



Inquiry into hate in the pandemic: Hearing transcript

Transcription prepared by BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

Presentation date: February 2022

Presenting organizations: Youth Talk Nation

[ORGNAME] attendees: Franco Ng, Jonathan Kong

BCOHRC¹ attendees: Human Rights Commissioner Kasari Govender, Sarah Khan, Meghan Toal, Guuduniia La Boucan

Please note that third-party personal information has been removed from this transcript by BCOHRC staff.

[Introductory comments by Human Rights Commissioner Kasari Govender not included in transcript.]

Franco Ng: Wonderful, thank you so much Kasari, for your wonderful introductions and providing us this platform to really share our story, our mission, but also further the conversation around exactly what you spoke of, this is combating hate.

So just again for brief introductions, my name is Franco, I am the founder and also now a chair of the board for Youth Talk Nation which is a youth run nonprofit here in the lower mainland. We partner with around 20 different high schools where we create innovative youth reports to address local community issues from a youth perspective, and we take these reports and we empower youth to share this with their local government officials to see how they can further participate in the conversation and build a brighter future for their generation.

On a personal capacity I recently am also the organizational chair for the Liberal Party of Canada's board directors here in BC and I also sit on the board for the CBC advisory board for Richmond, with a mission really to further highlight Asians within mainstream media and how we can further our voices. And today, the main core of our presentation is really to talk about the work that we performed and are still performing around combating anti-Asian hate and the rise of it last year during the pandemic.

Personally, you know a story that I like to mention and tell which really hits home, is **[third party personal information removed]** and you know in my capacity, both within Youth Talk Nation and the community roles that I've played, a lot of the work that I do is empowering ethnic communities and sharing my

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perspective of how we can get more ethnic minorities involved in governance and community leadership. And one thing that I've noticed is that during the rise of anti-Asian hate we lacked leadership, and you know visual leadership within the Asian community specifically East Asian community, to really take on a role of speaking up, and I think this was extremely saddening and disappointing because if you don't have someone that represents your community speak up within leadership, it's very difficult to combat, you know, sentiments within the community and that's something that, you know, I've noticed personally and my friends noticed as well. And later on we're going to share a little bit about an initiative that we created here at Youth Talk Nation to not only combat, you know, the present hate, but also how we prevent it, and as a youth organization today we hope to share that perspective of "How do we empower and educate the next generation the future generations to ensure that they're equipped with the right tools but also with the inspiration to really combat hate, and to really become the leaders of tomorrow's future?"

So with that, I also want to pass it off to Jonathan here and have him introduce himself and the work that he has performed.

Jonathan Kong: Well, good morning everyone, and thank you for taking time for us to share our stories with you. My name is Jonathan Kong and we acknowledge that we're on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations here in Vancouver. My background is in academic, in academia and also I've worked previously at Queen's University in the international office and the Vice-Provost internationals portfolio as well, and I've had the privilege to interact with many different ethnicities across different lines and had the opportunity to travel around the world. And I've experienced hate myself on several occasions throughout my life and that has been a really sort of a moment of reflection because we-- I think that a lot of this hate stems from misunderstanding or lack of understanding or ignorance on that fact, and I think these are things that when Franco and I talk about Youth Talk Nation. We want to empower youth to have more knowledge, to have more understanding so that we can go beyond hate and go beyond racism in our world. So with that, I'll turn things back over to Franco to begin our presentation.

Franco Ng: Absolutely, so we're just going to do a share screen here. I think we do require permission from the host to do so. Perfect, thank you. Wonderful. Hopefully everyone can see the screen. So I just want to quickly give everyone a brief backgrounder on Youth Talk Nation again and the work that we've done. So, as an organization we are on a mission to build a brighter future, and it's a very broad call and encompasses a lot of different components, but one component of course, is the diversity and inclusion of our community and how do we not only combat hate but prevent hate, starting with our future generations.

You know what we've noticed working with our students, mostly within the high school age ranges that they're so impassioned to take on global issue and not only are they impassioned but they're willing to take the action to create a more equitable society. And a lot of times they just lack the tools, resources, or networks to really elevate their mission and their goals and as a platform we're really here to provide them with those tools to ensure that they feel empowered to make a difference.

