



THE SOURCE FOR KNOWLEDGE
ON GENDER & ORIENTATION

2026 Impact & Outcomes

Midyear Report



Miami-Dade County recognizing YES Institute's 30 Year Anniversary with a proclamation.

Our mission is to prevent suicide and ensure the healthy development of all youth through powerful communication and education on gender and orientation.





Miami-Dade County Pride Kickoff Event, June 2026

30 Years of Results

YES Institute serves as a critical resource and safety net for the community by opening powerful dialogues that prevent youth suicide, reduce bullying and violence, and empower families. Across three decades, this work is carried forward by **generous donors, volunteers, and communities** who show up for South Florida's youth. This year, our impact and legacy were recognized in ways that moved us deeply.

On February 28, 2026, we celebrated 30 years of service aboard the Biscayne Lady Yacht. Joined and uplifted by YES Institute co-founders, philanthropists, community leaders, families, partners, and friends, we reflected on over a quarter-century of providing **powerful communication and education**. From heartfelt testimonies, joyful connections, and Miami skyline views, the evening mirrored the strength and persistence of those called to a powerful purpose. We're profoundly grateful to everyone who has ever supported our mission and contributed to creating a future for thriving youth.

We were honored by Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine-Cava and the Board of County Commissioners **proclaiming June 3 as YES Institute Day**, recognizing the profound difference our three decades of work have made. District 2 Commissioner Marleine Bastien presented the proclamation to YES Institute at the County's Pride Kickoff Event.

The need for our work has never seemed more urgent than right now. Please connect with us at 305-663-7195 or info@yesinstitute.org to engage, share, request, or contribute.



JOSEPH ZOLOBCZUK, MS ED.
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Meet our Family Resource Navigator, JB Pfeiffer.

JB has built a career of caring—from her work in pediatric HIV services to medical social work, JB knows how to show up for families when it matters most. She now brings that same care to YES Institute families.





YES Institute Communication Solutions™ course, January 2026

Impact at a Glance

YES Institute brought our mission to schools, families, corporations, healthcare systems, and universities, reaching participants from **Miami** to **Minnesota** and from **Colorado** to **California**. Whether through signature courses, clinical trainings, corporate workshops, or community gatherings, we created environments for powerful communication, belonging, and well-being in a year when those elements felt more necessary than ever.

This course gave me a reminder that I have power with my voice, and that I can generate transformation with my words."

— *Communication Solutions™ participant*

We offered a full slate of courses, including **Communication Solutions™**, **Essentials of Well-Being**, **Neurodiversity Awareness & Best Practices**, and **Well-Being in Times of Uncertainty**. We also conducted **Exploring Machismo** — an interactive course on gender roles, masculinity, and identity across cultures that examines what a healthy vision of masculinity can look like.

"Finding others who share the desire to do something about the way masculinity expresses itself today — that was powerful."

— *Exploring Machismo participant*

Program Outcomes

2,508

participants reached through June 30th.

98%

of surveyed participants said they felt "safe" or "very safe" to share their real views with YES Institute facilitators.

93%

of surveyed participants said they rated YES Institute presentations as "worthwhile" or "extremely worthwhile."

Youth and Families

Belonging • Community • Connection

YES Institute showed up for youth and families across South Florida, hosting gatherings, opening dialogues, and creating environments where young people and their caregivers could connect, reflect, and grow.

Our Youth Empowerment Council continued developing young leaders. Our Neurodiversity & Identity Family Empowerment Group met monthly, bringing together families navigating the joys and challenges of neurodivergence and gender- and orientation-related experiences.



*Neurodiversity & Identity Family
Empowerment Group
May 2026*

PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

Community Events & Partnerships

- Alper JCC Miami Pride Empowerment session — Mindfulness for Well-being
- Brandeis National Committee — New Thinking on Concepts of Gender
- Brazelton Touchpoints Center international webinar — Pride in Every Word
- Mosaic Miami Metro Town youth — Communication Toolbox & Well-being



*Alper JCC Miami Pride
Empowerment Group
May 2026*

Ongoing Youth & Family Programs

- Youth Empowerment Council
- Neurodiversity & Identity Family Empowerment Group
- Family Resource Meetings (English & Spanish)

"It is invaluable to have this safe, warm, welcoming space to connect. There is nowhere else I have found where this is possible for me and my family."

— Neurodiversity Family Empowerment participant



*Mosaic Miami MetroTown
Youth Leaders
June 2026*

Education Communities

Communication • Well-Being • Safety

YES Institute partnered with **school communities, youth-serving organizations, and educational groups** to support young people and the professionals who guide them. Through student-centered workshops, mental health professional development, and community programming, our work strengthened communication, well-being, empowerment, and belonging; creating safer, more connected environments for youth across South Florida.



