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Final Report

Pilot Project: Evaluating the Effects of an Asset Building Program for Young Offenders

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About the Centre for Criminology and Justice Research

With support from Alberta Justice and Attorney General, the Centre for Criminology and Justice Research (CCJR) was established in January of 2010, and officially launched in June 2010. The CCJR contribute independently produced, evidence-based research in the study of criminal and social justice issues and the promotion of safe communities. Committed to promotion of collaboration among faculty, students, industry experts, and community members, the CCJR provides independent services to help direct strategy and policy through informed research outcomes.

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Pilot Project: Evaluating the Effects of an Asset Building Program for Young Offenders

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About the Authors

Janne Holmgren, PhD

Janne A. Holmgren, PhD is an associate professor in the Department of Justice Studies at Mount Royal University. Originally studying molecular biology, Dr. Holmgren decided to combine criminology and science which led to her interest in forensic science and the use of forensic technology within the criminal justice system. Dr. Holmgren's research focus is on DNA evidence and the evolution of this technology in the criminal justice system. Her expertise lies in the studying of forensic evidence, in particular DNA evidence and biological and psychological explanations to crime.

Dr. Holmgren has also researched the area of the CSI effect and the Canadian and Australian courts. Currently, she is focusing on recent research related to MAOA genotyping. Dr. Holmgren prefers a multi-method research approach, using both statistical analysis and qualitative interviews.

Elaine Danelesko, MCE

Building knowledge transfer capacity--the need to build and share knowledge--is Elaine Danelesko's biggest goal in research. The Director of the Integrative Health Institute says both she and the institute have a responsibility for promoting research across academic disciplines to "answer meaningful questions in creative ways."

Having worked at MRU since 1985 as an adult educator, Danelesko is able to use her knowledge of personnel, resources and community partners to spark projects and pull resources together from a variety of sources. This means that, as well as faculty members, students and groups like child care centres or other community agencies are brought together to conduct research. Resulting in a constant loop of knowledge transfer, as students leave school better trained and enter a workforce where community partners are keeping up with best practices.

Dawne Clark, PhD

After teaching elementary children in her first career, Dr. Dawne Clark's research has now moved one step farther back: conception to five. Much of her work focuses on translating the burgeoning field of early brain development for students and practitioners, investigating what supports can be provided to children and their care givers, to maximize early child development.

Dr. Clark's main areas of focus recently have been on enhancing physical activity and physical literacy among preschool children and supporting resiliency among school age children in school and with their families. Dr. Clark has worked with preschool children affected by the Tsunami, presenting the results of healing through play at a number of conferences. She currently conducts overseas research in Southeast Asia, bringing MRU students along to gain research and cultural experience.

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Executive Summary

This pilot project explored the experience and impact of a six week Asset Building Program (ABP), delivered in Fall 2011 to 6 male youth ages 16-20 in custody at the Calgary Young Offenders Centre (CYOC). This project is not a program evaluation; it is an assessment of the impact of the program on the youths' resiliency development (to build positive personal identities, develop competent social skills and promote positive social values) and their lived experiences as program participants.

The theoretical framework for this study draws upon positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), a non-pathology model that emphasizes the strengths and resources of individuals, as well as a solution-focused therapy orientation, which is future-focused, goal-directed, and focused on solutions rather than on the problems (Berg and de Shazer, 1993).

The study applied a mixed methods design aligned with contemporary resiliency research that suggests a strengths-based therapeutic intervention approach affirming that all youth have strengths to build on and demonstrate resilience. The ABP fostered participant planning of their own treatment program; this study evaluated its outcomes using quantitative and qualitative measures. Six clients voluntarily consented to be part of the program; four completed the sessions (67%). Generally, pre-post program surveys completed by both the participants and their key workers revealed definite improvements. Based on four post-program interviews with the clients, five main themes emerged regarding the ABP:

- focused on individual learning styles and individual needs;
- identified "stress" as being a past and current issue (including institutional stress);
- assisted individuals in learning new coping strategies;
- focused on individual positive attributes; and
- enhanced personal communication styles and acceptance of other people.

