



JUST BECAUSE

IRC YOUTH SUMMER CAMP 2021 PRESENTS...

POEMS

JUST BECAUSE I am different
DOESN'T MEAN you can go ahead and
judge me

DOESN'T MEAN I am a monster
AND DOESN'T MEAN I don't love myself

JUST BECAUSE I am a girl
DOESN'T MEAN I am weak
DOESN'T MEAN I can't do what men can
do

AND DOESN'T MEAN I don't have strength
JUST BECAUSE Of your past
DOESN'T MEAN you need to ruin others
life

DOESN'T MEAN everything will be the
same

AND DOESN'T MEAN everyone is the same
JUST BECAUSE I am a human.

Do we have to try our best to fit in this
society?

If you hurt someone and laugh, how
would you feel if that happened to you?

Can you handle the truth?

Be in the present and not the past. Don't
let history repeat itself.

- Paw Moo, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I'm speaking up for myself
DOESN'T MEAN I'm rude
DOESN'T MEAN I'm problematic
AND DOESN'T MEAN you can treat me with
disrespect

JUST BECAUSE I'm short
DOESN'T MEAN I can't reach the car pedal
DOESN'T MEAN I can't do daily tasks
AND DOESN'T MEAN I was born with a
defect

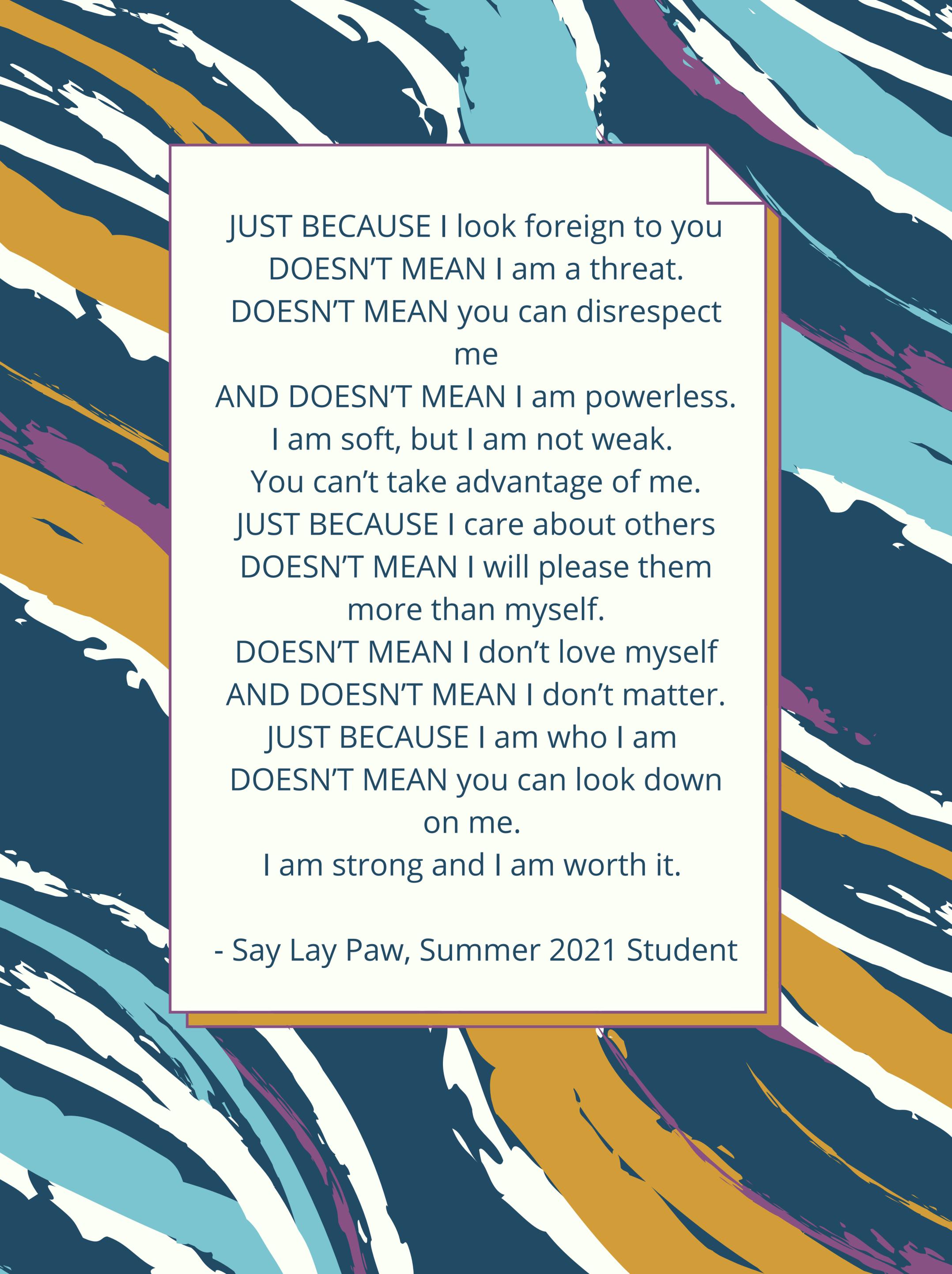
JUST BECAUSE I'm social
DOESN'T MEAN my dm's are flooded
DOESN'T MEAN my life can't be boring
AND DOESN'T MEAN I want to be famous

JUST BECAUSE I'm social
Why can't we be ourselves without being
judged?