So we believe in empowering youth ideas to build a brighter future and we've since 2019 have reached over 2000 young leaders across Canada through our programming, and we do so in a very unique fashion, and I mentioned before with what we call innovation reports, what we do is that we empower youth to go out within their communities to collect data points around their peers, ask questions, survey, have dialogue, have conversations, and then quantify that data into report, in which they're then taught to reach out to local government, whether it's municipal, whether it's provincial, whether it's federal, to have conversations with those that are making the decisions within our leadership, and we really feel like through this process, we're really able to not only inspire them to make a difference, but really have equipped them with the tools and skills to begin that conversation, and although our program only targets high school age range students, we really think that this is the start and this is planting the seeds for what we can create in the future, which is a brighter future and a more equitable society.



Now today what we really want to share is an initiative that we created last year in tandem with our students, and the mission for that was to break barriers to Asian young leadership, and that initiative was the youth for Asian representation. And how this idea came about was noticing that anti-Asian hate sentiment rising during the pandemic. We saw that key report of a sevenfold increase of anti-Asian hate crimes just within Vancouver alone, and with some more friends as well we have a friend named Steven who's very passionate about ensuring that there is in-language police reporting mechanisms for ethnic minorities in relation to hate crimes and, you know, with this initiative what we saw was that there wasn't that channel. So even with that seven fold increase that's probably just a tip of the iceberg to other hate crimes that occur within ethnic minorities just because they don't know how to speak out about this issue.

And this forum idea came about when we met **[third party personal information removed]** Now when Jonathan and I spoke with her, one thing that we really explored is not only how do we educate people and community about historical significance of different ethnic minorities, but at the same time how do we move forward into the future. And that's really big for us is understanding historical significance, but the impact on it culturally, around us, and how that has prevented us from taking on a leadership roles and from there on speaking out during a time of, you know, rises in anti-Asian hate and you know, together with her youth committee that she organized we were able to attract a national youth committee with representation across about five different provinces in Canada, and create what we call the youth forum for Asian leadership.

Now, some key facts is, you know, as Asia-- specifically East Asians, who are the victims of anti-Asian hate in the past year, was that we were very much underrepresented federally and provincially, and that is not to say that this is something that is entirely, let's say, the government's responsibility, but the responsibility of our own communities to participate, and that's what we see in terms of our voter turnout is a low voter turnout. And that is what we talk-- when we talk about historical significance and the impact on culture within our own communities, how has that prevented us from stepping up? And that was one key aspect of our forum, was "How do we break through cultural barriers to leadership?", and that was the topic area which we've explored through our online symposium during that day.

Now, one thing that we want to remember is that, you know, it was just very recent in history that Asian Canadians have the right to vote. And, you know, and that has carried through throughout because we do not have that mindset currently, a widespread mindset to participate democratically, and that is very key when we talk about representation on a governance level but also on a broader spectrum of community and in business and speaking out, and one thing that we really want to do is to break through that barrier to representation, but also to dispel this idea of the model minority of being silent, or breaking through what we call, hopefully the bamboo ceiling of leadership and that's very, very important for us.

One quote that I like to really throw out there from our event panelists **[third party personal information removed]** who is a trailblazer herself for both females and Asians is "If to visualize is to actualize, and we see people who look like us in leadership, we can imagine ourselves there".

And that is something that we really want to do is to empower that next generation to have that sort of visualization of leadership to see that they belong in positions of influence, and then they can create the differences that they can-- they wish to create when they are there.

I want to play a very quick video this is just something that we created during our forums to get a better understanding of the positioning and our work.

Video: These are our loved ones being attacked.

Our history, never known.

Our futures, at stake.



We are the generation that needs to step up.

Representation takes action.

Now, is our time.

On May 29, join the dialogue online, and let's take action together.

All event proceeds in support of the Vancouver Chinatown Foundation.

Franco Ng: So, amazing young leaders who are really stepping up and we love it, now it's our time, it's time to speak up, and it's time to take action, and it's not only about dialogue, it's about really making-- taking those actions to create change and that was what we were trying to express during this forum and, you know, we were very lucky to be able to... we're very lucky to run this event, we had about a thousand participants across Canada, 17 partnering student organizations, about \$10,000 raised to host the event, but also to donate some of the proceeds to Chinatown Foundation here in Vancouver, to support their storytelling centre that they've recently opened.

