

BLUEPRINT EVALUATION REPORT



2016

Funded by
The Youth Justice Fund,
Government of Canada



Our Team

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Our Funders: Government of Canada, Youth Justice Fund, Gangs, Guns and Drugs Grant

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Facilities included in this Evaluation Report: 1) Roy McMurtry Youth Centre (RMYC) in Brampton, Ontario; 2) Agassiz Youth Centre (AYC) in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, 3) Manitoba Youth Centre (MYC) in Winnipeg, Manitoba; and 4) William E. Hay Centre (WEHC) in Ottawa, Ontario; and 5) Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) in Calgary, Alberta.

A letter of thanks from Blueprint Executive Director Steve ‘Buddha’ Leafloor

It been an exciting year two of this three year program as we delivered our work in 5 facilities. Not only is the data we are collecting growing, but we continue to show both government employees and politicians that alternative models of therapy can not only be powerful, but life changing in the eyes of the youth. I would like to give a warm-hearted thanks to all the youth participating in this program, and to the facility staff, directors and stakeholders who helped make this program possible. The list of people who have supported our work over the years is vast but I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few of them.

None of this would have happened without the ongoing support of Justice Canada and more specifically Debra Auger. Thanks, Debra!

Special shouts out to Charlotte MacDonald-Allan, Brent Keller and the amazing team from the Calgary Young Offender Centre. You not only believed in the power of this work, you helped us launch BluePrintForLife’s first programming in youth corrections in Canada. I also want to acknowledge the incredible support from Lawrence Deck, Centre Psychologist at the Calgary Young Offender Centre, for his helpful insight into our evaluation design and our engagement process. Thanks also to the Wellesley Institute and their CEO, Dr. Kwame McKenzie, for supporting the evaluation process.

We cannot forget the special relationship we have also developed with Jay Dobberthien and Doreen Lesperance (Native Coordinator) at the Edmonton Young Offender Centre. Doreen and her incredible team are exceptional to work with. We have learned so much about how to incorporate traditional culture into our programing from her “Warrior Program”, and the youth who participate in it. Shout out to the Warriors for your ongoing leadership helping mentor younger youth at the Edmonton facility.

In Winnipeg we are blessed to have a core of support from Carlos Clark and his team – thank you all so much! We are looking forward to our return this fall. More thanks in Manitoba also goes out to Todd Clarke and his team at Crime Prevention Manitoba for helping bring our work to your province and for inviting us to deliver a keynote address at your provinces crime prevention conference.

In Ottawa, we would like to recognize the support and vision from the Executive Director of Youth Justice Services, Gord Boyd, and Program Manager, Terri Kehoe of the William E. Hay Centre. This was also the place that Stephen Leafloor, Executive Director of BluePrint Pathways, was able to reconnect with old friend and street

dancer, Vallan Lawrence who works at Ottawa's William E Hay Centre. Val was instrumental in helping our programming in Ottawa not only run smoothly, but he also fully participated as a dancer throughout the week with the youth. You've still got it, Val!

We also delivered our programming this year to the Roy McMurtry Youth Centre in Brampton. Thank you Stephanie Hedger for helping make this happen and to all the front line staff that danced with us everyday. We were delighted to have Assistant Deputy Minister of Children and Youth services (Joanne Miller Reid) in attendance and actively drum with the youth.

We would also like to recognize the ongoing support, participation and feedback we receive from First Nations Elders in the various facilities we work in. Your spirit and wisdom are greatly appreciated by Blueprint.

Behind the scenes Satinder Besrai, our Program Coordinator, gets the work done without all the attention the rest of us get. Thanks Satinder for your ongoing patience, professionalism and attention to detail with the work we do.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to again recognize the ongoing creative input, commitment and passion from the team at Blueprint. In my opinion you are some of the most talented youth outreach workers in Canada. Special shouts to some of my senior staff, Marcel "Frost" Da Costa, Aniel "Handlz" James, and Troy Sexton who have been with Blueprint for years building this vision. Frost Handlz and Troy: you are true warriors for the youth! Tara Wilson - none of this would have happened if you hadn't helped introduce our programming to the Calgary Young Offender Centre in the first place. So on behalf of all the youth we work with, an extra big hug of love.

Emma Ware, the author of this report, thank you so much for agreeing to be a part of the Blueprint Team. Many people probably don't realize that you are not only accomplished for your knowledge and education in the field of health research, but that you are also, in fact, a dancer and bgirl. I know you get what we do and with your help and support we are excited to share it with the world.

What we are engaged in is significant not only in the world of youth justice, but also shines a great light on the global world of Hiphop. Stay tuned as we move forward with an agenda to share our work with youth and adult corrections in other countries.

"Each One Teach One"

Stephen "Buddha" Leafloor



For more information about Blueprint please check out Blueprint's website:
<http://www.blueprintforlife.ca/services/youth-corrections-outreach/>

1. Executive Summary

1.1. Program Goals.

Blueprint Pathways is a hip hop arts and mental health discussion based program designed to empower youth in secure detention and custody facilities to break the cycle of crime and gang involvement and build better futures for themselves. Blueprint's innovative approach includes a) dance, spoken word, meditation, art and journaling, b) role models, mentorship and discussions (on topics such as anger and impulse control, support systems, alcohol and drug abuse, trauma and healing), and c) community, culture and performance. By centering around dance activities and group discussions, Blueprint programs holistically activate physical, mental, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual health. This unique format aims to foster adaptive behaviour in youth and to improve the quality of their social environment. Ultimately, Blueprint wants to help young people harness their potential and take control of their own futures towards positive community engagement, away from gang involvement and criminal activities.

1.2. Evaluation.

As part of the Youth Justice Funding scheme, Blueprint received funding to run programs in five secure detention and custody facilities for youth across Canada. Part of this funding was allocated to evaluating the Blueprint Pathways program to better understand the impact of program activities on youth, as well as on the custodial social environment as a whole. The goals of this evaluation include: a) to better understand the outcomes of Blueprint Pathways, and the mechanisms by which these outcomes emerge, b) to receive feedback about the strengths and weaknesses around program delivery, and c) to inform program development and increase Blueprint's positive effects on youth.



1.3. Methods.

A mixed method was used to evaluate Blueprint Pathways including both quantitative (surveys with youth) and qualitative methods (interviews with youth and facility staff). The quantitative surveys were conducted in a *Before/After* design, to compare scores on outcomes measures *After* program completion against the youth's baseline scores (*Before* the program). This was conducted both for the Main Program (1 week, all youth) as well as the Spoken Word Program (8 - 16 weeks, subset of youth). The qualitative component consisted of interviews conducted with youth participants as well as facility staff. The program was evaluated at 1) Roy McMurtry Youth Centre (RMYC) in Brampton, Ontario in July 2015; 2) Agassiz Youth Centre (AYC) in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba in September 2015, 3) Manitoba Youth Centre (MYC) in Winnipeg, Manitoba in October 2015; and 4) William E. Hay Centre (WEHC) in Ottawa, Ontario in November 2015; and 5) Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) in Calgary, Alberta in March 2016.

1.4. Summary of Results.

Complete before and after survey sets were collected from 104 youth in total (15 RMYC, 27 AYC, 27 MYC, 9 WEHC, 26 CYOC) for the Main Program and 37 youth (5 RMYC, 12 AYC, 5 MYC, 5 WEHC, 10 CYOC) for the Spoken Word Program. Please note that all results presented here should be interpreted with caution since we are still at preliminary stages of evaluation with small participant sample sizes. We do have sufficient data to



broadly discuss our findings. The evaluation showed that Blueprint Pathways has been successful in achieving a number of the outcomes set out in our program objectives. Evidence supporting increases in the capacity for adaptive behaviour included a) improved motivation to change, b) improved sense of mastery (self-concept, confidence), c) improved ethnic pride, and d) increased hope (reduced fatalism). Evidence that youth obtained new tools to increase adaptive behaviour including a) increased levels of activity engagement (dance, spoken word, art and meditation), b) improved self-efficacy for non-violent, healthy coping strategies (impulse control and anger management), c) increased moral reasoning and ability to talk about

complex feelings and trauma, and d) reduction of maladaptive (problem) behaviours in the facility. The data also suggest that Blueprint helped to improve the quality of the custodial social environment, yielding a) improved perceptions of social support, b) increased social inclusion c) increased community participation, d) improved social morale, cultural appreciation, and mutual respect, and e) improved quality of relationships between youth, as well as between staff and youth.

2. The Blueprint Program

2.1. Background

Blueprint has been developed over the course of a decade. Blueprint was born out of the recognized needs of small northern communities fraught with trauma and high suicide rates. Having experienced the healing effects of hip hop arts and culture firsthand, and armed with expertise in the field of youth social work and breakdance, Blueprint Founder Stephen Leafloor, AKA “Buddha”, set out to develop the Blueprint program as a tool for intergenerational and community healing. Buddha designed a potent ‘blueprint’ to foster healing in communities undergoing repeated cycles of trauma and tragedy. The buzz about Blueprint’s success quickly spread and the Blueprint team was soon in high demand across northern Canada. Since its inception, Blueprint has engaged in approximately 100 weeklong intensives with over 50 remote Arctic communities.

In 2011, Blueprint visited its first secure detention and custody facility and adapted its programming to meet the diverse cultural and mental health needs of youth in secure detention and custody facilities. The Blueprint Pathways Program works with youth to openly and honestly discuss topics such as anger and impulse control, support systems, alcohol and drug abuse, trauma and healing. Through discussion, teamwork and dance, Blueprint helps to foster a skillset for soothing and controlling anger, building confidence, increasing social morale and fostering resilience and hope. The ultimate goal is to equip youth with sustainable tools that decrease propensity for gang affiliation and criminal behaviour and increase propensity towards positive community engagement and personal achievement. More specifically the program objectives break down as follows:



Program Objectives

To assist incarcerated youth by increasing their capacity for adaptive behaviour:

Improved scores on measures of motivation to change, sense of mastery (self-concept, confidence, self-esteem), hope (reduced fatalism) and ethnic pride.

To provide incarcerated youth with tools to increase adaptive behaviours:

Improved scores on measures of engagement in healthy activities such as dance, meditation, self-reflection, and spoken word; improved self-efficacy in using non-violent strategies (e.g. anger management, impulse control); increased ability to talk about trauma and moral reasoning; and a reduction of maladaptive behaviours in the facility.

To improve the quality of the custodial social environment:

Improved perceived social support, decreased propensity for gang affiliation; increased community participation within the facility, social morale, cultural appreciation and mutual respect, improved quality of youth-youth, youth-staff, and staff-staff interactions.

2.2. Program Breakdown

In secure youth detention and custodial facilities, Blueprint Pathways utilizes the same basic ingredients that has made Blueprint so successful in the past. These include: 1) role models, mentorship and mental health education led through group discussion; 2) breakdance, spoken word, arts, meditation, journaling, and cultural activities; 3) community, culture and performance. By combining pillars of cultural, social, emotional, and physical well-being, Blueprint aims to empower youth with increased capacity for adaptive behaviour and a more supportive social environment.

Blueprint Staff

Blueprint programs are led by a culturally diverse team who are among Canada's top artists, breakdancers, cultural leaders and youth outreach workers. Many have life experience that the youth relate to. Each individual has their own unique story about how the hip hop community and culture supported them throughout hardship, trauma and healing. The staff's cultural diversity reflects that of the facility's youth population and enables youth to have multiple personalities, stories and perspectives to connect with. Blueprint staff members teach youth how hip hop arts and culture can be a powerful template to engage healthy notions of social support, community and cultural pride.

Main Program

Blueprint Pathways' Main Program is a weeklong intensive 9am – 5pm program with 5 to 9 staff members. The facility takes a break from regular programming to come together as an entire



collective. Blueprint encourages staff to participate along with youth. This gives youth the opportunity to build different and stronger relationships with facility staff. Buddha, along with the Blueprint staff, leads the group in discussion sessions staggered between breakdance instruction. Each program is slightly unique, and the content is adapted and modified based on both the cultural and educational needs of the youth in the facility, as well as the staff's skills and expertise. There are alternative activities such as spoken word and artwork to get involved in for those youth who prefer to engage in those side projects.

Main Program Discussion Topics

1. Bringing your own culture into Hip Hop and cultural pride
2. Anger Management (finding your 'one mic'¹) and Buddha's Story
3. Media manipulation
4. Sabotaging yourself with drugs and alcohol
5. Respect and loyalty of oneself, others, and one's environment and community. Treatment of women
6. Bullying – learning to say you're sorry, rebuilding relationships, fear of trusting
7. Impulse Control
8. Why not gangs: a hip hop perspective – getting a new familia
9. Healing paths – sexual abuse – being safe, Healing throughout ones life and asking for help
10. Who to talk to when bad things happen. Personal Inventory – safety plans, outside resources
11. How will you sabotage yourself (upon release from the facility)

These topics are adapted slightly based on specific concerns expressed from the facilities being visited.



Main Program Activities

- a. Warm up and Cool Down (Daily)
- b. Dance Skills: Backspin, Top Roc, Freezes, Dance Routines – the Hustle, Stomp, Bucket Drumming, Traditional Culture (Lessons that build throughout the week)
- c. Visualization/Meditation Exercises (Daily)
- d. Journaling, Self-Reflection and Poetry (Ongoing)

¹ The 'One Mic' concept comes from a song by rapper Nas, with the line 'All you need is one mic'. 'One mic' is a metaphor for having a passion. Whether it's dance, writing, kayaking, singing, or math, all you need is one thing to focus on to keep you going through tough times in life. Blueprint teaches youth that their 'one mic' can be used as a coping mechanism for managing anger and other maladaptive behaviour patterns.

- e. Art Project – builds throughout the week
- f. Final Showcase

Spoken Word Program

Following the Main Blueprint Program, subsets of 5-15 youth were chosen by each facility’s staff (in consultation with Blueprint) to participate in 16 to 32 hours of Spoken Word Workshops for 8 to 16 weeks (2 hrs/week). The Spoken Word workshops are run by 2 facilitators who teach participants that “literacy is a weapon”. Youth are encouraged to build vocabulary and tap into the therapeutic and cathartic properties of writing and claiming their words by practicing the art of spoken word.

Spoken Word Program Themes

- a. What’s your legacy? Write it and recite it. Take ownership of your words.
- b. My Life Story
- c. Rebuilding Concepts of Loyalty and Respect
- d. The importance and significance of journal writing, and the value of keeping this practice over your lifetime

3. Evaluation Methods

3.1. Design

The evaluation was conducted as a mixed methods design, and included both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Quantitative data was collected using a *Before* and *After* design, meaning that the same survey questions were delivered the week prior and the week following the Main Program, and again after the Spoken Word Program. This allowed us to compare youths’ scores on program outcome measures across the program’s delivery. Qualitative interviews for youth participants were conducted post program (Main Program and Spoken Word Program) by facility staff in small focus groups (3-6 individuals), and lasted approximately 30 - 45 minutes. Interviews with facility staff were conducted over the phone by the Program Evaluator.



3.2. Measures

Quantitative Evaluation

Long Version

1. **Demographic and Basic Referral Questions (9 Items).** Demographic questions included age, gender, education level, self-identified ethnicity, type of criminal offence committed and length of sentence.
2. **Modified Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory - Selected Items (3 Items)** (Rosenberg 1965).
3. **Beck’s Hopelessness Scale (3 item)** This items measure confidence in one’s ability to influence the future. (Beck et al 1974).
4. **Self-Efficacy – Teen Conflict Survey (6 items):** These items measure an individual’s confidence in his or her ability to control anger and resolve conflicts nonviolently (Bosworth & Espelage,1995).

5. **Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency – Selected Items (5 items):** These items measure perceived likelihood of engaging in violence and other high risk behaviours. (Flewelling, Paschall & Ringwalt, 1993).
6. **Motivation to Change (7 items):** These items measure the respondents motivation to change aspects of their behaviour associated with various negative and positive social outcomes (Biener, Lois; Abrams, David B, 1991)
7. **Frequency of Activities (5 items):** This was developed by Blueprint specifically to measure the frequency of participation in activities composing the Blueprint program.
8. **Pearlin Mastery Scale (7 items).** The Pearlin Mastery Scale is designed to measure self-concept and references the extent to which individuals perceive themselves in control of forces that significantly impact their lives (Pearlin, 1992).
9. **Vaux Social Support Record – Selected Items (2 items):** Items measure satisfaction with perceived emotional advice, guidance, and practical social support (Vaux, 1988).
10. **Ethnic Identity – Teen conflict survey – Selected Items (2 items).** Measures ethnic pride and respect for differences (Bosworth & Espelage, 1995).
11. **Propensity for Gang Affiliation – Selected Items (3 items):** This measure evaluates an individual's propensity to support gangs and their function (Ireland and Powers 2013).
12. **Social Inclusion – Selected Items (6 items):** This measure evaluates various constructs related to social inclusion such as social isolation, social relations and social acceptance. Youth are asked how much they agree or disagree with the items (Secker et al. 2009).
13. **Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10 (CD-RISC-10):** This measure was developed as a measure of an individual's ability to 'bounce-back' after a stressful or traumatic experience (Davidson and Connor 2003).

Qualitative

The semi-structured evaluation interview consisted of the following sections:

1. Program engagement
2. Coping skills
3. Quality of social relationships and custodial social environment
4. Individual sustainability of program content

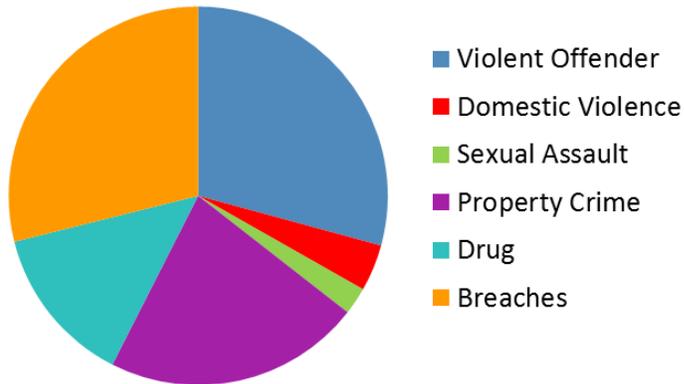
The interview content was modified slightly to adapt the interview to youth or facility staff.

4. Results

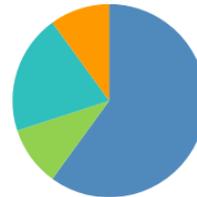
4.1. Demographic Data

Overall across all facilities, there were 110 males and 26 females who completed the demographics survey, the average age was 17 years (min = 13, max = 21); grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 6, max = grade 12). In Brampton at RMYC, there were 11 males and no females who completed the survey, the average age was 17.5 years (min = 16, max = 20); grade average was grade 10.5, (min = grade 8, max = grade 12). In Agassiz at AYC, there were 14 males and no females who completed the survey, the average age was 17 years (min = 15, max = 19); grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 8, max = grade 10). In Winnipeg at MYC, there were 49 males and 20 females who completed the survey, the average age was 16 years (min = 14, max = 20); grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 6, max = grade 12). In Ottawa at WEHC, there were 12 males and no females who completed the survey, the average age was 18 years (min = 15, max = 21); grade average was grade 11, (min = grade 9, max = grade 12). In Calgary at CYOC, there were 24 males and 6 females who completed the survey, the average age was 16 years (min = 13, max = 20); grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 6, max = grade 12).

Type of Offence (All Facilities)



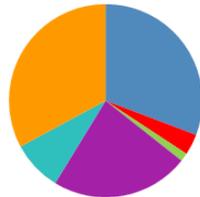
Type of Offence (RMYC, Brampton)



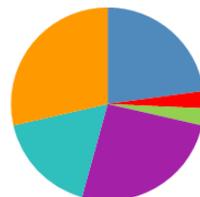
Type of Offence (AYC, Portage la Prairie)



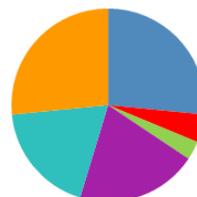
Type of Offence (MYC, Winnipeg)



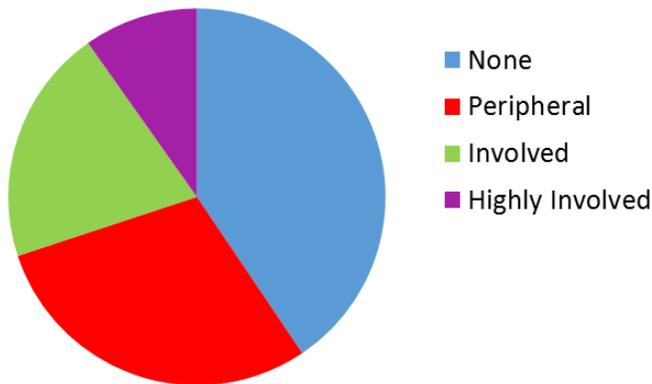
Type of Offence (WEHC, Ottawa)



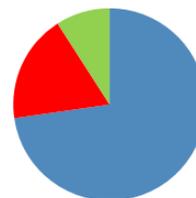
Type of Offence (CYOC, Calgary)



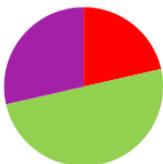
Level of Gang Involvement (All Facilities)



Gang Involvement (RMYC, Brampton)



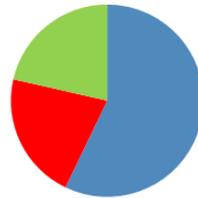
Gang Involvement (AYC, Portage la Prairie)



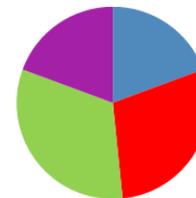
Gang Involvement (MYC, Winnipeg)



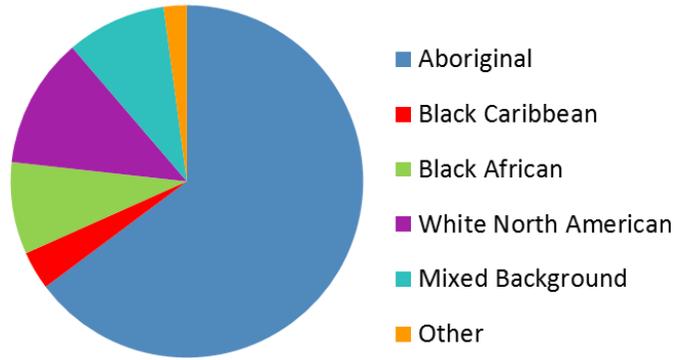
Gang Involvement (WEHC, Ottawa)



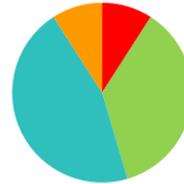
Gang Involvement (CYOC, Calgary)



Ethnic Identity (All Facilities)



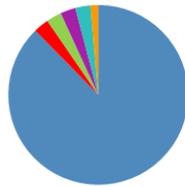
Ethnic Identity (RMYC, Brampton)



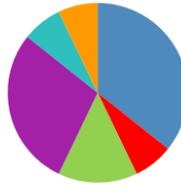
Ethnic Identity (AYC, Portage la Prairie)



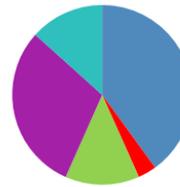
Ethnic Identity (MYC, Winnipeg)



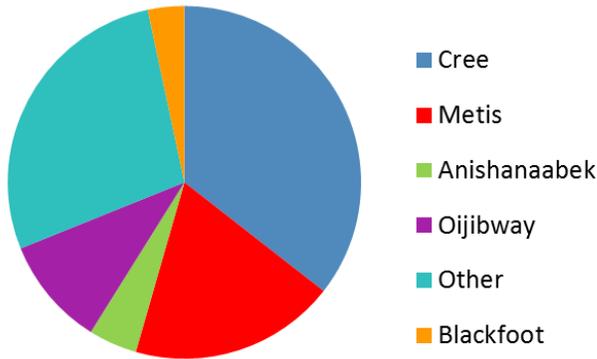
Ethnic Identity (WEHC, Ottawa)



Ethnic Identity (CYOC, Calgary)



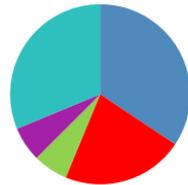
Aboriginal Identity (All Facilities)



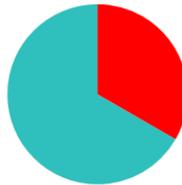
Aboriginal Identity (AYC, Portage la Prairie)



Aboriginal Identity (MYC, Winnipeg)



Aboriginal Identity (WEHC, Ottawa)



Aboriginal Identity (CYOC, Calgary)

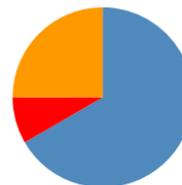


Figure 1. Demographic Results include a) the type of offence committed (top), b) the level of self-reported gang involvement (middle), c) ethnic identity (bottom).

