

The Power of Imagination: Introduction

By Mark Cruz

For teenagers and young adults today, it is difficult to dream. The social isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic, warnings of armed conflict due to instability within the current geo-political landscape, and overwhelming anxieties produced by the development of an ongoing climate crisis – the already challenging experience of adolescence is compounded by times of extreme uncertainty. To grow up in such a world can be an experience marked with apathy, despair, and sadness about the future. How can we help a generation of young people dare to *imagine* again?

This issue of *YA Hotline* explores the ‘power of imagination’ and poses a critical question: how might imagination be incorporated into library services? Given their historic proximity to learning and adolescent life, libraries have an important role to play in creating imaginative spaces, programming, and collections for their young adult patrons. This issue approaches the topic of imagination broadly, as a site for speculation, optimism, fantasy, and transformation within the minds of teenagers and young people. Libraries are uniquely positioned to promote imaginative learning; a generation that is able imagine something better, is the generation that will bring something better into reality.