



Blueprint Pathways Evaluation Report

Final Report 2014 - 2017



Funded by The Youth Justice Fund, Government of Canada, Gangs, Guns and Drugs Grant

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; 5) Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) in Calgary, Alberta 6) and the Edmonton Young Offenders Centre (EYOC) in Edmonton Alberta.

For more information about Blueprint please check out Blueprint's website:

<http://www.blueprintforlife.ca/services/youth-corrections-outreach/>

A letter of thanks from Blueprint Executive Director Steve 'Buddha' Leafloor

It has been an exciting three years where we delivered 12 programs in 6 youth correctional facilities across Canada. Not only is the data we collected quite substantial, but we particularly proud of the fact that the youth themselves showed government employees and politicians that alternative models of therapy can not only be powerful, but life changing. 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 and Sylvia Martel. Thanks, Debra and Sylvia!

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, but 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 programming 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 of had a core of support from Carlos Clark and his team – thank you all so much! We are actively looking for new funding to return every year as we heard from many of you that you hoped this

project could continue indefinitely. 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 several times at your province's crime prevention conferences.

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! More blueprint hugs go out to Kaethe Imbert from the McHugh school at the William E Hay Centre. Your active participation with your team was amazing.

We also delivered our programming for 2 years 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 every day. We truly felt like one big team of energy. We were delighted to have Assistant Deputy Minister of Children and Youth services (Joanne Miller Reid) in attendance year one 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, Andel "Handlz" James, Bob Veruela, Tara Wilson, and Troy Sexton who have been with Blueprint for years building this vision. Frost, Handlz, Bob, Tara 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. This is truly an example of small ripples eventually creating big waves.

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. Also, our evaluation assistant Sarah Tumaliuan who is also a dancer. Thank you both soooo much for all you do. I know you both really get the dynamics of how we work 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. As far as we can see, we have completed the world's largest study on dance and traditional culture as therapy with incarcerated youth. 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

BA, MSW, M.S.C, Ashoka Fellow Canada,
Founder and Executive Director



Executive Summary

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 build better futures. 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 on 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 take control of their own futures towards positive community engagement, personal achievement and away from gang involvement and criminal activities.

Evaluation

As part of the Youth Justice Funding scheme, Blueprint received funding to run programs in six 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, and 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.



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 *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, facility staff and Blueprint staff. The program was evaluated at 1) Manitoba Youth Centre (MYC) in Winnipeg, Manitoba in September 2014, October 2015, and October 2016 (3 programs); 2) William E. Hay Centre (WEHC) in Ottawa, Ontario in December 2014, November 2015 and November 2016 (3 programs); 3) Roy McMurtry Youth Centre (RMYC) in Brampton, Ontario in July 2015 and July 2016 (2 programs); 4) Agassiz Youth Centre (AYC) in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba in September 2015 (1 program); 5) Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) in Calgary, Alberta in March 2016 (1 program); and 6) Edmonton Young Offender Centre (EYOC), Edmonton, Alberta in September 2016, and April 2017 (2 programs). A total of twelve programs were carried out across 3 years of funding.

Summary of Results

Before and after survey sets were collected from 261 youth in total (97 MYC, 30 WEHC, 26 RMYC, 27 AYC, 26 CYOC, 55 EYOC) for the Main Program and 83 youth (13 MYC, 10 WEHC, 14 RMYC, 12 AYC, 10 CYOC, 24 EYOC) for the Spoken Word Program. The results show that Blueprint Pathways has been successful in achieving a number of the outcomes set out in our three program objectives.

Evidence supporting increases in youth’s capacity for adaptive behaviour included: a) improved self-esteem, self-confidence, sense of mastery; b) increased hope and positivity; and c) increased motivation to change, including i) level of engagement in healthy activities, ii) impulse control, iii) substance use habits, iv) level of community involvement, v) choice of peer group, and vi) level of gang involvement.

Evidence that youth obtained new tools for adaptive behaviour included: a) increased engagement in healthy activities (meditation, dance, spoken word, art and journaling); b) healthy coping strategies (e.g. using one-mics), decreased likelihood of violence and delinquency, and a reduction in maladaptive behavior in the facility; and c) increased moral reasoning, ability to deal with complex trauma, interest in sharing one’s story and reaching out for help.

The data also suggest that Blueprint helped to improve the quality of the social environment for youth, yielding: a) increased social inclusion, quality of social relationships and perceptions of social support; b) improved social morale, cultural/ethnic pride, and respect for diversity; and c) improved connections with hip hop and arts organizations with the community, and an interest in positive community engagement.



The Blueprint Program

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. By centering on dance and cultural sharing, while also weaving in potent group discussions, Blueprint programs activate physical, mental, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual health in a powerful community setting.

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 November 2016 Buddha received the Meritorious Service Cross from Governor General David Johnston, to recognize the “considerable benefit and honour to Canada” that the Blueprint program has brought to remote arctic and First Nations 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. In 2014, the Youth Justice Fund of Canada funded the Blueprint Pathways Project under their Gangs and Guns granting program to carry out programming in youth detention and secure custody facilities across Canada. This report presents the final evaluation results of the Blueprint Pathways program spanning 2014 - 2017.

Program Goals, Objectives and Indicators

Blueprint aims to equip youth with sustainable tools towards positive community engagement and personal achievement. Towards this goal, the program objectives break down as follows:

Program Objectives

To foster youth's capacity for adaptive behaviour:

Indicators: Improved self-esteem, self-confidence, sense of mastery, hope, positivity and motivation to change.

To provide incarcerated youth with tools to practice adaptive behaviours:

Indicators: Improved engagement in healthy activities such as dance, meditation, self-reflection, and spoken word; healthy coping strategies leading to increased resilience, decreased likelihood of violence and delinquency, and a reduction in maladaptive behavior in the facility; and increased moral reasoning, ability to deal with complex trauma, interest in sharing one's story and reaching out for help.

To improve the quality of the custodial social environment:

Indicators: increased social inclusion, quality of social relationships and perceptions of social support; improved social morale, cultural/ethnic pride, and respect for diversity; and improved connections with hip hop and arts organizations with the community, and an interest in positive community engagement.



Program Breakdown

In secure detention youth facilities, Blueprint Pathways utilizes the same basic ingredients that has made Blueprint 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 a selection of 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. 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. 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.

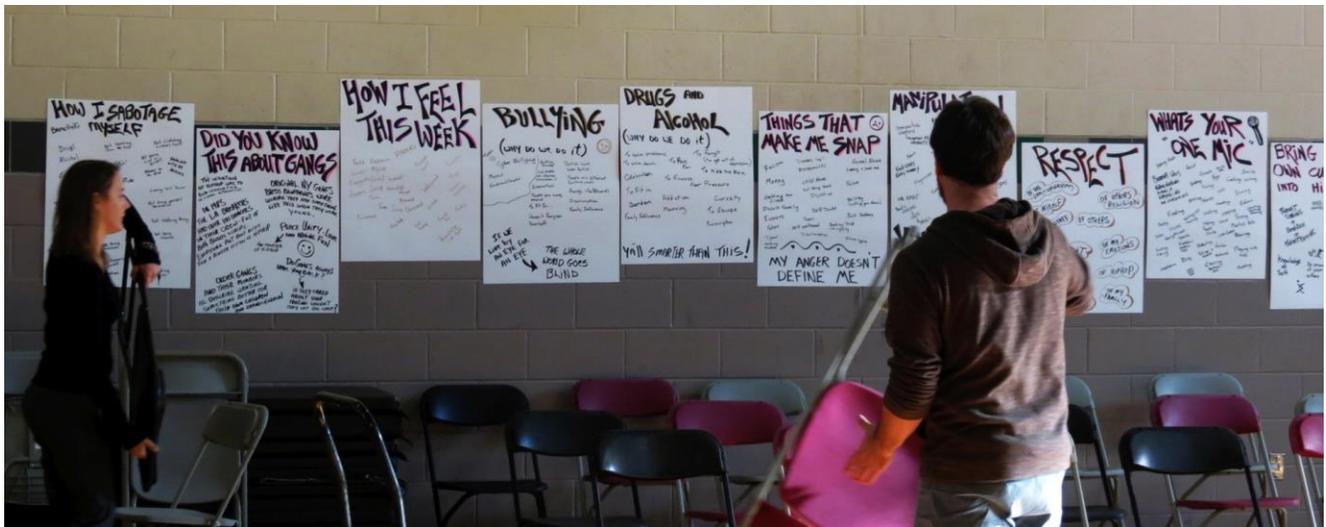
Main Program Discussion Topics

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, one's environment and community - treatment of women.
6. Bullying, learning to say you're sorry, rebuilding relationships and fear of trusting.
7. Impulse control.
8. Why not gangs: a hip hop perspective – getting a new familia.
9. Healing paths, sexual abuse and being safe. Healing throughout one's life and asking for help.
10. Who to talk to when bad things happen. Personal Inventory, safety plans and 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).
- e. Art project (builds throughout the week).
- f. Final showcase.



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.

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.

Evaluation Methods

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 before and after 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.



Measures

Quantitative Evaluation

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)** Measures an individual's perception of self-worth, ability, self-satisfaction and self-respect (Rosenberg, 1965).
3. **Fatalism / Hope for Change (1 item)** Measures confidence in one's ability to influence the future (Cummings 1977).
4. **Self-Efficacy – Teen Conflict Survey (6 items):** Measures an individual's confidence in his or her ability to control anger and resolve conflicts nonviolently (Bosworth and 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 and Ringwalt, 1993).
6. **Motivation to Change (7 items):** Measures the respondent’s motivation to change aspects of their behaviour associated with various negative and positive social outcomes (Biener and Abrams, 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).** Measures 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):** Measures satisfaction with perceived emotional advice, guidance, and practical social support from both peers and adults (Vaux, 1988).
10. **Ethnic Identity – Teen conflict survey – Selected Items (2 items).** Measures ethnic pride and respect for differences (Bosworth and Espelage, 1995).
11. **Propensity for Gang Affiliation – Selected Items (3 items):** Measures an individual’s propensity to support gangs and their function (Ireland and Powers 2013).
12. **Social Inclusion – Selected Items (6 items):** Measures various constructs related to social inclusion such as social isolation, social relations and social acceptance (Secker et al. 2009).
13. **Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10 (CD-RISC-10):** Measures 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. Impacts on youth’s capacity for adaptive behaviour
3. Quality of social relationships and custodial social environment
4. Feedback for program improvement

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

Results

Demographic Data

Overall across all facilities, a total of 304 participants completed the demographics survey, 238 males, 56 females and 10 people who did not specify a gender. The average age across all facilities was 16 years (min = 13, max = 21); and school grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 6, max = grade 12).

