inREACH: Final Process and Monitoring Evaluation Report

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inREACH

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Executive Summary

inREACH is a comprehensive gang prevention project designed to prevent Waterloo Region youth (13 to 24 years of age) from entering gangs, and to help youth who are gang- involved to end their involvement. The project began in September of 2009 with a contribution agreement of nearly $3.8 million from the National Crime Prevention Centre to the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council. Gangs are a serious and complex problem. Dealing with them requires a multi-faceted strategy that combines many elements. One successful program using such an approach is the Spergel Model (developed by the late Irving Spergel). This model includes activities that are designed to: **intervene** with gang-involved or at-risk youth by providing needed services such as counselling and addictions support; **prevent** youth who are at risk from becoming involved with gangs by providing opportunities in education, training, employment, and recreation; **mobilize communities** to create positive and meaningful activities for youth; and **create partnerships** among community organizations so that they can work more effectively together to deal with the gang problem.

The inREACH project has adopted these elements from the Spergel model, organizing its activities around two "phases" or components. The **Community Treatment** phase involves the provision of a range of services and supports (e.g., addictions counselling, employment support, assistance finding housing) to young people (age 13 to 24) who have been involved in, or are at risk for involvement in, gang activity. Treatment workers use a case-planning, "wrap-around" approach which entails working with community partners to access whatever supports youth need to reach their intended goals.

The **Community Mobilization** phase involves project staff working in targeted neighbourhoods to prevent youth from getting involved in gangs. The Youth Outreach Workers (YOWs) who staff this component utilize a "youth engagement" approach, in which young people are involved in creating and leading new programs in their neighbourhoods, based on their strengths and interests. Several programs and activities have resulted from this process, including youth drop-ins, meal preparation and dinners, an art studio, a music studio, and outings to athletic events.

As stipulated by the Spergel model, inREACH

involves a partnership among several community agencies and organizations. It has a group of **Community Treatment Partners** which met regularly to guide the activities of the treatment team, and a group of **Community Mobilization Partners** which also met regularly to guide the activities of the Youth Outreach Workers. A **Project Advisory Committee (PAC)**, which included representatives from these partnering organizations along with representatives from several other community organizations, guided the overall direction of the project. Project staff included the Project Manager, a Coordinator of Community Development and Research, a Project Assistant, four treatment workers, and four Youth Outreach Workers.

The purpose of the Process and Monitoring Evaluation was to provide a comprehensive assessment of the way in which the project was implemented and the outcomes that resulted. Data concerning program development and outcomes were gathered by questionnaires and interviews administered to youth, parents of youth, staff, the project manager and coordinator, and a wide variety of project stakeholders, as well as from examination of the project's data- base and an audit of the files of youth who had received service from the treatment team.

The results of the Process and Monitoring Evaluation indicated that the services that inREACH provided were appropriate for youth involved in both the treatment and mobilization parts of the project, as they were tailored to the youths' needs and interests. Project managers, partners, and staff indicated that the youth in both parts of the project received sufficient amounts of service. Indeed, project staff went far beyond what is normally provided by service providers working in more traditional service environments.

The research results indicated, as well, that the project was successful in reaching those youth who were gang-involved or at risk for gang involvement. Over 40% of the youth served by the treatment team were gang-involved, over two-thirds had been involved with the criminal justice system, and more than 50% had addiction problems. In addition, the evaluation indicates that once youth were involved in treatment, very few left the program. The evidence suggests that the community mobilization team attracted the youth that the project was designed to serve. Interviews with stakeholders indicated that the project was drawing in youth who were not

previously engaged in their communities, and had a high likelihood of engaging in negative behaviours such as drug use and criminal activity.

While the project did adhere to the major elements of the Spergel model, and the original plan for project activities, some key changes and adaptations were required to facilitate building the staff-youth relationships that were so critical to the success of the program. These included, in the treatment component of the program, making the intake process less formal and eliminating the structured group component of the program, instead focusing on working with youth individually.