The nature of developing and evaluating the impact of a program in a secure facility such as CYOC comes with its own difficulties; however, a few limiting areas could be improved. Five recommendations for future programming are outlined as follows:

- Group dynamics were at times challenging due to participants' maturity, skill and ability variance - different groups might be considered based on similarities,
- Group session and individual session length too short – increased time for group and individual sessions is recommended,
- Key worker support – participants shift key workers when they move from one unit to another; Programs Area staff may be better designates to support the participation of the clients,
- CYOC Program Area support – a staff member assigned to assist participants with issues stemming from sessions and support participants' learning between sessions, and
- Program process - program facilitator and co-facilitator need to deliver pre-program surveys to provide overview of the program and evaluate comprehension - enhance program content customization.

Due to the promising initial results of this pilot study, it is recommended that this project and its impact outcomes serve to inform a future larger research project where 4 to 6 ABPs are facilitated within a year serving a larger population providing a richer dataset, enhanced statistical strength, and greater opportunity for generalization.

Background

In 2005/06, Stats Canada (2007) estimated the number of youth held in custody in Canada at 1,987 and recognized most correctional services offer rehabilitative programming. Studies conducted by the Centre for Research on Youth at St. Thomas University (n.d.), regarding effective rehabilitation programs for youth, reveal that more promising programs involve:

- Psycho-educational interventions which address social and personal competencies (i.e., cognitive skills training, social and life skills training),
- Residential therapeutic communities/milieu,
- Group counselling (i.e., substance abuse, anger management, conflict resolution), and
- Intensive community supervision paired with non-custodial rehabilitative interventions (i.e., alternative education, substance abuse, or anger management program).

The Calgary Young Offenders Centre (CYOC) emphasizes rehabilitation for the youth it serves and, as such, offers a variety of programs to support reintegration. CYOC wished to formally evaluate the effects of an Asset Building Program for Young Offenders, a 6-week psycho-educational program grounded in a strengths-based, solution-focused approach to counselling. Should this pilot program be successful, ABP may be a resourceful intervention to regularly include in CYOC's rehabilitative offerings.

The primary focus of the ABP was to develop individual internal assets, as outlined in the 40 Developmental Assets by the Search Institute (see Appendix A). Specific program goals were to build positive personal identities, develop competent social skills, and promote positive social values. The program aligned with contemporary resiliency research focus and applied a strengths-based therapeutic intervention approach affirming that all youth have strengths to build on and demonstrate resilience. The program structure fostered participant planning in their own treatment program. Once selected, group members had a voice in determining the specific topics to be explored allowing the ABP to be customized to meet the needs of individual group members.

Significance

Contemporary treatment approaches for young offenders often include resilience enhancement training; however, there currently exists no 'gold standard' approach for programming or measure of change (Fougere and Daffern, 2011). This project supported the need: "to collect data that permit children and youth opportunities to describe *their own perceptions* of their experiences of resiliency ... [there is a] scarcity of descriptive and qualitative research that reflects children's and adolescents' organization of their own experiences. Such research has implications not only for theory, but has tremendous potential for influencing the design and implementation of effective interventions" (Schonert-Reichl, 2008, p. 15).

Objectives

This pilot project explored the experience and impact of a six (6) week Asset Building Program, delivered in Fall 2011 to 6 male youth ages 16-20, while in custody at the CYOC.

The study aimed to examine the following research questions:

1. What effect, or impact, does the program have on the participants' internal assets, specifically to build positive personal identities, develop competent social skills and promote positive social values?
2. What is the lived experience for young offender participants attending the Asset Building Program?

The study presented the following research objectives:

- To determine if an asset building program focusing on internal assets had a positive impact in the short term on attitudes and behaviours of participants.
- To determine if the participants believed that an asset building program focusing on internal assets had a positive impact on their attitudes and behaviours upon release.
- To determine if the participants believed that an asset building program focusing on internal assets had a positive impact on their future lives.
- To examine the lived experience of participants in the program where they have voice in shaping the focus of activities and experiences.

