COMPARED TO WHAT?

poetry and imagery by
Sand Point Young Artists Workshop
a project of Solid Ground
As Solid Ground embarked on its 40th Anniversary year, we wanted to do more than celebrate an institutional milestone. We wanted to showcase the communities that we have the privilege to work in, and provide opportunities for voices that too often go unheard.

Our Sand Point Housing campus is a neighborhood of 175 households living on the old Naval Station Puget Sound in Magnuson Park. It is a mix of properties, some new, some reclaimed from the old barracks. About 500 people moved onto the campus over the span of a few years, all of them folks who needed a good place to live, to heal, and to use as a stepping stone to their futures.

About half of the residents are children and youth for whom we feel a special sense of commitment and responsibility.

Compared to What? came about through a writing and arts workshop that was developed for the older teens living at Sand Point. It started with writing prompts led by Seattle storyteller and educator Kathya Alexander, and continued into photography and design workshops led by Solid Ground staff. Through it all, we witnessed these young people find their voices.

“This is the first time we are actually getting heard, with a different point of view. Our point of view,” one of the teens said about the project. “We think differently from the way adults think. We can also teach adults how we think, because our generation is so different than your guys’ generation. I feel like we know so much more.”

Clearly, these young people do not see themselves as a continuation of their parents’ lives. “I get super annoyed when I am compared,” one said. “It is irritating because that is just saying that you don’t really know who I am if I am being compared.”

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Deiosha Sparks
Homelessness looks like a dog begging its owner for food
It is the gray sky when it rains
It is a bittersweet taste in my mouth and the smell of a porta potty
Homelessness is my brother crying when I am trying to sleep
It is the sound of construction
Homelessness is having to live with another family and being locked out of the house
Homelessness is putting a smile on my face even when I don't have a safe place to sleep
It is the look on my parents' faces when they feel helpless
Home is a different world
It is a white horse
That glows in the dark
Home is playing video games at 10:45 pm
It is a phone right next to you
Indoor yoga
Family close to you
Home is a tree that blows cold air
into your skin
I am a rare solar eclipse
gray and overlooked
a tough cactus
I am needed like air
a glistening diamond
the illusion that the sky is blue
BELIEVE ME!

Once I told Bill Gates that I had more Versace products than him.

But he didn’t believe me.

I felt frustrated because nobody ever believes me.

And it was the one time I snuck by his security guards to see him.

So I went to the Versace store and was put on the label.

On every billboard in town.

Somebody believed me for once.

And I felt as happy as you can be.
Fun is the sun shining bright. It is green grass and hot wings. It is fresh air. Laughter. Music. It is doing cross fit. And hanging out with friends. It is mother taking me shopping. And doing crazy things with me. Fun is me filled with positive energy.
Justice shouldn't occur because you dislike color. It should occur because you don't know beauty.
Home is cool, 
but warm with love 
It is a black and white panda 
that is chill and well kept 
It is sunset when the air is cool and 
the sky is pretty 
Home is where my family is 
It is music 
A roof over my head 
Home as flowers blossoming peacefully
Fun is sports
It is **YELLOW** candy
sweat and music
fun is football,
sleep, being short.
My mother and father
don't show me fun
but I know they know what
it is.
Writing

Writing is happiness.
It is a white pony that gallops smoothly.
Writing is dawn awakening the world.
Writing is my friends.
It is reading a good book.
It is a family that welcomes you.
It is a bird chirping sweet song.

Home/Homelessness

Home is relaxing
It is a violet unicorn
That swims in the ocean
Home is dusk
Sunset
My family ocean
It is music
The rushing river
A tree growing

Homelessness is the hot blazing sun
A snow and lightning storm
A sour lemon
Sour milk and babies crying
Pounding feet
It is helping the homeless
Community service
Sleepless nights
It is seeing my mother and father angry and sad
Their facial expressions
Fake smiles and laughter
Cold nights and no peace

I am a lightning storm
I am green like rosemary
I am noon
A clear creek
A grassy field
A fluffy white cloud
I am a diamond

Fun is a cloud
A raindrop
Chocolate ice cream
It is the smell of chicken stew
The sound of music and rushing water
It is doing art
It is my mother and father listening to music and playing games
Fun is happiness and smiles

By:
Sahvannah Glenn
Injustice is defeat
It is a scarlet snake
that poisons your heart.
Injustice is 3:00 pm
When the sky starts to dim.
Injustice is drama and fights
It is something that keeps you up in
the night
It is lies and distrust
It is a nettle that stings
My Future

When I grow up,
I want to be a super hero.
I will only work at night so I will have one advantage on the bad guys.
I will put a lot of guys in jail and save my city.

