

January 2021

FRESH LIFELINES FOR YOUTH SYSTEMS CHANGE POSTCARD

So. Much. Is. Happening!

Thank you for your work for justice.

Questions? Comments? Email systemschange@flyprogram.org

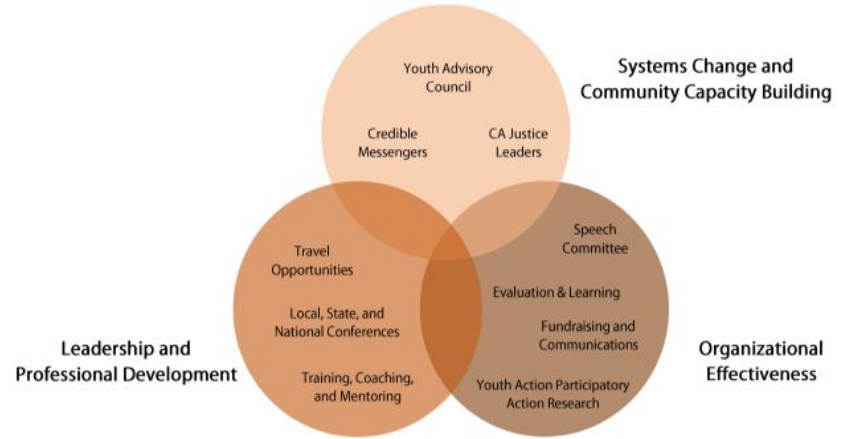
It's Official: FLY's Youth Voice Initiatives

Last week, Ali sent an e-blast to all FLY stakeholders about **our new portfolio of FLY's Youth Voice Initiatives**. Through these projects, FLY alumni will become even more energetically engaged in improving the lives of other youth involved in the juvenile justice system, while helping to make their communities healthier and safer.

The YAC and Speech Committee are the most well-known, long-standing Youth Voice efforts within FLY. Now that we've organized several new initiatives, we can **present all of our Youth Voice work as a portfolio of related projects** that support three main goals: systems change, organizational effectiveness, and leadership/professional development for our youth.

FLY's website has a new Youth Voice section that will be built out with action updates, youth insights, and stories. Youth Voice will also be a regular feature of [FLY's blog](#). Look for upcoming podcasts and news articles, too.

Thanks to everyone who is supporting Youth Voice throughout FLY and our communities.



"FLY's path is illuminated by our youth. Time and time again, they show what is possible when resilience is turned into agency, and agency turns hope into reality."
- Ali Knight

STAY FLY POLICY BRIEF & CASE STUDY PUBLISHED

FLY's [STAY FLY Program](#) for transition-aged youth (TAY) ages 18 to 25 was originally made possible by California [Senate Bill 1004, the Young Adults: Deferred Entry of Judgment Pilot Program](#). This past year, [SB 823](#) laid the groundwork for further justice system realignment and reform. **From our experience in STAY FLY, we culled several learnings and practices** that could inform efforts to implement SB 823 and evolve the larger body of justice work so that it:

- Aligns to current brain science by **including youth up to the age of 25 in the juvenile justice system**
- Continues the trend of **reducing incarceration and providing community-centered and strength-based care** to youth and their families

We recently published a TAY Policy Brief and STAY FLY Case Study for legislators and administrators. The Policy Brief outlines how to build on SB 823 to create a system that is responsive to the most vulnerable individuals in our community - TAY - while improving public safety. The Case Study makes specific recommendations to improve justice system practices to better serve TAY and their communities.



The [TAY Policy Brief](#) and [STAY FLY Case Study](#) show FLY's ability to be a thought leader in the juvenile justice field. If you or your stakeholders have any questions, please refer them to Cassidy Higgins, cassidy@flyprogram.org.

DJJ Realignment Work in our Counties

“Starting on July 1, 2021, per [Senate Bill 823](#), the state will stop taking most youth found guilty of serious crimes into the DJJ system — keeping them instead in their individual counties..” [Click here to read more.](#)



One of the biggest developments in juvenile justice last year was the mandate to **shut down the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)**, close the state’s youth prisons, and create/fund a system to serve former DJJ youth in the counties instead.

The legislation required that each county create a **Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) subcommittee** to develop a detailed plan for serving the youth in the counties and spending the funds.

We are working diligently to be involved in these subcommittees in all three FLY counties and so far have formally been invited onto the **SB 823 subcommittee of the JJCC in SMC**, where FLY is represented by Kate Hiester and Nick Jasso.

Kate reports that so far, “Probation has created a draft plan to propose to the Board of Supervisors and is accepting comment from committee members. Nick and I will be coordinating on that input. We are working to engage DJJ youth in a focus group to provide insight as well.”

Eliminating School Resource Officers in the San Jose Unified School District

Freddy Salto, FLY's Career Pathways Navigator for Santa Clara County, provided this summary of our ongoing efforts to urge SJUSD to remove police from their schools. You can read more about the issue here: [Pressure mounts for San Jose Unified School District to remove police from campuses](#)



“In efforts to remove school resource officers (SROs) from campuses across Santa Clara County we are bringing our voices to critical spaces and are organizing with community partners.

In our latest push for removal of SROs we were virtually present at the San Jose Unified School District's (SJUSD) Board meeting on Thursday, January 14. Unfortunately, not everyone who requested to comment on the SRO issue was given an opportunity to speak, myself included. The SRO issue is scheduled again for the Board's March meeting.

As always, we will use the time to organize to ensure that come March, parents, students, teachers, community organizations, and anyone willing to voice their desires for a more nurturing learning environment, will be able to do so.”

Systems Change Snapshots

Oakland's Youth Advisory Board

This fall, FLY was asked to convene a Youth Advisory Board (YAB) for Oakland's [Reimagining Public Safety Task Force](#) and to launch a participatory action research project with Oakland's youth.

The YAB was recently profiled in the San Francisco Chronicle, and presented [a comprehensive set of recommendations](#) to the Task Force. Fun Fact: they were the first group to present despite being the last subcommittee of the Task Force to be convened! They were lauded as a standard for the adult-led subcommittees to follow.

YAC Case Study Published

In recent years, our flagship Youth Voice initiative, the [Santa Clara County Youth Advisory Council](#) (YAC), has become a model for the nation, representing what's possible when Youth Voice is incorporated into systems reform.

FLY's partner, Learning for Action, recently published [a detailed case study about the YAC: Elevating Youth Voice to Change the System](#). It explains how the group was founded with support from the SCC Probation Department; how youth created its structure and organizing principles; how it has already affected change on the local, state, and national levels; and what might be next for the group.

Reserve a Spot Now: Focus Groups on Public Safety in San Jose

Anyone who lives or works in San Jose can **provide their thoughts on what public safety means in the City of San Jose**. On behalf of the City's Race Equity Action Committee, FLY is hosting two focus groups that will lift up the voices of those who are impacted to help create sustainable, safe solutions.

The dates are February 12, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m., and February 26, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Space is limited so **contact [Susie Rivera](#) as soon as possible to reserve a spot** in one of the Zoom meetings. Feel free to share this opportunity with volunteers, youth, families, friends, and community members who live or work in San Jose, too.