Questionnaire	Facility	Time	N	Min	Max	Mean	SEM	ANOVA
Motivation to Change: Community Involvement Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change level of engagement in hip hop and community programming for youth	All Facilities Main Program	Before	78	1	10	6.21	0.29	F(1,77) = 5.50, p = 0.02*
		After	78	1	10	6.89	0.27	
Motivation to Change: Peer Group Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change the people youth choose to hang out with	All Facilities Main Program	Before	92	1	10	6.50	0.31	F(1, 91) = 5.61, p = 0.02*
		After	92	1	10	7.23	0.27	
Motivation to Change: Substance Use Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change substance and alcohol use habits	All Facilities Main Program	Before	82	1	10	6.34	0.29	F(1, 81) = 2.80, p = 0.10**
		After	82	1	10	6.83	0.29	
	AYC Spoken Word	Before	10	1	10	5.92	0.77	F(1, 9) = 11.39, p = 0.01*
		After	10	1	10	7.60	0.83	
Motivation to Change: Self Reflection and Artistic Activities Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to engage in self-reflection exercises and/or artistic activities (dance, journaling, meditation, spoken word etc.)	All Facilities Main Program	Before	90	1	10	6.82	0.24	F(1, 89) = 5.45, p = 0.02*
		After	90	1	10	7.52	0.25	
Motivation to Change: Sharing One's Story Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to share and discuss significant events in one's life with others	All Facilities Main Program	Before	86	1	10	5.75	0.29	F(1, 85) = 10.04, p = 0.00*
		After	86	1	10	6.63	0.27	

Motivation to Change: Gang Involvement Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change involvement in gangs	AYC Main Program	Before	16	1	10	6.45	0.80	F(1, 15) = 7.00, p = 0.02*
		After	16	1	10	8.00	0.67	
Pearlin Mastery Scale. Range 7-28 Higher scores = increased self-concept and perceived ability to control forces significantly impacting their lives.	AYC Main Program	Before	27	14	27	19.63	0.68	F(1,26) = 16.38, p = 0.00*
		After	27	16	28	21.59	0.65	
	AYC Spoken Word Program	Before	12	15	27	20.33	1.20	F(1,11) = 4.82, p = 0.05*
		After	12	18	28	21.75	0.80	
	CYOC Spoken Word Program	Before	10	10	25	19.4	1.42	F(1,9) = 3.40, p = 0.10**
		After	10	17	28	22.7	1.41	
Fatalism Range 1-4 Higher scores = decreased confidence in ones ability to influence the future.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	94	1	4	2.32	0.09	F(1,93) = 5.92, p = 0.02*
		After	94	1	4	2.14	0.08	
	WEHC Spoken Word Program	Before	4	1	3	2.20	0.49	F(1,3) = 6.12, p = 0.08**
		After	4	1	2	1.25	0.25	
	CYOC Spoken Word Program	Before	10	1	4	2.70	0.34	F(1,9) = 5.06, p = 0.05*
		After	10	1	3	2.10	0.31	
Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency Range 4 – 16 These items measure perceived likelihood of engaging in violence and other high risk behaviours.	AYC Main Program	Before	27	4	16	8.70	0.62	F(1, 26) = 6.22, p = 0.02*
		After	27	4	16	7.41	0.57	
Self-Efficacy. Range 5 - 30 Higher score = higher perceived self-efficacy for using non-violent strategies	AYC Main Program	Before	27	14	29	23.33	0.73	F(1, 26) = 10.45, p = 0.00*
		After	27	19	30	25.96	0.51	
		After	12	1	10			
Meditation. Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in meditation activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	96	1	10	3.83	0.29	F(1,95) = 13.64, p = 0.00*
		After	96	1	10	4.99	0.29	
	All Facilities Spoken	Before	34	1	10	3.38	.54	F(1, 33) = 10.70, p = 0.00*
		After	34	1	10	5.05	.48	

	Word Program							
Dance. Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in dance activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	89	1	10	3.55	0.31	F(1, 88) = 38.25, p = 0.00*
		After	89	1	10	5.85	0.32	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	33	1	10	3.85	0.52	F(1, 32) = 11.67, p = 0.00*
		After	33	1	10	5.24	0.50	
Spoken Word. Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in spoken word activities	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	34	1	10	5.00	0.63	F(1, 33) = 6.62, p = 0.02*
		After	34	1	10	6.64	0.49	
	WEHC Main Program	Before	7	1	10	4.63	1.59	F(1, 6) = 6.32, p = 0.05*
		After	7	5	10	8.75	0.72	
Art. Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in art activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	94	1	10	4.72	0.33	F(1, 93) = 3.07, p = 0.08**
		After	94	1	10	5.36	0.31	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	34	1	10	4.88	0.61	F(1, 33) = 5.87, p = 0.02*
		After	34	1	10	6.17	0.51	
Overall Activity frequency. Range 1-50. Higher scores = increased participation in Blueprint activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	103	1	48	21.64	1.01	F(1, 102) = 18.82, p = 0.00*
		After	103	6	50	26.75	1.13	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	37	2	46	21.46	1.84	F(1, 36) = 16.76, p = 0.00*
		After	37	13	50	29.19	1.98	
CD resilience Range 0 - 40 This measure was developed as a measure of an individual's ability to 'bounce- back' after a stressful or traumatic experience	CYOC Spoken Word Program	Before	10	16	40	24.70	2.23	F(1,9) = 4.66, p = 0.06**
		After	10	20	40	28.20	2.60	
Social Inclusion Range 7 - 28 Higher scores = sense of belonging and inclusion in a social group.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	104	8	24	15.95	0.33	F(1, 103) = 12.60, p = 0.00*
		After	104	10	24	17.41	0.39	
Ethnic Identity - Pride. Range 1-5.	RMYC Main Program	Before	15	1	5	3.73	0.38	F(1,14) = 3.50, p = 0.08**

Higher scores = level of pride in being a member of their racial cultural group.		After	15	1	5	4.33	0.30	F(1, 26) = 4.52, p = 0.04*
	AYC Spoken Word Program	Before	27	2	5	4.11	0.21	
		After	27	3	5	4.25	0.17	
Vaux Social Support Record: Peer Support Range 4 – 16 Higher scores = increased perception of available peer and adult support.	AYC Main Program	Before	27	4	9	6.11	0.25	F(1, 26) = 3.104, p = 0.09**
		After	27	4	9	6.56	0.28	
Vaux Social Support Record: Adult Support Range 4 – 16 Higher scores = increased perception of available peer and adult support.	RMYC Main Program	Before	15	3	9	6.40	0.52	F(1, 14) = 3.68, p = 0.06**
		After	15	5	9	7.10	0.40	

Table 1. The table presents all survey measures with significant changes in scores obtained *Before* and *After* the Blueprint Program. Results for both the Main Program and the Spoken Word Program are displayed. N = the number of youth completing the survey. Descriptive statistics include the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of each set of scores. ANOVA (F & p) values marked with an * denote a statistically significant difference between Before and After measures ($\alpha = 0.05$), values indicated with a double asterisk (**) denote a marginally significant difference ($\alpha = 0.1$).

4.2. Quantitative Main Findings

Our main results for both qualitative and quantitative data are summarized below, and grouped according to our three objectives. All statistics for significant effects are reported in Table 1. The summary below indicates whether there were significant changes in the measures evaluating program outcomes across the *Before* and *After* surveys for both the Main Program and the Spoken Word Program.

4.2.1. Youth experienced increase in their capacity for adaptive behaviour

Motivation to Change.

Overall, there was a significant increase in scores on the Motivation to Change scale *After* the Blueprint Program as compared to the *Before* scores. Increases in Motivation to Change measures included motivation to change engagement in hip hop and community programming (all facilities, Main Program), the people youth choose to hang out with (all facilities, Main Program), substance and alcohol use habits (all facilities, Main Program; AYC, Spoken Word Program), engagement in self-reflection and the arts (all facilities, Main Program), to share and discuss significant events in one's life with others (all facilities, Main Program), and involvement in gangs (Agassiz, Main Program).

There was no significant change in the youths' scores on the measure evaluating motivation to change their criminal behaviour, or their impulse control, anger and emotions. Please note that these negative findings must be interpreted in light of the fact that the Motivation to Change scores on these measures were already at high levels

before the Blueprint program, and therefore there was not much room for them to change. While we did see small increases in these Motivation to Change scores, they did not reach levels of significance.

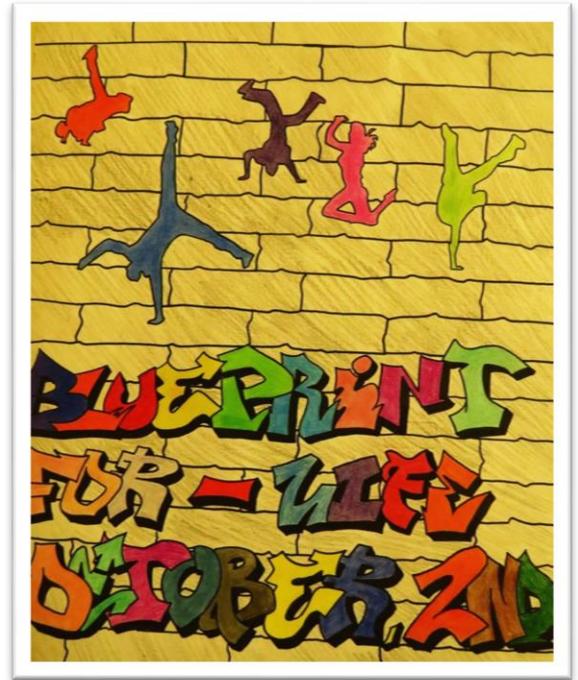
Sense of Mastery, Fatalism, Resilience, Self-Esteem and Self-Concept

In AYC and CYOC only, there were significant increases in youths’ scores on the Pearlin Mastery Scale *After* the Blueprint Main Program as compared to their *Before* scores.

A question measuring ‘sense of hope’ on the Fatalism scale showed decreases (decreased fatalism, increased sense of hope) for all facilities *After* the Main Program and these changes were sustained for WEHC and Calgary *After* the Spoken Word Program, as compared to *Before* scores.

At CYOC *After* the Spoken Word program there was an increase in the Connor Davidson resilience scale measuring an individual’s capacity to ‘bounce-back’ after a stressful or traumatic experience.

There were no significant changes in the youths’ scores on the Self-Concept scale or on Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Inventory.



4.2.2. To assist youth with tools to increase adaptive behaviour

Participation in healthy activities

There were significant increases in the overall number of healthy activities youth engaged in *After* the Blueprint Program as compared to their *Before* scores. These activities included meditation (all facilities Main Program and Spoken Word Program), dance (all facilities, Main Program and Spoken Word Program), spoken word (all facilities, Spoken Word Program and WEHC, Main Program), art (all facilities, Main Program and Spoken Word Program), and overall activity engagement (all facilities, Main Program and Spoken Word Program).



Self-Efficacy and Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency

For the Blueprint Main Program only, there were significant increases in youths’ scores on the Self-Efficacy measure for non-violent behaviour (AYC only), as well as a significant decrease in the Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency scale (AYC only) *After* the Main Program as compared to *Before* scores.

