

King County Youth Bill of Rights and Report

August 2024



King County

Acknowledgements

King County expresses its sincere thanks to the young leaders who partnered in the development of the King County Youth Bill of Rights, especially the King County Youth Bill of Rights Task Force Members Adhya Kona, Aisha Sahal, Anmol Gil, Ave Diamond, Diego Gonzalez, Josue Villalobos, Julia Kroopkin, Laura Bui, Layla Osman, Makayla Miles, Manthita Wague, Mariam Mohammed, Rohan Kurup, Rose Lulengo, Siddhika Kshetri, Tera Chea, Tracy/Tram Dinh, and Zobir Tarin.

Special thanks is also given to contributors who dedicated time and thoughtfulness to create the Youth Bill of Rights, including the King County Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB), especially Hikma Sherka and the Young Leaders Subcommittee members; Department of Public Health Interns Ladan Farah and Eyael Getachew; Gracie McDanold and projects consultants Ashley Barnes, Thearina Leng, and Pearl Malhi; King County Library Systems Teen Services Coordinator Rachel McDonald; and Best Starts for Kids Community Partnerships Program Manager Kerry Wade.

King County is also grateful to the many youth-serving community organizations, individuals, and municipalities who helped engage young people in the process to identify the most important needs confronting youth in our region.

The King County Youth Bill of Rights is dedicated to memory of former CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee member Sophie Theriault (Duvall, Washington) whose light continues to shine and guide us all towards a more equitable society for children, youth, and all humankind.

I. Table of Contents

I. Table of Contents	3
II. King County Youth Bill of Rights Articles	4
III. Executive Summary	7
IV. Background	10
Department of Community and Human Services	10
Children and Youth Advisory Board and Young Leaders Subcommittee	10
Foundational Policies and Plans.....	11
Purpose of a Youth Bill of Rights	12
Report Methodology and Terminology	12
V. Project Timeline and Guiding Principles.....	13
King County Youth Bill of Rights Project Timeline	13
Creation of the King County Youth Bill of Rights Task Force	13
King County and Community Partnerships	14
Equity, Inclusion, and Geographic Representation.....	14
VI. Declare Your Rights! Input Phase.....	15
YBOR Declare Your Rights! Outreach and Engagement Methods	15
Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Outreach and Engagement	17
YBOR Declare Your Rights! Phase Findings	18
VII. Youth Bill of Rights Ratification	19
YBOR Ratification Outreach and Engagement Methods	20
YBOR Ratification Phase Findings	20
VIII. Recommendations and Concluding Remarks	21
IX. Appendices	23
Appendix A: YBOR Task Force Members, CYAB Young Leaders, and young community members	23
Appendix B: YBOR Community Partnerships	24
Appendix C: YBOR Outreach Activities and Events	24
Appendix D: Examples of YBOR Print and Social Media Content	25
Appendix D: Ratification Phase Top Ten Themes with brief descriptions	31

II. King County Youth Bill of Rights Articles

We the children and youth of King County, Washington, as contributors to an inclusive and just human society, and to secure hope and a future based in equity, respect, and combined power for all, establish these youth bill of rights.

- I. **BASIC NEEDS & WELLBEING** – We the children and youth of King County, assert that every young individual has the right to the fulfillment of basic human needs.
 - A. Every young individual has access to fresh, nutritious, and affordable food.
 - B. Every young individual is housed in a safe home environment, and able to live without risk of harm or unwilling displacement.
 - C. Every young individual experiences sustainable living including access to outdoor spaces and unpolluted air.
 - D. Every young individual has access to clean drinking water.
- II. **HEALTH** – We the children and youth of King County declare the care of young peoples’ mental, emotional, and physical health is a fundamental human right.
 - A. Every young individual has access to mental health support, mental health resources, and mental health services that are affordable, responsive, and address their unique challenges.
 - B. Every young individual has respect, autonomy, and meaningful involvement in decisions about their body.
 - C. Every young individual has resources, services, and aid to combat drug and alcohol addiction.
 - D. Every young individual has affordable and easily accessible health care.
 - E. Every young individual has the power to make decisions about their reproductive health.
- III. **EDUCATION & LEARNING** – We the children and youth of King County uphold education as a pathway to progress, economic stability, and development.
 - A. Every young individual receives a quality education in a supportive learning environment where they feel emotionally, mentally, and physically able.
 - B. Every young individual receives unbiased education that expands their knowledge, trade, and skills, and that addresses individual learning needs.
 - C. Every young individual is supported by their community in building their educational goals.
 - D. Every young individual receives training that prepares them for the next stages of life.
- IV. **EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE** – We the children and youth of King County believe that equity and social justice are essential for a better world, and by upholding these rights, we create a brighter future for all.
 - A. Every young individual who experiences any form of discrimination is validated and taken seriously.

- B. Every young individual has resources that address language barriers, and/or situations that limit their ability to communicate or understand circumstances.
- V. **SAFETY & SECURITY** – We the children and youth of King County assert that all young people should feel safe and protected at home, at school, and in their communities.
- A. Every young individual has safe communities that are free from violence.
 - B. Every young individual has a learning environment that is physically and emotionally safe, free from violence, judgement, and inequity.
 - C. Every young individual has safe spaces shielded from gun violence and resources if they are impacted by gun violence.
 - D. Every young individual safely travels routes, roads, and sidewalks within their communities.
- VI. **COMMUNITY & BELONGING** – We the children and youth of King County champion the importance of a sense of community and belonging, and creating nurturing spaces for connection, contribution, and collaboration.
- A. Every young individual has community supports and uplifting environments to rely on in times of need.
 - B. Every young individual is surrounded by supportive communities and systems that protect and sustain their identities.
 - C. Every young individual has spaces where they safely gather, celebrate, and collaborate with other youth.
 - D. Every young individual is protected from bullying in any form and feels safe and heard when bullying is reported.
- VII. **ENVIRONMENT** – We the children and youth of King County recognize the urgent need to protect our planet for future generations.
- A. Every young individual engages in solutions to climate change and global warming.
 - B. Every young individual enjoys the natural environment and keeps it preserved for future generations.
 - C. Every young individual breathes clear air void of carbon emissions and pollution.
 - D. Every young individual enjoys clean streets, sidewalks, and highways free of garbage and dangerous waste.
- VIII. **TRANSPORTATION** – We the children and youth of King County maintain that public and private transportation is necessary for young people to attend school, build community, and explore the world around them.
- A. Every young individual has adequate access to affordable public transportation.
 - B. Every young individual walks well-maintained and accessible sidewalks.
 - C. Every young individual has options for an affordable personal mode of transportation and able to travel when and where they need to in a timely manner.

- IX. **YOUTH VOICE** – We the children and youth of King County uphold the right of youth to actively participate in civic life and contribute to decision-making processes that shape their future and present communities.
 - A. Every young individual expresses themselves, voices their opinions, beliefs, and concerns without fear of censorship or repression.
 - B. Every young individual has a voice in local government, boards, and commissions.
 - C. Every young individual shares their thoughts and concerns about their school or learning environment and is heard.

- X. **RECREATION & SPORTS** – We the children and youth of King County acknowledge the role recreation and sports play in the development of young people, having a positive impact on individual growth, community growth, and self-esteem.
 - A. Every young individual engages with the natural environment.
 - B. Every young individual has equitable access to various affordable recreational activities and sports.

