

FREE 
YOUR MIND

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Lead author

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(they/them)

Director of Accessibility

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our story:

Free Your Mind Mental Health Society (FYM) is a Calgary-based not-for-profit organization. Starting April 2018, our founders recognized the severity of the misinformation and under-education surrounding youth mental health. FYM believes in the power of genuine youth voice. We speak out about mental health through webinars, blogging, and community events.

Three years ago, Victory Angeli founded Free Your Mind. At the time, Victory was only 17 years old. Free Your Mind was never intended to be a long-lasting program, much less an incorporated society. Victory, who had suffered from mental health complications for over a decade, simply wanted to assemble a team and host an event dedicated to mental health education..

Victory's struggle with poor mental health began at the age of 5. At that time, their family immigrated from China. As a visible minority, Victory was often ridiculed for their mannerism and appearance. They continued to suffer through junior high, where they underwent two years of ceaseless sexual harassment. While they didn't know it at the time, Victory suffered from depression and two anxiety disorders. Along the way, Victory learned the value of resiliency and community. Now, Victory works hard to overcome their struggles and to embrace who they are, including their non-binary gender identity.

In June of 2019, the founders of FYM hosted Project Mindfulness, the education event that Victory yearned to see. Free Your Mind evolved from an ad hoc initiative to an ongoing project.

our legacy continues:

FYM's legacy continued through the fiscal year of 2023. Its team leaders built up organizational capacity and identified new areas of priority. FYM confirmed a partnership with Kickstand, an integrated youth mental health hub based in Alberta. FYM members continue to produce blogs as a part of the Speak Your Mind project, and they disseminate multimedia content through a brand new video creation team.





our model:

The three key values defining Free Your Mind are **awareness**, **understanding**, and **mindfulness**.

- **Awareness:** mental health literacy is the foundation of effective advocacy. FYM aims to educate the public - with a focus on youth audiences - about the basics of wellness.
- **Understanding:** mental health advocacy is a community affair. Empathy and human compassion are at the forefront of FYM's projects.
- **Mindfulness:** FYM's goal is to foster a society where every young person is in tune with their own thoughts, attitudes, and emotions. Youth would proactively address their needs by seeking out the appropriate support for their circumstances.

our role:

FYM is not a service provider. We do not claim to be psychologists, therapists, or coaches. Rather, we lend authentic youth voice to a heavily adult-dominated sphere and enrich relevant discourse. We exist in the mental health space purely as peer educators, and we are committed to learning on the go.



FYM recognizes that anti-oppression work is an indefinite commitment, and that equity measures are more than boxes to check. We invest in professional equity, diversity, and inclusion training for all volunteers, so our team is up to date on new ideas in social justice. We recognize that we cannot undertake social activism alone, and we call on our allies to share expertise, make space for under-served youth, and interrogate their privileges.

on equity:

FYM is committed to a plurality of anti-oppression practices, including antiracism, decolonization, and gender justice. We recognize that marginalized groups, like Black, transgender, and queer youth, face systemic discrimination that negatively impact mental health. We celebrate the resilience and healing that historically disempowered groups have achieved and continue to uphold. We do our part by challenging our own privileges and speaking candidly about intersectional systemic inequalities impacting youth mental health outcomes.

on diversity:

Our volunteers embody a range of lived experiences across genders, sexualities, ethnicities, and learning philosophies. FYM believes that our differences are our strengths, and we are committed to learning from differing perspectives. We strive to responsibly center underrepresented voices and leave space for those with lived experience of certain oppressions.

on inclusion:

Our commitment to inclusion extends beyond internal activities. At FYM, we strive for deeply accessible programming. We communicate information in plain language, offer cost-free events, and foster environments where everyone feels welcome.

Free Your Mind was founded in Calgary, Alberta, where the majority of our members still reside. In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that we live, work and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Iyârhe Nakoda Nations, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta District 6, and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.



future directions:

In the 2024 fiscal year, SYM will provide more rigorous research training to all volunteers. Targeted skills include database navigation, textual analysis, and media literacy. We hope to translate contemporary peer-reviewed science into plain language, accessible to readers as young as 12. SYM will maintain its authentic youth expression, where writers come across as reliable yet also relatable.

SYM is discussing knowledge translation strategies with our partner organizations. We hope to match the number of blogs published in 2023, and to double our readership by the end of 2024.

about:

The **Speak Your Mind Program (SYM)** is a social media and blogging campaign amplifying youth voice. SYM provides youth with an accessible platform to share their thoughts on diverse topics related to mental health. We encourage individual initiative, creativity, and innovation when we produce content under this branch of operations.

Speak Your Mind obtains our content from personal reflections and youth-directed research. Our volunteers draw on their own experience and academic sources to produce cohesive pieces of writing. Our Director of Speak Your Mind reviews each blog for coherence and factual reliability before publication. The final product is disseminated through our website and social media accounts.

impact:

In the 2023 fiscal year, the SYM team published **23** blogs online, authored by **6** youth volunteers, and earned **10 986** views on the FYM website. The SYM team gained **37** new followers on their unique Instagram page, and earned **16 145** impressions.

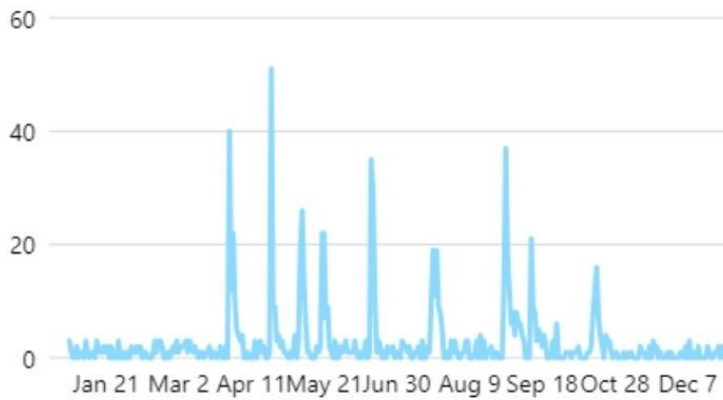


digital analytics:

Reach

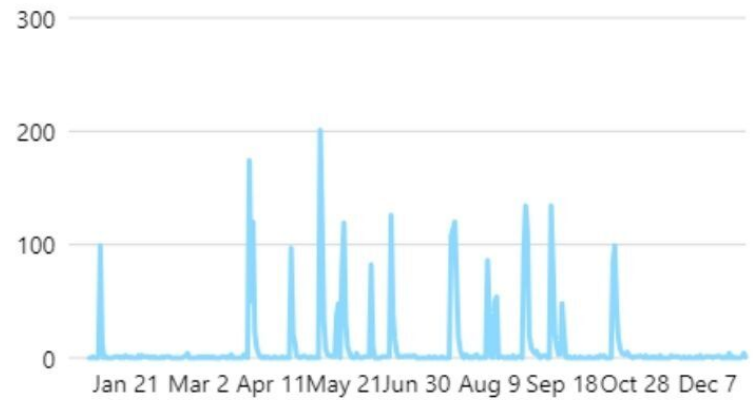
Facebook reach ⓘ

440 ↑ 29.4%



Instagram reach ⓘ

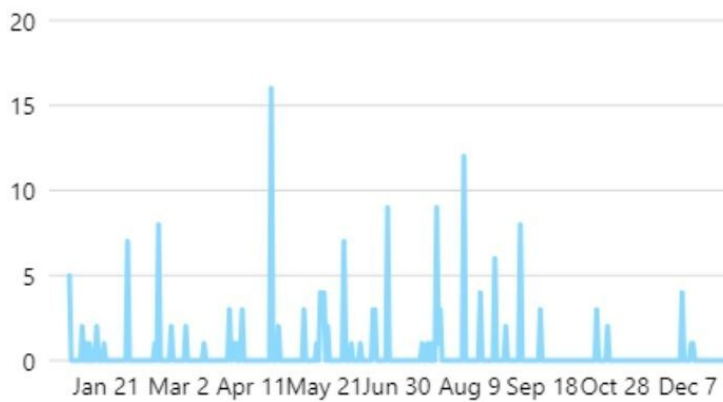
671 ↑ 41.6%



Visits

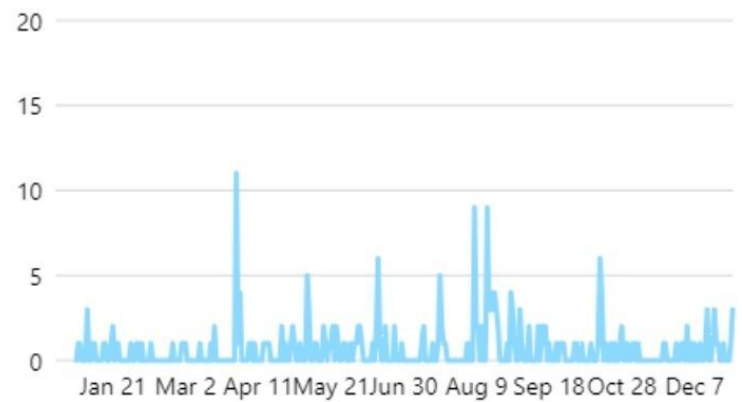
Facebook visits ⓘ

163 ↓ 51.8%



Instagram profile visits ⓘ

239 ↑ 21.3%

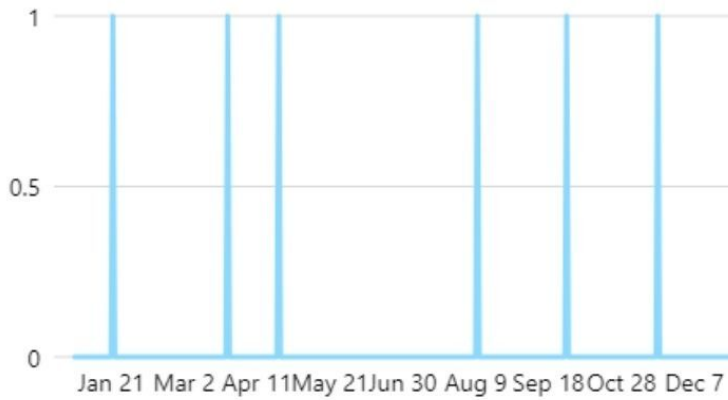


digital analytics:

New likes and follows

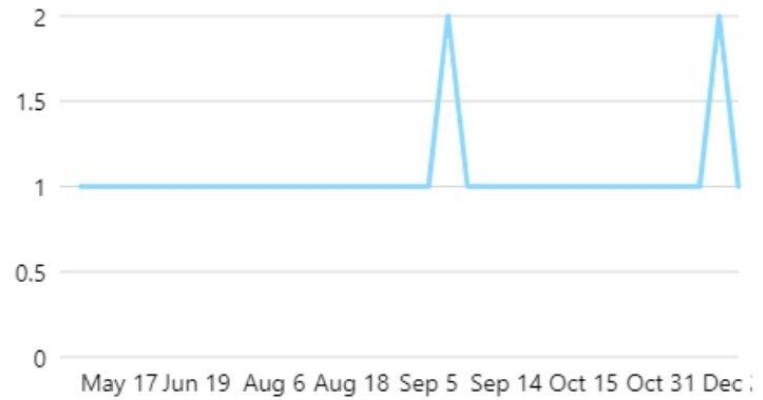
Facebook Page new likes ⓘ

6 ↑ 20%



New Instagram followers ⓘ

37 _



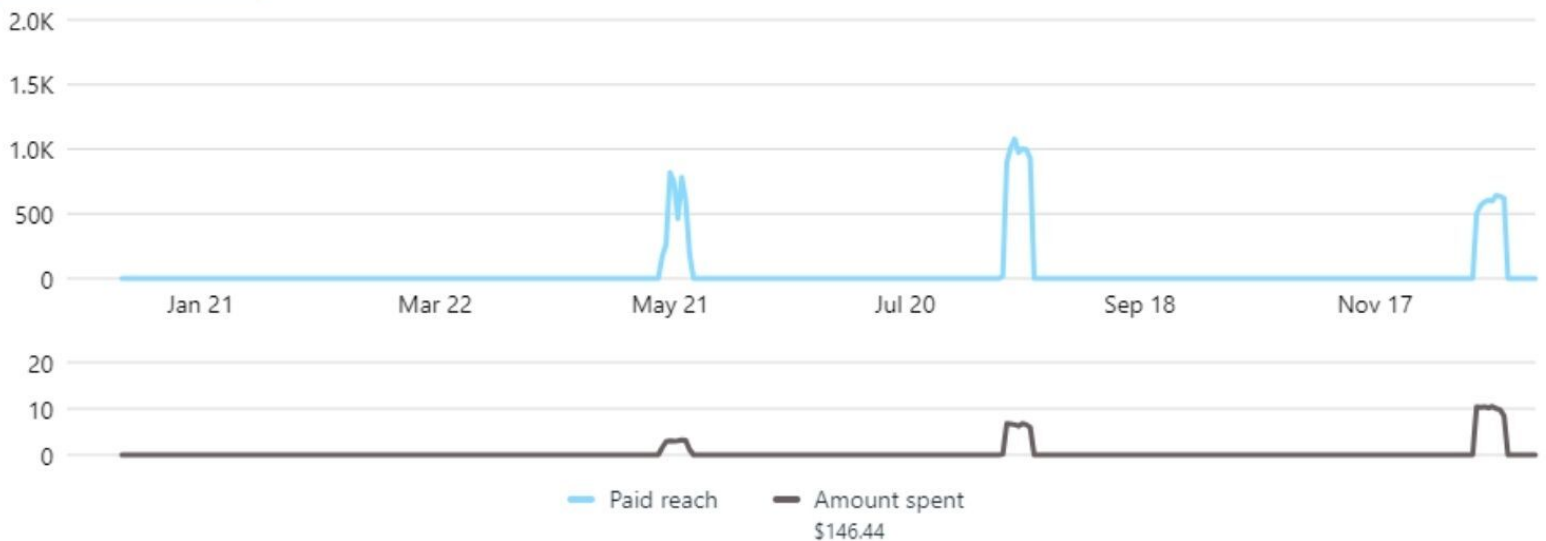
Ad trends

Paid reach ⓘ

11,519 ↑ 100%

Paid impressions ⓘ

16,145 ↑ 100%





about:

The Video Creation and Editing Team is the newest branch of FYM. Volunteers distill written content - such as SYM blogs - into bite-sized visual media. We are building up our presence on YouTube to engage a wider variety of audiences, and to provide content for those who may struggle with reading.

impact:

In the 2023 fiscal year, the Video Creation Team published **6** videos online, co-created by **4** youth volunteers, earning **916** views on our YouTube channel and **25 201** impressions.

We expect our reach to grow significantly as we expand the Video Creation Team, and as we refine our craft. We are moving beyond summaries of blogging content to include more original youth voice, fresh animations, and incorporating the video essay format.

in 2024:

FYM looks forward to growing our Video Creation team in 2024. We are tapping into members' expertise in video essay production to bring forth original, long-form content. We hope to produce a minimum of one video every two months while making improvements to our current quality. We hope to maintain a constant growth in our viewership throughout the coming months.