The process and monitoring evaluation indicated that solid and effective partnerships were established in the process of developing the inREACH project. Partners in the project worked together in supervising staff, providing resources to the project, contributing information and expertise, advocating for the project, and providing training opportunities and referrals. Surveys and interviews with stakeholders indicated that the partners felt that inREACH had produced greater collaboration and better service coordination among organizations within the region.

An examination of project outcomes indicated that it had an impact on youth, staff of the project, partner organizations and the community. Results indicated that youth participating in the project had: improved their skills in decision-making, problem-solving and the ability to resist peer pressure, among other things; established more positive relationships with their peers, families and community; taken advantage of opportunities to develop their skills and talents by trying new things; felt more self-confident and had greater self-esteem; and were less likely to get into trouble and more able to work toward a positive future.

Many positive outcomes were also evident at the systems level. Staff felt that working with inREACH had improved their skills in dealing with youth, and their ability to work in a collaborative way with other treatment providers who had different skills. inREACH partners thought the project had enhanced collaboration among community organizations and produced greater awareness of resources available in the community; this resulted in improved access to services among young people, and more appropriate and timely services for them. inREACH also had an impact on the partner organizations

themselves. Partners thought that inREACH had produced greater organizational awareness of the gang problem in the region, a different approach in dealing with at-risk youth, an enhanced ability to attract young people to programs and services, and changes in policies and procedures which allowed them to work more effectively with at-risk youth. At the community level, the results suggested that inREACH had produced more acceptance of and a more positive attitude towards young people, more resources for youth, and greater neighbourhood safety.

Some key lessons were learned from this examination of inREACH's development and outcomes:

1. Sufficient time must be allocated for planning programs, services and organizational structures

2. Programs must be allowed to change and develop

3. Relationships are key to successful youth programs and interventions

4. Youth must be listened to and involved in program decision-making

5. Youths' strengths, skills, capacities and interests must be recognized

6. Partnerships and collaboration are important for project success

7. Evaluation and monitoring needs to be appropriate

8. Funders should work in partnership with program stakeholders and personnel; funding requirements should be negotiated, not dictated

In conclusion, inREACH appears to be a unique and successful program, one that is much needed by both the youth that it serves, and by the community in which it operates. It is unique in the approach used to help young people and in the way in which community organizations have partnered to implement the program. It has been successful in the way in which it has engaged and helped youth who are gang-involved or at-risk, and created new connections among community organizations. It is needed because it serves a population – marginalized youth – who are underserved in the region, and who have the strengths, skills and capacities to become contributing members of society if they are given the support and opportunities they deserve.

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Introduction

inREACH is a comprehensive gang prevention project designed to prevent Waterloo Region youth (13 to 24 years of age) from entering gangs, and to help youth who are gang- involved to end their involvement. The project began in September of 2009 with a contribution agreement of nearly $3.8 million from the National Crime Prevention Centre to the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council. The Council served as the administrative lead in a partnership of community organizations that developed, implemented and administered the project's programs and activities.

inREACH consisted of three phases. The first phase, **Community Needs Assessment**, involved the administration of questionnaires and interviews to nearly 2,500 individuals in order to determine the community's perceptions of gang activity in the region. The second phase, **Community Treatment**, involved the provision of a range of services and supports to young people who were actively involved in or at-risk for involvement in gang activity. The final phase, **Community Mobilization**, involved project staff working in targeted neighbourhoods to engage youth in positive activities, so that gang involvement would be less appealing to them.

The purpose of the Process and Monitoring Evaluation was to provide a comprehensive assessment of the way in which the project was implemented. This included an examination of the nature and amount of services provided, the extent to which the project was delivered as planned to the target population, what changes were necessary in the way services were delivered to adequately meet the needs of youth, and how organizational partners collaborated with one another.

