



**MULTNOMAH  
YOUTH COMMISSION**

*Providing a Voice for Youth*

PORTLAND AND MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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# Multnomah Youth Commission (MYC)

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- ❖ The Multnomah Youth Commission (MYC) is the official youth policy body for Multnomah County and the City of Portland. We are a group of young people, ages 13-21, who strive to provide a voice for youth in the County & City's work.
- ❖ The MYC works to change policy affecting young people, as well as negative community perception about youth.
- ❖ All of the MYC's work is directly linked to *Our Bill of Rights: Children + Youth* (BoR), a document created by youth to protect their rights.

# Youth Against Violence (YAV)

- ❖ This committee was created during the summer of 2011 due to the increased anti-gay/gender and gang violence directed towards youth in our community that violated Article V in the BoR.
- ❖ Even though we focus heavily on these two types of violence, we are also addressing the many types of violence youth face everyday.
- ❖ We are working with youth and adults throughout Portland and Multnomah County to change the way our community views and deals with violence



# **Our Bill of Rights: Children + Youth**

**We, the Children and Youth of Portland and Multnomah County, have the right to loving care and a healthy environment at home, as our homes, families and community provides the basis for our development.**

**❖ a. Safety and Protection**

**❖ e. Freedom from Discrimination and Prejudice**



# Our Bill of Rights: Children + Youth

## Article V: Family, Home and Community

- a. Safety and Protection: We have the right to be safe in our homes and communities. Furthermore, we have the right to be protected from all types of abuse and exploitation, whether physical, verbal, emotional or sexual, and to be supported in reporting and combating abuse.



# Our Bill of Rights: Children + Youth

- e. Freedom from Discrimination and Prejudice: We have the right not to be discriminated against based on our race, color, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, political views, source of income, gender identity or any other basis prohibited by applicable federal, state, and local laws. We have the right not to tolerate any disparaging or insensitive attitudes aimed at the above characteristics.





# Focus Groups

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# Why Focus Groups?

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- ❖ Create an opportunity for community youth to share their stories and experiences about violence in order for the MYC to plan an event relevant to their lives.
- ❖ Provide the MYC with information to develop potential policy recommendations to present back to local decision makers at the summit after youth approval
- ❖ Inform youth about the summit and encourage participation in planning, volunteering and/or attending.

# Focus Group Facilitation

- ❖ Facilitators: Two Youth Commissioners
- ❖ Adult Support: One staff from MYC and at least one staff from participating youth group
- ❖ Minute takers: One PSU Senior CAPSTONE student

# **Focus Group Structure and Questions**

- ❖ **Introduction: Names, Objectives, Expectations, Confidentiality**
- ❖ **Ice Breaker: Brainstorm about violence**
- ❖ **Questions in small group:**
  - How does violence (Physical, emotional or mental) impact young people's lives?
  - What issues surrounding violence do you experience that adults may not understand?
  - Where do you think violence roots from?
  - What can be done inside / outside of school to prevent violence?
- ❖ **Closing: One thing you liked, one thing you learned**

# Focus Group Demographics

Date	Location	Youth Present	Females	Males	Other
2.29.12	SMYRC	4	0	3	1
3.1.12	NAYA	9	4	5	0
3.7.12	Rockwood Library	7	6	1	0
3.13.12	Teen to Teen	13	4	5	4
3.14.12	Reynolds HS	8	7	1	0
3.14.12	David Douglas (F)	10	10	0	0
3.14.12	David Douglas (M)	7	0	7	0
3.15.12	Gresham HS	4	4	0	0
3.19.12	Rosemary A HS	12	3	9	0
3.21.12	PAL Youth Center A	8	3	5	0
3.21.12	PAL Youth Center B	9	4	5	0
3.21.12	Highland Christian	6	4	2	0
3.21.12	Outside In	6	2	3	1
3.24.12	APANO	9	5	4	0
3.30.12	STRYVE Project	10	7	3	0
3.30.12	DCJ - Juvenile	12	5	7	0
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>134</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>6</b>



# Focus Groups' Results

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## ❖ What is violence?

- Physical Harm (39)
- Aggressive Behavior (22)
- Verbal (22)
- Emotional (13)
- Power (11)
- Cyberbullying/Media (10)
- Fighting (10)

## ❖ What does violence look like?

- Ridiculed for being different (46)
- Abuse of power: from police, parents (30)

## ❖ How does violence impact people's lives?

- Mental instabilities / issues: Depression, suicide, PTSD, paranoia (20)
- Future is compromised (16)

# Focus Groups' Results

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## ❖ What issues of violence don't adults understand?

- Physical violence (32)
- Cyber bullying / Social media / cell phones / computers (28)
- Parents' communication and connection with youth is poor (28)

## ❖ What can be done to prevent violence?

- Help resources/support networks (24)
- Being heard / Stories of violence being told (16)

## ❖ Root causes of violence?

- Environment/Culture/Community
- Lack of Power
- Poverty
- Racial Profiling
- Religion

# Types of Violence

❖ From data analyzed we found 7 forms of violence prevalent to youth in Multnomah County.

