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Promoting positive youth development and well-being in comprehensive transition programs for court-involved youth

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Dissertation

**PROMOTING POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND
WELL-BEING IN COMPREHENSIVE TRANSITION PROGRAMS
FOR COURT-INVOLVED YOUTH**

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my loving husband Lauren, my wonderful son Alex
and, inspirational parents Robin and Gerry.

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First and foremost, I would like to thank God for giving me the strength, ability and perseverance to undertake and complete this research project. Without his blessings, this accomplishment would not have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how community-based organizations are supporting the positive development of court-involved youth. More specifically, this study examined how organizations support youth's access to work-based learning opportunities. This study also investigated how organizations determine the kinds of activities to implement in their comprehensive transition programs. Additionally, this study sought to understand whether and in what ways these programs are incorporating positive youth development (PYD) principles. Purposive sampling identified five organizations that are implementing work-based learning programs for court-involved youth. These organizations were located in the Midwest, South, East and Western regions of the United States.

The research considered multiple sources of data, including documentation review, semi-structured interviews, field notes and survey interviews. Documents collected included administrative reports, brochures, evaluation reports, annual reports, samples of recruitment materials, youth needs assessment, and partnership agreements with businesses. The semi-structured, open-ended interview was conducted with an

executive director of each organization using an interview protocol that was guided by positive youth development and well-being frameworks. Survey interviews were conducted with other stakeholders of the organizations using a structured qualitative questionnaire.

The data were analyzed using cross-case analysis. Each organization's documentation, survey data and interviews were studied as a separate case to identify similarities, differences and unique patterns within the data. Then, a logic model was generated for each organization. Next, the separate logic models were compared using cross-case analysis. Lastly, based on the knowledge that emerged from the analyses, a proposed theory of change was created illustrating potential ways to incorporate positive youth development to guide future program design efforts.

The major findings of the study were: (1) partnerships with various organizations explain the extent to which court-involved youth gain access to WBL activities; (2) the development of a theory of change, framework or assumptions based in evidenced based research impacts the integration of PYD principles in program activities; and (3) implementation of PYD principles varies across organizations.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the United States, court-involved youth have significant obstacles to overcome. Post-incarceration interventions are necessary and critical for youth's successful transition to adulthood, economic self-sufficiency and the inherent challenges faced in many of their communities. Interventions that incorporate caring adults, vocational training, work experience and skill building can increase the likelihood that youth will ultimately thrive and produce positive personal and societal outcomes once outside the walls of the prison system. For the purposes of this dissertation, youth who have come in contact with the juvenile justice system for committing a status offence or delinquent act will be referred as court-involved (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015).

When thinking about the characteristics of youth commonly involved in the juvenile justice system, a disproportionate number of them are minority males (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015), younger than fifteen (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015), have a disability (Bullis & Yovanoff, 2005; Bullock & McArthur, 1994; Morgan, 1979), and have been exposed to at least one traumatic event (Abram et al., 2004; Dierkhising et al., 2013; Ford, Grasso, Hawke, & Chapman, 2013; Rosenberg et al., 2014).

Research suggests that approximately 1 million youth each year are arrested (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015). In 2012, for example, 68% of these arrests were referred to juvenile court, 22% were handled within law enforcement authority and released, 8% were referred to criminal court, and 2% were referred to a welfare agency (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013). Youth who are members of a racial minority group are arrested at disproportionate rates. In 2013, 66% of juvenile arrests were of ethnic

minority youth, and youth aged fifteen years old and younger made up the majority of juvenile arrests. Fifty-three percent of delinquent cases were accounted for by youth 15 years old and younger (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). With regard to gender, males accounted for 71% of all juvenile arrests in 2013 (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). Further, the literature highlights that youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system comprise 20% to 75% of the juvenile justice population (Bullis & Yovanoff, 2005; Bullock & McArthur, 1994; Morgan, 1979; Morris & Morris, 2006).

Additionally, court-involved youth, compared to the general population, are disproportionately exposed to trauma both in and out of the juvenile justice system (Evans-Chase, 2014). For example, it has been reported that between 75% and 95% of court-involved youth are exposed to at least one type of trauma over the course of their lives in comparison to 25% to 34% of the general population who have experienced some type of trauma (Adams, 2010; Costello, Erkanli, Fairbank, & Angold, 2002). Lastly, studies have indicated that between 40% and 75% of court-involved youth experience recidivism (Bezruki, Varana, & Hill, 1999; Bullis et al., 2002; Colman et al., 2008; Mendel, 2011).

While the juvenile justice system's primary goal is to rehabilitate these youth, research has demonstrated that the nature of confinement limits the prospect of rehabilitation and disrupts normal youth development in a number of ways, including reducing levels of educational attainment (Blomberg, Bales, Mann, Piquero, & Berk, 2011; LeBlanc, 1991). It also decreases the opportunity to foster and maintain positive social relationships (Hartwell, Fisher, & Davis, 2010), has a negative impact on

psychosocial maturity (Dmitrieva, Monahan, Cauffman, & Steinberg, 2012), exacerbates mental health challenges (Defoe, Farrington, & Loeber, 2013; Grande, Hallman, Caldwell, & Underwood, 2011; Gottsman & Schwarz, 2011; Holman & Ziedenberg, 2013; Teplin, Abram, McClelland, Dulcan, & Mericle, 2002; Teplin et al., 2013; Wald & Losen, 2003), enhances stigma (Mears & Travis, 2004) and increases youth and adult recidivism (Ezell & Cohen, 2005; Holman & Ziedenberg, 2013; Sampson & Laub, 2003; Warren & Rosenbaum, 1986). Overall, these outcomes suggest that court-involved youth are likely to have difficulties successfully transitioning into the community and managing adult tasks.

One intervention strategy being used to support transitions back to the community for court-involved youth is work-based learning programs. Work-based learning programs support this transition by creating conditions for positive youth development to emerge, and they facilitate the successful transition to school, work and society for court-involved youth. Studies have highlighted the promising nature of work-based learning as an effective transition program for all youth (Carter, Ditchman, Trainor, Sweden, & Owens, 2010; Mazzotti et al., 2016; Wehman et al., 2015). Researchers found that students participating in work-based learning programs had a higher percentage of enrollment in college within one year of graduating high school. For example, Colley and Jamison (1998) found that students in work-based learning programs complete coursework at high rates, and have higher attendance and graduation rates than those not enrolled in such programs. Additionally, researchers found that paid employment, work experience (Carter et al., 2012; McDonnall, 2011; McDonnall & O'Mally, 2012; Wagner

et al., 2014) and vocational education (Chiang et al., 2013) have a moderate level of evidence for predicting education and employment outcomes (Mazzotti et al., 2016; Test, Fowler, White, Richter, & Walker, 2009). Wehman (2015) highlighted that employment training, work experience, and high parental expectations for the child's future were important components of the transition process.

More specifically, some studies provide evidence that interventions with a workforce readiness and employment component reduce recidivism and promote positive outcomes for court-involved youth (Bullis, Yovanoff, Mueller, & Havel, 2002; Wilson, 1994). Wilson (1994) discovered a decrease in recidivism by 17.2 percentage points in youth who participated in vocational training compared to the control group.

Additionally, a study conducted by DelliCarpini (2010) demonstrated that youth who received vocational training earned a GED at higher rates compared to the control group. Lastly, Roos (2006) and Bullis and colleagues (2002) found that vocational program participants were more likely to be employed or enter college post program release.

Work-based learning refers to an educational intervention that incorporates learning and teaching in the workplace and is defined by the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education as “learning technical, academic, and employability skills by working in a real work environment” (Alfeld, Charner, Johnson, & Watts, 2013, p. 2). It is a form of learning that is “planned to contribute to the intellectual and career development of high school” students (Stasz & Brewer, 1998). Work-based learning programs were initially developed in response to the School to Work Movement of the 1990s and the culmination of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) in 1994.

The act was a pivotal piece of legislation for encouraging partnerships between schools, organizations and employers to create workplace opportunities for all high school students (Weichold, 2009). In 1998, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was created to oversee employment, training, literacy and vocational rehabilitation programs nationally. Additionally, WIOA introduced job-training centers that were managed by workforce investment boards. Under this law, work-based learning was promoted as a primary approach for youth vocational activities (Workforce Investment Act, 1998). In 2006, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act built on the STOWA and WIOA by requiring that states provide students with a comprehensive knowledge base of an industry through activities such as work-based learning (Blustein, 2006). Community-based organizations can provide the infrastructure for work-based learning programs and serve a paramount intermediary role in connecting court-involved youth, employers, schools and social services.

A review of the literature demonstrates that there is a vast range of activities that community-based organizations implement in their work-based learning curriculum, some of which include paid internships, educational services, community service projects, industry certificates, vocational training and mentorship, to cite a few (worknetncc.com; theurbanalliance.org; cases.org; livingclassrooms.org; Yearup.org; Miller et al., 2016; Parker, 2011). Work-based learning takes many forms, including apprenticeships (Cahill, 2016), career academies (Kemple, 2004), co-operative education/internships (Darche et al., 2009), and school-based enterprises (Cahill, 2016). Additionally, there are community-based organizations that have distinct education and

workforce components that may fall within these categories. Many of these work-based learning models differ by their goals, the students they serve, means of coordinating with schools, training opportunities, types of worksites, required hours per week, and compensation for work (Cahill, 2016). Despite program differences, all of the models provide students with work experience in a workplace setting.

For the general youth population, research illustrates that work-based learning programs promote an increase in career development skills (National Collaborative on Workforce Disability (NCWD)/Youth, 2014), cognitive, social and emotional competencies (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Nowicki & Mitchell, 1998), meaningful adult relationships (Blustein, 2011; Blustein, Prezioso & Schultheiss, 1995; Hirschi, 2009; Kenny & Bledsoe, 2005; Vignoli, Croity-Belz, Chapeland, Fillipis & Garcia, 2005), and a decrease in delinquent behaviors (Heller 2014; Leos-Urbel, 2014; Sum, Trubskyy, & McHugh 2013; Walker & Viella-Velez, 1992). Collectively, these skills are also identified as important indicators of “positive youth development.”

Positive youth development (PYD) is defined by the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs as “an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths” (www.youth.gov). This definition reflects a comprehensive approach that focuses on the optimal development of adolescence, factors that facilitate youth

successful transition to adulthood and conditions in which youth thrive (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004). Additionally, the PYD framework highlights the involvement of a variety of contexts, including organizations, schools, communities, social services, and peers in youth development (e.g. Benson et al., 2006; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004; Lerner et al., 2009; Scales et al., 2008). Positive youth development originated from research on prevention. Historically, prevention efforts focused on deficit views of youth development. For example, youth who engaged in risk-taking behaviors (e.g., alcohol and substance use/abuse, unsafe sex, partaking in violence) were exclusively characterized as lacking positive development features (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Semsal, 2006). However, over time, researchers and policymakers began to challenge the deficit-based perspective on development and sought ways to increase resources provided to youth because they recognized the critical nature of these strategies (Lewin-Bizan, Bowers, & Lerner, 2010, Bowers et al., 2010; Ramey & Rose-Krasnor, 2012). The convergence of an array of concepts, including youth strengths (Damon, 2004), plasticity of human development (Overton, 2010), resilience (Lee, Cheung & Kwong, 2012) and how youth could be assets to their communities, formed the positive youth development perspective (Lerner, 2005; 2006; Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005). Additionally, positive youth development is used in three different ways: (1) referring to a process of development, (2) approach to youth programming, and (3) instances of organizations focused on fostering PYD (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1999).

Since the inception of the positive youth development concept, several models

have been established, including the Five C's (Lerner et al., 2009), Five Promises (Scales et al., 2008), Features of Positive Development Settings (Eccles & Gootman, 2002), and 40 Developmental Assets (Benson et al., 2006). Many similarities exist across these and other positive youth development models. These features include the presence of supportive adult relationships, skill building opportunities, healthy and safe environments, appropriate structure, positive social norms, and opportunities to contribute to society (Zaff, Donlon, Jones, & Lin, 2015).

Positive youth development serves as an ideal framework for thinking about transition interventions for court-involved youth. The PYD perspective suggests that despite exposure to adversity, engagement in delinquent behavior, or involvement in various social services, youth can experience positive development or change for the better when provided with meaningful opportunities to develop competencies and positive adult relationships (Butts, Mayer & Ruth, 2005; Sanders, Munford, Thimasarn-Anwar, Liebenberg, & Ungar, 2015). Overall, PYD results from aligning youth strengths and community resources.

A study on outcomes resulting from positive youth development programs was conducted on programs that included youth between the ages of six and twenty, and were either in the general population or children at risk. Delinquency, drug abuse and mental health treatment programs were excluded. The findings suggest that PYD programs foster a range of positive outcomes, including healthy relationships, competencies, self-determination, self-efficacy, hope for the future, self-recognition of positive behavior, prosocial involvement and prosocial normative development (Catalano & Kennedy,

1998). The conditions that promote these positive youth development outcomes include the presence of supportive adult relationships, skill building opportunities, healthy and safe environments, appropriate structure and positive social norms, and opportunities to contribute to society all of which align with key components in work-based learning programs (Zaff et al., 2015).

Overall, prior research indicates that the general population of youth work-based learning promotes positive youth development. For example, researchers have conducted studies to support the contentions that youth who participate in work-based learning perform better in school compared to youth whose curriculum do not incorporate work-based learning (Bailey, Hughes & Karp, 2002; Visher, Bhandari, & Medrich, 2004), and that work-based learning promotes motivation and school engagement (Lapan, 2004), facilitates a range of academic and non-cognitive assets (Gilbert et al., 2015), and enhances self-control, self-regulation and future orientation (Kenny et al., 2016; Lerner et al., 2005). However, based on a meta-analysis of the literature, few studies have examined how organizations are specifically supporting court-involved youth in gaining access to these opportunities and to what extent these programs facilitate positive youth development outcomes (Lipsey, 2009).

Work-based learning may be especially critical for court-involved youth who experience serious disruptions in normal development. Parker (2011), for example, found that work-based learning for court-involved youth was associated with educational gains, employment gains, and avoidance of recidivism (Parker, 2011). Unfortunately, there are many court-involved youth who do not have access to, or the opportunity to engage in,

quality work-based learning experiences (Alfeld et al., 2013; NCWD/Youth, 2013). Recruitment strategies by organizations and institutions may contribute to, sustain or alleviate the disparities in who has access to work-based learning opportunities (Symonds, Schwartz, & Ferguson, 2011). This suggests the need for more work-based learning programming that supports the advancement of key positive youth development elements for this population.

The purpose of this research study was to gain an in-depth understanding of how community-based organizations are supporting court-involved youth in gaining access to work-based learning opportunities. The purpose was also to investigate the ways comprehensive transition programs incorporated positive youth development principles. A better understanding of how community-based organizations are designing and implementing comprehensive transition programs that incorporate work-based learning activities to support positive development of youth is needed. This awareness may help organizations to communicate design specifications with one another, and to duplicate and expand the creation of effective work-based learning for former court-involved youth.

This knowledge supports the development of future work-based learning programs that serve court-involved youth and further builds on the experiences of past programs. Additionally, this study improves knowledge on how organizations can align themselves with the strengths of their youth, and how to assess positive youth development. By exploring this topic, beneficial information has emerged that could inform stakeholder needs, effective intervention strategies and ways to develop

partnerships, and also ways to enhance employer engagement and attainment in order to ensure court-involved youth reach their full potential.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The Juvenile Justice System in the United States

This section provides a brief overview of the juvenile justice system. Then, the characteristics of court-involved youth, including inequalities in arrest rates, disabilities and trauma experiences, will be examined. The next section addresses the inequalities in juvenile case processing. Subsequently, commonly cited discussions regarding the impact court-involvement has on youth development, adult outcomes and recidivism rates is provided. Next, a summary on transition-based interventions for court-involved youth is provided. Finally, a conclusion is offered.

Overview of the Juvenile Justice System

In most states, juvenile delinquency refers to a youth between the ages of 10 and 17 years old who commits an “illegal act” (Shoemaker, 2005), with states allowing youth up to age 21 to remain in the juvenile court system. A few exceptions exist in some states where juveniles are prosecuted as adults. A status offense is an “illegal act” committed by an individual younger than 19 years old (Steinberg, 2009). A behavior that constitutes an “illegal act” for juveniles varies across states and is age dependent. Status offenses include behaviors such as running away, truancy, and possession or consumption of drugs or alcohol. Delinquent acts are crimes against others, crimes against property and crimes related to substance abuse.

Court-involved Youth Characteristics

Arrests. In the United States, juvenile crime and arrest rates have steadily decreased over the years. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency

Prevention, juvenile arrests decreased by 32% from 1980 to 2011 (Puzzanchera, 2013) and by 10% between 2011 and 2012, with a 37% decrease since 2003 (Puzzanchera, 2013). In 2012, over 1.3 million juveniles were arrested in the United States for various crimes. Of these arrests, an estimated 1,319,700 were violent crimes (e.g., murder, robbery, rape, aggravated assault), 295,400 were property crimes (e.g., burglary, arson, motor vehicle theft, larceny, theft) and 173,100 were classified as other (e.g., vandalism, weapons, curfew, prostitution; Federal Partners in Transition, 2013). These arrests were handled in a variety of ways. In 2012, 22% of arrests were handled within law enforcement agencies and released, 68% were referred to juvenile court, 8% were referred to criminal court and 2% were referred to a welfare agency (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013). Despite the trend towards a drop in juvenile arrests, there were still about 1 million juvenile arrests in 2014, and an overwhelming majority (87%) of these arrests were non-violent offenses (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015).

Youth from racial minority groups are arrested at disproportionate rates. When discussing racial groups, it is important to note that Hispanic youth are included in the white racial category. In 2012, 76% of court-involved youth were white, 17% black, 5% Asian and 2% American Indian (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015). In 2013, 66% of juvenile arrests were accounted for by ethnic minority youth, which was a decrease from the previous year. Overall, black youth comprise the majority of arrests. For example, in 2012, black youth accounted for 52% of all violent crime arrests, compared to 46% white, 1% Asian and 1% who were American Indian. In the same year, white youth accounted for 61% of property crime arrests compared to 36% black, 2% Asian and 1%

of American Indian youth (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015).

Arrest rates also differ by age and gender. With respect to age, the majority of juvenile arrests are of youth younger than 15 years old. In 2013, 53% of delinquent cases were accounted for by youth 15 years old and younger (Furdella & Puzzanchera, 2015). With regard to gender, males comprised a significant percentage of juvenile arrests, accounting for 71% of all juvenile arrests in 2013.

There are several limitations in the above arrest statistics. Researchers suggest that they do not represent all criminal activity, nor present a valid representation of how crime has been committed (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2015). Arrest statistics include the number of arrests reported in a year and exclude the number of individuals arrested, as well as the number of crimes one individual commits (Puzzanchera, 2013). The number of arrests does not equal the number of people arrested because an unknown number of individuals are arrested more than once in a given year (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2015). Another limitation is that most arrests are classified by the most serious offense charged in the arrest. Although an individual may be arrested for several offenses, they are only charged for the highest level of crime committed. In addition, there are situations in which many arrests occur for a single crime (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2015). This is especially common with youth because they are more likely to commit crimes in groups. Lastly, several crimes committed go unreported (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2015). Thus, researchers report that these arrest statistics are only a measure of individuals entering the juvenile justice system and are not representative of the crimes youth are committing.

Although arrest rates of juveniles have decreased over the years, many youth continue to enter the juvenile justice system. A seeming majority of these arrests are ethnic minority males who commit nonviolent crimes. Next, I discuss the overrepresentation of youth with disabilities who are arrested.

Disabilities. The literature highlights the overrepresentation of youth with disabilities within the juvenile justice system. Research suggests that youth with disabilities comprise 20% to 75% of the juvenile justice population (Bullis & Yovanoff, 2005; Bullock & McArthur, 1994; Morgan, 1979; Morris & Morris, 2006). Research suggests that there are many youth who are not accounted for in these percentages because they have gone through the system with undiagnosed disabilities (Shelton, 2001). It is noted that the inconsistencies in the prevalence of youth with disabilities found throughout literature is likely due to differing definitions of disability, methodology used by researchers and/or the ways in which court-involved youth are classified as having a disability (Morris & Morris, 2006). With regard to disability type, a national survey conducted by the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice and the National Center of Education Disability (Quinn, Rutherford, Leone, Osher, & Poirier, 2005) suggested that a high proportion of court-involved youth were identified as having an emotional disability (47.7%), learning disability (38.6%), intellectual disability (9.7%) and multiple disabilities (0.8%). Next, the relationship between court-involvement and trauma exposure will be discussed.

Trauma and Court-involvement. Literature states that court-involved youth have a high prevalence of exposure to trauma and posttraumatic symptoms (Bennett,

Kerig, Chaplo, & Modrowski, 2014; Ford, Hartman, Hawke & Chapman, 2008), with rates exceeding those in the general population (Wood, Foy, Layne, Pynoos, & James, 2002). Court-involved youth are disproportionately exposed to trauma both in and out of the juvenile justice system, which has an impact on normative development, contributing to poor social, behavioral and developmental outcomes (Evans-Chase, 2014). It has been reported that between 75% and 95% of court-involved youth are exposed to at least one type of trauma over the course of their lives in comparison to 25% to 34% of the general population who have experienced some type of trauma (Adams, 2010; Costello et al., 2002).

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), a set of traumatic experiences that occur prior to a youth's 18th birthday are considered adverse childhood experiences, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and household dysfunction (CDC, 2016). Other forms of trauma may include poverty (Fothergill, Doherty, Robertson, & Ensminger, 2012), foster care involvement (Anderson & Imle, 2001; Burt et al., 1999; Hamilton, Poza, & Washington, 2011; Park, Metraux, & Culhane, 2005; Roman & Wolfe, 1995) and court involvement (Koegel, Melamid & Burnman, 1995; Zlotnick, Robertson and Wright, 1999; Zlotnick, Tam, & Robertson, 2004).

Traumatic experiences outside of custody may include family stressors (e.g., parental incarceration and separation) and exposure to violence and poverty. For example, parental incarceration is a family stressor, which has been shown to predict behavioral outcomes such as aggression, violence and criminal behavior, and emotional difficulties (Bailey, Peck, Nelson, English, & Pasinin-Hill, 1998; Carlson, 2006). In some

cases, parental separation leads to foster care placement. Fifty percent of incarcerated youth are in a foster care home (Bailey et al., 1998), compared to 10% of the general population (Duke, Sandra, McMorris, & Borowsky, 2010). Further, a disproportionate number of court-involved youth are exposed to or have witnessed violence (Bjerk, 2007; Carlson, 2006; Hawkins et al., 2000). Victimization or exposure to trauma has been associated with self-protective behaviors, such as joining a gang or carrying a weapon to feel safe, which enhances the risk of court-involvement (McGee, 2003). Moreover, poverty is known to be associated with trauma related outcomes (Bjerk, 2007; Carlson, 2006; Hawkins et al., 2000).

Furthermore, traumatic experiences may occur when youth are within the juvenile justice system. From a national survey of residential facilities, 56% of youth reported at least one form of victimization (Beck, Harrison, & Guerino, 2010). For example, youth disclosed being sexually (12%) and physically (29%) assaulted by a peer or staff within residential placements (Beck, Harrison, & Guerino, 2010; Sedlak, McPherson, & Basena, 2013). Research suggests that trauma experiences outside of and within custody are known to enhance poor emotional and behavioral outcomes. For example, one study reported that 90% of youth leaving custody experienced some sort of emotional and/or behavioral problem, such as anger (81%), anxiety (61%), depression (59%), substance abuse (68%), and suicidal ideation (27%; Sedlak & McPherson, 2010a; Sedlak & McPherson, 2010b; Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). Additionally, 22% of these youth noted a past suicide attempt, which is four times the national average (Sedlak, and McPherson, 2010a; Sedlak & McPherson, 2010b; Snyder & Sickmund, 2006).

The association between trauma and delinquency is reciprocal. Researchers have found that 95% of court-involved youth were exposed to six different types of traumatic events, and 20% of them met criteria for PTSD, which were positively associated with arrest frequency and delinquency severity (Kerig & Becker, 2010; 2015). Other studies have confirmed these findings, suggesting that over 90% of court-involved youth have been exposed to trauma and are reporting an average of five different types of trauma events (Abram et al., 2004; Dierkhising et al., 2013; Ford et al., 2013; Rosenberg et al., 2014).

Further, involvement in delinquent behavior increases the risk for traumatization through victimization and exposure to violence (Kerig & Becker, 2010), which is commonly seen in gang-involved youth. Literature has investigated the relationship between delinquency and trauma among court-involved youth who were affiliated with gangs (Bocanegra & Stolbach, 2012). A study conducted by Bocanegra and Stolbach (2012) examined perpetration induced trauma, trauma exposure, posttraumatic stress and gang membership among 660 detained youth. Data collection included interviews at the detention center. The results indicated that gang members endorsed higher rates of trauma exposure and diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress compared to their non-gang affiliated peers (Bocanegra & Stolbach, 2012). Similar results were found in a study that assessed the prevalence of mental health disorders in gang-involved youth (Harris et al., 2013). Mental health screenings were conducted on 7,615 detained youth aged 13 to 17. Logistic regressions illustrated that youth affiliated with a gang were twice as likely as non-gang members to meet criteria for PTSD (Harris et al., 2013).

When discussing trauma and delinquency, it is important to consider the neuropsychological development of youth. The adolescent period is marked by neurological changes, which are associated with behavioral changes. One pattern is the ascent and descent of delinquent behavior that starts at the age of 10, peaks at 16 years old and declines in late adolescence/early adulthood (Blumstein & Cohen, 1987; Elliott, 1994; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Moffitt, 1993; Steinberg, 2009; Steinberg & Scott, 2003). Within adolescent delinquent behavior there is an enhanced reward salience and minimal threat salience (Fareri, Martin, & Delgado, 2008; Sedlak, McPherson & Basena, 2013; Steinberg, 2009). The second pattern related to the association between age and delinquency is the development of the self-regulatory systems, which often occurs at a slow pace (Baer & Maschi, 2003). It is assumed that trauma interferes with the development of self-regulatory pathways, resulting in outcomes such as delinquent behavior (Baer & Maschi, 2003; Hein, Cohen & Campbell, 2005). Overall, this section provided an overview of the juvenile justice system including court-involved youth characteristics. Next, I describe case-processing in the juvenile justice system.