Project Overview

Background

Gangs

In 2007, Public Safety Canada published a report entitled "Youth Gangs in Canada: What do we know?". This report was based, in part, on a 2002 Canadian Police Survey on youth gangs, as well as a number of other studies and reports. In the report, gangs were defined as a group of young people who "1. Self-identify as a group (e.g., have a group name), 2. Are generally perceived by others as a distinct group, and 3. Are involved in a significant number of delinquent incidents that produce consistent negative responses from the community and/or law enforcement agencies". At the time when the report was written, it was estimated that there were 434 gangs active in Canada, with a total of over 7,000 members. In Ontario, it wasestimated that there were over 200 youth gangs, with a total of over 3,000 members. Recent reports indicate that the numbers of gangs and gang-members is growing (Mellor, MacRae, Pauls & Hornick, 2005).

Gangs have a profound impact on their members, schools, neighbourhoods, and society- at-large. Compared to youth who do not belong to gangs, gang-members are more likely to engage in criminal activity, drop out of school, use drugs, carry weapons, and become teenage parents, among other things. The negative impacts of gang membership are life-long; individuals who were gang members in their youth are significantly more likely to suffer economic hardship and engage in criminal activity as adults (Krohn, Ward, Thornberry, Lizotte & Chu, 2011). The presence of gangs reduces the safety of schools and neighbourhoods. Studies show, for example, that the presence of gangs in schools is associated with the availability of drugs and guns in those schools (Erickson & Butters, 2005).

Treatment & Prevention Approaches

The serious consequences associated with gangs have led to a number of different approaches in dealing with them. Generally, there are four kinds of approaches to dealing with youth gangs. One of these is suppression, which involves the use of legislation and criminal justice activities such as targeted patrols and arrests of gang members involved in crimes by police gang units. It is generally agreed that suppression alone is not effective in reducing crime (Lafontaine et al., 2005). Another approach involves intervention with young people who are involved or associated with gangs, or at high levels of risk of involvement. There is some evidence that appropriate intervention programs can be successful in helping youth exit gangs and reduce criminal behaviour (Arbreton & McClanahan, 2002). A third approach is the prevention of gang involvement through programs that provide youth "with meaningful opportunities, prosocial skills and development and healthy attachments to social institutions" (Lafontaine et al., 2005, p. 35). It has been argued that prevention is the most effective approach, since it deals with some of the important root causes of gang involvement, such as the lack of meaningful positive activities for youth to engage in, and the need youth have for a sense of belonging and support. A fourth approach to youth gangs incorporates elements of the first three approaches, and is therefore considered a comprehensive, integrated approach. This approach recognizes that youth gangs are a complex problem which requires a multi-faceted strategy that combines suppression, intervention and prevention, as well as the collaboration of a wide range of community agencies and organizations, particularly those in the areas of social welfare and criminal justice.

The Spergel Model

One of the most prominent of the comprehensive, integrated approaches developed to address youth gangs is the Comprehensive Community Model, developed by the late Irving Spergel. Spergel was a professor of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago when he developed the model (now commonly known as the "Spergel" model) in the early 1990s. The model has five key components, or strategies, all of which are considered necessary to address youth crime: Opportunities Provision (the provision of opportunities in education, training, employment, and recreation to gang-involved and at-risk youth); Social Intervention (reaching out to gang-involved or at-risk youth and their families to secure needed services such as counselling and addictions support, and forging links between youth, their families, and the community); Community Mobilization (working collaboratively with neighbourhoods, community organizations, and youth to create positive and meaningful activities for young people, and to establish a sense of belonging to the community among youth); Organizational Change and Development (developing partnerships, policies and procedures that produce effective and efficient use of resources to address the gang problem); and Suppression (holding gang-involved and at-risk youth accountable for their behaviour, and monitoring of these youth by criminal justice agencies, schools, and other community-based agencies).

The Spergel model was first employed in the Little Village neighbourhood in Chicago, with some success (Spergel & Grossman, 1997). Evaluation of the program indicated that the program reduced criminal activities relating to violent behaviour and drug offenses for youth involved in the program. The program was subsequently adopted in other neighbourhoods, with some (though mixed) success (Spergel, Kwai & Sosa, 2006). The Spergel model continues to be considered one of the most effective gang prevention programs available, and is cited as a "Promising and Model Crime Prevention Program" by Public Safety Canada. Consequently, the Spergel Model was adopted as the model for the inREACH project, recognizing that it would need to be adapted to a Canadian and local context.

