

HerStory: UNlocked

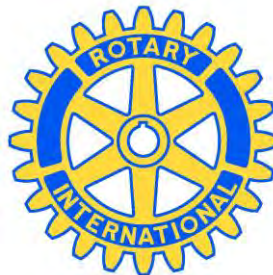
Genesee Valley Regional Center 2016-2017





Michigan Humanities Council

our stories, our lives



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The HerStory Project

The Gender-Based HERSTORY PROJECT takes place at the Genesee Valley Regional Center (GVRC), Genesee County Michigan's juvenile detention facility. It addresses the unmet needs of the young female residents, by enabling them to find their own voices and become the tellers of their own stories through the mediums of Spoken Word Art, Theatre, and Dance. The Project empowers young women not only to tell their own unique histories but to also connect with the history of their communities and to take ownership of their futures.

During the Spoken Word Art and theatre workshops, the girls engage with history through creative works by and about women: notable women, many of them who have endured extreme hardship, such as incarceration or oppression or other circumstances. These works become the springboards from which the girls explore and give voice to their personal, family, and community histories. The workshops stimulate critical thinking around themes about community and personal struggles, acceptance, overcoming adversity, challenging expectations, difficult decision-making, and dealing with the past. The goal is to encourage the young women to reflect on their own identities, actions and choices by providing them a safe place to acknowledge and communicate their experiences.

A primary objective of the dance workshops is to decrease the girls' sense of isolation while in detention and to address the sense of detachment from their physical selves many of them experience as a result of trauma and physical abuse. Issues such as negative body image, self-confidence, and physical awareness of self and others are explored through the styles of modern and other forms of Classical and contemporary dance. The classes include warm-ups, introduction of a dancer and dance form, short choreographed dance steps, improvisation and discussion.

Each year the Buckham/GVRC Share Art Project publishes a collection of the girls' written works that includes at least one piece by each participant. Copies of the book are distributed to each of the girls and are available to the public. This year an e-book is also available.

HerStory: Unlocked

We begin this book with a short story by one of our GVRC workshop participants.

A lot of people at my school don't like me because I'm not popular, don't wear converse, don't have long hair, I hang out with "losers." But that is not true. Everyone has a best friend that fits with their personality. But it's not what they look like on the outside, it's how they look on the inside.

People at my school hate my hair so they judge me. It's not about what other people think. It's about how you feel. They don't feed you or give you a place to live. They are just people in your life. Don't let them bring you down! Be You!

What you will read in the following pages are from the GVRC participants in their authentic voice and writing style. Learn & Live Their Stories, if you will, as they have UNLOCKED themselves over a period of 9 months - from June 2016 to March 2017.

On some of the pages, following their stories, there are writing prompts for YOU, The Reader. These are some questions we asked the participants. Consider sharing your story, as well, with the young women in this book.

ENJOY!

Our Voices

I was young when I found my voice. I remember my grandparents always watching the news. I wanted to imitate what I saw news reporters doing when they told the news. So, I would stand on top of the fire place mantle and jabber on and on, as if I was reporting on Breaking News like the news reporters on TV. It was there I realized how I like to talk and speak to people. Now, I have my own YouTube channel with over 700 subscribers. I also have a large social media following & presence! @JiasWorld

It felt empowering as I knew that “speech” could convey emotion & attention was placed on me when I talked. People listen to me and paid attention to what I had to say.

Using my voice does come with responsibility and accountability. I make sure I’m informed on what my voice is speaking on and about. I make sure I do not over step my boundaries, and I’m not taking up space from others whose voices should and need to be heard. @JiasWorld
~Jia Ireland, (GVRC Arts Intern)

I learn to
find my talent
when I was the
age of 5 or 6
and from there on,
thats when I love to
write about anything
and everything

-



I to r: Jia Ireland & Ella Thorp

The moment I
found my Voice was when
I was seven years old!
I started singing Beyonce,
as I would sing more I would
get better at it every day.
Till this day I still sing but
not in front of people because
I am scared to ☺ ☺

-

For the past 6 + years, my voice
has made people laugh, cry, think,
yell, smile, it's told lies. It's explained,
it's hid, it's raised, its rebelled,
it's been my only support in my life.
It's backed me up partnering with
my mind, making phrases to make
sense in other's heads, even making
sense in mine. It's gotten me in to
things & out of things. I Hate it,
yet I love it, but I don't care
I'm stuck with it.

-

Speak my thoughts
Make people laugh
Once, A girl was sad so
I went over and talked with
her and made her laugh. We
became bestfriends.
I had a friendly conversation
with her. I was smiling and
talking. And I was joking
around.

-

—



What does your voice say

to YOU when you need it

to encourage YOU?

Our Bodies

Go look at yourself in the mirror. Don't ask questions, just go do it. I'll wait here...

Welcome back!

Now, what did you see? What did you think about when you looked in the mirror? If you are anything like me, you probably thought about everything that you think is wrong with the way you look. Perhaps there is a line or two etched on your face that you wish would disappear; a blemish that sticks out and drives you insane. Perhaps your face is a little rounder than what you care to see. Do you fear your stomach isn't flat enough or your thighs are too big or too small?

Think about those imperfections we often cringe over when we look at ourselves. There are words we say in our head and aloud that are negative. There is so much criticism that we take in when we look at ourselves, often overlooking or forgetting how that can negatively impact our beings, let alone those around us.

If you ask me, and I am no stranger to being harsh on my own appearance, each thing I may not like about my physical self is a story. I have lines on my forehead - "laugh lines," as I've been told to call them - that I have to remind myself are marks of years on stage using my entire being to express a character. These lines show every single joke I have ever told or heard. They represent the times I have looked wide-eyed onto a good or bad event in my life and the number of tears I have cried with my face scrunched up. My laugh lines tell a story, My Story.

I could talk about every other imperfection and "gross" thing about my appearance, but that would take about 720373561075 pages and no one has time for that. What each of us does have time for is to learn how to love ourselves enough to accept the story that has been written in our physical appearance and then take that acceptance and turn it into love. It is hard and painful, but when we learn to love ourselves, the rhetoric that is used changes and the people that we come into contact with start to see that too.

Each imperfection is ours to embrace, as hard as that can be. It is difficult to teach others self-love and acceptance of their body when we, as teachers, struggle to embrace our own. When we say negative things about ourselves, we are teaching our children that it is okay to say those things about themselves.

When my fellow teachers and I walk into our classroom, we acknowledge that there are negative things that we can say about our bodies. In fact, we even say them out loud, right to the girls without thinking twice, but we have made it one of our goals to turn those negative things we say into positive things; into our story of positive self-love and appreciation in hopes that they will turn those negative phrases and criticisms into positive things and learn to love themselves.

~Ella Thorp, (GVRC Arts Staff)

I feel like my body is decent. I'm not too skinny anymore but I'm also not too big. I mean I have a little gut but I also have a nice butt. I'm in love with my hair tho, that and my eyes are my favorite part of my body. I do feel like I'm about to gain a lot more weight soon. All in all I do like my body and I'm confident about my body now and my boyfriend helps me with that.

-

My body is my body! Every day someone would tell me that I'm too small or too skinny for my age. So what I did was started eating more junk food. Every morning I would get up and eat like four to five things of cereal, I went to the store, get everything that was good to me and buy it then eat it. I started to eat more candy and some real food. Then when the junk food paid off I had gotten bigger and even better I got taller so I was not as big. Then people told me that I was getting big I got happy. So then I started eating more every day. "Till this day I still eat."

-

I was told as a
Kid that I was too
Skinny, as I got
older I was told I
was told I was too
fat. But my body

is my body and I
should be the judge
of it! Who cares
about what you think
about my body? Worry
about your own!

If you don't like it
Somebody else will,
but all I know is
that I love it.
My body speak
loudly of what I
know. And I know
I'm beautiful!!!