4.2.3. To improve the quality of the custodial social environment

Social Inclusion

There was a significant increase in the Social Inclusion scale *After* the Main Program at all facilities, as compared to *Before* scores.

Propensity for gang affiliation

There were no significant decreases in the youths' Propensity for Gang Affiliation after either the Blueprint Main Program or the Spoken Word Program.

Ethnic Identity

There was an increase in scores on items measuring ethnic pride and respect for differences on the Ethnic Identity Measure *After* the RMYC Main Program and the Agassiz Spoken word program, as compared to *Before* scores.

Social Support

There was a significant increase in the Vaux Social Support Record measuring perceived peer support *After* the AYC Blueprint Main Program, as compared to *Before* scores. At RMYC, there was a significant increase in the Vaux Social Support Record measuring perceived adult support *After* the Blueprint Main Program, as compared to *Before* scores.

4.3. Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative interviews allowed us to capture the nuanced information that is often missed in quantitative statistics. Below we present various quotes from youth, facility staff and Blueprint staff that demonstrate Blueprint outcomes, categorized by our three main objectives. Throughout this section we have included youth artwork which has been included with permission. Also see Appendix A for selected youth poetry (also printed with permission).

4.3.1. To assist youth by increasing their capacity for adaptive behaviour

Interviews with youth and staff at both facilities reveal that Blueprint Pathways has helped youth to a) become motivated to change in positive ways (e.g. use dance as a tool to become a better role model for their younger siblings), b) a sense of mastery, self-confidence, self-concept, self-esteem, and a positive sense of cultural identity.

Motivation to Change

All I want to change [is thinking that] – because I'm here, I'm a bad person. Everyone steps on ice, but you're not that one guy that has only ever slipped on ice. That moment in my life something happened and now I am wasting a couple months in my lifetime. And I am going to learn from it, everyone learns from their mistakes that's one thing. But I know that in the future if I'm still living I be capable of doing what I do. I'll be capable of providing for my family in each and every way. My futures going to be perfect.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I still write raps everyday. I want to get better on my creative writing. I want to make that one of my hobbies, spoken word and poetry. Like I'm trying to make that a hobby that I'm really good at.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

I could be called bad kid in detention but then I could show my friends this and it might make them think different. I could demonstrate what I learned. If they find it interesting they might do it too.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE



With the things that I learned from these guys. I'm going to use it all in my future. I have a kid on the way, I can't keep doing the things that I was doing. I'm an adult now.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

In the future, I learned to not hate everybody. When I get out, I'm going to do positive things to change my life. Awareness of what I do.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

It made me want to build a strong vocabulary like start reading more books. Read a dictionary; expose myself to new words every day.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

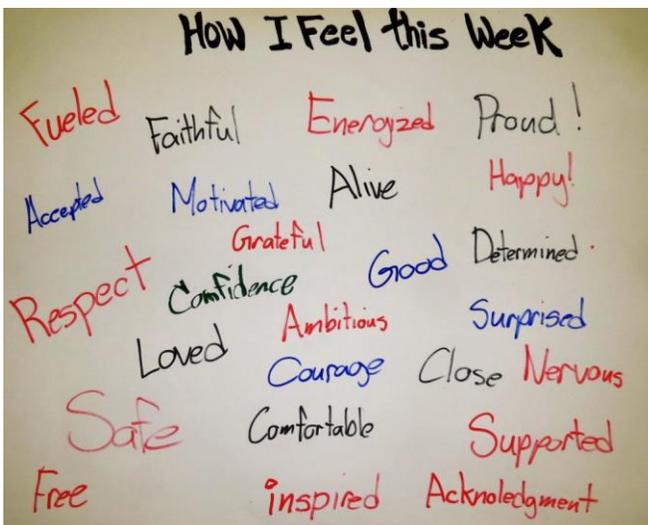
Yeah it gave me more motivation to just keep on going to school and stuff like that. That's one thing I wanted to change and I'm starting to do that now. And it had me take a look at the voice in my head. It had me go from I don't want to change to you know what I know that I need to change I just don't know how to do it and I'm scared. It kind of made me take a look at my situation.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

It made me think of possibilities of my future. Also like other people's futures too - like this guy with his writing.

At the level that he's at it makes me think alright so I can do this, he can do that or I can be this or be that. Made me think that if I wanted to do something I can be a writer or that I had other options other than the choices that I am already making.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE



Yeah, I think a barrier I'm gonna have is like, if I go back to like, if I go back to my home town or whatever, and I start seeing my old friends and that. Like they're gonna have that, they're gonna see me as the guy I was before I came to Blueprint. The guy that was down for any mission. I was like, didn't care, didn't care if I went to jail or not. It's, I don't know...Now, I don't know, I think

that's gonna be barrier for me, is like the um, I gotta like space myself...I don't know, like distance myself between that image and the new me. Like, show them like, what I'm really about now. Show them like, what I've changed, how I've changed and that I'm like done with all that stupid shit now. Something like that. I don't know how to say it.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Blueprint helps youth build a sense of mastery, self-confidence, self-concept, self-esteem, and a positive sense of identity.

For one, I didn't know I could dance. And I don't know where it came from, but it was pretty sick. And ya, I couldn't do all the dance moves that everyone else could, but I could do other things. I could manipulate my body to do things. That's what they praised me for. They loved that I could find better things to do with my body to not hurt myself.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Before Blueprint, I had a hard time with negativity. Negativity would consume my positivity and would affect my moods and my outlook on life. Now I try to channel my negativity into positivity as much as possible.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

It's life changing. You know it's, I don't know. It's giving me a more positive outlook on life that, you know, the world's not a uh, the world's not out, it's not just a shitty place. You know, there's some good people, good experiences out there that you can do. You know it's, just don't give up, you know. Keep trying to do your best. Yeah.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Yeah – after Blueprint I was in a better mood. For a while I was feeling down, down in the dumpster and I almost gave up. And they asked me – you guys came with the program and asked me if I wanted to come and I didn't know what it was. I was like what's Blueprint. You guys said it was a dancing program and I got happy.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE

Family could hear positive energy in my voice. They noticed a difference in my mood. Even without telling them about the program.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

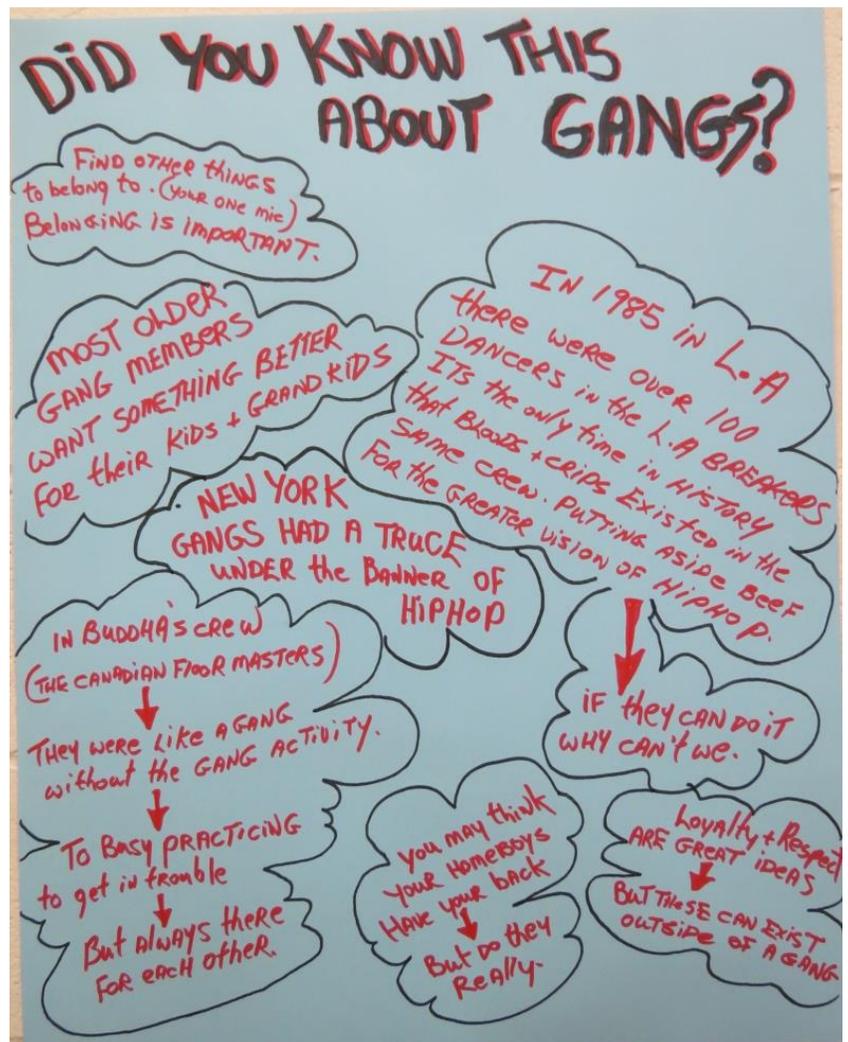
I noticed throughout the week from day one and day five a lot of kids came out of their shell and they appear more confident around their peers, it's such a judgmental peer group. By the end of the week, you could see kids – they've built a lot of confidence with their peers.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Before I went into the Blueprint program, like my friend, I didn't really know what to expect. I couldn't dance. I can do one kind of dancing, and that's country line dance, and that's all I can do. Can't do anything else, right? So when I went in there, it was neat the see. I didn't think I was smart enough to be able to do all that stuff. I was like "you know what, whatever". Then after the 2nd day, I was in my room and I tried some of the things I was taught, and I realized 'I can do it'. I realized I'm not stupid, and I wasn't as stupid as I thought I was. And whenever it came close to the end of the week, and on Friday when we performed our thing, I was like "oh my gosh, I actually did this".

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Some of the youth spoke about reflections they had during the week of the main program and it helping their self-esteem.



- STAFF, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

They [Blueprint] showed us that we can be better people. They taught a lot of things about myself, things I never knew about myself, you know.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I felt like I was being listened to, and they wrote down what I said, actually cared, and they left them in the gym so I could see them every day. I go workout and I can see them on the wall.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Self-esteem has been pretty boosted. I thought I was in rock bottom, that I could not say anything. I didn't think I could put a word into a line and actually spin it. But you know, Im alright. Boosted self-esteem makes you feel a little bit better.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

I learned how to be a leader by uh, learning how to speak up and encourage each others, encourage each other, encourage the people that are struggling by helping them out. By helping them out, seeing that when I help them out I help myself better. And, basically getting trust from other people that I wanna like, anybody, like help them out.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE



So, I'm giving myself like more credibility into what I do, as in like poetry, writing, and like doing graffiti and that. And um, I think I've changed a bit by the program. It influenced me positively, by the way I look at things now.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

It's unlike other programs that you do. It's more fun, more time to chill, open up and you have time to do things that you like to do or find things that you want to do. It's pretty good.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

4.3.2. To assist youth to increase adaptive behaviour and reduce maladaptive behaviours.

Interviews with youth and staff at both facilities reveal that Blueprint Pathways has helped youth to a) engage in healthy activities b) increase self-efficacy in using non violent strategies (impulse control and anger management), c) increase coping skills and dealing with complex trauma, and d) reduce maladaptive behaviours in the facility.

Engagement in healthy activities

The drumming is what I liked best, and the Stomp. The kids got really involved, it was really easy for them to grasp. You could see that some of them were using it to get out some aggression in a healthy way, which was nice to see.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

They made me realize that bringing out my talents is something that can calm me down

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE

I'll just be uh, continuing on with the, continuing to learn about Hiphop and dancing, break dancing. And try to get myself into uh, start rapping more and start writing stuff down, poetry. And my cultural things that I'll continue doing is smudging, praying. Start getting myself into public speaking. Build my self-esteem.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Even the hip-hop itself, the kids seem to enjoy it, if they had access to something like that, I feel like a lot of kids will go into it and it'll be a great extra-curricular for kids that aren't necessary sports-minded

- STAFF, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE

And like it's always better to be ah, doing that kind of stuff instead of just running around partying and stuff like that you know. All that negative, bad attributes. Slinging dope and whatever. It's better to just look for mentorship and head a better path.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

And we still, in my unit, dance and everything. (laughing) Because we love it, man. We sit in the units busting a move and stuff, they're like "Where did you learn that?" and we're like "Blueprint, we learned it at Blueprint", and the staff are like "you guys are crazy" and we're like "Yep", and bust a move again.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I wouldn't mind trying it again, spoken word. It gave me a break when I was stressed out. Helped me get some stuff off my chest and you get some positive feedback too. I wouldn't mind trying it again.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Everyone was like what the hell is going on, like it was fun. We weren't used to that in here.

