



IMPACT REPORT

2024



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“With a focus on people of our age demographic, we aim to connect art and mental health, and use that to battle the stigma that’s present in a lot of our communities.”

**Anya Li, Youth Leader
OK You Inner Peace Corps**

**YOUNG PEOPLE
CREATING THEIR OWN OK**

**TRANSFORMING
MENTAL HEALTH
CHALLENGES INTO
CREATIVE WELLNESS
STRATEGIES**

**ARTIST-DESIGNED
PROJECTS THAT
SUPPORT
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
LEARNING**

**REFLECTIVE AND
INCLUSIVE OF
ALL YOUTH**

**FREELY
AVAILABLE
TO ALL!**

**TO CREATE
MORE OKNESS
IN OUR LIVES
AND COMMUNITIES**

**YOUTH
SUPPORTERS
ACROSS THE
COUNTRY ENGAGE
DOZENS TO
HUNDREDS OF
YOUTH IN
THEIR CARE**

**YOUTH NAVIGATE
DIFFICULT
EMOTIONS WITH
COMPASSION AND
CONFIDENCE**

**FAMILIES AND
COMMUNITIES
JOIN THE
OK REVOLUTION**

**OKNESS
FOR ALL!**

**WITH YOUNG
PEOPLE LEADING
THE WAY**

**YOUTH AT THE
CENTER OF OUR
CONVERSATIONS
ABOUT THEIR
MENTAL HEALTH**

**DRAWING ON THEIR
MENTAL HEALTH
EXPERIENCES AND
CREATIVITY TO DESIGN
WELLNESS STRATEGIES
FOR THEMSELVES AND
OTHER YOUTH**

**SHARING THEIR
WELLNESS IDEAS
AND STRATEGIES
AS MENTORS,
FACILITATORS,
AND LEADERS**

**A THEORY
OF CHANGE**

**TURNING THE
YOUTH MENTAL
HEALTH CRISIS
INTO A
YOUTH-LED
WELLNESS
MOVEMENT!**

**CHANGING THE
MENTAL HEALTH,
ACADEMIC,
AND SOCIAL
OUTCOMES
FOR HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS OF
YOUTH**

**LET'S
DO THIS!**



A YOUTH-LED WELLNESS MOVEMENT

Yes, young people are struggling right now to maintain their mental health. 42% say they feel persistently sad or hopeless. 20% have seriously considered suicide (cdc.gov). These numbers are even higher for LGBTQIA+, female, and BIPOC students.

But here's the thing: Through so many challenges—a pandemic, global warming, school shootings, anti-LGBTQIA+ threats—these young people have amassed a ton of wisdom and some pretty incredible coping strategies.

We believe they belong at the center of our conversations about their mental health, and we believe they have the best chance of modeling for future generations that caring for their inner well-being can be a cool and creative act.

The more youth who are able to summon their creativity and wisdom to transform adversity into healing action, the closer we can get to turning this country's youth mental health crisis into a youth-led wellness movement.

TURNING THEORY INTO ACTION

How we go about this business of change

Evolve and expand

We grow and improve our program through learnings, data, and ideas from youth and youth supporters.

Promote youth ideas

We share student ideas and creative strategies on OK You's website to inspire and activate youth and youth supporters everywhere.