III. Executive Summary

In 2019, Young Leaders of the King County Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB) called for the development of a King County Youth Bill of Rights.¹ This report provides an overview of how, and with whom, the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) implemented the Youth Bill of Rights project. This includes the foundational policies, strategic partnerships, phases of the project, and the outreach and engagement methods to ensure that King County youth played the primary role in developing the Youth Bill of Rights.

Foundational Policies

King County Ordinance 17738² called for the development of a Youth Action Plan (YAP) to set King County's priorities for serving infants through young adults. The YAP was developed by a Task Force of 25 community members with a broad range of expertise and experience related to children, youth, and families. King County Council approved the plan in June 2015. Since then, the Youth Action Plan has guided County's investments and strategies to support every baby born and child raised in King County to reach adulthood happy, healthy, safe, and thriving. The YAP was built on the foundations of the King County Strategic Plan,³ Equity and Social Justice Initiative,⁴ the Health and Human Services Transformation Plan,⁵ and a series of efforts aimed at assisting children and youth that King County funded and participated in since the 1960s. YAP Recommendation Area 8 calls for a bill of rights for King County's youth akin to the youth bills of rights that jurisdictions in California and elsewhere around the country have adopted.⁶

Purpose of a Youth Bill of Rights

As outlined in the Youth Action Plan, a youth bill of rights lays the foundational framework for policymakers, youth, and the community, defining a shared vision for the future and making a place for youth voice in policy decisions. At all times, but especially during times of political change and financial upheaval, a bill of rights helps government and the community stay focused on children and youth as a priority. Importantly, it keeps the spotlight on all children, from all racial and cultural backgrounds, income levels, family structures, and developmental abilities.⁷ To make the bill of rights concept accessible to as many ages as possible, DCHS used a simplified definition of these ideas stating that the King County Youth Bill of Rights (YBOR) will identify the wants and needs of children and youth and

¹ The Young Leaders Subcommittee of the Children and Youth Advisory Board met in 2019 and made the Youth Bill of Rights their top priority. The CYAB subsequently approved this as a board priority in 2020. In spring 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly disrupted everyday life, school, and work, which also impacted the timeline and planning for the YBOR project in remote conditions.

² Ordinance 17738, 2014 [\[LINK\]](#)

³ King County Strategic Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴ King County Equity and Social Justice Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵ Health and Human Services Transformation Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

⁷ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

guide our leaders as they make decisions that affect the health, happiness and hopes of young people in our region.⁸

Youth Bill of Rights Timeline

DCHS organized the Youth Bill of Rights project from January 2021 through August 2023, which included four phases of work:

1. Project Planning phase (January 2021 – August 2021) focused on developing the process and tools to launch the project.
2. Declare Your Rights! phase (August 2021 – December 2022) included outreach and engagement activities to collect input from youth on their most important issues and needs.
3. Data Review and Evaluation phase (January 2023 – April 2023) organized all input from the Declare Your Rights phase to create major themes that would form the basis of the Youth Bill of Rights articles.
4. YBOR Ratification phase (April 2023 – August 2023) went back to youth to approve and rank the top ten themes distilled from the Input Phase.

Youth Bill of Rights Task Force and YBOR Project Partnerships

From the beginning, DCHS committed to a King County Youth Bill of Rights project that was to be youth-inspired, youth-partnered, and youth-led. Youth collaboration and leadership in decision-making was a cornerstone of the YBOR project. Early in the project, DCHS and CYAB Young Leaders established a YBOR Task Force with young people aged 14 to 24 years to ensure youth collaboration and leadership in the project. Youth co-designed the process, identified the issues, and informed the project at every step.⁹

Internal and external partnerships were critical to the success of the YBOR project. The YBOR project team partnered with several youth serving organizations and high schools to share the Youth Bill of Rights survey with their communities. King County Library Systems and several King County Departments also supported outreach, data analysis and youth engagement efforts.

Geographic Representation

The YBOR project team pursued comprehensive geographic representation to reach youth in as many municipalities and Zip Codes as possible. Youth participation in the YBOR project includes representation from 73 King County Zip Codes, all nine council districts, all public school districts, 36 of the 39 King County municipalities, and all Unincorporated King County Service Areas.

YBOR Outreach and Engagement

Throughout the YBOR creation process, the project team adopted a variety of methods to attract and engage youth in easily accessible and fun ways. This included the creation of Public Input landing page and informational materials for digital and print use, email and high school campaigns, and hosting and attending youth events to promote the YBOR project. The YBOR project team developed surveys in a digital and paper form, asking youth to identify the issues having the greatest impact on their lives. In total, around 2,200 youth submitted more than 4,100 comments during the initial input phase of the

⁸ To further aid in understanding the project team provided a definition of a bill and a right, as follows: “A bill begins as an idea that, if supported, can be passed into law or become a rule”. An example of a right was “all of us have the right to feel safe in our communities and homes”.

⁹ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

project.¹⁰ The responses came from a range of youth aged 7 to 24 years with the highest percentages coming from ages 15 to 18 years, or high school-aged youth.¹¹

The YBOR team reviewed survey responses and removed unrelated, inappropriate, and duplicative submissions. The team categorized answers into 13 major themes, and then organized a process to ratify the top 10 themes. Through an online ratification survey and in-person events the project team ensured that King County youth had a decision-making role in finalizing the ten thematic areas that formed the Youth Bill of Rights. A total of 248 youth participated in the online ratification process. The YBOR ratification process shifted the rankings of the 10 thematic areas, and how they would be listed in the final Youth Bill of Rights. Participating youth ranked Basic Needs and Wellbeing the highest, followed by Health, and then Education and Learning. The ten articles of the King County Youth Bill of Rights are titled as follow:

- I. Basic Needs and Wellbeing
- II. Health
- III. Education and Learning
- IV. Equity and Social Justice
- V. Safety and Security
- VI. Community and Belonging
- VII. Environment
- VIII. Transportation
- IX. Youth Voice
- X. Sports and Recreation

Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

Nearly 10 years after adopting the King County Youth Action Plan, the fulfillment of Recommendation Area 8 on a Youth Bill of Rights marks an important achievement. Youth in the region have affirmed their most pressing wants and needs to King County leaders. Now it is time for County decision-makers to respond. In this regard, the Executive recommends that King County:

1. Acknowledge the King County Youth Bill of Rights as a formal guide when considering policies and budgetary decisions that impact children and youth.
2. Set forth plans to create a King County Youth Commission.
3. Update the Youth Bill of Rights every five years.

The King County Youth Bill of Rights keeps the needs of children and youth at the forefront when making policy and budgetary decisions. As the County's leaders and communities continue to grapple with the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Youth Bill of Rights can serve as a North Star toward recovery and wellbeing. In striving to fulfill these rights for every young person in our region, King County will make steady progress toward becoming a welcoming community where every person can thrive.

¹⁰ This does not include pizza pies used by young participants or any secondary data.

¹¹ Individuals above the age of 24 years were not eligible to take the Youth Bill of Rights survey.

IV. Background

This section provides an overview of the King County agencies that organized the process to develop the Youth Bill of Rights, and the County policies and plans with which the Youth Bill of Rights (YBOR) aligns.

Department of Community and Human Services

King County's Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) provides equitable opportunities for people to be healthy, happy, and connected to community. DCHS envisions a welcoming community that is racially just, where the field of human services exists to undo and mitigate unfair structures. The Department, along with a network of community providers and partners, plays a leading role in creating and coordinating the region's human services infrastructure. DCHS stewards the revenue from the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL),¹² Best Starts for Kids (BSK) levy,¹³ the MIDD behavioral health sales tax fund (MIDD),¹⁴ the Health Through Housing sales tax¹⁵ and the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account (PSTAA),¹⁶ along with other state and federally directed revenues.

