

# How we grow

Today's youth are faced with a **range of challenges** that are creating a barrier of access to the protective factors that bolster social and emotional wellbeing. These conditions, among others, are **depleting the mental health** of young people today.

Increased global environmental & socio-political instability & conflict

Social media & online communication diminishing meaningful socialization

Excessive gaming & online exposure creating health & safety risks

Increased school & community violence creating anxiety & insecurity

Ongoing impact of Covid-19 isolation & uncertainty

These challenges require **creative, multi-faceted and innovative solutions** to interrupt this harmful environment. **Play!** activities merge **applied theatre, critical pedagogy, healing-centered engagement, restorative justice, drama therapy, and somatic experiencing**:

- Storytelling** Shared experience, memory, expression, humanization, listening
- Roleplay** Empathy, upstander practice, imagination, courage
- Theatre games** Collaboration, spontaneity, play, humor
- Embodiment & Somatic Experiencing** Physiological release, nervous system regulation, multi-sensory engagement
- Creative Conversations** Unique learning, community dialogue, awareness, value for diversity

**Developing SEL Competency**

**Supporting healing of underlying stress and trauma**

**Enhancing a sense of connection and belonging**

**Cultivating authentic compassion and social responsibility**