- Anti-Gay/Gender
- Cyberbullying
- Gang
- Home
- Police
- School
- Sexual/Dating





# Summit Overview





# Objectives of the Summit

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- ❖ Provide resources for youth to deal with violence they experienced and/or currently experience in their lives
- ❖ Inform policy makers with the experiences youth face regarding violence and provide potential policy recommendations to be considered
- ❖ Educate youth and adults about BoR and the importance of its implementation into all decision arenas in the community
- ❖ Bring diverse youth from across the region together to share ideas and experiences regarding violence and build a youth movement for social change

# Summit Overview

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## ❖ Agenda

- Welcome / Ice Breaker
- Our Bill of Rights: Children + Youth
- Youth Panel on Violence
- Lunch / Up and Over Entertainment
- Breakout groups on violence #1 (Youth Only)
- Large group debrief
- Clicker Questions (Demographics /Youth vs. Adult)
- Breakout groups on violence #2 (with Adults)
- Commitments to Policies
- Raffle and Thank you's



# The 8 Affinity Groups

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- ❖ Anti-Gay/Gender
- ❖ Cyber Bullying
- ❖ Gang Violence
- ❖ Home
- ❖ Police
- ❖ School
- ❖ Sexual/Dating Violence
- ❖ Restorative Justice



**NO VIOLENCE**  
**KNOW PEACE**

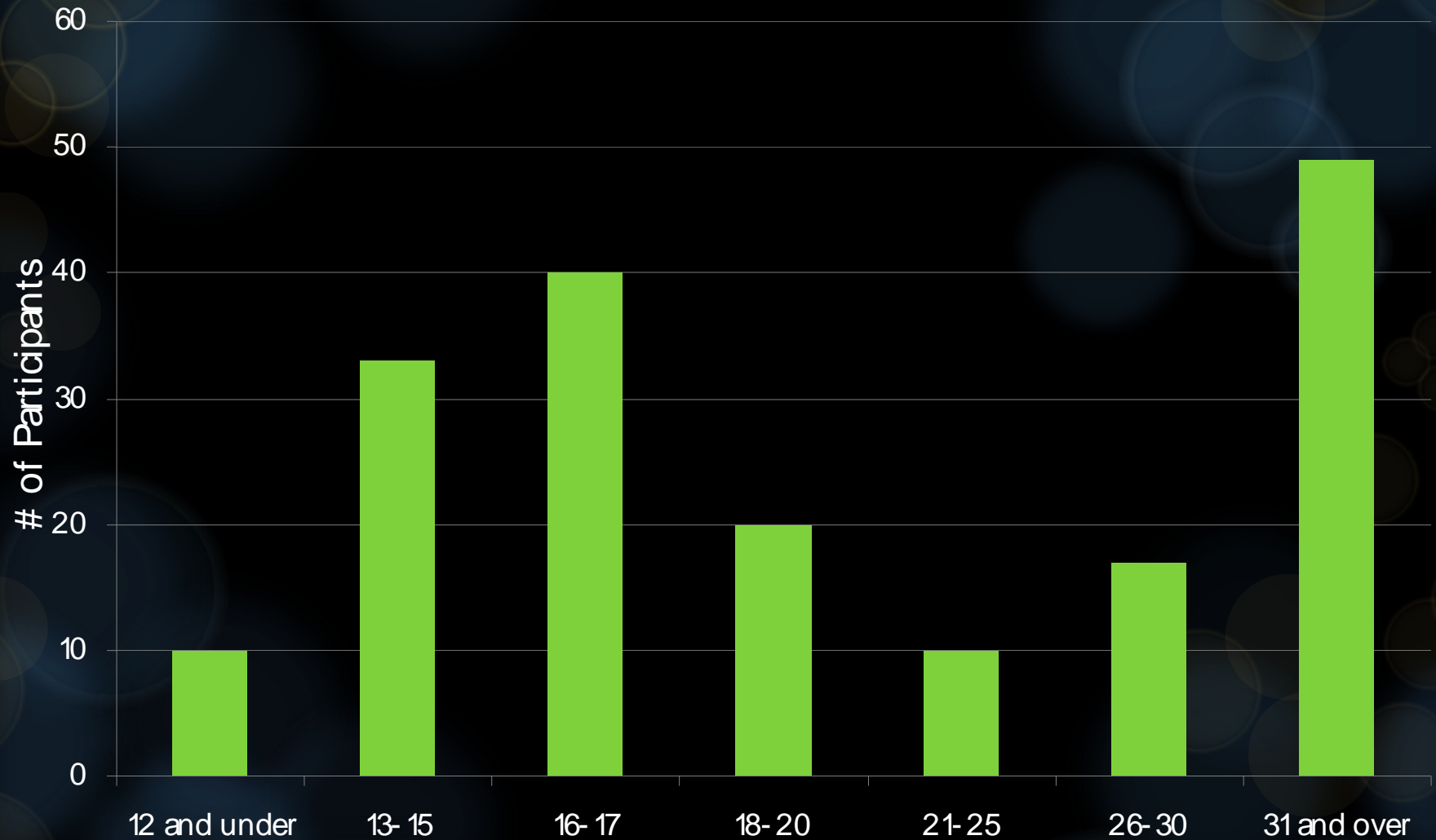
# **Summit Demographics, Similarities and Differences**



