



YOUTH TO YOU; OUR DOOR IS OPEN

FCJ Refugee Centre
Loly Rico & Maria Alejandra Ramirez Bolanos

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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The land we are standing on today is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

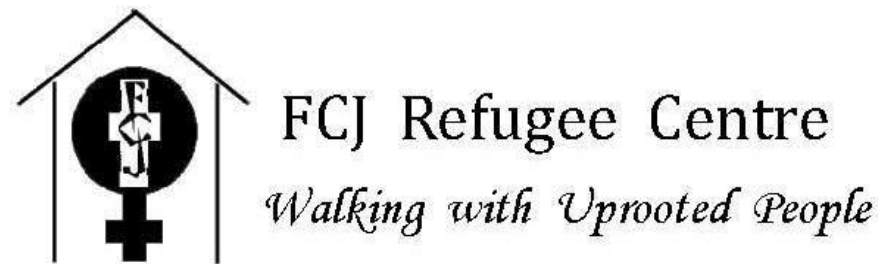
FCJ REFUGEE
CENTRE & YOUTH;

HISTORICALLY
AND IN THE TIME
OF COVID-19

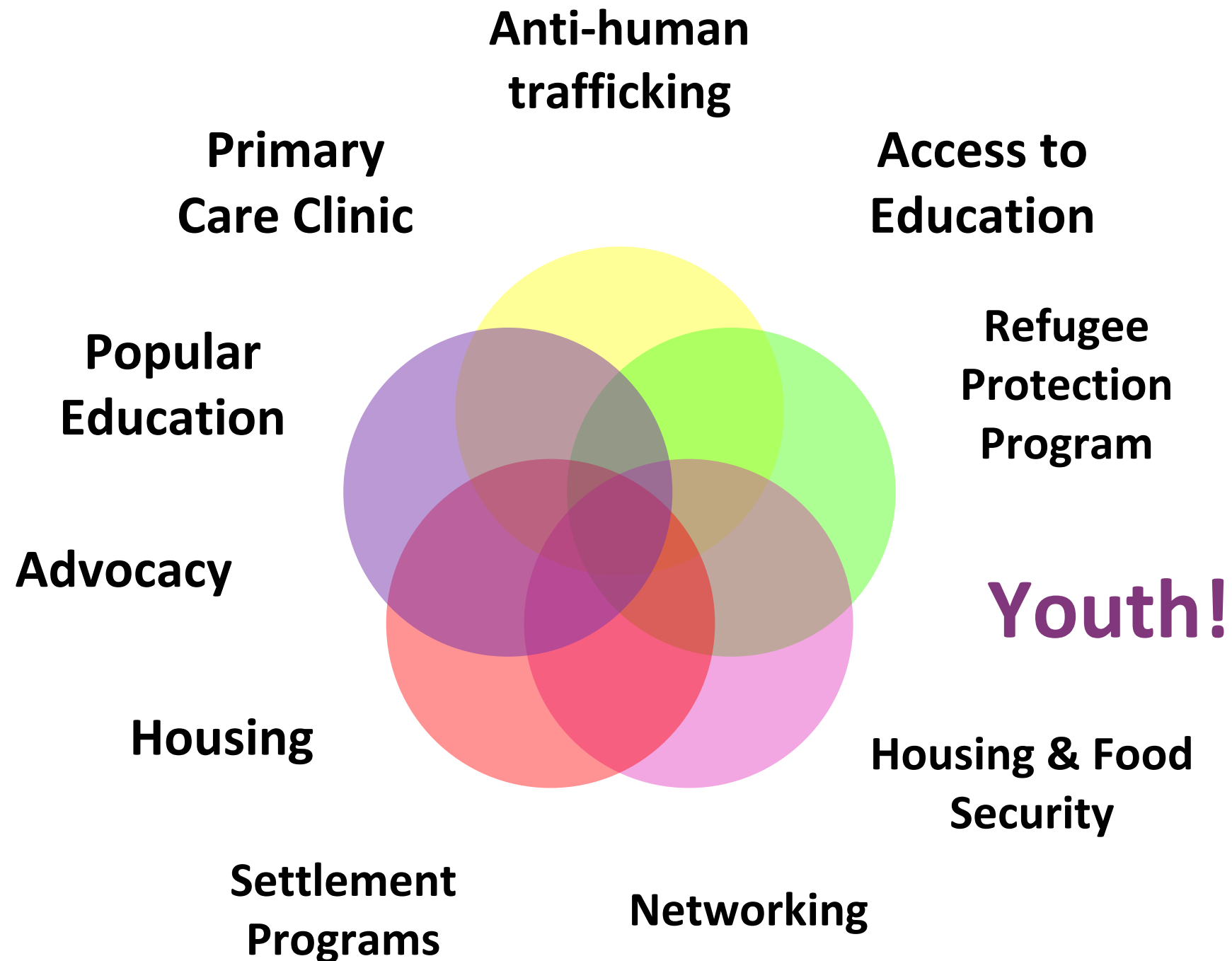


FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE; WALKING WITH UPROOTED PEOPLE

- We are a non-profit organization which serves refugees and others at risk due to their immigration status