The DCHS Children, Youth, and Young Adults Division (CYAD) managed the project to create the King County Youth Bill of Rights. CYAD is working toward a vision where all young people in King County have equitable opportunities to be happy, healthy, safe, and thriving members of their communities. The division delivers re-engagement, education, and employment services for youth and young adults and is home to the Best Starts for Kids Child Care Strategy and several Sustain the Gain investments serving young people ages five to 24, the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Act's K-12, community, and post-secondary investments, and Restorative Community Pathways.

Children and Youth Advisory Board and Young Leaders Subcommittee

The King County Children and Youth Advisory board (CYAB) is an executive-appointed and council-confirmed board of up to 40 individuals who live in King County. Board members come from all walks of life and represent numerous interests yet share a common goal to ensure the welfare and future of children, families, babies, youth, and young adults in the region. Established in 2016, the CYAB serves an oversight and advisory capacity to the King County Executive, the King County Council, the Best Starts for Kids Initiative, and the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account. The CYAB responds to Recommendation Area 7 of the Youth Action Plan on Accountability and is staffed by the Department of Community and Human Services.¹⁷

Within the CYAB, the Young Leaders Subcommittee is formed of members up to the age of 29, including five designated CYAB youth members aged 24 or under. In fall 2019, the CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee brought the need for a youth bill of rights to the forefront. The CYAB subsequently approved the creation of King County Youth Bill of Rights and worked with DCHS to develop a plan and

¹² Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy [\[LINK\]](#)

¹³ King County Best Starts for Kids initiative [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁴ MIDD behavioral health sales tax fund (MIDD) [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵ Health Through Housing sales tax [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁶ Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁷ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

process to realize a youth bill of rights.¹⁸ CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee members continued to be involved at different stages of the YBOR process, and additional CYAB members supported youth and community outreach throughout the project. The CYAB remains committed to the Youth Bill of Rights being adopted at an implementation stage throughout King County.¹⁹

Foundational Policies and Plans

King County's work is guided by a commitment to making a welcoming community where every person can thrive.²⁰ In 2014, King County approved Ordinance 17738²¹ which called for the development of a Youth Action Plan (YAP) to set King County's priorities for serving infants through young adults. As a result, the County formed a Youth Action Plan Task Force of 25 community leaders to develop the Youth Action Plan with input from youth and families, community members, experts in early childhood, youth development and education, and leaders across sectors. The King County Council approved the plan in June 2015. The YAP was built on the foundations of the King County Strategic Plan,²² Equity and Social Justice Initiative,²³ the Health and Human Services Transformation Plan,²⁴ and a series of efforts aimed at assisting children and youth that King County funded and participated in since the 1960s.

The YAP Task Force put forth nine recommendation areas that have provided the policy framework guiding King County investments in youth and families since 2015. In developing the YAP Recommendation Areas, the YAP Task Force asked over 1,000 youth "Do you think a youth bill of rights in King County could improve the lives of young people like yourself?" Ninety-three percent responded "yes." YAP Recommendation Area 8 calls for a bill of rights for King County's youth akin to the youth bills of rights that jurisdictions in California and elsewhere around the country have adopted.²⁵ The youth survey indicated that King County youth want meaningful input into programs and policies that impact them; youth want to be engaged with policymakers in a variety of ways, and that genuine engagement of young people will require a fundamental shift in how decisions are made.²⁶

In 2014, the King County Youth Action Plan Task Force asked over 1,000 youth "Do you think a youth bill of rights in King County could improve the lives of young people like yourself?" Ninety-three percent responded "yes."

The YAP Task Force reported that, while more than 1,000 youth felt a youth bill of rights was important, youth also stated that improvements in decision-making and other areas of governance must be

¹⁸ In spring 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly disrupted everyday life, school, and work, which also impacted the timeline and planning for the YBOR project in remote conditions.

¹⁹ During the duration of this work, new cohort members have been appointed and some members have left, but the project has received help and approval from both versions of the board.

²⁰ True North and Values - King County [\[LINK\]](#)

²¹ Ordinance 17738 [\[LINK\]](#)

²² King County Strategic Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

²³ King County Equity and Social Justice Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁴ Health and Human Services Transformation Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁵ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁶ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

addressed first. Furthermore, youth indicated that more pressing issues should be pursued prior to working on a youth bill of rights. Since the adoption of the Youth Action Plan in 2015, King County has grown investments in young people and families through the voter-approved Best Starts for Kids levy and Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account. Alongside these new funding strategies, the County established the Children and Youth Advisory Board as a governance and accountability body, and the Children Youth and Young Adults Division to manage programs.

When the time came to develop a youth bill of rights, youth recommended that the County find effective ways to involve large numbers of youth in its work including (a) asking youth to identify problems and solutions, (b) partnering with youth leadership groups to make decisions, and (c) communicating directly with youth through social media.²⁷ This report details how King County engaged youth in identifying the priority needs and issues confronting youth in the region, and how the county partnered with youth to develop the King County Youth Bill of Rights (YBOR).

Purpose of a Youth Bill of Rights

As outlined in the Youth Action Plan, a youth bill of rights lays the foundational framework for policymakers, youth, and the community, defining a shared vision for the future and making a place for youth voice in policy decisions. It is a foundational framework that serves to hold public officials accountable for considering the impact of their decisions on the well-being of children and youth. It also provides youth a concrete tool with which to draw attention to their needs and interests. At all times, but especially during times of political change and financial upheaval, a bill of rights helps the government and the community stay focused on children and youth as a priority. Importantly, it keeps the spotlight on all children, from all racial and cultural backgrounds, income levels, family structures, and developmental abilities.²⁸

King County Youth Bill of Rights will identify the wants and needs of children and youth and guide our leaders as they make decisions that affect the health, happiness and hopes of young people in our region.

To make the bill of rights concept accessible to as many ages as possible, DCHS used a simplified definition of these ideas stating that the King County Youth Bill of Rights (YBOR) will identify the wants and needs of children and youth and guide our leaders as they make decisions that affect the health, happiness and hopes of young people in our region.²⁹

Report Methodology and Terminology

This report provides an overview of how, and with whom, the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) implemented the Youth Bill of Rights project. This includes the foundational policies, strategic partnerships, phases of the project, and the outreach and engagement methods to ensure that King County youth played the primary role in developing the Youth Bill of Rights. The report uses the

²⁷ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁸ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁹ To further aid in understanding the project team provided a definition of a bill and a right, as follows: “A bill begins as an idea that, if supported, can be passed into law or become a rule”. An example of a right was “all of us have the right to feel safe in our communities and homes”.

YBOR project definition of ‘youth,’ which includes children, youth and young adults aged five to 24 years. At times, this report also references the role of the ‘YBOR project team’ or ‘project team,’ which included the DCHS program manager and consultants. The project team worked closely with YBOR Task Force members and CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee members throughout the process.

V. Project Timeline and Guiding Principles

This section provides an overview of the YBOR project timeline and phases, the YBOR Task Force members, County and community partners who helped realize the project, and how equity, inclusion, and geographic representation were central to the overall approach.