Code/Art Fest, Overcoming Imposter Syndrome Workshop, April 2026

RECENT WORK

- **Community & Special Programs**
 - Code/Art Fest — Overcoming Imposter Syndrome Workshop
 - First Star Academy — Gender & Orientation Training for Camp Counselors
- **School & Faculty Development**
 - Independent Schools — Leadership & Communication Coaching
 - MDCPS Mental Health Coordinators — Burnout Prevention Program
- **Student-Centered Initiatives**
 - Miami Coalition for Queer Youth GSA Summit — Communication Toolbox
 - North Miami Senior High School — Mental Health Resource Fair

"I learned that why I can't truly enjoy and celebrate my wins is because of imposter syndrome, and that I can work on getting better by surrounding myself with supportive people and transforming negative thoughts for positive ones."

— Code/Art Fest youth participant

Workplaces

Well-Being • Leadership • Belonging

YES Institute partnered with a variety of corporations and workplaces to deliver education on gender, orientation, communication, and well-being. From employee resource groups, business councils, and hospitality certification programs, our work supported professionals in building more connected and mentally healthy workplaces. We were proud to welcome new tourism leaders in the relaunch of the Pink Flamingo Hospitality Certification program, bringing welcoming practices to Miami's visitors industry.



Essentials of Well-Being for Miami HEAT PRISM Employee Resource Group, May 2026



Pink Flamingo Hospitality Certification Training at Carillon Miami Wellness Resort, May 2026

RECENT WORK

- Baptist Health South Florida — Business Resource Group
- Carillon Miami Wellness Resort — Pink Flamingo Hospitality Certification
- Miami HEAT Employee Resource Group — Essentials of Well-Being
- Kauffman Rossin Miami — Employee Pride & Community Presentation
- Vizcaya Museums & Gardens — Well-Being & Thriving Workshops
- LLYC Diversity Council — Community and Corporate Engagement

"I've been going through a moment of anxiety in my life and dealing with it, so this was very much on theme in my life and helpful."

— Miami HEAT PRISM participant



YES Institute is proud to serve as a training provider for the **Pink Flamingo Hospitality Certification**, an MDGLCC.com initiative that recognizes hotels and businesses committed to creating welcoming environments for gender- and orientation-diverse visitors across Greater Miami and Miami Beach.

Medical & Mental Health

Centering Patient and Client Care

YES Institute deepened its work with medical and mental health professionals, delivering specialized training and education across clinical, academic, and community settings. From graduate counseling students to practicing clinicians and first-year medical students, our programs equipped providers with the knowledge, communication skills, and confidence to serve gender- and orientation-diverse individuals and families with dignity and care.



University of Miami, Mental Health Counseling Graduate Students Class, June 2026

Professional Development

- Advanced Gender Therapy Certification course with International Institute of Clinical Sexology and YES Institute — 60 hour program completed

Academic & Clinical Training

- Nova Southeastern University Davie — Graduate Counseling Class
- University of Miami
 - Mental Health Counseling Graduate Students — Best Practices When Working With Gender & Orientation Diverse Youth & Families
 - School of Nursing Public Health & First-Year Medical Students — Patient Centered Care, Cultivating Belonging for Everyone

"Hearing the experience of the guest speaker opened my eyes to a life I hadn't fully understood before — and completely changed how I think about transitioning."

— NSU Graduate Counseling student



Baptist Health South Florida was honored with YES Institute's Corporate Belonging Award at our 30-Year Celebration, recognizing their long-standing commitment to compassionate, patient-centered care for all.

Community Organizations

Belonging • Connection • Well-Being



St. Mark's Lutheran Church: Belonging and Resiliency Amidst Challenges
March 2026



Transgender Day of Visibility at
The Pride Center at Equality Park
April 2026

YES Institute has extended its mission beyond schools and clinics, partnering with **community organizations, support groups, and faith communities** to foster belonging and well-being. From a national webinar series to local support groups and volunteer workshops, our work created environments for connection and mutual support. We also showed up alongside our community — standing in partnership at gatherings that celebrate resilience, visibility, and pride.