The inREACH Program

The Context: Kitchener-Waterloo

inREACH was developed to serve the Region of Waterloo, a regional municipality consisting of the cities of Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge, and

the townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich. The 2011 census indicated that the population of the region was 507,096. Over 95,000 of these individuals (18.4% of the population) are youth between the ages of 12 and 24. The Waterloo Region District School Board operates 16 high schools in the region, serving a student population of approximately 63,000 students. Waterloo Catholic District School Board serves 40,000 students from JK to grade 12 and operates five secondary schools.

The Waterloo Regional Police Service estimated in 2012 that there were approximately 20 street gangs operating in the region, with between three and four hundred youth involved in those gangs.[1] The estimate of the number of youth involved in gangs increases to 1000 when "associate" gang members are included in the tally. This represents a large increase in youth gang activity; ten years ago, only one youth gang was known to operate in the region. The majority of individuals involved in street gangs are 18 years of age or under, and most are male. They come from all ethnicities and backgrounds, but living in a socioeconomically disadvantaged community places youth at higher risk for gang involvement.

Program Components

There are two major program components of the inREACH Project – the Community Treatment Team (CTT) and the Community Mobilization Team (CMT). The CTT provides counselling and a range of supports (e.g., counselling, addictions support, employment support) to youth between the ages of 13 and 24 who are actively involved in a gang, associated with a gang, or are thinking about joining a gang. The CMT works within targeted, "high-risk" neighbourhoods to enhance the opportunities and activities for young people (aged 13 to 24) in those neighbourhoods, and to help make those neighbourhoods more youth-friendly places, where young people feel a sense of belonging and security.

Program Participants and Intake/Entry Process

Treatment Services

Youth between the ages of 13 and 24 who live in Waterloo Region and are involved in, associated with, or at risk of gang involvement, are eligible for treatment services. Youth may be referred for treatment by community organizations (e.g., schools, social service agencies, the police), family and friends, or may be self-referred. Youth who are referred meet with one of the treatment team workers within two weeks of contacting the program, during which time the worker obtains contact and demographic information from the youth, and finds out about the youth's educational and employment history, relationships with family, substance use, criminal justice system involvement, and community involvement, among other things. During this meeting, the youth's suitability for acceptance into the program is determined. If the youth is deemed suitable, a preliminary plan of action is made; if it is deemed that service from the treatment team is not useful or appropriate, other resources are sought to ensure that the youth gets the assistance he/she needs.

Community Mobilization Activities

A significant amount of time is dedicated to outreach in this phase of the project. YOWs spend time connecting with youth in their neighbourhoods with the goal of building rapport and trust with the youth. Once this relationship is formed, YOWs gather feedback and information from the youth about what activities/programs they would like to see in their community. These programs/activities are then created and implemented through a partnership between the YOW and the youth. Any youth between the ages of 13 and 24 who resides in one of the four neighbourhoods in which the project works is welcome to participate in project activities. The project provides a range of activities which vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, based on youth interest. These include, but are not limited to, youth drop-ins, meal preparation and dinners, an art studio, and a music studio. All a youth needs to do

1 See Waterloo Regional Police Service website: http://wrpssts.blogspot.ca/2012/11/why-do-youth-join-gangs-problem-risks.html

is to arrive at the designated time for the activity in order to be able to participate; no fee is required.