Project Design

With funding made available through the Centre for Criminology and Justice Research, Mount Royal University, the project was conducted over three months between August and October 2011 following clearance from Mount Royal University's Human Research Ethics Board (October 27, 2010) and the Government of Alberta's Solicitor General and Public Safety Research Unit (April 6, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

Resiliency can be viewed as a component of restorative justice (Vasquez, 2000). Resiliency is commonly referred to as the 'ability to thrive' despite experiencing adverse conditions; however, there is a lack of a consistent definition across the literature (Ahern, 2006; Ungar, 2004). Barankin and Khanlou (2007) denote resiliency as a developmental process which involves being able to recover from difficulties or change—to function as well as before and then move forward. People who are resilient can effectively cope with, or adapt to, stress and challenging life situations. They learn from the experience of being able to effectively manage in one situation, making them better able to cope with stresses and challenges in future situations. Resilient children have been defined as “optimistic children with a sense of meaning and purpose, confidence and self-esteem, who overcome challenges and know how to get the social support that they need” (CICH, 2000, p.214).

Approximately 20 years ago researchers interested in resiliency concentrated efforts on identifying risk factors that would negatively impact healthy human development believing the more risk factors a child was exposed to, the greater the chances of the child becoming at-risk, encountering serious problems, and becoming involved in criminal activity. In the early 1990's, research shifted to exploring the role protective factors played in assisting individuals to overcome risks, face adversity, and manifest healthy, successful lives. More recently, the research focus on how best to build developmental assets in children, youth, and their communities, suggests these assets will strengthen the individual's ability to withstand negative outcomes and events (Ungar, Liebenberg, Boothroyd, Kwong, Lee, Leblanc, Duque, and Makhnach, 2008).

Resiliency is a relatively new model of intervention. Historically, human services have viewed health from a deficit position using a medical model lens (Cox, 2006). A deficit position is based upon pathology, assessing a person to find out what is wrong with them, so that an intervention can occur to try and fix the problem. The focus of a deficit position is on problem behaviours and level of risk. Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Bockern (2002) list ten of the theories, (i.e., psychoanalytic, behavioural, correctional, sociological, etc.), that have historically been used to approach issues with youth and all ten are based upon finding the problem with the youth. The responses employed by these theories are mostly negative, that is blaming, diagnosing, punishing, reprimanding, or labelling. No matter what the theory, the response is something that is *done* to the youth. Strengths are not assessed and the youth are not involved in planning their personal treatment in any meaningful way (Pritchard, 2011).

The theoretical framework for this study draws upon positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), a non-pathology model that emphasizes the strengths and resources of

individuals, as well as solution-focused therapy orientation, which is future-focused, goal-directed, and focused on solutions rather than on the problems (Berg and de Shazer, 1993).

Methods

The study applied a mixed methods design. The main hypothesis was that participants in the program will experience an increase in recognition of their internal assets, specifically to build positive personal identities, develop competent social skills, and promote positive social values. These were measured using a pre-post program survey (see Appendix B) and a post-program interview (see Appendix C). In addition, each participant's Key Worker completed a pre-post program survey (See Appendix D).

Participants

The demographic profile of the group participants of the Asset Building Program included six (6) consenting male participants, 67% completed the entire program (n=4). The ages of the four participants included one 17-year-old, two 18-year-olds and one 20-year-old. The ethno-cultural backgrounds included two (2) Caucasians, one (1) First Nations, and one (1) from the Middle East. The participants had attained varied levels of education, as evaluated by the Calgary Young Offender Centre. Three participants had attained some of Grade 10, 11 and 12, but no diploma. One participant had finished high school and had begun studies at an undergraduate institution. Three participants were evaluated to have no disabilities or impairments; however, one (1) participant had been diagnosed with a developmental disorder but was not being medically treated. Two participants had received a sentence of between 5 and 6 months incarceration and the other two participants had received sentences of 8 months or more. The participants were asked to provide information on other programming completed at the Calgary Young Offender Centre. All participants were actively engaged in school (including undergraduate studies). All participants had participated in substance abuse programming. One participant had participated in anger management programming and three had participated in individual counselling.