Provide opportunities for youth to lead

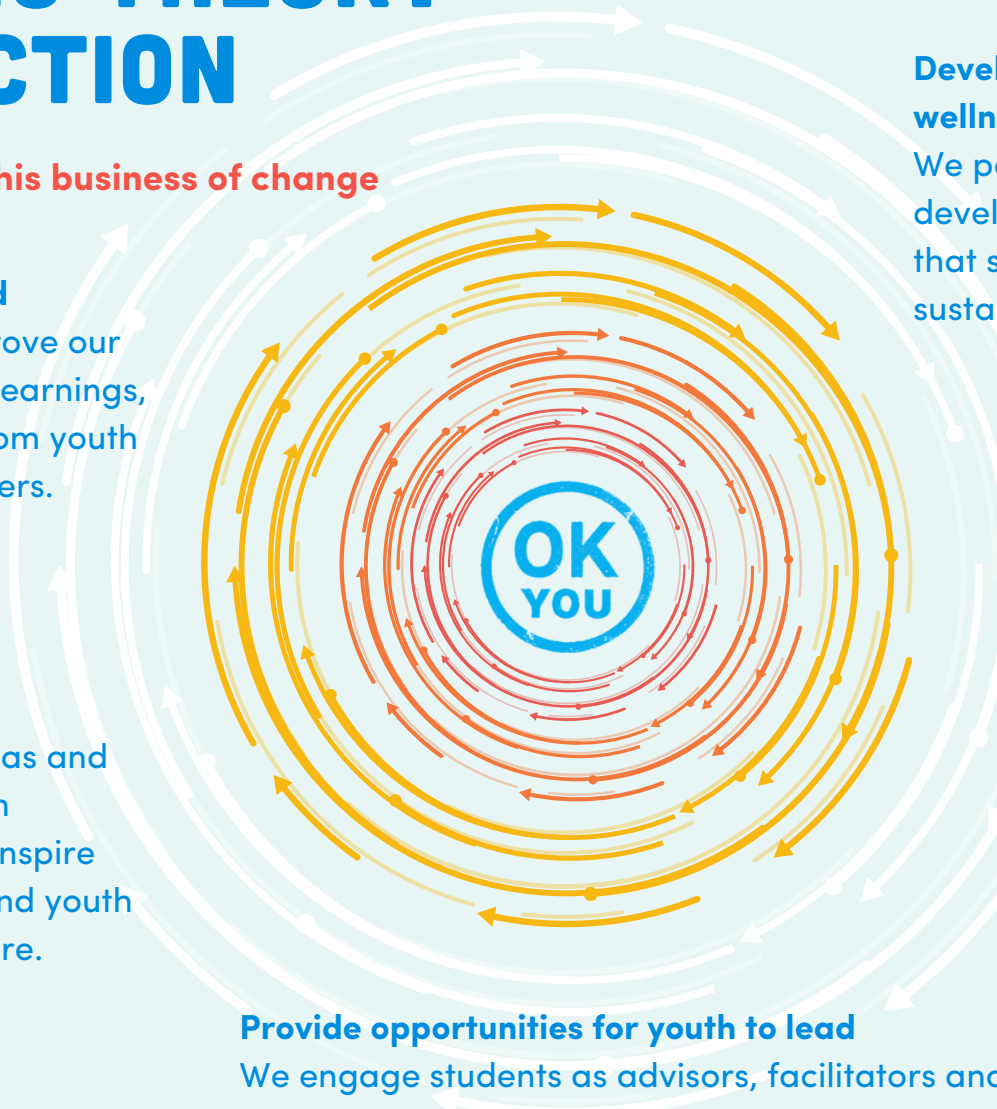
We engage students as advisors, facilitators and collaborators within their schools, and more widely through OK You's Inner Peace Corps youth leadership program & OK Challenge national project design competition.

Develop and share free arts-based wellness practices

We partner with diverse artists to develop free projects and resources that support youth in creating and sustaining inner wellbeing.

Support those in trusted, culturally-specific roles with youth

We offer resources and support to school counselors, teachers, families, culturally-specific programs, youth-supporting organizations.



WHY CHANGE, WHY NOW

In December of 2021, the Surgeon General issued a report warning that young people are experiencing a “devastating” mental health crisis. While mental health challenges take many forms, they all share one thing in common: a negative impact on overall wellbeing and academic outcomes due to impaired concentration, school avoidance, and lack of participation in social activities.

These negative impacts disproportionately affect youth from historically marginalized and under-resourced communities, especially BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, immigrant, and rural youth.

As the number of young people struggling with anxiety and depression continues to rise, never has there been a more urgent time to activate youth in sustaining their inner wellbeing, and leading the way for future generations.

