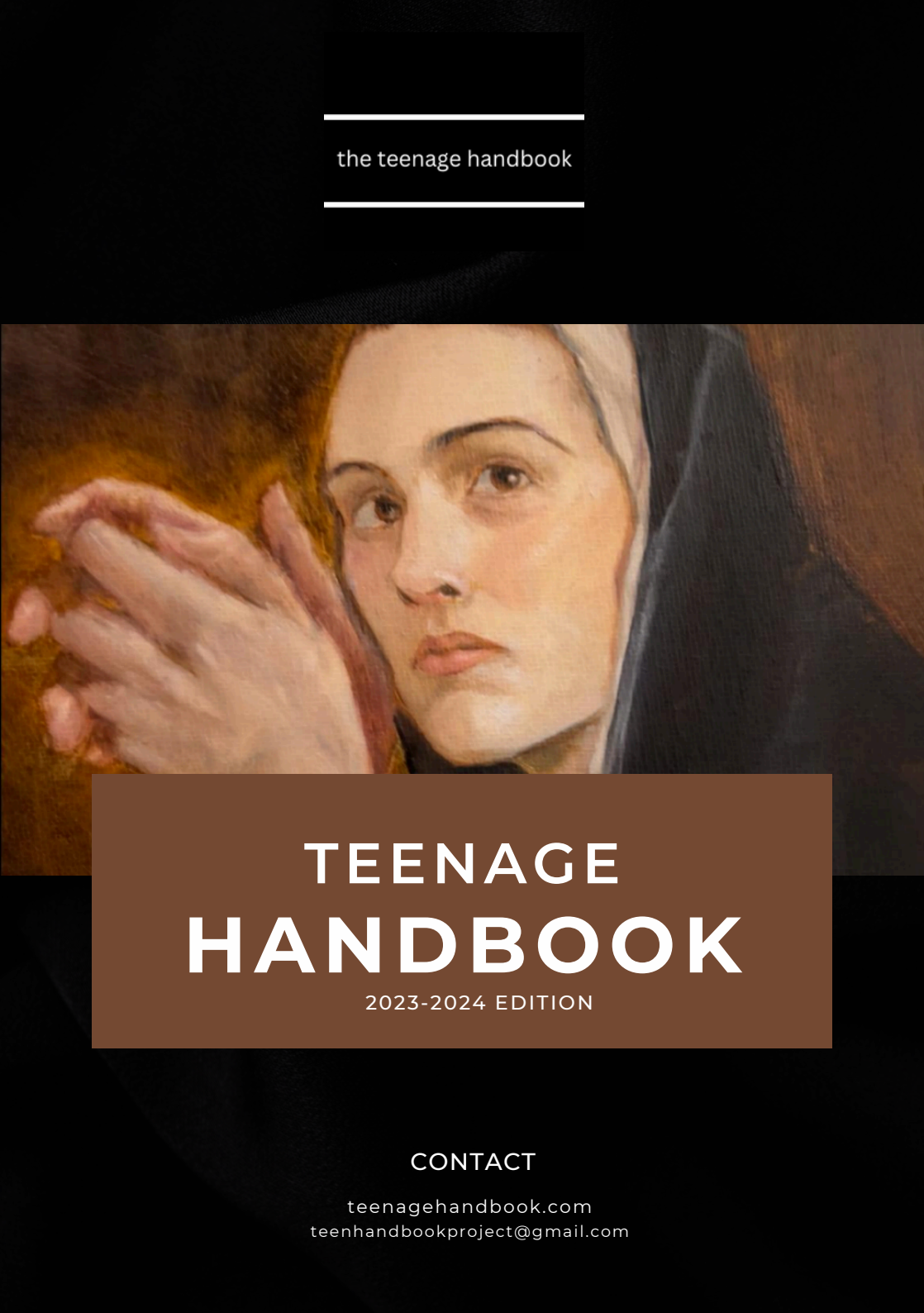

the teenage handbook



TEENAGE HANDBOOK

2023-2024 EDITION

CONTACT

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The Teenage Handbook is advice by teens, for teens, on teen issues. The entries to the 2024 competition were overwhelming in both quality and quantity. We are proud to present the winning entries. If you find any of the following issues resonate with you (pg. 5), do not hesitate to view advice from another teen!

