

SUMMER 2023 ZINE

YOUTH AGES 11-13



*the
future
is
bright*

Summer 2023 Youth Ages 11 - 13 Zine

“Be yourself. Above all, let who you are, what you are, and what you believe shine through every sentence you write, every piece you finish.”

– John Jakes

You cannot be a writer unless you see yourself as one. Each program begins with an exploration of ourselves as writers, creators, and communicators. Some work is developed by the individual, and some work is a collaborative effort.

Enjoy youth pieces from Podium partners at:

**Next Up at Downtown YMCA
Southside Boys and Girls Club
Petersburg Boys and Girls Club
Partnership for the Future**

Poetry & Prose

The Story of Xavier James

Zavier J.

Southside Boys and Girls Club

This is the story of Xavier James. He is a Caribbean – American that changed the world. He couldn't think about what he was going to do to change the world. He couldn't stick to walls, couldn't fly, didn't have a lot of money yet, and he wasn't the brightest. He did, however, have a paper and pencil. If he had a big breakthrough, he could get his ideas and start with his poems.

We can't tell you what happens next, just watch and see. This is not the end for Xavier James!

Ghost

Nevaeh G. & Drae W.

Petersburg Boys and Girls Club

The ghost injured a loud mother at night.

"What lies she left,

and many goodbyes left cold!"

Beginnings to ends, broken amends.

Ocean

Malachi B. & Chris T.

Petersburg Boys and Girls Club

Listening to the sound of the ocean
is like medicine to my feelings of crying. Driving on
my signature highway, wondering if I will ever smile again.

Parting the Defense

Jaheim P.

Petersburg Boys and Girls Club

Ja on the beat, with the crew B.T.D.

I love to rap on a daily –

on the field it's a rumble,

there's no need to fumble.

When I make a TD

I act as Moses when he split the sea;

I remember it was frozen.

After the Party

**Tiana J., Zierre G., Shanell D., & Maliyah A.
Southside Boys and Girls Club**

- A. After the party
- B. Bob went home to see his
- C. Children acting a fool and
- D. Destroying the house.
- E. Even the baby was destroying the house.
- F. Five minutes before his wife got home,
- G. "Go clean the house," said Mary.
- H. Her husband said, "It wasn't me."
- I. "I don't care," said the mom. "I said, clean the house!"
- J. Johnny laughed at his dad.
- K. Komora and Johnny started arguing
- L. Like they were wild animals.
- M. Mary said, "If y'all don't stop, you are grounded!"
- N. "No," said Johnny and Kamora.
- O. "Oh really?" said Mary.
- P. Peter said his first words, "No, Mama!"
- Q. Queen Mary said, "Who pays the bills?"
- R. Right now, I'm the one who's in charge!"
- S. Sophia the dog barked at Mary.
- T. "Tonight, everybody is sleeping outside," said Mary.
- U. "Usually I'm not this mad, but y'all got me
- V. VERY messed up. Y'all are some
- W. Wild children, except Peter. Here's your
- X. Xylophone.
- Y. You other kids are really working my nerves..."

Sally

**Omoyé B., Emmanuela G., & Amaya B.
Petersburg Boys and Girls Club**

Behind withered trees,
I remembered Sally's starry eyes
in the night sky.
I remember her laugh
and her smile.

Rule the World

Faheem J., Jaheem D., Zavier J., & Camrin W.

