



## SOURCES OF STRENGTH SPRING NEWSLETTER

May | 2021

### March 31<sup>st</sup> Art Mural Session

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Sources of Strength Peer Leaders and Adult Advisors met at the Health Department to collaborate on art murals for the What Helps Me Campaign! Together, the group created six banners that displayed words, images, and designs to convey what helps us cope with the Big 3 Emotions.

The banners were hung throughout the COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic in the Ascend One building to promote messages of hope, help, and strength to community members as they walk through the clinic.



### Spring Campaign: What Helps Me

For the Spring 2021 campaign, Howard County Sources of Strength Peer Leaders chose to focus on *What Helps Me*. The What Helps Me Campaign is centered around emotional regulation and finding strengths that help students deal with negative emotions.

Since all students have experienced one of the Big Three emotions of anger, anxiety, and feeling down/depressed, the What Helps Me Campaign helps individuals identify which of these emotions they wrestle with the most and which strengths function as positive and healthy coping strategies for them.

As Sources of Strength peer leaders, we want to normalize the discussion of coping mechanisms, rather than focusing only on the negative emotions we experience.



The final Sources of Strength meeting for the 2020-2021 school year will be May 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm. Peer Leaders can swing by the Howard Co. Health Department from 4-6 pm after the meeting to pick up their "graduation" goodie bag!

Any PL interested in helping plan for the 2021-2022 school year is encouraged to join the Student Advisory Group! Email Leah at [lbulka@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:lbulka@howardcountymd.gov) if interested. 😊



## April 21<sup>st</sup> Community Sharing Event: What Helps Me

Sources of Strength Peer Leaders facilitated a Community Sharing Session for Howard County residents of all ages to discuss what's helped us cope and connect during the 2020-2021 school year.

On April 21, Sources of Strength hosted a Community Sharing Event: What Helps Me. Howard County students, parents, teachers, and stakeholders joined Sources of Strength to share about the challenges they have faced during COVID-19 and what coping skills and relationships have helped them persevere over the last year.

Peer Leaders facilitated an evening of icebreakers, storytelling, and breakout room discussions alongside SOS trainer Dan Adams and SOS Adult Advisors.

Prior to the event, Sources of Strength distributed a community survey to learn what it's been like to navigate mental health challenges for both youth and adults. Peer Leaders and Adult Advisors shared these stories to give voice to the nearly 100 community members who completed the survey.

Sources of Strength was honored to showcase the personal stories of Joseline, NAMI Parent Advocate, and two SOS Peer Leaders, Jasmine and Hashini. We are grateful to everyone who shared their

stories of resilience and connection during hard times!

Youth and adults also had the opportunity to debrief and share in small groups about their coping strategies and stories of connection.

The event concluded with a Call to Connection – check out what you can do to promote connectedness in your community below!

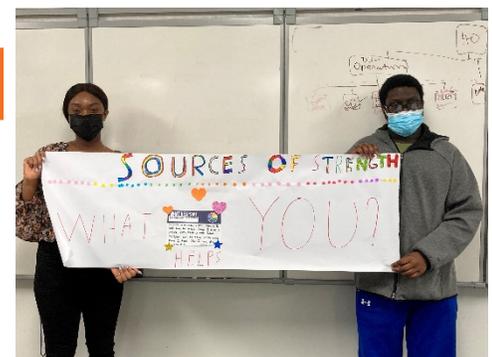
We would like to thank everyone who participated in, attended, or spread the word about the event!



### CALL TO CONNECTION

When you leave here today, we challenge you to practice generosity and gratitude:

- Send sincere messages of encouragement or thanks to a friend
- Surprise a neighbor with a homemade card
- Journal 3 things you are grateful for
- Reach out to a friend or family member you haven't spoken to in awhile



Want to join Sources of Strength for the 2021-2022 school year? Complete this [Interest Form](#).

*"If we can share our story with someone who responds with empathy and understanding, shame can't survive." – Brené Brown*



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