Outcomes

Overall, results indicate that the ABP content was well received by the participants. It served to support participants' enhanced resiliency development; quantitative and qualitative measures revealed the program fostered a positive impact on participants' short-term attitudes and behaviours. Participants' comments during the interviews indicated a strong belief that the program positively impacted their attitudes and they appeared to speculate these new perceptions will certainly affect their futures lives. The participants particularly noted a high degree of satisfaction with the customization of the curricula content; therefore, valued having a voice in shaping the focus of the program's activities and experiences.

Six consenting participants started the Asset Building Program; however, only 4 of the 6 individuals (67%) completed all eight (8) group sessions, two individual counselling sessions, the pre- and post-program surveys and the post-program interviews. Based on data collected from these instruments, five (5) main themes emerged and are highlighted below.

Themes

1. The ABP focused on individual learning styles and individual needs

One of most recurrent themes in the interviews was how the asset building program allowed the participants to work on their individual needs. This theme can be seen in a comment by one participant:

. . . [W]ell a lot of the programs that they offer at cy [CYOC] I've uh.. I've sort of exhausted already. Um well see I don't drink or do drugs so the majority of the programs are based around addictions and so I've kind of cancelled that out. I think essentially it's - you know a lot of the programs are tailored for a general audience. This one was tailored for me! So that's what really gravitated me towards the program. That's essentially why I chose to take it.

Another statement by the same participant:

“ . . . [W]ith me it's like you know growing up it was always - it was like if I had practiced my assertiveness skills I probably wouldn't be here right now [CYOC].

2. The ABP identified “stress” as being a past and current issue [including institutional stress]

All participants acknowledged that stress was a big issue in their pasts and also within the institutional setting of CYOC. As part of group session three, the issue of stress was examined. One participant noted the following:

. . . [A]nd at the end of the group it was like we were so relaxed. I felt like... you know.... It's like she's like, it's something as simple as going into your room and you know, you know, come into this peaceful place and just relax. And it's like I was really stressed out, because you know look at the environment. And the guys weren't really jiving at the beginning so it was almost like it really helped. So something as some as that really kind of you know changed my behaviour right. It really shaped the rest of my day into a happy ending as opposed to me being stressed out all day. So, the exercises were really effective, I thought.

Another participant said:

I asked XXXX [name withheld] if we could do a longer period of time for the group. But we couldn't. I have learned to block others out. I get angry and go back to my room and I read my book, and then I get totally distracted in my book. Then I forget about the whole situation until I come back and see that person. I probably get angry all over again. But then I do my breathing exercises. Like before I never had any control over my emotions and now it's like its way easier.

3. The ABP assisted individuals in learning new coping strategies

It was evident that the participants found the asset building program to be a valuable experience. For example, one participant shared how he learned to let go of his boyhood (childhood) and focus more on being in control and becoming an adult:

I feel like there's a big weight off my shoulders like I know that I can talk to people and stuff. Like way more in control. Um I feel like a lot better cause like before I never used to like being like a boy. I can [could] throw a temper tantrum and now I feel like a man . . . like I can control all of my emotions. And what not to do....

Another participant echoed this theme:

Well, I learned about positive and negative stress and what my triggers are. I learned how to deal with being anxious and stuff like that . . . [I] know when I'm getting stressed out and how to reduce it, I guess.

4. The ABP focused on individual positive attributes

It was clear that these participants had learned about the negative influences in their lives. They all seemed to understand how they had ended up in an institution like CYOC; however, it was interesting to listen to them attempt to focus on some of their more positive attributes, a concept which seemed new to them. One participant, who had left the program, but had decided to come back, smiled as he talked about finishing the program, a concept entirely new to him:

I had to come back . . . I wanted to finish. . . And then I wanted to come back because I realize a lot of the things that I've learned from that program, so I was like well I can come back and just finish it . . . one thing for me personally finishing it is there is a very short list of things that I've actually gone and done and finish[ed], so it was kind of an accomplishment itself in not walking away.