The following 2023-2024 Teenage Handbook contains three sections. Firstly, the top 8 winners of the High School competition. Secondly, the top 4 winners of the Middle School competition. Finally, we have insights from our survey on the benefits of digital journaling.

MISSION STATEMENT



The mission of the Teenage Handbook Foundation is to use technology to help teenagers successfully navigate into a healthy adulthood.

The Teenage Handbook Competition encourages teens to digitally journal and accumulate a collection of creative expressions by teens, for teens, on teen issues.

President and Founder
Jeremy Liew

Head of Fundraising and Marketing to High Schools
Madeline

Head of Marketing to Middle Schools
Samantha

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Research Scientist on SMAHRT (Social Media and Adolescent Health Research Team)



Nicole Powell

Clinical Research Specialist from the Digital Wellness Lab at Boston Children's Hospital



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INDIGO - BY NICOLETTE H.

PAGE 06



"Our mental health issues do not define who we are as people, they are just small parts that fit into who we are as a whole."

My piece is a storybook called "Indigo." I wrote the story and drew all the pages by myself digitally with the knowledge I learned about the issues from my interactions with anxiety as well as things I learned in my AP Psychology class. I came up with the concept of Indigo because I felt that in comparison to the other colors of the rainbow, indigo was the one most don't talk about, and I wanted to give her her own story.

In "Indigo," I wanted to convey the message that our mental health challenges are just a part of our overall identity and shouldn't define who we are.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Nicolette's full artist statement can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fWYBwjY66CDzX3mgmyD_BZSjj_Oesa13N/view

INDIGO - BY NICOLETTE H.

Nicolette's complete storybook can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lBMWqg_o8XPk3jnYOWKtNvgw2ixu7DjIJ/view

TOPICS "INDIGO" ADDRESSES

- Anxiety disorder
- The Big Five Personality Traits
- Mental health education

VIVIAN D. (PAINTING)



"I believe introspection is the solution to feelings of doubt and that it is important to figure out where that doubt stems from — even if it requires asking yourself where your belief truly comes from."

I think religion is an issue many have thought about at some point in their life. For me and many other people, religion (or lack of) is something not necessarily self-realized but something passed down from family or environment

I wonder if religion serves me any purpose. I wonder if it is really my religion, or that of my parents. Isn't religion most useful to those that value it as more than a status? I think this type of self-discovery requires asking yourself difficult questions and, frighteningly, being open to the possibility of deviation.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Vivian's full artist statement can be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Jd8tozp2UmHAtj5Wgy6WbEgqBDUTT9uK/view>

SUNSTONE SANDSTONE - BY VIVIAN D.

Vivian's painting can be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Jd8tozp2UmHAtj5Wgy6WbEgqBDUTT9uK/view>

TOPICS "SUNSTONE SANDSTONE" ADDRESSES

- Religion
- Self-Examination
- Philosophical Inquiry

KAVYA D. (PAINTING)



"I use art as a method to express my feelings, thoughts, emotions, and escape from the hustle and bustle around me. I like to be free and wild through my art, and often speak out about issues I feel are pressing to our current world."

With my piece, my goal was to depict the impact of social media and social apps on teenagers and children of this generation. Rather than propose a solution, I wanted to convey the emotions that come with the feeling of being stuck in the web of social media and how interconnected we have become to it. I wanted to show someone who was trying to find calm in the chaos of the social world and comparisons, but feeling too attached to it all to let go.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Kavya's full artist statement can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yD2H-gKW0Ap5Qasayo0p_gbd29rdWJ_H/view

FULL PAINTING

Kavya's painting can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yD2H-gKW0Ap5Qasayo0p_gbd29rdWJ_H/view

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Dopamine and Addiction
- Influence of Social Media

ALEXANDRIA M. (PAINTING)



“Sometimes I feel like two different people. I feel like half of my head is upside down. I feel like there are two different perspectives (colors) that people see. But even so, I am beautiful and I am whole.”