- We welcome anyone asking for advice, counsel and support regarding these issues.
- We address systemic issues that newly arrived refugee claimants and persons with precarious immigrations status face in Canada including: lack of resources, marginalization, and discrimination.



WHAT WE DO



OUR SERVICES

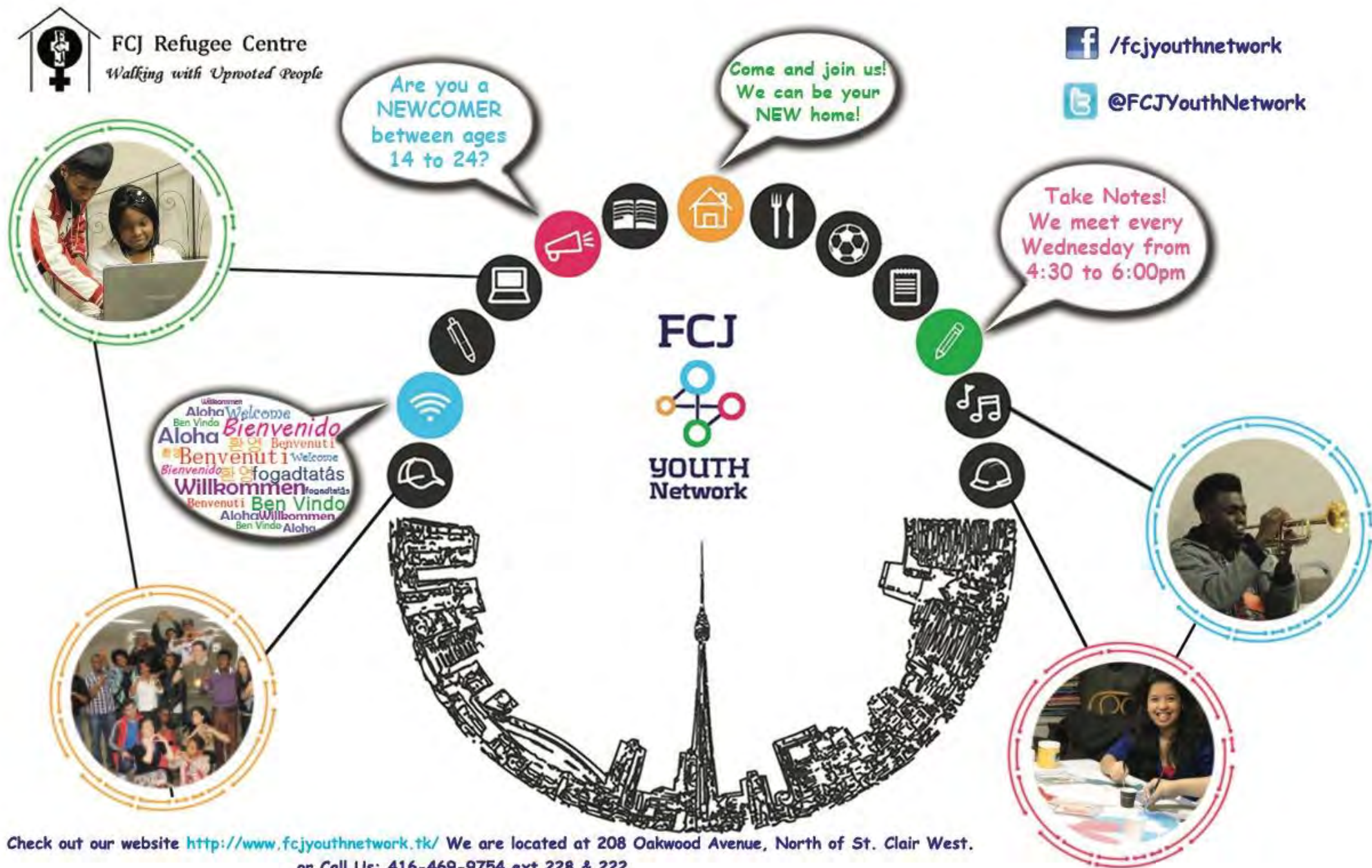
- Temporary housing
- General orientation
- Workshops
- Ready Tours
- RAD info-session
- Access to Education
- Housing
- Primary Care Clinic
- Counselling
- Youth Network
- Food Bank
- ESL Classes