40%

OF TEENS WHO REPORT FEELING
PERSISTENTLY SAD OR HOPELESS

1 IN 5

OF THOSE TEENS WHO SAY THEY
HAVE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED SUICIDE

80%

#OF YOUTH WHO DONT
RECEIVE MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

1:370

OREGON AVERAGE RATIO
OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS
TO STUDENTS

Source:
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

OK YOU ENGAGES YOUNG PEOPLE IN CREATING MORE OKNESS IN THEIR LIVES AND COMMUNITIES

With a mission of bringing more OKness to the world, OK You supports youth in accessing their inner wisdom and creativity to transform mental health challenges into wellness practices.

Having the tools and inner resources to sustain their inner calm and strength is fundamental to their health, relationships, ability to focus and learn, and resilience in navigating the challenging moments and emotions of their lives.





PROGRAM OFFERINGS

**FREE ARTS-BASED
WELLNESS PROJECTS &
RESOURCES AT OKYOU.ORG
AND ON YOUTUBE
@CREATEYOUROWNOK**

**ACCESSIBLE IN
MULTIPLE
LANGUAGES!**

**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOPS FOR
SCHOOL COUNSELORS,
TEACHERS, AND
YOUTH SUPPORTERS**

**FREE MONTHLY ZOOM
SUPPORT SESSIONS—
OPEN TO ALL!**









**YOUTH
LEADERSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES**










**PARTNERSHIP WITH
CULTURALLY-
SPECIFIC PROGRAMS**

WE ARE COMMITTED TO CREATING PROJECTS THAT REFLECT & ENGAGE ALL YOUTH

OK You's projects are designed by diverse artists who all hold one thing in common: using creativity to understand, express and befriend the challenging moments and emotions of life. Through the varied cultures, identities, ages, and experiences of our collaborating artists, we're able to expand our offerings with the goal of creating a hub of resources that are reflective and inclusive of all youth.

Our website (okyou.org) and YouTube channel (@createyourownok) provide youth and youth-supporters with easy-to-follow project instructions and resources for navigating anxiety and other complex emotions. And through our online gallery, youth have the opportunity to share their creations and find community among others who experience similar feelings and challenges.

 <p>MAKE YOUR OWN OK KIT And fill it with reminders of your calm, strong, creative & courageous OK self!</p> <p>START PROJECT #7</p> <p>Connection / Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Grades 9-12 / Grades K-2 / Kindness / Longer / Self-care / Self-confidence</p>	 <p>MAKE A TINY BOOK (OR 12) Comics, inventions, tiny drawings, big ideas... the possibilities are endless!</p> <p>START PROJECT #8</p> <p>Connection / Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Grades 9-12 / Longer / Self-care / Self-confidence</p>	 <p>TRY THE SELF-LOVE WORKOUT! (8 short videos) Celebrate yourself through movement with dancer Bethany Harvey</p> <p>START PROJECT #9</p> <p>Connection / Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Self-care / Self-compassion / Shorter</p>	 <p>MEET YOUR WORRY BEAST Who knows, maybe you'll even become pals</p> <p>START PROJECT #10</p> <p>Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Grades K-2 / Longer / Self-care / Self-compassion</p>
 <p>TAME YOUR WORRY BEAST (If you haven't met your worry beast yet, start with Project 10)</p> <p>START PROJECT #11</p> <p>Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Grades K-2 / Longer / Self-care / Self-compassion / Self-confidence</p>	 <p>LET YOUR INSIDE OUT Create a box that expresses all the hidden parts of you</p> <p>START PROJECT #12</p> <p>Connection / Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Grades 9-12 / Longer / Self-care / Self-compassion / Self-confidence</p>	 <p>CREATE A POWER ALTAR Who represents strength and inspiration to you?</p> <p>START PROJECT #14</p> <p>Connection / Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Grades 9-12 / Grades K-2 / Kindness / Longer / Self-confidence</p>	 <p>KEEP AN ART JOURNAL ...and fill it up with YOU!</p> <p>START PROJECT #15</p> <p>Grades 3-5 / Grades 6-8 / Grades 9-12 / Grades K-2 / Longer / Self-care / Self-compassion / Shorter</p>

 <p>WITH ALI DARWICHE</p>	 <p>CHRISTIAN ORELLANA BAUER</p>	 <p>29:50</p>
 <p>1:10</p>	 <p>1:13</p>	 <p>WITH BETH HADILE 8:08</p>
 <p>2:46</p>	 <p>WITH SEBASTIAN 0:57</p>	 <p>WITH RUBO GERRA</p>

THE REVOLUTION BEGINS INSIDE

Over time the stories we tell ourselves create neuropathways traveled so often they become our truth. The good news: We can change our stories.

