



## Breakout Session 1A: **Breaking Barriers and Promoting Youth Mental Health Equity**

Mental health is a universal human right. Yet, too many young people face significant barriers, from stigma to cost, in accessing mental healthcare.. This conversation focuses on dismantling these obstacles and forging pathways to ensure every youth, regardless of their background, has an equitable chance to thrive mentally and emotionally.

**Session Time:**11.25 AM - 12:15 PM (EST) - 50 Minutes

**Zoom Link:** <http://foryoupage.org/2025JoinNow>

	Panelists	Talking Points & Questions
	Alyna Lim (Moderator)	
	Nze Okoronta	What are the biggest, yet often invisible, barriers (e.g. cultural stigma, systemic bias, or lack of transportation) that prevent youth in marginalized communities from seeking help?
	Ross Layton	Beyond the clinician’s office, how can we empower schools, community centers, and peer groups to become safe, trusted first points of contact for mental health support?
	Dr. Sean Thum	While digital mental health tools offer promise, how do we ensure they bridge, rather than widen, the equity gap for youth with limited access to technology or digital literacy?
		What specific policies are most critical for creating systemic change—from integrating mental wellness

		into school curricula to demanding better insurance coverage for young people?
		Instead of prescribing solutions, how can we authentically amplify the voices of diverse young people, ensuring they are co-creators in designing the very systems that are meant to serve them?