In Winnipeg at MYC, a total of 119 participants completed the demographics survey, 71 males, 43 females and 5 people who did not specify a gender. The average age at MYC was 16 years (min = 13, max = 20); and school grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 6, max = grade 12).

In Ottawa at WEHC, a total of 43 participants completed the demographics survey, 41 males, no females and 2 people who did not specify a gender. The average age at WEHC was 17 years (min = 14, max = 21); and school grade average was grade 10, (min = grade 8, max = grade 12).



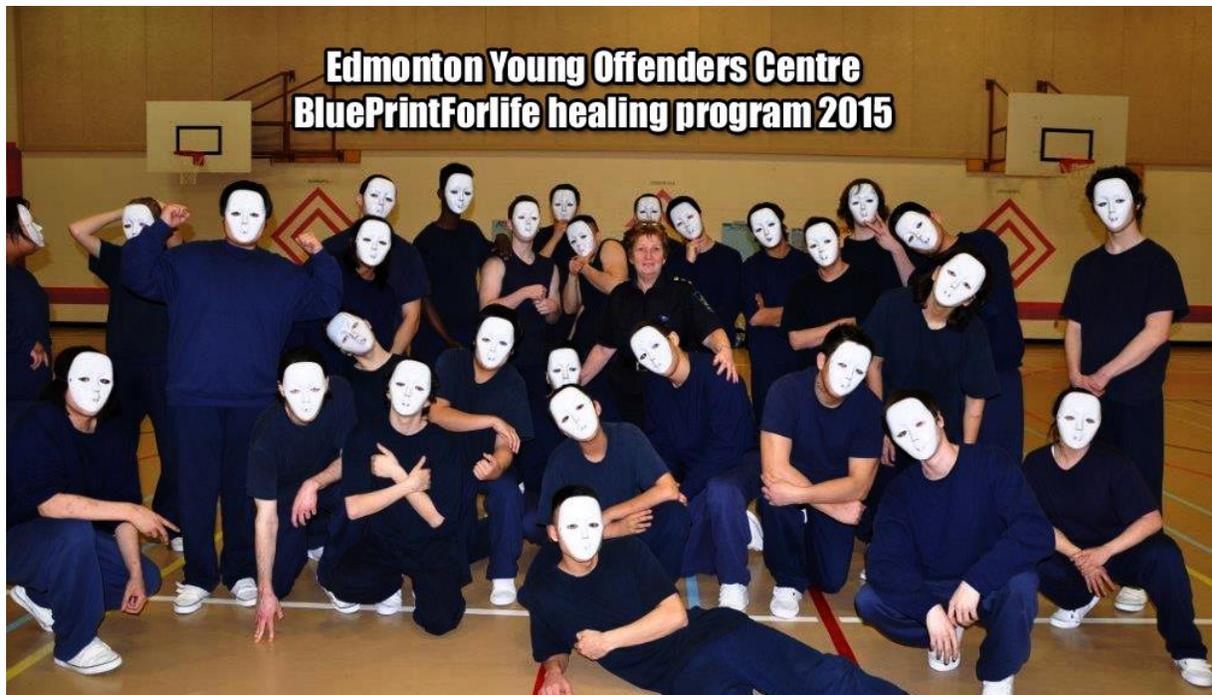
In Brampton at RMYC, a total of 28 male participants completed the demographics survey. The average age at RMYC was 18 years (min = 16, max = 21); and school grade average was grade 10, (min = grade 8, max = grade 12).

In Portage la Prairie at AYC, a total of 14 male participants completed the demographics survey. The average age at AYC was 17 years (min = 15, max = 19); and school grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 8, max = grade 10).

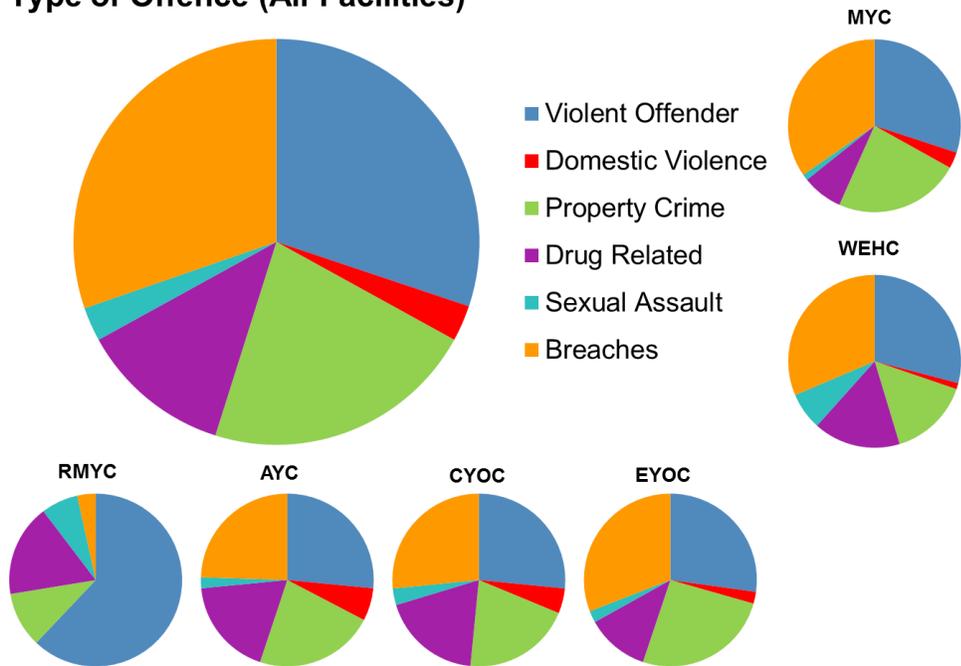
In Calgary at CYOC, a total of 31 participants completed the demographics survey, 24 males, 6 females and 1 person who did not specify a gender. The average age at CYOC was 16 years (min = 13, max = 20); and school grade average was grade 9, (min = grade 6, max = grade 12).

In Edmonton at EYOC, a total of 69 participants completed the demographics survey, 60 males, 7 females and 2 people who did not specify a gender. The average age at EYOC was 17 years (min = 13, max = 19); and school grade average was grade 10, (min = grade 6, max = grade 12).

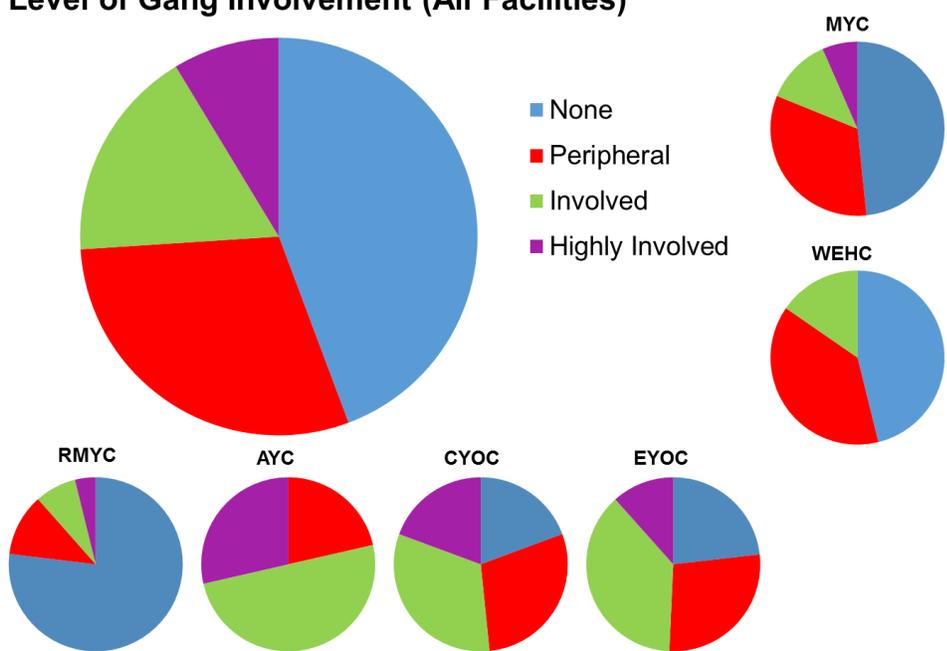
Demographic information about the type of offence committed, level of gang involvement and ethnic identity can be found in Figure 1.