Why is it so hard to live in society today?
Are you living a meaningful life?

Whatever obstacles you face, you'll
overcome it, just believe in yourself and be
you!

- Hser Paw, Summer 2021 Student



JUST BECAUSE I look foreign to you
DOESN'T MEAN I am a threat.
DOESN'T MEAN you can disrespect
me
AND DOESN'T MEAN I am powerless.
I am soft, but I am not weak.
You can't take advantage of me.
JUST BECAUSE I care about others
DOESN'T MEAN I will please them
more than myself.
DOESN'T MEAN I don't love myself
AND DOESN'T MEAN I don't matter.
JUST BECAUSE I am who I am
DOESN'T MEAN you can look down
on me.
I am strong and I am worth it.

- Say Lay Paw, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I am Nepali
DOESN'T MEAN I was born in Mount Everest
DOESN'T MEAN I am Indian
AND DOESN'T MEAN I am Chinese
JUST BECAUSE I am Asian
DOESN'T MEAN I am Smart
DOESN'T MEAN I can handle the spiciest food
in this world
AND DOESN'T MEAN all Asian eat seafoods
JUST BECAUSE I wear glasses
DOESN'T MEAN I am blind
DOESN'T MEAN I can't see your two finger you
show me
AND DOESN'T MEAN I am nerd
Why does everyone think I am smart?
Why do they think I am a nerd?
Yes I am Nepali not Chinese or Indian I was
not born in the mountains, I was born at
home. Yes I eat spicy food but I can't handle
spiciest food and yes I wear glasses not
because I am a nerd because of my eyes
problem.

- Ishmrika Rai, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I'm a girl
DOESN'T MEAN I wear girly makeup
DOESN'T MEAN I can't work
AND DOESN'T MEAN I can't reach my
goals

JUST BECAUSE I'm from Middle East
DOESN'T MEAN I eat meat

DOESN'T MEAN I eat rice everyday

AND DOESN'T MEAN I wear hijab

JUST BECAUSE I'm always smiling

DOESN'T MEAN I'm happy

DOESN'T MEAN I don't cry

AND DOESN'T MEAN I don't get sad

JUST BECAUSE I'm female

Does every girl have to wear makeup
or like makeup?

Why does every Middle Eastern have
to like to eat meat?

Why always assuming that people
don't get sad or cry?

I'm a girl and I don't like to wear
makeup. I'm from the Middle East and
I'm vegan.

- Ayat Salameh, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I like sleeping
DOESN'T MEAN I'm lazy
DOESN'T MEAN I can't get anything done
AND DOESN'T MEAN I'm irresponsible
JUST BECAUSE I'm from Africa
DOESN'T MEAN I don't know English
DOESN'T MEAN I can't speak English
AND DOESN'T MEAN I can't give a speech in
English

JUST BECAUSE I am a woman
DOESN'T MEAN I can't wear pants
DOESN'T MEAN I can't work hard
AND DOESN'T MEAN I bring food to the table

JUST BECAUSE I like sleeping
Does sleeping make you irresponsible?
Does coming from Africa restrict you from
knowing English?

Does wearing pants make me a man?
I'm from Africa and I can speak English and yes I
like wearing pants more than skirts and it doesn't
make me a man. Sleeping doesn't make me
irresponsible, instead, it makes me more
responsible because it relieves my stress.

- Joy Akonkwa, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I am 18
DOESN'T MEAN I am a completely
independent adult now.
DOESN'T MEAN I am going to always make
smart decisions from here forward.
AND DOESN'T MEAN I have my own place.
JUST BECAUSE I don't have my whole life
figured out,
DOESN'T MEAN I am a failure.
DOESN'T MEAN I will not find my path one
day.
AND DOESN'T MEAN I am hopeless or lazy.
JUST BECAUSE I am considered an adult
now,
DOESN'T MEAN I don't watch cartoons
anymore.
AND DOESN'T MEAN I don't spend
countless hours browsing over social
media.

Should 18 years olds be considered adults?
Is our society putting too much pressure
on 18 years olds?

I am still just a confused teenager trying to
find my place and purpose in this
enormous world.