5. The ABP enhanced personal communication styles and the acceptance of other people

The participants had been hurt by others as youth or children and they also accepted that they had hurt others as a result of their criminal behaviour. While it was evident that they had had many adverse childhood experiences, it was also clear that they had all gained from the asset building program in accepting other people. One question of the participants asked them to talk about caring and empathy and how their understanding of these concepts had changed as a result of the asset building program. One participant gave a surprising series of accounts related to his experiences working in the groups:

. . . I've sort of developed more patience with the group because if it wasn't for patience I would have walked out. Because it's like you know first off we started by signing this form. It was a big poster saying you know that this is what is

expected of you guys, you guys have to respect each other, sign it off. So, when I signed it off, it was almost like there was my first sort of respect right there.

After a series of exchanges between this participant and the interviewer related to issues of respect and empathy, the participant noted: *Yeah! [in response to having gained respect and empathy]. Because a lot of these kids grow up and they don't have nothing. This is like you know, what I've learned, the best they've ever had [at CYOC]. You know, three square meals, a place to sleep, they get security. It's [um.. it's ah] essentially better than home for these guys. So you know [umh] one of the kids said that he usually likes to come here [to CYOC] during winter time. That's like wow! I can't can't believe that I grew up in a very supportive family. There wasn't never one point in my life where my parents said we don't have enough money to put food on the table. So hearing that from the others it's just like wow! You've lived a rough life. So, yeah, empathy for sure!*

Discussion

As noted earlier, there is a lack of a clear definition and conceptualization of resiliency, and as a result, the resiliency literature is complicated. Novel programs serving young offenders vary in curricular content and often include topics such as effective coping strategies, emotional regulation, psycho-education, and social skills training. Due to the infancy of this programming area, there is little empirical evidence regarding its efficacy with young offenders that takes protective factors including resiliency into account. While several measures of resiliency now exist, most of the scales are new and require validation.

The Asset Building Program shows promise as a new programming option for CYOC delivery; participants enjoyed its customization and appear to have benefitted from its learning outcomes. Young Offender serving agencies want to provide useful programs to their clients and need tools that measure outcomes and identify areas for improvement. This project has provided initial evidence that resiliency enhancement programs assist young offenders to improve their internal assets.

Limitations

A variety of limitations developed within this pilot project as explained below.

Sample size was affected by the average length of stay at CYOC (2.5 weeks) and the length of the ABP program (6 weeks), reducing the recruitment pool significantly. It is recommended that the program be shortened and intensified as much as possible.

Insufficient measures were used to collect the data; it may be beneficial to seek and implement a resilience measure such as the Resilience Scale (Wagnild and Young, 1993).

Self-reported data is limiting because it can rarely be independently verified. It is recommended that the Program Facilitator and Program Supervisor be interviewed as sources of information and for the purpose of data triangulation. For the purpose of this study, these interviews are scheduled for January 9, 2012 at CYOC.

Future Directions

ABP appears to be a successful project which could provide a useful model for replication elsewhere. Further investigation is necessary to fully assess its efficacy and potential to reduce participant recidivism. An additional area to explore centres around staff understanding of resiliency theory and their personal theory of practice to assist the youth they support (Benard, 2004; Ward and Brown, 2004).

Recommendations

The nature of developing and evaluating a program in a secure facility such as CYOC comes with its own difficulties; however, a few limiting areas could be improved.

Program related:

- *Group Dynamics* were at times challenging due to participants' maturity, skill, and ability variance - different groups might be considered based on similarities.
- *Group Session and Individual Session Length* too short – increased time for group and individual sessions is recommended.
- *Program Process* - program facilitator and co-facilitator could deliver pre-program surveys to provide an overview of the program and evaluate comprehension. This will enhance program content customization.

Related logistics:

- *Key Worker Support* - participants shift key workers when they move from one unit to another; Programs Area staff may be better designates to support the participation of the client.
- *CYOC Program Area Support* – a staff member assigned to assist participants with issues stemming from sessions and support participants' learning between sessions.

Due to the promising initial results of this pilot study, it is recommended that this project and its outcomes serve to inform a future larger research project where four to six ABPs are facilitated within a year serving a larger population providing a richer dataset, enhanced statistical strength, and greater opportunity for generalization. Ultimately these stronger results may serve to build the capacity and resources needed to mount innovative young offender programming designed to reduce recidivism producing a successful upstream safe community initiative.