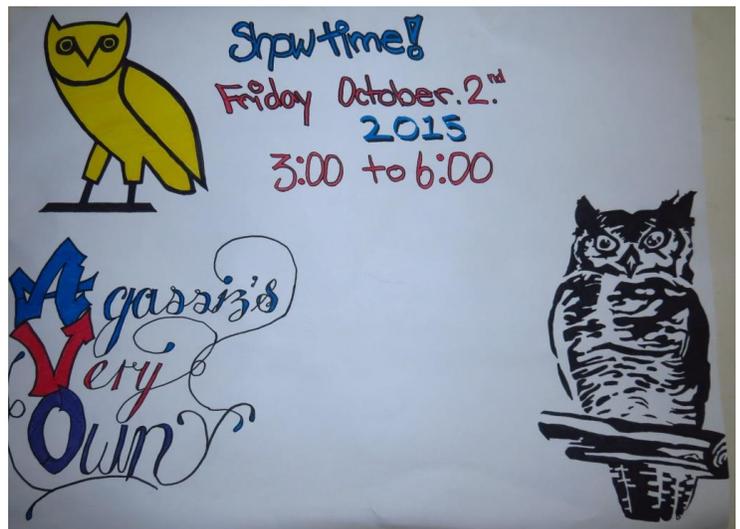
- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

The things that people think about detention centres, like if we told people that they would laugh, they wouldn't believe us. Most people think that if you are locked up you aren't doing anything positive.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

... the thing about hip-hop I understood a lot of things about life. Hip hop is fun, it's good to have fun, it's good for your heart you don't always have to be angry because it's not good you know. Anger is bad, it's a bad thing.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE



One thing I can use is that when I get angry, I can write poetry. It makes sense; I'm in the shower I read poetry. I'm in room time, I read some poetry.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

The spoken word was good. To me there's not like one thing, I liked everything. One thing I liked the best was the dancing, seeing that in the prison, dancing was amazing, but I liked everything else. In prison we don't usually get the chance to do things like that. It relieves tension.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

I'm going to teach things that I learned in Blueprint to others.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I started journaling the week of that program, I journal everyday now, going to that program allows me to go back to the journal and have something to write about.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

I: Where or when would you continue practicing? Would you do it by yourself, with friends, would you do it at home?

P: Right now I do it in here with myself. When I get out I'm going to live with family so I'll do it at home all the time. It will keep me from going out and doing what I used to do. Just sit inside and write down songs and stuff. Probably everywhere - showing people I have some new moves, showing my family.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE

I: What do you think you will continue practicing?

P: My poetry and raps and that book you gave me. I almost got like 400 pages left so I'll stop for some more books, something like that books and just write down more. I think I will continue dancing too - yeah I like that

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE

I: Who here wants to continue these activities when they get out?

Ps: Yes, Yes

I: So all four participants said yes - okay

I: Do you think you might teach these activities to friends or family at home?

Ps: Yes, Yes, Yes

I: What did you learn that you might use to help you deal with problems in the long term?

P: Meditate.

I: Does anyone else here meditate?

P: Yes, Yes, Yes.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE

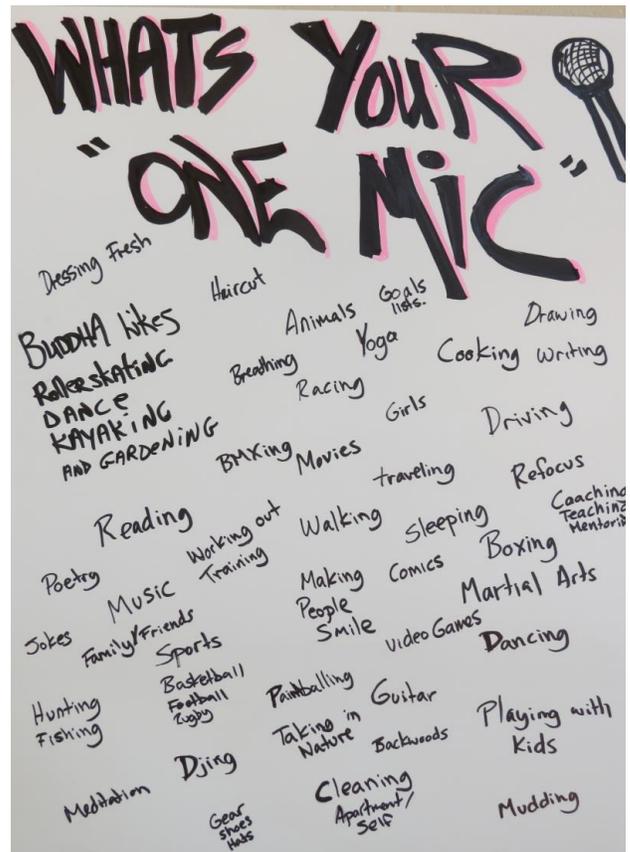
Self - Efficacy in using healthy coping strategies (non-violent strategies, impulse control and anger management)

Well I learned, well I used to get mad a lot and I didn't know how to deal with it and now I just write down like make a rap about like how I feel and stuff and after that I read it and feel a lot better.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE

During one of the discussions that we had about finding that one thing you like to do, whether its dance or hip-hop, walking in the park. You have to have more than one-mic, you have to have that one thing you like to do that keeps your mind off of it. Like if I was mad at my mom, I play basketball now or go walking to clear your mind and it really helps the situation. Learning to have more than one-mic was appealing to me. Because it wasn't about the one mic, it was about how you use them.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE



I don't know. They helped me realize that like the anger I hold towards my family, that's not really benefitting me or them. So, I think now when I see my family I'm gonna be more likely to want to repair the relationship. To have a more positive relationship, let my anger go towards them.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

The one mics really, really helped me. I wrote a bunch of them down in my journal. Just so that way, the one mics that I know how to do, and the one mics I don't know how to do, I can learn and I can find out a way to learn how to do them. Especially when I'm in here. There are one mics that I can do while I'm in here, like I can do push-ups in my room if I want to cool down. That really, really helped me, because I'm going to use that when I want in my future.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

You can't do anything by yourself. You can try to do it by yourself, but you'll fail more often than with other people. Everyone needs help to do certain things, on their own it would be harder.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE



One thing I learned is that saying you can not do then you'll never do it. But then I realized that I actually tried it and I did it. I guess its just practice. It's very simple. You just have to get it right. You don't want to embarrass yourself. You don't want to look stupid or embarrass yourself. But you just have to let go of that. Implications for life. Don't give yourself any more barriers than you already have.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Feel more positive knowing that you're uh, good uh, you're not doing negative... you're not like hurting your family, you're supporting them and building them up. I don't know. Something like that.

Just remind yourself you can try to deal with problems in constructive ways. Instead of always tryin' to use violence, tryin' to fight people and that to solve a problem, you can try to use a positive way.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Learn to distract yourself if you are angry or upset. Just a rap or write a poem, Express yourself using notes.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

There's another one too where they told us to write what was bothering us or on our mind. Write it, read it, throw it away and burn it. Just to try to get past it

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Now that I don't allow negativity to control me, my outcome in the future will be more positive

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I learned to think before you act. Think about what you could do to relax. Evaluate your mindset.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

So it helps us to start to think through the situations, and how we might use the one mic in our situations to help us. You have more than one mic for different situations.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

One thing I really like is that they gave us a tool. You know honestly I would never speak about stuff like this – you know around here. Stuff from like deep inside my heart that I didn't even know I was capable. It was all mystery, all my questions were a mystery. Like this gave me a tool to figure out how to ask questions you know – so like it kind of help spiritually and mentally.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN SPOKEN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I learned that, like, you can't always explode on people because of your own anger and stuff. You need to start opening yourself up about certain things, and talk to people. That's what Blueprint did.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Another thing is like the things we talked about about: drugs, alcohol, be safe. Like shots: after 5 shots I'm a happy guy, but after 7 shots I just want to F up everything. Maybe in the future I can rap instead. I didn't know I could do that.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Increased resiliency, moral reasoning and dealing with complex trauma

So then when you have problems when you are mad, you can write about it. When you write about it, you can write all different kinds of solutions and when you write solutions, you can pick out the ones that are best for you so then you are not only thinking about the stage because every moment of the day you feel different. One day you are angry, one day you're happy, one day you are really really excited you know. The next day you feel some type of way about it, so you can change it in the same way. So you can write about it and then fix it up.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE



Instead of dealing with the short term problems, I deal with the long term problems. If react because I'm feeling negative, what are my long term consequences, and short term? Because it is a short term solution. And now I look at the positivity, and I look at the long term instead of the short term.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Sometimes you need to see stuff from a different point of view. Like, I understood, like, with me growing up, with my mom and dad, I never had a problem with them. But I can understand that maybe somebody else did, but I had other problems going on, like where I lived, and like other things.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I like the similes and learning about different kinds of writing. It helps us deal with our emotions and how to write them down and stuff.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Don't be shy, just use your words. Words can get you out of places.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Reduction in maladaptive behaviours in the facility

... well, I used to hate people that came from the South cuz one of my best friends died there. Blueprint made me realize that it's not everybody that lives in the South's fault, so I can't be hating everybody for that one purpose.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Yeah, staff has come up to me and telling me that I have been doing a good job.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Instead of like mean-muggin' and like, "who's that guy?" We all know each other now. Like, we're not hostile towards each other now.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Yeah, it was probably showing more respect for each other. Like, it's a dangerous thing to do putting us, all of us in one place and it was pretty awesome how we kept it safe, showing respect, having laughs and stuff like that.



Didn't have one problem that week.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

There was no codes while Blueprint was happening, so that was good

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE

Willingness to talk about problems and share one's story

They are sharing more about their feelings and stuff like that cause that comes out in spoken word and experiences that they have had.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

I found different ways in the talks to express how I feel about myself.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

At home sometimes we don't want to share our problems with our family we want to keep it to ourselves, but now we kind of share and talk about stuff like that to other youth.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

[Blueprint] taught me a lot like kind of how to talk to with people. Before I didn't really talk to other people that I didn't really know, now I can just tell people how I feel if I don't know them. And just tell them what's what. So it taught me a lot.

And another thing is Blueprint showed me that I can tell my story. I want to tell me people how I got here, and how I'm going to change my life.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

4.3.3. To improve the quality of the custodial social environment:

Qualitative interviews from both Ottawa and Winnipeg reveal marked improvements the youths' perception of the quality of the institutional social environment including, a) improved quality of social relationships amongst youth, b) improved quality of relationships amongst staff, c) improved quality of relationship between staff and

youth and d) improved cultural appreciation and social morale, e) increased interest and capacity to participate in the hip-hop arts community (both within and out of the facility).

Improved Quality of social relationships amongst youth

At first I didn't like the group I was in, I was like "Ah, man, we can't do nothing". And then I was like "Whatever". Me and a friend of mine were in the group together, and started dancing together, and we made a bunch of cool dance moves, and then we brought it all together, and then we all did a bunch of creative dance moves and figured it out with different things like Basketball, and this and that. So our relationship built with a bunch of trust. At the beginning, I didn't give enough trust and effort to work with my group. After that, i was like "I don't want to do this", and they were like "common, just give it a try, you might like it".

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Um I think that when they broke up, um, on the – they broke up into two teams and then those two teams, we then had a battle against each other. So it wasn't- it was like us versus them but not in a negative way, in a



playful way so the two teams worked together really, really well to come up with the best routine to battle the other person, but in an appropriate way, that they're not used to doing. Having that competition without it being the way teenage boys usually have competitions; that make sense? [I: Yup, makes sense.] Like it was a healthy competition between each other.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Since the program, I have heard the youth discuss how they see things differently and see each other in a different light. They expressed respecting each other more and most have been engaged in continuing with the writing they started in the main program.