- Ehab Osman, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I'm bold
DOESN'T MEAN I'm conceited.
DOESN'T MEAN I think I'm smarter than
you.

AND DOESN'T MEAN I'm somehow better
than you.

JUST BECAUSE I know my worth
DOESN'T MEAN I think any less of you.
DOESN'T MEAN I know everything.
AND DOESN'T MEAN I think I'm too cool to
be friends.

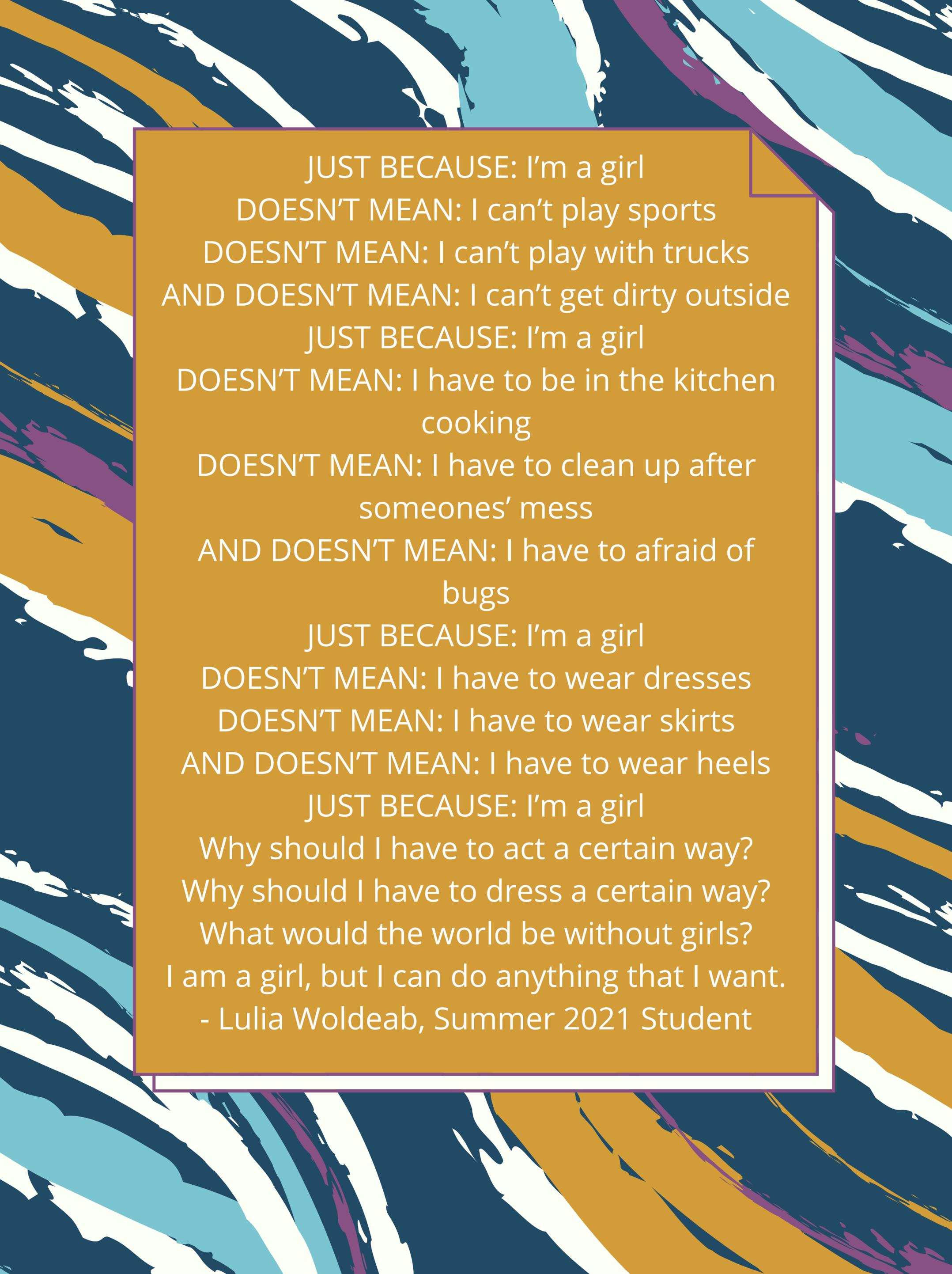
JUST BECAUSE I use my voice
DOESN'T MEAN I'm loud.
DOESN'T MEAN I'm an attention-seeker.
AND DOESN'T MEAN I'm a showoff.

JUST BECAUSE I'm confident
Do I have to be besmirched?
Why do I have to be labeled as
ostentatious?

Why is it so hard for you to understand
that I'm not better than you?

Just because I'm self-assured, doesn't
mean I'm self-absorbed.