King County Youth Bill of Rights Project Timeline

DCHS organized the Youth Bill of Rights project which took place from January 2021 through August 2023, and included four phases of work:

1. Project Planning phase (January 2021 – August 2021) focused on developing the process and tools to launch the project. DCHS set up a Public Input site for the project, initiated the process to recruit a Youth Bill of Rights Task Force, and met with jurisdictions that have already developed a youth bill of rights to learn from their experiences.³⁰
2. Declare Your Rights! phase (August 2021 – December 2022) was the longest phase of the project and included outreach and engagement activities to collect input from youth on the most important needs and issues confronting young people in King County.
3. Data Review and Evaluation phase (January 2023 – April 2023) organized all input received during the Declare Your Rights phase to create major themes that would form the Youth Bill of Rights articles.
4. YBOR Ratification phase (April 2023 – August 2023) went back out to youth to approve and rank the top ten themes of the Youth Bill of Rights articles.

Creation of the King County Youth Bill of Rights Task Force

DCHS committed to a King County Youth Bill of Rights project that was to be youth-inspired, youth-partnered, and youth-led. Youth collaboration and leadership in decision-making was a cornerstone of the YBOR project. Youth co-designed the process, identified the issues, and informed the project at every step. At the start of the project, CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee members partnered with DCHS to recruit and select members of the King County Youth Bill of Rights Task Force. They also provided initial input on the methods to reach young people and continued to provide insights and feedback throughout the project.

³⁰ This included [Santa Clara County, CA](#) , [San Mateo County, CA](#) , [Fall River, MA](#)*, [Multnomah County, OR](#)*, [Kids in Common](#) (also affiliated with Santa Clara).

The YBOR Task Force members provided strategic input on survey questions, outreach and engagement strategies, and analysis of survey results.³¹ The Task Force members hosted a Town Hall-style meeting with youth, presented at various youth events organized by community partners, and provided ongoing promotion of the YBOR project.

Task Force members were young people aged 14 to 24 years who lived in King County, could devote an average of four hours a month to the project, and who had an interest in public policy and/or youth advocacy. To recruit Task Force members, DCHS put out an open call for applicants and shared the opportunity with community partners who work with youth. Over the lifetime of the YBOR project, there were three versions of the Task Force, including some members who stayed throughout the project. A total of eleven to fourteen youth occupied seats in the Task Force at any given time. YBOR Task force members were compensated for their time and members who stayed on longer took on leadership roles. The Task Force met every other week for two hours to allow for robust conversations on what needed to be done.³² The list of YBOR Task Force members is included in Appendix A.

King County and Community Partnerships

Internal and external partnerships were critical to the success of the YBOR project. The YBOR project team partnered with several youth serving organizations and high schools to share the Youth Bill of Rights survey with their communities. Additionally, the King County Libraries Teen & Youth Services branches in Tukwila, Federal, Maple Valley, Carnation, and Duvall contributed to outreach and engagement efforts by hosting in-person events.

King County staff from various Departments also partnered with the YBOR project team to support outreach and engagement efforts and analyze data. This included individuals from the Department of Community and Human Services, Public Health Seattle & King County, King County Information Technology, King County Executive's Office, and the Department of Local Services. The list of community partners can be found in Appendix B.

Equity, Inclusion, and Geographic Representation

Principles of equity and inclusion were at the heart of the YBOR process. The YBOR project team sought out the richness of perspectives and experiences of King County youth by creating an inclusive process where all voices were heard and valued. This process aligns with King County's commitment to valuing the voices of those most affected by policies and decisions, to co-designing with community, and to advancing equity, racial and social justice.³³ The YBOR project team pursued comprehensive geographic representation to reach youth in as many municipalities and ZIP Codes as possible. Youth participation in the YBOR project includes representation from 73 King County Zip Codes, all nine council districts, all public school districts, 36 of the 39 King County municipalities, and all Unincorporated King County

³¹ Additionally, a Youth Bill of Rights Ambassador Program was planned for youth to share the YBOR project with their communities, though the program did not come to fruition.

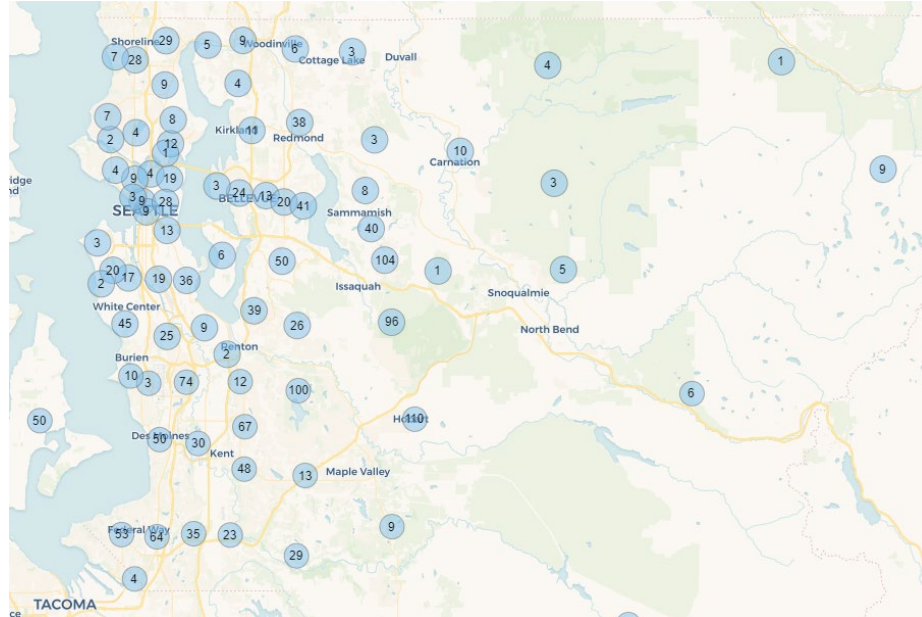
³² The Task Force originally met every Friday afternoon. After some meetings, the team realized that an hour was too short and changed the meetings to 2 hours every other week. The team also changed the schedule to alternate between Wednesdays and Fridays to ensure as many members as possible could attend.

³³ King County True North and Values [\[LINK\]](#)
King County Youth Bill of Rights and Report

Attachment A

Service Areas. The ZIP Code map below reflects youth participation in the YBOR process, including areas such as Shoreline with 57 youth, Skykomish with 12 youth participating, Vashon Island with 40 youth, and Enumclaw with 31 youth participating in creation of the King County Youth Bill of Rights.

Map of YBOR youth participation



VI. Declare Your Rights! Input Phase

The purpose of the Declare Your Rights! phase was for the project team to identify the most important issues and needs of young people in King County. This was the longest and most intense phase of the project, taking place from August 2021 through December 2022.

YBOR Declare Your Rights! Outreach and Engagement Methods

Throughout the YBOR creation process, the project team adopted a variety of methods to attract and engage youth in easily accessible and fun ways. This included publishing a YBOR Public Input landing page, creation of informational materials for digital and print use, initiating email and high school-based campaigns, and organizing or attending in-person youth events to promote the YBOR project.

Youth Bill of Rights Surveys

The YBOR project team developed surveys in digital and paper formats. The surveys asked youth one or more versions of the questions below to identify the issues having the greatest impact on their lives:

1. What is the most important issue impacting youth in King County today?
2. As a young person in King County, what is a right you currently don't have that young people need?
3. What is something that you would like to see change or have addressed in your community?
4. For very young children (ages 5-8) we asked: If you could be mayor/or in charge for one day, what law would you make/pass to help children.