Case-Processing

Upon arrest, youth encounter several case processes that commonly incorporate intake decisions, court, adjudication and/or disposition. At the time of arrest, police dictate whether to pursue juvenile court or divert the case to an alternative program. If the youth is referred to juvenile court, then authorities make the decision to dismiss the case, handle it informally, or formally request an adjudicatory hearing. In 2013, of all the delinquent cases, 18% were dismissed at intake due to lack of “legal sufficiency”

(Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). If a case is dismissed, there are certain conditions that youth may have to follow, such as participating in drug counseling or abiding by a curfew. Informal disposition (diversion) of a case occurs if an offense is minor and nonviolent, and the youth pleads guilty to the offense. In this option, disposition may include community service hour requirements or monitoring by a probation officer. In 2013, 27% of juvenile cases were taken care of informally (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). In both of these options, youth do not incur formal charges. However, failure to meet the conditions of their dismissal agreement or informal disposition will result in an adjudicatory hearing.

A formal hearing involves the decision to adjudicate the youth (find him or her guilty of the offense), which is made by a judge. In 2013, 55% of juvenile cases were managed formally (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). Depending on the state, some judges may waive and transfer juvenile court jurisdiction to criminal court, where a youth would be tried as an adult. In 2013, 4,000 cases were waived by juvenile court judges and sent to criminal court (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). During formal hearing processes, if the youth is adjudicated, there are several options for placement. For example, they may live with family while on probation, or those who are risks to the community may receive an out of home placement (i.e., group home, inpatient facility). In 2013, 64% of cases were referred to formal probation and 24% to residential placements (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). Similarly, Snyder and Sickmund (2006) reported that of those who were adjudicated, 56% were referred for community supervision via probation, 25% to residential and 19% received community service. Alternatively, youth could be sentenced

to a state department detention facility. Overall, during the processing of a case, youth who are believed to be a threat to the community or themselves are detained as they await decisions such as adjudication, disposition or placement.

There are racial inequalities that exist within case processing. Conducting a between groups comparison of youth who progress throughout this case process following intake illustrates the impact that each decision point makes on the overall inequality in the juvenile justice system. Black youth were twice as likely to be referred to juvenile court than their white counterparts and 20% more likely to be petitioned for formal processing (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). Adjudicated cases were 10% less likely to be appealed for black youth compared to white youth. Cases involving black youth that were waived to criminal court were 30% higher for black youth in comparison to white youth (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). Lastly, black youth were adjudicated at rates 20% greater than white youth; nevertheless, white youth were 10% more likely to be ordered probation than black youth (Furdella & Puzanchera, 2015). These statistics are a portrayal of the overrepresentation of black youth at every stage (arrest, intake, referral to court and placement) of the juvenile justice system process and reinforces the vulnerability of youth when race is a factor. Next, a discussion on how court-involvement has an impact on normative development is explored.

The Impact of the Juvenile Justice System on Youth

It is clear that the juvenile justice system disrupts normative development and remains a barrier to positive adult outcomes. More specifically, research suggests that juvenile justice involvement disrupts educational attainment (Blomberg, Bales, Mann,

Piquero, & Berk, 2011; LeBlanc, 1991), decreases the opportunity to foster and maintain positive social relationships (Hartwell, Fisher & Davis, 2010; Little, 2006), has a negative impact on psychosocial maturity (Dmitrieva et al., 2012), exacerbates mental health challenges (Defoe, Farrington & Loeber, 2013; Grande et al., 2011; Gottsman & Schwarz, 2011; Holman & Ziedenberg, 2013; Teplin et al., 2002; Teplin et al., 2013; Wald & Losen, 2003), enhances stigma (Mears & Travis, 2004) and increases youth and adult recidivism (Benda, Corwyn, & Toombs, 2001; Ezell & Cohen, 2005; Holman & Ziedenberg, 2013; Sampson & Laub, 2003; Warren & Rosenbaum, 1986). These outcomes imply that youth transitioning out of the system may demonstrate difficulties achieving and managing adult tasks, such as graduating high school or the equivalent and becoming employed and economically self-sufficient. For example, according to the National Center for Education (Wirt et al., 2004), only 12% of incarcerated youth graduated from high school or received a GED. To improve court-involved youth's successful transition, an effective intervention that focuses on positive youth development is needed.

Education/learning. Juvenile justice involvement has a negative impact on education and learning. Literature states the system disrupts the educational process and serves as a barrier to successful educational attainment (Sedlak & McPherson, 2010). Access to quality education is critical for court-involved youth to transition from the facility to the community, and it is particularly important for this population given that one third qualify for special education support (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2015). A survey on youth in residential placement indicated that less than half of

detained youth spent at least six hours dedicated to educational services, and only 50% of youth reported they participated in a “good” education program (Sedlak & McPherson, 2010). It has been documented that educational services are only provided to detained youth in 26% of states compared to youth in the community, because many facilities lack the infrastructure to provide services (CSG Justice Center, 2015). For example, only 60% of juvenile justice facilities meet national accreditation standards (Geib, Chapman, d’Amaddio, & Grigorenko, 2011). Additionally, few facility staff are trained on how to cater to or teach youth with unique developmental needs. Research demonstrates that most incarcerated youth receive a more fragmented and subpar education than their peers in the community (Blomberg et al., 2011; Leone et al., 2005) and that the education is not tailored for youth with learning, behavioral and cognitive challenges (Blomberg et al., 2011). The lack of educational infrastructure in juvenile justice facilities makes it especially more challenging for the 40% of court-involved with learning disabilities to effectively transition back into school upon release in order to graduate (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2013). For example, a study found that 7% of 10,000 court-involved youth released from Florida detention facilities earned a high school diploma or its equivalent before transitioning into the community (Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program, 2005).

Facilities that lack the resources and structure for educational programming limit opportunities for youth to attain an education. A study conducted by the Department of Education demonstrated that 43% of youth did not return to school following detention release, and the 16% who did enroll in school dropped out within five months of release

(LeBlanc et al., 1991). In addition, Blomberg and colleagues (2011) examined educational achievement during incarceration, post release schooling and subsequent re-arrest. Data was collected from 4,147 incarcerated youth across 115 juvenile justice facilities. The findings also illustrated that youth were less likely to attend school upon release (Blomberg et al., 2011). However, youth who received quality educational programming in the facility and performed above average were about 70% more likely to return to school after release compared to their peers who performed below average during incarceration. Additionally, the researchers found that youth who returned to school and maintained attendance were 26% less likely to recidivate within 12 months and 15% were less likely in a year (Blomberg et al., 2011).

Social relationships. Juvenile justice involvement has been found by experts to have negative effects on social relationships (Hartwell, Fisher, & Davis, 2010), which is particularly detrimental for adolescents who are developing socially. It has been reported that disconnectedness from peers, family members and other adult support is prevalent with court-involved youth more so than their non-incarcerated peers (Little, 2006). Many of the juvenile facilities are located far away from where the youth live and attend school, limiting their contact with positive adult figures in their lives. Developmentally, it is normal for adolescents to decrease their reliance on adult support. However, research suggests that court-involved youth separate from adults more rapidly than their peers (Little, 2006). Furthermore, research notes that isolation from the community limits opportunities for societal norms and expectations to be reinforced and prosocial behaviors to be practiced by youth (Steinberg, Chung, & Little, 2004).

The presence of an adult figure has been shown to decrease mental health challenges in incarcerated youth, which further illustrates the importance of not isolating youth from positive community members. Monahan, Goldweber, and Cauffman (2011) examined the relationship between parental visitation and the mental health of incarcerated youth. Interviews were conducted with 276 males aged 14 to 17 over the first two months of incarceration. Findings suggested that youth who received visits from their parents had more decreases in depressive symptoms compared to youth who did not receive visits from their parents. Further, more visits from parents resulted in greater declines in depressive symptoms.

Court-involvement also has an impact on peer relationships. Some researchers suggest that court-involved youth are at risk of engaging in more problem behaviors through association with delinquent peer groups (Dodge, Dishion, & Lansford, 2006). They also posit that segregating court-involved youth with other delinquent youth may lead to negative outcomes, while reducing the intended benefits of juvenile justice intervention programs. According to Dodge, Dishion, and Lansford (2006) there are several mechanisms of “deviant” peer contagion. Peer contagion may happen when youth are unsupervised in unstructured settings, and when young youth are placed with older youth who have committed the same crimes (Bayer, Pintoff & Pozen, 2004).

Psychosocial development. Adolescence is marked by the development of psychosocial maturity. Psychosocial maturity is critical for making a successful transition to adulthood (Steinberg, 2010). Therefore, youth must develop the psychosocial capacities to improve adult outcomes. There are varying psychosocial maturity models.

According to Greenberger (1984), youth must master three capacities in order to obtain psychosocial maturity. First, youth must develop skills necessary to be a contributing member of society through educational and vocational training. Additionally, one is expected to have social skills/interpersonal skills in order to interact with others and maintain relationships. Lastly, individuals must have a positive self-worth and the capacity to behave responsibly and set goals.

According to Dmitrieva and colleagues (2012), psychosocial maturity is reflected by increases in temperance (ability to control impulsive behavior), perspective (seeing things from multiple viewpoints) and responsibility (the ability to function autonomously). Temperance, perspective and responsibility gradually develop over the course of adolescence. Dmitrieva and colleagues (2012) conducted a study that examined the relationship between incarceration and the psychosocial maturity of juveniles using data from a seven-year longitudinal study. The population of youth included 117 males ages 14 to 17. The youth were from low socio-economic status families. Forty-two percent of the youth were African American, 34% Hispanic, 19% White and 5% other/biracial. The study investigated whether the quality of juvenile facilities and age at incarceration moderate the effect of incarceration on psychosocial maturity. For the methods, they conducted a baseline interview with each participant and then interviewed them every six months. Thus, the participants engaged in eleven interviews over seven years. There was 60% retention among the participants. The results of the study illustrated that incarceration in a secure setting was associated with a short-term decrease in temperance and responsibility compared to a residential setting (Dmitrieva et al.,

2012). Additionally, the results showed that the total time in residential facilities had a negative impact on the developmental trajectory of psychosocial maturity. Lastly, the results demonstrated that age at incarceration moderated the effect of incarceration, and youth who perceived their incarceration setting as unsafe had a decrease in temperance (Dmitrieva et al., 2012).

Similarly, Steinberg and Cauffman's (1996) review noted that individuals with higher levels of psychosocial maturity compared to those with lower levels made more socially responsible decisions and had healthier outcomes as adults. The results of these two studies suggest that age of incarceration and time spent incarcerated influences the development of psychosocial maturity.

Well-being/mental health. Researchers have suggested that a youth's journey through the various case processing phases of the juvenile system and incarceration itself exacerbate pre-existing behavioral and mental health problems (Defoe, Farrington, and Loeber, 2013; Holman & Ziedenberg, 2013). Mental health problems tend to be exacerbated by the lack of treatment offered in some juvenile facilities and by the non-optimal conditions experienced during juvenile justice involvement. Mental health concerns in this population include the severity of mental disorders (Shufelt & Coccozza, 2006), high rates of comorbidity (Abrantes, Hoffmann, & Anton, 2005) and associated clinical concerns such as suicidality (Abram, Paskar, Washburn, & Teplin, 2008) and self-harm (Kenny, Lenning, & Nelson, 2007).

Court involved youth are found to have a higher prevalence of mental health concerns (Grisso, 1999;) compared to 8.2% of the general population (United States

Department of Education, 2005). Literature also notes that between 50% and 75% of court-involved youth meet criteria for a mental health disorder (Grande et al., 2011; Gottsman & Schwarz, 2011; Teplin et al., 2002; Teplin et al., 2013; Wald & Losen, 2003). The most common mental health disorders for this population of youth include affective disorders, psychotic disorders, anxiety disorders, disruptive behavior disorders and substance abuse (Teplin et al., 2006). Approximately 15% to 30% of the juvenile justice population has depression or pervasive depressive disorder (Weiss, & Garber, 2003), 13% to 30% have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, 3% to 7% have bipolar disorder (Goldstein et al., 2005; Teplin et al., 2002), and 11% to 32% have posttraumatic stress disorder (Abram et al., 2004). Confirming these results, a multi-state study was conducted to assess the mental health of over 1400 court-involved youth (Shufelt, 2006). The results indicated that over 60% of youth qualified for a mental health diagnosis. Furthermore, they found that the most common diagnosis included disruptive behavior disorders, followed by substance abuse disorders, anxiety disorders and mood disorders (Shufelt, 2006).

Many youth involved in the justice system have more than one co-occurring mental health disorder (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2000). With regard to comorbidity, about 40% to 80% of incarcerated youth have at least two mental health disorders (Colins et al., 2009; Gilbert et al., 2015; Teplin et al., 2002, Timmons-Mitchell et al., 1997; Wasserman, McReynolds, Lucas, Fisher, & Santos, 2002). Data from the Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency demonstrated that substance use disorders are the most common co-occurring disorders with serious crimes committed

(Huizinga et al., 2000). More than 50% of court-involved youth are engaged in substance use (Huizinga et al., 2000). Despite the high rates of substance abuse among court-involved youth, substance abuse treatment is only accessible in 36% of juvenile facilities (National Center on Addiction & Substance Abuse, 2005).

Moreover, the prevalence of suicide ideations and attempts among the juvenile justice population is concerning. Research has found that 52% of incarcerated youth identified suicidal ideation (Esposito & Clum, 2002), and completed suicides accounted for 35% of deaths of juveniles in the system (Hockenberry et al., 2015).

The absence of effective mental health interventions coupled with the likelihood of experiencing a traumatic event, victimization, bullying, isolation, abuse or a suicide attempt while incarcerated enhances the prospect of exacerbated mental health concerns and the development of additional mental health disorders (Greve, 2001). Research has shown that one third of youth were diagnosed with an onset of depression after they were incarcerated (Kashani et al., 1980). Wasserman and colleagues (2010) found that rates of emotional, behavioral and substance abuse problems increased as youth moved through case processing.

In addition to the stressors associated within the juvenile justice environment, there are stressors related to being disconnected from their lives outside of the facility. One other stressor that may contribute to or enhance mental health problems for youth includes the perceptions of constrained opportunity one may face upon leaving the system. For example, Lane, Lanza-Kaduce, Frazier, & Bishop (2002) reported that many juveniles who were incarcerated felt that their childhood and positive aspirations for the

future had been taken away from them.

A few states have implemented interventions within their juvenile justice systems to address the mental health needs of court-involved youth. Some states (i.e., Arizona, California, Colorado, and New Hampshire) have developed courtroom practices allowing mental health screenings for youth, and others have created specialized mental health courts (National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), 2012). Some states have community-based treatment programs for youth whose mental health problems would otherwise be worsened if they were detained in a secure setting. Diversion programs have been established in many cities instead of processing youth through adjudication. Other states, such as Texas and Virginia, have implemented procedures for after care that include treatments (e.g., mental health, substance abuse) for youth reintegrating into the community. Although many states have been proactive in implementing promising intervention programs to assist youth with mental health problems, juvenile justice systems across the United States still exist that have not adequately developed the infrastructure to treat or help youth cope with preexisting mental health concerns, or those that have worsened or developed during incarceration.

Labeling. The lasting effect of being labeled a “juvenile delinquent” and the stigma that is attached to it may have short- and long-term consequences for youth. According to labeling theory, there are two mechanisms by which the label could lead to increased delinquency (Paternoster & Iovanni, 1989). One mechanism includes the youth’s internalization of the label. Research claims that the internalization of the label may lead to the adoption of a negative self-concept, such that a youth may question their

own ability to obtain success in their communities (Mears & Travis, 2004). This internalization stems from society's response to the youth's problem behaviors, which impacts how the youth begins to view their world (Becker, 1963; Schur, 1971). For example, authors noted that they may withdraw from pursuing their goals (Bernburg, 2009), and associate with peers who engage in delinquent behaviors (Wiley, Slocum, & Esbensen, 2013). The second mechanism in labeling theory emphasizes the external processes that occur in response to the label. For example, within society, youth may experience more surveillance, as well as decreased social opportunities (Klein, 1986; Link, Cullen, Struening, ShROUT, & Dohrenwend, 1989; Paternoster & Iovanni, 1989). Youth may be excluded from social networks, employment and educational opportunities (Mears & Travis, 2004). Research reports that the stigma may have an influence on how they are treated by employers (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Pager, 2003; Schwartz & Skolnick, 1962), and educational institutions may segregate these youth into specialized programs for individuals with problem behaviors (Kirk & Sampson, 2013).

Recidivism. Finally, juvenile justice system involvement has an impact on recidivism rates. Recidivism can be defined as “the repetition of criminal behavior” (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006, p. 234). Studies have demonstrated that placing youth in the juvenile justice system enhances youth and adult recidivism (Benda, Corwyn, & Toombs, 2001; Ezell & Cohen, 2005; Holman & Ziedenberg, 2013; Sampson & Laub, 2003; Warren & Rosenbaum, 1986). For example, an evaluation conducted on detention facilities in four Wisconsin counties found that 70% of the youth were arrested or returned to a detention center within one year of discharge (Bezruki, Varana, & Hill,

1999). Another study conducted on detention facilities in New York found that 89% of boys and 81% of girls who had been released were arrested again prior to reaching 28 years old, and 71% of these boys and 32% girls were placed in adult prison (Colman et al., 2008). Additionally, a five-year longitudinal study conducted by Bullis and colleagues (2002) explored the transition from facility to community of 531 incarcerated youth in Oregon. After leaving the facility, the youth completed a survey and were interviewed every six months. Family interviews were also conducted to obtain information on the quality of services youth were receiving while in the juvenile justice system. The results demonstrated that 40% of the youth returned to the juvenile justice system within 12 months of release (Bullis et al., 2002). Only 31% were engaged in work or school at 12 months after the release. Those who were placed in residential facilities had higher recidivism rates. A literature review identified recidivism rates for youth leaving juvenile justice placements in 38 states, including the District of Columbia (Mendel, 2011). Across these states, Mendel (2011) found that 70% to 80% of juveniles from residential correctional programs were re-arrested within three years of release. Overall, experts suggest that this provides evidence that involvement in the juvenile justice system may in fact maintain or increase levels of engagement in maladaptive behavior and criminal activity (Gatti, Tremblay, & Vitaro, 2009; Lane et al., 2002).

Literature has described other predictors of recidivism, including offense severity, age of first arrest, drug use and adverse family experiences. Recidivism has been linked to age of first arrest. Youth arrested prior to the age of 14 are two to three times more likely to commit adult crimes (Loeber & Farrington, 2001). Another study illustrated that

youth 14 years and older with at least one arrest were 75% more likely to recidivate (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). Furthermore, drug use has shown to enhance the likelihood of recidivism. One study examined assessment reports and court records of 234 juvenile males who were arrested and found that nearly all of them had a history of drug use, suggesting history of substance use predicted recidivism (Niarhos & Routh, 1992). Recidivism rates are higher for juvenile justice offenders with drug history compared with non-drug offenders (Blenko, 2006). Rates of substance use are three times higher in juvenile justice populations compared to the general population (Office of Applied Studies, 2005).

Lastly, adverse family experiences have been shown to be associated with recidivism. For example, a study investigated the differences between youth who engaged in delinquent behaviors earlier rather than later (Alltucker, Bullis, Close, & Yovanoff, 2006). The researchers collected data from 531 court-involved youth in Oregon using a social skill rating form, interviews and surveys. Data was analyzed with logistic regressions to predict age of involvement in delinquent behaviors based on foster care experience, family criminality, special education disability, and socioeconomic status. Findings indicated that youth from foster care were four times more likely to engage in delinquent behaviors early compared to youth with no foster care experience (Alltucker et al., 2006). Also, the researchers found that youth with a family member who was convicted of a felony started delinquent behaviors early and were twice as likely to be re-arrested compared to youth who did not have a family member convicted of a felony. Further, a meta-analysis found that the strongest predictors of juvenile recidivism

include offense history, family problems, poor use of leisure time, contact with delinquent peers, conduct problems, and mental health challenges (Cottle, 2001).

Transition Interventions

In order to promote positive outcomes and reduce recidivism, a provision of evidenced based practices must be implemented. Evidenced based practices help practitioners understand how programs can be successfully implemented and sustained. Implementing empirically validated practices with fidelity may support the effectiveness of the intervention and attain positive effects (Cook, Smith, & Tankersley, 2012).

Several studies have demonstrated that interventions with a workforce readiness and employment component reduce recidivism. A systematic review of juvenile justice interventions was conducted to evaluate which programs reduce at least one indicator of recidivism (Office of Justice Programs, 2008). Results highlighted that the use of counseling, skill-based activities and provision of multiple services, a strengths-based perspective, and youth empowerment activities were effective practices for reducing recidivism for juveniles. Overall, these key intervention practices suggest the importance of skill building, caring relationships and self-efficacy, which are key elements of a positive youth development approach.

Additionally, Lipsey (2009) conducted a meta-analysis from 361 studies published between 1958 and 2002 on effective intervention programs designed to reduce recidivism in juvenile offenders. His study found that skill-building, which consisted of 12% (n = 169) of programs, was one of the most effective interventions. Skill-building programs focused on social skills, vocational training and placement, academic programs,

and cognitive behavioral therapy (Lipsey, 2009). It was noted that these programs decreased recidivism by 6 percentage points. Specifically, job-related training programs reduced recidivism by about 2.8 percentage points. Although his results highlighted the importance of skill-building and workforce readiness training in reducing recidivism, the effects were not statistically significant.

Davis and colleagues (2010) also conducted a meta-analysis, but considered the impact of vocational training for incarcerated adults. They found that recidivism decreased by 36% compared to their similarly situated peers who did not participate in vocational training. In contrast, Wilson (1994) studied the impact of vocational training in the youth population by examining recidivism rates within five years post release among 403 youth ages 11 to 18. The treatment group, which received vocational education, had 260 participants and the group that received no programming included 143 youth. The study found that recidivism decreased by 17.2 percentage points in the treatment group compared to the control group (Wilson, 1994).

Similarly, DelliCarpini (2010) examined the impact of vocational training for youth ages 16 to 21 compared to youth in the previous year who only received academic instructional programming. The results indicated that the rate at which students earned a GED increased by 7.6 percentage points for those who received vocational training (DelliCarpini, 2010). In addition, Roos (2006) investigated the employment and recidivism rates for youth in the Re-Integration of Offenders–Youth (RIO-Y) career development program. The sample included 1502 court-involved youth ages 18-21. There were 582 youth who participated in the career development program and 920 participants

who were in the control group and received no programming. The study illustrated that program participants were 39% more likely to be employed one year post release compared to the control group (Roos, 2006). The researchers also found that recidivism was reduced by 3 percent in the treatment group, but this was not statistically significant (Roos, 2006).

Moreover, Bullis and colleagues (2002) found that court-involved youth who were employed or enrolled in college during the first six months following release were 3.2 times less likely to recidivate and 2.5 times more likely to remain employed in school within one year following release. Project Stay Out also addressed the transition needs of court-involved youth, but focused on those with disabilities, with 87% having emotional disabilities (Unruh, Waintrup, Canter, & Smith, 2010). Similarly, the results of the program indicated that 66% of participants were either employed or enrolled in some type of educational setting during the first six months following their release.

In sum, the results from all of these studies highlight employment/vocational-based interventions as a promising transition program for court-involved youth. Not only do these intervention programs have the potential to decrease recidivism, but they also promote positive youth development.

Effective transition intervention programs are critical to help re-engage court involved youth and make sure they are on a positive developmental trajectory (Altschuler & Brash, 2004; Spencer & Jones-Walker, 2004). The evidence suggests that court-involved youth are more likely to successfully reengage in the community and decrease recidivism if promising transition programs are in place (Hockenberry & Puzanchera,

2015). Transition programs refer to comprehensive services that combine positive youth development elements (i.e., vocational training, social skills training, relationship building) intended to assist youth in gaining competencies and life skills needed to successfully reintegrate into the community.

High recidivism rates and other poor outcomes noted throughout the juvenile justice literature suggest that current rehabilitation programs, educational institutions, juvenile justice facilities and community-based organizations are not adequately transitioning youth or providing them with the assets needed to thrive in the community. Specifically, there are few transition efforts that incorporate a positive youth development framework for this population. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), of the 72 model transition programs for court-involved youth, only seven of these programs that are considered effective or promising focus on positive youth developmental outcomes. This suggests that only a small number of youth are receiving these services. Therefore, there is a need for more positive youth development focused transition programs for court-involved youth.

Conclusion

This section provided an overview of the juvenile justice system in the United States, including information on arrest rates, court-involved youth characteristics, case processing, the impact court-involvement has on positive developmental outcomes and transition-based interventions for this population. In summary, for most youth, crime is nonviolent, infrequent, peer-driven, and rises in late adolescence and declines afterwards. While rates of juvenile crime have decreased over the years, society's focus on youth

violence remains high, potentially fueling policies that do not facilitate positive developmental outcomes. The juvenile justice system was developed to rehabilitate youth. Yet, research has demonstrated that the nature of confinement limits the prospect of rehabilitation and negatively impacts normative development, contributing to recidivism rates and unfavorable adult outcomes. For most court-involved youth, potential for trauma exposure in and out of the facility, problems at home, school and in the community, and the lack of access to community resources and support suggest that their development is marked with an overwhelming number of challenges. An effective reform strategy would focus on developing positive youth development assets and well-being.

Work-based Learning

Work-based learning is an intervention strategy that can create the conditions for positive youth development to emerge, and can facilitate the successful transition to school, work and society for court-involved youth (NCWD/Youth, 2014). Work-based learning is a strength-based career development approach that bridges organizations, schools, and communities who guide, aid and mentor youth toward a successful future (Whetzel, 1992). This section provides a brief background and definition of work-based learning. After that, a discussion on the elements that constitute a quality work-based learning program will be provided. Then, the role community-based organizations play in delivering work-based learning programs will be examined. Next, detailed descriptions of a few work-based learning programs are highlighted. Subsequently, evidence that work-based learning fosters positive youth development is included. Then, commonly

cited discussions regarding the challenges of developing and implementing work-based learning programs are examined. Finally, a conclusion for the section is offered.

Work-Based Learning Background, Definition and Models

Background. Work-based learning has a significant history in the United States and has a relationship to learning, schools, employers, and the transition from school to work. Work-based learning became a prominent educational reform strategy in the 1990s (Whetzel, 1992). In 2015, the Department of Labor and Education published a set of regulations for implementing the Workforce and Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA is a legislation designed to support public workforce systems in providing quality job opportunities for individuals with significant barriers to employment. Title 1 of WIOA provides a framework through which states and local entities can leverage financial resources to provide work-based learning opportunities to youth. It's noted that twenty percent of WIOA Title I youth funds must be used for work-based learning. The Department of Labor is tasked with providing high quality coordinated services including career exploration, support for educational attainment, skill training, credentialing and internship which culminates in employment or post-secondary education (Federal Partners in Transition, 2015).

Definition. Generally, work-based learning refers to an educational intervention that incorporates learning and teaching in the workplace. It is defined by the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education as “learning technical, academic, and employability skills by working in a real work environment” (Alfeld, Charner, Johnson, & Watts, 2013, p. 2). For the purposes of this dissertation work-based learning

is defined as a “supervised program sponsored by an education or training organization that links knowledge gained at the work site with a planned program of study” (National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, 2013). Work-based learning programs differ in intensity, structure, scope and activities National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, 2013). These programs may include on the job training, mentoring or other supports to facilitate learning and skill development (Cahill, 2016).

Work-based learning models. There is an assortment of work-based learning program models. Work-based learning models frequently described throughout literature include apprenticeships, career academies, co-operative education/internships, school-based enterprises, and transitional jobs. Many of these work-based learning models differ by their goals, students they serve, means of coordinating with schools, training opportunities, types of worksites, required hours per week, and compensation for work (Federal Partners in Transition, 2015). Despite program differences, all of the models provide students with work experience in a workplace setting. Apprenticeships include a blend of career training, college level academic courses, and relevant work experience in the form of full-time paid work (Cahill, 2016). Employers and organizations typically sponsor apprenticeships. Internships and co-operative education are structured, supervised work experiences designed to enhance academic learning and gain access to expertise that otherwise would not be available in school (Darche et al., 2009). Youth are employed for any duration of time ranging from a week to a summer or academic year. Depending on the internship, youth may or may not be compensated in payment for their

work. Career academies are an integration of small learning communities, academic studies, and work-related experiences all around a specific career theme (Kemple, 2004). Historically, the goals of these programs were to enhance preparation for work, school engagement and prevent school dropout (Kemple & Snipes, 2000). More recently, these programs have focused on strengthening STEM opportunities for the purposes of becoming more competitive internationally (Anderson, 2010) and preparing all youth for postsecondary opportunities. Lastly, school-based enterprises can be differentiated from the above models because they offer work experience within the school campus that mimics a specific industry (e.g., restaurants, stores). Another differentiating factor is that the supervisor is a teacher rather than an employer. Most school-based enterprises are run and managed by students providing them with training in entrepreneurship, marketing, accounting and management. Transitional jobs are time limited employment programs, through which youth obtain job readiness skills, various supportive services and a work history (Cahill, 2016). One emerging work-based learning model is work-based courses. These are community college courses that have been designed in collaboration with employers, so that skills are learned in the classroom and on the job (Kobes & Girardi, 2016).

Quality work-based learning programs. As defined by the National School-to-Work Office (1997), components of a quality work based learning program include: a) clear roles and responsibilities for worksite supervisors, mentors, teachers, support personnel, and other partners, b) training plans that specify learning goals tailored to individual youth with specific outcomes connected to their learning, c) opportunities for a

range of work-based learning experiences, especially those outside traditional youth employing industries such as hospitality and retail, d) assessments to identify skills, interests, and support needs at the worksites, e) reinforcement of work-based learning outside of work, and f) appropriate academic, social, and administrative support for youth, employers, and all involved (Federal Partners in Transition, 2015).

Research posits that the development and execution of quality work-based learning programs result from the collaboration of various stakeholders (Cahill, 2016). Worksites or other organizations must coordinate program design and delivery. Studies have shown that coordinated effort enhances use of academic skills in the workplace, promotes better quality supervision and provides work experience that is both challenging and meaningful (Stone, Stern, Hopkins, & McMillion, 1990). Experts argue that the degree of coordination can be assessed by the presence or absence of the following: training agreement, training plan, supervision of students' work, program coordinators having responsibility for finding placements, and course credit/grade depending on the achievement of work objectives (Kopp & Haimson, 1994).

Work-based learning programs that fail to include many of the aforementioned components may struggle to facilitate positive youth development outcomes. For example, research has illustrated that poor-quality, work-based learning programs that require long hours in poor quality jobs have been associated with negative behaviors such as substance abuse, smoking and drinking (Monahan, Lee, & Steinberg, 2011; Paschall, Flewelling, & Russell, 2004; Schulenberg & Bachman, 1993; Staff & Uggen, 2003; Weller, Kelder, Cooper, Basen-Engquist, & Tortolero, 2003). In contrast, it has been

found that these behaviors are minimized when youth work long hours in high-quality jobs (Barling, Rogers, & Kelloway, 1995; Schulenberg & Bachman, 1993). In sum, work-based learning quality is important for maximizing youth potential. Programs that neglect to incorporate these components may not facilitate positive outcomes for their youth.

Community-Based Organizations

Community-based organizations and crime prevention. A community-based organization (CBO) is a nonprofit that engages with a community or segments of a community, and provides a wide range of programs, activities and opportunities to develop relationships (Eccles & Templeton, 2008) to the individuals in the neighborhood. Communities are the “geographical and political” spaces where organizations function, and social norms, resources and relationships that surround the developing youth (Eccles & Templeton, 2008, p. 116). Community-based organizations are typically established, organized and managed by local practitioners and operated internally (Schneider, 2000). Community-based organizations differ in their mission, objectives, organizational structure, partnerships, sources for funding, budget, geographical location, political climate, size, staff training, and staff expertise.

Authors note that community-based organizations offer a variety of services at the individual (Dekovic et al., 2011), family (Goddard, 2014) and community level (Brewer, Hawkins, Catalano, & Neckerman, 1995) to promote assets and reduce challenges that may be present within the various levels of a youth’s ecology (Tanner-Smith, Wilson, & Lipsey, 2012). Community-based organizations may also align themselves around youth

strengths and needs in order to produce positive development outcomes, especially for the population of youth involved in the justice system.

Historically, community-based organizations played a key role in crime prevention (Ward, 2012). Community-based organization programming that targeted vulnerable youth started in the twentieth century (Katz, 1996; Ward, 2012). In the mid-1960s, the role of community-based organizations was to provide educational services and job training to prevent violence and delinquency, and increase political consciousness of urban youth (Goddard & Headly, 2015). During the 1970s, the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services sanctioned the treatment of court-involved youth into community-based organizations (Armstrong, 2002). Today, there continues to be a growing responsibility of community-based organizations to carry out crime prevention programs for delinquent youth and those involved in the juvenile justice system to help reduce problem behaviors and “risk factors” associated with court-involvement (Garland, 2001; Gray, 2013). These organizations serve a critical role in the lives of youth (McLaughlin, 2000) because they function as safe spaces that provide assets support to youth, and facilitate positive development (Borden et al., 2006; Deschesnes, McLaughlin, & O’Donoghue, 2006; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Roholt et al., 2013). Further, community-based organizations provide an avenue for youth to develop competencies and capacities to be leaders in their own communities (McLaughlin, 2000). Many communities-based organizations partner, collaborate and receive referrals from the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). In 1992, the Annie E. Casey Foundation initiated JDAI which is a national juvenile justice effort focused on reducing

secure detentions for low risk juveniles. The initiative focuses on public safety and positive development.

Community-based organizations conduct primary, secondary or tertiary crime prevention. Primary prevention programs focus on improving individual well-being, while secondary prevention activities target early stage offenders or individuals at risk of being court-involved. In comparison, tertiary programs are rehabilitative in nature and support youth that are transitioning from incarceration into the community (Goddard & Headly, 2015). Depending on the mission, funding or structure of the organization, they may implement one, two or all three crime prevention approaches.

Research has shown that community-based organizations that implement tertiary level interventions prove to be most effective at preventing crime (Lipsey, 2009; Lipsey et al., 2010). According to literature, the effectiveness of crime prevention programs is largely determined by the support and funding they receive from outside sources (Ramey & Shrider, 2014) and amount of partnerships they are able to build and maintain (Rosenbaum & Schuck, 2012). Therefore, organizations may serve an imperative intermediary role.

Community-based organizations as intermediaries. Community-based organizations that implement work-based learning programs for court-involved youth may serve a vital role in linking the various systems that developing youth are frequently embedded in, and interacting within and across (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; 2005). An expert suggests that community-based organizations provide the infrastructure for work-based learning but also facilitate communication and coordination among various stakeholders

across the levels including but also not limited to family, school, justice system, policymakers, business owners, social service providers, neighborhoods and youth themselves (Spencer, 2006). These elements are all described within the Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems (PVEST) framework she developed which examines resiliency during adolescent identity development (Spencer, 1995).

For example, community-based organizations can bridge the juvenile justice system and employers to ensure youth have a successful transition into the community. Additionally, organizations in an intermediary role can provide the supervision needed during the start of a new internship or job (OJJDP, 1995). In a supervisory role, organizations are positioned to help mediate problems, misunderstandings or challenges that may arise. Also, it is noted that they have “credibility” with businesses in several industries within the community, knowledge on juvenile justice processes, connections with community service providers and serve as youth advocates. Furthermore, they can function as case managers and consistently coordinate with employers and other organizations (OJJDP, 1995).

Social capital is an additional way of conceptualizing the partnerships between the systems youth are embedded within. The fundamental premise of social capital is that networks of relationships are valuable and provide resources such as access to knowledge (Coleman, 1988; Fortes & Landolt, 1996; Fortes, 1998). Conceptually, social capital is especially relevant to community-based organizations, which can create a supportive network within the community for youth by equipping youth with mentors, providing access to educational, employment and skill-building opportunities that will assist them

in their transition to adulthood (Fortes, 1998).

In summary, community-based organizations provide the infrastructure for work-based learning programs that serve court-involved youth. Community-based organizations can facilitate the development of assets by connecting youth to a variety of resources. Partnerships are imperative for youth development. Community-based organizations, businesses, social services, educational institutions, and juvenile justice systems must work together to successfully transition youth back into the community. It cannot be accomplished single handedly (National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth, 1996; Jang, Valero, Kim & Cramb, 2015). Next, evidence on how these and other work-based learning programs foster positive youth development outcomes is provided.

Evidence that Work-based Learning Programs Foster Positive Youth Outcomes

A couple of studies have highlighted the promising nature of work-based learning as an effective intervention program for youth (Bullis et al., 2002; Lipsey, 2009). For the general youth population, research illustrates that work-based learning programs support the advancement of key positive youth development elements evidenced by an increase in career development skills, cognitive, social and emotional competencies, meaningful adult relationships, and a decrease in delinquent behaviors (Heller 2014; Leos-Urbel, 2014; Sum, Trubskyy, & McHugh 2013; Walker and Viella-Velez, 1992). It is assumed that given these assets, work-based learning has the potential to also have a positive impact on the well-being and positive development of court-involved youth.

Career development skills. There is substantial evidence suggesting that work-based learning programs foster career development skills in youth (NCWD/Youth, 2014).

Career development activities provide youth the opportunity to develop self-exploration, career exploration and career planning/management skills. Self-exploration skills refer to youth developing an awareness of their interests, skills and values and learning how these apply to a wide range of occupational opportunities (NCWD/Youth, 2014). Career exploration skills refer to one's ability to explore their interests, skills and values, identify post-secondary opportunities necessary to pursue those goals, and generate a plan necessary to successfully enter those post-secondary opportunities (NCWD/Youth, 2014). Career planning and management refers to a wide range of skill areas, including job search skills, social emotional competencies, financial literacy and for youth with disabilities the ability to advocate for accommodations and disclose one's disability to employers. Career development opportunities empower youth and enhance well-being and positive youth outcomes. Some of these outcomes include matriculation into post-secondary schools (Kemple & Snipes, 2000; Kopp et al., 1995; Neumark & Rothstein, 2005), securing employment (Hughes, Bailey & Mechur, 2001; Kemple & Snipes, 2000; Neumark and Rothstein, 2005), developing relationships with positive peers and adults, and knowledge about a variety of careers (Burgstahler & Bellman, 2009; Hollenbeck, 1996; Neumark & Rothstein, 2005;).

Educational. In addition to workforce development, many studies have illustrated that work-based learning programs promote school engagement, decrease dropout rates and improve performance in school. Work-based learning activities provide students with a context for understanding how skills learned in school are useful and important in work, and an opportunity to apply academic skills to the workplace (Leos-Urbel, 2014).

Furthermore, work-based learning activities engage students who would be otherwise uninterested. Most recently, Leos-Urbel (2014) explored the impact of New York City's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) on educational outcomes for 35,550 low-income students ages 14 to 21. Data was collected through SYEP files and New York City Department of Education school records. Data analyzed included hours worked, student demographics, school attendance, and standardized Math and English exams. Results from the summer work-based learning program found that student attendance increased by one to two percent, and the passing rate on statewide high school Math and English tests increased a year following the completion of the program.

Another program also found improvements in achievement scores. Researchers examined the impact of the Summer Training and Education Program (STEP) on 2,519 low-income youth aged 14 to 15 in terms of academic performance and risk-taking behaviors. The STEP program incorporates education, job skill training, life skills and information on ways to decrease risk-taking behaviors. Another component included employment in an agency. Data collection included achievement tests, questionnaires, program records and school records. Results showed that student reading and math scores improved following the completion of a summer work-based learning program (Walker & Viella-Velez, 1992). However, no long-term impacts were found with regard to test scores, dropout rates, college attendance, employment, and risk-taking behavior.

Castellano and colleagues (2007) also examined the trajectories of students who participated in work based-learning programs with regard to school dropout. These authors conducted a five-year longitudinal study to explore the impact these programs

had on student achievement and postsecondary outcomes. The authors found that work-based learning programs that integrate career training and employment decreased school dropout rates (Castellano et al., 2007). However, unlike the previous studies, they found inconsistent results with regard to student achievement factors.

Another study (Hollenbeck, 1996) compared the outcomes for 178 students enrolled in the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Partnership (MTP) program to a group of similar students not participating in the program with regard to grade point average, academic performance and school attendance. Data collection included surveys, school transcripts and interviews. Participation in the program was associated with higher grades, attendance rates, and average class ranks (Hollenbeck, 1996).

Social and emotional skills. While the majority of literature focuses on cognitive and behavioral competencies students learn from participating in work-based learning activities, some research also emphasizes the importance of work in supporting students' ability to develop social and emotional skills. Social and emotional skills are necessary for the comprehension, management, and articulation of social and emotional information, which are associated with behaviors such as maintaining positive relationships, recognizing emotions, and making responsible decisions (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Elias, et al., 1994; Nowicki & Mitchell, 1998). Work-based learning activities cultivate opportunities to learn and strengthen these skills. For example, After School Matters examined the impact of a work-based learning program on various competencies in a sample of 535 students in Chicago. Data was collected from youth surveys, interview ratings by human resource professionals, school records and observations. Findings

suggested that at the conclusion of the work-based learning program, youth experienced improvements in behavioral, social, and emotional competencies and decreases in problem behaviors compared to non-participants (Hirsch et al., 2011). No significant differences were found in academic outcomes and in marketable job skills.

Meaningful relationships. Work-based learning activities encourage youth to develop positive and meaningful adult relationships. Supportive relationships in work programming can help reduce feelings of stress and anxiety that are commonly felt by youth who enter the workplace for the first time. Additionally, these relationships foster confidence in taking on new tasks, facilitate communication between co-workers and encourage youth to develop skills on how to search for support (Blustein, 2011; Hirschi, 2009; Kenny & Bledsoe, 2005; Vignoli, Croity-Belz, Chapeland, Fillipis, & Garcia, 2005). Also, literature has demonstrated the importance of developing positive adult relationships in promoting academic, social and emotional competencies (Haddad, Chen, & Greenberger, 2011). Although quality adult relationships are imperative for all youth, they are especially significant for ethnic minority youth from low-income backgrounds (Heath, 1994). These relationships are positively associated with several outcomes, such as access to resources, employment, and support with transitions from high school (Chang, Greenberger, Chen, Heckhausen, & Farruggia, 2010; Malecki & Demaray, 2013).

There is evidence illustrating the importance of supportive relationships in attaining positive outcomes. For instance, Bennett (2007) found that students from urban high schools reported that work-based learning program supervisors provided

informational support, encouragement, and mentoring, which positively influenced their attitudes towards work. Additionally, Linnehan (2001, 2003) found the positive workplace mentoring in work-based learning programs for urban youth improved their self-esteem, understanding of school relevancy, school attendance, and academic grade point averages. Further, students' attitudes towards school and career planning were positively associated with their perceptions of supportive work-based learning supervisors (Kenny, Walsh-Blair, Blustein, Bempechat, & Seltzer, 2010). Lastly, researchers demonstrated that students valued their relationships with their supervisors because they provided practical and emotional support (Bempechat, Kenny, Blustein, & Seltzer, 2014).

Delinquent behavior. Some research explores the association between work-based learning activities and decreases in risky, violent, and delinquent behavior. Given that school failure and dropout are risk factors for engaging in delinquent behavior, one can glean from the findings above that youth engaged in some form of work-based learning activity may reduce engagement in delinquent behaviors.

A lack of summer employment increases the probability that youth will experience social isolation, have more opportunities to engage in unstructured activities in neighborhoods or participate in violent and delinquent behavior (Sum, Trubskyy, & McHugh, 2013). Summer work-based learning programs have been shown to help decrease engagement in unproductive activities when school is closed. Heller (2014) assessed whether participation in Chicago's One Summer Plus (OSP), an 8-week summer program of part-time work in local community and government organizations, reduced

violent crime among marginalized high school youth in inner city Chicago. She conducted a randomized control trial of 1,634 predominantly African-American youth from high crime, high poverty neighborhoods to examine whether participation in the program reduced violent crime arrests. Youth participating in OSP were paid minimum wage for 25 hours of work per week. Youth who received the SEL classes and worked had a 43% decrease in violent crime arrests during the 16-month follow-up compared to the control group. This study demonstrates that low-cost employment interventions for marginalized youth who have not yet dropped out of school can lower violent crime arrests.

Another summer youth employment program was implemented in low-income neighborhoods in Boston to address unemployment problems and provide positive summer opportunities for youth ages 14 to 24 years old. The study examined the impact of summer employment on personal and social behaviors that are associated with violence exposure on 421 participating youth. The researchers analyzed the number of measures that participants and non-participants indicated either improved their behavior or experienced deterioration in behavior. Twenty-two measures were monitored by surveys. Improvements were found in 19 measures, including the seven of eight measures of delinquent behavior for participants. In contrast, non-participants experienced improvements in only three measures. The findings indicated that participants were more likely to decrease delinquent behaviors over the summer compared to youth on the program waitlist (Sum, Trubskyy, & McHugh, 2013).

Literature also demonstrates that work-based learning programs as a whole

enhance positive youth development outcomes. Researchers posit that youth who participate in work-based learning perform better in school than youth whose curriculum does not incorporate work-based learning (Hughes, Bailey & Karp, 2002; Visher, Bhandari & Medrich, 2004). Lapan (2004) suggested that work-based learning promotes motivation and school engagement. Furthermore, a study that examined high school graduates' experiences with work-based learning found that the program prepared them for work and life beyond high school (Kenny et al., 2016).

Overall, the findings in this section suggest that work-based learning has the potential to facilitate the development of academic and non-cognitive competencies, caring relationships, self-determination, hope for the future, self-recognition of positive behavior and prosocial involvement, all of which are highlighted in the positive youth development research. However, little is known how this programming may impact court-involved youth specifically. Due to limited access to resources such as work-based learning, many court-involved youth do not have the opportunity to experience these positive outcomes.

Access to Work-based Learning

Opportunities to participate in work-based learning are not available to all youth. There is a clear underrepresentation of court-involved youth in work-based learning programs. Thus, efforts must be made at every level to ensure work-based learning is accessible to this population. Student recruitment strategies by organizations and institutions may contribute to, sustain or alleviate the disparities in who has access to work-based learning opportunities (Symonds et al., 2011). Youth who are given these

opportunities may find themselves at less of an advantage than youth who have been offered work-based learning opportunities. In sum, access to these activities is important for all youth to ensure experience and positive developmental outcomes.

Challenges to Work-based Learning Development and Implementation

Research on work-based learning programs in the United States offers mixed findings. Although research has demonstrated positive youth outcomes in work-based learning programs, challenges exist in the design and implementation of these initiatives.

One challenge includes the competing beliefs on the effectiveness of work-based learning programs. While some believe that work-based learning activities improve diverse facets of development in youth, others hypothesize that work-based learning is detrimental to youth development. An enduring criticism of work-based learning is that it disrupts academic progress and performance due to its intensive nature. Scholars suggest that employment may take away time from producing homework and results in school tardiness, lack of focus during class due to being tired, taking fewer classes, and lower grade point averages (Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986; Mortimer, 2003; Stone et al., 1990). Yet, expanding work-based learning, especially through paid summer jobs, offers students an avenue to engage in positive activities. Summer is an opportune time for youth to engage in positive activities since the summer is relatively unstructured for most youth and a student would not have to experience the constraints and competing demands associated with being in school.

Another challenge includes the collaboration between key stakeholders within work-based learning programs, such as students, educators, community-based

organizations and employers. Students may lack the confidence or fear working in a foreign environment. Educators may have limited time dedicated to preparing students for work placements, making connections with employers in the community and understanding specific employer needs (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2011). Lastly, a fundamental challenge, especially for work-based learning programming for court-involved youth, is employer engagement.

Employer engagement. Employer engagement is the process of providing work experience and training within an organization for youth. This can be in the form of an internship/cooperative education, apprenticeship or summer employment. Employers are key for connecting court-involved youth to the workforce. Employers offer youth opportunities to learn about the labor market, develop vocational skills, prepare for work and support academic pursuits. Additionally, employers can serve as a mentor, positive role model and community advocate to court-involved youth as they transition back into society. Employers may also enhance pathways for networking that would connect youth to other resources and employment prospects. This section will discuss what we know and don't know about employer engagement in work-based learning programs. More specifically, employer motivation, opportunities for employers, barriers to engagement and the importance of partnerships will be examined.

There are various reasons why employers are motivated to engage in work-based learning programs. Philanthropic (wanting to help youth), individual (bringing benefits to the firm/publicizing contributions to community or low cost labor) and collective (broadening implications of work-based learning for improving learning) motivations

were identified as reasons why employers engaged in work-based learning (WBL) programs, according to Bailey (1995). A few years later Bailey, Hughes, and Barr (2000) conducted a study that explored employer motivation for engaging in work-based learning. The results suggested that the majority of employers engaged in WBL for philanthropic reasons. Lynn and Wills (1994) also found that philanthropy was a strong motivation for employer engagement. Bailey, Hughes, and Barr (2000) also analyzed the characteristics of employers who were most likely to engage in work-based learning activities. They found that the firms were large, oriented towards national and international markets, had progressive human resource departments (i.e., use of job rotation, self-managed work teams, profit sharing), and were nonprofit or government organizations (Bailey, Hughes, & Barr, 2000).

There are a few benefits for employers engaged in work-based learning. Shapiro (1999) surveyed 4,000 private establishments on their involvement with work-based learning. The findings suggested that involvement in work-based learning decreased recruitment costs, a need to provide remedial education to workers and turnover rates of young workers (Shapiro, 1999).

Barriers are present in employer engagement. There are several complex personal, societal, and institutional factors that make employer engagement challenging. A national survey conducted by the Committee for Economic Development (1998) suggested that employers found difficulties with student placement and scheduling, accessing youth and getting support from community-based organizations in transporting youth to employment sites. The National Fund for Workforce Solutions (2007) conducted

a study examining coordination efforts needed in work-based learning. The authors explored the barriers in developing partnerships between employers and organizations in order to implement work-based learning. The results indicated that the lack of resources dedicated to work-based learning limit employer engagement. Additionally, the results suggested that employer partners lack the knowledge on how participating in work-based learning could benefit their organization. Many employers haven't fully grasped or understood the long-term benefits of investing in the training and socializing of youth in the workplace. Many of the employers found that youth lacked the employment skills needed for their specific firm (Taylor, 2011). Further, employers may not know where to access students or how initiate a work-based learning training program. Moreover, some employers are not knowledgeable on the incentives they may receive for participating in work-based learning (Holzer, 2014). Lastly, a challenge to employer engagement is the lack of cross-sector engagement that would enable coordination of services and activities.

With regard to the court-involved youth population, barriers to employer engagement may include stigma and employer views. To help employers overcome barriers to participation in work-based learning, the Department of Labor implemented a Federal Bonding Program (FBP), which can be used by employers to meet bonding requirements if they hire court-involved youth. This program provides a business insurance policy to employers to help "high-risk" individuals obtain employment (United States Department of Labor, 2016). It protects the employer in case of any money or property loss during the employee's tenure at the workplace. Bonds are given to employers for free as an incentive to hire court-involved youth.

Summary

This section provided a brief overview of the history of work-based learning programs in the United States, the intermediary role community-based organizations serve in connecting court-involved youth and employers, the impact of work-based learning on youth outcomes and challenges to program implementation. Research trends using national databases have produced some findings on the benefits of work-based learning programming. Overall, the current research on work-based learning programs provides insights but also leaves unanswered questions about how court-involved youth gain access to these opportunities, engage employers in these activities and how these programs facilitate positive youth development outcomes. Next, the conceptual framework for this study will be discussed.

Conceptual Framework

Although exploratory in nature, the study is grounded in a theoretical foundation for understanding how effective intervention programs can support the development of positive assets and enhance well-being in court-involved youth. First, a partial version of ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) will be discussed to describe the foundational understanding of positive youth development and well-being. Then, a review of positive youth development will be provided to explore the specific assets that can be incorporated in intervention programs. Subsequently, a well-being framework (Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2006) is introduced to better understand not only well-being in youth, but also the well-being of relationships and communities in which youth are embedded and highly dependent upon (i.e., families, schools, juvenile justice systems,

employers and other services). Lastly, implementation science will highlight the factors needed in implementing an intervention program. This section will conclude with a summary.