I love my dark brown
luscious skin, my nicely
sized hips, my slim stomach and under
them my big butt. And to top
it my beautiful face
and Smart brain.



l to r: Jade Ponds and Traci Currie

Body image was never an issue, didn't
Love my body, didn't hate it. But when
I started loving it is when someone
else can't stop admiring it. My
boyfriend would tell me it's not
about being the hottest thing in
the room, it's about feeling that
way. So confidence is key, no matter how
you look or feel it's your body &
you need to be happy/content.

Get your shopping on at the
mall max your credit card you
don't have to choose by it all so
they like you, do they like you.

Get your sexy on don't be
shy girl take it off this is
what you want to belong so they
like you, do they like you. You
don't have to try so hard you
don't have to give it all away.
You just have to get up get up
get up you don't have to change
a single thing. You don't have to try try try
You don't have to try try try
You don't have to tryyy.

Run the extra mile keep it
slim do they like you, wait a second
why should you care what they think of
you when you're all alone by yourself
don't you like you. Take your make
up off let your hair down look into
the mirror at yourself don't you like
you cause I like you.

-



A long time ago, I hated my body. I felt too fat and unattractive. I took 6 kinds of diet pills 4 times a day, excersised like crazy, and even resorted to making myself throw up. One day, it hit me. Why am I doing this to myself? I layed there in a hospital bed, only 75 lbs. Doing what I was doing didnt feel good and I wasnt healthy at all. So I just decided, I don't wanna be this way. I started eating again and stopped taking all those pills. I felt so much better physically and mentally!

Now, Im completely happy with my body. I love every single thing about it. Im always posting full body pics on facebook knowing im gonna get only positive comments and tons of likes, as opposed to before when I was too scared to even post a normal selfie. Tbh, even if no one likes my pictures, I think they're bomb af and to me, that's all that matters.

-

When I was 5 this girl asked me
are you a slave on the bus Well being black with white
Mom dad sister and brothers I was
confused So I ask this girl why would you
ask that her reply blew me outta water she said b/c your
black.....well I said NO but I really hurt
me but I wanted to change her mind set so
I brought a book about black and whites, MLK
Jr. and Rosa Parks this girl learned
from her older brother and she told
me she was sorry. To this day
we best friends and closer than close.

-

Love Yourself No Matter What

Maybe theres a lot of girls who feel like me
Feeling like loving yourself was self-centered,
because I was always told it was.
In the end everyone needs to realize that
people come and go. Change is the only constant.
You need to be there for your self in the end,
because you're the only person that will be
there for 100% of your life. You are the only
one that will love you every second of your life.
That will only happen if you love yourself
And dont let what people say let you down

I love myself because

- I'm beautiful
- I'm unique
- I'm myself
- No one else can take my place

-

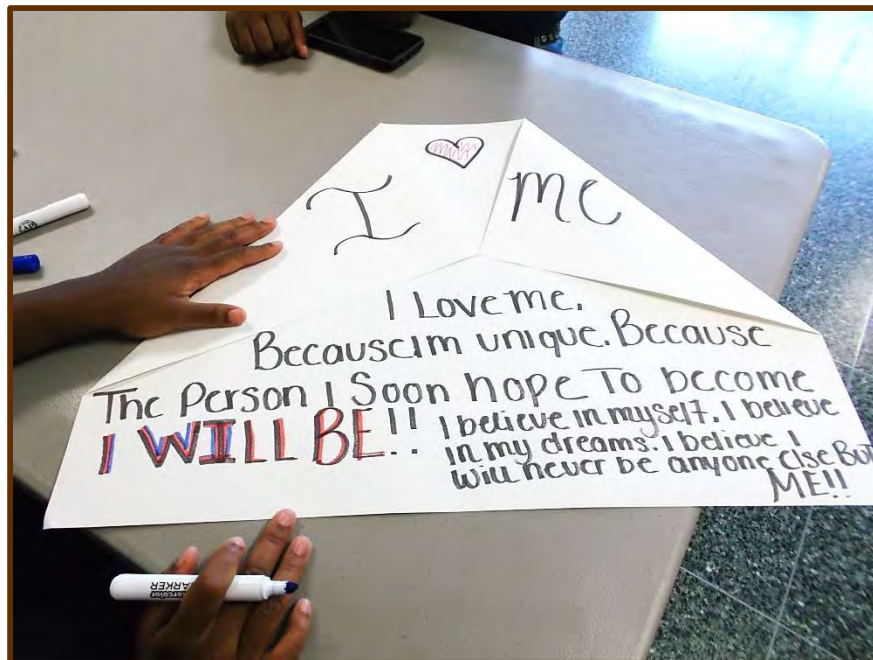
From the time I was old enough to understand people would make fun of me + harass me to the point it was unbearable. From 5th grade until now its been going its just changed, the words, the insults, everything. It used to really bring me down. I stopped going to school + doing other things because I hated myself. But recently I've learned to love myself I dont need the boys + the drugs to feel love or to change how I feel. It took me a long time to relize this, I thought it was impossible for me to ever love myself. Honestly it takes a while some times but you just have to relize what they say doesnt matter, it shouldnt change how you feel you just gotta keep strong + do what you want screw what they think about you.

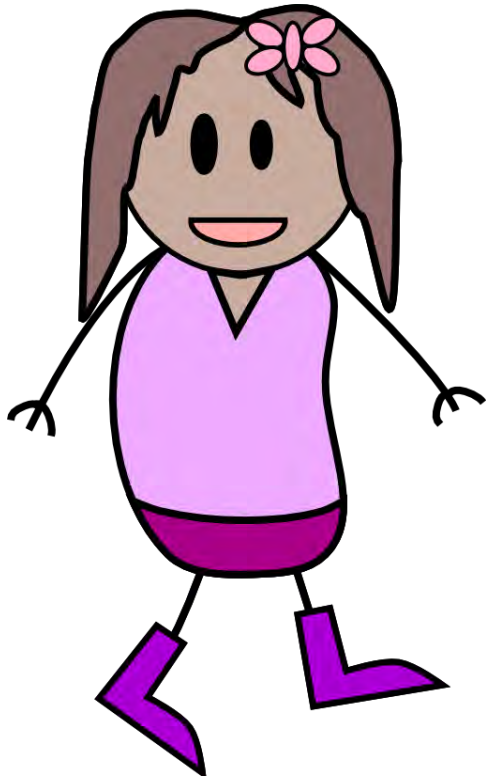
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You have to love yourself because at the end of the day, nobody else will. Sure, you have friends and family, maybe even a boyfriend or girlfriend, but think about it. How many of them are really going to be there for you? You could be like me; I have tons of friends but none of them write me even though they know im in here. I have a boyfriend who I loved with all my heart, but yunno as soon as im locked up, he's got another girl. I have a mom but she would never take the time to visit me. I have no one left to love me, but you know what? Idc cause I love myself. Im gonna keep loving myself for my whole life so Ill never be alone, and Ill always have someone to love me.

-

I was 13, I weighed
184, I didn't
Really think I
Was that Fat,
Until my sister
Was a couple years
older than me
An I weighed
More than her,
It was kind of
Weird.
But I never really
Payed attention to
My Weight. Until
I Noticed i lost
Weight When I
Was 14. I Weighed
162 I think. Now
I Weigh 145.
I Am Happy With
That. *But i need to gain a little more weight
-





How does your body make you feel? Are you tired and/or energized in your body? Do you feel like you can take on the world? Does your body say "Take Better Care of ME?!!!" What does your body say to YOU?

Decisions & Feelings

Missing Home

Missing those early birds chirp in the window
Missing My sister giggles fill my ears
Missing my dog's feet tap the wooden floor.
Missing my bed feel me at night
 Missing Home Oh I miss it
Missing the fan next my bed hit my face with
 tiny cold bits
Missing my mom yelling about the dishes.
Missing my brother's door slam at night
 Missing Home Oh I miss it
Missing the car drive out onto the street
Missing the wooden floor crack while I walk
Missing the sheets that give me warmth
Missing the friends I feel my laughter box
 with missing oh I'm missing it.