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Alexandria’s full artist statement can be viewed here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ufAJLPHP2PNtuJnQfAfw-LvTOIjnlaZy/view>

FULL PAINTING

Alexandria’s painting can be viewed here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ufAJLPHP2PNtuJnQfAfw-LvTOIjnlaZy/view>

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Duality of Identity
- Beauty and Wholeness
- Self-Examination

SOMETIMES I WONDER -BY SHINING S.

PAGE 10



"My story is about the complicated thoughts that can overwhelm teens during difficult times, based on my own experiences, but also how thinking in other ways can help the teen get through it."

Sometimes, I wonder why I'm here. Why, out of the infinite number of possibilities, with hundreds and thousands and millions of coincidences and thought-out decisions and chance events, did it all lead to me? Why me, who has a clear idea of a future I want, but no path to get there? Why me, who is expected to excel, to do great things, but has no idea of who I am? It's strange, a confounding contradiction that I cannot solve. All I can do is repeat the same day. Wake up. Go to school. Go home. Play tennis. Study. Sleep (if I'm lucky). Repeat.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Shining's full artist statement can be viewed here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wPhRcqz_8sD-4WvduEqgZsjCIsrax-Mh/view

SOMETIMES I WONDER -BY SHINING S.

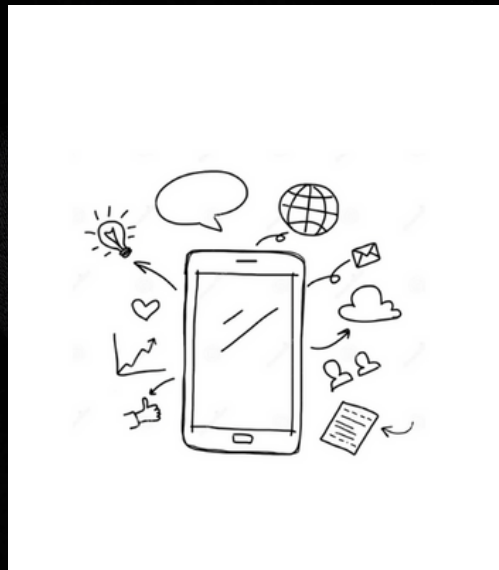
Shining's story can be viewed here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wPhRcqz_8sD-4WvduEqgZsjCIsrax-Mh/view

TOPICS "SOMETIMES I WONDER" ADDRESSES

- Self-Examination
- Anxiety about the Future
- Pressure and Expectations

OLIVIA J. (ESSAY)

PAGE 11



"I chose to write about social media and its impact on others because social media has become a major aspect of many teen lives. Writing about the evolution of the word blocked demonstrates the reality of today's world."

Blocking someone can relieve emotional stress and strengthen mental health. Sometimes clicking a button can bring anxiety levels down significantly.

It's important to use the power of blocking to your advantage. This application has been put in place to help people with dangerous or scary situations. People often under stress the impact social media has on individuals and their lives. Social media can be a dark place and taking action against possible threats is the best way to ensure the safety of yourself and others.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Olivia's full artist statement can be viewed here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Krj-64u848uvzYQkYSUKvW5bSIGMQ.6xg/view>

FULL ESSAY

Olivia's essay can be viewed here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Krj-64u848uvzYQkYSUKvW5bSIGMQ.6xg/view>

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Influence of Social Media
- Safety and Protection
- Coping Mechanisms

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAILURE - BY HUDSON M.