We were also very lucky to invite a number of leaders across the Asian community to participate within this event. We were very purposeful about the people that we invited. We wanted a broad spectrum, and, you know, Asians and leadership with this panel is really the pioneers of people within our communities, the business leaders and the media leaders who has blazed the trail for us and have them share their history and their struggles and their challenges and put it into perspective of, you know, how far we've come and that's something that we want to acknowledge is that we've come really, really far as a community, but there's still more work to be done and it's the signal of them passing that baton to the next generation, it's like "Here you go, the conversation is not done, the work is not done". And that was a message that they really want to carry through to the students, the thousands of students that are watching during that day of.

We had a panel of leaders in government, who was really, really passionate about sharing their journey into legislature, into parliament and we had a wonderful panel of youth in leadership to share about, you know, what they're doing within both the corporate world but also within the personal lives and their inspiring stories.

We also had social media influencers and CantoMando is a really well known YouTube group and really funny and popular amongst the target demographic, as well as Vessi who are great sponsors for us, led by young Asian and local entrepreneurs here in Vancouver, who really supported our event.

Commissioner Kasari Govender: Sorry Franco, to interrupt you, we just got a bit of confusion around the time, I just didn't want you to feel rushed. We do have till 11:50 so, not sure if you saw that in the chat.

Franco Ng: Alright, yep. Would you like our presentation to go to 11:50 or does that also include...

Commissioner Kasari Govender: No 11:50 is when we'll start asking questions, so however much of that time you'd like to use, until 11:50 is your decision. Sorry to interrupt, I just-- there was confusion and I didn't want you to feel any pressure.

Franco Ng: No, no problem. No problem. Thank you so much.

Yeah so we were very purposeful about what we were creating because not only do we want representation of the past, but we want representation the future, but also you want to keep it fun and light and we know that with, especially with the social media influences these days, we have a very very wide platform and sometimes we saw last year that this platform can be used for vitriol and for hate, but it can also be used for combating it, and with the participation of some of the social media influencers, who



are really the role models for this generation now, and having them speak out and connect with our students was something that we were extremely a purposeful about and really to great effect inspired them to utilize the new media platforms to do more, and to speak out more.

Now I want to very quickly show a very quick recap, you know it's easier to hear from them rather than from myself and then afterwards Jonathan will share about our initiatives upcoming in 2022, what we hope to further our impact with this program, and then we will be happy to take any questions from yourselves.

Video: Over 15 partnering student clubs and organizations, 8000 youth delegates from across Canada, three sessions and 14 panelists coming together to share an actionable roadmap, and breaking through barriers to leadership.

Good leaders maintain the status quo, but the inspired leaders actively create the future. Choose to be that kind of either choose to be significant.

You know this last year has really, I think, influenced a lot of us.

And, you know, even my 86 year old mother said to me, I think it's time that we have to speak up.

We have to overcome that shyness, and we have to overcome that self consciousness. It's not about you, no one really cares about you. It's about what you're saying and the goal that you're trying to achieve.

Look, I can't change the body that I was born in, nor do I want to. I'm incredibly proud of my Asian heritage. I think my parents, who immigrated here, they came here with about \$3200, so they mean incredible sacrifices so I can have a life here.

I saw injustices, but I became compelled to involve myself and when I knew-- when I started to understand more about how politics impacted the people that I cared about my family, my friends, my community, it became impossible for me to not take action.

That what we need to strive towards is to ensure that those who represent us are the faces of our community, and that was really part of that journey that I undertook and I felt great pride in it.

There's many great examples of young people work on campaigns or work as political staffers as I did back in Ottawa.

There's lots of different ways to make a contribution, and of course being active in your community for community organizations and involvements. That's really where the past starts. A political career and ultimately ending up in elected office is only an outcropping of that.

You know, growing up, I never thought I would be ever on city council, you know, like many of the panelists have spoken, you know, about, culturally, my parents never expected me to do this, they expected me to be a doctor, of course I don't like blood and guts, that kind of grosses me out. And so that was not an option. And just for volunteering this got tapped on the shoulder.

Whatever happens to other people, they'll sort it out themselves, or like the government will sort it out you know?



That's the mind your own business attitude.