Bad Decision

The Time I made a bad decision
was Friday night I got heavily intoxicated
for the first time and got high
and I did something terrible
and I wounded up here. I learned
that being locked up isn't fun
this isn't the life style I
want to live one bad decision
can change our out look on things
 I also learned fitting in
isn't okay and everyday I'm
here I learn something new.
I know next time that drinking/smoking
isn't cool no matter what the
circumstance is oh and your
first time doing something can
be your last moment

Good Decision

Was turning down sex to
stay a virgin even tho
I like the guy still turn
it down now I can proudly
say I'm still a virgin

Being Raped By My Brother Best Friend

I was 6 and 11 and I was Raped By my
Brother Bestfriend in my Room and it was hard
to tell my Brothers and my Mother But it did affected
me Badly so I Reely couldn't tell But it finlley Hit
me and I had tell somebody so I did

And it didn't hurt as bad as I thought
But I mean it was hard trying not to tell
But after I told I felt good
to get it of my chest. So it was good
But till this day I am doing Good with myself

-

Past Doubts Led To Future Successes

I never learned until I learned from realized mistakes
It was like life wasn't right as if it were a decorated cake
I couldn't focus on doing right, because I was still getting into fights
Then one successful glorious moment in life, changed it all
It was like life was giving me a chance to survive the fall
I spoke to to Lord who was always ready to help
From then on out I don't only pray for myself
I've learned to give to make me feel better
To not be selfish and to pray for others makes me feel as light as a feather
My faith gives me neverending hope in my journey
I try to live life freely without worry

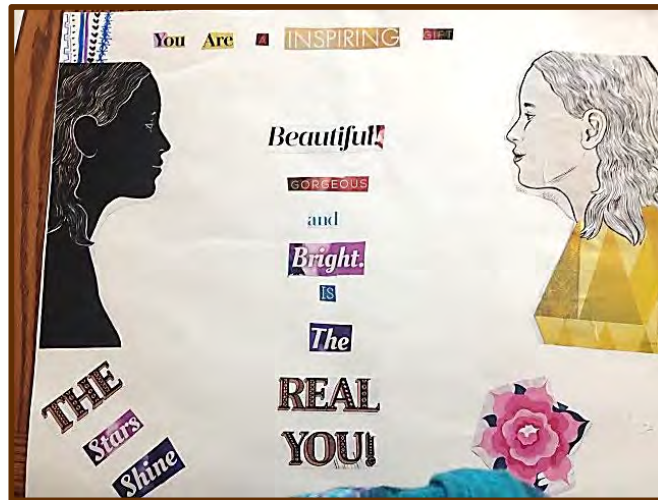
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To Be YOU

If you don't know the nature of
fear
then you can never be fearless

I say this because some days I feel
fearless. But sometimes I have
so much fear of what my future
will look like.

-



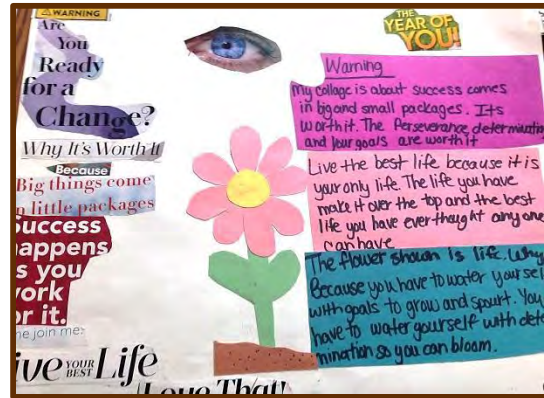
HOW
DOES
FEAR
CHANGE
A
PERSON?

Warning

My collage is about success comes in big and small packages. Its worth it. The Perseverance, determination, and your goals are worth it

Live the best life because it is your only life. The life you have make it over the top and the best life you have ever thought anyone can have

The flower shown is life. Why? Because you have to water yourself with goals to grow and spourt. You have to water yourself with determination so you can bloom.



Be A Leader
STAY Focus
You Can Do It
Sacrifice

Dont ever say you can't do it just put your mind to it.

I never think that i would be Here. I cried it out an pushed away my fears.

Being Hurt, Unloved, An Abanded

Wishing Y God put you threw it.

Trying to take your own life NOT thinking about how speacil you are!!

Being Bullied, Pushed around

Hearing the names you NOT BUT what they want

Telling you to kill yourself

You shouldnt Be Here Be Hated for you. Being yourself.

But you pray an wish everything

will be ok. But you start making smarter Choices.

Brave an smart Being who you

want an dont care what they say!!

Cause You R You♥♥

Let go the past and
see your future. Because
the next day ain't promise♥

We make mistakes
it's how we bounce back
that reflects who we are.
No matter how bad
we think we messed up...
there is still a chance.
listen to your heart! People will talk
about you and Judge
you... But their words
don't matter! Those people
don't know your story... they
can't even begin to think of how
strong you are.
Believe in yourself...
embrace your story...

I overdosed on L.S.D.
and a lot of people talked about me. Judged me, talked about
me... I lost almost all my friends...even my bf. ended up
leaving me... I got kicked out of school... My parents
lost all respect for me... I felt worthless. I cut myself...
I found comfort in guys who I knew didn't love or care for me...

I Was Nothing...
then I met my best friend ____♥ He helped me...
He was my only true friend and he made me feel loved♥
He helped me stop cutting ♥ He helped me
realize there is still a chance for me♥

-

Live life to the
fullest
Dont let people bring
You down
Nobodys Perfect

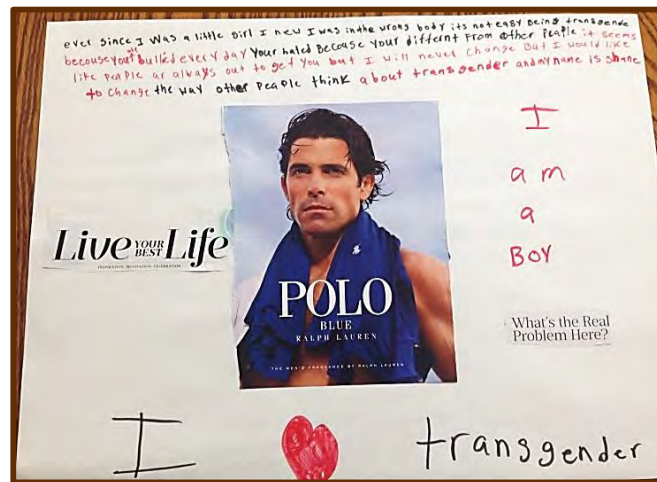
My parents always expected me to be Perfect in everything. They pushed me to be Perfect and if I failed or didnt achieve their expectations they were dissapointed. They never tried to hide it either. It really effected me for a long time, I always thought I was a dissapointment & if I messed up I would be scared to go home in fear of being Punished. It took me awhile to relize that I will never be Perfect & failure is a part of life.

-



I was only 13 when i thought I was nothing
 People bullied me because i cut my hair an
 that i was ugly They called Me Names so
 Every Day i stared at myself in the mirror
 an called myself what they did But after i
 tried to kill myself i thought about it an
 Became something Strong so i threw up The Pills.

-



Ever since I was a little girl I new I was in the wrong body its not easy being transgende
 because you are bullied every day Your hated because your differnt from other people
 it seems like people ar always out to get you but I will never change
 But I would like to change the way other people think about transgender and my name
 is Shane

-

My family judges me for
 things I have done
 and it makes me
 feel unloved alot!
 "If you judge people, you
 have no time to love them."
 -Mother Teresa-

-

I Can't Hide It, It have to COME
OUT It wont change you but it
can change your future.
There long ways to come.

"Being UnWanted"
"Being Uncared"
"Being unloved"
"An Forgotten"

Being Forgotten
an left behind, is something
that hurts.
Being left to suffer Alone,
Afraid, Hurt, Scared. But innocent.
Being Uncared for, Lost an Replaced
Judge by who you are an what you look like.
living in the Shadows of Darkness AN
Mislead.

-

I learned that
I have to be a
Leader than a
follower because I
have so many
people younger
than me looking up
to me so I have
to do what's right.

-

What I have learned about myself

I've learned that I am
beautiful

♥ I've learned that I can do
anything I set my mind to.