- Meron Ayecheh, Summer 2021 Student



JUST BECAUSE: I'm a girl
DOESN'T MEAN: I can't play sports
DOESN'T MEAN: I can't play with trucks
AND DOESN'T MEAN: I can't get dirty outside
JUST BECAUSE: I'm a girl
DOESN'T MEAN: I have to be in the kitchen
cooking
DOESN'T MEAN: I have to clean up after
someones' mess
AND DOESN'T MEAN: I have to afraid of
bugs
JUST BECAUSE: I'm a girl
DOESN'T MEAN: I have to wear dresses
DOESN'T MEAN: I have to wear skirts
AND DOESN'T MEAN: I have to wear heels
JUST BECAUSE: I'm a girl
Why should I have to act a certain way?
Why should I have to dress a certain way?
What would the world be without girls?
I am a girl, but I can do anything that I want.
- Lulia Woldeab, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I am your daughter
DOESN'T MEAN your always right
DOESN'T MEAN I have to follow
everything you say

AND DOESN'T MEAN I am a boss
JUST BECAUSE I am your daughter
DOESN'T MEAN I have to be smart
DOESN'T MEAN I have to look good all
time

AND DOESN'T MEAN I am weaker then a
boy

JUST BECAUSE I am your daughter
DOESN'T MEAN I can cook everything
DOESN'T MEAN I can't leave a house at 12
pm

AND DOESN'T MEAN I can't work at
second shift

JUST BECAUSE I am your daughter
I am a daughter that make you laugh
I am a daughter that make you cry
I am a daughter whose will make you
proud

I am a daughter whose love you so much
- Khee Lar, Summer 2021 Student



JUST BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN
DOESN'T MEAN I'M WEAK
DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T DO ANYTHING
AND DOESN'T MEAN I'M USELESS
JUST BECAUSE I'M SKINNY
DOESN'T MEAN I CAN BE BODY SHAMED
DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T BE FRIENDS
WITH ME
AND DOESN'T MEAN I SHOULD BE
EXCLUDED FROM THE SOCIETY
JUST BECAUSE I'M QUIET
DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T HAVE A VOICE
DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T HAVE AN OPINION
AND DOESN'T MEAN I'M AFRAID
JUST BECAUSE I'M ASIAN
WHY DO ASIANS RECEIVE HATE?
WHY ASSUME WE ALL KNOW MATH?
WHY EXPECT ALL ASIANS TO BE LIGHT
SKIN?
I'M ASIAN BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I
KNOW EVERYTHING, DOESN'T MEAN I
SHOULD RECEIVE HATE, AND DOESN'T
MEAN I SHOULD BE LIGHT SKIN
- Sui Par, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I am a refugee
DOESN'T MEAN I don't have freedom.
DOESN'T MEAN I can't achieve anything I want.
AND DOESN'T MEAN we will be treated
differently.

JUST BECAUSE I come from a small village or
city
DOESN'T MEAN I shouldn't look down on
people.

DOESN'T MEAN I am inferior (lesser)
AND DOESN'T MEAN I can't make it in life.

JUST BECAUSE I am short
DOESN'T MEAN I can't achieve anything
DOESN'T MEAN I can't do what tall people can
do.

AND DOESN'T MEAN I am not strong.

JUST BECAUSE I am a refugee.

Why do people have to make fun of us?
Can't refugees live like immigrated citizens?

Why did people treat us differently?
Treat people the way you want them to treat
you!

- Boi Hram, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I don't talk much
DOESN'T MEAN I am dumb
DOESN'T MEAN I don't have emotions
AND DOESN'T MEAN I don't matter
JUST BECAUSE I wear skirts
DOESN'T MEAN I don't know anything
DOESN'T MEAN I am old
AND DOESN'T MEAN I am less
JUST BECAUSE I am a refugee
DOESN'T MEAN I am lazy
DOESN'T MEAN I am not worthy
AND DOESN'T MEAN I can't improve
JUST BECAUSE I am a quiet person
Why do you consider me dumb?
Why do you think I don't feel any
emotions?

Why don't you want to be around me?
- Suzana Habtu, Summer 2021 Student

JUST BECAUSE I'm christian
DOESN'T MEAN I'm perfect
DOESN'T MEAN I don't dont get problems
like others

AND DOESN'T MEAN I don't get sick

JUST BECAUSE I'm happy

DOESN'T MEAN I dot get emotional

DOESN'T MEAN i can't be sad

AND DOESN'T MEAN I never cry

JUST BECAUSE I'm skinny

DOESN'T MEAN I don't eat

DOESN'T MEAN I starve myself to death

AND DOESN'T MEAN I can't gain weight

JUST BECAUSE I am me

Do you have to listen to other people's
opinions?

Why can't I just be me?

"Never let anyone dull your sparkle"

- Rachel Tuyambaze, Summer 2021 Student