Southside Boys and Girls Club

- A. Astriel ruled the world
- B. But in a bad way.
- C. Camrin was his best friend,
- D. Didn't understand his actions and
- E. Even though he wanted to help, he didn't at the same time.
- F. Frequently, Camrin checked up on Astriel.
- G. Guards were always protecting the castle.
- H. How could Camrin get in?
- I. If he tried to break in, he would get caught.
- J. Just because the castle was guarded, his friend showed him an unguarded way used long ago.
- K. Kate was not very knowledgeable about the village.
- (L & M omitted)
- N. No one knew about the unguarded castle, only his friend Camrin knew everything about it.
- O. Outside of the castle, people on the outside world thought it was abandoned.
- (P & Q omitted)
- R. Right then, Camrin
- S. Saw Astriel.
- T. Then, he saw Astriel in a chair tied up.
- U. Unusually, Astriel smiled.
- V. Very strangely
- W. While he was smiling a
- X. Xylophone started playing in the background,
- Y. Yet, xylophones don't exist here.
- Z. ZAP! It was all a dream...

As a Good Person

Zachariah E.

Petersburg Boys and Girls Club

Just because I am black, it doesn't mean I am a bad person.

I am not a robber.

I am not a cheater.

I am not a drug addict.

I am athletic.

Just because I have a hoodie on in the school,

It doesn't mean I am not going to steal from the teacher

I am not a thief.

I am not a grill chaser.

Just because I am tall

Doesn't mean that I play sports like basketball or football.

I am black – it doesn't mean I am a bad person.

See How He Made Me

Jaheim P.

Petersburg Boys and Girls Club

Just because I'm short

Doesn't mean I'm not going to have a growth spurt.

I am not a flirt.

I am not a little boy rapping on the popular streets.

Like sheesh I am not the type to flee.

I am God's son, his flesh and easy-going breeze.

God gave me eyes so I could see like jeez. He did so much for me.

Just Because Poem

Tiana J.

Southside Boys and Girls Club

Just because I'm pretty
Doesn't mean I'm popular,
Doesn't mean I'm a follower,
Doesn't mean I have to be in a group.
I'm myself.

Just because I'm a girl
Doesn't mean I can't play sports,
Doesn't mean I can't do boy stuff,
Doesn't mean I'm not rough.
I'm brave.

Just because I love math
Doesn't mean I'm smart,
Doesn't mean I'm a nerd,
Doesn't mean I'm passing.
I'm intelligent.

Just Because Poem

Faheem J.

Southside Boys and Girls Club

Just because I am a black male
Doesn't mean I am evil,
Doesn't mean I am a bad person,
Doesn't mean that I am a bad influence.
I am a human being like everyone else in the world.

We Always Cool

Chris T.

Petersburg Boys and Girls Club

Yeah, if the mic goes boom, you might be doomed.
Yeah, because when I see cars, they go zoom.
Yeah, because I'm always chillin' with the crew.
Yeah, I think my auntie's kids have the flu.
Yeah, when I was in middle school I was a fool.
Yeah, when I'm with B.T.D. we always cool.

Mystical Mysteries

Enjoy imaginative pieces on compelling crimes, mysteries, and spooky stories.

Charlie the Sleep Man

Arianna B.

Downtown YMCA

Arianna was a regular girl living just outside of Richmond, Virginia, alone in a house in the woods. She was looking at her phone late at night with her dog, when suddenly, a shadow crossed the door. Arianna was weirded out. She continued to hear tapping across the room and went to investigate. Creeping down the hallway, a man looked at her and said, "Sleep." She knew she could not because he was a sleep demon, so she hurried away and called the police. Ten minutes later, her dog was found outside.

Run, Twins!

Leah A.S.

Downtown YMCA

There was once a girl named Laneah who had a twin named Liah. The girls were walking to the store when they saw a dog transform into a killer clown! The dog / killer clown chased the twins, and they tried their hardest to escape.

Ouija Board

Zaria D.G.

Downtown YMCA

A girl named Sally was having a sleepover with her friends while her parents were on vacation. "Let's play with the Ouija Board," Sally said. Her friends said yes, and they all played. They asked the board a few questions. Minutes later, the lights went off, and one of Sally's friends was dead! The board said, "Keep playing or one will die." They all died, one by one ...

Nobody Knew Who He Was
Ty'Najah S.
Downtown YMCA

This man that wore a mask,
nobody knew who he was?
He went around killing people
without anyone knowing.

