



Sound It Out: Additional Quotes from Participating Artists and Mental Health Experts

Empress Of:

"This project was so incredible to work on. Mental health awareness in the Latinx community is rarely talked about and it was really beautiful to get to talk to Marianne and her mother about Marianne's life, in school and in home, and how she dealt with feeling different in a new world! As a child of Honduran immigrants, I see a lot of my own experiences in her and it was nice to share my story with her as well and how music and the arts has helped me become the individual I am."

Tobe Nwigwe:

"Unfortunately, emotional wellbeing is not something we discuss openly in our culture. As a father, an uncle, friend, and role model, I want to help change that narrative. I want the younger generation to know that it's ok to talk about your feelings, it's ok to have emotions, it's ok to cry, but with purpose behind your tears. Don't just cry without purpose. Get to the root of the situation. And it's always ok to ask for help. And if you can't find the right words to express yourself, you can always find the lyrics."

Lauren Jauregui:

"This pandemic and isolation has been hard on everyone, especially kids; and even more especially, those in underserved and disenfranchised communities. Helping them to open up about their feelings can be tough but Sound it Out uses the universal power of music and lyrics to unlock the barriers of mental health conversations between children and their caregivers. My hope is that this platform will provide the much needed resources to those in need of guidance to navigate these conversations."

KAMAUU:

"Steve Biko once said 'The most potent weapon in the Hands of the Oppressor is the Mind of the Oppressed.' The most impressionable minds of any group of people are the minds of children. In America, the most systematically attacked and targeted community is the 'Black' community. To be a child of the 'Black' or 'African Descended' community in America is to be born into the social position of mental prey, amongst other things. I believe that, though there are often exceptions to rules, naturally, it is the design of the father to be the first line of defense for a child as the mother is the first teacher."



At 64-75%, the 'Black' community in America has the highest single parent rate in the country. The majority of those households are single mothers. Whilst in the 'Black' community, 72% of babies are born to single mothers, only 29% of 'White' children are born into fatherless environments. When we combine that reality with the fact that 'Black' men have the highest unemployment, incarceration, & death rates in the country, I'm led to believe that there is a war on 'Black' children & consequently the 'Black' future, and that one of the many tools executed in this war is the elimination of the 'Black' father.

I was drawn to participate and be a part of this project in the name of self-preservation. In doing what I can to help the youth and parents, (fathers and mothers), I help create a better community for myself and for my future children."

Dr. Regina Miranda,
Professor of Psychology, Hunter College, City University of New York:

"It can be hard for kids to make sense of what they are going through, and even harder to express it to their parents or caregivers. Having music as a medium of expression and sharing it with young people to help them make sense of their feelings is a gift. It was an honor to help facilitate conversations between young teens and artists, to hear their stories and what they shared in common, and to see those stories inspire songs that I hope can be used as conversation-starters between caregivers and teens. Our interviews touched on many important areas that affect how teens, including those who are immigrants or the children of immigrants, make sense of their worlds. These included family, culture, friendship, and faith. Navigating these parts of our identities impacts how we see ourselves and how much we feel like we belong."