Ecological Systems Theory

This study focuses on a partial version of ecological systems theory. Urie Bronfenbrenner formulated the ecological systems framework to explain how youth development occurs in relation to multiple embedded and interacting social systems, including the most intimate (family ecological system) and moving outward to the broadest level, which includes socio-cultural and historical systems (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Bronfenbrenner & Morris (2006) noted that relationships between children and their immediate contexts and the larger social context must be evaluated to fully understand development and growth. The context involves four interrelated systems, each having either a direct or indirect influence on a child's development: micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chrono-systems (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). They are bi-directional at all levels. Importantly, humans are agentic and therefore influence their ecology, as well as being influenced by their ecology. The microsystem is the context in which the youth spends a lot of time interacting such as at home, school or with peers. The mesosystem is the interrelations amongst the various microsystems. This study focuses specifically on the mesosystem of the ecological systems framework. The study explores the interrelations between community-based organizations and the resources available to them to support youth. Next, I review the positive youth development framework.

Positive Youth Development: Framework for Studying Intervention Program Curriculum

In this section, I offer a brief history of positive youth development. Then, a definition of positive youth development is provided. Next, I review a few positive youth development frameworks and discuss common features recognized across these models that facilitate positive youth outcomes. Subsequently, the impact positive youth development programs have on youth outcomes will be examined. Finally, I will highlight the reasons why this approach is relevant to court-involved youth.

History and origins. PYD has a long history dating back to the twentieth century. For the purposes of this paper we will begin with the 1950s. In the 1950s, increases in juvenile crime and concern about delinquency led to the start of initiatives funded by the federal government to address these problems (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma, 2006). Youth problems increased and became more prevalent in the 1960s. The nation began to frame the adolescent period from a deficit-based perspective. Youth were described as “broken or in danger of becoming broken” (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma, 2006), dangerous (Anthony, 1969) and problems to be managed (Roth & Brooks-Gunn 2003). Furthermore, youth who engaged in risk-taking behaviors (e.g., alcohol and substance use/abuse, unsafe sex, partaking in violence) were exclusively characterized as lacking positive development features (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma, 2006). This deficit view of adolescence focused on problems in a youth’s development.

However, in the late 20th century, researchers began to challenge this deficit-based perspective on adolescent development, which underestimated young people’s true

potential/capacities and sought after ways to increase resources provided to youth (Bowers et al., 2010; Ramey & Rose-Krasnor, 2012). The concept of plasticity within adolescent development emerged. Additionally, researchers began to focus on youth strengths, and their ability to thrive and develop in the presence of contextual stresses (Werner & Smith, 2001). Rutter (1998) and other researchers started to use the term “resiliency” to describe this ability to flourish despite experiencing adversity. Research started to focus on ways schools and programs could enhance resiliency in youth (Rutter, 1998). Furthermore, investigations on the interactions between adults and youth led to an emphasis on how youth can be assets to communities. The convergence of an array of concepts researched for decades including youth strengths, plasticity of human development and resilience formed the positive youth development perspective.

Defining positive youth development. Positive youth development is a comprehensive way of thinking about the optimal development of adolescence, factors that facilitate their successful transition to adulthood and conditions in which youth thrive (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004). A primary principle of PYD is that even the most vulnerable youth or those who have experienced adversity can experience positive development or change for the better when they are provided with meaningful opportunities to develop skills and competencies, supports and positive adult relationships (Butts, Mayer, & Ruth, 2005). Positive youth development emphasizes the manifestation of strengths rather than risk factors (Damon, 2004). Organizations and programs that incorporate the principles of positive youth development are comprehensive (Kirby & Coyle, 1997) and encourage healthy development.

Relational developmental systems theory serves as the foundation for the positive youth development approach (Lerner, 2006). In general, the developmental systems theory highlights the role of contextual level assets (e.g., youth serving organizations, schools, family and community) in providing opportunities and supports to youth that facilitate the development of individual assets and skills (academic and non-cognitive) required to thrive during adolescence and into adulthood (Lerner, 2005). Individual assets may include intrinsic motivation, spirituality, positive purpose, self-regulation and hopeful future expectations (Lerner, 2004). More specifically, the metatheory, relational developmental systems theory recognizes that human development processes occur within mutually benefiting relations between the developing youth and various levels of his or her ecology (Overton, 2010). These relations control the pace, direction and outcome of development. Developmental regulations ensure there is always the potential for individual and systematic change through adolescence into adulthood (Baltes, Lindenberger, & Staudinger, 2006; Lerner 1984). These changes are referred to as plasticity. There are various social, physical, relational, emotional, behavioral and cognitive changes that occur within adolescence that make it an ideal period to study the plasticity of human development and the factors within the developmental system that promote positive functioning. The theory suggests that the potential for plasticity or change characterizes the strength of human development (Overton, 2010). Change can occur for better or worse. Nevertheless, a primary assumption of the relational developmental theory is that the presence of mutually influential relationships between the individual and context increases the likelihood for positive change and promoting

positive elements of human development (Lerner, 2002, 2004; Lerner, Phelps, Forman, & Bowers, 2009).

Altogether, this theory suggests that when bidirectional relations can be cultivated between the developing young person and their ecologies, then the probability that they will thrive across the lifespan and contribute to society will increase (Overton, 2010). Plasticity, adaptive developmental regulations and thriving suggest youth are “resources to be developed” (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003, p. 172).

Features that facilitate positive youth development. Since the inception of the positive youth development concept several models have been established, including the Five Cs (Lerner et al., 2009), Five Promises (Scales et al., 2008), Features of Positive Development Settings (Eccles & Gootman, 2002), and 40 Developmental Assets (Benson et al., 2006). A common framework used throughout literature is the Five Cs (Lerner et al., 2009). This model was built upon a 4Cs model proposed by Little (1993). This framework emphasizes the dynamic relations between the people in their varying ecologies (Lerner et al., 2009). As youth “navigate and manage” these interactions, they begin to attain the Five Cs. Those C’s include competence, confidence, connection, character and caring (Lerner et al., 2009). Youth who develop each of these Five Cs, which mark a “healthy flourishing person,” are considered thriving (Lerner et al., 2009). Furthermore, given that a thriving person ought to positively engage with and contribute to the contexts that have benefited them, the sixth C emphasizes a contribution to self, family, community and civil society (Lerner et al., 2009).

Another model includes America’s Promise Alliance’s Five Promises (Scales et

al., 2008). The Five Promises program suggests that the following five contextual factors are needed for youth to be “academically successful, civically engaged and socially competent”: caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, effective education and opportunities to serve (Scales et al., 2008). The National Research Council’s Features of Positive Development Settings (Eccles & Gootman, 2002) focuses on the daily settings (family, school and community) that promote positive development in youth. This framework suggests that these settings are more likely to maximize positive development assets in youth if they provide physical and psychological safety, consistent structure and adult supervision, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy, opportunities for skill building, and the integration of family, school and community efforts. The Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets (Benson et al., 2006) incorporate several skills, experiences, relationships and behaviors needed to encourage youth to engage in activities that promote positive development. Contextual assets include support from family, school and neighborhood, opportunities for empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time (Benson et al., 2006). Individual assets include commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies and positive identity. The more developmental assets an individual acquires, the greater the probability they will succeed in school and become healthy contributing members of their communities.

Many similarities exist across these and other positive youth development models. Zaff and colleagues (2015) described five common positive youth development features articulated across these and other frameworks. These features include the presence of

supportive adult relationships, skill building opportunities, healthy and safe environments, appropriate structure, positive social norms, and opportunities to contribute to society. These assets can inform practice and program delivery, resulting in youth who thrive, contribute to their communities (Lerner, 2005, 2006; Lerner et al., 2005) and experience overall well-being. A research study on positive youth development programs suggests that common contextual inputs include: presence of positive relationships, competencies, self-efficacy and autonomy, positive identity, hope for the future, recognition of positive behavior, and prosocial involvement and norms (Catalano & Kennedy, 1998). Based on the research, the present study will focus on safety the presence of positive relationships, skill building opportunities, pro-social involvement, and opportunities to contribute to society/belong. Theoretical foundations will be provided for each construct below.

Relationships. Relationships with caring adults are an essential feature of development. Research on child development describes the importance of attachment processes in the formation of social relationships with others (Ainsworth, Behar, Water, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1982, 1973, 1979; Mahler et al., 1975). A positive relationship with an adult has been demonstrated to be an effective intervention, especially for youth with problem behaviors (Caplan et al., 1992). A growing body of research confirms that social interactions and connectedness between youth and caring adults foster growth (Brophy, 1988; Boyes-Watson, 2008; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992) and strengthen positive adult outcomes such as autonomy, self-esteem, positive coping, motivation and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Furrer & Skinner, 2003). These outcomes are

attainable despite the challenges youth may face in their ecology, such as community violence, poverty, racial discrimination or social exclusion (Bulanda, Tellis, & McCrea, 2015). For youth facing stressful situations, supportive adults serve as resources by mentoring, listening, problem solving, encouraging goal setting, providing scaffolding for learning and forming secure attachments (Bowlby, 1969; Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Literature has also demonstrated the importance of developing positive adult relationships in promoting academic, social and emotional competencies (Haddad, Chen, & Greenberger, 2011). The Center for Promise published a report titled “Don’t Quit on Me,” (2015) which illustrated the role relationships play in the engagement and re-engagement of youth in school. The report highlighted that the various types (i.e., emotional, informational, appraisal and instrumental), sources (i.e., parents, adults, mentors and peers) and conditions (i.e., empathy, goal promotion, responsive and availability) of relationships lead to successful outcomes (Center for Promise, 2016). All these elements promote strengths, play a role in development and foster positive developmental outcomes (Dang & Miller, 2013). The researchers from the Center for Promise collected data through a mixed methods convergence model. Group interviews, individual interviews and surveys were conducted. One of the five findings suggested that caring relationships buffer the effects of adversity on rates of graduation (Center for Promise, 2016). Additionally, the results highlighted the importance of supportive relationships throughout the multi-level ecology of the adolescent, which varies by type, source and intensity. However, the results also stated that supports might not serve as a buffer for youth facing several risks to graduation and numerous adverse experiences. In

sum, nurturing relationships are essential for youth development (Center for Promise, 2016).

Competencies. Programs that promote positive youth development provide opportunities to attain various competencies (Gardner, 1993). Social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and moral competencies will be discussed. Programs that promote social competence provide training in interpersonal skills, including communication, conflict-resolution, negotiation and assertiveness. Emotional competence incorporates learning frustration tolerance, impulse management, coping and the identification of feelings (Gardner, 1993). Cognitive competence emphasizes the development of decision making, problem solving, goal setting and planning skills. Programs classified as promoting behavioral competence focus on teaching verbal and nonverbal strategies that reinforce positive behavior. Moral competence is comprised of the promotion of empathy, respect for diversity, rules, a sense of right and wrong and social justice (Keung Ma, 2011). Increases in social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and moral competencies can foster positive outcomes (Botvin et al., 1995).

Prosocial involvement. Prosocial involvement is an important asset for youth development. Prosocial norms are the precursor to prosocial behaviors. Prosocial norms are the standards, beliefs, guidelines, and expectations for appropriate behaviors that are enforced in society (Marshall, 1998; Siu, Cheung, & Leung, 2007). Behaviors that are prosocial are comprised of voluntary actions that serve to help an individual or community of individuals (Carlo et al., 2014). Carlo and his colleagues (Carlo, Knight, McGinley, Zamboanga, & Jarvis, 2010), identified various types of prosocial behaviors

including: compliant, emotional, direct, public anonymous and altruistic.

Social learning theory suggests that behavior is learned, modeled and shaped by rewards and punishment (Bandura, 1977). According to social learning theory, prosocial involvement is the result of reinforcements such as praise, rewards and social approval. Findings from one study demonstrated that children who shared or helped someone continued these prosocial behaviors when they received praise and attention (Gelfand et al., 1975). Alternatively, motivation theory suggests prosocial involvement fulfills the needs, goals or motives of the individual (Clary & Snyder, 1991; Wentzel, Filisetti, & Looney, 2007).

Prosocial involvement results in several positive adolescent outcomes. Prosocial behavior is associated with increased psychosocial adjustment (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998), social skills, attention (Eisenberg et al., 1996), community integration/relatedness (Eisenberg et al., 1996), mood, and attitudes (Penner et al., 2005). It also fosters self-acceptance (Keyes, 1998), autonomy, relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and overall well-being (Ellison, 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Wheeler, Gorey, & Greenblatt, 1998). Participation in positive activities provides opportunities for youth to acquire interpersonal skills through their interactions with peers and adults (Hawkins et al., 1987; Patterson, Chamberlain, & Reid, 1982; Pentz et al., 1989b), develop constructive relationships (Montgomery, 2005) and impact their community (Dryfoos, 1990; Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003; Search Institute, 2006).

Furthermore, prosocial involvement has been shown to have an impact on adolescent problem behavior. Prosocial behaviors may serve as a protective factor against

affiliation with deviant peers and potential delinquent behavior (Carlo et al., 2014).

Participation in prosocial activities offer structured time for youth, thereby reducing deviant behaviors (Hirshi, 1969). A study examined adult participation in high school prosocial activities for 900 participants from the Michigan Study of Life Transitions. Data was collected from questionnaires. The results highlighted that youth engaged in prosocial activities in 10th grade predicted lower substance abuse, higher self-esteem and an increased likelihood of college graduation (Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001).

More recently a study examined the relation between prosocial behaviors, deviant peer affiliations, and delinquent and aggressive behaviors among 666 adolescents (Carlo et al., 2014). The findings suggested that prosocial behaviors may serve as a protective mechanism for youth who affiliate with deviant peers and engage in delinquent behaviors (Carlo et al., 2014). Further, the results demonstrated that youth who engage in compliant and altruistic prosocial behaviors are less likely to associate with deviant peers and subsequently engage in delinquent behavior (Carlo et al., 2014).

Safe environments. According to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954), safe and secure environments both physically and psychologically are needed so that youth can focus on complex developmental tasks (Margolin & Vickerman, 2007). Physically safe spaces are "free of violence and unsafe health conditions" (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Psychological environments attract youth and keep them engaged in programs (Eccles & Barber, 1999). Supervised and structured positive youth development programs can meet the psychological and physical safety needs for youth (Borden et al., 2006; Connell & Gambone, 1998; Halpern, Baker, & Mollard, 2000;

Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003). When these needs are satisfied it results in outcomes such as an increased willingness to contribute to the community (Borden, Lee, Serido, & Collins, 2008), academic achievement (McCart, Smith, & Saunders, 2007; Pittman et al., 2003), leadership skills (Catalano & Kennedy, 1998), and a decrease in delinquent behaviors (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Lopez et al., 2005).

Fostering Self-Determination by Providing Opportunities to belong. Programs can cultivate belongingness by incorporating activities that increase youth empowerment, autonomy, self-advocacy, initiative, flexibility, discipline, responsibility, confidence to access resources, independence and an ability to interact with individuals (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Providing avenues for belongingness can facilitate self-determination. According to Deci and Ryan (1994) self-determination is the psychological need for competence, autonomy and relatedness. When these needs are met, an individual will flourish (Deci & Ryan, 1994). Additionally, self-determination theory addresses the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of an individual. Intrinsic motivation is characterized by accomplishing a task for enjoyment or pleasure. In contrast, extrinsic motivation is when an individual completes a task because it will result in a reward. Research demonstrates that intrinsically goal oriented individuals are more engaged and persistent in learning activities compared to those who are extrinsically goal oriented or lack goal framing (Deci, Lens, & Vansteenkiste, 2006).

In summary, the features that facilitate positive youth development were described and theoretical foundations were provided for each construct. The subsequent section examines the impact positive youth development programs have on youth

outcomes.

Impact of Positive Youth Development Programs on Youth Outcomes

Having described the features of positive development above, this section will discuss empirical research on the effectiveness of programs that adopt a positive youth development approach. Catalano and colleagues (2004) conducted a meta-analysis and examined the characteristics of 25 positive youth development program evaluations. The researchers also explored the relationships between the predictors of youth behavior and positive youth development outcomes. The review suggested that 76% (n = 19) of the evaluated programs experienced increases in the following outcomes: positive behavior, interpersonal skills, quality of relationships, problem solving, competencies, self-efficacy, engagement in school and academic achievement (Catalano et al., 2004). Additionally, the results illustrated that 96% (n = 24) of the programs demonstrated significant decreases in the following behaviors: substance use, school misconduct, violence, truancy, smoking and high-risk sexual behavior. It can be concluded from the results that programs that adopt a positive youth development approach result in positive outcomes for youth (Catalano et al., 2004).

Durlak and colleagues (2007) also reviewed the outcomes of positive youth development programs through a meta-analysis of 526 intervention programs that promoted social and emotional competencies in youth aged five to 18 who had adjustment challenges. Inclusion criteria for their articles included a control group, at least one outcome measure that assessed youth's behavior and appeared in English. Their findings confirm positive outcomes found in Catalano and colleagues' (2004) research.

Likewise, their results suggested that program participants experienced increases in self-perceptions, bonds to school, social behaviors, grades and levels of academic achievement compared to the control group (Durlak et al., 2007). These studies demonstrate growing evidence that acquiring assets predicts positive outcomes and overall well-being of youth. Additionally, the more assets acquired, the better the outcomes (McLaughlin, 2000; Merry, 2000). The following section describes the relevance of positive youth development intervention programs for court-involved youth.

Positive Youth Development and Court-involved Youth

A positive youth development approach that guides practice is particularly relevant to the study of court-involved youth (Eccles et al., 2003; Heinze, 2013; Scales et al., 2006). Understanding adolescence from a positive perspective is critical to the study of court-involved youth who are consistently defined by the negative behaviors they exhibit and exposure to contextual challenges. Despite exposure to adversity, engaging in problem behaviors or being involved in various social services, change is attainable (Sanders et al., 2015). There are three reasons why a positive youth development approach may be beneficial to this population of youth. First, youth who have experienced individual and contextual adversities tend to terminate childhood early and take on adult responsibilities earlier than most children their age (Rogers, 2011; Stein et al., 2011). Second, the focus on strengths provides an alternative narrative to the prevalent emphasis on problems, challenges and deficits that commonly define this population (Case, 2006). The strength-based approach is accomplished by highlighting the skills, capacities and resources court-involved youth possess (Cheon, 2008). This

focus is more productive because they need supports and opportunities to develop “prosocial strengths and attributes” if they are to avoid future court-involvement and successfully transition into their communities (Butts, Mayer, Ruth 2005).

Third, other perspectives focus on context, suggesting that these interventions may be responsive to diverse youth, their families and communities, thereby increasing the relevancy and significance of the intervention (Sanders et al., 2015). This focus on context also suggests resources are readily available and accessible to youth (Bottrell, 2009; Ungar et al., 2013).

Positive youth development program practices must be specifically adapted to serve court-involved youth due to contextual and systematic barriers they have encountered compared to their non-court-involved peers. Accounting for the diverse and unique needs of court-involved youth will allow organizations to better support and facilitate their successful transition to adulthood. For example, positive youth development programs that serve conventional youth may not have to consider the difficulties with trust and relationship building that many court-involved youth may experience. Additionally, the universal approach to positive youth development assumes that youth have the readiness, willingness and attitudes to participate in prosocial activities with peers and adults. However, these qualities may not be readily accessible in the court-involved youth population since they have demonstrated more of a tendency to not follow rules, resist authority and social norms (Butts, Bazemore, & Meroe, 2010).

The positive youth justice model was created to fill this gap (Butts, Bazemore, & Meroe, 2010). The model provides an alternative approach to program design and

implementation and has begun to dissect which positive youth development features are more relevant for court-involved youth. Similar to the other positive youth development frameworks, its approach emphasizes protective factors, strengths, and positive outcomes. The model focuses on youth's attainment of two essential assets (learning/doing and attaching/belonging) in six domains. These domains include work, education, relationships, community, health and creativity. The attaching/belonging asset highlights fostering bonds between youth and positive peers and adults. The learning/doing asset emphasizes the importance of providing youth with opportunities to develop as they transition into adulthood. In order to meet the needs of court-involved youth, the model underscores the importance of collaboration with a variety of systems including the justice system, communities, families and schools. Butts, Bazemore, & Meroe (2010) suggests that work programs are better situated to incorporate positive youth development principles because they place youth in roles where they can acquire knowledge, practice skills, and develop relationships with positive adults.

The Positive Youth Justice Model is unique in that it focuses on the importance of physical activity for court-involved youth in their PYD framework. Physical activity has the potential to aid in the development of social, emotional, and physical well-being (Butts, Bazemore, & Meroe, 2010). More specifically, participating in physical activity can aid in self-confidence, sense of belonging, emotional development through winning and losing, moral development from learning about rules and consequences, and learning that individuals can make a difference in group efforts (Butts, Bazemore, & Meroe, 2010). Additionally, this framework encourages creative arts as a tool for developing

competencies, character and relationships. Further, the model is presented as a matrix so that practitioners can use it as a guide in the development of interventions that incorporate a range of the assets and domains, and outcome measures.

In summary, this section discussed the origins of positive youth development, various models that have emerged and common characteristics across the positive youth development frameworks. Positive youth development replaces the deficit viewpoint of adolescence. The approach considers interrelated person-context bidirectional relationships within all levels of an ecology and “acceptance” that development occurs over time due to plasticity. More specifically, this approach emphasizes the potential of each court-involved youth.

Well-being: A Framework for Studying Intervention Program Infrastructure

A well-being framework is introduced to better understand the well-being of youth and interventions designed to promote well-being in addition to positive outcomes. Some researchers suggest that the well-being of an individual is highly dependent on the well-being of the relationships and communities in which they are embedded (Evans & Prilleltensky, 2007). Well-being is defined as a “positive state of affairs in which the personal, relational and collective needs and aspirations of individuals and communities are fulfilled” (Evans & Prilleltensky, 2007; Prilleltensky et al., 2002). Given that individuals should be understood within their broader environment and not in isolation, well-being is considered a multidimensional concept that spans across multiple levels (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2006). Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological model of human development provides a lens for understanding the

complexity of the nature of well-being at the individual, relational and collective levels.

According to Evans and Prilleltensky (2007), the framework of well-being includes sites, signs, sources and strategies of well-being for youth and communities. Sites are locations where well-being resides. Individual sites are where cognitions, thoughts and experiences of well-being are situated. Relationships are sites where affection, nurturance and exchange of resources take place. Finally, communities as sites include accessibility to quality education, health, jobs and other services. Evans and Prilleltensky (2007) refer to signs as the ways to examine whether well-being is present at the various sites. Expressions of well-being at the individual level include self-determination, mental health, and self-efficacy, to name a few. Indicators of well-being at the relational level are comprised of support, collaboration, nurturance and caring. Signs of collective well-being include, but are not limited to, resources, accessibility to quality services and employment opportunities (Evans & Prilleltensky, 2007). The presence of these signs suggests that individual and community level needs have been satisfied. Sources of well-being are groups of determinates for each one of the sites and their signs. Examples of sources include an opportunity to voice an opinion (individual level), experiences of trust with adults (relational level) and policies that promote social justice (collective level).

In summary, Prilleltensky's well-being framework is holistic, such that well-being is embedded in the social environment and is the result of the integration of personal, relational and collective dimensions. This well-being framework focuses on individual level well-being as well as the contextual dynamics that influence youth. Without

contributions of youth with optimism, self-efficacy and sense of purpose, organizations cannot effectively function. Similarly, youth cannot thrive without caring relationships and an environment that is affirmative, respecting and reflective. An integrated and multi-level understanding/perspective of well-being encourages interventions that are collaborative and lead to change. This perspective also emphasizes the mediating role of organizations (Sirgy et al., 2006). Berger and Neuhaus (1977) proposed that mediating structures could help “mediate between micro and macro” levels of the environment in order for policy change to occur and impact individual level well-being. Understanding how and to what extent mediating structures function in relation to well-being provides ideas for effective interventions. To maximize well-being, intervention strategies must incorporate each of the sites, signs and sources of well-being simultaneously. Also, the most promising interventions integrate the resources of relationships and communities. Additionally, interventions that implement strategies that focus on the individual as well as the infrastructure that enhances well-being prove to be a successful strategy.

Implementation Science

Implementation science is one approach that may help organizations understand how to build capacity for strengthening work-based learning interventions for court-involved youth. Implementation science was established over a decade ago out of the need to address more effective implementation of research to practice in professional areas such as healthcare and child welfare (Kelly & Perkins, 2012). Implementation science has been defined as the study of the process of implementing evidenced based programs and practices into professional practice and public policy (Eccles & Mittman,

2006). This framework includes the study of how to “transport” core components of an intervention, adapt the intervention to the specific context, and enhance successful implementation by addressing the culture of an organization or community (Rabin & Brownson, 2012). Implementation science is important because it expands knowledge on how evidenced based programs can be successfully developed and sustained. Even if the intervention is proven to be effective by research, if not implemented effectively it will most likely fail (Fagen et al., 2008). It is important to understand how and if intervention programs are successfully implemented, as well as how implementation is related to outcomes.

Theoretical Foundations Conclusion

Adolescence is a period of challenges and opportunities. Youth have the potential to develop into productive adults who positively contribute to society. However, court-involved youth are exposed to variety of ecological barriers and challenges that may negatively impact their wellbeing and future adult opportunities. This section provided an in-depth examination of the set of assets acknowledged as important for positive development, youth well-being and the successful transition to adulthood. Ecological systems theory, positive youth development and well-being have implications for community-based organizations designing and implementing transition interventions for court-involved youth. The section highlights the importance of organizations in supporting youth developed relationships, social capital, and competencies to manage transitions from the juvenile justice system. Additionally, these theories suggest the important role organizations play in linking youth, community services, juvenile justice

system, and businesses. The features of positive youth development and the infrastructure needed to facilitate positive youth development programs align with the key components of work-based learning programs.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the research aims, research design and analysis plan for the dissertation project. Research has demonstrated that juvenile justice system involvement limits the prospect of rehabilitation and creates a barrier to normative development, contributing to recidivism rates, unfavorable adult outcomes and overall well-being. Given this, court-involved youth are less prepared to successfully transition into society and manage adult tasks. Nevertheless, literature is beginning to suggest that positive outcomes can be facilitated with court-involved youth when a positive youth development framework guides practice. Comprehensive transition programs with a work-based learning component are one intervention strategy that can incorporate the principles of positive youth development, emphasize positive youth outcomes and facilitate the successful transition to school, work and society for court-involved youth. Community-based organizations that implement work-based learning programs for court-involved youth are vital for connecting the systems in which youth are embedded. Although developing partnerships in order to implement work-based learning that positively impacts youth development, few studies have examined how organizations are supporting court-involved youth gain access to these opportunities. Additionally, a better understanding of how community-based organizations are designing work-based learning programs to support positive youth development is imperative in order for organizations to communicate design specifications with one another, and to duplicate and expand the creation of effective work-based learning for former court-involved youth.

The current study supplements existing research by exploring the experiences of

community-based organizations that have implemented work-based learning as a transition-based intervention for court-involved youth. The purpose of this research is to examine how community-based organizations are supporting court-involved youth's access to work-based learning opportunities and investigate whether, and in what ways, these opportunities are facilitating positive youth development. The following questions will be addressed:

- (1) How do community-based organizations support court-involved youth to gain access to work-based learning activities?
- (2) How do community-based organizations determine what activities to implement in their transition programs?
- (3) In what ways are the organizations incorporating positive youth development and well-being principles in the programs?

Research Design

A comparative multiple case study design (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009) was used to analyze the similarities, differences and patterns in how organizations are designing and implementing their transition programs for court-involved youth (Yin, 2003). This study utilized a qualitative multiple comparative case studies design by comparing cases with similar features (Yin, 2014). The unit of analysis is each individual organization that are engaged in work-based learning programming for court-involved youth. This design provides a rigorous approach for collecting and analyzing data (Yin, 2014). Yin (2003) emphasized the importance of multiple sources of evidence for the purposes of triangulation in each case study. He suggests sources such as documentation,

archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artifacts. The current study utilized interviews, contract documents, brochures, media documents, annual reports, and online qualitative surveys. Merriam (1998) states that case study is a useful research design in applied fields because it has proven beneficial for evaluating programs, informing policy and studying educational innovations. This applies to the current study context wherein organizations are being evaluated on their implementation and integration of positive youth development principles in their transition programming. The decision to focus on case study design stems from the fact that this design has the ability to answer "how" and "why", questions within real-world contexts (Trickett, 1994). The present study targets the growing significance of positive youth development in transition programming for court-involved youth. A multiple case study approach repeats the same procedure on multiple cases which enhances validity of the findings (Yin, 2003). The data collection protocol was designed based on logic modeling and positive youth development elements. The protocol included one table including the following sections: assumptions/theory of change, input, activities, output, impact. The other table included the following sections: safety, caring relationships, competencies, prosocial involvement, opportunities to belong, individual well-being, relational well-being and collective well-being.

Sample Selection

Purposive sampling was used to select agencies that were implementing comprehensive transition programs for court-involved youth. Inclusion criteria included the following: programs that serve youth who are at-risk or have been involved with the

juvenile justice system, the program included some aspect of job training and employment placement, and the willingness of the organization to participant. Access to the sample group was identified through researching the academic literature, internet searches and discussions with professional contacts in the field. Five organizations were identified for the study which is adequate for conducting a comparative case analysis (Yin, 2014). The organizations differed in their geographical location, structure, staff make, mission statement and age. One similarity is that they were all located in high crime cities.

Table 1

Organization Demographics

Organization	Geographical Location	City/Suburb/Rural	Age (years)
CBO1	Midwest	High Crime City	42
CBO2	West	High Crime City	19
CBO3	South	High Crime City	1
CBO4	South	High Crime City	37
CBO5	East	High Crime City	31

Data Collection

This section outlines describes the data collection and the instruments used for data collection including documents, interviews, field notes and qualitative surveys. The focus of the data collection was to evaluate how court-involved youth are gaining access to work-based learning, how programs are implementing positive youth development

principles, which positive youth development practices are occurring in the program and the range of factors that appear to facilitate or hinder implementation of practices. Areas examined include program mission, funding mechanisms, staff training, youth recruitment, compatibility of positive youth principles in their activities, collaborative relationships, assessment and evaluation efforts, and personal, relational and collective well-being. Data were collected from five organizations over a six-month period using documents, semi-structured interviews, field notes and qualitative survey interviews. After the data was collected, a data base was created to organize and document the data collected.

Data collection involved contacting each organization by email or telephone to gain their cooperation, explain the purpose of the study, and assemble key contact information. Each participant was asked to provide informed consent.

Document review. The researcher gathered organizational documents such as administrative reports, brochures, evaluation reports, annual reports, media, samples of recruitment materials, youth needs assessment, and partnership agreements with businesses. These documents were examined to assess if and where positive youth development principles were embedded in the program activities.

Interview. Semi-structured open-ended interviews were conducted with the executive director or director of each organization using an interview protocol, which can be found in Appendix A. The interview protocol is guided by the four main research questions. Questions were compiled from positive youth development and well-being frameworks, implementation science, as well as literature on organizations working with

court-involved youth. Interviews are key components of case studies because they “reveal ideas and opinions that can’t be uncovered through observation” (Yin, 2004). The interview questions were developed to elicit participants’ understanding of positive youth development, their perception of how these principles look in practice, opportunities and challenges to implementation, and awareness of collaborative relationships with other services. Flexibility is an important aspect of the interview (Yin, 2014). The general direction of questions may be changed and additional ones may be asked that were not planned beforehand (Yin, 1994). Each interview lasted 45 to 60 minutes. One interview was conducted in person and four were conducted over the phone. No matter the location, the interviews were conducted in a private room to ensure privacy. All interviews were audiotaped with participant permission and identified using participant identification numbers. The interviews were manually transcribed after the interview session by a research assistant.

Field notes. Written notes were taken during and after the interviews to capture impressions and questions that assisted with the interpretation of the interview data.

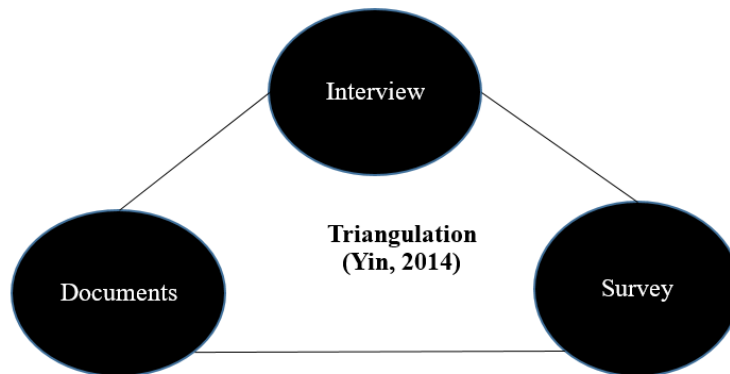
Survey interview. Survey interviews were conducted with one key stakeholder at each organization using a structured qualitative questionnaire (See Appendix B). This qualitative survey was created on Qualtrics. The link to the survey was emailed to the director or executive director of the organization. They were then asked to disseminate it to a stakeholder in their organization that was knowledgeable on the demographics of the organization and program activities. The types of stakeholders that completed the survey included a case manager or program director.

Data Processing. A case study database was created to organize and document the data that was collected. The documents, interview responses, field notes and survey responses were matched to its respective case.

With these methods of data collection, data triangulation was utilized (See Figure 1). Collecting information from multiple sources and corroborating findings strengthened construct validity of the case (Yin, 2014) and provided multiple measures of the same phenomenon.

Figure 1

Data Triangulation



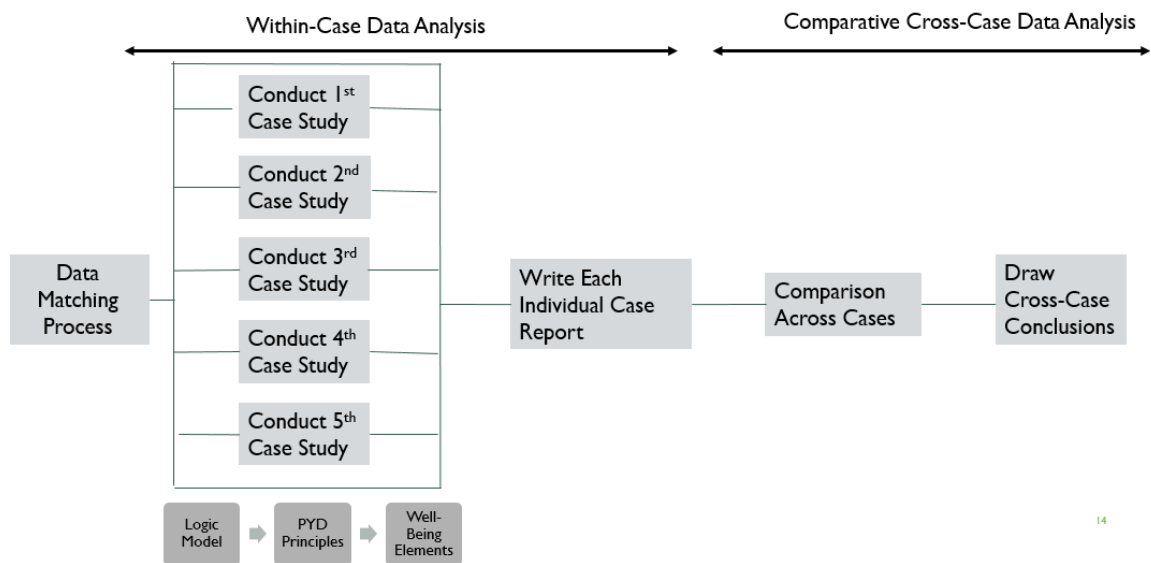
Analysis

A comparative multiple case study design (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009) was used to develop an in-depth description and analysis of the different ways in which agencies are designing and implementing comprehensive transition programs for court-involved youth (Yin, 2003) (See Figure 2). Yin's strategy for conducting a

comparative case analysis is to conduct a case analysis for each separate organization prior to comparing across cases.

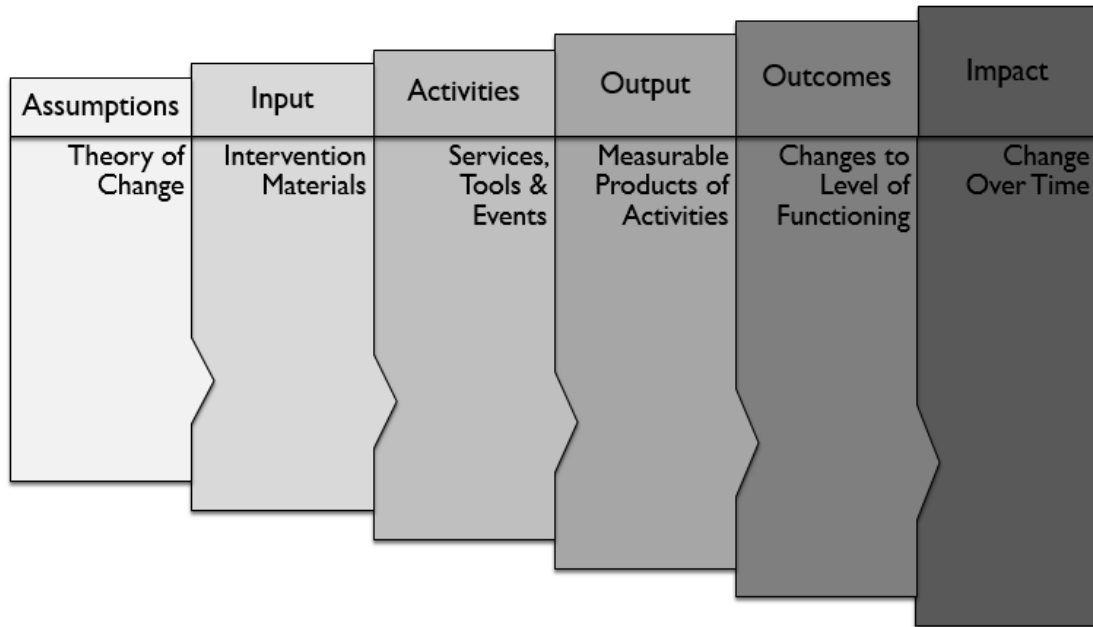
Figure 2

Data Analysis



First a within-case analysis was conducted and then a comparative cross case analysis. During the within-case analysis, three content analyses were conducted for each of the five cases. The first content analysis assessed the case data (e.g. documents, interview, field notes, and qualitative survey) for logic model components. Logic modeling provides a chain of events overtime. To describe the logic of the organization's design and implementation strategy, the outcomes-based logic model was adopted from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2004) (See Figure 3).

Figure 3

Logic Model

The six components of the logic model include the following: input, activities, output, outcome, impact and assumptions presented in the logic model (See Figure 3). The input/resources included intervention materials, financial reports, products and infrastructure. Activities included services, tools and events. Outputs are the measurable products of the activities. Outcomes are the individual changes to behavior, knowledge, skills or level of functioning. Impact is the change that occurs over an extended period of time (Kellogg Foundation, 2004; Yin, 2014). Additionally, an assumptions component includes the theory of change that helped with understanding the principles that influenced the design of the intervention (the how and why the intervention worked). This assumptions section will describe the problem addressed by the program, describe reasons for implementing certain types of solution strategies, connect strategies to

activities and other assumptions the organization holds (Kellogg Foundation, 2004). These definitions were used to construct separate logic models for each of the five organizations.

Each of the six logic model components were assigned a number one through six. All of the case data was coded for each of the logic model categories. After the data was coded, a logic model was created to illustrate the organizations assumptions, input, activities, output, outcomes and impact. To ensure the logic model captured the organizations full story, it was sent to the participants for review. A limitation of the study is that only CBO1 provided feedback. Based on their feedback, the model was refined and revised.

The second content analysis was conducted to code for positive youth development principles. These principles included safety, supportive relationships, competencies, prosocial involvement, and opportunities to belong. Each of these components were assigned a letter A through E. All of the data was coded for each of the five PYD components. This information was recorded in a table for analysis.

The third content analysis was conducted to code for indicators of well-being (personal, relational and collective) as defined by Prilleltensky (2005). Each of the three components were assigned a lower case letter a, b or c. All of the data was coded for these elements. This information was displayed in a data collection table. The three content analyses described above was repeated for each of the five cases. After completing the three content analysis, each individual case was written. The coding process for the three content analyses was challenging given that none of the

organizations documented all of their activities, program components and assumptions on one document.

Next, the separate logic models, PYD components and well-being elements tables were compared using cross-case analysis. Three comprehensive tables were created to compare each case across the three analyses. The five case studies were analyzed to determine if they shared similar design elements or contrasting profiles. It was assessed which positive youth development principles were being applied by the organizations and which one's appeared to be more challenging to implement/incorporate in the design of the intervention. Additionally, they were analyzed to determine which well-being principles were incorporated throughout the intervention.

Lastly, based on the knowledge that emerged from the data, a comprehensive theory of change was proposed that illustrated the conditions that facilitate positive youth development in order to guide future program design efforts. Overall this analysis strategy was used to evaluate the program intervention logic and research-base justifications.

This study's analysis established construct, internal and external validity, and reliability. Construct validity was established by incorporating multiple sources of data. Internal validity was established by conducting logic modeling and linking the interviews to existing data. External validity was established by replicating multiple case studies. Reliability was established by developing a case study database.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results for each of the five individual cases included in this study. A program logic model is presented based on interview, survey and document data. Following this visual, the context of the organization will be discussed, including the history, mission, target population, input and staff. Second, the theory of change, assumptions and program model or framework will be described. Then, a description of how positive youth development and well-being principles were integrated throughout the programs will be provided. Lastly, a cross-case analysis of the five cases in this study will be presented.

Table 2

CBOI Logic Model

Assumptions	Input/Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Evidenced based research to develop effective programming CBT - <i>Thinking for Change</i> - <i>CBT Skills (Aggression Replacement Training)</i> - <i>Advanced Practice</i> - <i>Cognitive Behavioral</i> - <i>Treatment Relapse Prevention</i> - <i>Getting Motivated to Change</i> - <i>Girls Moving On Aftercare Group</i>	Youth ages 12-24 Staff Mentors Case Managers Court Involved Youth Programs: - <i>Youth Career Academy: provide educational instruction, vocational training and person-centered</i> - <i>Footprints: residential program for girls that provides skill building</i> - <i>RAMP: mentoring to promote the successful transition of youth to employment, continued learning opportunities, and independent living</i> - <i>Right Turn 2.0: provides a career development programming to youth</i> - <i>WIOA Youth</i>	Assessment/Screeners - Student satisfaction survey - Footprints service planning guide/interest inventory (pre-assessment) - Client Evaluation of Self and Treatment is administered pre-service and every ninety days while in program. It assesses psychological functioning, social functioning, and treatment motivation. - How I Think Questionnaire administered at intake and at program exit. It measures criminogenic thinking risk areas. - Juvenile Automated Substance Abuse Evaluation Survey administered at intake. - Vocational assessments (O*Net and/or Career Cruising)	Social skills Emotional Skills Employment Skills Job-readiness skills Career Exploration Career planning and management skills Transition services Quality meaningful relationships	<u>Overall (2016 -2017)</u> - 374 Youth served - 98% Student satisfaction - 16 high school graduates - 28 On-the-job trainings - 98 youth obtained employment - 47 students earned an industry recognized credential - 7 students traveled abroad to Costa Rica - 74 Mentors recruited and trained <u>Program Specific Outcomes</u> <i>Youth Career Academy</i> - 89% participated in a Talent Tour (visiting colleges and employers) - 97% completed a vocational assessment - 10 students obtained after-school jobs - 36 Youth obtained work experience within a business line - All students participated in Certification days pursuing a certification in Customer	<u>Overall (2016 -2017)</u> - 92% of students refrained from obtaining new court charges - 89% continued working or remained in school 3 months after completing a Youth Services program - 1,880 hours of give back services from youth to the community

<p><i>Programs: provides valuable resources and support to students and aides in the transition to self-sufficient adulthood</i></p> <p>CBT Curriculum</p> <p>Partnerships with school districts, universities, and fire departments</p> <p>Grants (e.g., Capital Region Foundation, Dart Foundation, U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration, Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, The Institute for Educational Leadership</p> <p>Employers (e.g., Party City, Sugar Berry, Kroger’s, Royal Scot Catering)</p> <p>Referrals: police, juvenile facility, school district, walk-ins</p> <p>Staff are trained in trauma, crisis prevention and intervention, and CPI.</p>	<p>On-the job training</p> <p>Mentoring</p> <p>Professional portfolio development</p> <p>Industry recognized credentialing</p> <p>GED training</p> <p>Tutoring</p> <p>Job Shadows</p> <p>Campus visits</p> <p>Transition planning</p> <p>Aftercare Group</p> <p>Skills Trades Program</p> <p>Seasonal Hiring Events (for 22 employers)</p> <p>Volunteer Work/Restorative Justice</p>	<p>Service or the Trades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student satisfaction: 4.8/5 <p><i>Footprints</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 completed the program - 4 obtained after-school employment - Student satisfaction: 4.4/5 <p><i>RAMP:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Student selected to attend RAMP Annual Conference in Washington DC to present her high tech STEM - 100% of students completed a vocational assessment & Interest Profiler - Student satisfaction: 4.67/5 <p><i>Right Turn:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Served 213 Lansing youth over the past 2 years. - Placed 66 youth into employment. - 12 youth obtained their GED or HS Diploma - 28 students obtained an industry recognized credential - Student satisfaction: 4.6/5 <p><i>WIOA:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% enrollment goals met - 56% of Out-of-School 	
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<p>Program data management system is updated weekly</p> <p>Safety team</p>	<p>youth obtained employment and retained for at least 90 days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 Students attended National Jobs for America's Graduates Leadership conference - Student satisfaction: 4.87/5
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CBO1 Results (see Table 2)

History. **Community-based organization 1 (CBO1)** is a nonprofit organization located in a suburb of a Midwestern state. It was founded in 1976 to provide job training and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. According to the data, they provide more than 30 different rehabilitation and human services programs from art to career planning, pre-employment screening to facility-based training, youth programs and residential services. Overall, CBO1 is committed to assisting individuals with securing a job and maintain long-term employment, and allowing for career advancement. A wide range of services are offered, with a focus on job readiness skills, career exploration, resume development, interviewing, guided job searches, as well as developing interpersonal and coping skills to enhance job retention.

Mission. CBO1's mission is to provide a wide range of opportunities to maximize human potential for persons striving for independence and self-sufficiency. They embrace collaboration, effective resource management and innovative approaches to achieve world-class excellence. More specifically, the youth services programs focus on the needs of students in special education programs in local school districts. Programs are also available that support students involved in the court system who need an alternative to school or home. The youth service programs provide as many opportunities for individuals who have barriers to employment and help them strive for independence and self-sufficiency.

Target Population. Community-based organization 1's youth services have five programs that serve court-involved youth. One program provides educational instruction

and vocational training. Another program specifically provides skill-based instruction to girls living in a residential facility. Additionally, a program focuses on career development programming to youth. Further, a program provides mentoring services. The last program provides resources to youth who are transitioning to adulthood. Participation in these programs are fluid and youth can receive services or programming from any of the programs. The youth they serve range in age from 12-24 years old. The department receives referrals for youth from police, juvenile and probation facilities, and school districts. They also accept walk-ins. In 2016-2017, the program served 374 court involved youth. Racial demographics on the youth were not provided.

Staff. The department staff included an executive director, mentors, and case managers. Data demonstrated that 74 mentors were recruited and trained to serve the youth. With regard to hiring, the executive director hires individuals who have a “warm spirit, are caring and have a love vibe.” Interview data also suggests that the staff are described as “active” members in their communities. Community-based organization 1 has a “learning and growing” philosophy. Thus, staff are encouraged to become members of a variety of organizations in order to develop partnerships and stay abreast to trends in the community. For example, some staff members belong to organizations that target human trafficking, housing, abuse and welfare issues. Many of the youth they serve have trauma histories, so all of the staff are trained in trauma informed care, and crisis prevention and intervention through Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI).

Theory of change/assumptions/beliefs. Data suggests that the assumptions that serve the foundation of the program include cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT),

relational theory, and motivational interviewing. Documents demonstrated that they utilize a variety of CBT curricula throughout the program, including Thinking for Change, Aggression and Replacement Training, Advanced Practice, CBT Relapse Prevention, Getting Motivated to Change and Girls Moving on Aftercare Plan. With *CBT Skills* fifty social skills are presented in a CBT-based lesson format. Skills used are from Aggression Replacement Training by Glick and Gibbs (2011). The learning of these social skills in a step by step, easy to understand format encourages participants to engage with others in a pro-social way based on self-awareness and understanding how their actions impact others. *Advanced Practice* was developed by the University of Cincinnati. Advanced Practice uses social skills learned in T4C and CBT Skills and has participants do more practice on these skills using realistic or difficult situations. *Relapse Prevention* is based on a curriculum developed by the Correctional Services of Canada. Concepts/strategies learned by participants in the other CBT based curricula are pulled together and put into an individual relapse prevention plan/package that the participant can use once they are back at home and in the community. *Getting Motivated to Change* by Bartholomew, Dansereau and Simpson of Texas Christian University's Institute of Behavioral Research is derived from cognitive behavior models and instructs residents in the role of motivation in behavior change, self-motivation, adopting strategies for staying motivated while strengthening their commitment to change and exploring how to maintain gains and focus on set goals while making change. *Girls Moving On* is a program for criminal justice involved girls by Marilyn Van Dielen, Ph.D. It is a gender responsive program based on relational and cognitive behavior theory and research

concerned with girls and women. The goal of the program is to reduce criminal behavior and thinking as well as increase participants' health and well-being. Aftercare group uses CBT tools that are learned in the program by participants and allows for participants to review how to use the tools and also allows for additional practice. The goal of this group is to assist participants in managing high risk situations they face once reintegrated into the community. The explicit theory of change for this organization suggests that if youth receive evidenced based cognitive behavioral programming and supportive relationships then they will have positive postsecondary outcomes and decreases in recidivism rates.

Program Activities. A variety of activities are provided across all of the programs. Assessment is a large component of the youth services department. There are educational, mental health, and vocational assessments that are administered to determine eligibility into a specific program, immediate needs and goals. Client Evaluation of Self and Treatment (CEST) from Texas Christian University is administered pre-service and every ninety days while in the program. The CEST is a self-rating form completed by the referral or resident. It includes short scales for assessing psychological functioning, social functioning, and treatment motivation. These scales also provide a baseline for monitoring resident performance and changes during treatment. How I Think Questionnaire (HIT) by Gibbs, Baraga and Potter, is administered at intake and at program exit. The HIT is an assessment tool used to measure criminogenic thinking risk areas. The Juvenile Automated Substance Abuse Evaluation Survey (JASAE) from ADE Incorporated is administered at intake. The JASAE is a 107-question adolescent

substance abuse evaluation. This tool focuses on age and life situations as part of the substance abuse assessment and incorporates the differences in life situations for juveniles, including: living at home, going to school and not having a job or a family to support. Alcohol and other drug use are based on Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV (DSM-IV) and American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Guidelines.

Additionally, the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI) and/or Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT3) assessments are received from the court with the referral packet. The MAYSI is a 52-item true/false method used to screen youth ages 12-17 entering the juvenile justice system for potential mental health issues that may need immediate attention. The WRAT3 is an instrument designed to assess an individual's basic academic coding skills necessary to learn reading, spelling, and arithmetic.

Once they are placed in a program, they complete a career assessment that identifies strengths and areas for growth, and provides the opportunity to explore specific industries with a career interest in mind. The program also assesses education level to decipher quickly within the first 30 days what their education level is so that the staff can help design a treatment plan. Lastly, youth complete satisfaction surveys throughout the year. Additional activities include on the job training, mentoring, professional portfolios development, GED training, tutoring, job shadowing, campus visits, transition planning, aftercare programming, seasonal hiring events and civic engagement.

PYD elements embedded in program. All of the positive youth development

principles were imbedded in the program activities. This program incorporates several Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) activities. CBT is considered a PYD element such that it focuses on building cognitive and behavioral competencies in youth. Youth are provided with tools and agency to manage their thoughts and behaviors during challenging situations. Additionally, these tools can be beneficial for building and managing relationships. CBT in this context is not referred to therapy services.

Elements of safety were targeted throughout the program as evidenced by CBT curricula that address ways to manage high risk situations, and relapse prevention. Data suggests safety was demonstrated by providing staff training in crisis prevention and intervention. This training provides staff the tools to respond appropriately in unsafe situations. Lastly, safety was addressed in the program through the development of “safety teams” that included staff and youth. They develop plans for how to handle crisis situations at a public and personal level. These plans are shared and reviewed with all the youth.