Horror Story
Jamia U.
Downtown YMCA

“OMG! The door’s locked, we’re going to die,” Amy says, as she bleeds from her stab wound!
Max whispers, “Amy, please calm down.” The door starts to crack open. “He’s here.”
As one of the four doors in the puzzle open, a large man approaches from the dark wearing a
rabbit mask drenched in animal blood. He begins to walk towards Max. “NO, PLEASE!”

My Life
Alex D.
Downtown YMCA

I woke up and got ready, but something was weird, and not a good kind of weird. It was weird,
weird. I started my car. It made a concerning noise, but I ignored it. I just decided to go to work.
Once I got there, the elevator broke, so I had to walk to the 100th floor. It hurt a lot. After a few
hours, I took my lunch break, but when I finished eating, I realized I was eating ants. Then, it hit
me. I had it in my garage all night.

I threw up ants all over my laptop, so I just ate my snack. By the time I was packed up and
ready to leave, I noticed a person wearing all black standing by my car. I grabbed all my stuff and
ran downstairs. By the time I got to the first floor, that person had opened my car door. I was on
the way outside to get them when the car blew up. Blood was everywhere. I was shocked.

I took an Uber home. Once there, I took a bath, but instead of water, it was blood. The next
thing I knew, there were spiders all over me. Then, I blacked out and never woke up.

A Day in the Life

Our students shared pieces on what their daily routine looks like

Everyday Routine

Arianna B.

Downtown YMCA

I wake up and go back to sleep, so after I really wake up, I take my dog out. Then, I eat breakfast and look at my phone. I am told to get dressed. My dog finishes breakfast and comes to get a belly rub. If it's a school camp day, I call my sister to come pick me up. Once there, I take the bus to a morning activity. Then, I get back on the bus and go back to either school camp or home. I take my dog out again and eat dinner.

Day

Jason H.

Downtown YMCA

I woke up and went to the bathroom. I brushed my teeth and hopped in the shower. Then, I went to my room and didn't see my XBOX, so I just went to the YMCA without talking to my grandma. When I came home, she was upset, so she did not talk to me other than to tell me that I couldn't eat. I went to the pool hungry. I had no energy to swim, so I was tired, sleepy, hungry, and sad. I left for home, ate my dinner, and went to sleep.

A Sleepy Day

Taneah A.S.

Downtown YMCA

I woke up, ate, and then got ready for school camp. I took a shower this morning since it was hot. When we all got on the bus, I started to talk to my friends. Later that day, I took a good nap, but I was disturbed by someone calling my phone (so annoying). I ended up talking to them anyway. Then, I went for another nap, but my mother woke me up so I could eat. When I got back to my room, I went back to sleep for my third nap.

My Day
Kendall P.
Downtown YMCA

I wake up and walk my dog.
After my grandma buys me candy,
I can't take a shower.
I go play with my dog,
and he says that I'm stinky.
I tried to buy deodorant on Amazon,
but they ran out.
My mom makes my lunch because I can't.
I ride my bike, and it's so fun.
I tried to watch TV, but it didn't work,
so I tried to buy a used TV,
but that didn't work,
so I just sat down and did my hair.

One Day
Ke'Asyia C.
Downtown YMCA

When I get home, I like to paint and listen to music. When I'm done doing those things, I invite my friends over to watch a movie and play games. After I'm done hanging out, I plan to find my dogs and start playing with them, but while I'm playing a game with my friends, my dogs interrupt me. After I'm done playing with my friends and my dogs, I go into my room and try to sleep without my sleep music.

Advocacy
Maliyah Anderson
Southside Boys and Girls Club

Today, I want to advocate for my friend because she always gets bullied for being herself. I will talk for her when she can't. One day at school, she got bullied by this other girl who was racist and a small little girl.

I Podium

@PODIUMRVA