Dissemination

A poster presentation (see Appendix E) related to the project was conducted as follows:
Holmgren, J., Clark, D., Danelesko, E., Switzer, V., Keller, B., MacDonald-Allan, C., & Witmer, A. *Pilot project: Evaluating the effects of an Asset Building Program for young offenders*. Mount Royal University Faculty of Health and Community Studies Faculty Scholar's Showcase, December 1, 2011. Calgary, AB.

Manuscripts will be submitted for publication to peer-reviewed journals focusing on Child Development / Canadian Criminology / Youth Justice. At least one presentation will be made at a provincial conference for service providers.

The target audience for the findings of this evaluative research includes case workers and clinicians in child development and justice services about the benefits of enhancing developmental assets among a young offender population and the potential of the Asset Building Program to support these youth.

Non-peer reviewed publications such as newsletters or fact sheets will also be sources of dissemination.

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Appendix A: Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets



40 Developmental Assets® for Adolescents (ages 12-18)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as Developmental Assets®—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



External Assets	Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive family communication—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other adult relationships—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring neighborhood—Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring school climate—School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.
	Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as resources—Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to others—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
	Boundaries & Expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person’s whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people’s behavior. 14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive peer influence—Young person’s best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High expectations—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
	Constructive Use of Time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative activities—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth programs—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious community—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at home—Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation—Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement—Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
	Positive Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring—Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and social justice—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty—Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.” 30. Responsibility—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
	Social Competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance skills—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	Positive Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power—Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.” 38. Self-esteem—Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of purpose—Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.” 40. Positive view of personal future—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

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Appendix B: Pre- and Post-Program Survey - Participants

Name: _____ Date: _____

Asset Portfolio Self Assessment (Pre/Post)

There are three types of internal assets: positive values, social skills (competencies) and positive identity.

To complete the Asset Portfolio Self Assessment, read each of the following statements and circle one of the five responses.

Remember there are no wrong or right answers.

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------|---------|-----------|---------|------------|
| 1. I think it is important to help others | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 2. I think it is important to promote equality | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 3. I stand up for what I believe in | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 4. I try to be honest with myself | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 5. I accept and take personal responsibility | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 6. I believe it is important to refrain or use alcohol responsibly | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 7. I believe it is important to refrain from using drugs | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 8. I know how to plan ahead | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 9. When I have a problem in life, I make good choices | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |
| 10. When I need help, I know who to go to | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know |

11. I am empathetic and sensitive	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
12. I have good friendship skills	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
13. I accept people who are different from me	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
14. I can resist negative peer pressure	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
15. I resolve conflict peacefully	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
16. I feel I have control over "things that happen to me"	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
17. I have high self-esteem	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
18. I feel "my life has a purpose"	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know
19. I am optimistic about my future	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet	Don't know

Raw Score: _____ Administrator: _____

*The Asset Portfolio Self Assessment (Pre/Post) and Staff Asset Assessment (Pre/Post) have been developed based on the 40 resiliency assets identified by the Search Institute.

Appendix C: Pre- and Post-Program Survey – Key Workers

Completed by: _____ Completed for: _____

Staff Asset Assessment (Pre/Post)

There are three types of internal assets: positive values, social skills (competencies) and positive identity.

To complete the Staff Asset Assessment, read each of the following statements and circle one of the five responses relative to your assessment of the client's skill/ability in the area.