Project Activities and Change Goals (Project Logic Model)

While the ultimate goal of inREACH is to prevent and reduce gang involvement in Waterloo Region, there are many other changes that the project is designed to produce that are expected to lead to achieving this ultimate goal. It was recognized from the start that the reduction of gang involvement would require changes in youth themselves, as well as in the various environments (home, school, community) in which young people live, work, learn and play, and the systems that are in place (e.g., health and social service organizations, criminal justice services) to promote the well-being of youth and the communities in which they live. In January of 2012, a meeting of the key stakeholders, staff and partners of the inREACH project was convened to discuss the kinds of changes they hoped to see in the youth that inREACH was seeking to help, and in the environments and systems that affect the lives of these young people. Those attending the meeting also discussed the major activities in which inREACH engages to affect the kinds of changes the project desired to see in youth, and in the systems and environments that influence their lives.

The result of these discussions was a two component model that specified the major activities undertaken by the project, and the major changes or outcomes that were expected to result from these activities. One component of the model – the youth component – describes these activities and expected changes/outcomes for the youth themselves, and the other – the systems component – describes the activities and expected changes/outcomes regarding the systems or environments that affect young people's lives.

The youth component of the model (see Appendix 1) indicates that there are five major kinds of outcomes or changes that inREACH would like to achieve with regard to the youth that they are attempting to help. The program would like to see these young people improve their skills (e.g., in problem-solving, impulse

control); establish connections (e.g., with positive role models, their communities); take advantage of opportunities; demonstrate personal growth; and have an enhanced future (involving success at school and work, among other things). The major activities designed to achieve these outcomes involve changing systems; providing treatment; providing greater access and opportunity; giving youth a voice; and engaging young people in their communities.

The systems component of the model (see Appendix 2) indicates that there are eight kinds of outcomes that inREACH would like to achieve at a systems or environmental level. The program would like to see: enhanced relationships and collaboration among systems; greater interaction between generations (youth, adults, seniors); more system sensitivity to young people; greater engagement of community organizations with youth; more of a sense of community in the neighbourhoods in which youth live, learn and work; more resources for young people; enhanced acknowledgement and recognition of inREACH within the region; and realistic expectations about what the project can achieve. The major activities designed to achieve these outcomes involve providing resources to organizations and neighbourhoods, engaging communities in working with young people, changing people's attitudes about youth and what can be done to involve them in community life, advocating on their behalf, and partnering and collaborating among systems.

Project Theory

No model of a program is complete without a discussion of the logic or theory that underlies the model (Pancer, 1997; Pancer & Westhues, 1989). The logic or theory part of a model provides a justification or a rationale for assuming that the resources and activities that make up the program will achieve the changes or outcomes that the program hopes to produce. A model that includes these three elements – a description of program resources and activities, a listing of desired outcomes, and a theory or logic that explains why the program activities should indeed effect the desired

changes – is consequently called a "logic" model. The logic or theory can come from many sources, but two prominent sources are previous evaluations of similar programs, and theories or research about the problem to be dealt with.

The logic or theory underlying the inREACH project is substantial. inREACH is based on a sound theoretical model – the Spergel model – that is itself based on rigorous research, and has been used in the implementation of gang prevention programs in a number of American neighbourhoods. Evaluations of these programs have indicated that they can be successful in reducing gang activity (see Spergel, Kwai & Sosa, 2006). The inREACH model is itself based on a solid body of research. The research literature indicates, for example, that gang involvement is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by several factors that place youth at risk for participation in gangs. These include alcohol and drug use, poverty, disengagement from school, and lack of a sense of belonging and esteem (which gang membership can provide) (Sharkey et al., 2011). Other factors serve to protect young people from gang involvement. For example, when youth possess good coping skills for dealing with problems, they are less likely to join gangs (McDaniel, 2012). One very prominent factor that serves to protect youth from gang involvement is their engagement in positive activities, such as music, the arts or community service, and in making decisions about their activities and their futures. This kind of engagement is said to contribute to positive youth development (Pancer, Rose-Krasnor & Loiselle, 2002).

The multitude of risk and protective factors that relate to gang involvement suggests that a multi-faceted approach is needed to address the problem. inREACH employs such a multi-faceted approach in both its treatment and community mobilization components. It attempts to reduce gang involvement through several means, including dealing with addictions and drug use, helping youth develop coping skills, engaging youth in school or employment, and providing them with opportunities to make decisions and to engage in activities that spark their interest. inREACH also attempts to address gang involvement at both an individual and systems level. Such approaches are considered necessary in order to solve complex social problems (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010).