With practice, we can transform the way we see ourselves and move through the difficult emotions and moments of our lives with greater compassion, creativity and courage.

This idea is at the center of our program and every project and experience we create. This is how we turn challenge into opportunity, and opportunity into a youth-led wellness movement.

OKness is different for each of us, and each of us has the self-knowing and inner resources to create our own OK.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO START A MOVEMENT

By collaborating with youth-supporting organizations and offering free creative resources and support to school counselors, educators and families, OK You is able to multiply our impact with creative wellness strategies that continue to expand within communities. This expansion includes opportunities for young people to develop into leaders and advocates within their schools and communities.

OK You embraces an equity-based mindset to address disparities and lack of inclusion in arts and wellness programming by partnering with organizations serving historically under-resourced communities, and by providing free resources that anyone can pick up and use without barriers to access or implementation.



Ronald McDonald House receives OK Kits and staff training to share our practices with seriously ill and injured children and their families

Through our partnership with Guerreras Latinas, we've been able to transcreate OK You's resources into Spanish and offer Spanish-language workshops and leadership opportunities for youth and community members.





We were raised in communities that carry past trauma and stigma around mental health. Talking about OKness instead of mental health breaks through these stigmas, offering simple and compassionate language for addressing this important issue so we can begin to destigmatize and gradually normalize emotional care in Latino communities.

Yoana Molina Marcial
Founder / Director
Guerreras Latinas

SUPPORTING THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOUTH

In 2024, OK You provided professional development trainings to:

North Clackamas School District

Guerreras Latinas

Multnomah County Health Department

Portland Parks & Recreation

Portland Public Schools

Ronald McDonald House

School counselors across Oregon through the Oregon School Counselors Association's annual state conference

West Hills Montessori

We also offer monthly zoom support sessions that are free and open to all.



**SINCE 2019, OK YOU
HAS SUPPORTED
MORE THAN 100
SCHOOLS AND
ORGANIZATIONS
IN OREGON**

**AND MORE THAN 30,000
YOUTH SUPPORTERS
NATIONWIDE THROUGH
OUR ONLINE RESOURCES.**



30,000 YOUTH SUPPORTERS

NATIONWIDE, EACH USING

OK YOU'S RESOURCES

TO SUPPORT...

DOZENS TO HUNDREDS OF YOUTH

EACH USING ONGOING WELLNESS PRACTICES

TO STAY CONNECTED TO THEIR OWN SELVES

AND SERVING AS ROLE MODELS TO OTHER YOUTH

GROWING A MOVEMENT OF CONNECTED,

CONFIDENT, RESILIENCE YOUNG PEOPLE

CAPABLE OF NAVIGATING THIS COMPLEX WORLD

**OK YOU HELPS KIDS
PREDICT THEIR
WORRY AND INTERACT
WITH IT HEAD-ON
IN A COOL AND
DYNAMIC WAY.**

**Kevin Ashworth
Clinical Director, NW
Anxiety Institute**

**OK YOU CENTERS THE
NEEDS OF YOUTH AND
RECOGNIZES THE
ESSENTIAL ROLE THAT
CREATIVE PRACTICES
PLAY IN DEVELOPING
YOUTH WELL-BEING.**

**MOBILIZING A STRONG
AND DIVERSE NETWORK
OF ARTISTS AND
WRITERS WHO KNOW HOW
TO CONNECT WITH AND
INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE.**

**Hana Layson
Head of Youth and
Educator Programs
Portland Art Museum**

When I told a student who struggles with anxiety that making art can help, she was so surprised and doubtful. Now she uses art to process anxiety and self soothe on a daily basis!

