WE ARE NOT AT-RISK

#3BILLIONSTRONG  #WEARENOTATRISK

AFSC
YOUTH IN ACTION
2019-2020
AFSC’s Youth in Action (YIA) is a global network of youth leaders working together to strengthen their capacity to transform their respective communities.

Participants take part in youth-centered, experiential, and trauma-informed organizing trainings that analyze racism, colonialism, and imperialism locally and around the world. We create campaigns designed to dismantle systems of oppression while building infrastructures of liberation.

YIA participants serve as mentors and leaders to the next generation of social change agents in our local communities. Participants are nominated by AFSC staff.
HOW CAN WE, AS YOUNG PEOPLE, END HARMFUL NARRATIVES ABOUT YOUTH?
According to a media study by Mori for Young People Now, one in three articles about youth were focused on crime or antisocial behavior, and young people were only quoted in 8% of stories. As a result of these dynamics, words like "at-risk," "thug," and "vandals" are automatically associated with young people.

Words matter. Negative messaging in media impacts:

- Youth employment
- Youth agency and esteem
- Local and national policies that impact youth & communities
WE ARE NOT VIOLENT
WE ARE PEACEKEEPER
Building on the success of 2018's "We Are Not At-Risk" campaign, we will continue to drive a youth-led narrative change movement. This time, we will focus our efforts on transforming the stories that media tell about young people. Outlets big and small often neglect well-rounded representations of youth in favor of ones that dehumanize and criminalize.

In 2020, youth storytellers will harness the power of art and collective action to enter into conversation with media outlets about who we are and the stories we want to tell. Because we are #3BillionStrong, we will make our truths heard. Nobody can like we can.
Social stigmatization is the foundation of oppression, as discrimination and disparity are intrinsically linked. Systemic bias based on age prevents millions from fully accessing social, economic, and political systems. Neuroscience research tells us that there are two ways that individuals can undo their social biases: being exposed to messages that challenge that bias and having repeated interactions with stigmatized groups. The We Are Not At-Risk campaign employs both of these strategies by amplifying the collective power of youth who have been systematically silenced. By equipping young people with strategies for narrative change, we support our collective and individual liberation.
WE ARE NOT
ENTITLED
WE ARE
EMPOWERED
WEARENOTATRISK
CAMPAIGN PART 1: COLLECTING STORIES

(Dec. 1-Jan. 20): Collecting stories and engaging media—Community Members will start collecting stories that respond to the provided prompts—written and/or visual—on postcards (13 x 18 cm, 127 x 178 mm, 5" x 7") from other young people and their allies in their communities. Using selected prompts (see postcard for prompts) such as, “Because we are 3 billion strong, we can…”

#3BILLIONSTRONG
#WEARENOTATRISK
CHECKLIST

Collecting stories

- Print postcards (13 x 18 cm, 127 x 178 mm, 5" x 7") with prompts in your language (Postcards can be found at afsc.org/notatrisk).
- Gather young people and/or their allies to collect stories that respond to the provided prompts.
- Open up the space to have in-person dialogue about harmful youth narratives and how it impacts young people and their communities. Educate on the power of narrative change and basic media engagement.
- Work with groups of young people and allies to write and or create visual images using the prompts (people can do as many postcards as they want).
- Get consent from young people and their allies to take their pictures.
- Take pictures.
  - creating and writing postcards.
  - holding up their writings, visuals and/or the We Are Not At-Risk signs.
- Encourage young people to take pictures of theirs and others postcards.
  - Remind the group to share their postcards and stories from Jan. 6-21 using the hashtag #wearenotatrisk and #3billionstrong. Remind them to share, follow, like and comment on other posts.
CHECKLIST

Engaging Media

☐ Read the Media Toolkit (see link on afsc.org/notatrisk) to familiarize yourself with how to engage media.

☐ Select media outlets (newspapers, blogs, podcasts, magazines, public access TV stations, college newspapers, etc.) that you would like to target. See the media toolkit for how you might select a media outlet.

☐ Contact the media outlet.

☐ Follow up with the media outlet if you did not get an initial response or if they have more questions.

☐ Work with the media outlet to produce a story on the power of narrative change and the impact of harmful youth narratives.

☐ Share story on social media using the hashtag #wearenotatrisk and #3billionstrong.
CAMPAIGN PART 2: RAISING AWARENESS

This phase is designed to educate our audiences and introduce them to the impact of harmful youth narratives and the topic of narrative change. Community members will start the pre-campaign by building buzz on social media through interactive live conversations, polls, Instagram stories, contests, quizzes, behind the scenes videos, news articles, etc. discussing the topic of narrative change.
Campaign Part 2 (Dec. 23-Jan. 4): Raising Awareness

- Research the impact of harmful youth narratives and the topic of narrative change. If you have questions contact neubanks-dixon@afsc.org.
- Community members will use this data to inform their audiences about the impact of harmful youth narratives and the topic of narrative change.
- Host a series of Facebook or Instagram Lives, a series of social media polls, a series of IG stories, blog, podcast, or a series of community events that raise awareness about specific aspects of narrative change for example see afsc.org/notatrisk.
- Collect relevant news articles to share. (For example: http://www.njrin.org/article/theyre-not-thugs--theyre-our-children)
facebook Live
CAMPAIGN PART 3: SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING

For 14 days, community members will post social media messages promoting the campaign. These will include photos of young people making art, #WeAreNotAtRisk images, and the postcards created in Part 1 of the campaign. From Jan. 6th-21st, youth activists/community members will tag media outlets, urging them to join the conversation and adopt the anti-racist decolonizing youth framework.
CHECKLIST

Campaign Part 3 (Jan. 6-Jan. 21): Social Media Posting

For 14 days, community members will post social media messages promoting the campaign. These will include photos of young people making art, #WeAreNotAtRisk images, and the postcards created in Part 1 of the campaign. From Jan. 6-21, youth activists/community members will then tag media outlets, urging them to join the conversation and take the pledge to adopt the anti-racist decolonizing youth framework (see afsc.org/notatrisk).

- Identify 4+ local, national and/or international media outlets you would like to tag in your daily post (see the Media Toolkit @ afsc.org/notatrisk).
- Post daily or as often as you can, spreading the word about the campaign.
- Tag each other and media outlets/reporters in posts.
- Introduce the anti-racist decolonizing youth framework and the ask for media outlets to take the pledge to use it (see afsc.org/notatrisk for framework and pledge).
- Post images, videos, and stories from young people.
- Post and share relevant articles about youth, media, and narrative change for example: http://afsc.org/power-of-words.
- Follow the hashtags. Like and comment on posts from other youth involved in the campaign to increase visibility.
- Invite others to share, post, like and comment.
- Thank people for sharing.
Three Billion youth around the globe challenge media organizations. #3BillionStrong
CAMPAIGN PART 4:
DAY OF ACTION

On Jan. 21, youth around the world will facilitate dialogue with different media outlets. As Shirley Chisholm once advised, “If they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.”

On the Day of Action, you will see:

• Youth holding press conferences in different cities around the world.
• Youth attending meetings with local media outlets talking about the anti-racist decolonizing framework.
• Activists/community members delivering postcards to selected media outlets.
NO SOMOS
UN RIESGO
SOMOS
AGENTES DE CAMBIO

#WEARENOTATRISK
CHECKLIST

Campaign Part 4 (Jan. 21): Day of Action

On January 21st, youth around the world will facilitate dialogue with different media outlets.

Engaging the Media

- Host a press conference or roundtable discussion with media outlets asking them to take the pledge to adopt the anti-racist decolonizing youth framework (see afsc.org/notatrisk).
- Activists/community members deliver postcards to media outlets and ask them to take the pledge to adopt the anti-racist decolonizing youth framework.
- Take photos of all individuals who wish to be involved.
- Capture the event with videos and photos upon consent.
- Share Day of Action footage on social media outlets using the hashtags: #wearenotatrisk #3billionstrong

Educating the Community on Narrative Change (For those who may not be able to directly engage media outlets)

- Educate the community on the role the media plays in the youth employment crisis, youth self-esteem, and local and national policies that impact youth and their communities by:
  - Hosting a lecture demonstration, workshop, or roundtable discussion OR by
  - Hosting a play, dance, spoken word event, etc.
CAMPAIGN PART 5: POST CAMPAIGN

Jan. 22-26 we thank the community for participating and debrief with one another.
CHECKLIST

Post Campaign (Jan. 22-26): Thank the community for participating & debrief with one another

CELEBRATION

☐ Debrief
☐ Inform AFSC via neubanks-dixon@afsc.org of:
  ☐ how many media outlets wrote stories about the campaign.
  ☐ what media outlets took the pledge to use the framework.
  ☐ how many postcards were created.
  ☐ how many youth stories shared.
  ☐ how many people the campaign reached.
SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

• Youth engaging with media outlets during the 14-day campaign and on the day of action.

• Local media outlets covering the campaign talking about the importance of ending the harmful narratives about youth and the impact it has on employment, youth esteem, and local policies.

• Positive youth stories being shared throughout social media, tagging local and national media outlets.

• 5 media outlets take the pledge to adopt the anti-racist decolonizing framework.
"We have been called to be a voice of reason and reconciliation in our noisy world." @oyekunbohita

Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud. May, Angola

FAC is full of craziness! For it is those who are crazy enough that they can change who eventually we are at-risk.
JOIN THE WE ARE NOT AT RISK CAMPAIGN JAN. 6-21
VISIT AFSC.ORG/NOT AT RISK FOR MORE INFORMATION
THE WORDS WE ALL USE TO DESCRIBE YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE ASSET-DRIVEN, HUMAN-FOCUSED, AND CENTER ON THE WHOLENESS OF THE YOUNG PERSON. JOIN US IN THE MOVEMENT DECLARING, WE ARE NOT AT-RISK, WE ARE AGENTS OF CHANGE.

-NIA EUBANKS-DIXON
AFSC Youth Program Director (US and International Programs)