- STAFF, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Ever since that my group has been pretty good; I've made some close relationships with some guys in my group. Now sometimes we do a rap battle just for fun.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

... with their peer groups, I found by the end of the week, you saw little dynamics that you didn't because day one, everybody was kind of like, I'm not talking to anybody, but by the end of the week, they were very encouraging of each other, pushing each other to do better and try different things by the end of the week. I don't know how that's related to on the unit, but when they were in that group, you could see the change from day one to day five, that they've all become a little, like, clan.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

...when new friends meet, they can go do something fun to make their bond stronger. Like me when I came here, I didn't know this guy for example we went to hip-hop whatever and got tighter and then spoken word – people can express themselves and know how they are and who they are and from there you know you get tighter and now this guy is my little ninja.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

The way that we act towards each other [has improved], we all have to be treated equally.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Improved quality of relationships between staff and staff.

Being one of a few staff that participated in the week, I also was seen differently by staff. Also being a Coordinator and not being on the front line, it allowed the staff to see me in a different light.

- STAFF, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Improved quality of relationship between staff and youth.

Throughout the week, I got to know the youth on a different level. The youth expressed that they learned how to trust me and respect me as a person.

- STAFF, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Kind of the staff as well, the staff were all talking about it, even the guys that attended they were asking us how it went, sort of a bridge for communication. A way to make little jokes with them.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Um I noticed in their relationships with the staff that participated with them, because we did all the dancing with them, we sat with all the talks with them – we did all that. I found that they saw us a little bit more fun than what they originally thought we were, because we were doing everything with them and trying to learn with them so I found that they thought that, you know, we were funner than they actually thought.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Made me realize that I'm not the same person that everyone thought I was. The relationships with staff, too. They completely underestimated us. Some staff were like "Let's go dance, Haha", making a joke out of it. But at the end of the week when those staff seen us all come together. I had some staff come up to me and say "You know what, I did underestimate you" in the sense of, they didn't think that all of us would be able to come together and not fight.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE



Having the opportunity to be with the youth all week, I definitely got to know them on a different level. My relationship did change where we now have in common our experience and all the inside jokes! We helped each other out during the week and got to know each others talents. The trust is also now there which it makes it easier to have youth participate and help out when needed.

- STAFF, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I think that I really think my relationship improved with a lot of other staff, and since the staff were participating in the performance too. Because we had something to talk about and I gave us a common ground. Because otherwise we come from different worlds. We communicate better, a better relationship with them. Something to share with the staff that nobody really knows about.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Cultural Appreciation, Mutual Respect and Social Morale

Teaches us how to accept our culture. And um be proud who we are, to be who we are.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

Its up to you to live your culture. To respect your culture. There are cultures out there right now that are being impacted like we were. I accept every body for who they are now. I try to listen and understand who they are before making judgements right away. Like I used to see someone on the unit and judged them based on their look. Now I try and have a conversation with them. It could be something different you know.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

I learned about respecting people's point of views when it comes to culture

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE

I feel like when we walked into the gym and we started the Blueprint program, there was no culture. We're all, we're all one culture. Didn't matter what your background was, or sexuality, you know

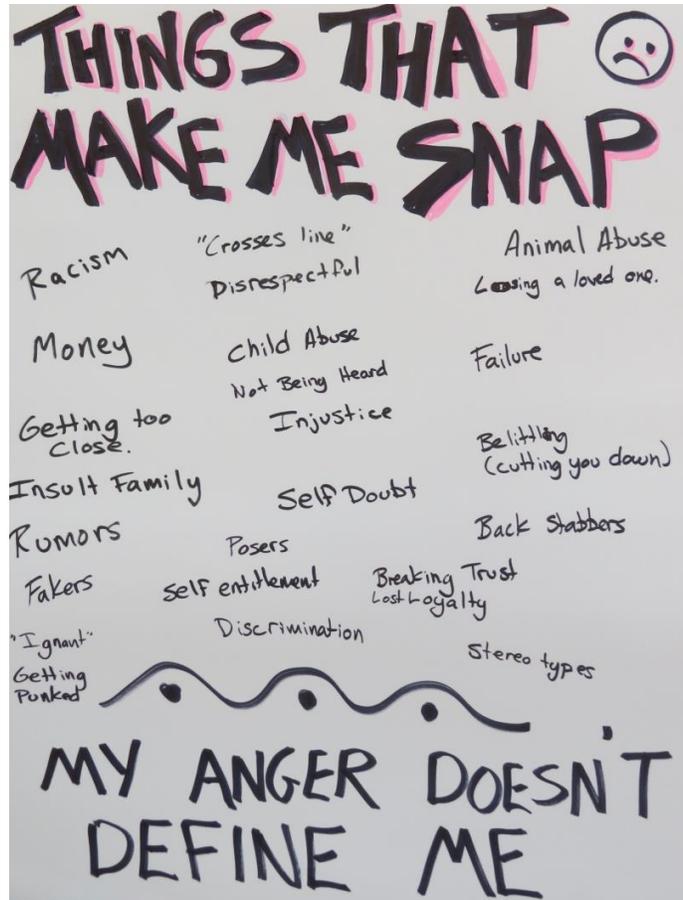
- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Before I started Blueprint, I was a little iffy on certain cultures. Just because of what's been happening in life.

Everything that happens, people just create stereotypes on certain people. Once I went to Blueprint I realized , you know we're all just people. We all just live different ways. We all go to the same grocery store, we all eat the same foods, we're all the same, we're just a different person. So, like, to realize that now we're all the exact same. We're humans. We just do our own things. It's all difficult now to think back and think "why did I think that way?" Why did I think everyone in this room was different than me? We're not, we're all the same person.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

So that's what I realized when I went into the Blueprint thing. Like, ya, I was a bit iffy cuz like, I don't dance. And certain people I don't like, per-say. But I just realized that, well, why hate them when we are all working together and like, if I'm going to keep hating that one person, then it's not going to turn out good for everyone else on the team. So why would I do that because of my own ignorance or ignorant freakin, Frost would say. It's not good for someone to feel so much hatred all



the time towards somebody that has nothing to do with that hatred. Like Buddha said, we're all one nation. Hip hop is a nation.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Like when you see a bunch of girls dancing, those girls have brothers, those girls have dads, those girls probably have kids. You have to understand, imagine if that was your sister, imagine if that was your that, so you have to respect every woman in the same way as if that were your sister, or your mother.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Honestly, I've been here for a while. Never once has there been 25 youth in one area from all different units. To allow something like that to happen allows more opportunity and opens doors for us to come together. The morale continued on because they had the spoken word program that was offered. But with the spoken word it was 2 guys...so you can still see the same faces from the program and we are still learning the same thing. To continue the vibe of what we are.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE



They brought us all together, they trusted us. You guys won't even trust us enough to be together. They trusted us for the whole time. They actually trusted us. They gave us the opportunity, and we accepted the opportunity.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Blueprint empowers youth to participate in and connect with the hip-hop arts community

I used to have thoughts about finding ways to give back to community and help people. This program made me realize that you don't have to have a big program to make a difference but you can just do positive activities in your life to influence the people around you. I see that you don't have to take big steps, you can take baby steps to reach those goals.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

It kind of feels it brought a lot of awareness to me because there are more programs to do on the outside, and like the right programs because they taught me. And I want to keep on doing it when I get out.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE

I am aware of more programs and organizations now. Unity, two of the blueprint staff are also involved with unity. It's a community that if you go there you can ask for help, it's a big brother type of program. There's a whole bunch of them that help you with jobs and resumes and all this stuff. Red cross, act up, things that help you with jobs and all that kind of stuff too.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Another thing is like, the way I felt: they care, too. DJ, Sammy, Buddha. Like, I talked with Buddha and Buddha told me 'Yo, when you get out of here, here is the Facebook page. Link me up, I live in Kanata, we can go out for coffee, we can go out for dinner, something'. I talked to DJ. DJ was told me "I live in Oshawa, come play box", because I told him I box. He said "Come box. Come box for a week, I own my own boxing thing". Sammy, Sammy

gave me his thing he said "If you need any volunteers, you need any talk, come talk to me". Some people who come in here, they talk to you, and that's it, they leave. And they've done their job, you know? These guys talked to us and told us "I want to see you again". So the connection does not leave. I feel like they're my friends, you know. Dj is my friend. Frost is my friend. We built a good connection. It's like a bridge, you know?

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

We can't just sit down and expect people to come to us. At home these activities are out there but if they were easier to find I would go. Right now everyone is telling me where to go, but when I'm own, I won't necessarily do it cause I have to do research and I don't know anyone in the community but now I know blueprint.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

I wouldn't quit it if there was a program like this in the community...If I was trying this program on the outside I wouldn't quit because people, my enemies are there, because Blueprint makes it like what I just said already. Like it makes it come together and drop all the stuff guys have against each other.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE

I: So you guys are going to visit Jamaal. Are you guys going to bring friends?

P: Yeah I'm going to bring my ninjas. Bring my homies. Going to bring my community and peeps in my neighbourhood. You know some people, its not the struggle, they come from a family that don't really help that much, I see so many kids in my neighbourhood that show me mad love but me, I can show them mad love in a positive way like yo you can do this, you can go here. So that's the impact they get. They give me another option. People show me doors that can be opened. There's like ten paths, not a few.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

4.3.4. How Blueprint Works, and How to Make it Better

How Blueprint Works

It motivated me. Its not the same as our stories. But in hearing their stories we could kind of relate to what they go through, like seeing things can still end up positive if they're bad now.. And I can imagine stuff that I can do to not get in fights and things can still end up positively.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

What stood out the most was, like, how much respect they show us. Like the guys who come in here and look at us like "oh, these guys are criminals, you know. Yo, we should be scared. We should hide our stuff". They were like "Hey come in", you know. Even the people who didn't feel comfortable in the beginning, they still wanted them to show. And they really liked us.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

What made it the most unique was trust, trust is a big word for me – I don't usually trust people because people go back on that. That's a big word for me and I trust them.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

Something that stands out is how much respect you show us - how much like the trust. Another thing is that they have issues to you know.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

So they were tired, so they were intaking the information that BluePrint was speaking to them a lot more than if they were rambunctious and somebody's just trying to talk to them. So I feel like the physically activity to it really helped with the talks because they only needed a break cause they were exhausted and they couldn't really—they were exhausted so now they were listening.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Advice for improving Blueprint's impact

P: One thing I found that's kind of weird is, like why didn't they do it before? You know, maybe I wouldn't have not been here.

I: You mean in the community?

P: Yeah that's like one thing I don't understand, like I've been saying this since I've personally arrived here. I had to come to a place like this to get the advantages through Blueprint that I didn't really know about. If they did it outside, I think it would help a lot of kids in the community. Go to a community centre; in the gym teach them how to dance. I think they are all going to love it. Like how we did, everybody loved it. Kids commit crimes because they are bored, they have nothing to do. So what do I do, I go chill in the streets, meet some new guys, smoke, they start smoking, drinking.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

If they could like kind of target schools in a way, like go to the high school, middle schools. Yeah, high schools, community centres. Everybody goes to the community centre. Like each neighbourhood you could meet people too. And if they go there, there are certain activities that go down. Summer league basketball, everybody from each neighbourhood plays in one gym - it's a big tournament. And if you say like yo, do you want to participate in the Blueprint program you have to be a part of this program too. These kids don't really understand that if you do the Blueprint program you'll understand that there are other ways in life to deal with stuff, you know.

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I believe that a program such as Blueprint should be part of a yearly (if not more) activity in facilities. Youth are inspired following such a week and it is great to be able to provide to the youth opportunities that most have not been given. This unique opportunity may help youth in the long run find other paths, safe and healthier paths to go down. The program and the staff gives the youth the chance to believe in themselves and feel proud. Their self-esteems are affected in a positive way which gives them more time to think of positive things to do when they leave. It is as important to keep the momentum going which is great to have Spoken Words follow the program.