YOUTH NETWORK



YOUTH NETWORK

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WHAT DOES THE FCJYN DO?

- Participation in workshops/trainings
- Community Development programs
- Campaigns (Access to Education, workshops, and video)
- Networking: involvement with other organizations such as the Canadian Council for Refugees, Coalition of Service Providers, youth networks, school groups, etc.
- Participation in FCJ events/festivals: Anti-Human Trafficking Forums, Diverse Residents One Community celebration, Holiday Party, Street Party), CCR conferences, Community events (Oakwood Arts Festival, Refugee Pride Event, Seneca Forum etc.)
- Arts & Culture based programs: Book, Mural, Videos, Podcast, Monthly Zine, Cooking program

INTERSECTIONALITY

Exploring dimensions of identity such as:

Age

Gender identity

Ethnicity

Social class

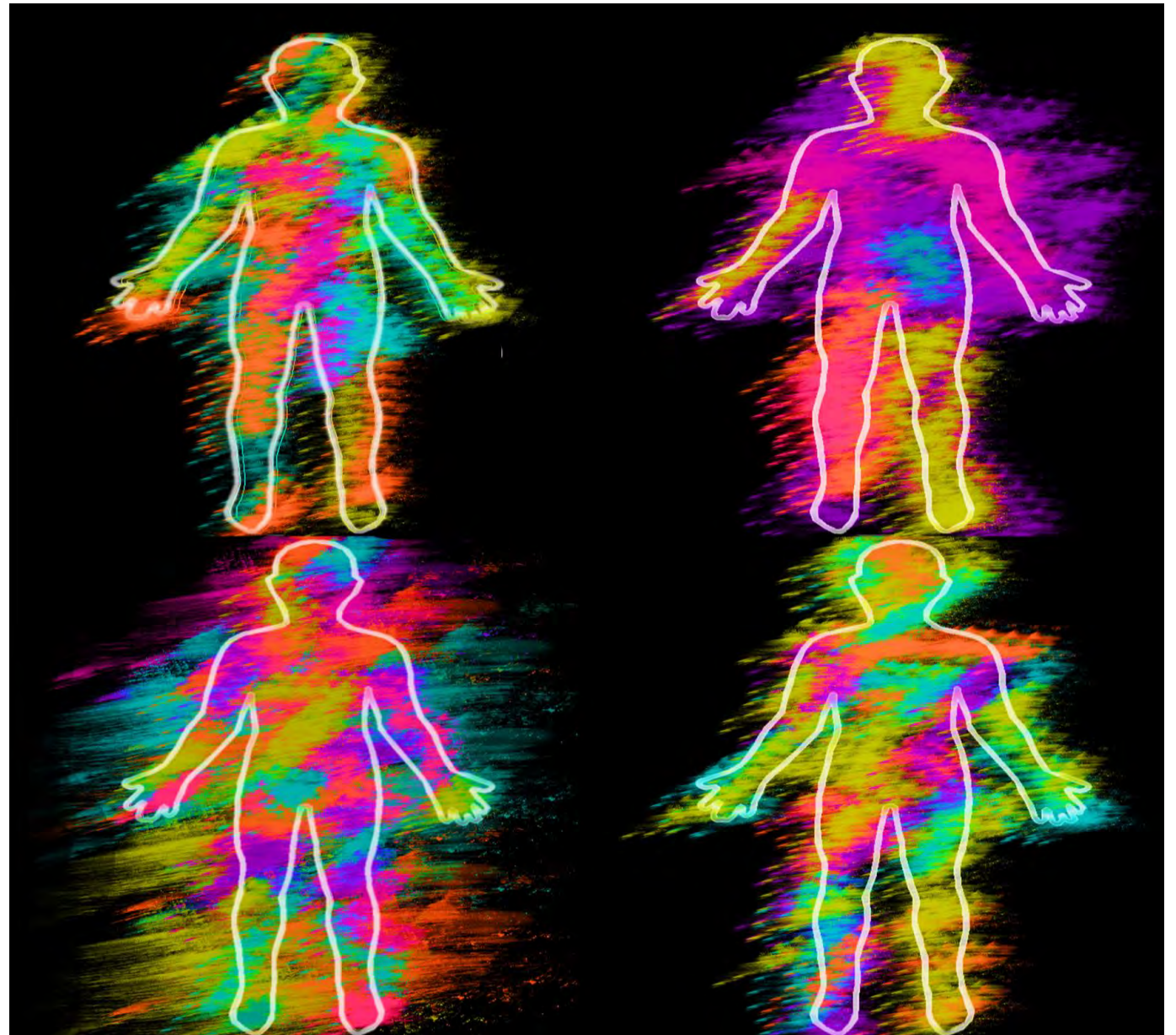
Immigration status

Sexual identity

Experiences with authority