RECENT WORK

- PFLAG South Miami — Pinecrest Support Group
- St. Mark's Lutheran Church — Belonging and Resiliency Amidst Challenges Workshop
- SAGE NYC Care Volunteers — Transforming Compassion Fatigue Workshop
- The Learning Council in Paonia, Colorado — Communication Toolbox course

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Transgender Day of Visibility — Transinclusive Group at The Pride Center at Equality Park

"Being reminded that setting boundaries is OK — and I don't need to feel guilty for it — was exactly what I needed to hear. It's a shift that will genuinely improve my quality of life."

— SAGE NYC care volunteer



Jeffrey Shearer, LCSW, MCAP joins YES Institute Board

YES Institute is proud to welcome Jeffrey Shearer to our Board of Directors. Jeff retired as CEO and co-founder of Tykes & Teens, a leading children's mental health organization in Martin County. He now runs a trauma-informed therapy practice in Wilton Manors. With over 30 years of clinical experience and national recognition, he brings deep expertise in mental health leadership to our mission.



We celebrate our own
Claire Barone, who
received the **"Most
Valuable Event Person
of the Year"** Award for
her work as the event
planner behind the
30-Year Celebration



30 Years of Impact: Honoring Our Visionary Awardees

These honorees have shared their time, talent, and treasure to advance the mission of YES Institute. We honor them for their decades of dedication and selfless service, which have strengthened families, saved young lives, and helped build a more compassionate world.



Family Changemaker
Eva Leivas-Andino



Board Leadership
Bob Oldakowski



Community Connector
Joan Schaeffer



Parent
Isabelle Camille



Youth Leadership
Victorino "Vic" Marti



Foundation
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Intl. Educational Leadership
Dr. Luis Ottley



Founder's Legacy
Martha Fugate & Connie Barden



Philanthropic Heroes
Lane Park & Dr. F. Lynn Leverett

Corporate Belonging Award
Baptist Health South Florida



Copies of our 30-Year Commemorative Book are available. Reach out to us at info@yesinstitute.org or 305-663-7195 to request yours.





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June 30, 2026.*

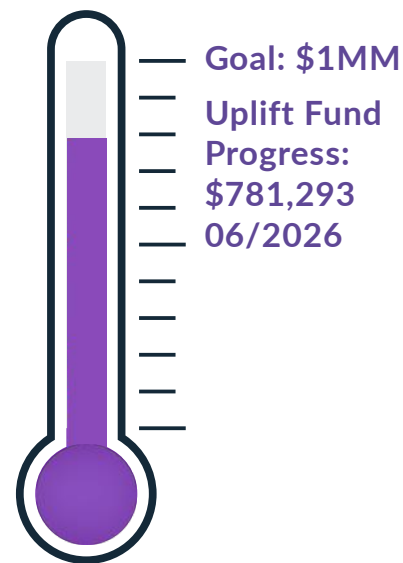


We thank our amazing Kiaora Society and Professionals Society of Donors for their incredible support. Contributions are vital to sustaining our vision and fulfilling our purpose. YES Institute's finances are audited annually. YES Institute holds a Gold Transparency rating by Candid/GuideStar, and a 94% ranking score with Charity Navigator.

Looking Ahead: The Uplift Fund

As part of our 30-year anniversary, YES Institute launched the Uplift Fund — a \$1 million initiative to expand our reach and strengthen our impact for the future. Thanks to our community's generosity, we're already more than three-quarters of the way to our goal, supporting growth into new communities and meeting the increasing needs of youth and families when support matters most.

This investment allows YES Institute to scale our programs, deepen partnerships, and keep life-saving communication and education accessible for the next generation. Learn more and contribute at: yesinstitute.org/uplift-fund



Thank *you!*

to all our donors, volunteers, speakers, and partners!



Let's Connect!

 info@yesinstitute.org

 yesinstitute.org

 5275 Sunset Drive
Miami, FL 33143

 305-663-7195

We couldn't have done it without your generous support.



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS



THE SOURCE FOR KNOWLEDGE
ON GENDER & ORIENTATION

8TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISING TOURNAMENT

BOWLING WITH A PURPOSE!

Sunday, August 9, 2026

11am – 1:30pm

Bird Bowl

9275 SW 40th St.

Miami, FL 33165

*Join our commitment to the mission of
YES Institute, which serves youth and
families across the community.*

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INVITE YOUR COLLEAGUES
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AND NON-ALCOHOLIC
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- Participate in a team building activity while supporting your local community and having fun.
- Partnership with YES Institute, a leading and reputable nonprofit with over 30 years of impact.
- Invitation to our yearly donor events and inclusion in our donor acknowledgements.
- Silent auction and win raffle prizes!
- Highest scorer wins a trophy and a special prize!

yesinstitute.org/bowling

Call 305-663-7195