# Demographics

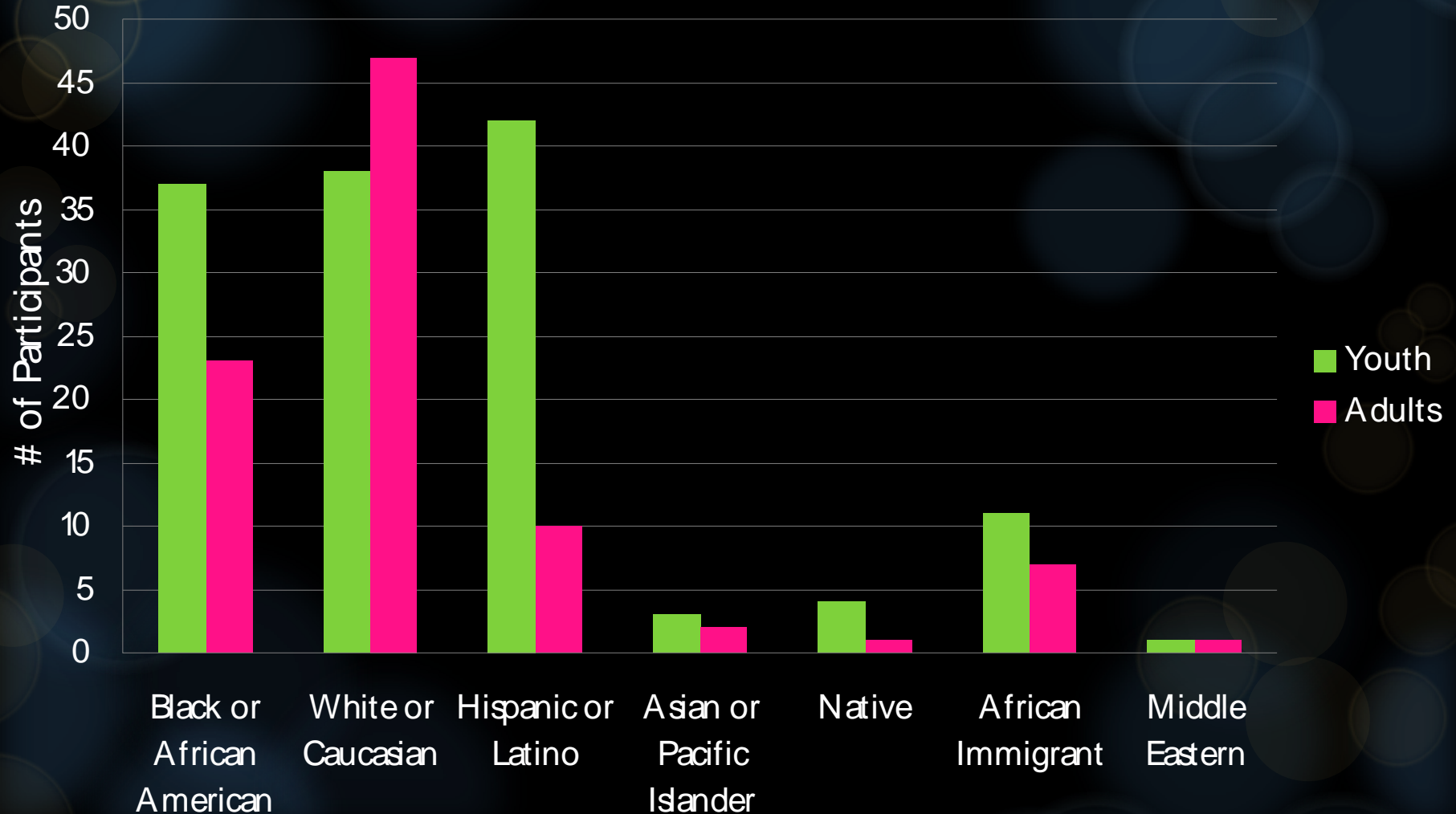
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## Ages



# Demographics

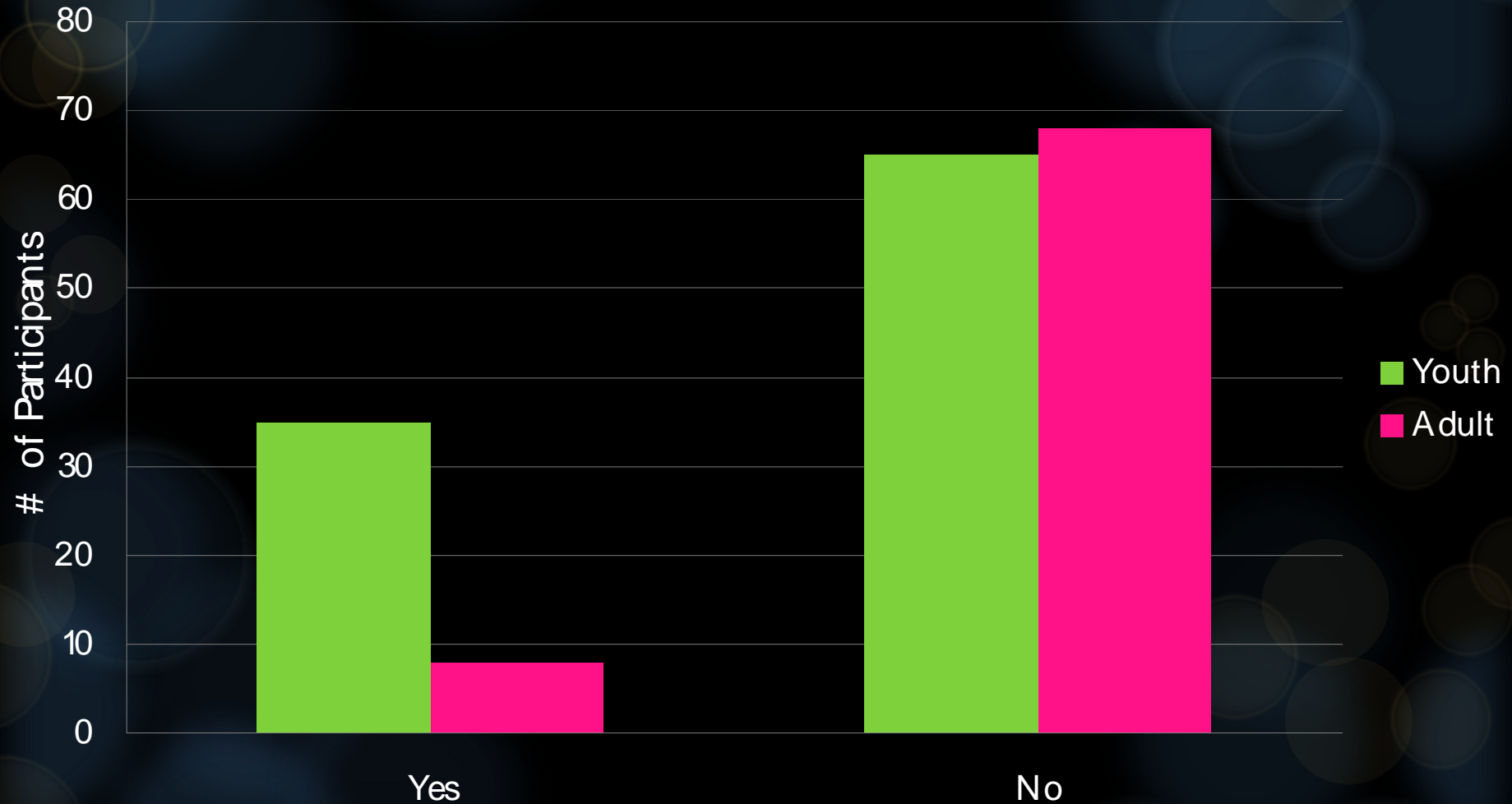
## How do you identify? Race or Ethnicity