Yeah that's the police's job to deal with it. But the thing is that, it's not always the case, you know, at least me personally was raised with this in mind, I try not to follow it. I try to do what's right when I can, but this is the Chinese culture to be somewhat obedient and your own business and take care of yourself.

Now is the time to stand up for each other, you know?

Yeah, now is time to change that.

But my mom was really concerned and I think it's because our parents want to ensure that their kids succeed, and I think even when you look at the pandemic and the return and the rise of anti-Asian racism. Our families have gone through a lot, and we're still going through that today and I think our parents just want their kids to be okay. I think more people are actually encouraging younger people to consider politics, and it used to be that people would enter politics after they retired, now it's actually something that you can do during your career.

What are you passionate about? And if something is, then do it. And when you're young, wasting a couple months, wasting a couple years is not a big deal. That's important. There's no right answers, you have to try it. It's trial and error, that's what life is. And that's a big takeaway from me.

Food is essentially the unthreatening bridge for you to get to know a people, or your friend or a general culture, or just what we have out there, it's sort of like something you have to do, but something you're excited to do at the same time.

Youth care about the way that they're being treated or their peers are being treated youth care about what type of action is being taken or not being taken, they care about how different cultures are being represented in media and how they're being portrayed in different environments and different industries.

One of my passions as an MLA and Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training, is to empower and uplift other women of color into government or into leadership positions, so that they know, even though barriers for women of color are still there, they don't have to go through it alone.

Representation takes action, and now is the time for our generation to step up and carry the torch, to carry on the work of our community leaders.

Thank you once again. Take care and see you all soon.

Franco Ng: Wonderful, so that was just a very quick recap and thank you for sitting through that, before I pass off the-- to Jonathan to talk about this upcoming years programming, a quick anecdote, a story that I want to tell is, **[third party personal information removed]** So his support was so inspirational to us, because someone of his stature, and his age with everything that was going on in the pandemic, for him to take time out to do that and to do that, not only properly, but to do that with such passion was —made us feel like we need to further on carry his—the torch of his work and empower more youths to know his story and what he's been through, so just a very quick anecdote that I'd like to share, but I'm going to pass it off back to Jonathan.



Jonathan Kong: Well thank you Franco and I think, you know, the motto of why fires, we call it affectionately, is "To visualize is to actualize". And I think the momentum that we built having-- have done a very successful forum in empowering youths to, you know, see all these different groups of people, see all these possibilities for them as an Asian, as a Chinese, as South Asian. These are things that we will continue to build momentum towards, and we have been actively conducting several different projects now, in collaboration with one of our mentors as well and the community, **[third party personal information removed]**.

And so far this year, we're on track to bring in a few programs to further empower youth to visualize how we can go beyond racism and hate. One of our programs that we have currently is a close collaboration with Mulgrave school in West Vancouver, where we have a group-- the entire grade 10 is currently conducting a class in communities, and how communities evolve. And so we are working closely with the teacher on a very custom curriculum where we will bring students down to Vancouver's Chinatown and have them assess. So this is all part of having mainstream or different ethnicities people coming and understanding Chinese history or the history of Chinatown itself.

The first activity we had was an online symposium on February 2nd, where we invited a **[third party personal information removed]** via video link and she was able to explore a lot of the topics that kids are going to see once they go to Chinatown as the pandemic restrictions recede in April 2022, so we anticipate that to be the second event this year, the third event is a garden fundraiser at the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen garden. This has to be anticipated in probably the late spring, early summer 2022 and that event is to bring in the greater community of Metro Vancouver, to come in and actually see the fascinating facets of Chinese culture, and various cultural elements that we possess as Chinese Canadians here in Canada. So I think if we...

So these are some of the photos that we have for you here. One of our student leaders at **[third party personal information removed]** has been doing a lot of work with **[third party personal information removed]** over the past several months. **[third party personal information removed]**, talking to different teachers about, you know, his desire and there's an anecdote for that, was we brought **[third party personal information removed]** down to Chinatown for light up Chinatown festival, and he saw how passionate **[third party personal information removed]** was in saving Chinatown, because at that time Chinatown was in very rough shape with businesses closing, a lot of different elements of the city was not involved in helping it clean up and she said, "I'm going to do this myself", and so once again we see leaders within our community rising up and saying, "This is our time, we need to do what is right", and **[third party personal information removed]** was very impacted by **[third party personal information removed]** passion and he said, "I want to bring this on", and this was a very organic experience for **[third party personal information removed]** as well and we're very proud of him and, you know, and to think that he's just been grade 10 and imagine the possibilities.