A review of data suggests the organization supports the intention to foster caring relationships through CBT curricula, partnerships with employers, mentoring activities and community service opportunities. The CBT curriculum provides youth with the skills to build healthy relationships, as well as develop relationships with staff who are teaching the skills. Data suggest youth have the opportunity to develop relationships with employers that hire them to work while they are participants in the program. Data demonstrates that supportive relationships are fostered in the program through a mentoring program established with a Community College. College students in the

criminal justice department earn credit for mentoring the youth in the program. Further, youth have the opportunity to develop relationships with the elderly through community service projects at the nursing homes. The director of the program noted, “elderly serve as an essential support system...serving the elderly gives the youth a sense of purpose. The program attempt to maintain relationships with youth and their respective employers by inviting them to fun events that the program throws.

A review of data indicates the program strives to develop social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive and moral competencies in their program activities. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy curriculum targets social, emotional and behavioral competencies as evidenced by the opportunity to learn how to build relationships, express emotions, make healthy choices, develop self-awareness and understand the impact actions have on others. The relapse prevention program supports the development of behavioral competencies by teaching youth several relapse prevention strategies they can use once they transition back home and to their communities. Cognitive and behavioral competencies are developed through the career development activities, including career exploration, career planning and management, and job readiness skills. Youth have the opportunity to practice these skills through employment pipelines with organizations. A review of data demonstrates that the program supports the development of moral competencies by making youth aware of issues facing girls in society and conducting trainings related to how they can have a voice in our community and become strong leaders.

Data demonstrate that youth are provided opportunities for prosocial involvement.

Youth engage in community service projects such as helping the elderly at nursing homes and making flags out of wood to give to veterans. Additionally, prosocial involvement is demonstrated through restorative justice projects in collaboration with a local university.

Lastly, data indicate that CBO1 provides opportunities for youth to belong and develop self-efficacy. This is evidenced by the satisfaction survey which provides youth a voice into what improvements the organization should make to meet their goals or needs. The survey asks the following questions: *people at CBO1 have a caring attitude and treat me with respect, they value my skills and talents, they provide high quality service to everyone, with their help I am learning valuable skills that will help me in the future, I feel CBO1 is a great company and I'm happy with my experience here, what types of classes would you like offered?, please give examples of how CBO1 helped you achieve this goal, help us make CBO1 even better – what are your ideas?* Through panels and job shadows, youth have the opportunity to ask elected officials pertinent questions related to youth services, juvenile justice, youth rights and the foster care system. Some youth have traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with other youth across the country to discuss disability rights. Youth also attended a leadership conferences and trainings to learn how they can have a voice in their community.

Data suggest that the organization incorporated personal, relational and collective well-being as evidenced by providing opportunities to develop competencies, build relationships and access employment.

Youth outcomes. The outcomes from the annual report demonstrated improvements in program satisfaction, educational and employment outcomes, and

decreases in recidivism rates. The program served a total of 374 youth. Overall, across all five programs, 98% of youth were satisfied with the program, 16 youth graduated from high school, 28 received on the job training, 98 youth obtained employment and 47 youth earned an industry recognized credential. Additionally, 92% of students refrained from obtaining new court charges, and 89% continued working or remained in school 3 months after completing a Youth Services Program. Lastly, youth completed a total of 1,880 community service hours.

Table 3

CBO2 Logic Model

Assumptions (1)	Input/Resources (2)	Activities (3)	Outputs (4)	Outcomes (5)	Impact (6)
Search Institute Developmental Relationships Positive Youth Development (4 Cs) Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Nine Networks Model - Home & Family - Health - Legal - Education - Workforce Development - Life Skills - Community Engagement - Recreation - Leadership Development “Making the Right Turn” Guidebook Strategy - Meet the needs/gaps of	Youth ages 14 - 24 - 206 males & 39 females - 115 Hispanic - 138 AA - 115 Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Mentors Coach “Navigator” Job Developer Grants/Government Contracts/Contracts Contributions Donors - The Weingart Foundation - The California Wellness Foundation - The United Way - LAWFC Partners (90) Local officers, probation officers and departments	Coaching Career services ICDP Homework Help Application Workshop Movies and Pancakes OSHA Certification Work Readiness DMV Prep Tutoring Recreation activities Academic Counseling ESL Credit Retrieval Assistance Alternative School GED Instruction	Social skills Emotional Skills Employment Skills Job-readiness skills Career Exploration Career planning and management skills Transition services Quality meaningful relationships	Served 245 youth 93% (14/15) Basic skills deficient participants increased at least 1 grade level of reading 80% (12/15) Basic skills deficient participants increased at least 1 grade level of Math	61% (ages 17 and under) participants remained in high school for 12 months- Goal: 50% 70% (ages 17 and under) participants received a high school diploma- Goal: 60% 63% (ages 18 and up) participants received an Industry Recognized Certification-Goal: 60% 82% (ages 18 and up) participants received employment/post-secondary outcomes-Goal: 60% 17% recidivism rate at 12 months for participation ages 17 & under (8/47) 32% recidivism rate at 12 months for participants ages 18 7 up (9/28) 68% Working or attending school at 3 month follow up (173/253) 67 % Working or attending

<p>probation officers</p>	<p>Referral: - 86 Correctional Facility, - 156 Probation</p> <p>Rigorous mentee/mentor match process</p> <p>Participant Handbook</p> <p>PYD training for Mentors and Staff</p> <p>Corporate Incentives</p>	<p>Vocational Skill training</p> <p>College bound activities</p> <p>Work experience/employment</p> <p>Work Readiness training</p> <p>Job placement services</p> <p>Community Services/Restorative Justice</p> <p>Leadership Development</p> <p>Supportive Services Substance abuse training</p> <p>Math & Reading Remediation</p> <p>Assessments - Education Plan - Needs Assessment for all Nine Networks</p> <p>Mentors/Mentee trainings, mentoring events, and workshops</p> <p>Comprehensive referral services/list</p>		<p>school at 6 month follow up (160/238)</p> <p>55% Working or attending school at 9 month follow up (132/238)</p> <p>52% Working or attending school at 12 month follow up (61/117)</p>
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CBO2 Results (see Table 3)

History. Community-based organization 2 (CBO2) is a nonprofit organization located in an urban, high crime city in the Western Region of the United States. It was formed in 1998 to fulfill a City Council mandate to provide at-risk residents with construction job opportunities. According to data, more than 100 community-based organizations have partnered with CBO2 to refer disadvantaged individuals to the job program. Once these individuals visit CBO2, their profiles are stored in a database so that they can be notified about upcoming job training and career opportunities. Community-based organization 2 assists job candidates in union entry preparation due to the fact that the majority of their employment opportunities come from construction projects that are union affiliated. Community-based organization 2 has nearly 14,000 active job-ready candidates in their database. To date, CBO2 has filled more than 4,500 positions and have maintained a retention rate of 87%.

Mission. The mission of CBO2 is to provide at-risk residents in a career-track employment in the construction and other industries. The youth program was developed to provide court-involved youth with the necessary skills to gain employment experiences.

Target Population. The program targets youth involved in the juvenile justice system. In 2016 -2017 the program served 245 young people ages 14-24. The majority of the participants were male (206) compared to female (39). Racial demographics were provided (138 African American and 115 Hispanic youth). They receive their youth referrals from correctional and probation facilities.

Staff. The department staff includes an executive director, associate director, mentors, coaches/ “navigators”, job developer and case managers. All hires must have an affinity for working with this population. So, with regard to hiring strategy, the associate director reported that they target individuals with criminal backgrounds to ensure they relate to the youth they are serving. The original founding board decided that they wanted their executive director to have some affinity to the population. Thus, their executive director has been to prison, struggled with drug addiction, attended college and obtained employment. So the premise has always been to hire individuals who, like him, have an affinity for working with this population because they have “walked in their shoes.” As evidence, 40% of the staff have criminal backgrounds. However, for the youth program, none of the staff have criminal backgrounds because they are working with youth. Many of the staff have been raised in high poverty, high crime areas and “were able to pull themselves out of that, go to college, find good jobs and were still relatable.” In addition to these criteria, the individuals that they hire are young (average age 26) so they can relate to youth. With regard to training, the staff are trained on “personalizing” every youth’s experience and in a positive youth development framework, specifically the 4 Cs.

Theory of change/assumptions/beliefs. The assumptions that formed the foundation for this program were the Search Institute’s Developmental Relationships model, the Four Cs positive youth development framework, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Nine Model Network and Making the Right Turn Guidebook. These models, frameworks and guides supported the development of the activities implemented by the program. Evidenced based research was utilized to determine the ratio of mentors to mentees, level

of commitment from mentors, and level of interaction (groups vs. individual mentoring). Additionally, the program utilized information from probation officers to develop their programming. They initially met with probation officers to find out what their needs were, where they felt some of the gaps were and some of the challenges that they had experienced with working with youth. Lastly, CBO2 developed their own internal framework called the “Nine Networks”. Nine Networks identifies nine specific areas that are crucial to youth development. They are organized by priority starting with home and family first, then legal, then health and then moving on to education and workforce development, mentoring, community engagement, and recreation. This model appears to align with the Positive Youth Justice framework. The explicit theory of change suggests that if youth are provided basic needs, safety, connections, competencies, opportunities to belong then they will achieve positive postsecondary outcomes and decreased recidivism rates.

Program activities. A variety of activities are provided across all of the programs. They developed an assessment based on the Nine Networks that ask youth a series of questions of each one of those nine networks to assess their needs and their strengths so they could develop a plan for the youth. Additionally, CBO2 distributed interest surveys to the youth, which asked questions related to skills they wanted to learn or develop. Other program activities centered on education, vocation, credentialing, leadership development, recreation, civic engagement, and mentoring. For example, youth created an individualized career development plan which is a tool designed to assist youth in assessing their interests and abilities, goal setting, and planning their

future career path. Additionally, youth receive vocational skill training, work readiness training, and job placement services.

PYD elements embedded in program. All of the positive youth development principles were imbedded in the program activities. Elements of safety were targeted throughout the program as evidenced by providing youth with physical and emotional safety. Examples are provided below. Documents and interview data demonstrate that the design of the program is based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs to ensure youth's basic needs are met providing a sense of safety. A review of documents illustrates that youth are being referred for general health services, safe sex education, teen parenting and pregnancy information through the health portion of their Nine Networks. A review of documents suggest Home and Family is one of the networks with the highest priorities. Within this network, food, shelter, clothing, child and sex abuse counseling, gang intervention, family counseling or reunification services, and issues such as domestic violence are addressed. According to the interview, CBO2 created an environment in their building where youth "could feel safe enough to feel productive." The building incorporates an independent charter school that provides education for the youth who are having challenges. Thus, the youth are receiving comprehensive programming under one roof. The interviewee reported that youth could be in the building from 8am to 5pm receiving services without worrying about any competing gangs. The data demonstrated that youth's safety needs were met by the program with outings and field trips outside the city. All of the youth come from high poverty, high crime areas and, due to limited transportation access, many of the youth don't have the means to escape the city. The

interviewee reported that in order to get to the beach they have to travel through 17 rival gang neighborhoods on the bus and risk their life. Thus, youth get stifled into their own little one or two block mile radius. They can't leave that radius without protection. However, when the program had their outings, they took the youth as far from the high poverty, high crime areas as possible. As a result, youth were able to "play basketball for hours without having to worry about anyone stealing the ball, shoot at them, swear at them, or jump them" reported the executive director.

With regard to supportive relationships, this program provides youth with a mentor, coach, and a job developer. Additionally, training opportunities for youth and staff heavily focus on the importance of positive relationships in the program. Document review and interview data demonstrated that quality relationships are an integral part of the program, as evidenced by matching mentees to mentors based on interest and preferences. These mentors are in place to "help, listen and guide youth every single day." It was noted that youth have the opportunity to discuss their relational and school challenges. The interviewee stated that the mentors, staff and coaches are the "glue of the program". Mentors are probation officers, teachers and family members, and external adult role models. With regard to caring relationships, youth also receive a coach. According to the data, the coaches play an essential role in transitioning youth back into the community, school and home. The data highlighted that youth were cared for by the program job developer. The role of the job developer was to find specific industries that are amenable to the youth and their schedules such as retail and customer service, and culinary and food service. These individuals demonstrated care by being intentional about

finding jobs that aligned with youth needs. The data suggest that the program supports the youth by paying for required/optional certifications prior to referring them to employers to ensure they are competitive (e.g., Servsafe Handlers certification, National Retail Customer Service Training). Additionally, the data indicated that all of the CBO2 staff was trained on the PYD framework. Document review and interview data highlight that the program initiated relationships outside of youths' immediate family by connecting them with probation officers, teachers, mentors, coaches, community members through specific programming. Data from the interview suggests that some youth maintain relationships with staff following graduation from the program. For example, the interviewee stated, "we still have youth that come in, that text me, that call me, that still just say- I want to check in and wish you a happy mother's day, or happy thanksgiving, and just like random acts of kindness."

This program supports their youth in developing cognitive, behavioral, social and emotional competencies through a variety of activities. A review of documents suggests that the program supports the development of cognitive and behavioral competencies in their youth through life skill classes. The life skills classes are available to assist participants with understanding how to work effectively in society. They help create an understanding of the financial aspects of life, including, filing taxes, using and understanding credit, working with a budget, health and nutrition, family planning, and much more. A review of documents suggests that the program supports the development of cognitive and behavioral competencies in their youth through the Workforce Development and Career Exploration classes which are geared towards helping the

individual discover what interests they may have for a career. Job readiness sessions offer help to prepare for future interviews, prepare resumes, time management, and understanding their role in a company. Additionally, interview data reported that guest speakers frequently come to educate youth on specific career pathways. A review of documents and interview data indicate that youth have the opportunity to develop cognitive and behavioral competencies through work experience. The program connects youth to jobs in construction, food service, retail, customer service, and warehouses. Prior to connecting youth to these jobs, the program ensured youth received Servsafe Handlers certification and the National Retail Customer Service Training. Interview data highlights that the program provides the opportunity for youth to develop social and emotional competencies by incorporating a guest speaker series that discusses with youth how to seal juvenile records and build healthy relationships with their family. Documentation review and interview data provide the opportunity for youth to develop social and emotional competencies through restorative justice and volunteer projects. Data indicates that youth develop competencies through leadership opportunities. For example, it was noted that youth lead some program-wide staff meetings.

Community-based organization 2 provides prosocial involvement for their youth. The organization emphasized the importance of restorative justice. Youth participate in activities such as graffiti removal, beach clean-ups, and food bank packing, to name a few. Also, the Community Wide Violence Reduction provides youth with opportunities to take part in making the community a safer place to live. Peace rallies, speaker forums and community days are just a few events that the program hosts. Data indicates that

prosocial involvement occurs through volunteer work. For example, youth revamped an office in the building and created a clothing closet in order to distribute suits to men and women who had been in prison. Additionally, they delivered backpacks in the neighborhood to kids who were attending school.

Lastly, the program provides opportunities for youth to belong and build self-efficacy/self-determination skills. Document review and interview data suggests that youth were provided opportunities to belong by engaging in the needs assessment. The assessment gives youth the opportunity to engage in goal setting and express their needs in the areas of education and home life. Specifically, the assessment asks the following questions: *How do you define success in regards to your education? The areas I need to focus to achieve success regarding my education, I plan to do these things to accomplish my goals, Whose help do I need to achieve success with my educational goals, What obstacles could stop me from achieving my goals, need to participate in these program activities to support my goals, How I know I've reached my goals, Reflection of success.* The staff used the feedback from these forms to create their monthly activities calendar. The Community Wide Violence Reduction facilitated self-determination because it was youth led. Youth created short videos that highlighted community violence, the current status of community violence, their thoughts on, the impact community violence has had on them, and showed positive ways that people have come through community violence and changed their life. Data indicates that youth develop competencies through leadership opportunities, as demonstrated by youth leading program wide staff meetings.

Youth outcomes. A comprehensive spreadsheet provided by the organization

detailed the program outcomes. The outcomes assessed improvements in education and vocational outcomes, and decreases in recidivism. A total of 245 youth participated in the program. With regard to education the following results were noted: 93% participants increased at least 1 grade level of reading, 80% of participants increased at least 1 grade level of Math, 61% of participants (ages 17 and under) remained in high school for 12 months, and 70% participants (ages 17 and under) received a high school diploma. Employment outcomes included the following: 63% of participants (ages 18 and up) received an Industry Recognized Certification, and 82% of participants (ages 18 and up) received employment/post-secondary placements. The program also provided data on retention in postsecondary outcomes. For example, 68% of youth were working or attending school at the 3 month follow, 67 % at the 6 month follow up, 55%, at the 9 month follow up, and 52% at the 12 month follow up. Additionally, youth (17 and under) had had a 17% recidivism rate at 12 months and youth (ages 18 and up) had a 32% recidivism rate at 12 months.

Table 4

CBO3 Logic Model

Assumptions	Input/Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Implicit	<p>Youth ages 16-18 years</p> <p>Partnerships with Foundations, Nonprofits, Elected officials, Educational organizations, Employers (i.e., Houston Community College, TX RX Labs, Harris County juvenile probation department, Houston Center for Literacy, community-based organizations, Youthuild Houston, Food Bank)</p> <p>Referrals from probation officers</p> <p>Career Coaches</p> <p>Vocational Coach</p> <p>Probation Officer</p> <p>Case Managers</p> <p>Social worker/social work intern</p> <p>SER Jobs</p> <p>Data specialist</p> <p>Special Education Teacher</p>	<p>2-week Mental Toughness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing our Culture of Excellence - Team-Building Activities - Mindset Shift – (Academic and Career) - Goal Setting – Advisory Groups - Story and Knowledge of Self - Daily Celebrations/Shout-Outs - Academic Assessment Testing - Workplace readiness - Organization - Accountability and Support Circle - Leadership Development <p>6-week Paid On site job readiness/training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 Certification Tracks: customer service, food service, forklift operations (working on the following: woodshop, ceramics, 3D printing, welding) <p>GED classes and tutoring</p> <p>8-week Paid work experience</p> <p>Enrichment programming such as: sports, art, poetry, financial literacy, music production and life skills</p> <p>Social Services support</p> <p>Individual and group counseling</p>	<p>Job Readiness Skills</p> <p>Social skills</p> <p>Emotional Skills</p> <p>Employment Skills</p> <p>Job-readiness skills</p> <p>Quality, meaningful relationships</p>	<p>Youth Earn \$3,600 completing program</p> <p>71% Youth attrition rate</p> <p>57% (20/35) Youth obtain occupational skills training</p>	

CBO3 Results (see Table 4)

History. Community-based organization 3 (CBO3) is a nonprofit organization located in an urban high crime city in the southern region of the United States. It was founded in 2017 and is in the process of becoming a sustainable organization.

Community-based organization 3 is an alternative education program that seeks to upend the school-to-prison pipeline by supporting previously incarcerated youth as they re-enter their community and curbing unnecessary referrals from schools to the justice system.

Working with local businesses and organizations, they will empower vulnerable youth to succeed in school and beyond through a holistic educational experience grounded in academics, vocational skills training and social-emotional development. Community-based organization 3 is a five-month program that is designed to help students build meaningful relationships in their community, access a wide range of social services, develop critical life and job skills, continue their education and secure meaningful employment.

Mission. Community-based organization 3's mission is to guide their vulnerable students to break a self-perpetuating cycle of poverty, hopelessness and crime by facilitating a holistic, results-oriented, and transformative educational experience centered on intensive academics, cognitive behavioral skills development, college and career-readiness skills, and healthy communities.

Target population. In 2017, the program enrolled 35 court involved youth between the ages of 16 and 18. The program receives referrals from the juvenile probation department. Racial demographics of the youth were not provided. However,

they noted that they serve predominately African American youth.

Staff. The department staff include an executive director, career coaches, social worker/social work intern, probation officer, special education teacher, data specialist and case managers. With additional funding, the program would like to incorporate mental health counselors and mentors. The staff is all African American, which the executive director stated helps with their connection to the population of youth. However, they want the youth to interact with people that don't necessarily look like them, have different perspectives and come from different backgrounds. Thus, the goal is to hire a diverse staff. The staff have "high expectations" for the youth and generally have a "tough love philosophy."

Theory of change/assumptions/beliefs. The program explicitly stated they do not have any assumptions, models or theory of change. However, based on the data, the implicit theory of change is that if youth are provided opportunities to develop competencies and build relationships with caring adults then they will achieve positive outcomes.

Program activities. A variety of activities are provided in the program. They have a two-week mental toughness program, which focuses on establishing a culture of excellence, team building activities, mindset shift, goal setting, story and knowledge of self, daily celebrations, academic assessment testing, workplace readiness, organization, support circles and leadership development. Then they have a 6 week, paid, on-site work readiness training. There are three certification tracks that the youth can select from (food handling, customer service and forklift operations). Following the internal work

experience, the youth participate in an 8-week, paid work experience. Additional activities include GED classes, tutoring, and enrichment programming. They are hoping to include individual and group counseling, as well as support services.

PYD elements imbedded in program. When asked what PYD means to the organization, the interviewee stated, “continuous development of our young people in various ways... it’s grounded in character development, social-emotional learning, and teaching them types of forms of respect.”

Four of the five PYD elements were addressed in this program. Interview data suggests that the program promotes safety, as evidenced by having 1-2 career coaches in each class to manage situations that may arise. Further, it was reported that they are mindful of when they schedule activities/programming to ensure youth are safe and accounted for. Students are required to attend CBO3 Monday-Friday (8:30am-3pm). All students receive a bus pass (metro card) to be used to and from the program. Further, a review of documents suggests that the program has an intensive aftercare program that supports the transition of youth back into the community. This is led and guided by the social worker and social work intern.

A review of data suggests that supportive relationships are fostered through staff and counseling sessions. Data suggests that the program functions like a “family,” such that everyone is there to support the youth, discuss their challenges, encourage them on areas of improvement and “celebrate their wins.” The program emphasizes “wins/accomplishments” of the youth. For example, a staff member will write a positive note to a youth, which is displayed to ensure that everyone is aware of the youth’s

success.

A review of the data indicates that CBO3 strives to develop behavioral, cognitive and moral competencies in their program activities. Document review and interview data demonstrate that youth have the opportunity to develop cognitive and behavioral competencies through onsite job training. For example, youth are operating machines twice per week, and the other days they are in class learning material for the certification process. Available credentials to obtain are the NCCER Core Credential, the Multi-Craft Core (MC3) Credential, the Customer Service and Sales Credential, and the Office Essentials Credential. Through their job training, they are also acquiring social and emotional competencies. They are learning how to engage with a customer. It was identified that this is an area of weakness that the program is trying to target. Document review suggests that the program clearly articulates the expectations of the program that incorporate the ability to exercise moral and social competencies (commitment, timeliness, care, courage, respect, resilience). Data demonstrates that youth are not currently provided opportunities for prosocial involvement.

Lastly, data indicate that CBO3 provides opportunities for youth to belong and develop self-efficacy. This is evidenced by the opportunity to talk about their journey, life and things that have shaped who they are today. The interviewee reported that youth have the opportunity to select certification programs, which gives them a sense of autonomy within the program. Youth also help staff think through programmatic decisions.

Youth outcomes. The program has not formally assessed program outcomes.

Table 5

CBO4 Logic Model

Assumptions	Input/Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Rooted in transformational philosophy with a steady emphasis on the Christian message, the Gospel message, “change the way you think, change your behavior.”	Staff trainings	2 week Straight to Work Job Readiness Program	Social skills		<u>Criminal Behavior</u> 92% No new conviction
	Partnerships: Department of Youth Services, Police, Churches, Mental Health organizations, Youth opportunities program, Universities, Men of Compassion (25 organizations)	1 week Soft Skill training Employment	Emotional Skills		97% No probation/parole violation
		Job Training w/ Internal Entrepreneurs or churches	Employment Skills		67% integrated faith into daily decision making
		Outdoor activities (hikes, mountains, camping)	Job-readiness skills		68% accepting responsibility for own actions
		Individualized service plan	Career Exploration		
	Grant - Safe and Successful Youth Initiatives	Speaking at Advocacy/Fundraising Events	Career planning and management skills		
	Outreach workers/ Division	Volunteering	Transition services		<u>Employment</u> 68% sustained employment 100% placed in employment
	Aftercare division	Research Opportunities with University	Quality meaningful relationships		
	Life Coach	Educational Support	Character Development		<u>Change Prosocial Behaviors</u> Power Orientation decreased by 17%
	Volunteers	Character Development			Criminal rationalization decreased by 15%
		Evaluation - face survey; pre and post program evaluation			
	Rent Space to Entrepreneurs	Variation of the Arizona self-sufficiency model Criminal Thinking Scale			Personal Responsibility decreased by 26%

CBO4 Results (see Table 5)

History. Community-based organization 4 (CBO4) is a nonprofit organization located in an urban high crime city on the East Coast. It was founded in 1981. The organization focuses on providing young people around the world the opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel. It operates programs and provides materials, training and resources in 40 states, 35 countries and in 7 languages. Over the years, this school drew people from 22 states and inspired and encouraged juvenile justice workers around the world. Ten years later, it would grow to become part of the first-ever Juvenile Justice Ministries major currently offered in conjunction with a college. In 2004, successful community-based aftercare programs in the city chose CBO4 as a lead demonstration site for the United States Department of Justice's Ready4Work Reentry Program. The program serves 230 youth per year through outreach, aftercare and the intensive Straight2Work program, offering educational opportunities, job readiness training, leadership and character development and service opportunities. In 2012, CBO4 Café & Community Center opened and three new job readiness training sites, and a Resale Store were created to educate and employ youth. In 2013, to support CBO4's strategic initiative to follow youth from lock-up through re-entry and back into the community, three technology platforms were deployed, to collect outcome data, inform program development and enable staff to assess, in real-time, the progress and status of a program or specific youth. In 2014, a Youth Work Internship program was developed for the program graduates who wanted to pursue a career in youth work or juvenile justice ministry.

Mission. CBO4's mission is to provide train and equip Christians to lead Bible Study discussion groups, facilitate recovery discussion groups, and mentor youth who are locked up in juvenile facilities, as well as provide effective aftercare models to help youth transition successfully back into the community. The director of the program stated, "our strength-based resources, curriculums, training modules, and direct ministry models help youthful offenders become all that God intended them to be."