# Demographics

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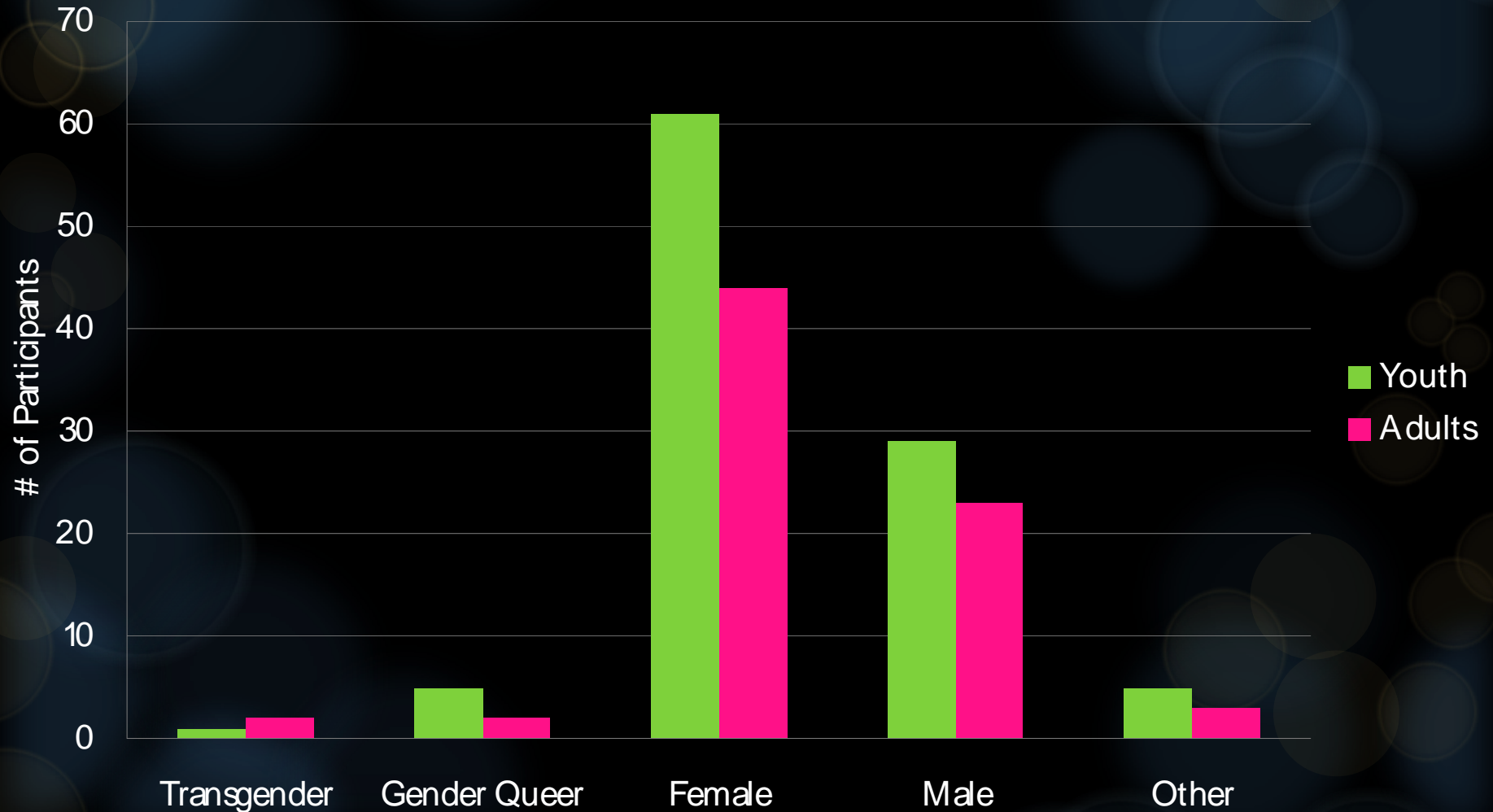
Do you Identify as an Immigrant or Refugee?