I've learned that I am
a good person

I've learned that I can
do it.

I've learned to never say
I can't

-

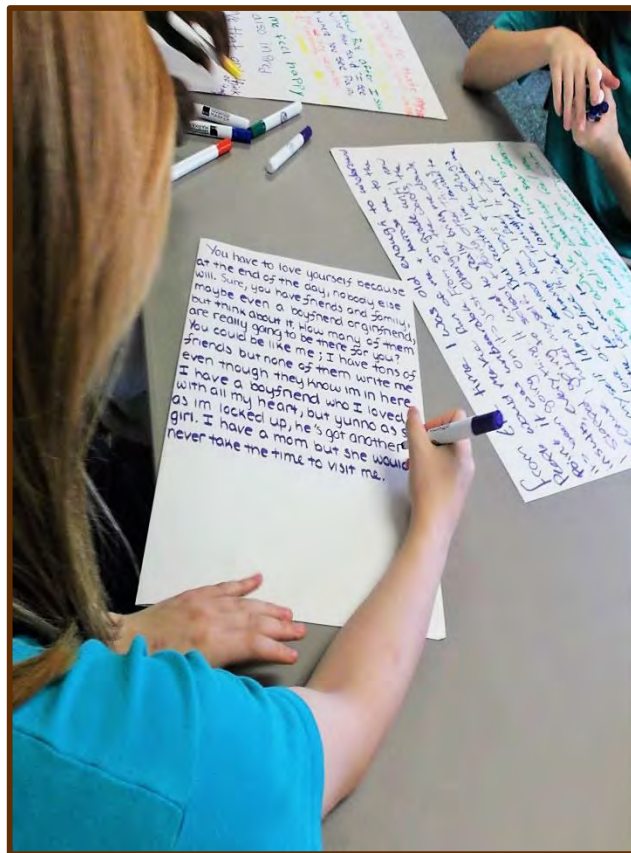
I learned
that no
matter what
mistakes
I make they
don't make
me who I
am today

-

IN Gvrc I learned...

- To accept help
- follow rules
- Be a leader
- look at the positive
- Sacrifice
- Wake up early
- Stay positive ☀

-



I learned and Gvrc

Never to Come Back!

- to accept help
- to give help when needed.

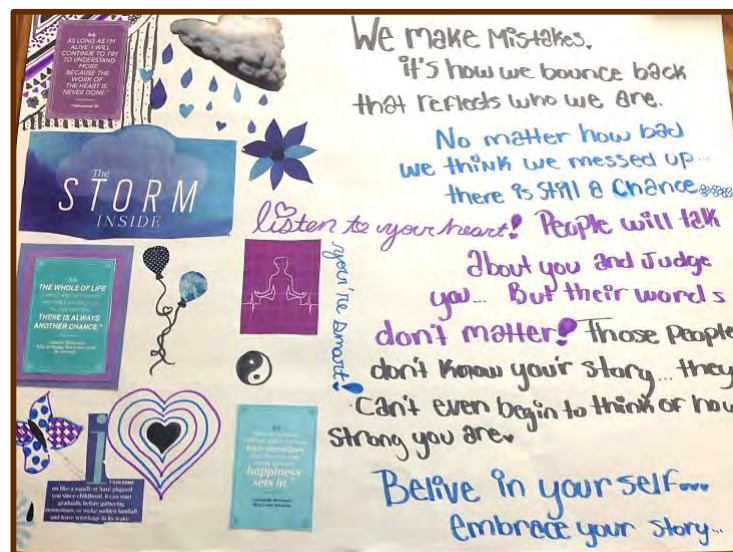
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I...Can...Change

- ♥ I Can change my attitude.
- ♥ I Can change my Bad ways.
- ♥ I Can change my life now.
- ♥ I Can change my lifestyle.

I Can change this by doing as Im told. Not getting upset for little stuff and making something of my life.

-



The decisions we make to be our truest selves. Who is your TRUEST self? What are you like when you are completely YOU wholeheartedly?



Mother Teresa Moment

"I want you to be concerned about your next door neighbor.
Do you know your next door neighbor?"

-Mother Teresa

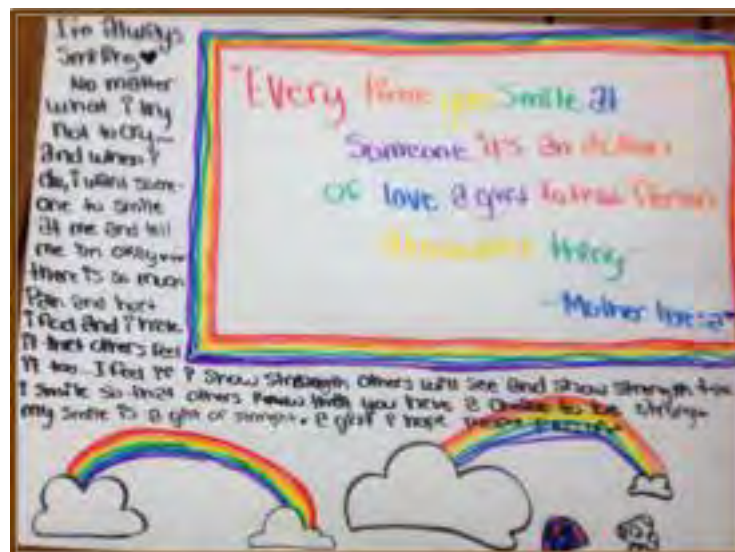
→ Help others beside yourself.

→ She saved lots of children. She went around helping kids.

To Me.... This phrase means
Are you concerned about other
people? Or are you just selfish?
Do you know who the people are
that are starving, with no clothes or
shelter. Dont be concerned on
what you want that you don't
have.

Think... I have what I need does
everybody have what they need.

-



"Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love."

-Mother Teresa

it mean's to me that when you smile at me a feel loved I feel happy because some one Loves me and cares about me I feel this way when I'm with my grandma ___ and my other family members I Love Feeling Loved becous it makes my life way better Love Shane

Let's smile for the beginning of Love

Love rocks

I ♥ Love

helping people rules

Ya Boy!!!

-

"Every time you Smile at Someone, it's an action of love, a gift to that Person, a beautiful thing."

~ Mother teresa♥

I'm always smiling ♥

No matter what... i try not to Cry... and when i do, i want some-one to smile at me and tell me im okay♥♥♥

there is so much Pain and hurt i feel and i hate it that others feel it too... I feel if i show strength others will see and show strength too. i smile so that others know that you have a choice to be strong♥ my smile is a gift of strenght, a gift i hope people pass on♥ -



"Intense Love Does Not Measure. It Just Gives!!!!♥"

I picked this phrase because the intense love That I have for my mother and my family It's not measure at all I just give it I don't think about how much I don't show how much Intense love I have for them especially for my dear Loving Mother...

-

"Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies...."

I chose this phrase because I feel like my Granny & Auntie wanted the Best for me before they left this earth and went with God So I chose this one because what ever happend with anything they always told me to Be Strong..... Love yall

-

"Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty."
-Mother Teresa

This phrase hit me deep because I spent most of my life feeling lonely, friendless and unwanted by everyone, including my family. Feeling that way is one of the worst feelings, it makes each day painful escpecially when your always sad, you feel like you have no one. I spent years feeling this way and it truley is the most. terrible. poverty. It robs you of your happiness, steals what matter the most.

-

1. "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."