The project team also collected demographic information such as age, email, name, and ZIP Code through the survey. Youth had to provide their email and age and answer at least one question to complete the survey. To increase responses and ensure privacy, the project team limited the amount of demographic information to be collected to age and ZIP Code. This helped to verify that individuals taking the survey were eligible and that survey data came from all ZIP Codes within King County. Upon completion of the survey, youth could opt-in to (1) receive updates on the Youth Bill of Rights and/or (2) learn more about how to get involved.

Website, print materials, and social media

The project team used Public Input as a landing page to share information and gather survey responses for the Youth Bill of Rights.³⁴ The landing page hosted descriptions of the project, how to get involved, upcoming events, information on random participant drawings, and links to the surveys for the Declare Your Rights! and Ratification phases.

King County employees, youth-serving community partners, the Children and Youth Advisory Board members, and the YBOR Task Force members shared surveys through email campaigns, word of mouth, events, and the Best Starts for Kids blog.³⁵ Additionally, the YBOR project team created post cards and print media for speaking engagements, and used T- Shirts with QR Codes for outreach events, and VideoAsk, a two-way video-based service, to provide a dynamic way for Task Force members to engage with youth and encourage them to fill out the survey.³⁶ A few months into this phase, the project team identified emerging themes and created a QR Code Survey where participants could use their phones to scan their top three issues and input contact and demographic information.³⁷ A complete list of events is available in Appendix B.

The project's social media presence was limited to Instagram and Facebook, applications recommended by the YBOR Task Force and approved by King County. The YBOR Instagram and Facebook pages hosted Task Force member bios, encouraging quotes, and reminders to take part in the Youth Bill of Rights survey or attend upcoming events. Samples of YBOR print and social media content is in Appendix C.

YBOR Project Campaigns

³⁴ King County Youth Bill of Rights landing page [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁵ Best Starts for Kids Blog post [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁶ VideoAsk [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁷ Over 65 youth participated in the QR Code Survey.

The Declare Your Rights phase included two major campaigns to increase responses to the Youth Bill of Rights survey. The “3 Months to 3000” campaign focused on securing pledges from youth-serving community partners to have youth complete the survey. The YBOR project team provided information packets, and encouraged community partners to host listening sessions, ask young people to take the survey, and/or share recently collected data. The project team also provided custom campaign posters with personalized QR codes to participating municipalities and organizations. As a result of the campaign, 37 organizations and individuals pledged to engage 1,400 youth in the YBOR project over a period of three months.



The second campaign was the “CAPTURE! A YBOR Photo Booth Contest” that focused on public high schools in King County. The CAPTURE! Contest awarded the King County public high school with the largest percentage of participation in the YBOR survey, as well as the high school with the largest number of participants. Winning schools were awarded a photo booth at a dance of their choice in the 2022-2023 school year. The YBOR project team sent invitations to enter the contest to every public high school in King County. Six high schools participated including Tahoma, Issaquah, Chief Sealth, Tyee, Kent-Meridian, and Kentridge. The participating schools were assigned unique QR codes and links, a provided with custom branded posters. Over 425 students participated in the CAPTURE! Contest with Issaquah High School winning for highest number of student participants, and Tyee High School winning for the highest percentage of student participants.³⁸

Use of Incentives at Events and for Survey Completion

To incentivize youth participation in this phase, the project team announced that 10 young people who completed the survey would win a \$100 gift card through a random drawing.³⁹ The project team also held weekly random drawings for smaller prizes in summer of 2022 to boost participation during that season. For events, the YBOR Task Force members recommended candy, snacks, tote bags, widgets, and other fun prizes be used as incentives for youth to take the survey. Young people could choose prizes, drop a puck in the YBOR PLINKO game, or spin a wheel for prizes after taking the survey. At some events, the project team also drew two random winners for a \$100 or \$50 gift card.

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Outreach and Engagement

The YBOR engagement process began in 2021 when the COVID-19 pandemic had a direct impact on the outreach methods, engagement, and outcomes. For example, typical meeting spaces for youth, including schools and libraries, were not open to in-person engagement, necessitating solely online engagement for the first 12 months of the project. However, as COVID-19 regulations changed some in-person events were permitted. Virtual meeting tools such as Zoom allowed for access and engagement with youth and partners, though some youth struggled to adapt and operate within virtual spaces. The emotional toll of the pandemic and frustration of using exclusively virtual meeting tools likely reduced overall engagement.

³⁸ Data collection for the Capture Photo Booth Contest was via Google Form and initially evaluated and coded by the YBOR Task Force.

³⁹ Participants were notified at the closeout of phase 1. Only five of the ten winners accepted the prize.

King County Youth Bill of Rights and Report

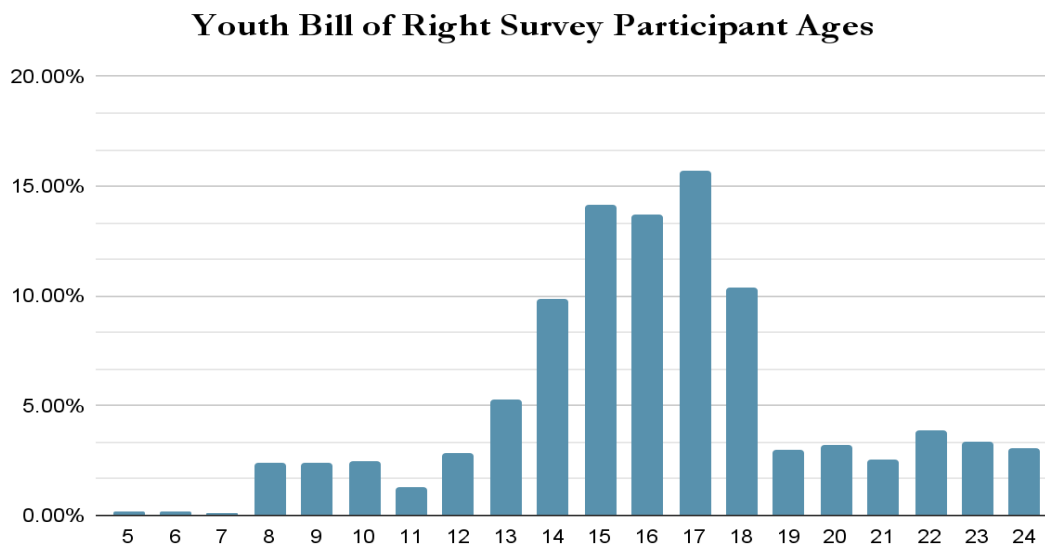
YBOR Declare Your Rights! Phase Findings

Upon completion of outreach and engagement to gather input from King County’s youth, the project team moved all survey responses into Public Input for data review. The project team worked closely with staff and interns from the Department of Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) to analyze data and determine findings that would inform the ratification phase of the project. The PHSKC team coded all the data and highlighted comments to be shared and discussed with the YBOR project team. Throughout the process, the PHSKC and YBOR project team met regularly to discuss progress, initial finds, and the follow-up process. The data analyzed included participant ages, Zip Codes, and most important issues confronting youth in King County.