# Demographics

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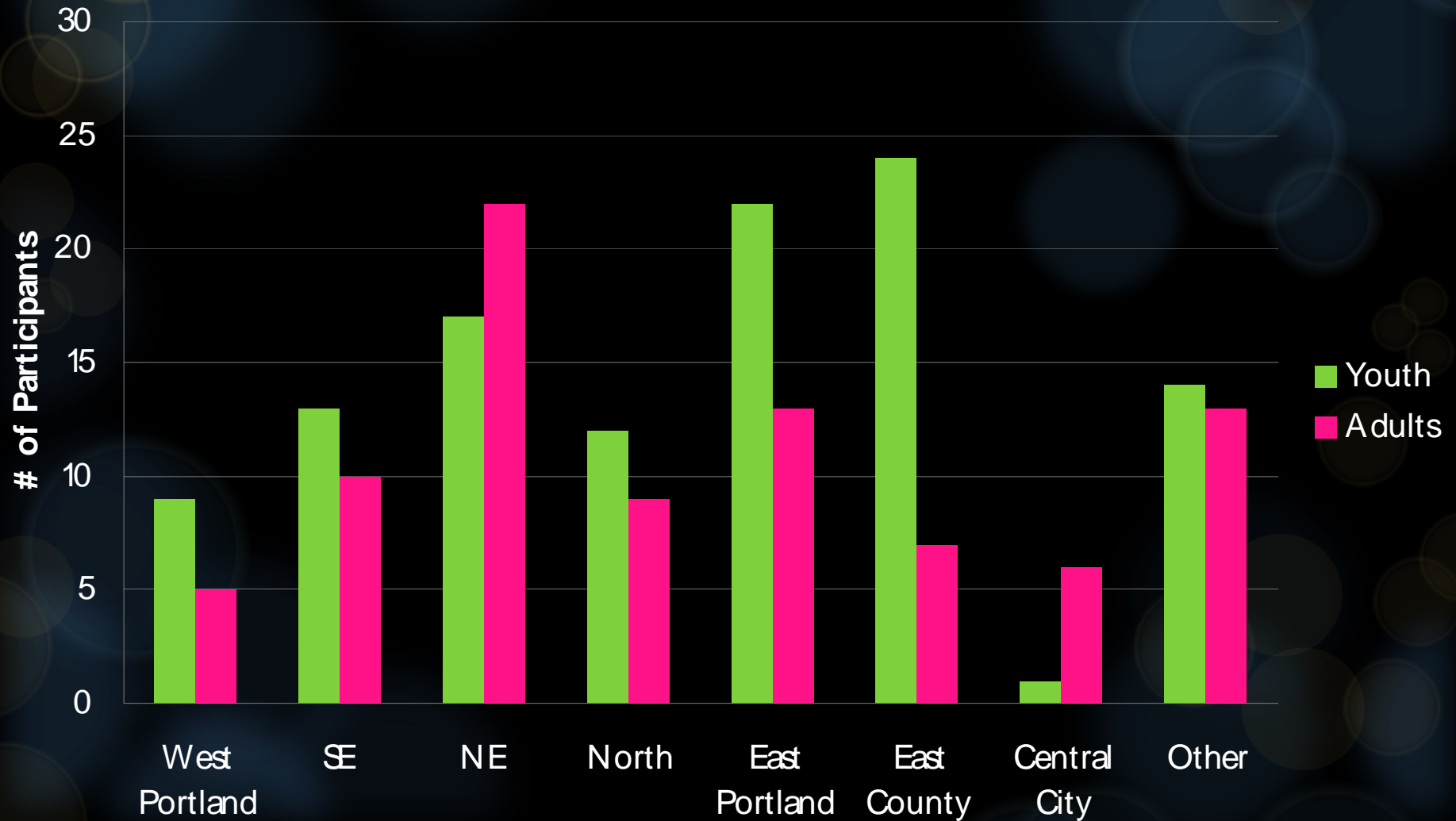
What gender do you identify as?