-Mother Teresa

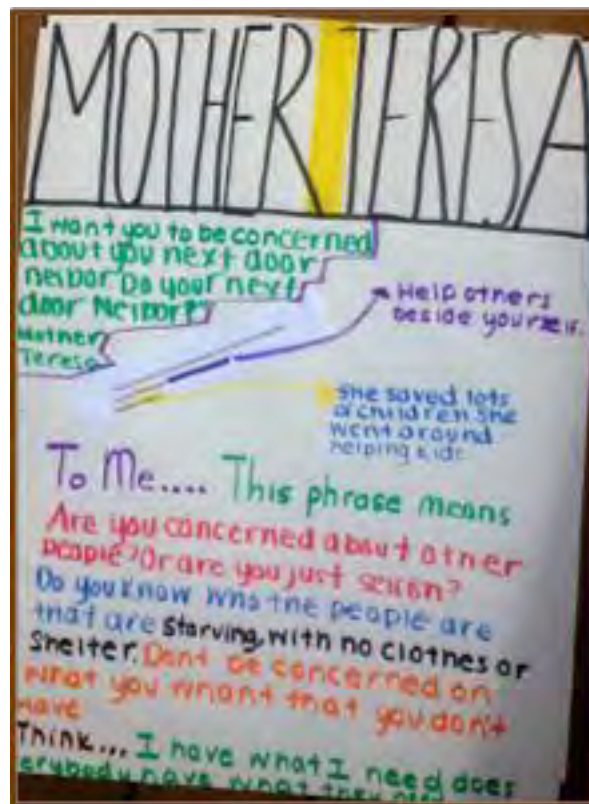
2. "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

-Mother Teresa

1.) America and its people are so at war and we forgot we have each other we have people we can gain our peace with each other.

2.) Those words we speak are good and amazing but if we actually do it, it can have an impact on others and you can be and do what echoes on others life

-





Who are the people in your life?

And how do they treat you?

People in Our Lives

My name is _____, I
am 13 years old and I
met my Dad when I was
nine. And on that day I
accomplish a goal that took
my mom and I 9 years.
Ever since then I have been
through good and bad stuff
that I'm grateful that have
happened because that's what
made me, me.

-

Mama & Daddy
Daddy did the deal,
Mama did the drugs.
Life is a
Privilege
Death is a
Promise!

-

I take Care of my
grandma because she
NEEDS me! Ever since
my dad passed away
nobody would check on
her...so I moved in ☺
I've helped her walk
around the house get in
the tub and sometimes
I help her cook♥

It makes me happy when
she smiles ☺ She always thanks
me for being there for her♥
Now that she's lose half
her memory nobody wants
to be around but I Love to
help her *
I even remind her to take
her meds!

-

pt1

Ten Toes Down

My Mama did It By Herself
Cause you was never around
Shoutout to my mama you
Know you Held it down, Thinkin
It was all my fault as I Look
around, waitin on the Bench
for you to Never even come
around Man I was Hurt and
Crying But I wasnt finna let
It get me down, Now Im Ten
Toes down Doing Better makin you
wish you was In my life Instead
of In the gutter couldnt come
out the Room cause I knew
Better got a daddy now and
He show me Better never walked
out & He treat me Better

pt2

Taught me life lessons now
I know Better, Ten Toes
Down But Im Back &
Im Better. ♥

-

life is all fun in
games till someone get
hurt. It hurt to see them
hurt, and it also hurt to
see them gone. When they gone
its nothing we can do, but
set back in cry. People
see life as a joke, but
I see it as a game we
Play and win. You only get
one life so live it when
you can. People talk about
what the world or there
life could of been, not

know that it take the
real you to make your life
the better you. last but
not lease it take us
to make the world a better place.

-

First love ♥ (Daddy)

Yeah my first love was my Daddy he was very
very sweet he changed his baby girls diapers
and he keep his girls on fleek he make sure
we look good and he keep us out the
hood Keeping it Classy we aint trashy and
he make sure thats rule My Daddy is my
Knight & Shining armor so dont try him
If he catch me messing w/ these boys
he gone fry My Daddy is the King &
im the Princess so if he exicuting
im not a witness lock em down tie em
up You can do w.e. thats not gone
change my love for my daddy
thats forever

-

This conversations getting
boring you think that you are
right but theres two sides
to every story theres a right
and a wrong shoulda listened
to my mom now im wrapped
around your finger and im
Chilling on your palm so
ladies learn from my mistakes
Just cause he buys you
dinner doesnt mean he's gonna
stay Yeah I need a break
from my phone Cause
every night on twitter all
I see is relationships goals
But no relationships
perfect If you didnt have
to fight for em would
it be worth Just imagine
if your sis was in my
shoes you know you'd
beat up the dude
Cause all the things
he put her through

So why do I stick around
this long Sometimes I
just dont know but you'll
Miss me when im gone
Realize what you lost...im gone.

-

I don't have or know anything or anyone who
Impacted my life or I impacted they life because
I'm a nobody ☹

-

My biggest Downfall was following followers
Footsteps. As i was walking one summer I
seen some kids bussing out window & smoking. I
they were cool I just bussed a window &
started talking to them & lying saying I smoked &
I really didn't. & I guess the more we hung out
the badder I gotten & the stuff I thought Ill will
never do I did. & I Got used
to it an I started doing it more, seems like I got
off focus & started being & doing bad things. School
I started hating & started yelling & cussing out
my teachers just to get kicked out to hang with
friends. But yeah this is my Biggest impact
on my life. & I just wanted to be cool & look
how it effect my life !!

-

How I Impact Others...

♥ If you know me you know I talk about
my Dad a lot, having a white Dad has been
hard but I embrace it because im proud of it
People have called him names but I honestly don't
care because I love him and im gonna be his
Daughter no matter what by being myself I
Encourage others to do the same I just want
people in the world to find the good in people Because
color is easy to spot, Character is a little harder.

"A father is someone you can
Always look up to no matter
How tall you get"

-Unknown-

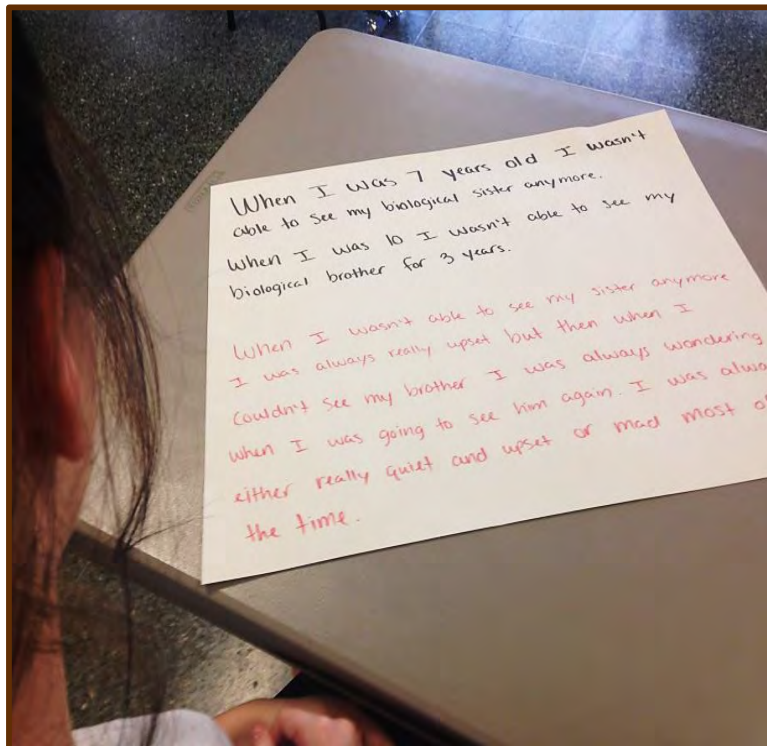
Because it gets worse before it gets better.