Violence

Etc.



WHY JOIN?

- Community Hours
- Leadership skills
- Communication and writing skills
- Make new friends
- Share your ideas and experiences
- More opportunities
- Increase social support networks Education
- Support in Accessing
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Health Care and Mental Health Support
 - Recreational Programs
 - Financial Assistance
 - Immigration Status Support
 - Legal Support
 - Safe Space



THE FCJ YOUTH NETWORK AND IT'S SUCCESS

- The Youth Network examines all elements of intersectionality and anti-oppression, and uses this to build goals and programs.
- Programs that have been created through the collaboration of the youth network members
 - Access to Education Campaigns
 - Uprooted U
 - From Youth to You Toolkit

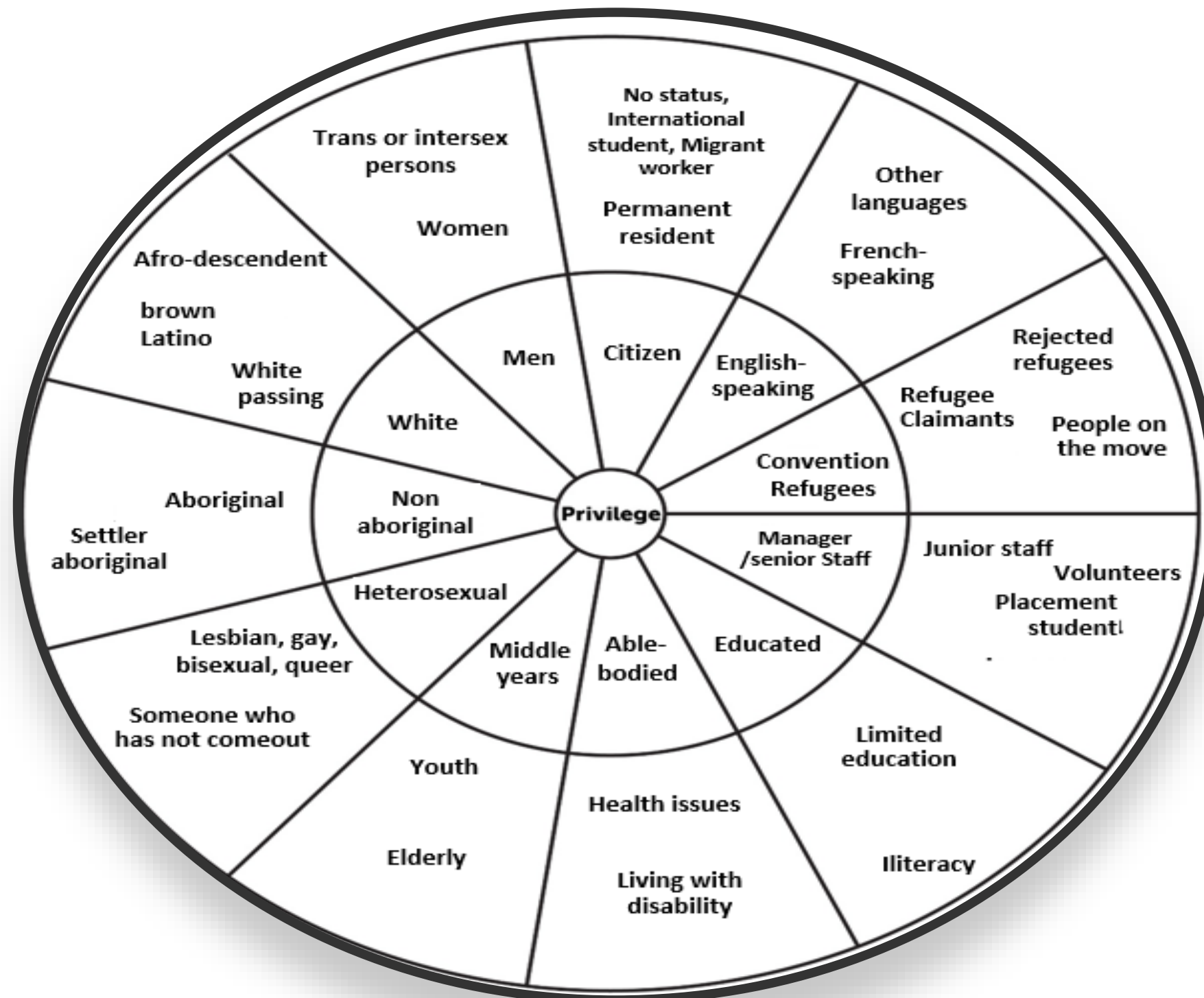
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the youth network is home to me.
even though we're from all over,
they're my family.