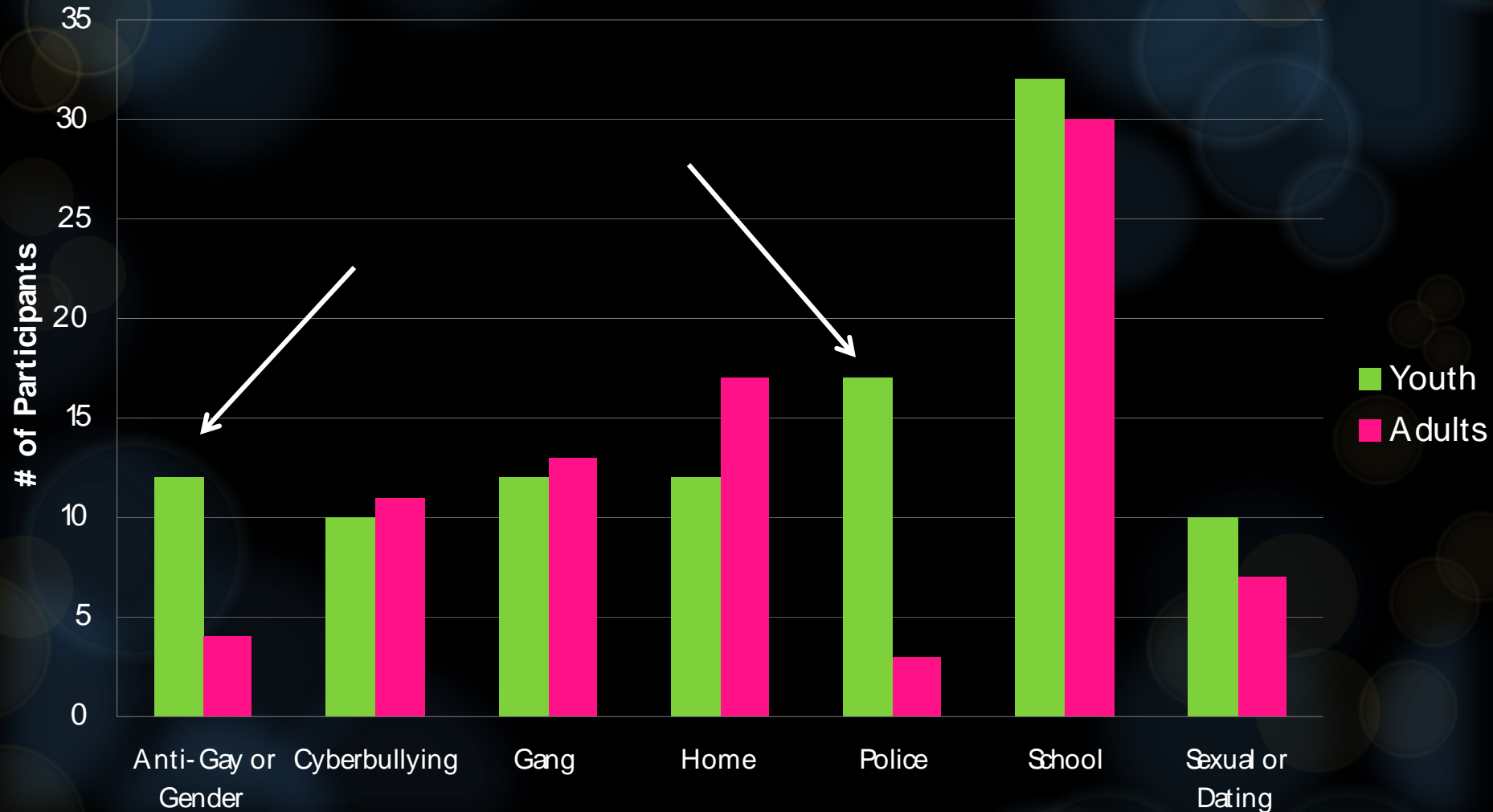
# Demographics

## Where do you live?



# The Similarities and Differences

What types of violence do youth experience most?



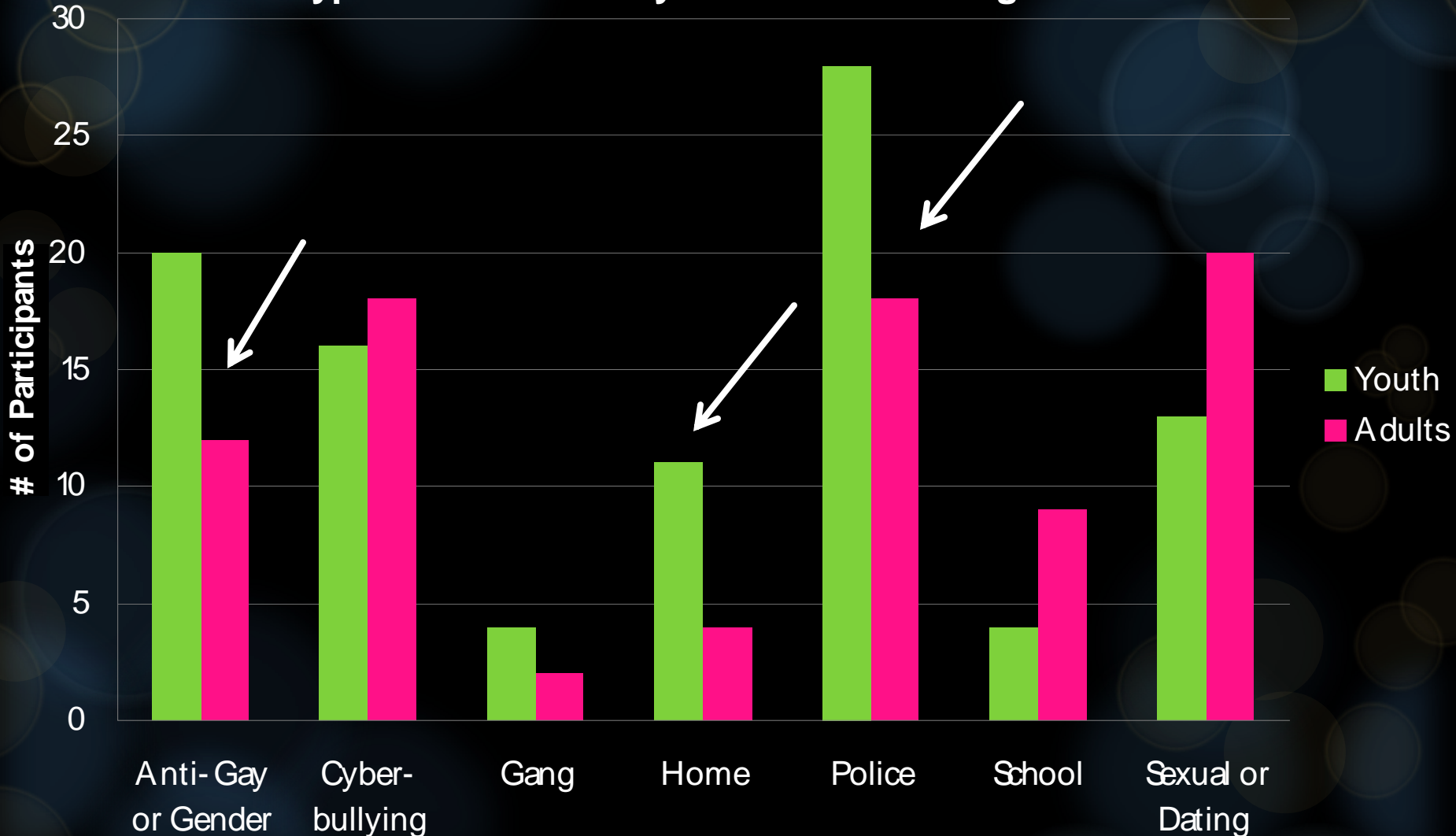
# The Similarities and Differences

What type of violence do youth see most?