-

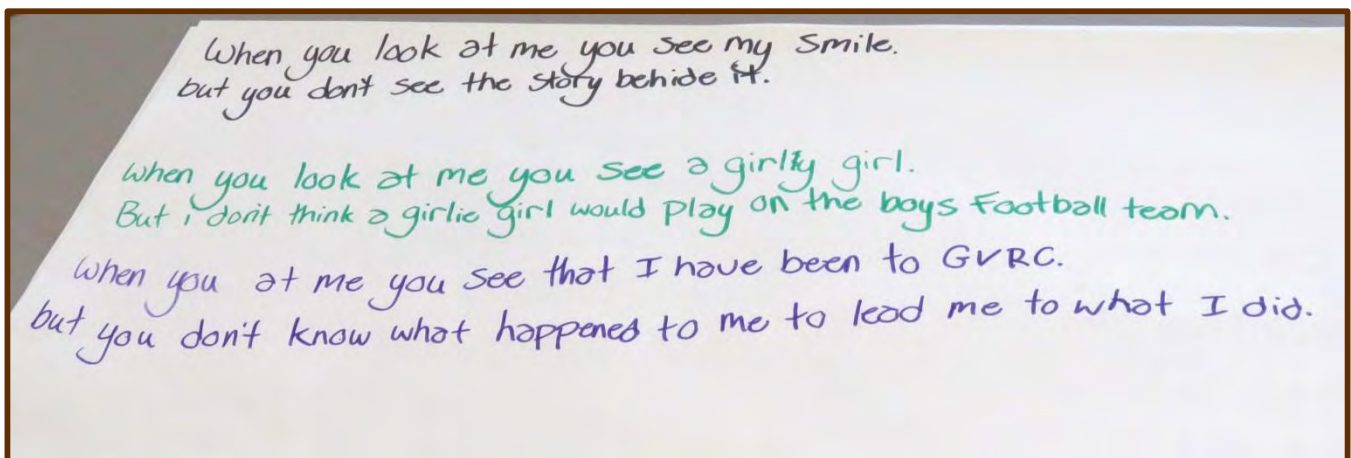
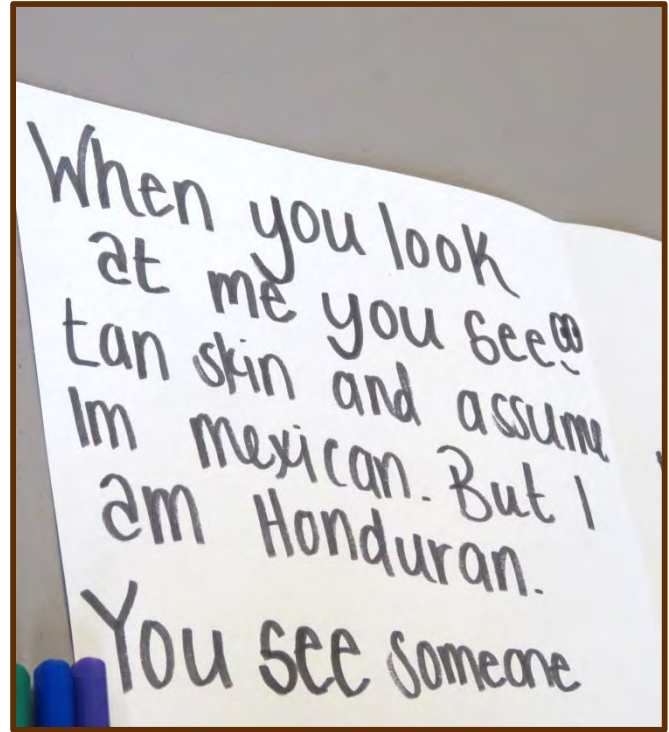
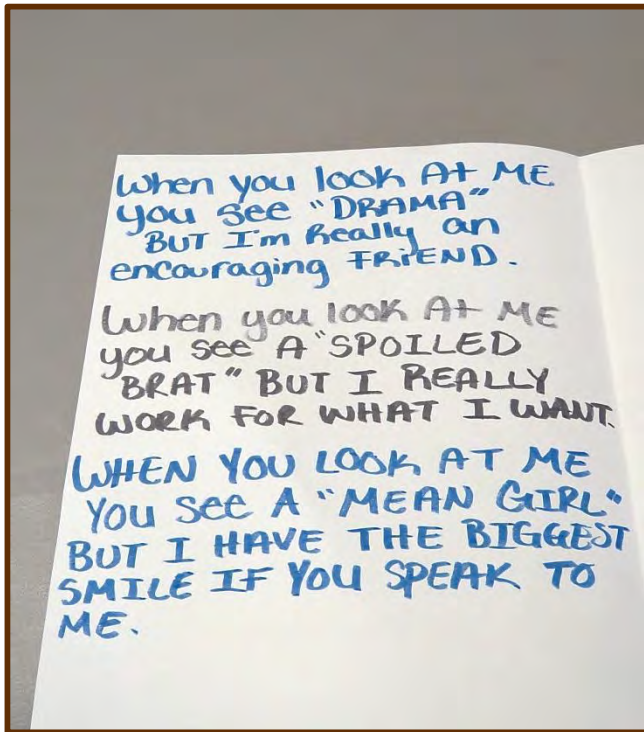
I impacted my mother
when I did good in school
For a whole year at first
I was kicked out every week
But I soon wanted to do good
so I got back in school and did
GOOD a whole year She was so
Proud of Me! ♥

My sis impacted me when she
told me by dad passed away...
But I soon thought about how much
Pain he was in so I became happy
cause he doesnt have to go through
Anymore pain!

-



What Do You See?



SERVICE



What does community look like to you & who creates the community you live in and belong to?



Be you because Everyone else is taken ♥

Giving up is not
The answer... its not
A choice.

My life is a puzzle
it won't make sense
untell you put the
pieces together.

Sadly i have drawn with Silver
and it can out red... butttt
I got away. Now I have good
Friends and I'm Happy

We all act surprised
Be we could'nt see
The hurt inside her
Eyes...

I want to
Be the reason
You smile. ☺ -

When you look at me you see my smile.
But you don't see the story behind it.

When you look at me you see a girly girl.
But, i don't think a girlie girl would play on the boys football team.

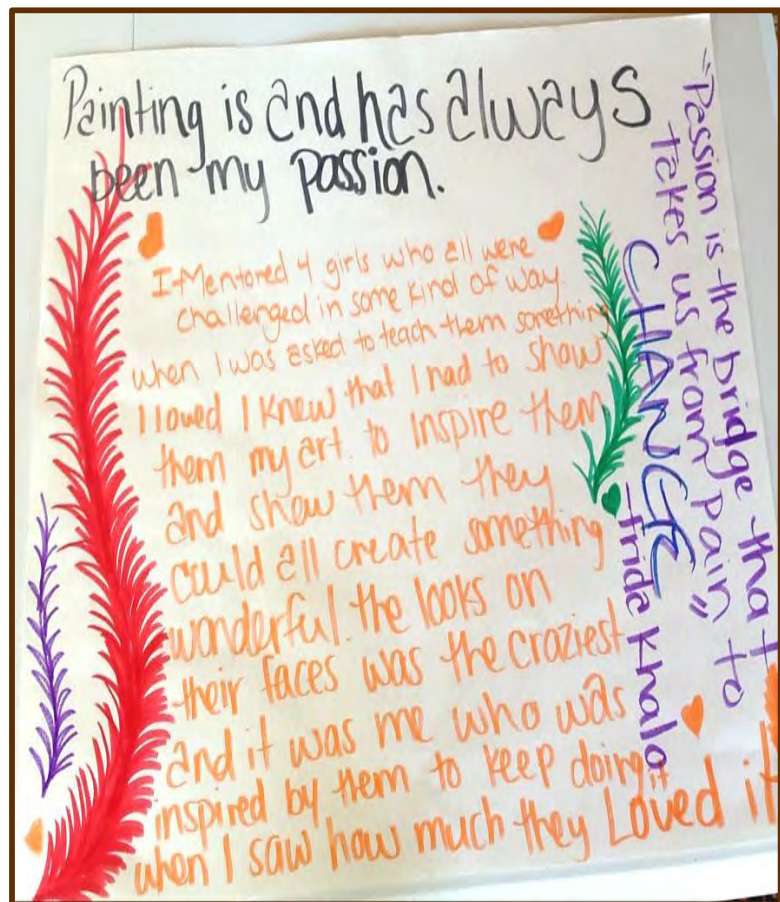
When you at me you that I have been to GVRC.
But you don't know what happened to me to lead me to what I did.

When you see me you see a popular girl.
But actually I'm just nice to everyone so I have a bunch of friends.