digital analytics: youtube

Channel analytics

Overview Content Audience Research

Your channel got **916 views** in the last 365 days

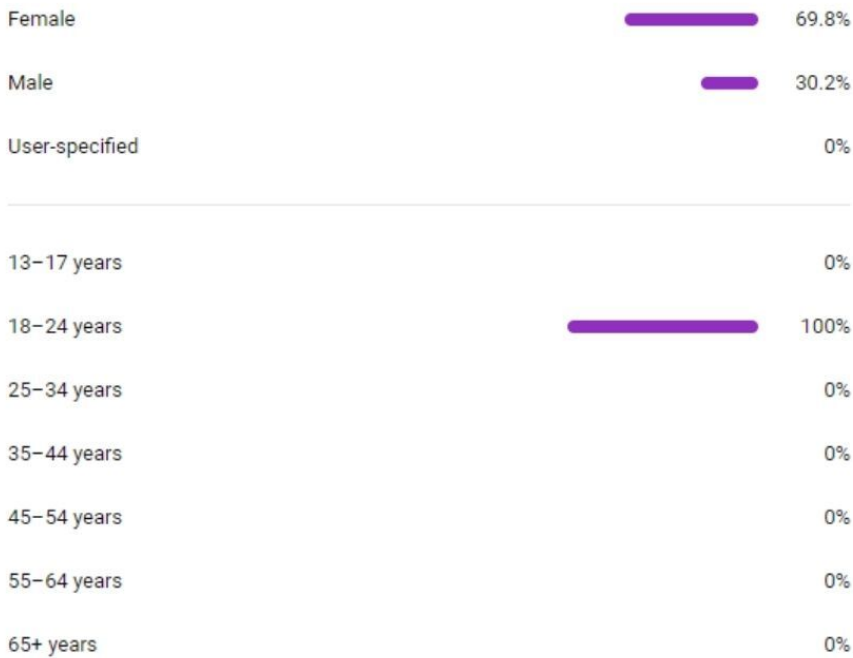


Content	Views ↓	Average view duration	Average percentage viewed
<input type="checkbox"/> Total	925	0:49	12.5%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Do the Characters from Winnie the Pooh Represent Dif...	689 74.5%	0:49	12.1%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Our Story Free Your Mind	50 5.4%	0:47	34.5%
<input type="checkbox"/>  3 Brain Tips and Tricks to Improve Your Brain Efficiency	42 4.5%	0:57	31.4%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Seasonal Affective Disorder Free Your Mind Initiative	32 3.5%	1:03	26.4%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Setting Boundaries - Free Your Mind Mental Health Soc...	24 2.6%	0:17	31.6%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Social Media Habits	19 2.1%	0:13	18.1%
<input type="checkbox"/>  A Glimpse into what Therapy Sessions May Look Like ...	15 1.6%	0:34	12.7%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Anxiety Management FYM Blog Summary Animatic	13 1.4%	0:30	15.2%
<input type="checkbox"/>  take a break. you need it. here's how.	11 1.2%	0:16	28.7%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Adjusting to Life After Lockdown Free Your Mind Pod...	6 0.7%	0:14	1.1%

digital analytics: youtube

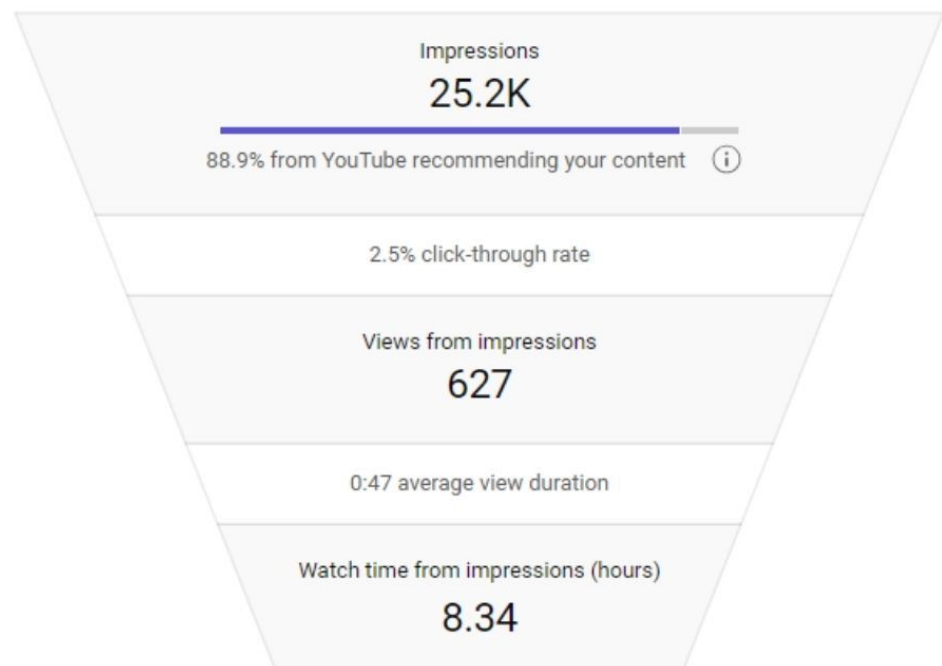
Age and gender

Views · Last 365 days



Impressions and how they led to watch time

Data available Dec 28, 2022 – Dec 27, 2023 (365 days)



finances:

Free Your Mind Mental Health Society
Statement of Activities
 January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023

Revenue	
Sponsorship (Note 1)	\$ 3,945.75
Total	\$ 3,945.75
Expenses	
Recruitment (Note 2)	\$ 184.78
Event Promotion (Note 3)	\$ 106.03
Software Subscriptions (Note 4)	\$ 238.94
Honouraria (Note 5)	\$ 3,500.00
Total	\$ 4,029.75
Net Income (Note 6)	\$ -

Note 1: Sponsorship by Kickstand, a partner nonprofit.