PAGE 12



"My essay tells the story of how I learned how to face my weaknesses head-on and grow from it, both as a climber and as a person. I hope to encourage readers of all ages to challenge themselves even when it seems impossible and always support those around you who may be struggling."

As much as my journey with rock climbing has periodically caused frustration and tested my limits, there was never a single second that I considered giving up on it. Rock climbing and the amazing community of people it's brought me has irreversibly etched its way into my heart, and for that I will be forever grateful.

I feel fortunate that I have had to work extra hard to become the climber I am today, because through every adversity I have learned unforgettable lessons about patience, developing grit, feeling confident in my abilities, and learning to celebrate every one of my accomplishments, no matter how big or small.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Hudson's full artist statement can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qyd7b67Qz6xDbc5do0U_s4md6wEsh2qI/view

FULL ESSAY

Hudson's story can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qyd7b67Qz6xDbc5do0U_s4md6wEsh2qI/view

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Personal Growth
- Skill Development
- Sense of Community

MILJA S. (PAINTING)



"I realised, that at the end of the day all I can offer to the truest form is myself, as an empath and a listener. My way of helping other teens is being there for them, and what better way to reflect that then with a self portrait."

My experience painting this work was almost therapeutic. I saw myself on the canvas, and it was like I was talking to myself. If anyone else could come to me with their problems why couldn't I? I realised I can help both myself and others. You, the reader, who doesn't know me, may not know, that this painting is a very accurate illustration of me, and that physically it looks exactly like me.

Seeing myself portrayed so accurately on the wall brings me a feeling of peace, knowing I can talk to myself.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Milja's full artist statement can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ukdUPmT63KEZk_DsluWJjFG4rhIFeQ0T/view

FULL PAINTING

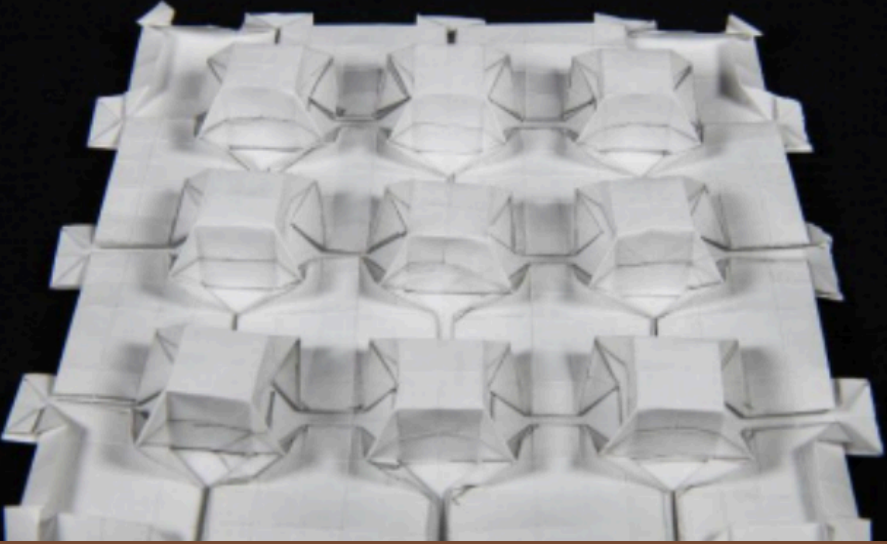
Milja's painting can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ukdUPmT63KEZk_DsluWJjFG4rhIFeQ0T/view

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Self Reflection
- Coping Mechanisms
- Presence of Self

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

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SPRING

-BY ISABELLA J.

PAGE 15

Spring

A breath of fresh air from the frigid and bleak winter

Animals awake from their deep slumber

Trees blossom and sway in the slight breeze

Water warms and trickles through the ice

Fragrant flowers open and let out their sweet smell of pollen

Temperatures rise and the sun beams through the heavy clouds

Seedlings sprout up from the ground like rockets

Bees and wildlife come alive while the community comes to life

Animals hatch and crawl for the first time bringing

The world awakens to a fresh page and a new start

“The world awakens to a fresh page and a new start.”