**Chandler Deming
Middle School Counselor**



IF NUMBERS COULD SPEAK

They would say that this program is transforming lives. We hear it from counselors and educators. We hear it from program partners and families. And we hear it directly from youth.

Through surveys and stories gathered from students, school counselors, teachers, social workers, and other youth supporters, we know that students are gaining greater confidence in navigating anxiety and other complex emotions. They're opening up, sharing their feelings, and turning their mental health challenges into personal wellness strategies.

Through the support of The Camassia Group (an equity-driven research and evaluation company), we continue to evolve our evaluation efforts, and we have been selected to be a 2025 case organization for the American Evaluation Association's annual Student Evaluation Case Competition. We are also actively exploring new ways of collecting data from our 30,000+ online users, including a registration feature that will gather more detailed metrics on our users and how we can better meet their needs.

98%

OF STUDENTS REPORTED THEY FELT LESS ALONE IN THEIR WORRIES AFTER PARTICIPATING IN OK YOU GROUPS

100%

OF YOUTH REPORTED THEY LEARNED AT LEAST ONE NEW STRATEGY FOR HANDLING THEIR WORRIES

100%

OF YOUTH INCREASED THEIR CONFIDENCE IN NAVIGATING ANXIETY, ACCORDING TO THEIR COUNSELORS

Method:
Surveys collected from
40 school counselors and 90
students across grades 3-6.

WHAT DOES ART HAVE TO DO WITH MENTAL HEALTH?

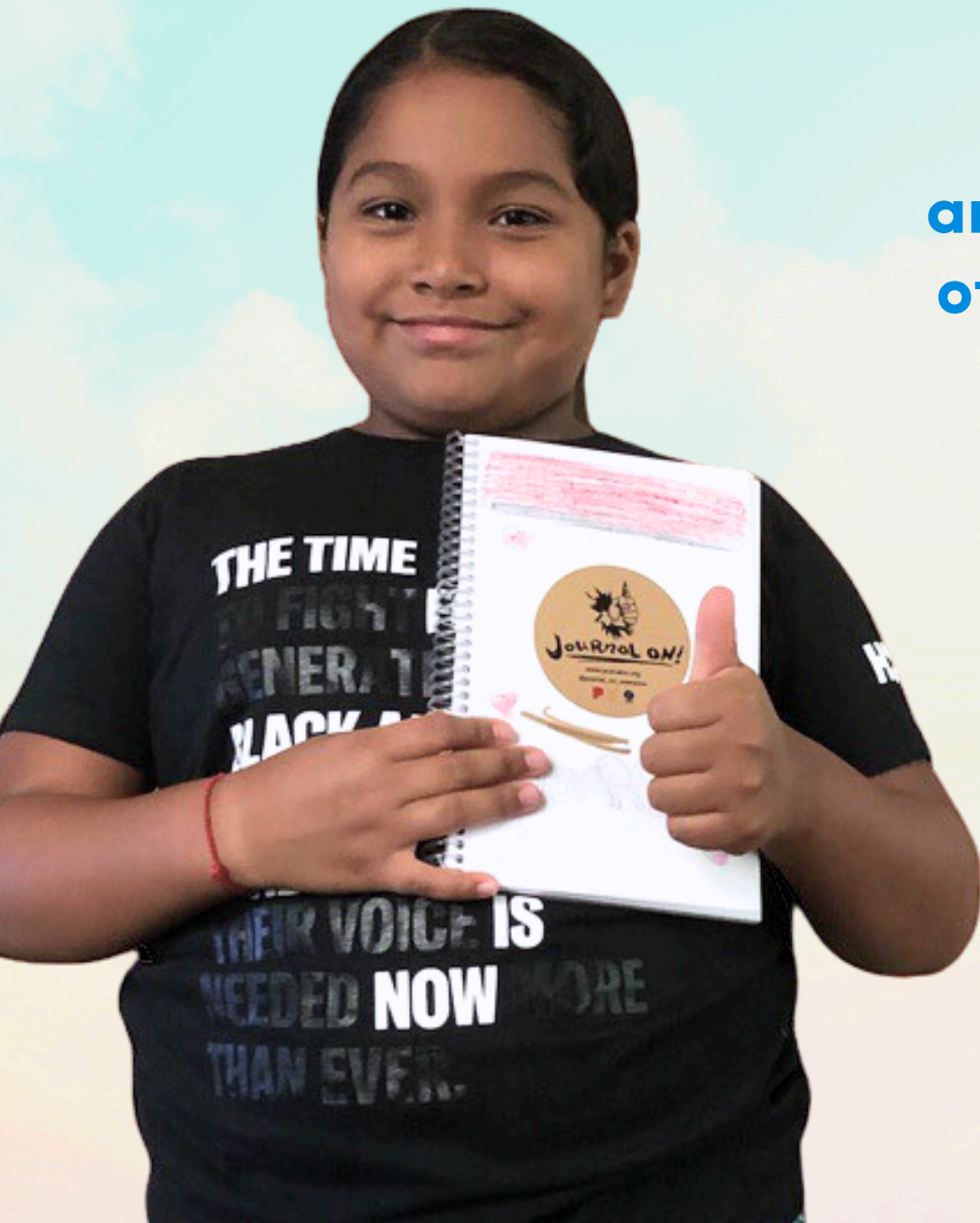
According to numerous studies cited by the National Library of Health, creative practices are an indispensable resource for managing change and the challenges of our increasingly complex world.

