

2019

honestly OKC

LISTENING SESSIONS WITH
PRIORITY POPULATIONS

1000feathers



PURPOSE

Listening sessions with Oklahoma City young adults were conducted by the 1000 Feathers team. A cross-section of local youth-serving organizations were selected by *honestly* staff to be representative of the collective's direct consumers; those organizations were charged to recruit participants for the sessions, with a preferred focus on identified priority populations (i.e. homeless youth, youth in care, 18-19 year olds). Listening sessions were conducted to provide insight into the perceptions of teen pregnancy, family planning services, and sexual health education.

The gathered information and summaries in this document will provide direct input and guidance for the ongoing *honestly* strategic planning effort.

A total of 60 young adults participated in six listening sessions. See demographics below; numbers below may not add up to total as some young people declined to provide all information.

Age:

- 15-17 year olds = 29
- 18-19 year olds = 19
- 20-26 = 12

Race:

- White = 17
- Black = 19
- Hispanic = 17
- Other = 7

Gender:

- Male = 15
- Female = 27
- Other = 5

METHODS

All listening sessions were facilitated by a small team of experienced public health professionals assembled and trained by 1000 Feathers. As the listening sessions were designed to be conversational and informal – yet informative – a loose interview guide was used, allowing for interviews to be directed by the interviewee's contributions and expertise. Over time, interview questions were further condensed and refined based on information collected through previous sessions.

A total of five sessions took place between March 4 and March 6, 2019 with participants within the targeted age range. Most sessions lasted between 30-60 minutes. When feasible and possible, sessions were audio-recorded with the permission of the participant(s) to better capture details of the conversation without impeding the process by taking notes in real time. In addition to audio recordings, facilitators wrote notes about each session. These session recordings and notes were reviewed by additional 1000 Feathers team members as they became available to identify emergent themes.

In this report of preliminary results, overall themes and subthemes are presented with supporting direct quotes from the transcribed interviews. All quotes remain anonymous in this summary to preserve confidentiality. The overall themes are presented in no particular order, but do represent the main emergent ideas reflected in the listening sessions.

FINDINGS & SUMMARY THEMES

1. OKC young adults want to be independent, productive adults and understand that teen pregnancy can pose a barrier to that goal.

- “I do want to have kids but not right now. Like there's so much life to live, there's so many places to go, and when you have kids it's like you have to be with them. You'll have to like take care of them, but you have to stop your life having kids.”
- “I just feel like you have to mold yourself first and then actually take the responsibility (for a child).”
- “Most teenagers who have kids, their children are going to be raised in poverty because they don't have a

career set up for their selves. They don't have schooling done because they're still in high school. So they don't have like financial stability for them and their children."

- "I have a job, and I don't have a car yet. I couldn't afford one at the time. Um, so I'm always constantly worried."
- (We're talking about) "supporting ourselves."
- "Being in your early 20s, (ain't) much people (gonna) hire us because we (ain't) got much work background."
- "Having a baby makes life more difficult."
- "Ever since my homeboy had a kid, I never see him anymore. I talk to him on Facebook."

2. OKC young adults want comprehensive sexual health education in schools.

- "Well, you know you have your right to actually learn about (sex) and then what it is you know and about like diseases."
- "I didn't know there were so many steps to put on a condom. Like I actually remember, I remember all of them. Like that was crazy."
- "Right now younger kids are starting to have sex so like kids in middle school. So I feel like we should be starting that process. We got to seventh grade cause that's really whenever you start like coming into your body and those hormones really just hit you."
- "Fourth grade or fifth grade they have the period videos and the puberty videos, but other than that, they don't have anything about sex."
- "I think they definitely should have more sex ed for gays and lesbians because I didn't know like there were safe sex or lesbians until like two years ago and I was like, whoa man."
- "I think our generation was like the last one they lied to before they fixed it. The educational system, like was scaring kids to help (teach about sex)."
- "I feel like instead of telling them how to prevent it, like you can also tell them that there's disadvantages of it. Like you don't tell them don't get pregnant but they're probably not telling you what's going to be after that. Like if you get pregnant, this might happen. You're probably going to drop out of school, you're not going to have money to feed your kids or whatever."