Note 2: Meta ads for start of year member recruitment.

Note 3: Meta ads to promote online events.

Note 4: Includes subscriptions to Canva and Hostinger (website host).

Note 5: \$250 annual award for every volunteer active for >4 months.

Note 6: Any outstanding payments are pending reimbursement.

Please note that Free Your Mind operates on a reimbursement system, where we receive full financial compensation for all program related spending from Kickstand. Free Your Mind does not retain any liquid or transferable assets.

Free Your Mind Mental Health Society's financial statements, for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, are reported by Victory Angeli and Debadrita Chowdhury, to whom have been delegated the responsibility of auditing all financial statement.



about:

The Events Team is FYM's longest-running branch. It is an extension of the work done by FYM's youth founders, who hosted Project Mindfulness in summer 2019. FYM's Events Team consists of passionate volunteers who plan, organize, and execute education-based initiatives on youth mental health, accessible to the Canadian public. The Events Team went online following the emergence of COVID-19, and it is pursuing a hybrid planning approach for 2024.

impact:

In the 2023 fiscal year, FYM's Events Team organized **4** unique projects, consisting of **2** webinars and **2** podcasts. These initiatives engaged **6** youth volunteers, and reached **21** people outside of FYM. Maintained by the Events Team, Free Your Mind's Instagram page gained **122** new followers, and **21 308** impressions.

future directions:

In 2024, FYM's Events Team strives to publish 6 webinars through a partner organization's platform (Kickstand Connect). We are diverting resources away from podcasts to focus on our live offerings. FYM believes that authentic youth voice sets us apart, and we are committed to quality webinar production blending reliable research, youth-led discussions, and audience engagement. Our target number for total participants in webinars over the next 12 months is **120**.

significance:

The Events Team is FYM's direct liaison to our community partners. In 2023, our webinars were the key deliverable presented to Kickstand. We host our content on their platform, Kickstand Connect, which provides secure conferencing and access to Kickstand's network on top of our own.

As COVID-19 restrictions are eased, FYM's Events Team will complement our digital initiatives with in-person projects. We are planning for an educational meet-and-greet with Albertan mental health service providers. This event will most likely take place in Edmonton around August 2024.

our evaluations:

FYM employs ongoing methods to assess the effectiveness and impact of our various programs. We strongly value feedback from our volunteers and members of the public. We collect programmatic insight through a variety of means:

- **Member feedback forms:** These consist of Likert-style measurements and open-ended questions. Feedback forms are formally distributed twice a year to all volunteers. Respondents are asked to describe the teamwork dynamics, cultural atmosphere, perceived strengths, and areas of improvement within the organization. All information collected is de-identified and centrally stored on a secure drive.
- **Individual check-ins:** FYM's directors, including members of the executive, conduct regular one-on-one check-ins with interested personnel. We host these meetings up to three times a year. Conversations are open-ended and solutions-driven, tailored to volunteers' individual needs.
- **Community commentary:** our team reads all comments sent to our social media pages, website, and 'info' email. We take public commentary into consideration and proactively meet the needs of our audience. Our executive team also meets with community partners for feedback, such as during end of year check-ins with Kickstand.

testimonies:

"The best aspect of this organization is how it is led by students, with us being in the age group where mental health is one of the most important things, we are able to make projects, blogs with our perspective attracting other students. We are also able to make friends and as students we have a lot in common making it very easy to interact and have conversations with each other." - Youth Volunteer

"I really enjoy the sense of community created that I have among fellow events team members and love the gratification of completing projects together. I also love the different perspectives that everyone is able to bring to the group and really value our diversity." - Youth Volunteer

contact us:

This report is the work of Free Your Mind's Executive Team. It was approved by the Board of Directors in December 2023.



For general inquiries, please email info@freeyourmindinitiative.com.

For urgent messages, please contact our Director of Accessibility at victory.angeli@freeyourmindinitiative.com

For more information about Free Your Mind, please visit our website at www.freeyourmindinitiative.com.