# The Similarities and Differences

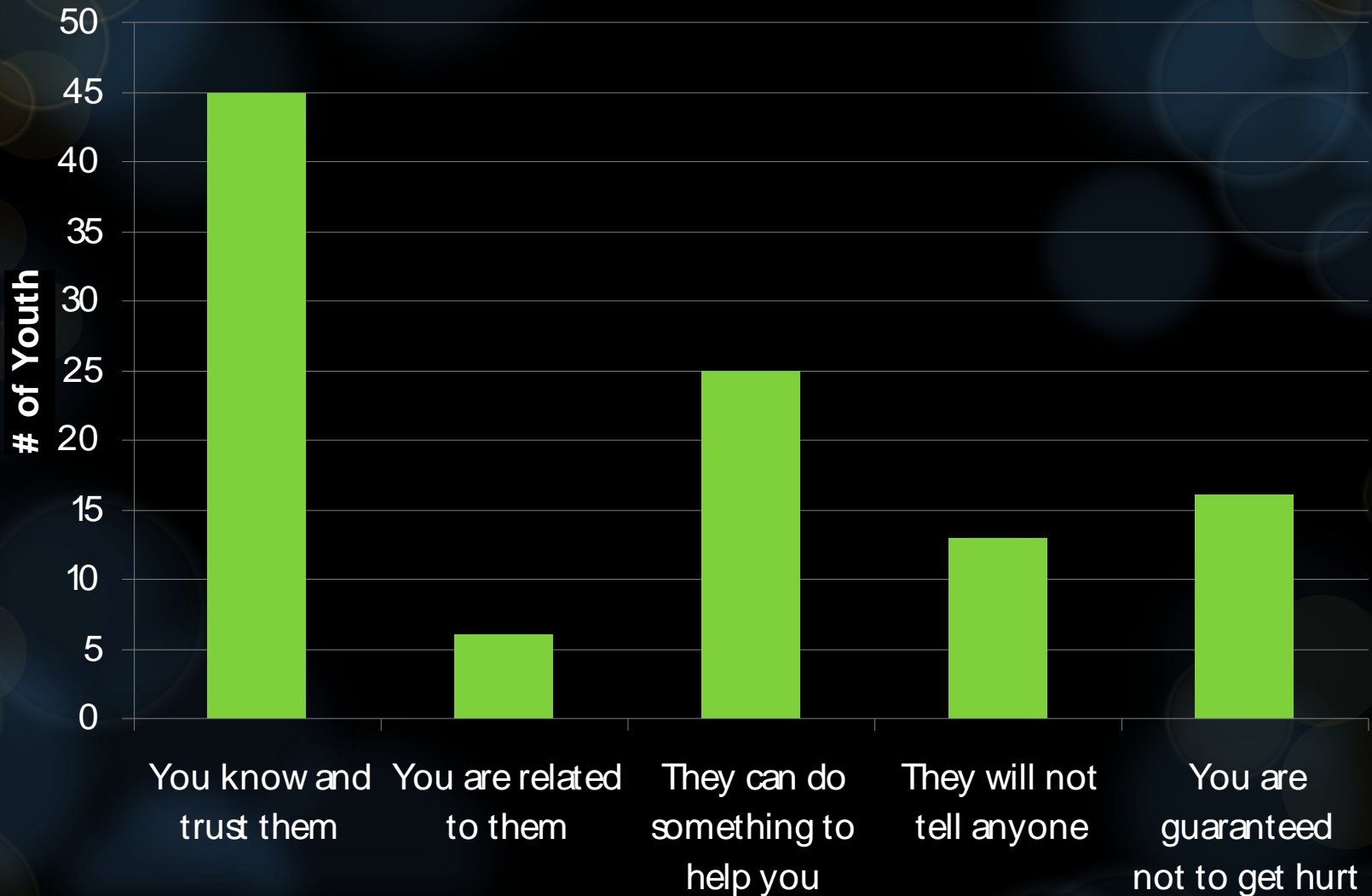
What types of violence do you think does not get addressed?





# Who To Tell About Violence?

What makes it easier to tell someone about violence?



# **Policy Recommendation Process**

# Process of Policy Development

- ❖ PSU CAPSTONE analyzed the focus group data
- ❖ The MYC used this data to write the first draft of policy recommendations.
- ❖ The youth at the summit, in their affinity groups on violence edited, drafted and voted on the final policies.
- ❖ Each affinity group presented their final policies to the larger group for final approval.

# Anti-Gay and Gender

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- ❖ **Schools should review curriculum and work to increase content on the history of the LGBTQ Community and the Women's Rights Movement, as well as share information about the historical targeting of these groups to build awareness and compassion.**
- ❖ **Schools, businesses, and service agencies should learn the consequences of hateful language and advocate for strict enforcement of policies which promote respectful communication.**
- ❖ **Conduct trainings to promote more understanding and acceptance of the LGBTQ people and to stop violence against women.**
- ❖ **Promote suicide prevention and intervention supports, especially in schools, building in peer-to-peer models of intervention.**
- ❖ **All Districts in Multnomah County should ensure that LGBTQ students are named in district anti-discrimination policies and work to protect their rights.**
- ❖ **Break the silence – create a campaign to speak out against Anti-Gay and Gender Violence and share stories of anti-gender violence impacts.**
- ❖ **Maintain and work to expand access to school-based mental health services through Multnomah County Department of County Human Services.**
- ❖ **Continue funding for MYC and 2nd Annual Rob Ingram Youth Summit Against Violence.**