My mother and father don’t want this because it will risk my life. But it will be during the night, so no one will be able to see me. Then I will save my city and be disguised.
Justice is a rainbow colored parrot that takes flight. Justice is an autumn night, it is a star that shines bright. Justice is a newborn baby. It is like a reclining chair. It is an open basketball court. It is being born for the very first time.
MY FEET LOOK LIKE THE STRUGGLE
BLACK THUNDERSTORMS
HARD WORK & DEDICATION
AFRICAN FOOD & INDIAN FOOD
SOMETIMES THEY SOUND LIKE AN ANGRY OLD MAN
STOMPING THROUGH THE HOUSE
BUT SOMETIMES THEY SOUND LIKE A SWEET OLD LADY
BAKING COOKIES FOR HER GRANDKIDS
I LIKE THEM THE MOST AFTER I SHOWER & MOISTURIZE
I DON'T LIKE THEM WHEN THEY ARE CRUSTY
I WEAR SOCKS & CLOSED-TOED SNEAKERS
CUZ THEY'RE UGLY & LONG
BUT THEY NEVER GIVE UP ON ME.
Home is nerve filled, 
it is a blue jay that spins, 
home is morning, 
the shuffle of eager legs, 
home is a dessert, 
it is empty and alone, 
it is sharp, 
it is caged,

I am lightning, 
like a hibiscus in the sun, 
i am twilight, 
the rushing waves, 
i am a rock, 
long forgotten, 
i am a cloud, 
slowly gliding, 
i am water, 
giving life to the land,

Fun is a bird, 
so free, 
water flowing so effortlessly, 
sweet as cotton candy, 
early morning chirping, 
crashing waves, 
it is a ziming, 
sports with my cousin, 
all day filled with laughter, 
completely free...

-Marie m.
Home is cozy and comfortable
It is a brown bear that snuggles up with me at night time when I sleep
Home is a dream
It is music and unity
Home is a tree near a river at sunset

Homelessness is a bird that flies from nest to nest
It is a storm that chases you away
A honey bucket
A sour smell
It is squeezing noises, the sound of fingernails on a blackboard
It is not having the basic necessities
Moving all the time

Homelessness is my mother, vulnerable and worried
Showing it in her actions
It is not telling your friends where you live and moving unexpectedly
I am sunshine
I am pink roses

Evening at the lake

A good luck penny

I am a shooting star
And a good night's sleep
Fun is the Sun...

Fun is the Sun
Smiling up high
It is the color blue
The taste

Of Panda Express
Basketball court
Good music and
Hanging out
Fun is family
It is my mom
Always smiling
Positive.

It is the smell of a
After practice
Laughter.
With friends.
Time.
Taking me shopping and
Fun is always being
MY FEET LOOK LIKE MY LITTLE BROTHER'S
THEY ARE GREEN AND RED
THEY ARE SUNNY BUT RAINY DAY

ROTTEN MILK AND BOILED EGGS
HOT SAUCE WITH A MIXTURE OF OCEAN WATER
MY FEET SOUND LIKE FRANK OCEAN

I LIKE THEM WHEN THEY ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING
I DISLIKE THEM AFTER A WORKOUT

I HIDE MY FEET WITH MY VERSACE SHOES
THEY ARE BIG, HEAVY AND OVER-SIZED

AND THEY LEAD ME TO SUCCESS
We look at the same image, but we see differently. We hear the same voices, but we hear different tones. We look into this image, but we don’t believe in the reality. We hear, we see, how real does it have to be to believe?

Special thanks to:
Kathya Alexander
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