Type of Offence (All Facilities)

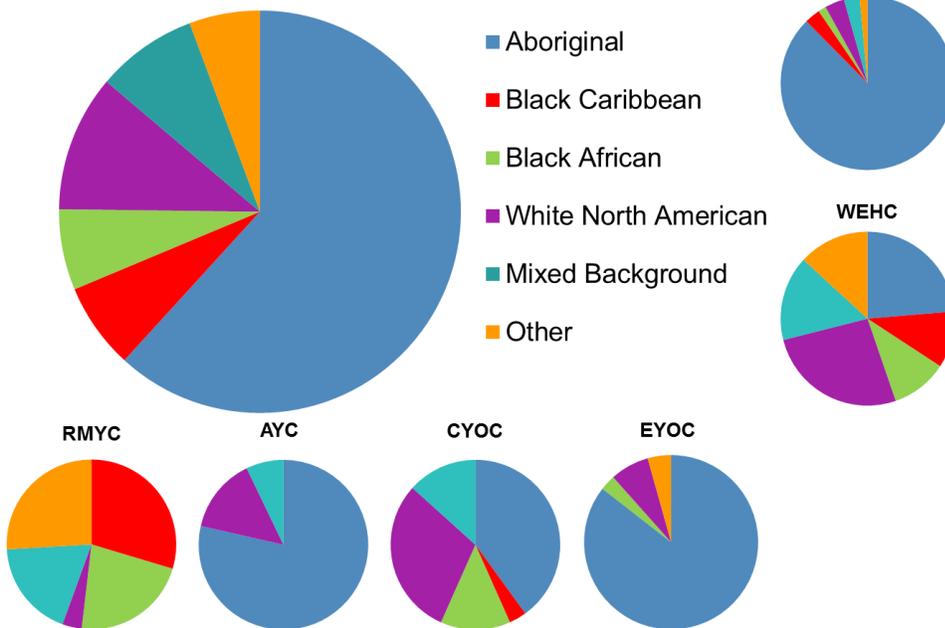


Level of Gang Involvement (All Facilities)



Acronyms: MYC – Manitoba Youth Centre (Winnipeg, MB), WEHC – William E. Hay Centre (Ottawa, ON), RMYC – Roy McMurtry Youth Centre (Brampton, ON), AYC – Agassiz Youth Centre (Portage la Prairie, MB), CYOC – Calgary Young Offender Centre (Calgary, AB), EYOC – Edmonton Young Offenders Centre (Edmonton, AB).

Ethnic Identity (All Facilities)



Aboriginal Identity (All Facilities)

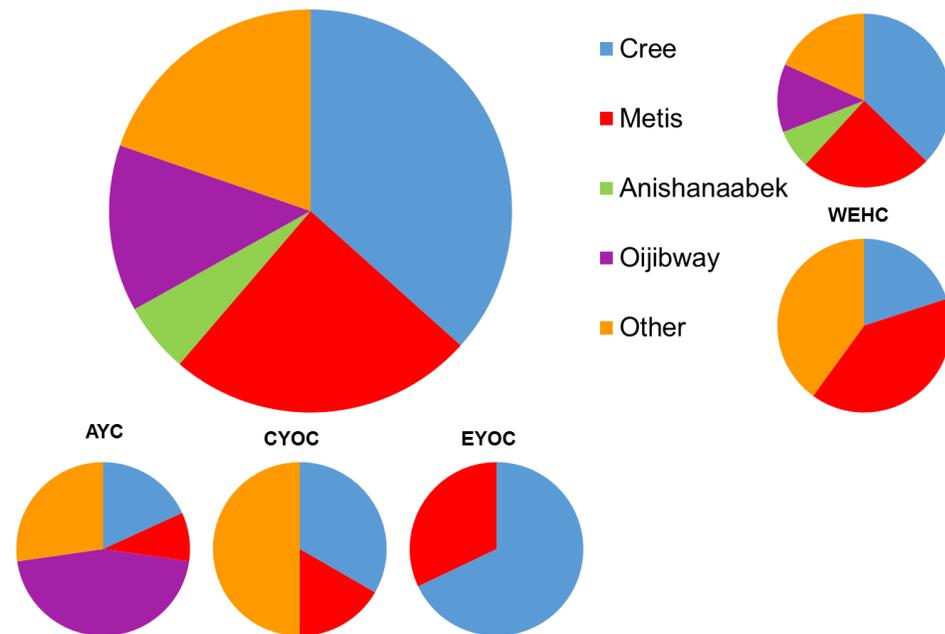


Figure 1. Demographic Results include a) Type of offence committed; b) Level of gang involvement, c) Ethnic identity, where the 'other' category includes South American, Middle Eastern, South Asian and East Asian; d) Aboriginal Identity, displays specific group identified by aboriginal participants. Note that RMYC did not have any aboriginal participants who identified with a specific group, therefore the RMYC chart is missing on the Aboriginal Identity graph. In the aboriginal identity section the other category includes Blackfoot, Dene, and Dakota.

Table 1. Quantitative Main Findings

Survey Questionnaire:	Facility	Time	N	Mean	SEM	ANOVA
Self Esteem Range 4-12 Higher score = higher self esteem	All Facilities Main Program	Before	201	7.94	0.15	F (1, 195) = 18.96, p = 0.00*
		After		8.59	0.16	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	83	7.72	0.43	F (1, 77) = 7.63, p = 0.01*
		After		8.045	0.28	
Pearlin Mastery Scale. Range 7-28 Higher scores = increased self- concept and perceived ability to control forces significantly impacting their lives.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	202	20.51	0.24	F (1, 196) = 5.36, p = 0.02*
		After		21.08	0.26	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	79	20.32	0.42	F (1, 73) = 6.81, p = 0.01*
		After		21.85	0.43	
Fatalism Range 1-4 Higher scores = decreased confidence in one's ability to influence the future.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	181	2.32	0.06	F (1, 185) = 6.69, p = 0.01*
		After		2.12	0.06	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	75	2.36	0.10	F (1,69) = 9.30, p = 0.00*
		After		2.06	0.09	
Motivation to Change: Total Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change towards healthy habits and lifestyle.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	251	49.07	1.29	F (1, 245) = 19.37, p = 0.04*
		After		55.00	1.18	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	81	53.99	2.07	F (1, 75) = 18.02, p = 0.00*
		After		58.32	1.87	
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	203	5.75	0.20	F (1, 197) = 13.51, p = 0.00*
		After		6.59	0.18	
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	232	6.40	0.19	F (1, 226) = 5.71, p = 0.02
		After		6.82	0.18	
Motivation to Change: Substance Use Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change substance and alcohol use habits	All Facilities Main Program	Before	205	6.49	0.19	F (1, 199) = 2.78, p = 0.10*
		After		6.76	0.19	
	AYC Spoken Word	Before	10	5.92	0.77	F (1, 9) = 11.39, p = 0.01*
		After		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	231	6.57	0.18	F (1, 225) = 8.52, p = 0.04*
		After		7.30	0.17	
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	156	5.73	0.21	F (1, 150) = 11.48, p = 0.00*
		After		6.42	0.20	
Motivation to Change: Gang Involvement Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change involvement in gangs	AYC Main Program	Before	16	6.45	0.80	F (1, 15) = 7.00, p = 0.02*
		After		8.00	0.67	
Motivation to Change: Impulse Control Range 1-10 Higher score = higher motivation to change impulse control, anger and emotions.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	229	6.77	0.18	F (1, 223) = 4.66, p = 0.03*
		After		7.04	0.15	
		After		58.32	1.87	
Activity Frequency: Meditation Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in meditation activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	250	3.46	0.18	F (1, 244) = 19.65, p = 0.00*
		After		4.78	0.19	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	76	3.51	0.36	F (1, 70) = 18.91, p = 0.00*
		After		5.51	0.32	
Activity Frequency: Dance Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in dance activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	230	3.47	0.19	F (1, 224) = 83.24, p = 0.00*
		After		5.86	0.20	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	72	3.79	.35	F (1, 66) = 12.34, p = 0.00*
		After		4.78	0.35	
Activity Frequency: Journaling Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in journaling activities.	MYC Main Program	Before	95	5.30	0.33	F (1, 94) = 5.78, p = 0.02*
		After		7.54	0.77	
	WEHC Main Program	Before	25	4.21	0.72	F (1, 24) = 3.11, p = 0.01*
		After		5.44	0.71	
	RMYC Main Program	Before	26	4.67	0.60	F (1, 25) = 5.47, p = 0.03*
		After		5.37	0.60	

	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	77	5.83	0.37	F (1, 71) = 2.96, p = 0.01*
		After		6.10	0.34	
Activity Frequency: Spoken Word Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in spoken word activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	236	4.25	0.20	F (1, 230) = 9.94, p = 0.00*
		After		5.13	0.21	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	75	4.68	0.39	F (1, 69) = 12.372, p = 0.00*
		After		6.02	0.38	
Activity Frequency: Art Range 1-10. Higher scores = increased participation in art activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	242	6.57	0.17	F (1, 236) = 6.45, p = 0.01*
		After		7.30	0.17	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	73	4.63	0.41	F (1, 67) = 14.23, p = 0.00*
		After		6.79	0.36	
Overall Activity Frequency Range 0-50. Higher scores = increased participation in Blueprint activities	All Facilities Main Program	Before	258	20.49	0.68	F (1, 252) = 46.09, p = 0.00*
		After		26.52	0.73	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	78	21.35	1.29	F (1, 72) = 33.91, p = 0.00*
		After		28.08	1.21	
Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency Range 1-10 Higher score = higher perceived likelihood of engaging in violence and other high risk behaviours.	AYC Main Program	Before	27	8.70	0.62	F (1, 26) = 6.221, p = 0.02*
		After		7.41	0.58	
	EYOC Spoken Word	Before	21	8.38	0.92	F (1, 20) = 4.90, p = 0.04*
		After		6.17	0.56	
Self-Efficacy Range 6-30 Higher score = higher perceived self-efficacy for using non-violent strategies.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	248	24.07	0.30	F (1, 242) = 6.591, p = 0.01*
		After		24.71	0.30	
Social Inclusion Range 7 - 28 Higher scores = sense of belonging and inclusion in a social group.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	184	16.09	0.25	F (1, 178) = 31.61, p = 0.00*
		After		17.53	0.26	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	68	16.47	0.42	F (1, 62) = 9.07, p = 0.08**
		After		18.21	0.41	
Ethnic Identity - Pride. Range 1-5. Higher scores = increased pride in being a member of their racial cultural group.	All Facilities Main Program	Before	250	4.06	0.07	F (1, 244) = 3.08, p = 0.08**
		After		4.22	0.06	
Vaux Social Support Record: Peer Support	AYC Main Program	Before	27	6.11	0.25	F (1, 26) = 3.10, p = 0.09**