Ages of Survey Participants

In total, around 2,200 youth submitted more than 4,100 comments during the Declare Your Rights! phase.⁴⁰ The responses came from a range of youth aged seven to 24 years with the highest percentages coming from ages 15 to 18 years, or high school-aged youth.⁴¹

Table 1 YBOR survey participant ages



Most Important Issues, Wants and Needs Identified by Youth

To identify the issues, wants, and needs of King County youth, the YBOR team reviewed responses and removed unrelated, inappropriate, or duplicative submissions. The team then categorized answers into thirteen major themes or issue areas.⁴² The 13 themes are listed in order of frequency of responses, starting with the highest number of responses.

⁴⁰ This does not include pizza pies used by young participants or any secondary data.

⁴¹ Individuals above the age of 24 years were not eligible to take the Youth Bill of Rights survey.

⁴² The 13 themes do not include other, which included 1.61% of comments.

1. Health (especially mental health)⁴³
2. Youth Voice
3. Basic Needs and Wellbeing
4. Education and Learning
5. Safety and Security
6. Equity and Social Justice
7. Community and Belonging
8. Environment and Environmental Justice
9. Recreation and Sports
10. Transportation
11. Employment
12. Adulthood
13. Spirituality and Religion

One interesting finding of this survey results is the difference in top issues reported by youth today versus ten years ago. Basic Needs is reportedly of greater concern to King County youth now than it was ten years ago. When asked as part of the King County's Youth Action Plan in 2014, one thousand youth defined the top areas of concern as:

1. Education
2. Social/Emotional (especially depression and self-harm)
3. Jobs/Employment
4. Safety/Violence
5. Health
6. Basic Needs⁴⁴

VII. Youth Bill of Rights Ratification

From April through May 2023, the YBOR team organized a process to ratify the top ten issues, thus ensuring that youth had a decision-making role in finalizing the ten thematic areas that formed the Youth Bill of Rights. During the YBOR Ratification Phase, the YBOR team asked young people to prioritize the main themes identified in the Declare Your Rights phase and confirm that no major issues were missing. This team also held in-person events to engage youth in areas of King County where little input had been received.

To help youth have a shared understanding of the findings, the YBOR team provided examples of the wants, issues, and needs within each thematic area, as expressed by youth during the Declare Your Rights phase. The top ten themes, including examples provided, are included in Appendix D.

⁴³ Many comments were related to mental health, which is listed under Health. A total of 7% of all comments were related to mental health. Similarly, the YBOR team heard feedback on the theme of youth mental health during the in-person discussions and outreach throughout the process.

⁴⁴ The 2014 youth survey asked King County Youth for the top 3 areas of concern. The Youth Action Plan Appendix C only shares these top 6 areas. King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)
King County Youth Bill of Rights and Report

YBOR Ratification Outreach and Engagement Methods

The YBOR project used the emails gathered in the Declare Your Rights! phase to reach out to youth, and asked project partners to promote in their communities. Youth ratified the King County Youth Bill of Rights through an online website and in-person gatherings. Online ratification was carried out through a new Public Input survey that asked youth in King County to select the three most important issues from among the top 10 listed. The survey also asked youth to identify a topic or issue that was missing from the list.

The YBOR project team and Task Force members hosted six in-person events to engage youth in areas with little to no prior participation. These locations were Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, Shoreline, Skykomish, and White Center. Gracie McDanold demonstrated outstanding dedication to the project, ensuring youth engagement and facilitating the community cafés at Enumclaw High School and Skykomish K-12 School. The community café approach had students circulate throughout the room to discuss and comment on the top themes presented.⁴⁵ Youth participating in the ratification phase also had the chance to win one of ten \$100 gift cards made available through weekly drawings.

YBOR Ratification Phase Findings

A total of 248 youth participated in the online ratification process. Participants ranged in age from 5 to 24 years old with the highest participation coming from young people aged 15 to 17 years, who accounted for 51 percent of respondents.⁴⁶ The YBOR ratification process shifted the rankings of the 10 thematic areas, and how they would be listed in the final Youth Bill of Rights. Participating youth ranked Basic Needs and Wellbeing the highest, followed by Health, and then Education and Learning.

Table 2: YBOR Ratification Phase Findings

Theme	Rank	Frequency of being selected
Basic Needs and Wellbeing	1.71	131
Health	2.54	108
Education and Learning	2.56	91
Equity and Social Justice	2.80	79
Safety and Security	3.10	72
Community and Belonging	3.28	61
Environment	3.32	75
Transportation	4.13	46
Youth Voice	4.30	46
Sports and Recreation	5.05	43

As to whether any important issues were missing, most youth shared that the themes addressed the priorities they had in mind. This included comments like healthy food, which falls under Basic Needs and

⁴⁵ See Appendix D for examples of printed posters and comments.

⁴⁶ The breakdown of the 51% response rate includes 17-year-olds accounting for 20%, 15-year-olds accounting for 15%, and 16-year-olds accounting for 16%.

Well Being, and self-defense which falls in Safety and Security. However, there were some topics that were not explicit in the above themes, such as immigration status and trauma-informed care.

After the Ratification phase the project team brought the final themes to YBOR Task Force members to author the article subthemes for each of the top ten rights identified.⁴⁷ The YBOR project team then drafted the preambles for each section and edited the articles for consistency and visionary language.

VIII. Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

Nearly 10 years after adopting the King County Youth Action Plan, the fulfillment of Recommendation Area 8 on a Youth Bill of Rights marks an important achievement. Youth in the region have affirmed their most pressing wants and needs to King County leaders. Now it is time for County decision-makers to respond. In this regard, the County Executive recommends that King County:

Acknowledge the King County Youth Bill of Rights as a formal guide when considering policies and budgetary decisions that impact children and youth.

King County Council should approve the motion acknowledging the Youth Bill of Rights and take steps to ensure that the YBOR articles inform decisions impacting young people in King County. Additionally, King County should use the Youth Bill of Rights findings to inform and shape the updated Youth Action Plan (2025).

Set forth plans to create a King County Youth Commission.

To ensure meaningful youth voice, King County should establish a Youth Commission to give thoughts, opinions and action to policies and budgetary decisions. A King County Youth Commission aligns with the Youth Action Plan recommendation that calls for youth to be involved in governance and policymaking through serving on boards or key committees.⁴⁸ King County can learn from other jurisdictions that have developed youth commissions to ensure youth voice and agency.⁴⁹ To operationalize the Youth Commission, King County should:

- Make available a minimum of 1 FTE to plan and staff the Commission.
- Draft the Bylaws to govern the operations of the Youth Commission, such as
 - a. Number of members from each council district.
 - b. Number of at-large members.
 - c. Compensation for Commission members.
 - d. Role and scope of work.
- Introduce legislation that determines the Youth Commission as the official youth policy body for King County.

⁴⁷ The following YBOR Task Force members and consultants co-authored the article subthemes for the Youth Bill of Rights: Julia Kroopkin, Makayla Miles, Tram Dinh, and Gracie McDanold.

⁴⁸ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁹ Some examples include Multnomah County (<https://www.multco.us/multnomah-youth-commission>) and the city of Santa Ana (<https://www.santa-ana.org/youth-commission>)

Update the Youth Bill of Rights every five years.

King County should update the Youth Bill of Rights every five years to ensure that it is reflective of current needs and issues confronting youth in a rapidly changing environment. Youth needs are constantly changing due to sociological events like COVID-19 pandemic, updates in technology, and the impacts of political and economic changes. As the Youth Action Plan describes, the Youth Bill of Rights should be a living document, a document with room for interpretation and negotiation over time, as new issues and opportunities emerge, and as priorities shift and strategies are reassessed.⁵⁰ A King County Youth Commission would be well suited to ensure the Youth Bill of Rights is updated, and that youth play a leadership role in this process.

