

**Hello. My name is Kelly Limes-Taylor. You can call me LT.** I am the adult lead for the Current Events Listening Sessions series for teens, hosted by LEAD on February 25, March 4, and March 18, 2026. I'm excited to begin!

### **General Information**

I suggested this workshop series to LEAD because we are in what many consider as particularly challenging or tumultuous times. As adults do the hard work of navigating new difficulties or upsetting information day by day, they may not be able to quietly sit and listen to their young people's thoughts about current events. I remember being a teenager and valuing whenever adults facilitated opportunities for me to share my thoughts and hear what other teens thought.

Through these sessions with LEAD, I want to give teen participants an additional space to openly express and process their thoughts about current events in real time and in person, with the option to hear the thoughts of their peers if they so choose. I will be present to hold the space, maintain the group agreements (see below), and manage the sharing process – but I will not provide my thoughts or opinions in session, attempt to guide discussions (outside of the pre-set Sharing Procedures also described below), nor suggest discussion topics. I also believe in the importance of a teen-centered space for these workshops, so adults are welcome to come and hang out before and after the sessions, but not during the sessions. My presence will be as a space-holder, to allow participants to talk and listen with each other.

It is my hope that this listening space will be helpful for the participants and their families. It is my pleasure to be present in this way.

### **Confidentiality**

While participants and their adults are welcome to discuss what *that* participant talked about in session, participants will be asked to refrain from discussing what *other* participants share in session. We do this to maintain a safe space where all participants can feel free to share. If an adult has been made privy of a session discussion that they then want to discuss with me, they may contact me as soon as possible. If it seems most appropriate that a LEAD staff member be involved in either that or a subsequent discussion on the issue, we can make sure they are invited, too. Finally, while I do not consider myself as a teacher in these sessions, I still very much consider myself a mandated reporter in the same way professional teachers are. This means that if any participant speaks of self-harm or harming others, I will contact that participant's adults the same day.

### **Group Agreements**

By being present, participants in our sessions are agreeing to conduct themselves according to our Group Agreements, which are outlined below. During our first meeting, we will review them and discuss what each agreement means to us. We will also have the opportunity to add additional agreements as needed:

- A. I respect the people around me and can expect respect in return.
- B. I recognize others' allotted time to speak without interruption and can expect my full time to speak when it is my turn.
- C. I work to distinguish difference from active/intentional harm – the former, I can accept; the latter, I cannot.
- D. I understand that I have my own path and am in the process of growing, learning, and changing every day. This is also true for everyone around me.
- E. I work to actively listen to, to consider, and to better understand others' points of view, even if I don't agree with them. I can expect the same to be done for me.

### **Sharing Procedures**

Once we're clear on the Group Agreements, we move on to discuss our Sharing Procedures, which are outlined below. More details will be provided in session, but I'm sharing the general framework here to make sure participants and families are aware:

1. First, we will introduce ourselves with a brief ice-breaker and review the Group Agreements, defining concepts and additional agreements as needed.
2. Each participant will then receive a hard copy of a questionnaire or access to the questionnaire link. On it, participants will be invited to name and briefly discuss two current events or social/political issues on their minds. Participants will have up to 15 minutes to complete this questionnaire.
3. Each participant then gets 7 to 10 minutes (depending on the size of the group) to discuss one of the topics they wrote about. As each participant discusses, everyone else in the room listens. No responses are needed at that time. At the close of their discussion, each participant notes if they would like to hear or discuss additional perspectives about their topic.
4. I will make a list of the topics available for additional perspectives and for additional discussion.
5. Then, each participant has five minutes to share their perspective about one of the topics on the additional perspectives list OR discuss a topic with the original sharer. The latter option is not meant as an effort to debate or convince, rather to discuss points of view.
6. We then do steps 2-5 for the other topic from each participant's questionnaire.
7. Once we have completed our second round of discussion and perspective sharing, I will thank our participants and share closing words. We will then take 10 minutes to have an individual or group reflection about the experience, depending on group preference.

If we run out of things to discuss in session, or if the participants feel like they have discussed their thoughts enough before the session ends, I will not suggest additional things to discuss. We will instead end the session early but remain in the room until the participants' adults arrive.

### **Closing**

I think that's all the information I wanted to share for now. **Take care.** 😊