POWER & PRIVILEGE

- Take a moment to examine your privilege...





What are our privileges, especially during these times?

Ask yourself:

Is my job secure? Do I have the privilege of steady income, food on the table and safe housing from which to work?

If not, can I access emergency financial supports?

Do I have housing and food security?

Can I access health care without fear?

Privilege looks different to different people, and this pandemic does not affect us all equally.

ACCESS WITHOUT FEAR

Toronto; A Sanctuary City?



PRECARIOUS MIGRANT POPULATION

- Refers to those populations that hold some form of uncertain migration status – often lack work authorization, the right to remain here permanently, social citizen rights, etc...
- The weight and consequences of our choice of language
- Undocumented: Often used interchangeably with “non-status”, most widely used by the City of Toronto
- Non-status: Refers to those living here without official immigration status
- **What does this mean now?**
 - **No access to financial support (eg CERB), housing insecurity, loss of employment, food insecurity etc.**

WORKING WITH
YOUTH;
CREATING SAFE
AND INCLUSIVE
SPACES

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THEY ARE NOT
” THERE TO
COMMAND
BUT HELP AID
IN WHATEVER
THEY WOULD LIKE
TO PURSUE.

WHAT IS A SAFE SPACE?

- A safe space is a place where clients, staff and allies can feel welcome and free to share their ideas, stories and needs. A place where people do not need to hide part of their intersecting identities due to fear of being judged.
- Our role as service providers or allies is to create that safe space for the populations with whom we work. Creating a meaningful safe space is part of a process therefore it is our responsibility to constantly revise it and improve it if needed.