And this is just only one student at one school, and we want to bring this to more schools throughout the Lower Mainland, Metro Vancouver and just see the possibilities of what we could do as we combine different communities together to end hate.

So with that, thank you very much and we look forward to your questions.

Commissioner Kasari Govender: Thank you both so much for that presentation. So many inspiring stories in there, I really appreciated seeing the videos as well. I do have a few questions for you. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit, if you have been hearing from those who work with--in high schools, about young people's experiences with hate within the context of the K-12 system within the context of their schools, and in particular, if you could draw out, what you're hearing about hate online. You talked briefly about the internet as a tool for hate, and if you could tell us any more about what you hear from young people on that front.

Franco Ng: Absolutely. And thank you for that question. It's a fantastic question because the reason why Youth Talk Nation exists is because there are so many issues surrounding young people that adults trying



to solve, and oftentimes we never look inwardly to those that are affected the most which are the young people. And, you know, in relation to that question is the use of internet and social media.

A lot of times, you know, as parents or adults we're very concerned but we never really go right to the source and ask them how they're feeling and how they're combatting some of the issues that happen online, and I think from the students that we work with and the data we've collected is that there is a rise of anxiety, especially amongst hate crimes, and the reason being is because there is no off switch to social media, there is no off switch to the internet. They are constantly surrounded by news every single day of not just perhaps the Asian community, but community surrounding them locally, but also around the world of negative news and sentiments. And as I mentioned before, we are with a generation that are very passionate about speaking up and very passionate about doing something about it, but oftentimes they do feel helpless because they feel like they are not able to either reach the right people, or they're not able to really truly make a difference and that anxiety of being surrounded by these sort of negative sentiments, but also feeling helpless about it is something that we as an organization are really passionate about solving, even in a very minor way by providing that conduit of reports of forums.

As you can see, we've been very successful of getting a lot of government, elected officials involved as they're passionate about hearing the next generation. And I think for us is, how do we take that negative sentiment and turn it into something that is, that is productive, empowering, and constructive and that's what we hope to create but to answer your question, I'm sure Jonathan has his thoughts, is that there is that anxiety to do more and to be constructive, but also a lack of channels to communicate with them. And we hope that not just us, but other organizations can continue that work and to continue to empower that next generation to make them feel heard.

Jonathan Kong: And I think from, I can actually speak from an institutional perspective.

Having spoken with the youth we also speak with the parents as well and oftentimes, newly landed immigrants, especially those within nonspeaking countries will face the barrier of accessing school resources. As much as schools have resources, such as the cultural liaisons within the Vancouver school board, Richmond school board and all the other school districts, there's still this mentality that "Oh my gosh I'm going to a school I have to talk to the principal", there's the fear of authority in that sense is quite pronounced.

And I think one of the parents that I've spoken to it's like "Oh, I don't want to go talk to the principal because I don't know how to interact with him".

So all these sort of ethnic, cultural barriers that are in place within the school districts is not necessarily a overt type of hate or racism in that sense, maybe more of a systemic sort of racism in which that people can't access or do not know how to access or, these are ways that I've-- through us we try to help these parents say, "okay, we will help you go talk to the counselor." "We will help you go talk to the principal".

And because we could navigate in both Chinese-- Mandarin, Cantonese, and in English very well so they feel that sense of comfort. So, not necessarily, you know, a way in which, you know, it's a systemic issue that we've been continuing to face and also at the same time, right, from a university perspective and, you know, Queens is where I work, I could comment. I was probably the only one or two person of color, within my workplace so that was a few years ago and I think we can I think Queens is slowly beginning to address that in equity. But I when I was in university administration, it was very difficult for me to talk to another person of my race and say "Hey, are you experiencing this?", because I was oftentimes-- I was the youngest one, and also was the only Asian in the room.

So there, it came with a lot of different connotations and stuff like that and I do really feel we are on a road to a better place, but as a lot more students see that "Oh, I see Jonathan in an admin role at Queens, oh maybe I could go there as well".