-

I have...
Pride* Spirit*
Respect <3
Joy<3
Peace of mind

I am...
Smart*
Loveable<3
Funny*
Amazing*
Positive<3
Ready!
Pretty*
Independent*



When you look at me you see

1. Trouble
2. A disrespectful person
3. Mean
4. Mugging all the time

But I am...

1. Nice
2. Quiet
3. Smart
4. Unpredictable!

-

When you look
At me you see ☺
tan skin and assume
im Mexican. But I
am Honduran.

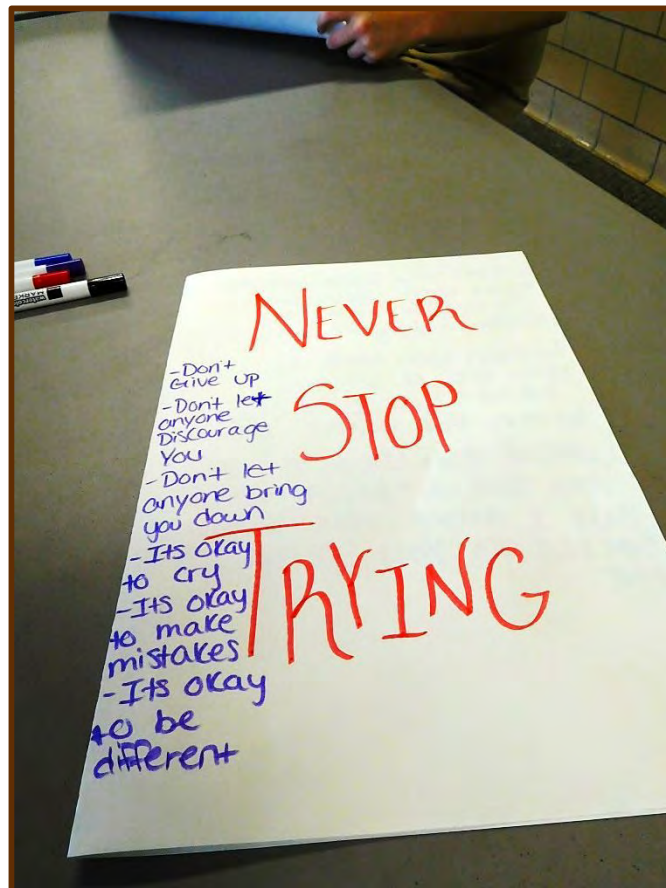
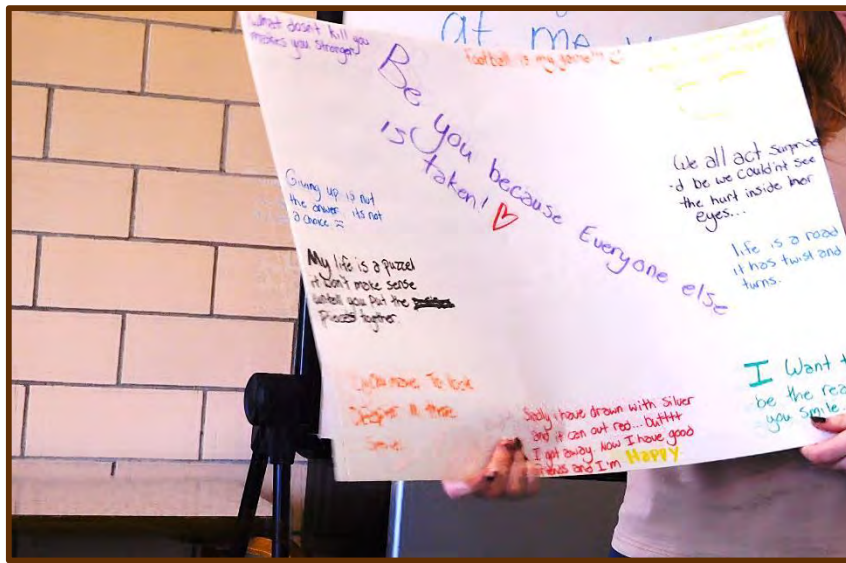
-

When you look at me
you see "DRAMA"
But I'm really an
encouraging FRIEND.

When you look at me
You see a "SPOILED
BRAT" But I REALLY
WORK FOR WHAT I WANT.

When you look at me
You see a "MEAN GIRL"
But I HAVE THE BIGGEST
SMILE IF YOU SPEAK TO
ME.

-



Flint & Using Our Feet

Better Place

I feel like, when Flint come to my mind, I think of a better place. Flint could of been much more if people would have taking better care of are City. It also could of been more jobs if they would stop taring down old jobs & just reopen them to have more jobs here. Then just fix them old buildings up.



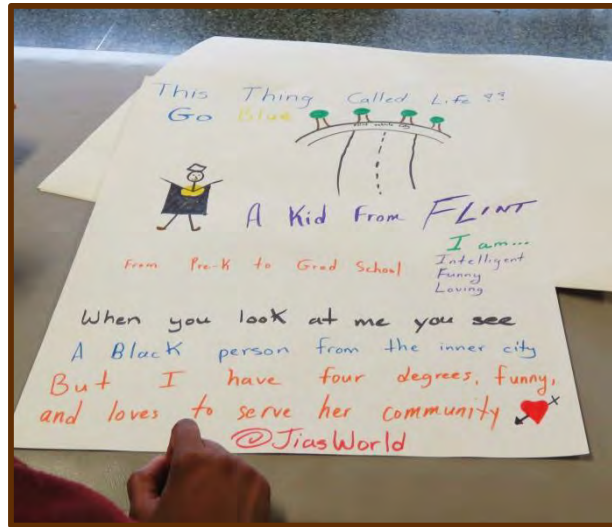
Then they could start fixing things when they see a problem finna come. They need to stop closing schools and fix them up and make them into something that that well stay open. They need to up the pay because people need to live in suport there familys & mine people can't because of the little pay they get. And thats why most people struggle if they have more then one kid & only with one job.

-

A Better Place

When Flint come to mind I think of a better place. I feel like Flint could be a better if it was not so much killing & hate in

-



Jia Ireland, (GVRC Arts Intern)

FLINT ♥ "Our City"

I want to change Flint for The Better. Why? Because I was raised here I have love for Flint and it Hurts seeing people give up on it, saying bad things.

I get Flint is getting Bad
But I feel we could change
it peice by piece. Stop the
crime rate. It hurts seeing
Body's droppin, hearing Guns
Poppin, watching plays be made.
People selling themselves on ever
corner. I feel as if we all pitch
in and Help we could change Flint
not only Flint but its Reputation.
Because Flint does have alot of
good things you just have to
clean the dirty window so
we can see through it

-

5 things about Flint

- Zeke Gundry
- Carman Ainsworth
- Military
- Home
- Claressa Shields

My brothers & sisters
inspire me to help
more.

My mom inspires me
to do better.

Young m.a inspires
me to be myself.

My Dad inspires
me to help other
people in need and
do my part in
Society. He shows
me a positive way
to live But also
how mistakes can &
will be made.

-

Flint Lives Matter

Because many people are getting killed when
it was never meant for them The other half killing over
drugs. Babies are never getting to live there lifes.
People are getting sexually abused people are getting
abused and neglated children Flint Lives Matter

-

I March
For Flint
Life's

Everyone
Life's Matter

I march for Flint Life's
Because I am sick of seeing
People loseing there life's and I'ts
not right for people to lose there
For no reason

-

Every
One
Have
Freedom
March for Freedom
Freedom
Stand up for your Freedom

lifes matter & freedom
matters and every one
should have freedom

-

I March for
Health!

I march for my families health because
my whole family has been in the hospital for something
and everybody had to take time to get
better. I want their health
to be better and get better
because a lot of my uncles
have pasted away from
health problems.

-



Why are you Here?

So, who are you?

I'm 24 years old. I'm a Social Justice Activist. I'm currently pursuing my Master Degree in Women & Gender Studies. I'm a YouTuber and very outspoken. I'm a daughter, granddaughter, friend, mentor, and proud Fur Mother.

Why are you here?

I'm here to spread love, compassion and Social Justice. I'm here to give, to smile and be happy among other lively beings. I'm here to have fun and experience life through trial and error.

