CHALLENGES CREATE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

ANNUAL REPORT 2021
Asalaam Alaykum,

As the impact of the pandemic continues, resilience has been critical! Individuals, families, communities have stood together, supported each other, and become stronger as a result.

Because of you, 2021 was pivotal. With the rising need to create research and resources to meet Muslim Americans’ mental health and family wellness needs, The FYI has grown exponentially. As we reflect on this past year’s efforts, there are many reasons to be excited and hopeful! With the invaluable lessons gleaned from last year and a renewed passion for this vital work, we carry this energy and excitement into 2022.

With your unwavering support and God’s blessing, we will continue to meet your needs and empower our communities to reach new heights.

Sincerely,

Sameera Ahmed, Ph.D.,
Executive Director, The FYI
The Family & Youth Institute is a 501(c)3 non-profit, independent, mental health research and education institute. Our community-engaged research and solution-seeking efforts empower Muslim Americans to address their mental health and family wellness needs.

The FYI’s interdisciplinary team of professionals works with the community to identify priorities, conduct research, and create data-driven and culturally appropriate solutions. We then collaborate with partners to disseminate resources and ignite community-wide change.

The FYI’s Theory of Change

**Identify Issues**
What is the problem?

**Research**
What factors affect the issue?

**Solution Seeking**
What works?

**Resource Development**
Resources needed for change?

**Implementation**
How to make a change?

**Impact**
Does it work?
Research To Resources

Ramadan Youth Study

Do you ever wonder what promotes Ramadan change in young people? Dr. Madiha Tahseen teamed up with Baylor University in an innovative research study on Muslim youths’ religious practice before, during, and after Ramadan. With this knowledge, we can use the blessed opportunity of Ramadan to support positive growth of Muslim youth across the nation.

300+ youth
Shared their Ramadan Religious Practice with Researchers

75 Youth
Development Resources Created

13,975
Educated Individuals with The Muslim Youth Mental Health Fact Sheet

500 Imams
Empowered with the Latest Research on Muslim Youth Mental Health

I want to thank you for doing this experiment to see how us teenagers behave during covid and in Ramadan. The experiment really opened my eyes to how I feel about myself. I think the way that you incorporated the experiment with teenagers live’s in a safe space was really good.

– Adolescent Study Participant

Muslim Youth Mental Health Fact Sheet

What’s the latest research on Muslim youth and how do we support them? The Muslim Youth Mental Health Fact sheet summarizes the research in two easy to view images!

For those of us on the ground, counselors, interventionists, youth directors, program managers, community leaders, we really, really, really do need this work that The FYI provides.

– Dr. Suzy Ismail
Responding To Community Needs

Response Guides: 9/11 Guides

Muslim youth often feel “othered” and uncomfortable during classroom discussions commemorating September 11th. With the 20th anniversary of 9/11, we created guides for parents and educators to support Muslim youth and schools through difficult conversations.

Educators' Guide
To Supporting Muslim Students Around 9/11

I shared The FYI 9/11 guide for educators with our DEI (Diversity and Equity and Inclusion) director in Hilliard school district. She immediately shared it with the district principles! Thank you!
– Lila Sibai, Hilliard Public Schools, Hilliard, OH

Empowered
22,000
Individuals Helping
Muslim Youth Navigate 9/11 Classroom Discussions

3,228
Individuals
Enhanced their Knowledge of Men’s Mental Health

iBelong Research Study

How do we address the unmosqued phenomenon? By researching the solutions! Hanan Hashem, Ph.D. candidate, kicked off a 3-year national research study in 5 communities. More than 300 young adults shared their barriers and experiences of belonging in mosques. More than 150 adolescents and parents weighed in on the survey results to contextualize and confirm the findings. The research will continue in 2022 as communities partner with The FYI to explore community nuances and effective interventions.

We got people who are qualified, educated, and who want to help! This [The FYI] is exactly what I’ve been looking for. I’m in. Whatever we have to do I’m in.
– Imam Siraj Wahaj

Annual Report 2021
Reducing Mental Health Stigma

Owning Our Legacy: Muslims & Mental Health

What does our Islamic legacy teach us about mental health and current misconceptions? To answer this, we created a video to reduce mental health stigma based on research about Muslim contributions to psychology by The FYI researchers, Dr. Khalid Elzamzamy and Alaa Shareef.

Research to Resources

- **Created 48 Mental Health Resources**
- **Supported 14,080 People with The FYI’s Suicide Prevention Resources**
- **Inspired 7,817 with Our Muslim Mental Health Legacy Video**
- **Empowered 3,521 Individuals with The Muslim Historical Contributions Infographic**
- **15,448 Relied on The FYI’s Toolkits to Navigate Mental Health Challenges**
Setting Up Marriages For Success

Marital Conflict and Resolution Infographic
Conflict in marriage is inevitable, but how do you make it an opportunity for growth and understanding? We created an infographic for couples that highlights a pathway for positive change. Couples shared the infographic, mental health professionals used it in therapy sessions, and community leaders integrated it into presentations and khutbas to strengthen marriages nationwide.

From Intern to Resource Developer
In my last year of undergrad, my future husband approached me for marriage. He seemed like a great guy, but I felt unsure and overwhelmed. How do I know if this person is for me?
Alhamdulilah, supported by my family and others, I got to know my future husband. The Family & Youth Institute had an internship opportunity to develop the marriage prep toolkit during the courtship process. I seized the opportunity!
After more than a year of integrating the research and developing the toolkit, it was finally complete . . . and I had gotten married!
With the success of the marriage prep toolkit, I joined The FYI staff to develop an online marriage prep course, Prepare to Pair. And guess who ended up supporting me in the process? My husband!
Four years later, from single to married and intern to staff, The FYI has empowered me to help others on their marriage journey.
– Issra Killawi

New Program Launched: Prepare to Pair
Based on The FYI researcher Amal Killawi’s, MSW’s marriage preparation research, The FYI created Prepare To Pair: Marriage Prep course. This course guides engaged couples to assess compatibility, build relationship skills, and discuss difficult topics. It is now available online at https://p2p.thefyi.org/sp.

This program (P2P) provides a blueprint for establishing a healthy relationship and shows Muslims entering relationships the tools needed to grow and nurture themselves and their relationships.
– Obadah Alfaham
Change Making Partnerships

Igniting community-wide change, promoting mental health, and family wellness requires partnering with changemakers across the nation. From mosques, like East Plano Islamic Center Masjid in Dallas, Texas, to Islamic schools and institutions like The Islamic Schools League of America, community-based organizations like Milwaukee Muslim Women’s Coalition, and research institutes like Baylor University and the SEARCH Institute – partnerships make change happen! Together we have made a difference by strengthening individuals, families and communities.

Where We’ve Been

- Workshop Attendees: 2,710
- Workshops & Webinars: 55
- Community Empowerment Videos: 5,970

Where We’ve Been Internationally:
- London, Ontario
- Putra Jaya, Malaysia

Workshop Testimonial

This workshop (Mentoring Muslim Youth) was very relevant and practically addressed the concerns we all have for our youth. It provided us with understanding, tools, and resources to help address our youth’s issues.

- Rebekah, Sacramento
Finances

Income
- 5% Program Services
- 30% Grants
- 65% Donations

Expenses
- 8% Administrative
- 36% Research
- 56% Community Education
The FYI Team

Executive Team
Sameera Ahmed
Nadeem Siddiqi
Madiha Tahseen
Sumbal Raza
Samer Naseredden
Lama Elsharif
Amina Rahman
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Donations made to The Family & Youth Institute are Zakat and Tax Eligible

www.TheFYI.org