



**TEEN TOWN HALL 2020  
TOPICS AND DESCRIPTIONS**

Topic #	Topic Title
1	<p><b>DIGITAL ACCESS: Do students have adequate access to the internet and equipment in school or at home?</b></p> <p>The lack of adequate funding for education has resulted in many issues, not only with teacher and counselor shortages, but also with school facilities and technical infrastructure. Since March 2020, the COVID-19 Pandemic has forced us into a virtual world of learning. Were our schools and homes ready for this? What are your thoughts on the matter, and what recommendations do you have to close the digital gap for schools and homes that do not have adequate access to internet or technical equipment?</p>
2	<p><b>CAREER READINESS: Do you have the skills that employers want?</b></p> <p>Career readiness is demonstrating core skills that prepare high school and college students for a successful transition into the workplace. Employers are looking for critical thinkers, problem solvers, strong communicators, team players, leaders, digital/technical knowledge, strong work ethic, professionalism, and intercultural awareness and respect. Do you have opportunities to learn these skills through high school, business, or community programs?</p>
3	<p><b>SOCIAL JUSTICE: What is diversity and inclusion?</b></p> <p>We hear these words all the time, but what are they and why are they important? The fundamental constitutional protections of due process and equal protection are embodied in our Constitution and Bill of Rights and are supposed to apply to every person. Yet it seems like these rights are not experienced by all. How can we start having these conversations in school through a curriculum that includes exposure to multicultural literature, and having constructive discussions on prejudices and racism? How can we go about mending divisions, and how can we ensure that all people are treated with respect?</p>
4	<p><b>COLLEGE ACCESS: College is possible for all students...fact or fiction?</b></p> <p>All students should have equal and equitable opportunities to take full advantage of a higher education. It begins with providing a rigorous academic curriculum that prepares students for college-level work. What factors contribute to certain students having less "access" to educational opportunities than other students? What can we do to increase the attainment of a higher education for students in our community?</p>
5	<p><b>COVID-19 ISSUES: A Whole New World</b></p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a seismic shift in lives all across the globe. How has the pandemic affected you personally, socially, and academically? What steps can be taken to successfully transcend these issues?</p>
6	<p><b>HEALTH EDUCATION: Are we getting the whole story?</b></p> <p>Health education is a high school graduation requirement in Arizona. In general, we learn about physical health, social health, emotional health, intellectual health, as well as sexual and reproductive health education. Reforms to health education have been a topic of discussion in recent times, but lesson plans remain the same despite changes in the environments that today's youth live in. Students are asking for a comprehensive</p>



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	curriculum that includes gender identity, sexuality, dating abuse, and healthy relationships. What changes are needed and how can students be better equipped to deal with these complex issues as they mature into adulthood?
7	<p><b>MENTAL HEALTH: Stop the stigma and get help!</b></p> <p>If left untreated, mental illnesses can impede all aspects of health, including emotional well-being and social development. This can leave youth feeling socially isolated, stigmatized, and unable to optimize their social, vocational, and interpersonal contributions to society. Addressing mental health problems early in life, however, can lead to decreases in emotional and behavioral problems.</p>
8	<p><b>QUALITY EDUCATION: What does quality education look like and who has it?</b></p> <p>The funding of K-12 education is a concern for Arizona political leaders, educators and parents, but the state's complicated funding formula and competing political interests have impeded progress. While there is broad agreement that improvements must happen, there is little consensus about how to do that. What are your thoughts?</p>
9	<p><b>SUBSTANCE ABUSE: Vaping and Other Substances: How addictive can they be?</b></p> <p>Widely differing definitions of substance abuse are used in the worlds of public health, medical services, and criminal justice. In some cases, criminal or anti-social behavior occurs when the person is under the influence of alcohol or a drug, and long-term personality changes in individuals may occur as well. In addition to possible physical, social, and psychological harm, alcohol and drug use can lead to tough criminal penalties.</p>
10	<p><b>SUPPORT SYSTEMS: Who can you trust?</b></p> <p>Support systems with people of all ages are important to our well-being at home, school and work. Do youth have networks of people at home, school, and in their communities that they can go to get help when they are being challenged personally or academically?</p>
11	<p><b>TEEN SUICIDE: You are not alone.</b></p> <p>Any time a child takes his or her own life, it is an unspeakable tragedy. Sadly, in the state of Arizona, such tragedies have been occurring with increasing frequency in recent years, to the point that suicide is the 8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in Arizona. What are some strategies for reducing the number of suicides, and what should you do if you or one of your peers are contemplating suicide?</p>
12	<p><b>VIOLENCE: Am I safe anymore?</b></p> <p>Bullying (physical and cyberbullying), guns, gangs, physical and sexual abuse in families and dating relationships, and more are plaguing our society. Exploring and implementing effective solutions in one's own life and in the general community can provide answers to this problem.</p>