How Do Interior Environments of Youth Centers Promote Wellbeing?

ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study aims to understand what amenities and interior features can be implemented into a youth center that can support the wellbeing of teenagers ages twelve to eighteen. In today’s world, teens are being exposed to outdated learning tactics, little to no education on how to handle emotions/feelings, and little means of self-expression. An online survey was conducted anonymously, and participants were given as much time as needed to complete each question. Survey questions were based on the participants’ opinions towards amenities and interior features that focus on teen wellbeing. Although the study was limited to a specific community in the area, the results gave precise and accurate representation for the youth in local communities today.

RESULTS

- Participants found lighting to be one factor with the greatest impact on wellbeing, especially in the case of natural lighting (Fig. 1).
- Flexible and interchangeable furniture dependent on the youth’s needs was recommended by most participants (43%) while others indicated neutral colors (27%) and plant life (24%) were important.
- With the lack of biophilic design in public schools, there was also a large demand for bringing nature into interior environments (44%). “(Incorporate) places that allow natural light and a connection to the outdoors” (Direct quote from participant).
- Participants found lighting to be one factor with the greatest impact on wellbeing, especially in the case of natural lighting (Fig. 2).

DISCUSSION
- Participants of the study agreed that quiet lounge areas (16%) would benefit teens along with art/music rooms (13%) and relaxation/sensory rooms (13%) tied as the second most important spaces to include in teen environments (Fig. 1).
- With the lack of biophilic design in public schools, there was also a large demand for bringing nature into interior environments (44%). “(Incorporate) places that allow natural light and a connection to the outdoors” (Direct quote from participant).
- Participants found lighting to be one factor with the greatest impact on wellbeing, especially in the case of natural lighting (Fig. 2).

FUTURE DIRECTION
Weather can impact the mental health of human beings. For future research, data collection, surveys, and focus groups could ask how interior environments can be designed to limit the possible mental health struggles that are impacted by weather. With participant numbers being lower for this study, in future studies, we would focus more time on gathering participants and distribute to a broader range of mental health professionals that work with youth.

REFERENCES: