

**City of Chandler
Mayor's Youth
Commission**

2017

**Teen Town Hall
Report**

CHANDLER CITY COUNCIL/DIGNITARIES

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Jay Tibshraeny

Vice Mayor

Kevin Hartke

CHANDLER CITY STAFF

Acting Community Services Department Director

Brenda Brown

Recreation Superintendent

Sandy Muñoz-Weingarten



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Grace Church

Rashmi Athavale

Khyati Raka

Anika Joshi

Jillian Hensley

Staff Liaison

Tony Baumann, Recreation Coordinator II

The Mayor's Youth Commission would like to extend a special thanks to Sprouts and Einstein Bros. Bagels for their donations used to provide breakfast and lunch. We would also like to thank the City of Chandler for providing giveaway items and amenities such as the Council Chambers for the forum.



Mayor Jay Tibshraeny and the Chandler City Council

TEEN TOWN HALL

February 23, 2017



Hosted by the City of Chandler Mayor's Youth Commission

SCHEDULE

8:00 a.m. – 8:25 a.m.	Arrival, Registration & Breakfast Community Center Courtyard
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Opening Session - Council Chambers Welcome Guest Speakers Teambuilding activity
9:35 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Discussion Groups Life After High School – Community Center Room 109 Teen Dating Violence – Community Center Room 110 Not My Kid – Community Center Room 111
10:50 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Guest Speaker Community Center Rooms 109, 110 & 111
11:50 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.	Lunch (provided) Community Center Courtyard
12:20 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Discussion Groups – Resolutions Life After High School – Community Center Room 109 Teen Dating Violence – Community Center Room 110 Not My Kid – Community Center Room 111
1:35 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Group Presentations & Closing Remarks Community Center Rooms 109, 110, & 111

The Mayor's Youth Commission sponsored its eighth annual Teen Town Hall on Thursday, February 23rd, 2017 at the Community Center and City Hall Council Chambers. The 113 teens that attended the conference were registered from various Chandler high schools, middle schools and charter schools. The purpose of Teen Town Hall is to bring together teenagers from the community to discuss topics of concern with each other and offer recommendations for practical solutions that the community can implement. To ensure input from all sectors of our community, individuals from numerous private and public high schools and non-profit groups within the City of Chandler were invited to participate.

Teen Town Hall began with Mayor's Youth Commission President, Brennan Zhou, welcoming the participants. Brennan then introduced the council and Mayor, who gave a few words. The Mayor thanked the students for coming to the event and being engaged in issues that pertain to them. Mayor's Youth Commission member Zeba Rizvi then introduced Jevin Hodge, the event's first keynote speaker. He talked mostly about being active in the community and the power that it can have for teenagers. He also performed a slam poem dictating the importance of being active in the community. Jevin stressed making a plan and carrying it out to the end no matter what. He also told stories from his perspective, relating to the audience of the day. Jevin wrote a book called L.Y.F.E: Living Young Free and Extravagant, a book about living your life to the fullest potential. He finished by noting the importance of the event and what it meant for the future of each attendee.

After the conclusion of Jevin's speech, the participants were led in an icebreaker activity presented by Shawn Peoples, Recreation Coordinator I for the City of Chandler Teen Programs. The icebreaker was a mannequin challenge that played out the passing of a controversial bill.

After Shawn concluded, Brennan returned to discuss the schedule for the day and had participants break into their respective groups. Participants were assigned to either **Teen Dating Violence, Not My Kid, or Life After High School**. Each group was led by a delegate from each respective organization and was assisted by Mayor's Youth Commission Members.

Each group was assigned a question related to their topic to discuss. Commission members educated participants on their assigned topic, encouraged participation, and asked their group to think critically about the issue and come up with possible solutions. Leaders helped the groups define the problem, identify possible contributing factors, and discuss what is currently being done.

After the discussion groups had met for over an hour, the conference reconvened for a speech by Philip Alibrandi. Philip also talked about civic engagement and the importance of being in tune with your community. Through an interactive power point, he explained how to exhibit leadership and how to spur positive change throughout one's life. He told stories of people taking initiative through HOBY, his program to help

teenagers make a difference in their communities. Philip finished by noting that giving back to the world around you is leadership itself.

Following lunch, participants were divided back into their groups to create resolutions for the issues outlined in their first discussion. Groups were given an hour to focus on solutions to address their assigned question and develop practical recommendations that could easily be implemented within the City of Chandler. After the discussions, the participants reconvened to discuss and present each of the resolutions collectively. Each discussion group selected a representative to speak to all the Teen Town Hall participants about their group's issue and proposed recommendations.

The Teen Town Hall ended with closing remarks from Mayor's Youth Commission Vice-President, Ritika Bharati. She thanked the participants for attending and contributing to the discussion. Ritika informed the participants that the results of their hard work would be compiled into a report that would be shared with the Mayor and members of City Council at a City Council meeting in the near future.

In addition, this Teen Town Hall report will be made available to various agencies, organizations, clubs, and schools for review. It will also be used as a resource in our community. In this way, the Teen Town Hall provides both teens and adults the opportunity to communicate openly with one another about important issues that affect them.

The following pages provide details on each of the three topics of discussion at this year's Teen Town Hall, as well as the specific recommendations for change developed by each group.