I chose this artistic creation because I was inspired by the beauty of the world. I feel that not many people in this age are stopping and waiting to appreciate the beauty of the world. I wanted to help other people enjoy the beauty we are all missing out on. My piece is really just describing spring in general and everything that happens during the time. My inspiration for the piece was really just looking around me and noticing the little things.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Isabella's full artist statement can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AfZwffpG7iOSEJH8WnIAjelmyLg_nZQHi/view

FULL POEM

Isabella's poem can be viewed here:

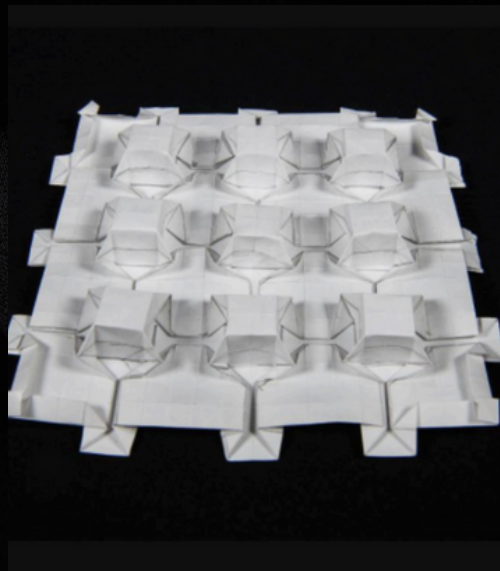
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AfZwffpG7iOSEJH8WnIAjelmyLg_nZQHi/view

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Influence of Social Media
- Connection to Nature
- Inspiration from Everyday Life

LUCAS L. (ORIGAMI)

PAGE 16



“Some people may dismiss the art of origami as a simple pastime that kids do in class when they’re bored, but that couldn’t be farther from the truth.”

Origami is an awesome way to express creativity, especially for kids and teens. When I fold paper, I feel like I'm making something unique with my own hands. It's not just about following instructions; I can tweak designs and create my own pieces. Each time I start a new project, I get to challenge myself and think outside the box.

It's more than just folding paper; it's about discovering who I am through art. I hope that others can experience that too.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Lucas's full artist statement can be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W8pvt1GOv9uHBEHizdaO3k-1ltmqrNm8/view>

FULL POEM

Lucas's origami can be viewed here:

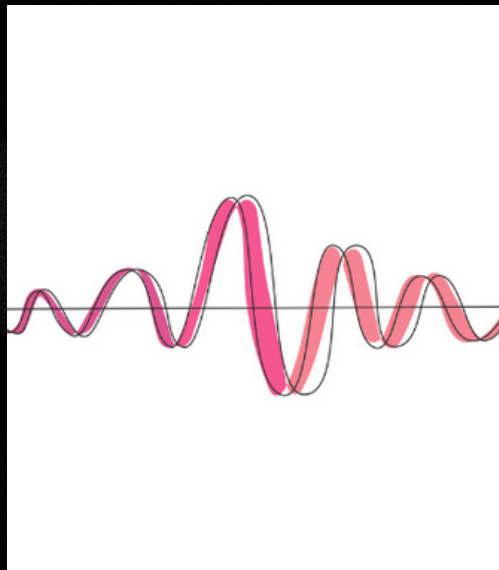
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W8pvt1GOv9uHBEHizdaO3k-1ltmqrNm8/view>

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Creativity and Self-Expression
- Focus and Relaxation
- Personal/Artistic Discovery

BRANFLAKES - HOW IT CAN CHANGE -BY JACK B.

PAGE 17



“The thing about this, is that it's not meant to sound great. But it's meant to show that your mind and emotions can change in a matter of seconds at this age. It can be calm, scary, happy, sad and you have no idea what's going on.”