HOW TO CREATE A SAFE SPACE

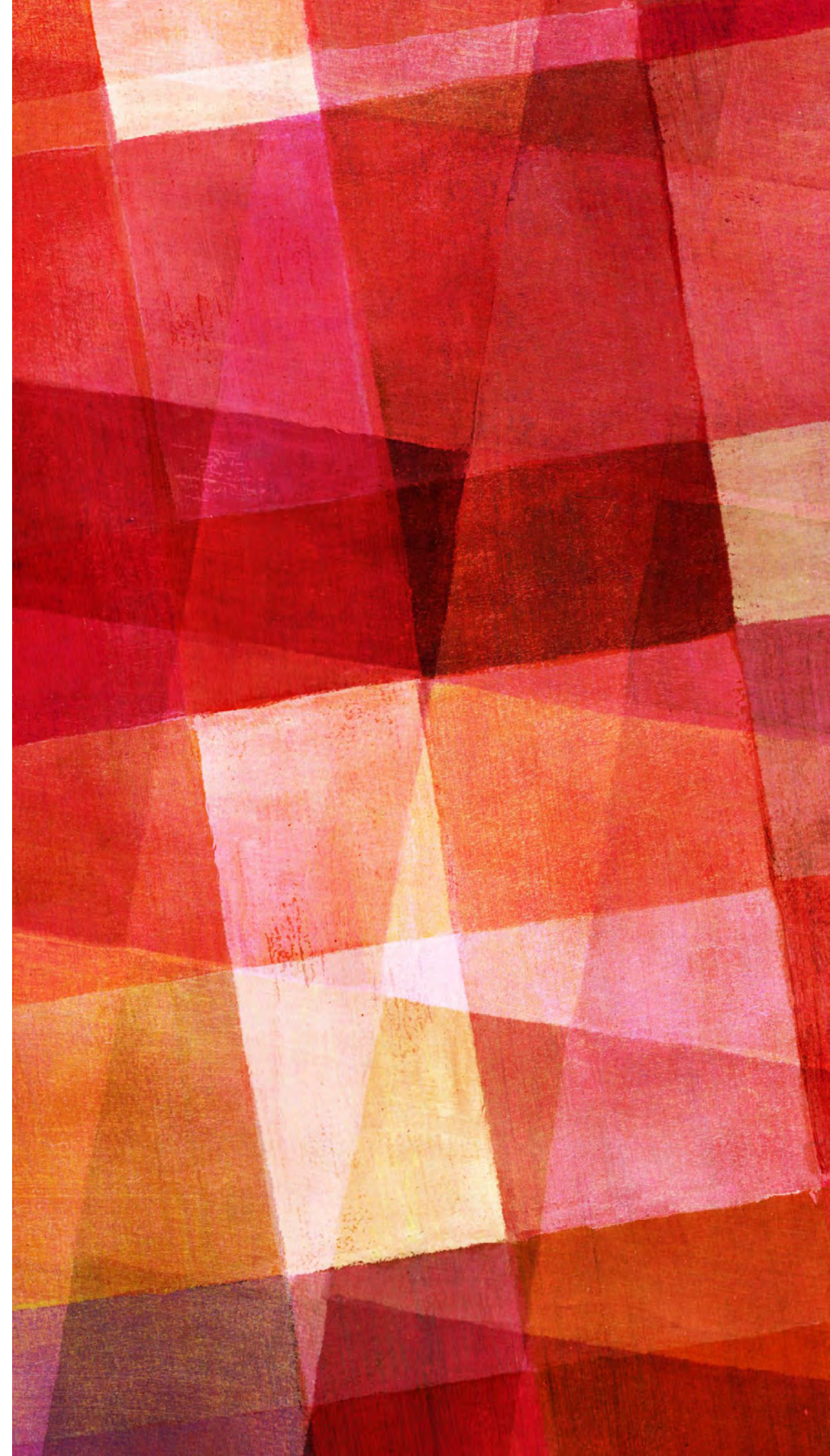
- Do not make assumptions or judgement
- Use gender neutral pronouns
- Work under an anti-oppressive framework
- Establish safe space group norms
- Be open to feedback
- Give them space to acknowledge their biases, while maintaining respect of all.
- Work together to counter discrimination and violence
- Encourage Youth Led Programs



**VALUE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS AND
ALWAYS ASK FOR THEIR OPINION**

WORKING WITH
YOUTH;