-
1. The individual helps others
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 2. The individual promotes equality
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 3. The individual stands up for what s/he believes in
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 4. The individual is honest with him/herself
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 5. The individual accepts and takes personal responsibility
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 6. The individual refrains or uses alcohol responsibly
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 7. The individual refrains from using drugs
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 8. The individual plans ahead
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 9. When the individual has a problem in life, s/he makes good choices
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know
 10. When the individual needs help, s/he knows who to go to
Always Usually Sometimes Not yet Don't know

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------|---------|------------|--|
| 11. The individual | is empathetic and sensitive | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 12. The individual | has good friendship skills | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 13. The individual | accepts people different from him / her | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 14. The individual | can resist negative peer pressure | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 15. The individual | resolves conflict peacefully | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 16. The individual | appears in control over "things that happen to her/him" | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 17. The individual | has high self-esteem | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 18. The individual | appears to feel "her/his life has a purpose" | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |
| 19. The individual | is optimistic about her/his future | | | | |
| Always | Usually | Sometimes | Not yet | Don't know | |

Raw Score: _____ Date: _____

*The Asset Portfolio Self Assessment (Pre/Post) and Staff Asset Assessment (Pre/Post) have been developed based on the 40 resiliency assets identified by the Search Institute.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Introduction:

The information sheet and consent form explained the purpose of this research. As discussed in the information sheet, your involvement is entirely voluntary and please be assured you can end your involvement with the study at any time. Should you feel uneasy about what is discussed and would like to talk to a counsellor about issues brought up during this research, please let me know so that you can be referred to one.

I have some questions I would like to ask you. These questions will help us understand your experience attending the Asset Building Program and any impact you feel it may have had on you.

Please take as much time as you like to answer. There are not right or wrong answers, just answer as truthfully as you are comfortable with. Also, feel free to tell me when you do not want to answer a question.

All the information you provide will be treated as confidential. I will be audio taping our conversation and the audiotape will be transcribed word for word into a written document. Before we begin, please give me a pseudonym, a name you wish to be referred to in the transcript of this conversation.

The information gathered from you will be used to write a report including recommendations to CYOC. In addition, the information will be used for newsletters, conference presentations and academic journals of interest to child development and justice professionals. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the reports, presentations or manuscripts. Please note that the audiotape and transcript will be stored separately in a locked cabinet in a secured research lab and after 5 years both will be destroyed.

Semi-structured questions.

The Asset Building Program addressed 3 broad areas: social competencies, positive values and positive identity.

In the area of social competencies, you talked about:

- Planning/goal setting
- Making choices
- Communication and friendship skills
- Conflict resolution skills

Describe what you have learned about _____ (as above)

How will you use this new skill now? _____ (as above)

How will you use this upon release? _____ (as above)

How will this make a difference for your future? _____ (as above)

In the area of positive values, you talked about:

- Caring about other people
- Standing up for your beliefs
- Becoming more honest
- Taking personal responsibility

Have your attitudes changed about _____ (as above)

How will you use this new skill now? _____ (as above)

How will you use this upon release? _____ (as above)

How will this make a difference for your future? _____ (as above)

In the area of positive identity, you discussed:

- Having control over your life
- How you handle stress
- How you feel about yourself
- View of personal future

Tell me how you feel differently about yourself in any of these areas? _____
(as above)

Explain to me how you/r _____ (as above)

Please tell me about what it was like to be involved in this program.

- Explain why you started this program? Describe why you stayed in this program? Would you do a program like this again? Why or why not?
- What did you hope that you would gain? Did you gain what you expected to gain?
- What changes, if any, will you make in the way you live your life as a result of this program? Can you give me a specific example?
- Was there an activity or an experience in this program that really impacted you? Can you describe why? Do you think or act differently now as a result of that experience? Why or why not?
- How do you think this will help you in the short term? How will you use this new skill now? How will you use this upon release? How will this make a difference for your future?

What is the most important thing you have learned from the Asset Building Program that you will take with you? Why?

Overall, have you gained skills that will help you now, in the short term? Please give me an example?

Please give me an example of any skills you have gained that will help you upon release? ?

Do you have anything else you would like to add?

Whatever you said here today will be treated with confidentiality and will not be shared with parents/legal guardians.

Do you have any questions?

Thank you for taking the time to share this information with me.

Appendix E: Poster Presentation

Holmgren, J., Clark, D., Danelesko, E., Switzer, V., Keller, B., MacDonald-Allan, C., and Witmer, A. (2011, Dec. 01). *Pilot project: Evaluating the effects of an Asset Building Program for young offenders*. Mount Royal University Faculty of Health and Community Studies Faculty Scholar's Showcase. Calgary, AB.