- STAFF, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I think it should have been more centered on different aspects about what everyone was practicing. For three hour we practiced dance, and then half an hour on DJ, the focus could be on things other than dance. If we knew about the layout of the week to start and had more time to do djing and spoken word it would have been better

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE

I think they should have made a group, with things you maybe want to do. I don't really dance.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

Sometimes I felt like, I felt like we focused a lot on dancing. I like the dancing, but the way it was advertised there were 5 categories of stuff. I think if we focused more on everything the performance would have been a lot better, because there would have been a variety of performances and people.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

I: What stuff would help you engage in cultural/community activities?

P: Support. I have a support worker and we do a lot of stuff like that [like Blueprint does]. When I was getting drunk and doing drugs, I didn't have time to do that stuff but now that I think about it, it helps me a lot because it makes me think different.

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE

I: So are there opportunities in the facility to sort of continue the activities without BluePrint staff coming in? Like say some of the kids wanted to get together to come practice dance, would they have that opportunity?

P: Um, well they have a rec period everyday. They can do it then. If they asked to- it's just everything's a process, it could happen, it's just, I'm not sure how that process would work and I think the youth would have to bring it towards the right channels to see how to make that happen. We have the space, we have the equipment, we have all that. So it could still happen, it's just how to make it happen, I'm not sure of the process.

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE

5. Discussion

5.1. Summary and reflections

The evaluation shows that Blueprint Pathways has been successful in achieving a number of the outcomes set out in our program objectives. Overall we obtained evidence supporting our Theory of Change (Fig. 2). Specifically, our data yielded evidence supporting increases in the capacity for adaptive behaviour including a) improved motivation to change, b) improved sense of mastery (self-concept, confidence) c) improved ethnic pride, and d) increases in hope (reduced fatalism). Evidence that youth obtained new tools to increase adaptive behaviour included a) increased scores on levels of engagement in healthy activities (dance, spoken word, art and meditation), b) improved self-efficacy for healthy coping strategies (impulse control and anger management), c) increased resilience, moral reasoning, and dealing with complex trauma and , d) reduction of maladaptive (difficult) behaviours in the facility, and e) willingness to talk about problems and share one's story. We also have evidence that Blueprint helped to improve the quality of the custodial social environment, including a) improved perceptions of social support, b) increased intentions of community participation, c) increased social inclusion, d) improved social morale, cultural appreciation and mutual respect, and e) improved quality of relationships. There were some quantitative measures that did not change significantly over any part of the Blueprint Program. These measures included the Propensity for Gang Affiliation scale (Ireland and Powers 2013), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (Rosenberg 1965).

Note that this is a superficial summary of the data, and not all measured outcomes showed significant changes across both methods of measurement (quantitative vs. qualitative), across all elements of the program (i.e. Main Program vs. Spoken Word Program), or across all facilities (RMYC, AYC, MYC, WEHC, CYOC). The results section can be referred to for details about the differences in results across research methods, locations and program elements. It should be noted that the difference in results across program locations and program elements should be interpreted with caution since the sample sizes of participants who took part in the evaluation vary widely across location (Main Program: RMYC = 15, AYC = 27, MYC = 27, WEHC = 9, CYOC = 26) , and program element (Main Program = 104 participants, Spoken Word = 37 participants). While we should be cautious about interpreting the data, we can begin to draw out broad themes about the impacts of Blueprint on our program objectives.

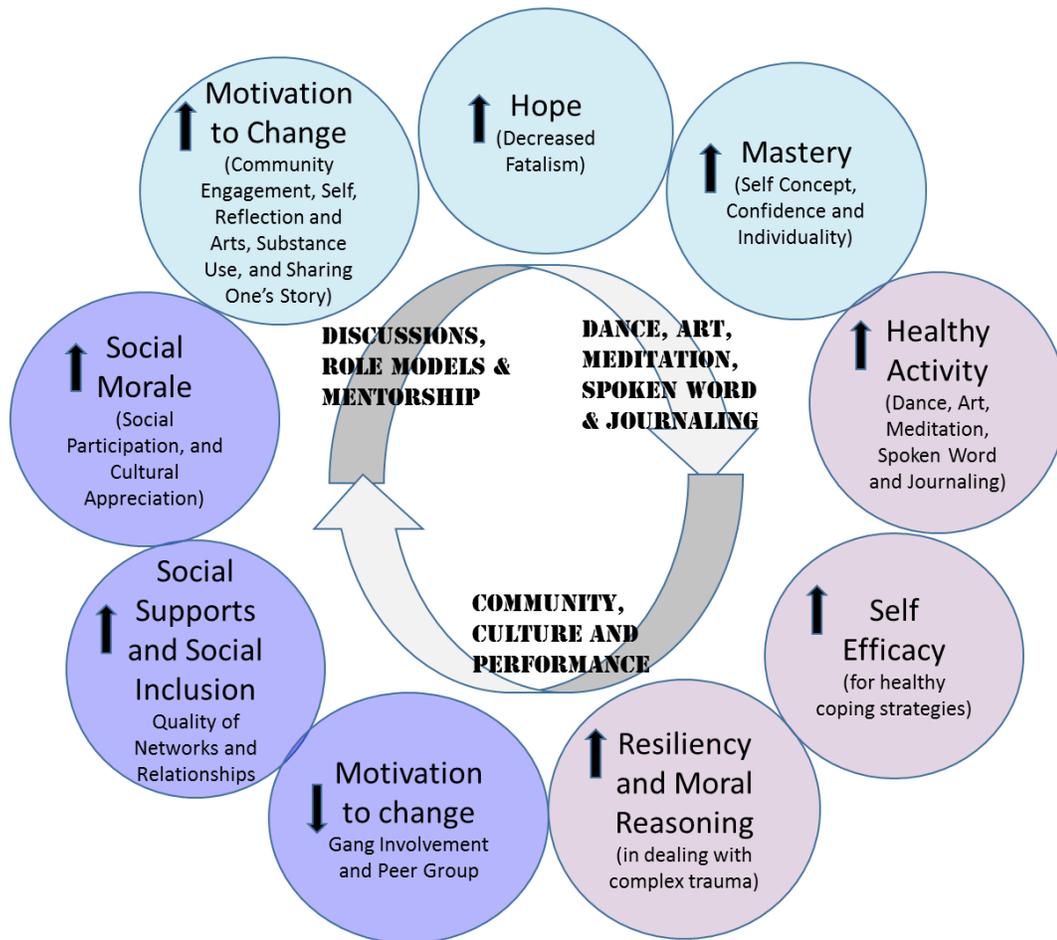
This purpose of this discussion is to inform Blueprint, facility staff and youth about the effects of the Blueprint program, to increase understanding about and how to improve, mediate and capitalize on those positive effects. We will also use the evaluation to shape the development and continuous revision of the program as well as its evaluation. Our aim is to maximize the positive effects that Blueprint programming has on youth.

Blueprint assists youth in increasing their capacity for adaptive behaviour.

The observed increases in capacity for adaptive behavior, including motivation to change, sense of mastery (self-concept and confidence), and increased hope (decreased fatalism), indicate that youth feel empowered to take control of their own future to make positive change. Although changes in sense of mastery did not reach significance levels at all facilities, significant changes in this measure at both AYC and CYOC suggests that Blueprint does have an impact on many youth's sense of mastery. Caputo (2003), in his study of 969 American youth found that sense of mastery was the best predictor of both future mental and physical health. This is thought to be due to the fact that the sense of control and influence over one's own life circumstances (i.e. a sense of mastery) has a buffering effect on the impact of stressful life events. In the Blueprint Evaluation interviews, youth talked about discovering how to develop their skill, individuality, creativity and their realization that can take control of their accomplishments and change their futures. While this lesson of 'controlling your own outcomes', and developing your creativity and individuality was exemplified mainly through arts-based activities, the interview evidence suggests that youth were gaining more confidence in the prospect of making positive change and achieving positive outcomes across different life contexts. In other words, Blueprint's lessons appear to be translating into a sense of mastery in other aspects of the youths' lives.

Our results showed robust and widespread effects of Blueprint on youth's motivation to change. The changes on motivation to change measures suggest that Blueprint participants became empowered with new intentions to engage in healthy and artistic activities, self-reflection, sharing their stories with others and community involvement. Furthermore, youth expressed a desire to change levels of substance use, the peer group that they hang out with, as well as their levels of gang involvement. Youth spoke about realizing that even if they've done bad things in the past, they can still turn things around and make something positive of themselves. A cornerstone of Blueprint is that Blueprint staff openly share their honest experiences of dealing with trauma and difficult life experiences and youth can therefore relate to them on a number of levels. In doing so, Blueprint staff provide real-life role models to demonstrate how one can leverage difficult life experiences to build a stronger individual character, to inspire art and creativity, and a fuel a drive to have a positive impact on their community. Blueprint staff provide inspiration for youth to explore those possibilities within themselves. This inspiration helps to foster in youth a motivation to change youth and a vision for better lives.

Figure 2. Theory of Change



Blueprint provides incarcerated youth with tools to increase adaptive behaviour.

The Blueprint program markedly increased the youths’ engagement in healthy activities such as dance, spoken word, meditation and self-reflection. There is abundant supporting evidence for the effects of physical and arts-based activities on health and well-being (Bilderbeck et al 2013; Stuckley and Noble, 2010, Cashin et al. 2008). Evidence for the positive effects of these activities include impacts on self-awareness, quality of life, hope, cognitive functioning, body image, mitigation of stress and bolstering immune system function, to name just a few (for review, see Stuckley and Noble, 2010). By exposing youth to these tools for self-expression (e.g. dance, art, meditation, spoken word), community engagement, and coping, future pathways to leading healthy and productive lives become apparent.

During the interviews many youth talked about finding different ways in the Blueprint discussions to talk about complex feelings and trauma that they previously had difficulty describing and voicing. This was also supported by the changes on the motivation to change measure of how much they share their own story with others. When Blueprint staff share some of their own stories about their past, this act not only provides scaffolding onto which staff can connect and empathize with the youths’ own experiences, but also serves to model this ‘story-sharing’ behaviour as an adaptive coping mechanism that fosters social connection and paths to healing. Close social relationships act in a number of ways to directly affect health, and to act as a buffer mediating the ill-effects of stress on mental and physical health (Cohen 2004). By emulating and practicing the coping skills that Blueprint

champions (such as talking about stress and participating in healthy activities), participants of the program should directly experience the positive impact of these practices on their health and well-being.

The increased scores on the Self-Efficacy scale for non-violent behaviour in AYC suggest that Blueprint was effective in bolstering youths' healthy coping strategies for controlling their impulses and managing their anger. During the interviews, many youth talked about using techniques taught by the Blueprint program to control their emotions and manage their reactions. In particular, the interview data highlighted how useful the concept of 'one-mic' was for youth in developing healthy coping strategies. The 'One Mic' concept comes from a song by rapper Nas, with the line 'All you need is one mic'. 'One mic' is used as a metaphor for having a passion. Whether its dance, writing, kayaking, singing, or math, all you need is one thing to focus on to keep you going through tough times in life. Blueprint equips youth with several activities that could be used as a 'one mic' coping devise, including dance, storytelling, journaling, meditation drumming, dj-ing and art and graffiti, but also encourages youth to explore other passions that might work for them. Blueprint teaches youth that they can have multiple 'one mics' ready for different situations to be used as a coping mechanism for managing anger and other maladaptive behaviour patterns.

Some youth reported reductions in their negative or antagonistic feelings towards others. They reported a realization that everyone has a complex background, and that people don't deserved to be judged or hated based on their ethnic or cultural background, and first 'quick to judge' impressions. This demonstrates the development of moral reasoning, where youth are finding different logic for thinking through how they react to situations that may have triggered a maladaptive or anti-social response in the past. An increase in moral reasoning should translate into a reduction in facility incidents and reduced problem behavior. Our interview data did show some evidence that youth had improved their behaviour in the facility since the Blueprint program.

Taken together, the evidence suggests that the Blueprint program had a positive impact on youths' activity levels and behavioural conduct throughout the facility, and not just within the Blueprint program itself.