Concluding Remarks

The King County Youth Bill of Rights keeps the needs of children and youth at the forefront when making policy and budgetary decisions. As the County's leaders and communities continue to grapple with the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Youth Bill of Rights can serve as a North Star toward recovery and wellbeing. In striving to fulfill these rights for every young person in our region, King County will make steady progress toward becoming a welcoming community where every person can thrive.

⁵⁰ King County Youth Action Plan [\[LINK\]](#)
King County Youth Bill of Rights and Report

IX. Appendices

Appendix A: YBOR Task Force Members, CYAB Young Leaders, and young community members

Youth Bill of Rights Task Force Members

Name	Task Force Session	District *
Adhya Kona	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force II	3
Aisha Sahal	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force II	8
Anmol Gill	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force II	6
Ave Diamond	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	8
Diego Gonzalez	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force II	3
Josue Villalobos	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	8
Julia Kroopkin	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I & II, Consultant	3
Laura Bui	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	9
Layla Osman	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	7
Makayla Miles	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	2
Manthita Wague	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	4
Mariam Mohammed	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	3
Rohan Kurup	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force II	3
Rose Lulengo	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	8
Siddhika Kshetri	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I	5
Tera Chea	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force II	7
Tracy/Tram Dinh	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force I & II, Consultant	6
Zobir Tarin	Youth Bill of Rights Task Force II, Consultant	5

**YBOR Task Force candidate from District 1 unfortunately had to withdraw at the last minute. The project team engaged with youth in DCHS-Shoreline College Center for Education and Career Opportunities to help mitigate the lack of formal representation on the Task Force.*

CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee Members and Other Contributors

Name	Role
Brianna Holden Granado	CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee (District 4)
Corbin Muck	CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee (District 2)
Hikma Sherka	CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee (District 2)
Mutende Katambo	CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee (District 2)
Nebiyu Yassin	CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee (District 8)
Sophie Theriault	CYAB Young Leaders Subcommittee (District 3)
Eyael Getachew	PHSKC Data Analysis Work
Gracie McDanold	Community Café Facilitator/Consultant
Ladan Farah	PHSKC Data Analysis Work
Pearl Malhi	Video content/Consultant
Thearina Leng	YBOR Special Events Consultant
Yui Hashimoto	PHSKC Data Analysis Lead

Appendix B: YBOR Community Partnerships

YBOR Community Partners played a vital role in connecting youth they serve to the project.

YBOR Community Partners	
Anmol Gill	Thien-Di Do
Ariana Sherlock, Newcastle City Councilmember	Tyee High School
Atlantic Street Center	Yoga Behind Bars
City of Seattle, Youth & Family Empowerment Division	
Communities Rooted of Brilliance	
Enumclaw High School	
Falis Community Services	
Fernanda Maria Novoa	
First Five Years and Beyond	
Indian American Community Services	
Julia Kroopkin	
King County Library System - Teen Services Librarians	
Latino H.E.A.T.	
The Lambert House LGBTQ Youth Center	
Neighborhood House	
OneWorld Now	
Reconnect to Opportunity	
The Rogers Family (Trenise, Anisah, Keith Jr. & Brittany)	

Appendix C: YBOR Outreach Activities and Events

Speaking Engagements
Moving in Solidarity Youth Summit 2021 (Task Force Presented)
Communities in Schools Federal Way & Kent Summit 2022. Approximately 250 middle school students participated via design your own pizza pie dot/sticker survey.
Youth and Family Services Association Meeting
Learning Center North

Events in partnership with the YBOR Task Force, youth-serving organizations, and King County departments.

Community Events
- Reconnect to Opportunity Federal Way Back to School Event 2022 - Reconnect to Opportunity High School Drive Thru Resource Fair – 2022
- King County Care and Closure Team - Garfield High School Youth Summit Fair (June 2, 2022)

Attachment A

• Garfield High School Youth Summit (April 7, 2022) • LINC Conference at Highline College (September 30, 2022) • Consejo Counseling Youth Leadership Conference 2023 (Milton)
King County Library System, Teen Library Program • Maple Valley Library Event • Juneteenth Tukwila Library • Brandi Colbert Book Event • Grand Opening of Makerspace (Federal Way)
King County Comprehensive Plan project • Vashon Strawberry Festival 2022
• Shoreline College, Phase I • Highline College (see above conference) • Cascadia College, Phase I • Green River College, Phase I • South Seattle College, Phase I • Westfield Southcenter • Rain City Rock Camp

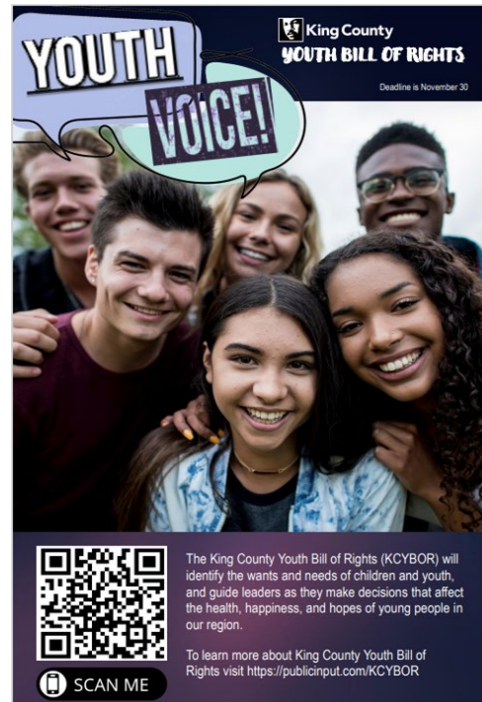
Appendix D: Examples of YBOR Print and Social Media Content