Target population. Community-based organization 4 serves court-involved youth ages 12-24. In 2015, they had 40 youth enrolled in their program. The program has three phases that target pre-vocational, work skills development and individual skill development. There are various activities that the youth engage in during these phases. They receive referrals from outreach workers, police and correctional facilities. Racial demographics on the youth were not provided.

Staff. The department staff include an executive director, outreach workers, life coach, mentors, and case managers. The director stated, "we hire individuals who are "genuine, willing to grow and learn as well as engage, challenge and question."

Theory of change/assumptions/beliefs. The program did not explicitly state a theory of change. However, there implicit theory of change suggests if youth change the way they think then they will change their behavior. The director stated the program is rooted in "transformational philosophy," with an emphasis on the Christian/Gospel message.

Program activities. A variety of activities are provided throughout the program. The youth receive job training with internal entrepreneurs and/or churches, mentoring,

individualized service plan, certification, employment, field trips, job shadowing, referrals to mental health agencies, CPR training, GED classes, civic engagement, and personal skill development.

PYD elements embedded in program. When asked what PYD means to the organization, the interviewee stated, “PYD is encouraging and providing opportunities for youth, consistently relying on them to help direct the program trajectory, engaging them in the conversation around what we’re thinking of doing. A peer leadership type of model is really what we try to embody, you are not what has happened to you, but there is greatness within you and really providing opportunities for them to walk into that and really re-gain their power back.”

Most of the positive youth development principles were embedded in the program activities. Elements of safety were targeted throughout the program. Interview data suggests that the program incorporates safety as evidenced by partnering with churches that provide meeting spaces for youth who may not feel safe meeting at the program location due to nearby gang affiliations. The interviewee reported that they design programming for youth outside of the city. For example, they partner with programs to engage youth in activities such as hiking and camping. This provides the opportunity for youth to focus on reflection, building relationships and discussing challenges. The program facility is considered to be located in one of the neighborhoods of a major rival gang. However, according to the director, the program was able to create an “oasis in the midst” of everything by tinting their 8x4 feet windows so youth can see out but no one can see inside.

A review of data suggests supportive relationships are fostered through mentoring, life coaching and employment. All youth receive a mentor. Data reports that youth obtain a life coach in the aftercare program. The role of the life coach is to assist the youth in developing an individual service plan and ensuring the youth achieve their goals. The service plan is led by the youth and the coaches are there to guide them through the process.

A review of data indicates that the program strives to develop social, behavioral, and cognitive competencies in their program activities. Youth develop social competencies through their pre-vocational training, where they learn about attendance, punctuality, initiative, communication skills, teamwork, problem solving and response to supervision. Cognitive and behavioral skills are learned through the job readiness portion of the program. Youth earn a ServSafe certification, obtain training in CPR and First Aid, customer service, equipment, and pricing/merchandise and are given employment opportunities. Other skill training includes resume building, networking, identifying interests, job search and dress for success. A major focus of CBO4 is character development, so youth develop “strong values and deep faith.” Emotional competencies were not directly identified. However, it was noted that CBO4 had partnerships with mental health agencies for youth to work through their trauma.

Data demonstrate that youth are provided opportunities for prosocial involvement. Some of the youth work in local emergency shelters. No further details were provided.

Lastly, data indicate that CBO4 provides opportunities for youth to belong and develop self-efficacy. Two of the youth had the opportunity to create a comprehensive

model to reduce youth violence in the city with a local university. They are listed as co-authors on the study. Additionally, youth create and lead their individualized training program, which lists their career and life goals. Further, youth are a part of the decision-making processes in the organization. They also help with advocacy related issues by sharing their perspective and giving their own testimonies. In addition, youth have spoken at churches, fundraising events, and gang summits.

Youth outcomes. CBO5 is committed to outcomes-based management. To support the initiative, they employed three technology platforms. They track youth progress in the program, which goals were achieved and does the improvement last. They served 301 youth. Looking at the impact, data suggest youth that participated decreased criminal behavior, increased employment, improvement in life skills, change in prosocial behavior and experienced personal and spiritual growth. With regard to criminal behavior, the program reported that 92% of youth had no new convictions, 97% had no new probation or parole violations, 67% integrated faith into daily decision making and 68% are accepting responsibility for own actions. Employment outcomes demonstrated the following: 68% of youth sustained employment and 100% were placed in employment. Outcomes suggested changes in prosocial behavior as evidenced by a 17% decrease in Power Orientation, 15% decrease in Criminal Rationalization and a 26% decrease in Personal Responsibility.

Table 6

CBO5 Logic Model

Assumptions	Input/Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<p>rooted in transformational philosophy with a steady emphasis on the Christian message, the Gospel message,</p> <p>“change the way you think, change your behavior.” Also, it’s somewhat rooted in CBT, cognitive behavioral therapy.</p>	Staff trainings	2 week Straight to Work Job Readiness Program	Social skills		<u>Criminal Behavior</u> 92% No new conviction
	Partnerships: Department of Youth Services, Police, Churches, Mental Health organizations, Youth opportunities program, Universities, Men of Compassion (25 organizations)	1 week Soft Skill training Employment	Emotional Skills		97% No probation/parole violation
	Grant - Safe and Successful Youth Initiatives	Job Training w/ Internal Entrepreneurs or churches	Employment Skills		67% integrated faith into daily decision making
	Outreach workers/ Division	Outdoor activities (hikes, mountains, camping)	Job-readiness skills		68% accepting responsibility for own actions
	Aftercare division	Individualized service plan	Career Exploration		<u>Employment</u> 68% sustained employment 100% placed in employment
	Life Coach	Speaking at Advocacy/Fundraising Events	Career planning and management skills		<u>Change Prosocial Behaviors</u> Power Orientation decreased by 17%
	Volunteers	Volunteering	Transition services		Criminal rationalization decreased by 15%
	Rent Space to Entrepreneurs	Research Opportunities with University	Quality meaningful relationships		Personal Responsibility decreased by 26%
		Educational Support	Character Development		
		Character Development	Evaluation - face survey; pre and post program evaluation		

CBO5 Results (see Table 6)

History. Community-based organization 5 (CBO5) is a nonprofit organization located in an urban, high crime city in the South. No history was provided.

Mission. Community-based organization 5's mission is to provide educational and career opportunities, as well as job search assistance to young people.

Target population. Community-based organization 5 serves court-involved youth ages 16-24. Ten percent of the participants have a felony charge, but the majority of them are misdemeanor charges only. With regard to racial demographics, the majority of the youth they serve are African American males. In 2016-2017, the program served 301 youth. The program receives referrals for youth from police, juvenile and probation facilities, and school districts. They also accept walk-ins.

Staff. The program staff include an executive director, mentors, case manager, career planner, family resource coordinators, employment specialist, court designated workers, and probation officers. The staff receives training in trauma informed care and motivational interviewing. Additionally, staff always have access to different community trainings. The specific trainings were not provided.

Theory of change/assumptions/beliefs. Community-based organization explicating stated they did not have a theory of change or framework that supports the development of their program. However, their implicit theory of change suggests, if youth are provided positive relationships and opportunities to develop strengths, then youth will achieve positive postsecondary outcomes and decreases in recidivism.

Program activities. A variety of activities are provided across all of the activities,

including education services, employment placement, mentoring, college tours, field trips, job training, incentive program, individualized career development plans, mental health services, support group, restorative justice projects, and resource/job fairs. They have an incentives program. Youth receive a Kroger card when they complete certain activities.

PYD elements embedded in program. When asked what PYD means to the organization, the interviewee stated, “Youth voice, involve the youth in our decision making, identifying what it is they want to do out in their communities, collaborating amongst the staff, and focus on their strengths.”

Most of the positive youth development principles were imbedded in the program activities. Elements of safety were targeted throughout the program, as evidenced by providing family services, a support group and having a security guard. Interview data suggests that youth and their families are receiving mental health services through CBO5’s partnerships with community-based organizations. The support group “time to talk” provides a space for youth to discuss concerns they have personally or in their communities in a safe and supportive environment. Community-based organization 5 has a security guard on site, which provides physical safety.

A review of data suggests that supportive relationships are fostered through case manager, career planner, mentoring and employment. A career planner guides and supports the youth with establishing goals. Additionally, youth meet with their mentor once per week. A review of data indicates that the program strives to develop cognitive and behavioral competencies in their program activities. These competencies are

developed through the career development activities, including career exploration, career planning and management, job readiness skills and GED courses. Youth practice these skills through employment pipelines with organizations.

The interviewee indicated youth are provided opportunities for prosocial involvement by engagement in community service/restorative justice. However, details were not provided on what these activities looked like. Lastly, data indicates CBO5 provides opportunities for youth to belong and develop self-efficacy. This is evidenced by their role in facilitating the support group and voicing what programming they would like to see implemented in the program during meetings.

Youth outcomes. A comprehensive spreadsheet provided the youth outcomes. The outcomes demonstrated improvements in level of reading and math, educational and employment outcomes. With regard to education the following results were noted: 93% of participants increased at least 1 grade level of reading, 76% of participants increased at least 1 grade level of Math, 59% participants (ages 17 and under) remained in high school for 12 months, 15% of participants (ages 17 and under) received a high school diploma. Employment outcomes included the following: 70% (ages 18 and up) participants received an Industry Recognized Certification, and 43% of participants (ages 18 and up) received employment/post-secondary outcomes. The program also provided data on retention in postsecondary outcomes. For example, 71% of youth were working or attending school at the 3 month follow, 71 % at the 6 month follow up, 54%, at the 9 month follow up, and 71% at the 12 month follow up. Youth (17 and under) had had a 3% recidivism rate at 12 months and youth (ages 18 and up) had a 0% recidivism rate at

12 months.

Comparison of all Organizations

The five CBO's have distinguishing histories. Founded in 1976, CBO1 is the oldest organization (42 years), followed by CBO4 (37 years), CBO2 (19 years) and CBO3 (1 year). Interview data or a review of documents could not confirm the founding date for CBO5. The mission statements across the organizations have clear similarities and differences. All five organizations explicitly identify youth as central to their mission. Also central in all the missions are career readiness and/or opportunities for employment. None of the organizations delineate positive youth development in their mission statement. More specifically, none of the organizations highlight the opportunity to develop supportive/quality relationships. Most telling across the organizations' mission statements are their differences. Community-based organization 1's focus centers on striving for self-sufficiency and independence, which aligns with PYD. This focus ensures youth are transitioning to adulthood successfully. Community-based organization 3 was the only organization that incorporated "healthy communities" in their mission statement. This illustrates that the focus is not only on youth but on the communities in which they are embedded. Community-based organization 2, CBO4 and CBO5, in contrast, strictly list the skills/competencies that the youth will gain/develop by participating in the program.

Table 7

Logic Model Comparison

	Theory of Change	Input	Activities	Output	Outcome	Impact
CBO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBT, Relational, Motivational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth 12-24 • Referrals • Various Staff • Collaborations • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Workforce Dev. • Mentoring • Community Service • Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Skills • Emotional Skills • Employment • Job-readiness • Career Exploration • Career Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in: Education, Employment, Recidivism Rates, Satisfaction , Service Hours, Social and emotional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in postsecondary outcomes and recidivism
CBO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Relationship Model, PYD 4C's, Maslow, Right Turn, Nine Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth 12-24 • Referrals • Various Staff • Collaborations • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Workforce Dev. • Mentoring • Community Service • Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Skills • Emotional Skills • Employment • Job-readiness • Career Exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in: Education, Employment, Recidivism Rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in postsecondary outcomes and recidivism
CBO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth 16-18 • Referrals • Various Staff • Collaborations • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase Program • Workforce Dev. • Incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Skills • Employment • Job-readiness 		
CBO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth 12-24 • Referrals • Various Staff • Collaborations • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase Program • Workforce Dev. • Mentoring • Community Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character Employment • Job-readiness • Career Exploration • Career Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in: Education, Employment, Recidivism Rates, Social and emotional 	
CBO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth 12-24 • Referrals • Various Staff • Collaborations • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Dev. • Mentoring • Community Service • Incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Job-readiness • Career Exploration • Career Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in: Education, Employment, Recidivism Rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in postsecondary outcomes and recidivism

Q1: How do organizations support youth in gaining access to comprehensive transition programs?

The organizations' target populations differed in many ways (See Table 6). There was great variability in terms of number of youth served and the ways in which they recruited their youth. The number of youth ranged from 35 to 374 annually. The ages of the youth were quite consistent across the organizations. Community-based organization 1, CBO2, CBO4 and CBO5 served young people from 12 to 24 years old. Community-based organization 3 was the only organization that served "youth" ages 16 to 18. All of the organizations received referrals for youth from probation and correctional facilities. Community-based organization 1 and CBO5 also recruited their youth from school districts, police, and accepted walk-ins. These two organizations happen to be the ones that served the greatest amount of youth annually. Racial demographics of the youth were only provided by three of the organizations. Community-based organization 3 and CBO5 both served predominately African American young people. Community-based organization 2 served a more diverse population, both African American and Hispanic young people. However, this may be due to its geographical location. Community-based organization 5 defined their population even more by stating that 10% of their youth have felony charges and the rest are misdemeanors.

The staff structure varies across the organizations. All of the organizations have executive directors and case managers on staff. CBO3 was the only organization that didn't have a mentoring program established, and this is primarily due to funding and just establishing their program. Community-based organization 2 and CBO5 both had a

specific position that focused on employment, finding jobs, placing youth in jobs (i.e., job developer and employment specialist). Other unique positions included data specialist (CBO3), special education teacher (CBO3), court workers (CBO5), family resource coordinator (CBO5) and probation officers (CBO3, CBO5). With regard to hiring staff, important qualities differed across the organizations. They all indicated the importance of creating a familial type culture within the organization. Community-based organization 1 stressed “warm, caring and active in a variety of community organizations.” Community-based organization 2 stressed “relatable,” such that all of the staff were young and grew up in urban high crime cities. Community-based organization 3 highlighted that their staff have “tough love and high expectations” for their youth. Community-based organization 4 indicated staff that “engage, challenge and question” are essential. Community-based organization 5 didn’t get specific on the qualities of staff members. None of the organizations identified any technical requirement the staff were required to have. All of the organizations considered staff training to be significant; however, only two of the organizations identified the specific trainings all staff were required to complete. Community-based organization 1 required all of their staff to be trained in trauma informed care, crisis prevention and intervention. Community-based organization 2 specifically provided training in positive youth development to their staff. Community-based organization 3 and CBO4 were the only organizations that discussed the racial and ethnic makeup of their staff. Community-based organization 3 reported that all the staff was African American. They are actively looking to recruit more diverse staff so their youth are exposed to different individuals with varying perspectives. In contrast, CBO4

noted that their staff is primarily Caucasian and they are actively trying to diversify its staff so the staff racial makeup is consistent with the population of youth they are serving.

With regard to program input and resources, all of the organizations stress the importance of partnerships with educational organizations, elected officials, foundations, non-profits, probation departments, mental health agencies and employers (See Table 6). Community-based organization 4 was the only organization that noted their partnership with local churches.

Q2: How do community-based organizations determine what activities to implement in their intervention programs?

A theory of change was explicitly expressed by two organizations (CBO1 and CBO2). Additionally, CBO1 and CBO2 provided specific evidenced based models/frameworks that guided their intervention model (See Table 6). Community-based organization 1 incorporated CBT curricula, relational theory and motivational interviewing. In contrast, CBO2 was more comprehensive. They utilized Search Institutes developmental relationship model, Positive Youth Development 4Cs, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Right Turn Model and they developed an internal Nine Network Model. Further in addition to utilizing research, the program engaged the community by asking probation officers to identify some the gaps in training for these youth transitioning. For CBO1 and CBO2, theory of change/organizational planning activities seemed to be playing a role in furthering the organizations commitment to PYD. Through a theory of change process, CBO2 arrived at an integrated youth development model. Community-based organization 1's model addresses all the areas of positive youth

development, all of which organizations determined to be important for youth's successful transition from facility to community/adulthood. Based on the data, CBO3, CBO4 and CBO5 had implicit theory of changes.

Activities and programming vary across the organizations (See Table 6).

Community-based organization 1, CBO2, and CBO5 have an integrated model in which the youth have access to activities across the areas of education, workforce development, employment, and civic engagement. Community-based organization 1 and CBO2 both administer an assessment at the beginning of the program to assess youth needs and strengths in order to provide them with the most appropriate programming. In contrast, CBO3 and CBO4 have a structured phase program. All of the youth participate in a pre-vocational training that includes learning social, emotional, and career skills.

Additionally, youth receive paid internal employment experience. Following the graduation of this experience, they are placed in employment. Both of these programs emphasize the importance of choice, such that each youth gets to determine the tracks or certifications they obtain/participate in. An additional unique program activity includes an incentive program that CBO3 and CBO5 implemented. Upon completion of certain activities or graduating the program, the youth receive a financial gift or a Kroger card.

Q3: In what ways are the organizations incorporating positive youth development and well-being principles in the program?

Table 8

Comparison of PYD Principles

	Safety	Relationships	Competencies	Prosocial Involvement	Opportunities to Belong
CBO1	Emotional	Intentional, rapport training	(S, E, B, C, M)	Community Service & Restorative Justice	Satisfaction survey
CBO2	Physical and emotional	Intentional, mentor-mentee matching	(S, E, C, B)	Community Service & Restorative Justice	Needs assessment, youth led programming
CBO3	Physical and emotional		(E, C, B)		Decision making
CBO4	Physical	Rapport training	(S, C, B, M)	Community Service	Decision making, research
CBO5	Physical and emotional		(C, B)	Community Service & Restorative Justice	Attend meetings

All of the interviewees were asked to define PYD from their perspective. The definitions varied across the organizations. Community-based organization 2 was the only organization that incorporated a complete definition of positive youth development. Their definition included the 4Cs: connection, competencies, control and collaboration. Community-based organization 3's definition focused on competencies (social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and moral). Community-based organization 1's stressed the importance of bringing out youth strengths but did not articulate specifically what that looks like in practice. Community-based organization 4 emphasized youth voice and providing youth with opportunity in their definition. Community-based organization 5 defined PYD as youth voice, collaboration and youth strengths. Interestingly, these four

organizations did not include relationships as a key factor in positive youth development.

All the programs incorporate some form of safety in their programs. However, the forms of safety varied across the organizations. Community-based organization 3 and CBO5 both identified providing youth with physical and emotional safety (See Table 8). Community-based organization 1 focused on emotional safety. In contrast, CBO3 and CBO4 emphasized physical safety. Physical safety was defined as providing a security guard in the building, tinting building windows, planning activities outside of the city and holding meetings in local churches. Emotional safety was defined as providing support groups, meeting basic needs such as food, shelter, health etc., and being equipped with tools to manage current and future crises.

While all organizations valued quality youth-adult relationships, CBO1, CBO2 and CBO4 were the only organizations with a well-defined program that intentionally focused on relationship building (See Table 8). Community-based organization 2 matched youth with mentors based on interests and goals. Community-based organization 1's approach to relationships was unique in that youth were provided the opportunity to develop supportive relationships with a variety of age groups (elderly, peers through community college mentoring program, and adults at their employment site/program staff). Additionally, they specifically hired staff who were relatable to the youth in that they also grew up in high crime environments. Community-based organization 3 and CBO5 all highlighted aspects of their programs that targeted relationship building with program staff and/or mentors but didn't appear to be an intentional goal. Community-based organization 3 noted that all staff, including the director, go out of their way to

develop relationships with all youth. With regard to relationships, CBO1 and CBO4 provided youth training on how to build rapport with individuals. None of the programs discussed ways to maintain the relationships with youth following graduation of the program. Further, none of the organizations focused on developing relationships or partnerships with the youth's parent(s) and/or siblings.

A review of data suggests CBO1 was the only organization that targeted all five competencies (social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and moral) throughout their programming (See Table 8). The other four organizations touched a varying combination of competencies. Overall, it appeared that organizations struggled to target emotional and moral competencies. Community-based organization 1 provided an avenue through CBT curriculum to address emotions, making healthy choices, self-awareness and understanding how actions impact others and social skills. Additionally, they incorporated career development skill which targets social, emotional, cognitive and behavioral competencies. Community-based organization 2, CBO3, CBO4 and CBO5 all incorporated cognitive and behavioral skills through their career development programming. Community-based organization 4 had a heavy focus on moral development, given its spiritual emphasis.

Four out of the five programs had a program component focused on restorative justice and/or community engagement (See Table 8). Though all three organizations highlighted community engagement for youth participants, in practice these components take on different forms depending on the organization. Although they had these components, they were not well defined. These organizations generally articulated events

youth participated in and helped to implement when referring to the ways in which youth are active participants in their communities. For example, were the youth trained on civic engagement, how often did they engage in projects, did they write about their experiences? – all of these were unanswered. Community-based organization 3 currently does not have a component dedicated to restorative justice or community service. Community-based organization 3 acknowledged that community service and restorative justice is an area that they need to strengthen.

Youth voice and opportunities to build self-efficacy were prevalent across all of the organizations (See Table 8). Nevertheless, the implementation of this concept differed across the five organizations. Community-based organization 1 was the only organization that administered a formal satisfaction survey to gauge youth perception of the program and provide feedback. Through this evaluation, youth are able to provide feedback on the organization, staff and programming routinely. In contrast, CBO5 invited youth to some staff meetings for them to provide their feedback on the program. Youth engaged in the decision-making process of the organization in CBO3, CBO4 and CBO5. Some organizations encouraged youth to tell their story in public arenas (CBO3, CBO4). Community-based organization 4 had a unique opportunity for youth to engage in research pertaining to youth violence in collaboration with a university that resulted in co-authorship. Additionally, CBO1, CBO2, and CBO5 personalized the program activities to support the individual youth strengths and needs. In comparison, CBO3 and CBO4 offered phase-based programming in which all youth participate in the same program.

Four organizations articulated specific youth outcomes each is pursuing through their work (CBO1, CBO2, CBO4, and CBO5) (See Table 8). In contrast, CBO3 did not seem to be evaluating its work in a systematic way. However, they are in the process of developing an evaluation. All four of these organizations indicated improvements in employment placement and educational retention, and decreases in recidivism rates. Community-based organization 1 and CBO4 were the only organizations that measured social and emotional outcomes. Community-based organization 1 assessed youth satisfaction and community service hours. Community-based organization 4 assessed improvements in life skills, prosocial behaviors and personal/spiritual growth. Interestingly, given CBO4's emphasis on PYD elements, they did not assess youth connections, control, or collaboration. They only assessed competencies.

Looking at the well-being elements, all of the organizations had aspects of their intervention model that applied to personal, relational and collective well-being. Data suggests that the program promotes personal well-being by providing opportunities for youth to develop self-determination, self-efficacy, competencies, and voice their opinion through various activities, such as volunteer/restorative justice, skill training, and leading meetings to name a few. Data suggests that the program promotes relational well-being by facilitating nurturance, support, care, trust, affection, collaboration and exchange of resources through relationships with mentors, coaches, program adults/staff and peers. These relationships are developed through youth-staff partnerships in program development, restorative justice projects, mentoring, and developing an Individualized Career Development Plan. Data suggests that the program promotes collective well-being

by providing educational opportunities, health referrals, access to employment, resources and quality services.

In conclusion, the five organizations included in this study have shared similarities and clear distinctions. Across the organizations, they are integrating PYD in various ways. All of the organizations highlighted the importance of youth contribution/voice, emphasize youth strengths, promote career development and are social justice oriented. Organizations that had an explicit theory of change and were founded on evidenced based research/assumptions tended to have more clearly defined PYD elements integrated throughout the program. Additionally, they produced explicit youth outcomes. An organization's emphasis on theory of change may influence greater knowledge and understanding of PYD. This is evidenced by the interviewees' definition of PYD. The program director of CBO2, which had a model was able to clearly define PYD.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how community-based organizations are supporting court-involved youth's access to work-based learning opportunities. Additionally, this study sought out to understand whether, and in what ways, these opportunities are incorporating positive youth development principles. The study addressed the following questions: How do community-based organizations support court-involved youth to gain access to work-based learning activities? How do community-based organizations determine what activities to implement in their transition programs? In what ways are the organizations incorporating positive youth development and well-being principles in the programs? The major findings of the study were: (1) partnerships and partnerships with various organizations and funding opportunities explain how many of the youth gain access to WBL programs; (2) the development of a theory of change, assumptions based in evidenced based research and organizational structure impact the integration of PYD principles; and (3) implementation of PYD principles varies across organizations. The first section of this chapter expands on these findings. The next section discusses the implications of the study's findings for practice, research and policy. Lastly, the chapter ends with a discussion on the study's limitations.

Research Problem/Purpose

Court-involved youth have significant obstacles to overcome. Post-incarceration interventions are necessary and critical for youths' successful transition to adulthood, economic self-sufficiency and the inherent challenges faced in many of their communities. Interventions that incorporate caring adults, vocational training, work

experience and skill building can increase the likelihood that youth will ultimately thrive and produce positive personal and societal outcomes once outside the walls of the prison system. One intervention strategy being used to support transitions back to the community for court-involved youth is work-based learning programs. Community-based organizations can provide the infrastructure for work-based learning programs and serve a paramount intermediary role in connecting court-involved youth, employers, schools and social services. Unfortunately, there are many court-involved youth who do not have access to, or the opportunity to engage in, quality work-based learning experiences (Alfeld et al., 2013; NCWD/Youth, 2013). This suggests the need for more work-based learning programming that supports the advancement of key positive youth development elements for this population. The purpose of this research study was to conduct a comparative multiple case study to gain an in-depth understanding of how community-based organizations are supporting court-involved youth to gain access to work-based learning opportunities and investigate in what ways these organizations are incorporating positive youth development elements in their programs.

The participants for the study included five organizations located in the Midwest, East, West and Southern regions of the United States. The research considered multiple sources of data, including documentation review, semi-structured interviews, and survey interviews. Documents collected included administrative reports, brochures, evaluation reports, annual reports, samples of recruitment materials, youth needs assessment, and partnership agreements with businesses. The semi-structured open-ended interview was conducted with an executive director of each organization using an interview protocol

which was guided by positive youth development and well-being frameworks. Survey interviews were conducted with other members of the organization using a structured qualitative questionnaire.