What did you have come here to do?

I came to spread LOVE, HAPPINESS, JOY, LAUGHTER, SOCIAL JUSTICE, and COMPASSION to all lively beings and the world.

How will you change history?

I will change history by simply being myself. I will lead by example. I will make my mistakes, but I will learn from my mistakes. My life's purpose will be to live, learn, love, and spread Social Justice.

@JiasWorld

~Jia Ireland, (GVRC Arts Intern)

Why are you
here?

I don't know
for what im
here exactly
for but I
know I will
be and do
something
great...

I want to help
people either by
becoming a C.O.,
cosmetologist or a
R.N. I want to help
them because I
recieved lots of
help & I want to
give back & do
great things
for them.

-

Who am I?

I'm a strong black woman!!

I'm here....?

To make the world a better
Place ♥

I came...??

To save a life, And
Create a life!

That alone?

Will change history, one
effect on the present...

Could
Change
The Whole
World

-

I March
for my
Brother...

Survivor
Survivor

Brother and Sister ♥

Forever

And

Always-

Who am I?

I am _____ a 15 year
old girl that comes from a
unique family in Color and Culture
I have a bright future that I
plan to take advantage of.

Why im here!

Im here because God knew
I could do something great.
He also knew I would take
advantage of my oppurtunities

What I Came to do.

I Came to be a leader, in the
military, at home and everywhere
else.

I Will Change history by...

Im not sure how I will change
history but I want it to have to do
with interacial marriages and
equality Instead of black lives
matter I want human lives to matter.

-

I March Because....

Family is Family

Before I was born my bio Dad went to prison for murder! By the age of one my mom married my Dad (step) the only thing that made it any different was he white you wouldn't think it would be a big deal but walking in stores we get lots of Dirty looks and comments America fought so hard for racial equality and still this happens even more ironic is that majority of our Dirty looks and comments are from black people men and women. NOW I have 3 mixed brothers and 1 mixed sister that at times struggle with there identity I feel that they should not want to be Just white or Just black because they are both! I want them to embrace both sides of there culture I want not only my siblings to embrace where they come from but everyone as for my real Dad I don't talk or have any contact with him since I was one He's been my Dad regardless of his color and even though im not mixed I enjoy him telling & teaching me of his culture!!! belifs and lifestyle

-

I March For

... health issues that don't
affect men, but women
Can't get affordable
treatment

...my nieces whose
voices are not yet being
heard, but whose lives
are being impacted

...those who are still
accused of "asking for it"

...to bring on awareness
and force education on
those who won't
acknowledge their
privilege

~Ella Thorp, (GVRC Arts Staff)

Who am I?

I am _____ and I am 14 years old. I am very observant and a good listener. I am very mature and I love helping people.

Why am I here

I am here
to make a change I don't know
what exactly, but I just know
I am here to make a change.

What did I Come here to do?

I came here to be someone
who works in the mental health
field.

What will I do to change history?

I'll probably do something to help people ♥

-



How To Be Me ♥ Sunshine

Let go the negativity & be yourself♥

Live life and be successful♥

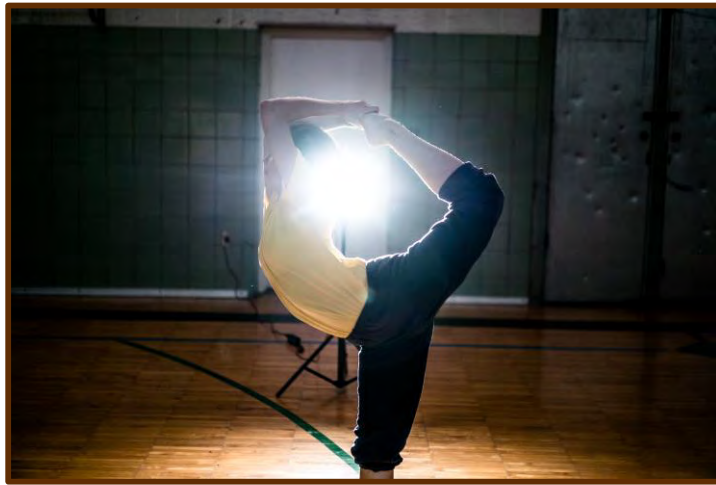
Be the Bigger person
cause it's people in this
world that think they not worth it♥

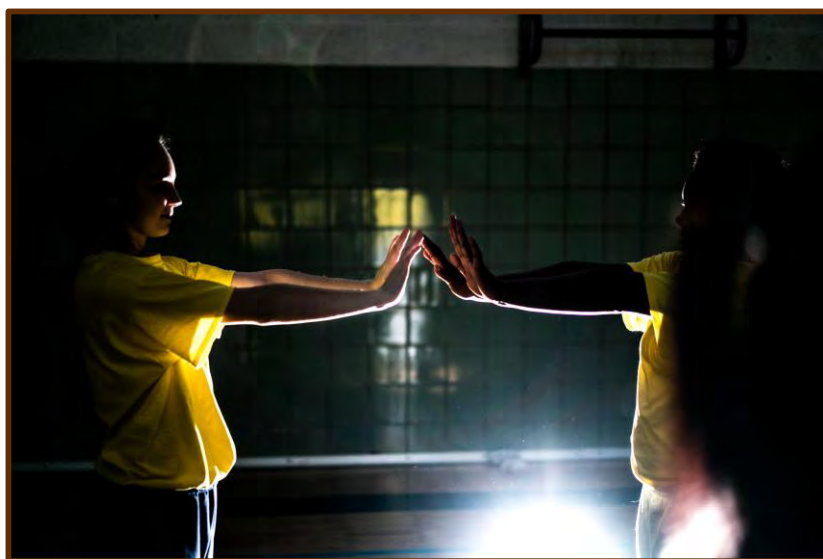
life is NOT perfect but
at least MAKE it worth it♥

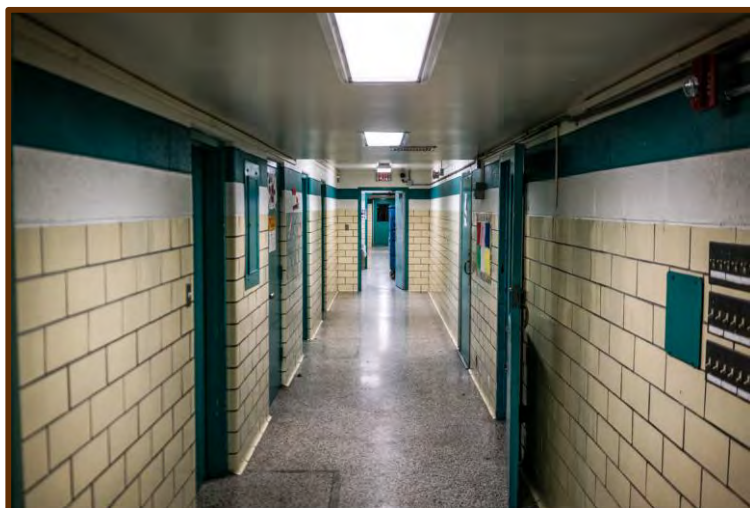
Be your Best put it in your Heart♥
Love Yourself First!!

-

The photos that follow are from the Dance Workshops conducted by Emma Davis & Melanie Schott *Photography by Zack Canepari







THANK YOU!

The Buckham/GVRC Share Art Project is a collaboration between the Buckham Fine Arts Project and the Genesee Valley Regional Center. A special thank you goes to the hard-working and dedicated staff and administration of GVRC. Without their help and cooperation, these workshops would not have been possible. And of course thank you to all of our participating artists, student assistants, and advisors: Erica Britt, Kyle Clark, Traci Currie, Emma Davis, Cakhilah Durden, Carol Gardner, Dan Gerics, Steven Hull, Jia Ireland, Heather Laube, Todd Onweller, Joyce Piert, Jade Ponds, Jill Rosenbaum, Melanie Schott, and Ella Thorp.

~Shelley Spivack, Project Director

~C. L. Fields, Project Coordinator