NOT MY KID DISCUSSION SUMMARY

SESSION SPEAKER: SARAH TISDON AND TOMAS BARRAZA

OBJECTIVE

- To promote awareness of body image issues teenagers experience and body positivity.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

- There is more to body image than the physical appearance of others.
- Body image is defined as not only how others see a person, but also how the person views themselves and how they can change their own perspective of their body.
- Myths included diet and exercise fixes everything, you can never exercise too much, boys don't struggle with body image issues, and only thin people have a good body image.
- Students identified the cause of these misconceptions stemming from deceptive media including use of editing software and filters to make an image appear to fit society's social norms and "ideal".
- 25% of men think they are underweight when they are not, 80% of 10-year-old girls have been on a diet, and 50% of girls and 33% of boys use unhealthy weight control measures due to restricted eating, bingeing, diet pills, over exercising.
- Students were educated about the warning signs that can be easily identified and how to build a better body image.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Education programs- reach out to nonprofit organizations that provide these opportunities and schools in order to implement a day where students have the opportunity to learn more about the topic, how to build a better body image, and best ways to promote positivity in their own lives.
- Kindness Week- contact student council or any clubs affiliated with body image or body positivity topic to organize the event and post on social media
- Kindness Walk/ Parade- can be small scale event; promote through social media, have vendors to gather attention, invite nonprofit organizations and volunteers to participate
- #keepitkind- promote through social media via MYC members, volunteers, peers to initiate conversations regarding body image on social media and create a

challenge where we partner with an organization to raise awareness and donate to an organization

Not My Kid Group Assistants:

Monet Tam, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

Anika Joshi, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL DISCUSSION SUMMARY

SESSION SPEAKER: CHRISTI COOKS AND VICKIE KIRKPATRICK

OBJECTIVE

- To aid Chandler students in learning about high school financial aid and personal finances after high school

SUMMARY

- During this discussion, Christi Cook and Vickie Kirkpatrick from Avalon Cosmetology schools discussed personal finances and financial aid after high school with students.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1) OPTIMIZING FINANCIAL AID RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

- The community center host sessions talking about financial aid, taxes, FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), and such financial duties that students must complete before college.
- The city will be able to provide virtual organizers which can monitor and be customized according to scholarships and financial aid forms the student must complete by certain dates.
- The city will invite guest speakers (ex. Tax officials and financial aid counselors) to schools to educate students on the importance of taxes and personal finances after high school.
- The city will provide a portal open for parents so parents can stay vigilant and be alert about upcoming financial aid and scholarship deadlines that they must follow in order to help their student

2) COLLEGE PLANNING APP

- This app would address the problem of college planning which is prevalent throughout many public high schools.
- The app would provide suggested scholarships based on the parameters set by a person's GPA, SAT, ACT, grades, and other factual information about the student.
- Based on gathered information, the app would also provide an in-depth analysis and advice as to how the student should approach applying for financial aid.
- This app would be feasible through assistance from outside corporations such as Intel to fund and aid in the creation of this app.

3) REAL WORLD WORKING SIMULATION

- This simulation of the real world would involve high school teens taking the role of working people in different jobs. The simulation would be complete with currency, taxes, amenities, and paying bills.
- One possibility is having such an activity being headed by an after-school club by the city of Chandler.
- Incentive- partner with businesses as funding sources that will provide a scholarship for the people who manage their money the best. For example ten donors each contribute \$250 for scholarship of \$2500.
- As an alternative, high school students can run clubs which handle such simulations, and create simulations for middle school students to partake in.

Life After High School Group Assistants:

Ritika Bharati, Mayor's Youth Commission Vice-President

Jeffrey Liu, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

Khyati Raka, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE DISCUSSION SUMMARY

SESSION SPEAKER: SEBASTIAN BLACKWELL

OBJECTIVE

- To get Chandler teens more aware of the topic of “Teen Dating Violence”.

SUMMARY

- Sebastian Blackwell, a mentor from Bloom 365, talked to a group of teenagers about teen dating violence and how teens can spread awareness.
- Students came down to three resolutions to help spread awareness about this crucial topic. These ideas can include a teen dating abuse app, an advocate at different schools for victims of teen dating violence, and at all schools, a day dedicated to reach out to the topic and get students involved.
- Students, along with their mentors, constructed three propositions that the City of Chandler could effectuate.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Teen Dating Violence App

- Speaking about this issue, even to close peers, can be difficult for victims of this issue to talk about. This app would allow anyone to talk anonymously to a coach for help with a problem regarding an abusive relationship.
- Make 24/7 help be available for those in need and different programs to assist as well.
- The app will also provide statistics of violence in unhealthy teen relationships to spread awareness.
- This app would be feasible after receiving funds from corporations such as Bloom365, etc.

2) Teen Dating Violence Awareness Day

- All junior high and high schools in Chandler will have a day dedicated to talking about teen dating violence.
- The city will invite guest speakers to schools to educate students on the importance of teen dating violence and how to resolve it.
- The City of Chandler can also hold other events like these at the community center for those who may not have access at school.
- As an alternative, high school students can create clubs and hold events like these throughout the year at their schools.

3) Teen Dating Violence Counseling

- At different junior highs and high schools, there will be separate counselors for teenagers who are experiencing problems in their relationships.
- They will be dispersed around schools in spots where students can feel comfortable and talk about their problem.

- Additionally, if a student is having trouble talking to an adult about an unhealthy relationship they are in, “code words” can be used to indicate that they are being abused and can receive help later on.

Life After High School Group Assistants:

Shahd Abdelkarim, Mayor’s Youth Commission Vice-President

Farin Shiehzadegan, Mayor’s Youth Commission Member

Nikita Bharati, Mayor’s Youth Commission Guest