3. OKC young adults (of all ages) want to talk to their parents about sex, but often feel judged and awkward when they do so.

- "It's hard for my mom cause my mom, she had me at a young age so I grew up in that type of lifestyle. So we're like, you know, I had to understand but she would not talk about it. She will not tolerate that conversation at all."
- "Who would you like to, who would, who would ideally in your life, whether it's now or a couple of years ago, who would you have liked that information to come from? Your older sister? ...My mom."
- "(Talking about sex and relationships with your parents) would make like your relationship with your parents closer. Cause then like you feel like you know, trust, don't trust even though you're supposed to trust your family. Like your mom, your parents are openly about talking about anything, not just like school or anything else."
- "If they actually talk and they knew what the kids were actually like, they could go to their parents about it instead of like keeping it to themselves or hiding it in their phone or looking it up on the internet on their own."
- "I say more listening. More communication from parents are quick to judge."
- "Parents aren't talking to their kids about pregnancy."
- "I was starting to get sexually active. Like I did my own research but it wasn't anything that like my parents, my parents should have told me. So like I didn't have to go out and guess about certain stuff."
- "I like the people that I find like are, are trustworthy. Like I can have a conversation like this with because it's like there's no judgment."
- "Sometimes I feel like I could talk to my mom about some things but not sex stuff."
- "We want parents to learn about hormones, speaking without judgment, and sharing their own teen experiences."

4. OKC young adults perceive teen pregnancy as a common issue among their friends and peers. Most also anticipate that the relationship, which resulted in the pregnancy, will not be stable.

- “Everybody got a baby.”
- “People having babies and everyone is talking about it, so they want to be that famous and get pregnant so people can talk about them.”
- “It’s like they’ll get pregnant to try to keep a dude with them. Yeah. I don’t want to be with him no more.
- “We’ll take care of kid anyway. Exactly. They going to take care of the kid anyway.”
- “One of my friends have a baby. I really liked the way she goes about stuff. Like she’s smart about the decisions she takes. Like she already has everything planned though with her life and her baby with her boyfriend.”
- “Girls are saying you don’t want to do it, just slow down. It’s not that serious. But guys are saying, come on, get it. I’m ready to do it now. And it’s a problem. When you say no.”
- “They know young ladies that have self esteem issues get with the guy and they feel like this guy is all I want so I’m going to do anything I can like to please him. I’m going to do anything I can to keep him because he makes me feel this type of way.”
- “Even if they have the person, the, the dad there, they always think of it of being a single mom because the other person isn’t always going to be there.”
- “Nobody wants to be in a real relationship. They’re in a relationship to get what they want.”
- “(We) shouldn’t stigmatize like teen pregnancy because there are some cases that are like people who get raped, people do get assaulted and they can’t like stop, they can’t stop that.”

5. OKC young adults use the internet as their primary source for sexual health information, primarily Google.

- “Watch your kids phones for real.”
- “That’s just when you go to Google.”
- “Like the younger generation, they just look on social media, take what that is as true and they don’t really go behind it because they trust social media.”
- “If you’ve got a question, what? What’s your first thought? Google.”
- “(Kids are) exposed to more at an earlier age. So now they think that it’s normalized that people are this sexual and they’re seeing all this stuff from older people on social media. So like the younger kids are living up to that like that’s okay. So then they’re more curious and getting engaged in them.”
- “So what if you need resources or you need help or if you have a question about something sexual, who do you go to? Google.”

6. OKC young adults want better access to condoms and contraception, yet are not convinced that using both simultaneously is essential.

- “If you’re on birth control then you’re on birth control. No need for condoms.”
- “I was going to add the cost of a plan B. Yeah. It broke the bank.”
- “(Plan B) is becoming more popular, especially with young people because I’m like, okay, well I don’t have to wear a condom and if I do ejaculate in this person then I don’t have to worry.”
- “It’s like I don’t want to use a condom, and you are on birth control, so we don’t have to buy other contraceptives.”
- “Sucks that men don’t have as much options for birth control that women do.”
- “STDs, checking should be cheaper and doing a whole spectrum – not just chlamydia and gonorrhea.”
- “And then like when you’re at the front counter, you know people criticize you. So, but that’s why there’s self-checkout.”