So, you know, the trailblazing element is there as well and I think a lot of students within the K-12 system, especially Chinese or Asian or a non-English speaking individuals will continue to have this difficulty accessing services provided.

Commissioner Kasari Govender: Do you, along those lines, do you have thoughts, you know, I'm sure you're aware of a number of community based reporting services that have arisen over the pandemic, particularly in relation to anti-Asian racism or anti-Asian hate, but also more generally around reporting hate from the perspective-- are you able to give us any perspective, around how youth might want to report incidents, whether community based reporting systems would be helpful, and what you think would need to happen with that reporting to make it useful and helpful.

And sorry, that's a long question but I'm going to add the last little bit which is if you have a sense of this, what do you think young people would want to see as a result of reporting, like why would they report in the first place?

Franco Ng: Yeah, that's a great question because we did a large innovation competition around cyber bullying, very similarly, we asked them to design a method of reporting around cyber bullying. And that was in 2019 but if I remember correctly, there was that whole debate and discussion is "What is the best way to reach youth?", you know and what does that look like, is it through the counselor system, is it through the school system, is it externally?

And I think one sentiment that that came up was the, the counsellor system within schools because of how limited the resources are, is that it is very difficult for students to go directly to a counsellor and set up a time to speak out about whether cyberbullying or issues of hate and that was a key component of a lot of the discussion was one, the lack of resources, but second, is that fear of authority, right? That was one thing that students constantly brought up is, "I do not feel comfortable going to an adult face to face and to open up and to be vulnerable to an adult counsellor, who maybe was there to-- maybe they're not trained or not equipped, or they just have, "I have a 30 minute slot for you, I have a 15 minute slot for you to open up about a very serious incident", and with that timeframe comes this idea of not being valued or understood or cherished.

So, you know, I think a lack of resources is one thing, the method, channel of communication, face to face with an adult is another and I think the third thing is a timely response as well as actionable steps so even if there wasn't an online reporting system. I think students often feel like their voices are lost and when you go through a reporting system oftentimes you submit paperwork and it's kind of just gone and you might get an automated response of "Your inquiry has been received, we will speak with you soon". And it's kind of just up in the air in that sense, so I think if there's a better way of not only acknowledging that receiving of that report, but at the same time providing timely actionable steps or transparency of the process to make them feel like their incident is valued, is being addressed, but in what way, right? And I think there's such opacity sometimes with the way that, you know, we deal with certain issues especially on a bureaucratic level, that doesn't breed confidence that their issue is being dealt with, so I think that is something that can be further explored, not just in relation to hate but in other facets of just reporting.

Jonathan Kong: I think one thing that we see youth doing a lot more now is to point out hate on social media, and have a lot, you know, they would post a video of somebody, you know, going through an incident of hate.

And there-- from there they're a lot of conversation or a lot of replies on their dm's saying "Oh this is happening, what's going to happen, how are we going to fix this?"

So there's a lot of dialogue at this moment, online on Instagram, TikTok, or whatnot, but then actualizing that and having go fill out a form will be an additional barrier for them, it's like "Oh why?", I mean it's a monolith, they feel that, you know, up against, you know, if we're going to report this what's going to happen? So, what they see is, if they could—if people could use the power of social media as we've seen,



to highlight hate, but then also to address it on that platform in a way that maybe the police will begin to see, or use these platforms together and have a meaningful sort of mechanism where they can ingest all this data and investigate this data and then on social media say, "This is what we are doing", etc. I mean that's additional resources that's required by different police departments or different municipalities but I think these are ways that if you want to speak to young people, if you want to address hate at that level or at that age range, they're perfectly able to use, you know, social media, and they're not going to go again, go to a, you know, website or something like that and input, all these information, right, so I think we need to think about how young people behave in terms of how they access different forms of communications and speak to them directly at that level.

Commissioner Kasari Govender: Great. Thank you, Sarah I think we're going to jump in with a question there?

Sarah Khan: Yes, thanks Kasari.