Creativity contributes to well-being by promoting self-actualization, self-confidence, greater perceived control over problems in life, and resilience in the face of stressful and traumatic circumstances. Through increased resilience, youth are able to attribute positive meaning to complex events, cope with negative emotions, and adapt to external stressors that change throughout life. Creativity has also been shown to support post-traumatic growth.

OK You's resources take these benefits a step further by aligning with social-emotional frameworks and mental health interventions, and by sharing our creative practices with those in professional, supportive roles with youth.

**CREATIVE
PRACTICES ARE AN
INDISPENSABLE
RESOURCE FOR
MANAGING CHANGE
AND THE
CHALLENGES OF OUR
INCREASINGLY
COMPLEX WORLD**

**Source:
National Library of Medicine**



**“With this program,
anxiety has become less
of a big deal in my life.”**

Student Leader

FROM STUDENT TO LEADER

After participating in an OK You group as 6th-graders, and with the support of their school counselor, these three students moved on to mentor incoming 6th-graders, and as 8th-graders, they planned and facilitated their own OK You workshop for 3rd-grade students.

Through our online workshop guides, OK You offers youth supporters ideas for growing youth leadership within and beyond their groups. This can take the form of students helping their school counselor select and facilitate projects, to students mentoring younger youth, to students designing wellness projects of their own.



CENTERING YOUTH AS ADVISORS, COLLABORATORS, AND ADVOCATES



While youth need our support, they also have support waiting to be discovered within them. We believe that through their creative ideas and lived experience, students can lead the way to wellness for themselves, their peers, and younger youth.

In 2023, we partnered with the Portland Art Museum to launch our first OK Challenge, a project design competition that invited Oregon and Washington high school students to share creative strategies for supporting inner wellness. Inspired by the ideas we received, we then launched our Inner Peace Corps Youth Leadership Program, inviting high schoolers to join us as advisors, creative collaborators, and wellness advocates.

By making youth-designed projects and ideas available on our website where they can be accessed by youth and youth supporters across the country, these young leaders are inspiring more and more youth to create their own OK.



Members of our 2024-25 Inner Peace Corps leadership program.



Winners of our first OK Challenge, an invitation to Oregon/Washington high school students to share their creative ideas for supporting inner wellness. In 2025, the OK Challenge will go national.



A lot of kids struggle with their mental health, and that's why OK You and the Inner Peace Corps is more necessary than ever. Everyone can always be more connected with their OK selves. That's what we're here for.

**Luke Hestand, Youth Leader
OK You Inner Peace Corps**

I cannot express enough how valuable OK You is to my profession, my students, and my community.