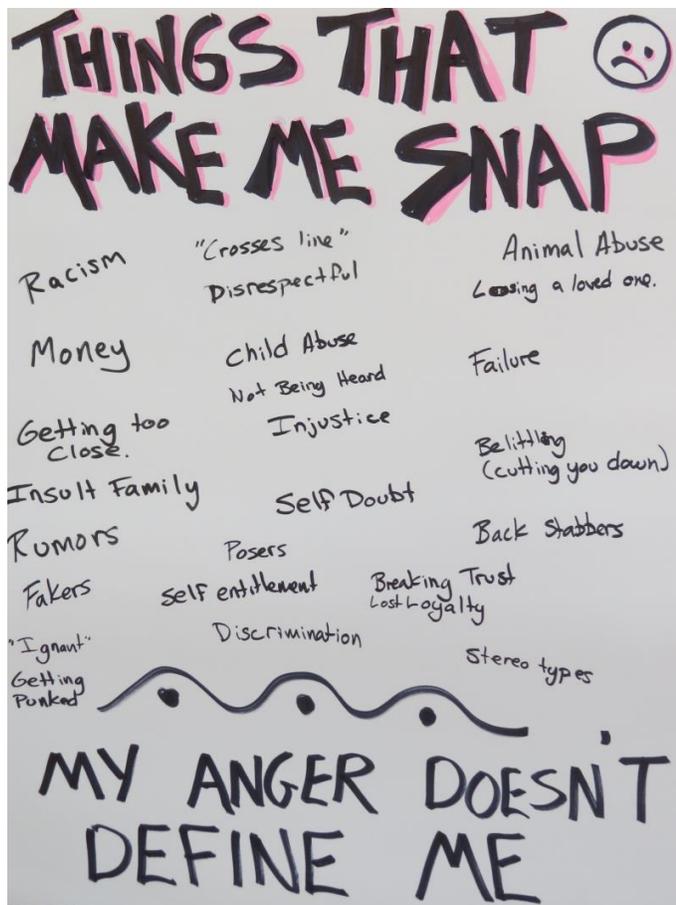
Range 3 – 9 Higher scores = increased perception of available peer and adult support.		After		6.75	0.28	
	All Facilities Spoken Word Program	Before	81	6.38	0.23	F (1, 75) = 4.32, p = 0.04*
After		6.79		0.17		
Vaux Social Support Record: Adult Support Range 3 – 9 Higher scores = increased perception of available peer and adult support.	RMYC Main Program	Before	26	6.88	0.39	F (1, 25) = 3.75, p = 0.07**
		After		7.12	0.35	
	MYC Spoken Word Program	Before	13	5.31	0.73	F (1, 12) = 8.00, p = 0.05*
		After		7.31	0.31	

Table 1. Quantitative Main Findings. This 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 mean and standard deviation of each set of scores. ANOVA (F & p) values marked with an asterisk (*) denote a statistically significant difference between Before and After measures ($\alpha = 0.05$), values indicated with a double asterisk (**) denote a marginally significant difference ($\alpha = 0.1$).



Quantitative Main Findings

Our main results for the quantitative survey are summarized below and grouped according to our three objectives. 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. All statistics for significant effects are reported in Table 1. Note that the number of participants (N) may be different from measure to measure. The reason is that, to continuously improve the evaluation each year the evaluation was modified based on feedback and results from the year before. Therefore, the N value may vary substantially across some evaluation outcomes.



Program Objective 1: Youth experienced increase in their capacity for adaptive behaviour

Survey data reveal that Blueprint Pathways has helped youth to a) increase self esteem, b) achieve a sense of mastery, c) find hope and d) become motivated to change in positive ways (e.g. to change the people they hang out with, or their substance and alcohol use habits).

Self-Esteem,

Measures of self-esteem from the Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Inventory showed significantly increased scores at all facilities both *After* the Blueprint Main Program, and *After* the Blueprint Spoken Word Program as compared to their *Before* scores.

Pearlin Mastery Scale,

There were significant increases in youths' scores on the Pearlin Mastery Scale at all facilities both *After* the Blueprint Main Program, and *After* the Blueprint Spoken Word Program as compared to their *Before* scores.

Hope (Reduced Fatalism),

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 all facilities *After* the Spoken Word Program, as compared to *Before* scores.

Motivation to Change.

Overall, there was a significant increase in scores on the Motivation to Change scale *After* the Blueprint Program, and this increase was sustained after the Spoken Word Program, as compared to the *Before* scores. Increases in specific 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), involvement in gangs (Agassiz, Main Program), and the ability to control one's impulses, anger and emotions (all facilities, Main Program).

There was no significant change in the youths' scores on the measure evaluating motivation to change their criminal behaviour. Please note that this negative finding must be interpreted in light of the fact that the Motivation to Change criminal behaviour scores 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.

Program Objective 2: Youth gained tools to increase adaptive behaviour

Survey data reveal that Blueprint Pathways has helped youth to a) increase their participation in healthy activities, b) improve their self efficacy for using non-violent strategies, and c) reduce their likelihood of violence and delinquency.

Healthy activities

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

Self-Efficacy for Non-Violent Behaviour

For Blueprint Main Program, there were significant increases at all facilities in youths' scores on the Self-Efficacy measure for non-violent behaviour.

Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency

There was a significant decrease in the Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency scale at AYC *After* the Main Program, and at the EYOC facility *After* the Spoken Word Program as compared to *Before* scores.

Connor Davidson Resilience Scale

There were no significant changes in the Connor Davidson Resilience Scale measuring an individual's capacity to 'bounce-back' after a stressful or traumatic experience.

Program Objective 3: There was improvement in the quality of the custodial social environment

Survey data reveal that Blueprint Pathways improved the quality of the social environment by improving youth's a) sense of social inclusion, b) ethnic pride and respect for differences, and c) sense of social support.

Social Inclusion

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



Ethnic Identity

There was a marginally significant increase in scores on items measuring ethnic pride and respect for differences on the Ethnic Identity Measure at all facilities *After* Main 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 Main Program, and a marginally significant increase at all facilities *After* the Spoken Word Program as compared to *Before* scores.

There was a significant increase in the Vaux Social Support Record measuring perceived adult support *After* the Main Program at RMYC, and *After* the Spoken Word Program at MYC, 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.

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, and written submissions (also printed with permission).

Program Objective 1: Youth experienced increase in their capacity for adaptive behaviour

Interviews revealed that Blueprint Pathways has helped youth to a) achieve a sense of mastery, self-confidence, self-esteem, b) find hope and positivity and c) become motivated to change in positive ways (e.g. use dance as a tool to become a better role model for their younger siblings).

A sense of mastery, self-confidence, self-esteem.

"[I learned] Just to be yourself I guess. There wasn't any rules about what or what you can't say. They kind just let you express yourself, something you can't really do everyday"

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, SHERWOOD CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

"Yeah, like I'm not afraid to write now. I like to tell people what I write"

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"It made us not afraid to express who we are. It helped cause we can lose that [in here] and it was nice to have that."

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"You guys helped me overcome my shyness and helped me get more confident."



- FEMALE YOUTH, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2016

"To see the transformation of character because of the confidence (Blueprint) has provided the youth, is unlike anything else I've seen."

- STAFF, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2016

"One thing I learned is that saying you cannot do something, then you'll never do it. But then I actually tried it and I did it. I guess it's just practice. It's very simple. You don't want to look stupid or embarrass yourself. But you should 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, 2015

"I had the courage to go up there and do the fancy dances with the girls and I didn't have the courage to do it in my home town, I was too scared. That was actually my first fancy dance, first ever."

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014



"Lots of time I'll talk about how women are portrayed in the media really affects how you personally see women. A lot of times the kids haven't even thought of that but like they're just absorbing 'bitches and hoes', the way the media portrays us. Even the girls are just absorbing all this. I talk to the kids about how it doesn't matter how you dress, you can dress anyway you want, you could portray yourself anyway you want it doesn't give anybody the right to disrespect you. And even though you will be disrespected because that's a lot of the way it is, a lot of time, the way the world is, doesn't mean you have to disrespect yourself."

- BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

"I noticed throughout the week from day one to 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 they've built a lot of confidence with their peers."

- FACILITY STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"Before I went into the Blueprint program, I didn't think I was smart enough to be able to do all that stuff. 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 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, 2015

"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, I'm alright. Boosted self-esteem makes you feel a little bit better."

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"I could be called a bad kid in detention but then I could show my friends this [hip hop dance and spoken word] and it might make them think different."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

Hope and positivity

"It's boosted our hope. Made us believe in ourselves."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2016

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

"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, 2015



"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 you guys came with the program and I got happy."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2016

Motivation to Change

"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, 2015

"I learned to not hate everybody. When I get out, I'm going to do positive things to change my life. With awareness of what I do."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

"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."

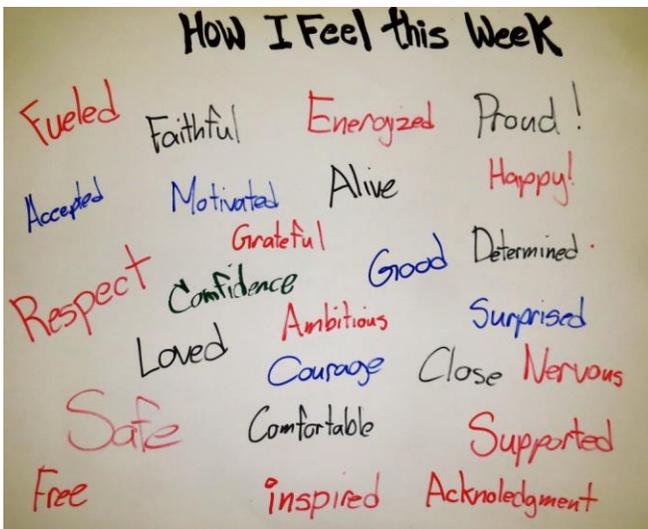
- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"It helped me take a look at the voice in my head. It helped me go from 'I don't want to change' to 'I know that I need to change, I just don't know how to do it and I'm scared.'"