CREATING SAFE
SPACES DURING
COVID-19



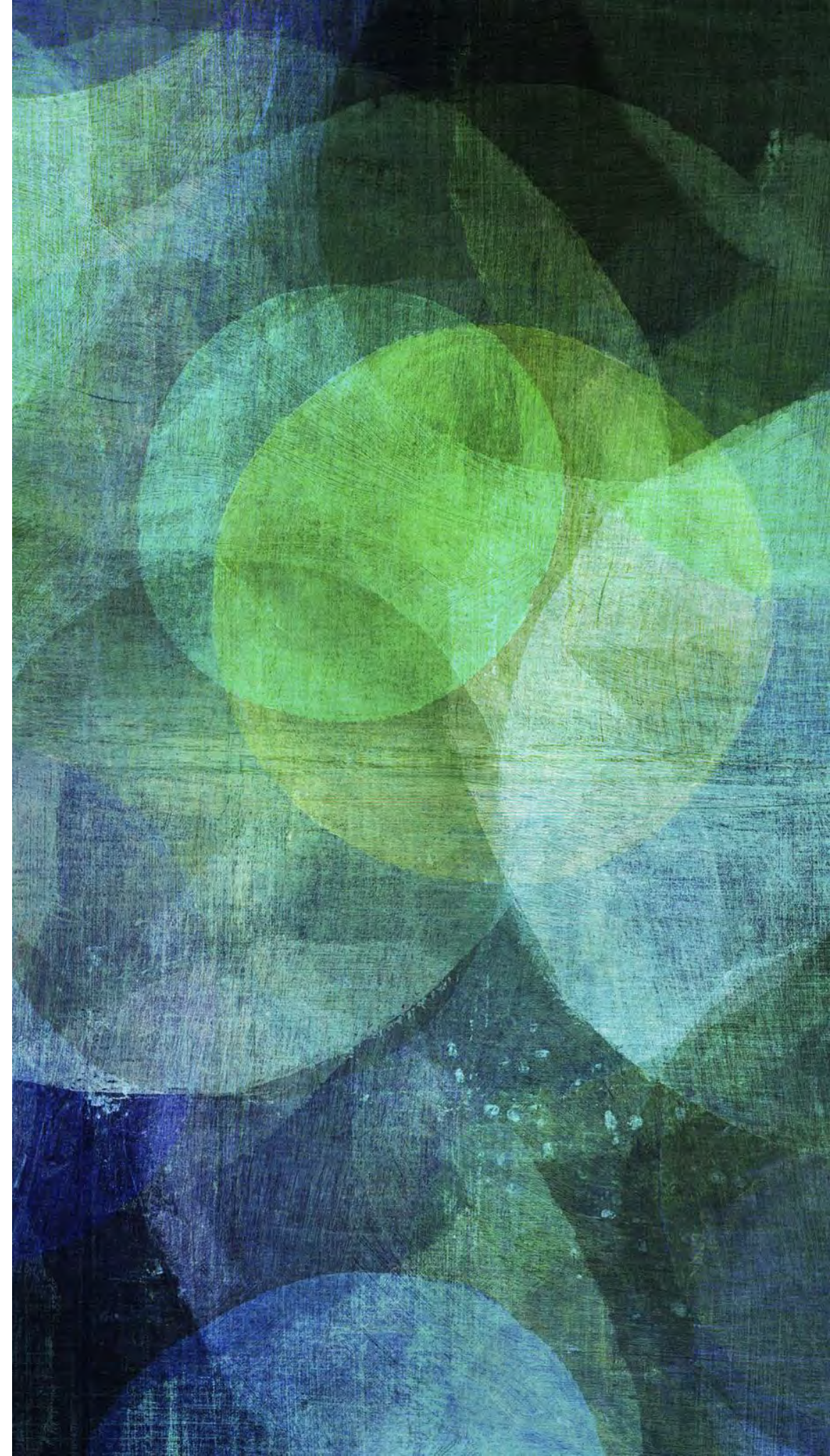
WHAT IS OUR CURRENT SAFE SPACE?

- We work to respond to the needs that our community identifies - we respect the principle of self determination, and work from a peer-to-peer approach.
- In these times, our job is to listen, keep our doors open, and provide a safe environment for youth to voice their concerns, and access support.
- Listen, respond - show that we're here, our door is open, and we're here to reach out.



ADVOCACY &
ALLYSHIP;