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Jack's full artist statement can be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UQImYJpOHMPODrhugjWddWZNXYDuw2vV/view>

FULL SONG

Jack's song can be viewed here:

<https://on.soundcloud.com/n9eNy>

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Emotional Change
- Mindfulness and Awareness

GOODBYE, BEST FRIEND. - BY CHOLE S.

PAGE 18



“To move on, I have learned in my 14 years on this planet that you cannot change people. Only time can do that. I have watched my best friend in the whole world turn into someone I don’t know in a matter of years, and that is scary to me.”

My essay details our friendship's 'lifetime', from the days when we were inseparable to when we started growing apart. This was an extremely hard essay to write, because it was truly unfiltered. The inspiration for my essay was the years of confusion, frustration, and sadness that came when we started growing apart. And when I started to type, every ounce of emotion I had just spilled onto my essay.

FULL ARTIST STATEMENT

Chole’s full artist statement can be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/18Dan-QaX2NBiwZDIstxmE31CTHzyNK9B/view>

FULL STORY

Chole’s story can be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/18Dan-QaX2NBiwZDIstxmE31CTHzyNK9B/view>

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- Loss and Separation
- Change and Growth
- Acceptance and Moving On

DIGITAL JOURNALING BENEFITS FOR TEENAGERS

"The process of planning my painting helped me think through my issues because I had to consider how to express my thoughts without words, and this helped me think through things from different perspectives"

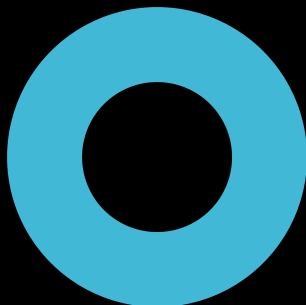
- Tuscaloosa, Alabama

"Writing out my artistic statement especially helped me understand myself better, and putting my thoughts into words really helped me deal with my own emotions and feelings."

- Helsinki, Finland

Insight 1:

Digital journaling was unequivocally beneficial to teens who participated in the Teenage Handbook competition. **100% of participants** strongly agreed or agreed with this statement: "I feel like this creative process of digital journaling has helped and benefitted me through this specific problem."

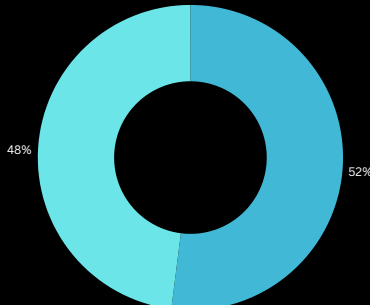


Strongly Agreed or Agreed
100%

"I feel like this creative process of digital journaling has helped and benefitted me through this specific problem"

Insight 2:

Interestingly, only **52% of teens** said they would have liked additional resources **before** starting their journaling. But **after** journaling, **over 80%** said they are now more likely to reach out for help or future resources on subsequent issues. Journaling is not only helpful in of itself but also encourages teens to be more willing to reach out for help in the future.

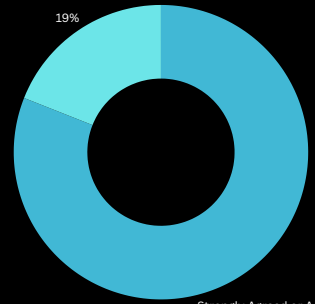


48%

52%

Before the Teenage Handbook:

"I would like to have seen additional resources about my issue before working on my creative expression."



19%

Strongly Agreed or Agreed
81%

After the Teenage Handbook:

"I am more likely to reach out for help or look for resources on other issues I face in the future"

SPECIAL THANKS

teenagehandbook.com

Founded 2023

As seen on Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation's digital blog,
Channel Kindness

channel kindness
A Project of Born This Way Foundation

Recognized with a First prize in UNESCO Clubs 2024 Worldwide
Youth Multimedia competition for Sustainable Development Goal 3:
Health and Wellbeing



Partial funding from Walmart Spark Good

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