Thanks so much for your presentation today, I wanted to just follow up on the issue of reporting and what young people might want to happen with the reports, let's say if some system was set up, I know various community reporting systems have been set up. And I was just wondering what you would see as the outcome, would it be, as you mentioned, for example, that the police might be able to do something, would it be police potentially investigating the incident as a hate crime, for example, or perhaps that a human rights complaint would get filed through the BC Human Rights Tribunal. I'm just interested to know, or if there's other types of outcomes that you think folks would want to have through some kind of a reporting tool, just to give us a sense of what you think people might be looking for.

Franco Ng: Absolutely, I think, I think that's, again a great question. You know from I think from our perspective, it depends on obviously the severity of the incident whether it is a, a police incident or something that is more systemic which would go to the Human Rights Commission, obviously being able to have a dialogue with the student or with the young person that's very important. I think students these days very much value transparency. They want to know whom they're speaking with, they want to know that their concerns are being addressed in a very serious manner. So I think, you know, a more humane way of human touch is not only a report of, again, an acknowledgement but rather, if time allows, you know, being able to speak to the victim directly, to the student directly and putting a face to it, I think putting a face to it is very, very important these days with youth, they want to know.

Now, and the second point that I want to bring up as well is something that I've been advocating for a number of years, is that it's less so about, from my personal view, simply the outcome. But how do we involve them in the process, and I think that's very important I think what we have to acknowledge, is that with this generation and I speak, you know with the high school age range, Gen Z age ranges, that I firmly believe they're probably the smartest generation that we've have upcoming because they're just surrounded with access to information. So they feel like they have the knowledge, they feel they have the skill set to really speak up, but there isn't a mechanism to involve them. And I think what they are very passionate about is amongst their peers, have discussions amongst their peers, come up with policy solutions that they've created, we have these amazing student leaders who are doing this job, but again they lack that channel of dialogue and what we do see are kind of student leader reps within school boards now we see a youth city council member or a youth school board member, and those are wonderful ways of communication because that student that's suffering from some sort of hate crime would be able to speak with the youth representative of a certain committee, and they'll be comfortable with that and then be able to pass it up the chain of command in that sense.

So, you know, from my perspective, are we able to widen that, where we're able to have some sort of youth committee around maybe a Human Rights Commission, right, and have different pieces of the youth police board and create that committee, where we're able to have a youth representative within our democratic government organizations that allow them that direct channel of communication, but also be



able to be more comfortably, raise ideas of concern and have that access, I think that would really be important, outcomes important, but the process of involvement is also very important.

Commissioner Kasari Govender: Well thank you. Thank you both so much for your time and all your contributions here today, and also for all the work you do, really, again, really interested to learn about your organization and the incredible conference that you were able to organize and pull people together for. So on that note I will pass it over to Meghan to wrap us up and give you a little more information about what's next. What's next here for us, but thank you again to both of you.

Jonathan Kong: Thank you.

Franco Ng: Thank you so much.

Meghan Toal: Thanks Kasari, yes and just echoing, thank you so much, it was really interesting to hear about all the work that you're doing and really inspiring to hear about, you know, the youth leadership that's emerging in the work that you're doing as well.

So I just wanted to remind on a couple of pieces.

We do have, we are right now accepting written and recorded submissions, until the end of March so till March 31st.

So we're definitely interested in hearing from youth, if you think that that's something that youth that you work with would be interested in doing, sharing within that submission process, just want to encourage that that's an option and that that is available.

We will let you know once this recording is ready. If you want it to review it before we have it complete, you're welcome to do that, you can just let me know if that's something that you're interested in and outside of that we-- if you have questions about the consent form please do let us know that as well. I will just send a reminder, and hopefully we can-- we'll get that from you as soon as we can.

We're super grateful that you took the time today. This was really inspiring and lovely to hear about the work that's happening within, within Youth Talk.

Franco Ng: Wonderful. Thank you so much, Meghan and committee for your time today and providing us this platform to speak out, not only about hate but also about the work that we do with youth.

In regards to the consent form, we have actually sent it over I believe your colleague Emily has acknowledged it, so I think that's okay, and we would love to participate in any further conversations, as well as if there is intention of creating some sort of youth committee or conference to further gather data points or to speak directly with youth, you know, we're very open style, we always encourage to have more partners around different areas and I think this is something that youth are extremely passionate about and they should know about these opportunities to speak up, so I appreciate again for providing this platform and this opportunity.

Jonathan Kong: Than