NOW
IT'S MORE
IMPORTANT
THAN EVER

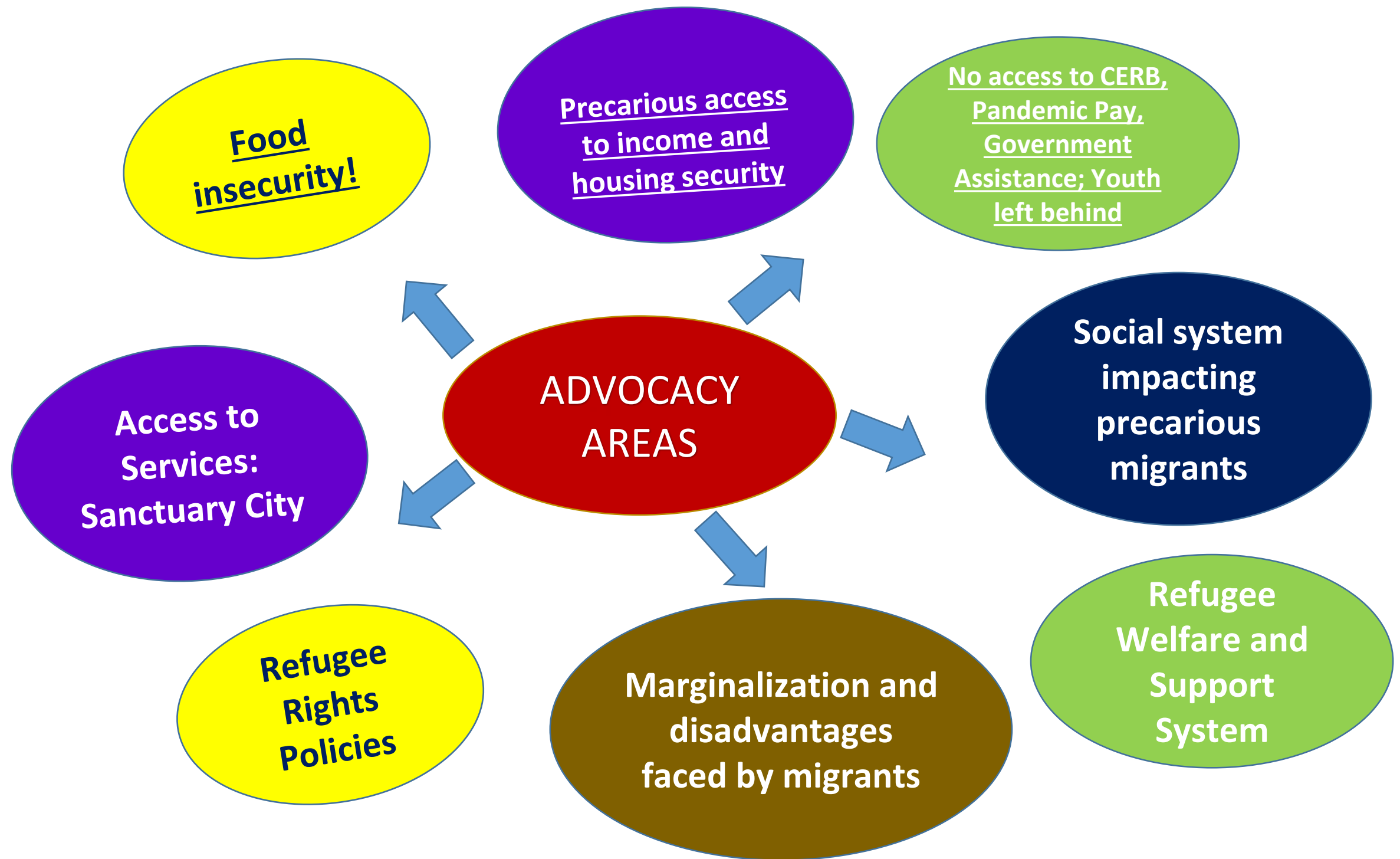


ENCOURAGE ADVOCACY BY BEING AN ALLY

- Advocacy isn't always about systemic change; sometimes it's about connecting with the community, and creating awareness.. 'from our kitchen table to yours...'
- Respond to the needs presented by the community
- Be aware of the population you are working with and how you can provide an effective support. During this crisis, we've transitioned to providing food and income security.
- Always adhere to the principle of
- Self-determination
- Use your privilege & platform!



ADVOCACY; IT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER





YOUTH EXPERIENCES

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- Access to social & health services
- Mental Health Concerns; Impacts of extended social isolation
- Fear of Police/Law Enforcement - Carding allowances broadened in times of crisis.
- Access to education
- Living in high risk neighbourhoods - especially in times of pandemic these neighbourhoods are hardest hit.
- Family issues & domestic violence

SO WHAT ARE WE DOING?

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- Ongoing YN Meetings through Zoom & GoToMeeting
- Weekly movie nights on Netflix Party - getting together, even when we can't get together
- Online (free) classes that we can pursue together
- Support families doing home-schooling
- Grocery bag & card drop offs
- Check in! Call, text, FaceTime - check in and have virtual visits.





THANK YOU!

JOIN US ON INSTAGRAM! @FCJYOUTHNETWORK

CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS

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