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"It made me think of possibilities of my future, that I have options other than the choices that I am already making."

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015



"Yeah like drugs and stuff. Like they showed me, how you could get drugs when you're younger and get messed up when you're younger but you could still do good things and be better when you're older."

- FEMALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"I don't know how to explain it. It's a motivational type group for me. I mean, I find it motivated me throughout the week to kind of, move on from a lot of stuff that had happened in my past, and yeah, it really helped me with that aspect."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

Program Objective 2: Youth gained tools to increase adaptive behaviour

Interviews reveal that Blueprint Pathways has helped youth to: a) engage in healthy activities and have fun b) gain healthy coping strategies (e.g. using one-mics) leading to increased resilience, c) reduce maladaptive behaviours in the facility, d) improve moral reasoning and their ability to deal with complex trauma, e) increase their interest in talking about problems and sharing their story

Healthy activities and having fun

"when they're in their cells, or when they're alone, they're thinking about all the heavy things that they've done and all the crap that is going on in their world and all the stuff on the outside and all the politics and shit on the inside, and so when they're just allowed to have fun and laugh and feel, and listen to music and move their bodies, I think that's also really a powerful connection for them because they just forget what that feels like."

- BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

"It's unlike any other programs that we 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."

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"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 is it helped me understand 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."

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

"One thing I liked the best was the dancing, seeing that in the prison, dancing was amazing. 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

"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 broke up into two teams and then had a battle against each other. It wasn't like 'us versus them' in a negative way, but in a playful way so the two teams worked together really well to come up with the best routine to battle the other group, but in an appropriate way. That they're not used to doing. Like it was a healthy competition between each other."

- STAFF, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"We use dance as the main vehicle for a reason, because dance engages people physically, mentally, socially, spiritually, you know what I mean, and it's low resources too."

- BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

"Isn't it wonderful that something that is so much fun can actually be both healthy and healing – an important lesson for us all."

- STAFF, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, WINNIPEG, 2016

"I learned, to squash my ego, you know. Just because I can't dance, doesn't mean I can't try."

- MALE YOUTH, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2016

"I liked all aspects but I was particularly struck by the merits of the bucket drumming this time. With more reluctant dancers this year, I appreciated the effectiveness of the drumming component. It blends active movement to get anger/aggression/physical stress out without needing any skills or experience. There was much



less pressure to be good at it because you blend in with all others and the result still sounds amazing. Another very power activity is the 'trust circle' I think they call it. Where one person stands in the middle and slowly turns in a circle making eye contact with everyone. Wow."

- FACILITY, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2016

"I still write raps every day. 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, 2015

"It's always better to be doing that kind of stuff [dance, art, spoken word] instead of just running around partying and 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 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

Healthy coping strategies (e.g. using one-mics) leading to increased resilience

"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. They taught us that 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, 2015

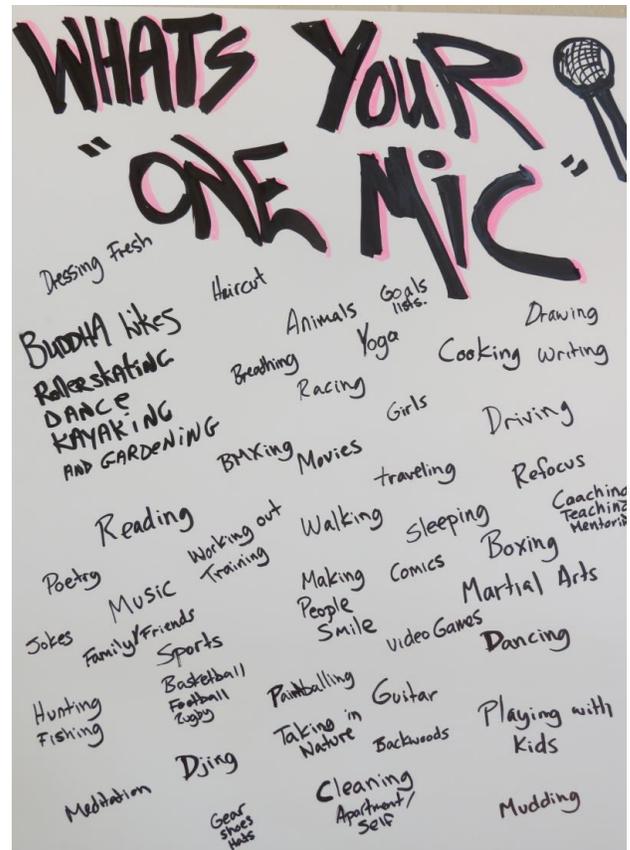
"The one mics really, really helped me. I wrote a bunch of them down in my journal. Just so that way, the one mics that I know how to do, and the one mics I don't know how to do, so I can find out a way to learn how to do them.

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 in my future."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE



"It helped me put me in a better mind frame when I did smudge. So then, I'm probably going to keep doing that. And keep journaling. And then, drawing too. It's my like, as they called it, the one mic."

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

"Um, like me I have an anger problem you know what I mean and one of the Blueprint staff, XXX, he was telling me like yo even if you get mad you can rap, you know, you can make music. Take a time out and go in your room, make a song, come out and say sorry. So yeah it actually works, cause I get mad fast, and he actually helped me out."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

"It's helped me get into less fights... I've walked away from a lot of fights cause of it."

- FEMALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014



"[Blueprint taught me] to always breathe. Like uh a lot of people don't realize that breathing can relieve a lot of stress you know. So when you get mad take a lot of deep breaths and those deep breaths, you know, it relaxes you. That's one thing I learned."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

"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, 2015

"Just remind yourself you can try to deal with problems in constructive ways. Instead of always trying to use violence, trying to fight people. To solve a problem, you can try to use a positive way."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"Learn to distract yourself if you are angry or upset. Just a rap or write a poem, express yourself."

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

"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, 2015

"Another thing is like the things we talked about, drugs, alcohol, being safe. Like 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, 2015

"I used to get mad a lot and I didn't know how to deal with it and now I just write down my thought(t), make a rap about how I feel and after that I read it and feel a lot better and I make better decisions."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2016

Reduction in maladaptive behaviours in the facility

“Well the fact that we had different living groups mixing together for this program we did not have any incidents with fights or any codes that is a huge step too, right, and it is the environment too that helped. It was a positive environment so if it wasn’t something that they were enjoying it could have potentially been an issue. But it was not, they were happy, they were engaged and they kind of put all that stuff aside to be an active participant within the program.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

“I always find there is a momentum that we can capitalize on in the classroom for a period of time following Blueprint. Their comfort level with personal reflection and expression seems higher and I am able to do some work with that. I would say their receptivity to various things (other programs or challenges in school) is higher post-Blueprint.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2016

“one of our kids that has shown nothing but disrespect and terrible behaviour for the last three years that he’s been here, and since turned around. And I’m not going to say that it’s just the Program because I don’t know, we have a lot of fine staff here to work with kids too and we interact with the kids. But since that program that kid hasn’t had one problem and he has turned things around completely. I can tell you that, it was since that program that things started getting a lot better for him and I think it has something to do with it. When I was observing that program, I saw him and how much he got into the program and was dancing and doing the steps and listening and I know he enjoyed it immensely. But a lot of our kids here, they don’t have a lot to enjoy. He was able to, sort of, like, you know, get outside of his angry self. I don’t know whether your program was the main influence, I’m just going to tell you, that I think there is a correlation.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

“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, 2015

“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, 2015

“There was no codes while Blueprint was happening, so that was good.”

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2015

“we have zero incident reports during the week of blueprint. We also have low suicide ideation during the week, which requires less staff, so we can end up saving money.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016



"All of the staff are saying the behaviour on the units is much quieter this week."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2016

Increased moral reasoning and dealing with complex trauma

"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, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"I think my relationships will improve because before Blueprint, I don't know, I couldn't trust certain people. Just cause of my past experiences and that. But, through Blueprint they taught me like, you know, it's okay to trust some people. You gotta... just cause you get hurt once doesn't mean you have to give up or whatever, you just have to keep trying."

have to keep trying."

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016



"They helped me realize that 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 going to want to repair the relationship. To have a more positive relationship, and let my anger go."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"Instead of dealing with the short term problems, I deal with the long term problems. If I 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, 2015

"And, you know, like talking to the kids, sometimes I talk about being a mom and how I've had a big struggle with that, you know, being a mother, being a single mom and how I wasn't always the best mom but I did my best and here for my kids, and sometimes my point being to the kids, you know, you sometimes have to forgive your parents for stuff that they've done."

- BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

"I talked to one of the mental health workers here that said that she only had two mental health referrals since that day and she usually gets ten to fifteen of them, so clearly it seemed to have some impact on the kids."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA

"You feel more positive knowing that you're not doing negative things... you're not like hurting your family, you're supporting them and building them up."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"We're always doing new things and the way we did it is never the same either, so it kind of pushes you to like, think differently. And thinking differently really helps you in the real world, in real aspects of life because if you

think the same, you'll always gonna do the same things, and you'll never achieve anything if you're always doing the same things."

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2016

Willingness to talk about problems and share one's story

"A really valuable aspect of this program is the 'talks' that explore issues that are meaningful to youth. Since the completion of the program I have noticed youth more willing to share openly about what they have been through."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

"They are sharing more about their feelings and stuff like that."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"[Blueprint] gave me a voice to tell what happened to me, and what happened to XXXXX (Blueprint staff member) made me feel stronger. It was the right thing to do, to tell someone."

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"It's still kind of weird talking to like, other kids about personal stuff. It kinda helps though because a lot of them have gone through stuff too."

- FEMALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"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, 2015

"It helped me to put my words in a way that people can understand. Not to assume that people and everybody else understands what I'm saying. Just put it in a way that's understandable."

- MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, SHERWOOD CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"When certain youth started opening up about personal issues related to the topic it kind of lowered the anxiety and in a way it normalized some of (the) issues that other people did not want to speak about. For instance, when one youth opened up it kind of gave others permission to open up as well. Even if they didn't feel like opening up you could tell that they were more engaged or at ease within the conversation because it was more interesting seeing their peers talk about it."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

"Being in a circle felt great during the discussion. It was good to be able to share my views and opinions with everyone."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2016



Program Objective 3: There was improvement in the quality of the custodial social environment

Interviews reveal improvements in the quality of the youth's social environment including improvements in: a) relationships amongst youth, b) relationships amongst staff, c) relationships between staff and youth and d) cultural appreciation and social morale, e) youth's motivation for positive community engagement.

Improved quality of relationships amongst youth

"It was great to see the kids participate with strangers because there were different living units all together participating in Blueprint and they did not have any conflict. You saw them interacting with other kids. Even when they brought it back to the units, you could see them dancing and telling the other kids about it. Like there were just smiles on their faces the whole time. So, I mean even now a few weeks later I still see them talking, doing the dancing, telling the other kids about it. The same thing with staff, they would go back to the units with big smiles on their face and it's contagious almost."

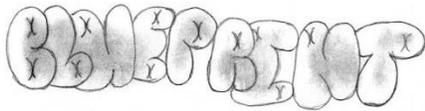
- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

"I'm not shy no more. Made me and my friends closer."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"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, 2015



"Yeah because we put it aside, lots of beef that we had with each other, we put it aside to do this program. A lot of new friendships were made there to, I guess."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014



"I made a lot of new friends and the girls I didn't talk to and now are like close."

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014



"We got to come out of our comfort zone and I actually took the time to know a person instead of seeing them just walk by."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

"I learned how to be a leader by learning how to speak up and encouraging others, encouraging the people that are struggling. By helping them out, I help myself too. And, basically get trust from other people."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"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'. We started dancing together, and we made a bunch of cool dance moves. 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."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

“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, 2015

“I liked to encourage other girls to voice their stories and share their poems; hearing other girls’ stories you see we’re not all so different. It helped us build friendships”

- FEMALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

“Blueprint presents an opportunity to learn new social skills, healthy ways of interacting.

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

“I had a problem with a guy but Blueprint helped us squash it and we shook hands.”

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2017

“The kids have all been practicing the moves back on the units and no one is making fun of anyone.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2017

“It’s amazing to see the different units without any conflicts in the same room despite prior beefs.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2017



“Watching the youth (on) day two teach each other – magic.”

- FACILITY STAFF, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2017

Improved quality of relationships between staff and staff.

“Being fairly new within the program, and participating in a few activities I was able to see my colleagues in a different light and it made it easier to create some relationships with other staff members.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

“Being a coordinator and not normally being on the front line, it allowed the staff to see me in a different light.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

“We got to learn too, we got to be vulnerable in front of our peers as well. We got to learn to trust each other and see each other from a different point of view.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

Improved quality of relationship between staff and youth.

“I really think my relationship improved with a lot of 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. Something to share with the staff that nobody really knows about.”

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

“Yeah, I’m more open with staff. Like a lot of staff, I was afraid to talk to them before”

- FEMALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

“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.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

“Sort of a bridge for communication. A way to make little jokes with them [staff].”

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

“I found that they saw us as 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.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

“Made me realize that I’m not the same person that everyone thought I was. The relationships with staff, too. At the end of the week, I had some staff come up to me and say ‘You know what, I did underestimate you’, 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, 2015



“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 other’s talents. The trust is also now there which it makes it easier to have youth participate and help out when needed.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

“Yeah I would say that with the program it brought certain barriers down, so instead of being seen as a staff that is constantly down on them about rules and regulations. It was now a fun atmosphere where we can learn together. That really broke down some barrier(s) and kind of levelled the playing field.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

"For me, Blueprint week serves as an opportunity to learn alongside the youth. It puts me in a position where I am as vulnerable as they are in terms of abilities, participation level etc. I think this furthers our relationship in terms of our appreciation for each other."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2016

Cultural Appreciation, Mutual Respect and Social Morale

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, AGASSIZ YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"Dance doesn't have just one culture. That's something I learned. Like, we can be from different cultures. I can be from one end of the earth and someone can be from another but dance has its own common language. Dance has this loving aroma that it, it sends on."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

"It's 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 everybody 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, 2015

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

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, CALGARY YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

"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 grocery store, we all eat food, and we're all the same. We're humans. We just do our own things."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"When I went into the Blueprint thing, I just realized, 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. It's not good for someone to feel so much hatred all the time towards somebody. Like Buddha said, we're all one nation. Hip hop is a nation."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015



"They seem to be more open to hearing other people's perspectives without jumping into situations and using aggression. Youth were able to identify how different cultures can influence things and now they are more interested in understanding and learning about other cultures."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

"They have embraced playing with each other and dropped worrying about their shields. I have witnessed them trusting each other, joining hands and having fun with each other and the adults around them. I believe I have seen alternative identities emerging. It has reminded me of my garden. Witnessing the joy has been like looking at the green shoots poking up through the earth. It's beautiful and hopeful as well as amazing. It's a project that you need to tend to so that the seedlings can grow into everything they are ultimately meant to be."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

"I feel it brought like everyone in the facility closer together because like, for a whole week, we weren't looking at each other like, I don't know, thinking about what other kids were doing in the past. We were just focused on one thing, the art that were doing, and dance and stuff like that. We were working it on and it brought us all together"

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014



2015

"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, 2015

"They brought us all together, they trusted us. 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,

"[The morale] changed when all the units were together because you got to socialize with people in different units. I think the morale was better when all the units were together because people were having all different types of conversations, people were having fun."

- MALE YOUTH, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

Blueprint empowers youth towards positive community engagement

"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, 2015

"Blueprint let us know there's options out there to help, and people to surround us with support. They even had a board full of names, and they let kids suggest names and places."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"And he [Blueprint Staff] stood by me and after, like, we finish chatting... I felt like I changed cause he told me not to give up on him and after that like I just kept going writing raps and stuff."

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"I'm going to show it [hip hop dance and spoken word] to my siblings. Yup, they can do the hustle with me. I'll be a positive role model to them, instead of doing whatever I was doing. Teach them something positive and maybe they'll look up to me."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"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

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

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

"[Blueprint] suggested programs, they suggested dancing skills, they gave us like their own program names and stuff like that."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"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 [journal] you gave me. I almost got like 400 pages written so I'll stop by for some more books. 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

I: "So what will help you continue exploring cultural activities?"

P: "Positive friends"

I: "Positive friends. Okay, in what way? How will that help you continue on to cultural activities?"

P: "Because they like, they don't do drugs and stuff like that, and they're keeping you from that stuff and they don't make fun of you."

I: "Okay"

P: "You can go do that stuff together instead of going to go do drugs."

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"I'll just be uh, continuing to learn about hip hop and dancing, break dancing. And try to get myself into 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

P: "Yeah I got new people to talk to now when I need help."

I: "They hooked you up with some more resources and stuff?"

P: "Have you talked to them or anything so far?"

P: "Yeah, I call them like all the time."

- FEMALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

"I learned that you can't do everything 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, 2015

"It brought a lot of awareness to me because there are more programs to do on the outside. And I want to keep on doing it when I get out."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

'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, 2015

"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 out, I won't necessarily do it because I don't know anyone in the community. But now I know Blueprint."

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"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, 2015

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, it's 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, 2015

"Right now I do it (hip hop/arts) 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. I can show people I have some new moves, show my family."

- MALE YOUTH, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

"They are looking to participate in the community, some of them have mentioned, and possibly take some of these things back to their friends or family, or teaching their siblings some of the things that they've learned as well, in the community."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

"You helped me open my eyes to hip hop and what it can do – not being a gangster. The work you guys do is amazing."

- MALE YOUTH, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2017

"I have a new (out)look on Hiphop. It isn't about guns and drugs. It's about having respect and having fun."

- MALE YOUTH, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2017



How Blueprint works, and how to make it better

How Blueprint Works

“So there’s all sorts of different avenues Blueprint was able to hit, they’re able to express themselves in different ways. This I found was quite creative and they’re able to bring it all together as a very powerful package”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, OTTAWA, 2014

“I really liked the staff that they had. Like lots of them went through kind of like stuff that we did. Lots of them, like when they talked to us, like legit, we could really connect with lots of them.”

- FEMALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

“In hearing their stories we could kind of relate to what they went 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, 2016

“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. And they really liked us.”

- MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

“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, 2015

“What made it the most unique was trust, trust is a big word for me – I don’t usually trust people. And I trust Blueprint.”

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

“...we’ve heard these comments often, ‘I’ve never felt safe like this before in my life’, ‘I never felt happy like this before in my life’. So, you know ... that’s not a small insignificant thing when people

have complex trauma and those concepts [arts, creativity and community engagement] don’t even seem believable if they’ve never felt safe. It’s very likely some of these kids never felt safe, so if you don’t feel safe, you don’t have the headspace to feel creative like all those other things are a luxury. You’re stuck in flight or fight mode, tightly wound your whole life and then all of a sudden that becomes believable and it’s like laughter can be genuine, it can be real.”

- BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

“I thought a lot about the concept of hope and that you need to find glimmers of hope in life, in many different places and time or really, you know, the logical thing is well, why not kill yourself, really that’s the extreme of it, especially for people who have been severely, severely hurt and I feel like hope, you can’t artificially create that

but you can set up organic environments where it might organically develop on its own because it's that complex interaction. And I think Blueprint is really good at creating organic hope."

– BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

"And then XXXX [Female Blueprint staff member] talks about umm her history, you know, with her mom and with her family and that, I think a lot of it, it gives the girls a lot of courage that they can overcome all the crap they're going through because they look at us, like 'I've never seen a native girl or a single mom or whatever who is so successful, who's like going to school, who's like dancing, who's just doing something with her life.' And I think just being there, and telling your story, the kids identify with what you're doing and you know, one little girl was nineteen, she had a baby and she was just worried about how her kids are going to perceive her and hearing my story she was like, you know, maybe it's going to be okay, you know, I think it's just different how they all take in your story and it's so complicated but it's a part of the kids healing and learning and they're reflecting and it's just so amazing."

– BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

"I feel like the physical activity really helped with the talks because they were exhausted so now they were listening."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

"Yeah if you look at programming in correctional facilities across the board this is definitely the most out of the box, in that most of the staff that are participating do say that it is one of the best experiences that they have ever had. Hope it can continue that kind of thing."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER,, EDMONTON YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE, 2017

"I noticed you guys use dance as a metaphor for life. Like encouraging the kids to step out of their comfort zone, have fun, try something new, try again if you don't get it the first time. Patience/Technique, encouraging them to be kind, honest, loyal...there's so much life teachings they are being taught through dance, I don't even think they pick up on the fact that this is teaching them life skills."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016

Advice for improving Blueprint's impact

"Maybe next time they [Blueprint] come, maybe have them earlier and explain to staff and what is going to be happening and how it's going to work because when it was done maybe on our end we weren't able to relay that information to staff and there may have been some confusion just because we had never done anything like Blueprint before so it's kind of hard to relay what was going to be happening when we didn't know."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2014

"Ya, people don't want to step on Blueprint's toes, and then if there is a behaviour thing, Blueprint expect and want the staff to come into it, so there needs to be some form of orientation or training between the unit staff who will be in the gym and the Blueprint staff if this happens again in the future, because there is too much confusion about who is doing what, or who should step in."

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE, 2016



"It would be really cool if we can have more I guess funding or capacity to kind of work in or around that and see if we can elevate what we're doing, or even just spend more time, intensifying, or amplifying the curriculum, the prizes or who knows, perks."

– BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

I: *"What would make it easier to do this kind of stuff?"*

P: *"To have a mentor."*

– FEMALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE WINNIPEG, 2014

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. Kids commit crimes because they are bored, they have nothing to do."*

– MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015



"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."

– MALE YOUTH, SPOKEN WORD PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"I believe that a program such as Blueprint should be part of a yearly (if not more) activity in facilities."

– FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"The focus could be more on things other than dance. If we knew about the layout

of the week to start and had more time to do dj-ing and spoken word it would have been better."

– MALE YOUTH, MAIN PROGRAM, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2015

"Imagine if we were able to be well partnered with Hip-hop organizations in every city so that, the release thing, was very much supportive and much more consistent way, I mean that would be fantastic, so XXXX [Blueprint Staff member] has a little outreach thing going now connected to a studio, so that kids if they connect with him, not only can they can make use of dance lessons, but he may have a whole separate outreach program for kids that are released from here to support them when they're out."

– BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

"it seems like five days is not enough... there's a lot there to work out... they are taking away different things each time, like even in the mastering of the dance routines. I know that they are doing some spoken word follow up things which is really cool but in terms of the healing work, you know, I think that that's something that is

really unique to that intense program, that transformation that happens continues each time we come back ...it is deeper and it was almost more needed [the second and third time around] and it was richer. So we facilitated a lot of like cohesion within their community a lot of leadership amongst the kids. Kids teaching other kids. I think the best follow up is to keep having the Blueprint project many times, not leaving too big a gap.”

– BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER

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 every day. 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, and we have all that. So it could still happen, it’s just how to make it happen, I’m not sure of the process.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, ROY MCMURTRY YOUTH CENTRE, 2015

“The facility absolutely has the capacity in terms of staff resources to continue development of Blueprint activities. It would take increasing comfort levels on the part of staff to try activities perceived to be ‘out of the box’ or different than the daily norm. These sorts of activities typically occur in the education wing of the facility and are led by teachers rather than facility staff.”

- FACILITY STAFF MEMBER, WILLIAM E. HAY CENTRE, 2016

“I think Hip-hop has got such huge potential worldwide, it’s this huge passionate resource space. And I love that fact that Blueprint gets to show some international leadership on what next level outreach could look like... I mean that warms my heart. If we’re inspiring a group in Korea or in Africa, we get held up there as one of the gold standards so I think that, that’s another bigger picture thing where we’re having more impact than we even know.”

– BLUEPRINT STAFF MEMBER



Discussion

Summary and reflections

The evaluation shows that Blueprint Pathways has been successful in achieving many of the outcomes set out in our three program objectives. Overall, we obtained evidence supporting our Theory of Change (Fig. 2). Specifically, our data yielded evidence supporting the following:

Increases capacity for adaptive behaviour:

- a) Improved self-esteem, self-confidence, sense of mastery
- b) Increased hope and positivity
- c) Increased motivation to change, including i) level of engagement in healthy activities, ii) impulse control, iii) substance use habits, iv) level of community involvement, v) choice of peer group, and vi) level of gang involvement.

New tools for leading a positive life:

- a) Increased engagement in healthy activities (meditation, dance, spoken word, art and journaling),
- b) Increased in healthy coping strategies (e.g. using one-mics) leading to increased resilience, decreased likelihood of violence and delinquency, and a reduction in maladaptive behavior in the facility.
- c) Increased moral reasoning, ability to deal with complex trauma, interest in sharing one's story and reaching out for help.

Improved quality of the social environment both inside and outside the facility:

- a) Increased social inclusion, quality of social relationships and perceptions of social support,
- b) Improved social morale, cultural/ethnic pride, and respect for diversity.
- c) Improved connections with hip hop and arts organizations with the community, and an interest in participating in, connecting with and creating within the hip hop arts community.



Note that the above is a superficial summary of the data, and not all measured outcomes showed significant changes across both measurement methods (quantitative vs. qualitative), across all program elements (i.e. Main Program vs. Spoken Word Program), or across all facility locations. The results section can be referred to for a detailed description of outcomes across measurement methods, program elements and facility locations. 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: 97

MYC, 30 WEHC, 26 RMYC, 27 AYC, 26 CYOC, 55 EYOC), and program element (Main Program = 261 participants, Spoken Word = 83 participants). While we should be cautious about interpreting the data, we can draw out broad themes about the impacts of Blueprint on our program objectives.

Blueprint assists youth in increasing their capacity for adaptive behaviour.

Our findings show Blueprint's impact on youth's capacity for adaptive behaviour, including increases in youth's motivation to change, self-esteem, sense of mastery (self-concept and confidence), and increased hope (decreased fatalism), both after the Main Program, as well as after the follow up Spoken Word Programs.

We know from previous research that these capacities are critical building blocks for youth to build stronger and more resilient mental and physical health (Caputo, 2003). This is because a strong sense of mastery, self-esteem and self-concept gives youth a sense of control over one's own life circumstances and this is thought buffering effect on the impact of stressful life events on mental and physical health. In the Blueprint Evaluation interviews, many youths expressed shock and surprise that they could actually do complex skills if they simply tried and practiced them. This simple lesson, that youth can control their own outcomes, is a powerful one. From there, 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 making positive change across different life contexts. Youth expressed new motivation and confidence to succeed in school, avoid drugs and alcohol, stay out of fights and be a positive influence on their family and communities. In other words, the impact Blueprint has on sense of mastery, self-esteem and self confidence in the context of dance and hip hop also seem to be translating into other aspects of the youths' lives.

The impact Blueprint had on youth's motivation to change show that youth became empowered with new intentions to actively pursue healthy and artistic activities, self-reflection, healthy coping strategies, healthy relationships and positive community involvement. Some youth also 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



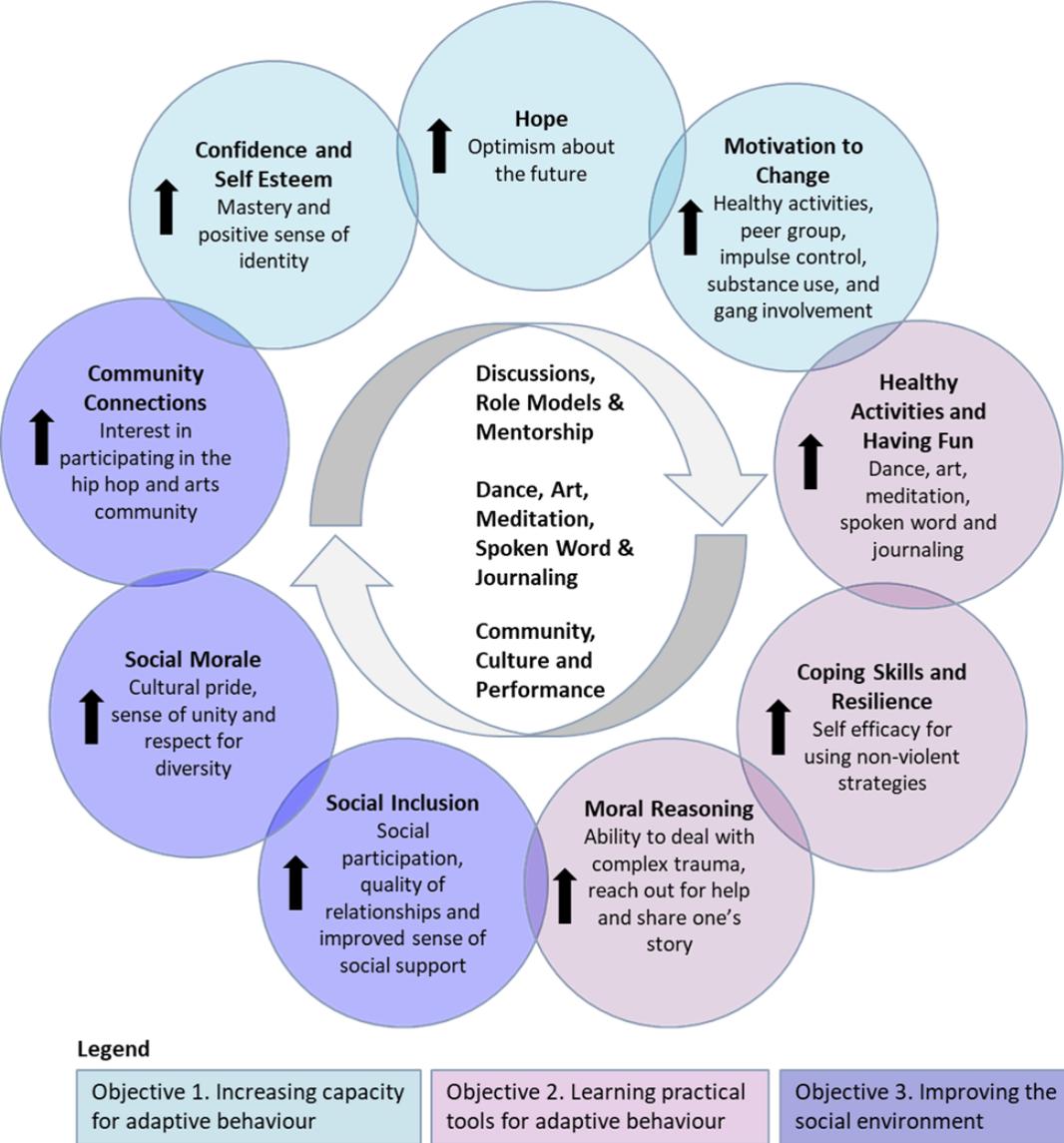
turn things around and make something positive of themselves. A cornerstone of Blueprint is that Blueprint staff openly share their honest experiences of dealing with trauma and difficulties and youth often strongly relate. By sharing their stories, Blueprint staff provide real-life role models to demonstrate 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 a motivation to change in youth and a vision for better their own futures.

Blueprint provides incarcerated youth with practical tools for 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 healthy tools for self-expression, community engagement, and coping with life's many challenges, future pathways to leading healthy and productive lives become apparent.

During the interviews, many youths 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. The ‘One Mic’ concept comes from a song by rapper Nas, with the line ‘All you need

Theory of Change: How Blueprint Works



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 device, including dance, storytelling, journaling, meditation drumming, dj-ing and art and graffiti. Blueprint 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 and thought patterns.

Many youths expressed that the Blueprint discussions helped them to talk about complex feelings and traumatic experiences they previously had difficulty describing and voicing. This was also supported by the changes on the

motivation to change measure about how much they are motivated to 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 youth, 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.

Sharing stories and hearing the stories of other also appears to have an impact on the youth’s capacity for complex moral reasoning. Many youths reported re-considerations of their negative or antagonistic feelings towards others. They talked about a realization that everyone has a complex background, and that people don’t deserve to be judged or hated based on their ethnic or cultural background, and first ‘quick to judge’ impressions. Some youth also expressed a desire to think differently about their family members’ situations, and to reconsider their negative feeling towards their parents or siblings. This demonstrates the development of moral reasoning, where youth are using different logic for thinking through complex situations, thinking ‘outside themselves’, practicing empathy and finding healthier ways to react.

Our data suggests that these new coping strategies learned during Blueprint (healthy activities, the one-mic strategy, talking to others, moral reasoning) made a big difference in the daily lives of the youth participants, as well as in the facility at large. The increased scores on the Self-Efficacy scale for non-violent behavior, and well as the reduced scores on the Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency measure suggest that Blueprint was effective in bolstering youths’ healthy coping strategies for controlling their impulses and managing their anger. Youth interviews strongly corroborated these findings. They talked about thinking before acting, feeling capable of controlling their anger, and getting in to less fights. Facility staff also reported a reduction in facility incidents, a reduction in mental health referrals and suicidal during and after 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 strong evidence for increased social morale, social inclusion, and quality of social relationships and 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’: relationships between individuals, social networks, and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them (Putnam, 2000). The right kind of social capital and social participation is vital to a juvenile offender’s re-entry success as measured through outcomes like employment, school performance, health and recidivism (Mathur and Clark et al. 2014; Cohen,

2004; Berg and Huebner, 2011). Several youths mentioned having a renewed sense of trust in others and in the system of social supports, which is especially critical for youth to feel comfortable using supports in their community when they get out. In connecting youth with a positive and healthy community from within the facility, Blueprint hopes to open doors for building social capital for youth once they leave custody.

Our data show that Blueprint has helped to build a strong motivation to connect with the wider hip-hop community once they leave the facility. In the qualitative interviews many youths 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 tries 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.

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.

Conclusion

The mantra of the hip hop community is 'Peace, Love, Unity and Having Fun'. It 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'. Blueprint's work helps to shape a vision that Hip hop culture can be leveraged as a model for healthy community development and used within youth custody facilities to help youth transform their lives.



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. Blueprint programming in the community could also help to continue the networks and supports during the difficult transition youth face as they exit secure custody facilities.

As a response to this feedback, Blueprint is proud to announce that we are currently building programming in communities, and we hope that some youth who experienced Blueprint in custody will come join us in our community programming.

It was also suggested that the impact of the Blueprint program in youth facilities would be enhanced if Blueprint invested more in consulting with and training facility staff before the program, and scaled up the programming within facilities (i.e. ran for longer periods and/or more frequently throughout the year). We also had some valuable feedback from youth participants about the need to get feedback from them early on in the program to give them more choice and input into the design of each of Blueprint's unique programs.

As we are building new Blueprint programs we are taking this feedback into account, and working to implement systems for co-developing programming with input from staff and youth in the community. We are working to build more choice into our programming and platforms for youth with diverse skills and interests.

This evaluation report represents the final installment of three annual reports for the Youth Justice Fund Grant. We hope that these reports can help assist Blueprint to strengthen programming, coordinate better with facilities and expand our scope.

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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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 thunned. 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...

Mr. Buddha

AGASSIZ
YOUTH CENTRE
2013

I missed the first day of blue print
& was in d.U because
I have lost My voice. & I
noticed how some kids were
sent there for not participat
ing. That upset me. I've
been looking forward to
blueprint all month. My
passion is singing but I
cant do that when
My tonsils are the size
of golf balls. Thus the letter.
I just want to say that
Every kid in here should
be thankful for you & your
team. And even tho I'm
sicker than a dog I'm gunna
dance my ass off to make
you, your team, and myself
proud

From

- just another kid.

Loyalty & Respect

I have so much anger in me all I want to do is fight.
I'm caught up in the system & I know it's 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 won't faze me or affect 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.
Can't 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 and 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

(old/New) Me

Date ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

I was loyal to my colour

willing to die for my colour

I had that mentality where I didn't give a f---

So, why bother,

getting in trouble at a young age

thought I was invincible

checking the measures on the gauge

while my grandparents at home wishing

that I read the bible,

got recruited at age eleven

that was sometime ago

I learned a lot in that gap

of time,

my boys are not around

'cause I'm locked up

I feel down

but I keep my head up,

stop reminiscing

because that is the old me

think of a new beginning

because that is the new me.

Untitled

People really need to stop
Having such high expectations
And hopes for me. I mean...

What

if I don't come through?
I hardly ever do
seeing the sadness it brings people...

if

they would just listen to me
when I promise to fail (again)
if they would only realize why

I

don't promise success
it's not because I believe I can't
it's definitely not because I

don't

want to it's because I'm
the one living the life of
an addict...because
I feel, without being high, I can't

make it.

MY RECOVERY



I am a monster to the public
A disease to the man locked behind wooden doors
With steel cuff's on my hands
Lost in the darkness in the darkness I stand
Went from cash power, to love, to hate, envy and
greed
Lusted over a person who only deceives
Lost my son due tragic error
Now with this life it's hard to relax in terror
I mask my anger
Grew up with my moms and my dad as a stranger
Walk down a lonely road
No place to go this life like a relationship
You just got to take it slow
Live clean a sober my code of honor
Withdrawal broke me, but now I'm growing
STRONGER

The Monster Crankin Her

**The Monster Rises Up
Boiling in her Blood,
Hard in Her eyes, The
Monster that's bin Crankin Her,
Has Destroyed Her, for she is now Mad.**

**The Monster Crankin Her
Flows through Her Veins, Now its
Changed Her Body and Corrupted her
Mind.**

**The Monster Crankin Her
People tried to warn Her, help Her,
Tell Her,
But she never did Listen.
So continuing down this Dangerous
Path,
She never realized before, Discovering the truth way Late;
This girl is in Jail, and that Girl is Me.**

**While the monster Cranks Me,
I see the scary truth, I don't
Want to believe it but it's true;**

**I never saw it Coming, and never
Did She,
I should've Stopped Her, But she is way
Too Persistent
Now the Monster Cranks Us Both**

**And all I can think is: Why and How could I have
Let someone like Her take
Control?
To come out of the Shadows
All only to Destroy
My Life?**

Every now and then
I start to feel gloomy
The problems in my life feel like a bullet right through me
It hurts
But that's the way life works
Gotta solve your problems
Just ignore the jerks
Without the perks you're your own pain killer
Life is what you make it
You can make it more iller
Just have faith
Make yourself a plan
Make it to your best abilities
I know you can
I know your sad
Your also maybe made
But you're alive
Your livin
Thank your mom and dad
Just be glad
It could be a helluva lot worse
Shot up on the block for rock
And end up in a hearse
Driven away
Simply
To go get buried
A man of 2 children
2 weeks from getting married
the man needed money
money to feed his kids
people can be greedy
F*** greasy skids
I don't like it
Peoples lives are so dead
They have a chance to fix it
But they'd rather be a head
they see red
if they aint got their fix
soon they get desperate
so they offerin you tricks
just being plain ticks
who lost all their love
who lost all there faith too the man up above