# Cyber-Bullying

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- ❖ Adults need support/awareness education of what cyber-bullying is and how to approach youth to talk about it through a campaign to speak out against cyber-bullying.
- ❖ Schools should work with youth to develop policies/reporting systems for cyber-bullying.
- ❖ Create authentic opportunities to engage parents and students to talk about cyber-bullying, what it is, and how it impacts students.
- ❖ Promote suicide prevention and intervention supports, especially in schools, building in peer-to-peer models of intervention (sometimes only other youth know when a youth is being cyber-bullied and considering suicide).
- ❖ Break the silence- Create a campaign to speak out against Cyber-Bullying.
- ❖ School counselors should be available more often.
- ❖ Student Unions should be created across all schools in Multnomah County.
- ❖ Continue funding for MYC and 2nd annual Rob Ingram Youth Summit Against Violence

# Gang

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- ❖ **Expand YouthPass program to all youth in Multnomah County so they can access jobs, after school activities and school.**
- ❖ **Sponsor clean ups in the community and work to build pride in distressed neighborhoods. Efforts like the rosewood initiative should be continued and expanded to other neighborhoods that have high crime rates. Community building as prevention of crime.**
- ❖ **Continue funding for summer youth connect and 9th grade counts. Connection to jobs, internships and positive activities can help break the cycle of gang involvement.**
- ❖ **City of Portland Parks and Recreation, Portland Children's Levy and Multnomah County should maintain funding and increase access to SUN schools, especially concentrating services where gang violence is most prevalent.**
- ❖ **Provide free, private counseling for youth involved in gangs.**
- ❖ **Provide more information to youth about programs outside of school that are free.**
- ❖ **Bring in more speakers and reps from programs into the school to educate students about their services.**
- ❖ **Have support for family and significant others of gang members.**
- ❖ **Provide youth of all ages a safe, confidential environment to talk about gang involvement.**

# Home

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- ❖ **Publicize and promote the child abuse hotline.**
- ❖ **Promote holistic, family services through school based Mental Health and Health center programs at Multnomah County, Many Families have little access to care. Violence experienced by parent impacts the child.**
- ❖ **Partner with and support domestic violence organization.**
- ❖ **Increase resources for better parenting, parent education**
- ❖ **Support alcohol and drug services for parents. Addiction can be a root cause of home violence.**
- ❖ **Promote respectful ways anyone can intervene when they witness child abuse.**
- ❖ **Ensure strict enforcement of policies to protect the safety of foster kids when being placed out of home. Work to prevent re abuse or traumatization of foster youth.**
- ❖ **Continue funding for MYC and 2nd annual Rob Ingram Youth Summit Against Violence.**

# Police

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- ❖ **Publicize and promote the child abuse hotline.**
- ❖ **Portland Police Bureau, Gresham Police Department, and Multnomah County Sheriff Department should develop or promote existing anonymous reporting of law enforcement officials who abuse their authority.**
- ❖ **Educate police and work to address racial profiling of young people.**
- ❖ **Promote better police/youth relations.**
- ❖ **Educate young people on what to do when they encounter law enforcement and what their rights are during the encounter.**
- ❖ **Eliminate all no non-mandated school exclusions. Avoid making school discipline issues criminal justice issues.**
- ❖ **When Police violence is reported, respond quickly and seriously to maintain trust of community.**
- ❖ **Continue funding for MYC and 2nd Annual Rob Ingram Youth**



# **School (Bullying / Discrimination)**

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- ❖ **Speak up, talk about violence. Peers need skills and messages to call out bullies.**
- ❖ **Teachers need to step in when someone uses derogatory language or harasses a student.**
- ❖ **Implement Restorative Justice in all Multnomah County middle and high schools, similar to existing pilots led by Resolutions NW which works with the bully and those being bullied to have honest conversation and repair damage done. Multnomah County should continue funding for Restorative Justice in schools.**
- ❖ **Promote suicide prevention and intervention support building in peer-to-peer models of intervention**
- ❖ **Allow space in schools for youth to anonymously share their stories of being bullied to break down feelings of isolation.**
- ❖ **Continue funding for MYC and 2nd Annual Rob Ingram Youth Summit Against Violence**

# Sexual / Dating

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- ❖ **Support organizations which provide victim services and resources to survivors of dating violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking, so that survivors have safe and confidential spaces.**
- ❖ **Provide education for youth while also raising public awareness on safe/healthy relationships, and what survivors and bystanders can do when relationship and sexual violence happens.**
- ❖ **Provide support and training for parents on how to talk to their children about sexual and dating violence.**
- ❖ **Increase the number of non-mandatory reporters in organizations that support youth, and allow them to work with youth.**
- ❖ **Continue funding for MYC and 2nd annual Rob Ingram Youth Summit Against Violence**

# Restorative Justice

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- ❖ Allow space in schools for youth to anonymously share their stories of being bullied to break down feelings of isolation.
- ❖ Implement RJ middle and high schools, similar to existing pilots led by resolutions NW, which works with the bully and those being bullied to have honest conversation and repair damage done. Multnomah county should continue funding for RJ in schools.
- ❖ Eliminate all mandated school exclusions avoid making school discipline issues criminal justice issues.
- ❖ Reduce or eliminate exclusions in schools through efforts to support a culture at the school building that productively addresses conflict and prevents behaviors that could lead to enhanced discipline methods.
- ❖ Promote positive activities for youth like SUN to provide connection to caring adults and activities to keep them out of trouble

# NEXT STEPS

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What can YOU do?



# Thanks To Our Sponsors

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