Blueprint helps to improve the quality of the custodial social environment

The data strongly suggest that Blueprint has helped youth gain stronger social relationships as well as a motivation to participate in positive community activities. The desire to become involved in community activities, if nurtured and fostered into action, could result in higher social participation and community engagement once youth leave the facility. Increased social participation in one's community has been linked to better health outcomes (Cohen, 2004) and is thought to be associated with a juvenile offender's re-entry success as measured through outcomes like employment, school performance, and recidivism (Mathur and Clark et al. 2014). In the qualitative interviews many youth noted their appreciation for the list of resources and hip hop community centers available to them in their cities. Many expressed a renewed intention to participate in these communities, and to specifically connect with Blueprint staff upon release. Blueprint hopes that by keeping youth informed about these resources, they will reach out to their local support networks upon release. Blueprint also makes an effort to educate and inform these community resources about youth coming from the Blueprint program. In doing so, Blueprint can help build a strong network of diverse community resources for youth once they leave the facility.

The strong evidence for increased social morale, social inclusion and increased sense of social support is very encouraging. Having just one friend to confide in can make a critical impact on a youth's ability to buffer the effects of stress on health (Cohen, 2004); having a whole cohesive community of support can bolster these effects significantly. The increase in social inclusion scores suggest that Blueprint's impact on the social environment goes beyond individual relationships and creates a more cohesive, connected and inclusive facility environment. Community cohesion increases youths' access to what is referred to as 'social capital': the connections among individuals, social networks, and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them (Putnam, 2000). The mantra of the hip hop community is 'Peace, Love, Unity and Having Fun' and the hip hop community is fundamentally inclusive and cohesive. Hip hop grew out of poverty and therefore is designed by and for communities experiencing hardship and marginalization. It is this community and social support piece that manifests such common statements as 'Hip Hop saved my life'. Hip hop culture can be thought of as a model for

healthy community development that can be leveraged within secure detention and custody facilities, to bridge community ties upon transition out of the facility.

We did not find any significant change in the Propensity for Gang Affiliation scores. This contrasts with our first annual report (2015-16) in which we report an effect of Blueprint on this measure. Despite this negative finding, the motivation to change scores indicating that youth are motivated to change the people they hang out with as well as their level of gang involvement, provide promising evidence that youth's propensity for gang affiliation may be in the early stages of change.

5.2. Conclusion

The evaluation presented in this report demonstrates that, over the course of the Blueprint Pathways program, youth increased their motivation to change certain aspects of their life towards more positive outcomes. They experienced an increased sense of mastery and heightened self confidence by learning and sharing new skills. Youth gained and used new tools for coping and connecting with peers and staff, and that the quality of the custodial social environment significantly improved. In a secure custody facility these outcomes are expected to not only positively affect the youth's behaviour and experiences within the facility, but also improve the likelihood that youth will succeed in leading a positive, healthy crime-free lifestyle once they leave the facility.

Many youth and staff expressed that the Blueprint program should be expanded to serve a preventative function in the community, to reach youth before they end up in secure custody facility. It was also suggested that the impact of Blueprint in youth facilities would be greatly enhanced if the Blueprint program ran for longer periods and/or more frequently throughout the year.

This evaluation report represents the second installment of three annual reports that will occur throughout the Youth Justice Fund Grant. Ultimately, we wish to be able to precisely identify and describe the outcomes that Blueprint achieves, as well as explain the mechanisms and active ingredients that create Blueprint's success. In doing so, Blueprint can better assist facilities in maintaining the elements of Blueprint programming, that most work for the youth population at each particular facility.

Should you have any feedback, questions or concerns, or would like to share your story of how Blueprint has affected you, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our Program Evaluator, Emma Ware at emma@wellesleyinstitute.com.

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7. Appendix A: Youth poems, with permission to publish

BLUEPRINT...

October 2015
MYC

Thanks buddah and blueprint staff..

I was so caught up in my front and so caught up with the stuff i had on my plate, I there for got caught up with myself. Either i was full of myself, putting myself down and letting my anger get the best of me and my actions... I now realize i like dancing, I like poetry and I worked up the courage to stand up and not be shy! I also learned its not all about drugs & alcohol! but anyway back to you guys. I really liked the way you guys made and encouraged everybody to support eachother. I especially liked that we didnt have to be perfect then you guys all supported us or took the time to teach us individually. i also really loved your heart to heart / REAL talks. the questions were answered and the advice was I hummed. So keep it real and keep doing what your doing. You'll soon have all us kids off the streets, who know's maybe ill be a bgirl ONE DAY. you guys really encouraged me to

Woke up screaming; with a big start, had the cold sweats, chilling me.
I was thoroughly on my way to insanity...
Yeah, insanity

I cracked, I had no choice in the matter
My brain felt like some slimy batter
I hurt those; close to me,
and landed myself in EYOC.

Two years later; I start recovery.

The voice is gone, cuz God looks out for me

No desire, to be a drug addict neither

Ooo! I'm hot! I think I got a fever
and I'm Flying Fresh!

I'm a believer,

Of Blueprint's flame, of positivity.

Ignite me, enlighten thee

So we all make a blaze of positive energy... Yeah.

It's about that positive energy...

My Story

At the age of thirteen I started on drugs
Now I think back, it should have been hugs
I have a good friend, but he was negativity
led me down a path of no responsibility
My Dad was sick, and far far away
He was kicking it back; in Fanny Bay
I needed something, Yeah, I needed something

I became a goth

My Mom didn't dig it, it really made her froth
She sent me away,

Down to Camrose, I didn't want to stay.

I was hated, discriminated against, and lonely,

It drove me mad, along with the voice in my head

Now I think about it, I should have went to bed,

Under six feet of rocks, I have my regrets. Yeah, I have my regrets.

Dad died

It seemed, all of a sudden

I knew for eight years that it was coming

Happened two years ago, My best friend gone

left me with nothing, or so I thought,

Reflexively, I turned to pot, thought I was nothing.....

Became a Cybergoth champ, I guess that was something....

Yeah, that was something

I turned to rage, it became my cage

Formenting me, in so many ways

I couldn't sleep, got less than two hours a night.

When I did, I felt fright

I had the zombies; nightmares ripping me apart.

Loyalty & Respect

I have so much anger in me all I wanna do is fight.
Im caught up in the system & I know its not right.
All I got is a mind full of shame, a couple new charges & myself to blame.

I got haters on the other side & homies that committed homicides.
I got a smile that shines & boo thang i'd like to call mine.
I got a record full of crimes & booklet of poetry rhymes.

I tell them, respect me, disrespect me, it wont faze me or effect me.
I had people reject me, neglect me, then select me
but the ONLY thing I wanted was for people to respect me.

I got scars that run deep & secrets I keep &
sometimes when I lay down at night, I start to weep.
Cant pin point the pain, don't ask me why,
feeling helpless so I just break don't and cry.

Its hard to put on this pretty girl disguise or smile to try an satisfy.
Locked in room with the demons I've tried to hide.
Facing fear, I finally realize..
You have to forgive to forget in order to walk your path & have no regret.

-A poem from inside the walls of a youth correctional facility.

Dear Buddha,

I'm writing you this letter to thank you for the opportunities you have opened my eyes too. Blueprint 4 Life helped me find another piece of my identity. Before, Blueprint for Life, I never knew the depth to hip-hop and how it really can be a way to leave behind all the negativity in one's life. I wanted to share a little bit of my own story with you and in doing that, I hope you really understand the appreciation I have for what you do.

So I grew up in a pretty good house. My family went to church a couple times a week. I grew up with good manners and "proper edict" around me. However, my dad was a pretty heavy addict on and off until I was about nine. This is when his addiction really went too far for my mother. My parents split after a huge fight one night. My dad was wasted and yelling. I woke up with my brother. We were curious nine and ten year olds so we went to check it out. That turned into us yelling at my dad to leave. I was mad at him for about a year or so but once I was exposed to smoking trees and drinking from chilling with my brother and his friends, my madness toward my dad was all of a sudden lost. I recognize now that's because a relationship with my dad enabled me to be the little shit that I was. It's not surprising I moved to his house pretty quick. Its not surprising wither that within a year my brother and I were apprehended from social services and put into group homes. In my dad's defense though, he showed us tons of love and I was never scared to tell him anything. Anyways, I was in a group home for a year and a half. They were good places. I enjoyed them both. I wish I didn't awol from the first one so much though. I was caught up on a girlfriend and never seemed to want to go home. That's what got me sent tot the second one. It was on a ranch so awoling wasn't much of a option anymore. That was a good thing though because the ranch was where I first got connected with my Aboriginal culture. I was interested but I didn't care for it to much yet. I was there until I had to decide if I wanted to move back to my moms or go under PGO (Permanent Guardianship Order) status. I didn't want to be under the care of the government until I was 18 so I moved back in with my mom. I was on conditions for about 8 more months because when I went on a home visit earlier during my stay at the ranch I got charged with some robberies and went to jail for 4 days and got a bout a year and a half of conditions to follow. I finished my conditions on XXXX of 2012. My birthday was on XXXX so I decided to end my conditions a couple days early. My probation officer didn't see a point in breaching me. By this time I had been smoking weed daily and drinking maybe once or twice a week. I just made sure I went to my probation meetings and made it home for curfew checks. When my probation ended I was finally able to not go home if I didn't want to. I was finally able to stay out until whatever hour and not worry about getting locked up. To me this meant I could finally start selling drugs and not be too "heat." This is because I was finally aloud to be out and not get searched by police because I had no warrants. What lead me to want to start selling drugs is because of money. I had seen lots of people around me doing it and they always seemed to be able to do what they want because of money. I had been looking out for myself since age 11 so I understood if I wanted new clothes or money for weed and alcohol I had to get my own money. I also loved being the friend that everyone could look to when it comes to paying for that stuff. I was looking for my friend's approval so I would try to impress them as much as possible. This meant to me always having money. When I seen they were happy to be around me I let the ego go to my head. I stopped hanging around them more and more and switched to the crowd I sold drugs with. To impress them though, money mattered but who had the most respect was how to impress them. Their idea of respect though is twisted. To get their kind of respect, it's who can be the biggest thug or doing the most gangster things. I slowly got their respect and that gave me a bigger and bigger ego. This is what brought me to where I am today. The more untouchable I thought I was, the more vulnerable I became. This is because I thought I always had to prove something, that with all my anger inside I did the stupidest things. My own stupidities lead me to take someone's life. From there, I went to jail. My first year in jail was up and down. I kept thinking I was going to be able to get out and just not really accepting that I actually did anything and that I would be in jail for a bit.

Changing still didn't appeal to me much. I was in denial. I got asked to go and do a healing program in Edmonton. This was the start to a better path. The program was called Tapwe Youth Warrior Program. I was excited to switch up the scenery and go to a different center. When I first started the program, I was amazed at the person who ran it. My whole time in custody, I always felt it was offenders vs. staff. The lady who ran the program changed my perception of that being true. She is so selfless. Doing the program really opened my eyes. I realized how immature some of the things I did were and it also helped me get in touch with my feelings. I did that program about 4-5 times I think, each time being able to learn more about myself. Blueprint 4 Life I did between all the times I did warriors. Blueprint 4 Life was an extraordinary experience. My first time doing it made me realize breaking isn't just for people who go to dance classes or whatever. I realized it was for anyone who has determination and enjoys hip-hop. Blueprint opened my eyes to seeing that hip-hop is a culture or community that I could identify with. It became part of me. The more projects I did, the more I recognized all the healthy things that can come from hip-hop. It's a way to express myself positively. The relationships I built with your team I also value so much. I see them as mentors but also as great friends. The majority of my friends before were pretty negative. With the new relationships I made with your team also showed me something... People don't have to be a certain way to be cool. The biggest thing Blueprint 4 Life helped me with was finding a community that I could feel accepted into by being myself, not someone I thought other people wanted me to be.

Buddha, thank you so much for the work you do and I hope you don't ever get discouraged from doing it for any reason. Thank you for all the support you have given me though my journey and I look forward to working with you in the future.

Your friend