Video explaining the YBOR Project

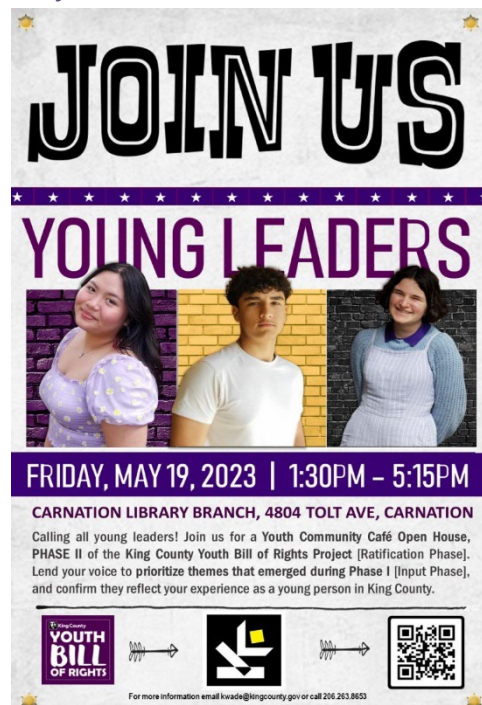


Posters with QR Codes for Youth to Vote

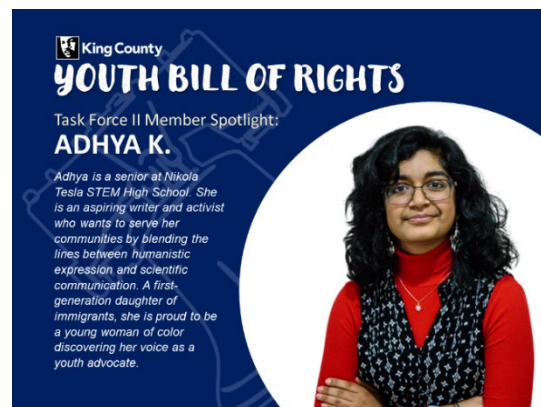
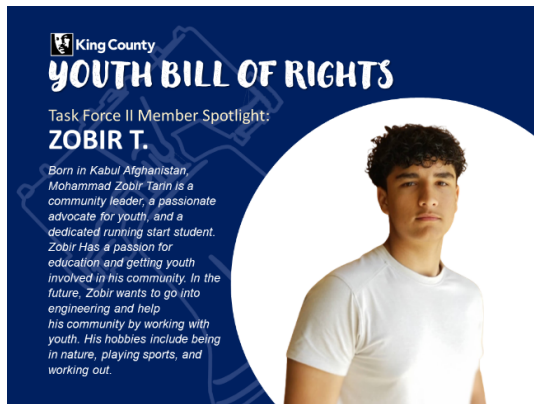
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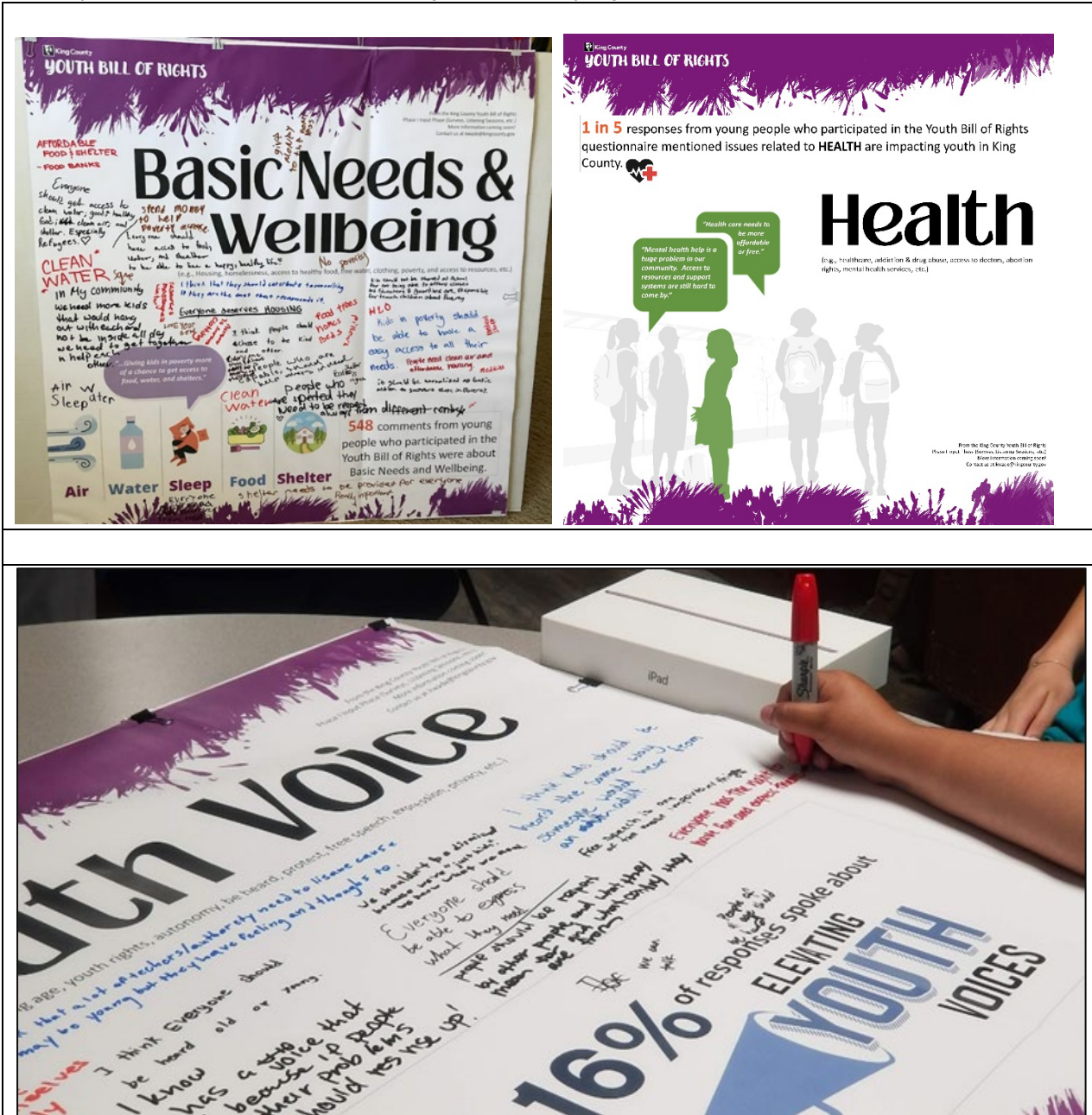
Ratification Phase II Posters



YBOR Task Force Member Social Media Highlights

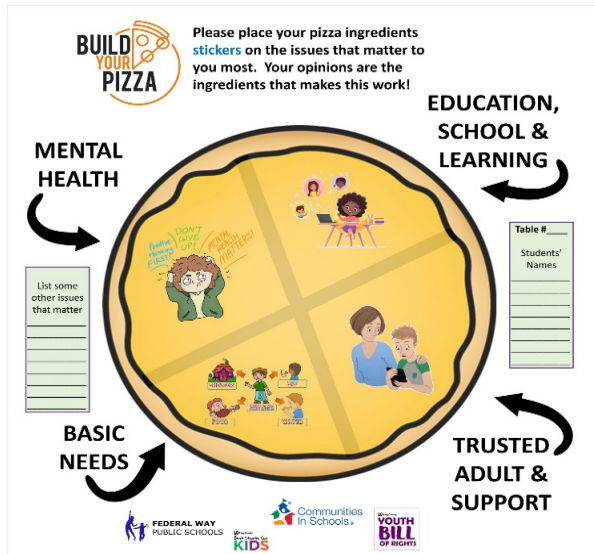


Printed posters with YBOR thematic areas for community café events.



Attachment A

King County YBOR Pizza Pie activity designed gather input from middle school children



Attachment A

Participant photos from the YBOR Phase II Youth Community Cafes and Open Houses



Appendix D: Ratification Phase Top Ten Themes with brief descriptions

1. Health (especially mental health, healthcare, drug addiction, etc.)
2. Youth Voice (voting age, youth rights, privacy, free speech, etc.)
3. Basic Needs and Wellbeing (housing and shelter, access to food, clean air, water, clothing, etc.)
4. Education and Learning (quality education, more learning programs, life lessons, education equity, etc.)
5. Safety and Security (a safe place to live, school safety, bullying, etc.)
6. Equity and Social Justice (freedom from bigotry, racism and stereotypes, LGBTQ+ rights, etc.)
7. Community and Belonging (acceptance, more unity, freedom to be yourself, service to the community, etc.)
8. Environment and Environmental Justice (sustainable environment, better air quality, cleaner streets, climate change, preservation, etc.)
9. Recreation and Sports (more club sports, affordable recreation options, art programs, parks, and natural spaces, etc.)
10. Transportation (free driver's education, flexible public transportation hours and options, walkability, access to free transit, etc.)