significant issue because San Diego is one of the most expensive cities in the nation to live in. The youth aspire for a healthy and affordable future.

-  Housing
-  Lack of jobs
-  Gun violence
-  Mental Health
-  Lack of Youth Voice
-  Climate Anxiety

Addressing Concerns

Opportunity Youth Collaborative

Created to eliminate silos, amplify collaborative services, and enhance multi-sector networking to support youth in reaching self sufficiency.

Through the Opportunity Youth Collaborative, Youth Will has been steadfast in closing gaps and addressing systemic issues that marginalize youth. In 2023, we launched a comprehensive resource website that provides essential information about educational and workforce opportunities across the county, in addition to other resources. This initiative aims to mitigate job insecurity and other pressing issues identified by youth, empowering them to navigate their futures with greater confidence and support.

RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

We aim to connect young people with resources, ensure that those resources are easily accessible, and advocate for those needs.

GET CONNECTED!

- ✓ Education (High School & Before)
- ✓ Education Beyond High School
- ✓ Employment Opportunities
- ✓ Food
- ✓ Foster Youth
- ✓ Healthcare
- ✓ Homelessness Response
- ✓ Immigration
- ✓ LGBTQIA+ Youth
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Youth Justice



bit.ly/resourcesyouth

Climate Justice Action Team

Focused on addressing the climate anxiety youth are feeling and engaging in ways to ensure youth a healthy future



The Climate Justice Action Team was established in response to the concerns of youth and the community regarding climate change. In 2023, we conducted workshops on environmental justice and campaign strategies aimed at developing a campaign centered on climate justice. This team is youth-led, and in 2024, we will collectively decide on a policy campaign to address the concerns voiced by youth.

Youth Highlights



Keala Minna-Choe

“Youth Will has empowered me to learn more about governmental systems and has inspired me to make a difference in my community. I have loved all of our fun events, action opportunities, and being able to work with Youth Will’s incredible team!”

Samira Hassan

“Youth Will has taught me the importance of amplifying my voice and use it as a tool when it comes to organizing. I also learned how to make a public comments & learned how to gather and organize research to decrease San Diego’s youth disconnection rate!”



Taking Action



Join our Action Teams

Join the climate justice action team and learn how you can make a difference in a youth led policy campaign! Registration link: bit.ly/cj_action

Get Involved!

Fill out our Get Involved form to advocate with us and receive updates on upcoming events! Link: bit.ly/yw_getinvolved



Stay Connected!

Check out our website and follow us on social media!