The data was analyzed using cross-case analysis. Each organization's documentation, survey data and interviews were studied as a separate case to identify unique patterns within the data. Then a logic model and theory of change was generated for each organization. Next, the separate logic models were compared using cross-case analysis. Lastly, based on the knowledge that emerged from the five logic models, recommendations were provided that illustrate potential ways in which to facilitate positive youth development in order to guide future comprehensive transition program design efforts.

Findings

Q1: How do community-based organizations support court-involved youth to gain access to work-based learning activities?

The first finding demonstrates the importance of partnerships with various agencies in supporting youth in transition programs. More specifically, the results highlight the quantity, intentionality and types of partnerships. With regard to quantity, the study results suggest some organizations partner with some more than others. Two of the organizations had over 100 partnerships. These two organizations also appeared to offer the most program activities for their youth. These partnerships appeared to enhance the opportunities for youth to develop skill building and connections with others in the community. The results demonstrated that some organizations were intentional about

their partnerships. For example, one organization strongly encouraged their staff to become members of two or three community agencies. Lastly, the results suggested organizations engaged in different types of collaboration. All of the organizations were strong in interagency collaboration in that they all emphasized working with a variety of staff to support the youth. Additionally, outer-agency partnerships were made with a variety of agencies. It is apparent that no single organization can provide all the services that court-involved youth need. Thus, it is key for organizations to develop partnerships with educational organizations, employers, elected officials, school districts, police, juvenile and probation facilities, and mental health services. However, it was evident that none of the organizations indicated partnering with other comprehensive transition programs that serve court-involved youth.

Research supports that partnerships with community organizations are critical to meet the multiple needs of youth that cannot be addressed solely by youth employment agencies (Office of Juvenile Justice of Delinquency Prevention, 2000). This study's findings support previous research on effective programming for youth involved in the juvenile justice system that includes: (1) the juvenile justice system, (2) workforce development system, (3) educational system, (4) social services, (5) community-based organizations, and (6) the labor market (Frey, 1999; OJJDP, 2000). Acknowledging the intersection between various settings and the impact on youth outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), experts recommend collaborative relationships with mental health, medical, probation, education, and CBOs toward the goal of social justice (Maschi, Hatcher, Schwalbe, & Rosato, 2008). More recent research by the Harvard Family Research

Project (2010) on family and community engagement suggests that the following elements are essential: (a) a shared responsibility, (b) a continuous process, and (c) an ongoing relationship that involves partnerships (Harris & Wilkes, 2013). Therefore, to improve partnerships efforts among transition programs there must be continuous assessment of stakeholders' awareness of programs, services and supports.

Q2: How do community-based organizations determine what activities to implement in their intervention programs?

The second finding suggests that a theory of change, assumptions founded in evidenced based research and organizational structure impact the integration of PYD principles. Two of the organizations had an explicit theory of change and articulated assumptions founded in evidenced based research that guided their intervention model. This theory of change and assumptions appeared to have a role in advancing the organizations commitment to positive youth development, which they indicated to be essential for youths' successful transition back to the community. To further support the importance of a theory of change grounded in research, these two organizations also had detailed inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact results. Unlike these two organizations, the others had implicit theories of change and did not demonstrate utilization research-based evidence to support the development and implementation of their program. This is consistent with a body of research emphasizing the underutilization of research by practitioners working with delinquent youth (Johnson, Lebold, & Elam, 2016). In this study, this underutilization of research appeared to result in difficulties adopting all of the PYD principles in intentional ways. Having a theory of change is important because it

examines the assumptions of how change is expected to happen within the program. Without a theory of change, it can be challenging to interpret the results of an evaluation or the impact of the program. Theories of change are visual roadmaps of the change process and are utilized to reach the programs goals. For organizations, this is very important for marketing, communications and grant writing, as it summarizes the organization. When funding is competitive, as it is with programs working with court-involved youth, it is needed to explain the organization's strategy. Organizations need to be intentional in their incorporation of PYD, which includes establishing ways in which the elements of positive youth development will be rooted in all facets of the organization.

Staff plays a central role in the dissemination of PYD in organizations. Despite this being the case, one out of the five organizations trained their staff in PYD. Hirsh and colleagues (2011) point to the importance of training in promoting use of best practices. More formalized training may ensure that the principles of PYD most important to the organization would be standardized throughout the organization. Not only should staff obtain training in PYD, they should also be trained in trauma informed care since they are working with youth with trauma histories. Two organizations articulated the importance of training their staff in trauma informed care. Research suggests that interventions are most effective when staff who are engaged with traumatized youth a) understand how trauma might impact a child or youth and (b) are able to provide support, understanding, and recommendations for helping the youth re-regulate (Erna et al., 2015). Environments where all staff recognize and have the ability to respond to traumatic stress symptoms in

a supportive manner allow a youth to feel safe (Erna et al., 2015). The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) has created a number of curricula that organizations can utilize designed to foster trauma-responsive systems. Research demonstrates that a trauma-focused training for staff can result in positive outcomes for youth residing in moderate to high security correctional facilities (Marrow, Knudsen, Olafson, & Bucher, 2012; Olafson et al., 2016). Although this research focused on youth residing in correctional facilities, it could also apply to organizations working with the same population of youth.

Q3: In what ways are the organizations incorporating positive youth development and well-being principles in the program?

The third finding indicates that the implementation of PYD and well-being principles vary across organizations. One organization successfully implemented all the principles of PYD, which included safety, relationships, competencies, prosocial involvement and opportunities to belong, unlike the other programs that lacked one or some PYD principles.

Overall, all the organizations incorporated physical and emotional safety, provided youth opportunities to build relationships with more than one adult, and had programming that targeted social, cognitive and behavioral competencies. With regard to safety, all the programs incorporate some form of safety in their programs. However, the forms of safety vary across the organizations. Some focus on physical safety or physiological safety, or a combination of both. A focus on both forms of safety is key given that many of the youth have trauma histories, current or past affiliations, and/or

don't have their basic needs met (e.g., food, shelter, stability, security). Thus, organizations should focus on ensuring their activities are held in safe locations to decrease unsafe/confrontational peer interactions and increase positive peer interactions. Additionally, organizations may provide transportation to and from the site, access to food and avenues to discuss their eminent concerns.

The findings suggest the development of supportive relationships with more than one individual for court-involved youth is essential. Research reports supportive relationships enhance coping strategies, networking, and emotional connection (Heinze, 2013; Schofield & Beek, 2009). All of the programs highlight the importance of relationships with the youth as one of the single most important factors in their programs. In each of the programs, there is more than one person that the youth form connections with. Across the organizations, youth received varying levels of support. For example, they were connected with individuals who mentored, trained, employed or guided them. One program provided the opportunity for youth to build relationships with individuals of varying age groups (adults, elderly and peers). An aspect that neither organization addressed was whether, and in what ways, the staff maintained relationships with the youth post program graduation. Ensuring youth not only have direct but also lasting experiences with positive relationships is a key component of the PYD framework.

Incorporating all five competencies (social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive and moral competencies) in the programming proved to be challenging. One organization successfully incorporated a variety of activities that supported youth in building these competencies. All of these competencies are important for the development of youth

transitioning into adulthood and back into their communities. These skills give youth the necessary skills to comprehend, manage, and articulate information associated with behaviors such as maintaining constructive relationships, recognizing feelings, and making appropriate decisions (Davis et al., 2014).

Many of the organizations had challenges with providing a clear and well-defined prosocial involvement component. Four out of the five programs had a program component focused on restorative justice and/or community engagement. While all four organizations emphasize community involvement for youth participants, in practice these elements appear different depending on the organization. Prosocial involvement is critical for court-involved youth because it has been shown to benefit youth personally, civically, socially, and academically (Delio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011), facilitates future oriented thinking (Nurmi, 1991), engages youth in constructive relationships (Montgomery, 2005), and positively impacts their communities (Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003; Search Institute, 2006). Additionally, Henderson, Pancer, and Brown (2014) found that civic engagement enhanced self-esteem, led to better relationships, better school achievement, higher aspirations for their future, and a greater sense of social responsibility. Some research has demonstrated prosocial involvement with reductions in recidivism (Hayes & Daly, 2004; Luke & Lind, 2002; Rodriguez, 2005). Given the benefits of prosocial involvement for youth, organizations should provide a clear and well-defined component in their program that incorporates service planning, preparation, and reflection.

Organizations had challenges with providing a well-defined component of youth

empowerment. Youth voice and opportunities to build self-efficacy were prevalent across all of the organizations. However, the implementation of this concept seemed like one of the hardest PYD elements to implement. Meaningful inclusion of youth voice is important. Youth voice facilitated by youth leadership is a key mechanism in PYD and social justice (Iwaski, 2015). Hirsch and colleagues (2011) suggest the development of youth councils or other mechanisms for youth participation in order “to make sure youth voice is heard.” These activities should be clear, intentional and consistent. In this study, the organizations were committed to involving youth in meaningful ways in internal decision-making processes of the organization, fundraising, satisfaction surveys and advocacy. Yet, in practice this was not consistently done. In order to integrate this aspect of PYD, organizations need to institute clear procedures that will allow youth to participate regularly in meaningful ways. Research suggests that the opportunity for youth to exercise personal agency is central to developing independence in youth (e.g., make future decisions on their own) (Umana-Taylor et al., 2015). Literature also suggests that youth should have opportunities to address self-awareness of how race, gender and class and other dimensions of power impact youths’ lives (Ross, 2011).

Another challenge included limited family involvement. If programs are to align with positive youth development principles families must be engaged at the assessment, decision making, activity and evaluation levels of the organization.

All, of the organizations had aspects of their intervention model that targeted the personal, relational and collective well-being. For example, the organizations promoted well-being by providing youth opportunities to develop competencies and self-efficacy;

nurturance and support; and access to employment and resources.

Collectively, these findings showed the importance of partnerships with community agencies to support all the diverse needs of court-involved youth. Additionally, findings demonstrated the need for organizations to develop a theory of change grounded in evidenced based research in order to successfully integrate PYD principles in the program. Lastly, findings indicated that organizations have various ways in which they implement PYD principles.

Proposed Theory of Change

Implementation science emphasizes the importance of programs understanding how to incorporate components of an intervention, adapt the intervention to the specific context and enhance the implementation by addressing the culture of the organization (Rabin & Brownson, 2012). Therefore, by developing a theory of change organizations have a framework that encourages stakeholders to describe how and why change is expected to happen. Further, it supports organizations in defining desired outcomes and understanding the appropriate activities required to obtain the long-term goals.

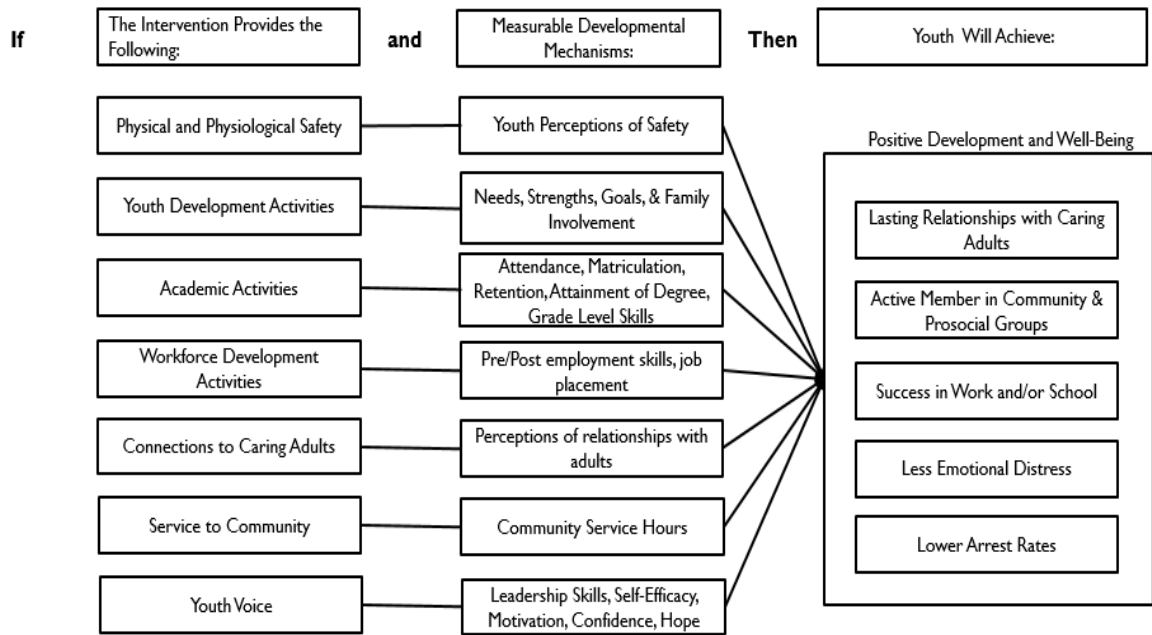
Developing a theory of change may also help organizations better sustain and evaluate their programs.

Based on these findings and literature, the following Theory of Change Model is proposed for organizations implementing a positive youth development focused transition program for court-involved youth. The intervention elements in this proposed theory of change were key areas emphasized by the organizations in this study. The majority of the organizations incorporated the following: safety, youth empowerment, connections to

caring adults, service to the community, and youth development, academic, and workforce development activities. These components are also supported by PYD frameworks (e.g. Benson et al., 2006; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004; Lerner et al., 2009; Scales et al., 2008). and the Positive Youth Justice framework (Butts, Bazemore, & Meroe, 2010).

Figure 4

Proposed Theory of Change



This Theory of Change Model suggests that if comprehensive transition programs provide safety; youth development, academic, and workforce development activities; connections to caring adults; and opportunities to serve the community and belong, it will result in youth achieving the following: lasting relationships with adults, service to the community, success in work and/or school, less emotional distress and fewer arrests. Providing a safe physical and physiological environment forms the foundation of the

construction of the program for the youth. Environments must eliminate the threat of and actual violence. Therefore, creating a space where youth feel safe to express their thoughts and learn new skills (Larson, Eccles, & Gootman, 2004). Youth development programming may include activities such as a needs assessment, an individualized learning plan to identify academic or workforce goals, social skill training, physical activity, creative arts, and individual and family therapy. Further, especially important for court-involved youth, programming should focus on knowledge related to laws, rights, juvenile justice process, education on consequences of risk taking behaviors, reflection on how behaviors impact others, and personal responsibility. Academic programming may include an initial educational assessment of skills, tutoring, GED courses, and college tours. Workforce development programming can be provided through career awareness, exploration, planning and management activities. Additionally, skill training, job placement, and credentialing activities would be beneficial in this area of programming. Supportive relationships with an adult provides an “environment of reinforcement, good modeling, and constructive feedback for physical, intellectual, psychological, and social growth” (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 96). These relationships can be fostered through formalized mentoring programs, and case management. Prosocial involvement activities may include community service and restorative justice projects. Programs can create a sense of belonging for youth by providing opportunities for youth to participate in decision making, advocacy efforts and youth councils. Organizations should integrate family and community involvement throughout the program.

Evaluations should be designed to evaluate these seven areas. Organizations could

measure youth perception of safety; youth needs, strengths, and goals; educational matriculation, retention, degree attainment and grade level skills; employment skills, job placement; youth perceptions of their relationships with adults, community service hours, leadership skills, self-efficacy, confidence, motivation and hope. Additionally, programs may assess community level outcomes (i.e. employer or community member's perception of youth).

Incorporating PYD programming and an evaluation in the program will help youth achieve positive development and well-being. Long term outcomes may include lasting and meaningful relationships with adults, active membership in prosocial events in the community, success in work and/or school, less emotional distress and fewer arrests.

Implications for Developing PYD-Focused Comprehensive Transition Programs

Develop a theory of change. Organizations must develop a theory of change that reflects positive youth development principles. Overall, an organization's goals should be to help youth re-establish enduring and effective relationships or connections with the community, connect youth and their families with diverse pro-social activities, encourage active participation and build on youth assets and interests, whereby youth are empowered to choose positive activities and take on responsibilities. This may be reflected in recidivism, education, vocational, social and/or emotional outcomes. All staff need to be trained in positive youth development models or framework. The Louisiana Models for Change Initiative, in partnership with the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ), developed a framework for determining an

organization's readiness to implement an evidenced based program. Their guide may be helpful for organizations in assessing and discussing the following key components: target population, funding, level of collaboration, level of evidence, practice structure, family involvement/engagement, expected youth outcomes, cultural diversity, workforce requirements, feasibility of implementation, organizational experience with evidenced based practice, organizational readiness and leadership (Phillippi Jr., Coccozza, & DePrato, 2013).

Administer a needs assessment. At the beginning of the program, organizations should administer a survey that assesses youth needs and strengths. This may help provide clarity on what programming or activities are most beneficial for the individual youth. The YSS-13 measure can be used to assess the extent to which the service delivery aligns with PYD principles and identifies areas where service delivery may be strengthened. This is administered to youth and can be a beneficial tool in enhancing quality supports to at-risk youth (Liebenberg, Sanders, & Munford, 2017).

Incorporate more tailored and dynamic training for staff. PYD training should be provided to all staff working with youth. ACT for Youth provides a free PYD curriculum for youth workers, supervisors and administrators. It provides a 10-hour training on the theoretical underpinnings and key principles of PYD, positive outcomes and strategies to build these outcome opportunities for meaningful engagement, features of effective youth development settings and youth-centered learning approaches, as well as competency frameworks, boundaries, and ethical dilemmas (Dotterweich, 2015). Additionally, staff working with court-involved youth receive training in trauma

informed care. Some promising trauma informed tools that provide trauma training to groups of professionals include: Cops, Kids & Domestic Violence (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2006); the Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators (National Child Traumatic Stress Network Schools Committee, 2008); the NCTSN Bench Card for the Trauma-Informed Judge (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Justice Consortium & National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 2013); and Ten Things Every Juvenile Court Judge Should Know About Trauma and Delinquency (Buffington, Dierkhising, & Marsh, 2010).

Partner with a variety of organizations. Organizations must develop ongoing partnerships with various entities to address youths' needs. Partnerships may include: health services, transportation, housing, financial planning, faith-based organizations, recreation activities, interpreters, personal assistant services, social services, mental health agencies, educational systems, labor market/employers, juvenile justice systems, advocates, workforce development systems and community-based organizations, to name a few. Most importantly, it may be useful to provide youth with a legal advocate to help them navigate the legal system.

Utilize a job placement specialist. Hire one individual who focuses on identifying potential placement opportunities for the youth. They can meet with youth to guide their job search and assist with application preparation and interview preparation. This individual can also communicate directly with employers about the youth's background, training, as well as what strengths the youth brings to the job. The job specialist may identify businesses that are willing to train and hire court-involved youth.

Research demonstrates that individuals with a criminal offense tend to get employment by relying on a person who will vouch for their “reformed character” (Maruna et al., 2004, p. 275). By being transparent with both the youth and the employer, a job placement specialist can set clear expectations for both employers and youth increasing the likelihood of a successful match. This may expand employment opportunities for youth.

Hire Case Managers. A case management system for monitoring, supporting and assisting youth throughout and following the completion of the program. A case management system may be a key tool for transition programs to help connect youth to services, assess a youth’s goals and progress and determine if a program’s activities are appropriate.

Focus on relationship development and maintenance. Research suggests various types (i.e., emotional, informational, appraisal and instrumental), sources (i.e., parents, adults, mentors and peers) and conditions (i.e., empathy, goal promotion, responsive and availability) of relationships lead to successful outcomes (Center for Promise, 2016). Relationships play a role in development and foster positive developmental outcomes (Dang & Miller, 2013). Youth should have the opportunity to develop supportive relationships with more than one individual. A mentorship program that includes mentee-mentor matching based on interests and prescribed frequency and duration of mentoring meetings should be established. In addition to a mentor, youth ought to have access to other adults, such as a case manager, job developer and/or employer. A peer mentoring component may be beneficial. This can be established with

local college students or graduates of the program. Additionally, youth and the adults should receive training on how to build and maintain relationships. Maintenance of relationships is important. The program can host alumni events that encourage graduates to reconnect with program staff. Relationships should also be fostered with the families of the youth. This can be accomplished by encompassing a family component in the program. Given that the majority of youths' time is spent with and learning from the family, family counseling and parenting classes are two program activities that can be included (OJJDP, 2000).

Target social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive and moral competencies.

Increases in social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and moral competencies can foster positive outcomes (Botvin et al., 1995). Social competencies can be developed by focusing on skills such as communication, assertiveness and the ability to ask for support. Social skills can be enhanced by providing youth opportunities to practice through networking or at community events. Emotional competencies can be fostered by providing avenues for youth to discuss emotions (e.g., individual and group counseling). Behavioral competencies may be enhanced through activities such as work-readiness skills training, employment, or other hands-on learning. Cognitive skill development may include opportunities to engage in goal setting, problem solving, planning, conflict resolution and developing an individualized career plan. Moral competencies may be developed by programming that focuses on knowledge related to laws, rights, juvenile justice processes, education on consequences of risk taking behaviors, reflection on how behaviors impact others, personal responsibility, values and character development

(Keung Ma, 2011).

Encourage prosocial involvement. Encourage youth to lead restorative justice or community engagement projects. Determine the number of hours you would like the youth to engage in community service by graduation. Provide some structure to the youth in starting a meaningful community service project. Also, teach them the benefits in engaging in prosocial behaviors (Carol et al., 2014). The following guidelines may be helpful for the youth in designing and implementing the program: (1) brainstorm and determine neighborhood needs, (2) define goals, (3) plan the who, what, when, and how, (4) do the project, (5) reflect on the experience. An example guide is “Planning Your Community Service Project Michigan State University Extension 4-H Youth Development” (Michigan State University, 2007). Data suggestions that promoting altruistic and compliant behaviors may be effective in minimizing associations with deviant peers and engagement in delinquent behaviors (Carol et al., 2014).

Opportunities to belong. Programs can cultivate belongingness by incorporating activities that increase youth empowerment, autonomy, self-advocacy, initiative, responsibility, confidence, independence and an ability to interact with individuals (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Programs distribute a satisfaction survey frequently to participants to assess areas that are successful or need improvement. Develop a youth council to provide a space for youth to discuss pertinent issues and engage in decision making processes, while promoting activism and developing leadership skills.

Use a database management system. This may be useful in collecting, managing and evaluating all the data that is collected throughout the program.

Assess youth impact on the community. Assess the impact youth have on the community. For example, ask the community members who come in contact with the youth through activities, training, civic engagement projects or employers their perceptions of the youth. Youth may enjoy hearing the positive ways in which they are impacting individuals in their communities. This may serve as positive reinforcement.

Implications for research

More research is warranted to understand community-based organizations that have programs for court-involved youth. More specifically, research is needed to understand the critical components of organizations that can support PYD focused transition programs for court-involved youth. Although this study briefly touched on the ways youth access comprehensive transition programs, more research is needed to better understand the organizational conditions that foster more youth participation. Moreover, in this study, it was clear from executive directors and other key stockholders what they found as essential components in their programs that resulted in positive outcomes. However, more research needs to be done to understand the key organizational components from youths' perspectives. Few programs focused on family involvement. More research in this area may help organizations determine in what ways family should be involved in programming for court-involved youth. Additionally, many organizations lacked well-defined internal training models. Further research is needed to understand the most effective PYD and trauma informed training for staff. Additional research is needed in understanding how PYD programs can be more culturally responsive to court-involved youth. Lastly, more rigorous research needs to be conducted to evaluate the impact these

programs have on court-involved youth.

Limitations

This study had limitations. First, the results could have been impacted by the organizational funding streams. While the study provides insight into how organizations are integrating positive youth development elements, the depth and breadth of the integration could be heavily influenced by grants and funding. Second, this study is based on five qualitative case studies, which limits the generalizability of the findings. The results are not representative of all comprehensive transition programs that serve court-involved youth.

Conclusion

Structuring comprehensive transition programs grounded in a theory of change, that integrates PYD principles and emphasizes partnership at all levels (e.g. stakeholders, interagency, youth and families) can support the positive development of court-involved youth. Thus, encouraging these youths to capitalize on their strengths, develop new prosocial competencies, form supportive relationships, and connect to educational, employment, and civic, opportunities that help them to better negotiate the transition from facility to community. A positive youth development-oriented transition program could also benefit the larger community through the partnerships it creates between youth and employers, community groups and citizens. Overall, there is a need for improvements in the way programs are designed, evaluated and reported so that we can draw on more conclusions as to their potential in fostering positive development and reducing recidivism.

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

A. Research Question: How do community-based organizations support court-involved youth gain access to work-based learning activities?

Interview Questions

1. Please describe the purpose and mission of your organization.
2. How would you describe the culture of your organization?
3. How do you recruit and retain youth?
4. Does your program have collaborative relationships with other agencies, services or businesses? Describe how you engaged these relations and the nature of these relationships.
5. How do you develop and maintain partnerships with other services?
6. How do you assess the needs of your youth? Why is this important to your program?
7. How is your program unique to court-involved youth?

B. Research Questions: How do community-based organizations determine what activities to implement in their transition programs? How often are each of the positive youth development features experienced? Which types of community programs most often provide these experiences?

Interview Questions:

1. Is this work-based learning program based on a specific model or theory? What is the theory/framework of the program and how well has the theory been implemented at the organization?
2. What does term “positive youth development” mean to you?
3. Can you provide examples of how your program may or may not incorporate the following characteristics: safety, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, opportunities for skill building, self-determination, self-efficacy?
4. What are the characteristics/demographics of your organization?

C. Research Question: How are work-based learning activities facilitating positive youth development and well-being?

Interview Questions:

1. How do you assess whether the program/activities have an impact on your students?
 - a. Why do you use these measures?
2. Have there been any outcome evaluations conducted for your program? If so, what were the findings?
3. What factors, activities, resources or people would you say helped or hindered

these outcomes?

4. Do you assess community level outcomes?

Appendix B: Interview Survey

Please describe your role with the organization.

How does the organization access youth for the program?

How is your program unique to court-involved youth?

Does your organization have collaborative relationships with other agencies, services or businesses? Describe the nature of these relationships.

Is this transition program based on a specific model or theory? What is the theory/framework of the program and how well has the theory been implemented at the organization?

Can you provide examples of how your program may or may not incorporate the following characteristics: safety, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, opportunities for skill building, self-determination, self-efficacy?

What are the characteristics/demographics of your organization?

- Size
- Funding sources
- Budget
- Partnerships

Years program has been in existence

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CURRICULUM VITAE

