

# Bicultural Active Living Lifestyle (BALL) Training for Youth

Tales from the Garden, #18



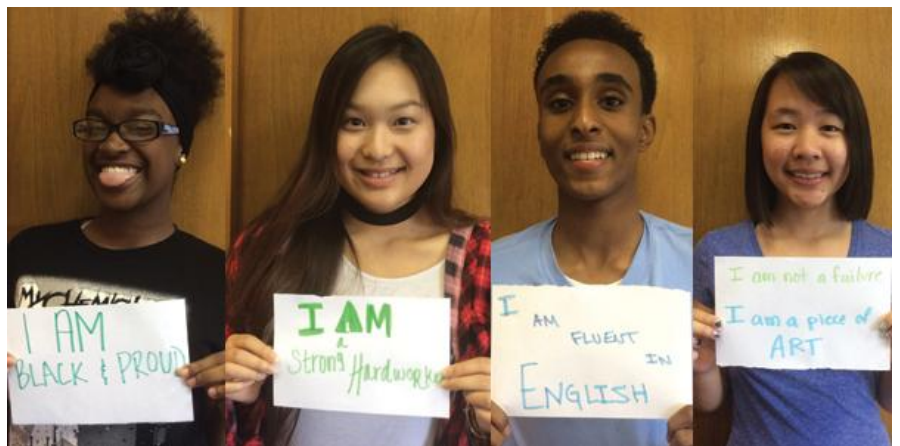
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This summer, we have offered once again the Bicultural Active Living Lifestyle (BALL) Training for Immigrant Youth. BALL is a training surrounding self-awareness about one's own cultural contributions to living a healthy lifestyle. It is also about educating mainstream society regarding these contributions that come from our ever-growing multi-cultural population. No longer is one culture, the dominant culture and their practices, the only option for living a healthy lifestyle. It is about acknowledging, accepting, and offering healthy living lifestyles to all cultures, and including options FROM all cultures for living a healthy lifestyle: food, exercise options, medical practices etc.

During the Training, the Facilitator uses an exercise called "I am" in this workshop so that participants can celebrate themselves, the culture they come from, and their beliefs by using the statement "I am..." to claim for themselves, and educate others about who they are BEYOND what others see. e.g. "I am more than what you allow me to be." "I am not a gangbanger just because I like hip hop." "I am tired of going to restaurants that never serve food from my culture." This statement allows participants to empower themselves to claim who they are and educated, as well as refute the stereotypes put upon them.

And the Facilitator asks youth participants to write a short reflection after the training so they can marinate on what they've learned, how they felt before and after the training, and how they see themselves/society after the training. In addition, it allows them time to reflect on what they might change for the future: beliefs, practices, and how they allow others to interact with them.



Through this workshop, we have felt the energy change among participants. We have seen participants relate to the topic and have much to say about their frustrations be it stereotypes they have to deal with, not having product offerings or activities that are in line with their cultures, and being marginalized as members of the dominant society. We have seen and felt the pride that grows as they discuss with one another, vent, share out, and embrace, who they are in a more positive way than society might offer.