One of the students who attended in 6th grade was scared to speak in front of others, and now as an 8th grader, is not only leading a group of 5th/6th graders but she often goes to events to speak on behalf of OK You and how it's changed her as a student and person.

Lisbeth Kobs
Middle School Counselor



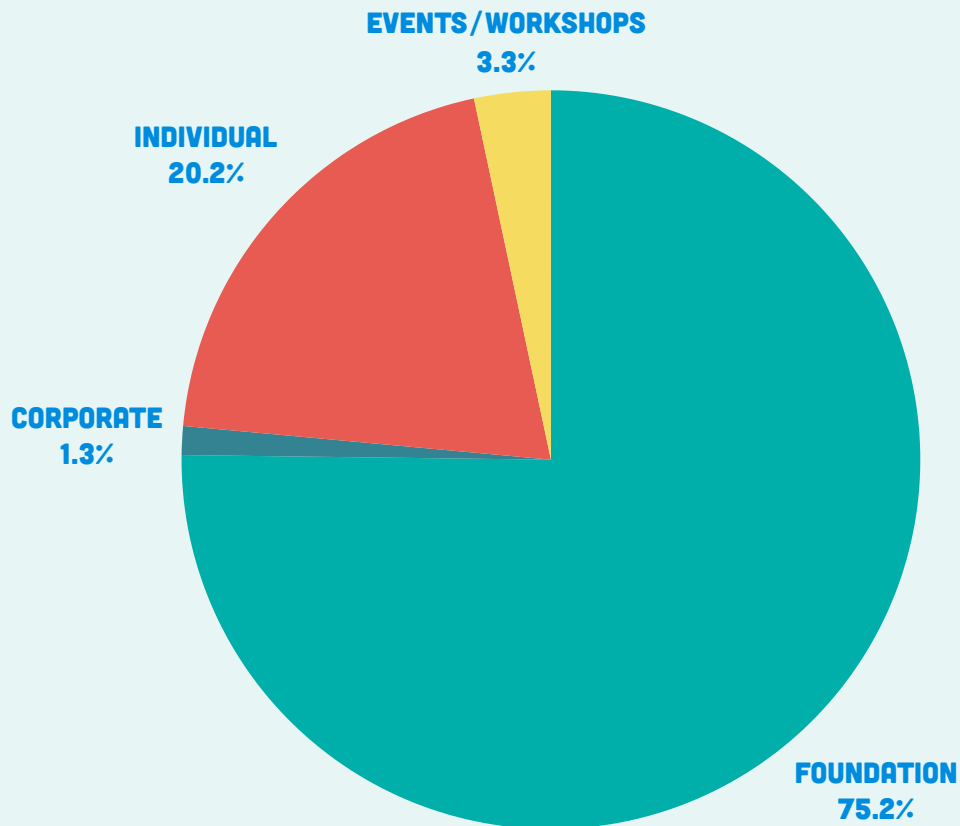
**NO ORGANIZATION I'VE
WORKED WITH HAS COME
CLOSE TO THE DEPTH AND
BREADTH OF COLLABORATION
WITH THE INTENDED
USERS THAT I'VE SEEN IN
THE THREE YEARS OF
COLLABORATION WITH OK YOU**

**Britt Bieberich,
LGBTQ2SIA+ Program
Manager, Portland
Public Schools**

**OK YOU NOT ONLY
UNDERSTANDS THE
IMPORTANCE OF EQUITY
AND INCLUSION, BUT
KNOWS AND RECOGNIZES
THAT ANY MENTAL
HEALTH PROGRAM
NEEDS TO BE
ACCESSIBLE AND
RESPONSIVE TO
CULTURALLY SPECIFIC
COMMUNITIES LIKE OURS**

**Yoana Molina Marcial,
Founder/Director,
Guerreras Latinas**

OUR SUPPORTERS MAKE IT HAPPEN



OK You programs are made possible through the generous support of:

- Anxiety Society individual donor circle
- Autzen Foundation
- Awesome Foundation
- Betsy Priddy Fund
- BPN, Inc.
- City of Portland/ Portland Arts & Culture
- Clark Lewis Family Foundation
- Collins Foundation
- Dr. Bronner's
- Full Potential Fund
- Harold and Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation
- Jackson Foundation
- Madfish Digital
- Marie Lamfrom Foundation
- Maybelle Clark MacDonald Fund
- OnPoint Community Credit Union
- Oregon Community Foundation
- PGE Foundation
- RACC (Regional Arts & Culture Council)
- Raymond Family Foundation
- Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation
- The Camassia Group
- Trustey Family Foundation
- Wieden+Kennedy
- Women's Foundation of Oregon

TEAM, BOARD & ADVISORS



Kevin Ashworth
he/him
Clinical Director,
NW Anxiety Institute



Britt Bieberich
they/them
LGBTQ2SIA+ Program
Manager, PPS



Noah Bolls
he/him
School librarian, writer,
fiber artist



Allison Bonifay
she/her
Director of Clinic Operations
& Senior Clinician,
NW Anxiety Institute



Mayra Camacho
she/her
Development Manager/
Grantwriter



Phoebe Ebright
she/her
Principal,
Ebright Consulting



Ben Franson
he/him
U of O Design student



Marquita Guzman
she/her/ella
Student Success & Health
Program Administrator, PPS



Sara Guest
she/her
Communications Advisor to
Multnomah County Chair



Heather Hadraba
she/her
Board Chair, Professor & School
Counseling Program Director,
Lewis & Clark College



Beth Haidle
she/her
Artist, Creative
Director of Illustoria



Courtenay Hameister
she/her
Writer, Editor, Author



Bethany Harvey
she/her
School Counselor,
Therapist, Dancer



Jonathan Hill
he/him
Cartoonist, Illustrator,
and Educator



Gary Hirsch
he/him
Artist, Creator of Botjoy,
and On Your Feet



Mariam Higgins
she/her
Administrator, PPS, Founder,
ArtsWell Consulting



Ahmond Jackson
he/him
Creative Media Manager/
Producer and Music
Composer



Adrienne Karecki
she/her
Chief Development and
Marketing Officer,
Relief International



Liz Kobs
she/her
School Counselor, Beverly
Cleary Middle School



Cristianne Lane
she/her
Writer, Director of
Professional Development,
Lee Pesky Learning Center



Kathleen Lane
she/her
OK You Founder/Director;
author



Hana Layson
she/her
Head of Youth and Educator
Programs, Portland
Art Museum



Kim Leonard
she/her
Founder/Principal,
Camassia Group



Katy Mayo-Hudson
she/her
Educational Consultant,
Co-founder of Turnaround Arts



Yoana Molina Marcial
she/her
Director and Founder,
Guerreras Latinas



Ivo Mussa
he/him
Board Treasurer
Senior Financial Analyst,
Nike



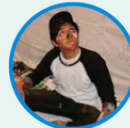
Liz Gill Neilson
she/her
Co-owner/Creative Director,
The Beauty Shop brand &
interactive design agency



Mia O'connor-Smith
she/her
Artist, Dancer, Educator,
Founder of Deep
Underground



Takaaki Okada
he/him
Multidisciplinary artist



Christian Orellana Bauer
they/he
Multidisciplinary artist



Lynne Shlom
she/her
Former Asst Director of
New Teacher PD, PPS



Kelsey Snook
she/her
Artist, designer and creator
of shared experiences



Marna Stalcup
she/her
Board Chair Emeritus;
Founder of
The Right Brain Initiative



Niko Swanson-Brownell
they/them
Poet, artist, youth
program facilitator



Robyn Tenenbaum
she/her
Principal of Rhapsody
Productions, Co-creator,
Live Wire Radio



Nik Whitcomb
he/him
Inner Peace Corps
facilitator; Bag&Baggage
Productions Artistic Director



Chris Williams
he/him
Student Advocate,
Manager, Storyteller,
Improviser, Producer



Sahar Wilson
she/her
Marketing/Communications
Coordinator,
Pacific Refugee Support Group