Staff/Service Providers

The staff of inREACH, when the project was fully operational, included the Project Manager, the Coordinator of Community Development and Research, six Treatment Team Workers, four Youth Outreach Workers, and a project assistant.

Partners

From the initial conceptualization of the inREACH project, it was recognized that addressing such a complex problem as youth gangs would require the active collaboration of key community agencies and organizations. inREACH works with three groups of partners: **Community Treatment Partners** (John Howard Society, Lutherwood, ROOF, St. Mary's Counselling, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, Waterloo Regional Police Service); **Community Mobilization Partners** (House of Friendship, Mosaic Counselling & Family Services, Preston Heights Community Group, Kinbridge Neighbourhood Association); and **Program Partners**, who offer programs for inREACH youth (Dwight Storring Digital Media, Vanderpool Fitness and Boxing). Representatives from these partnering organizations, along with representatives from several other community organizations, serve on a fourth body, the **Project Advisory Committee (PAC)**, which meets at least once a quarter to monitor the progress of the project, provide advice and consultation, and serve as a link between the project and the wider community. Organizations (in addition to the community treatment and community mobilization partners) that provided representatives to serve on the Project Advisory Committee included the Alliance for Children & Youth of Waterloo Region, the Argus Residence for Young People, the Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Area (CAFKA), the Crown Attorney's Office, Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region (FCS), Interfaith Grand River, the KW Multicultural Centre, Ministry of Children and Youth Services – Youth Justice Services, the National

Crime Prevention Centre, the Working Centre, YWCA Settlement and Immigration Services, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board and the Waterloo Region District School Board. The PAC is co-chaired by two individuals, one from the Waterloo Regional Police Service and one from the Waterloo Region District School Board. In addition to the Project Advisory Committee, there is also a Youth Advisory Committee comprised of youth who have been with the project for an extended period of time; this committee provides advice to the project from a youth perspective, and helps arrange special events and celebrations.

Organizational Structure

Appendix 3 presents the organizational structure of inREACH. As the chart indicates, the Project Manager reports to the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, and is responsible for both the community treatment and community mobilization components of the project. He provided support to the Coordinator of Community Development and Research, who provided support to the Youth Outreach Workers of the Community Mobilization Team. The project manager also provided support to the Treatment Team Workers of the Community Treatment Team, and the Project Assistant. Two teams of advisors, made up of the partners associated with the project's two components, met monthly to help coordinate the activities of those components. The Project Partner Team, consisting of representatives from the Community Treatment Partners, helped coordinate the activities of the Treatment Team Workers, and the Community Mobilization Team, consisting of representatives from the Community Mobilization Partners, helped coordinate the activities of the Youth Outreach Workers. The Project Advisory Committee provided advice, direction and support to the whole project. This organizational structure changed somewhat since Crime Prevention Council funding ended in March of 2013 and funding for inREACH was picked up (at a lower level of funding) by the Region of Waterloo (until the end of 2013).

The Process and Monitoring Evaluation

The purpose of the Process and Monitoring Evaluation was to provide a comprehensive assessment of the way in which the project was implemented. This included an examination of

- the nature and amount of services provided (as well as their adequacy, appropriateness and timeliness)
- the extent to which those served by the project were truly at-risk for gang involvement and other anti-social activities
- the extent to which the project was delivered as planned to the target population
- any changes that were necessary in the way services were delivered to adequately meet the needs of youth
- how organizational partners collaborated with one another

The data gathered also provide a picture of the impact that the project had on the youth involved in both the treatment and community mobilization components of the project, the organizations who served as partners with inREACH, the staff who worked with the project, and the neighbourhoods and community-at-large.

Methodology

The Process and Monitoring Evaluation utilized both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. All stakeholders in the project, including youth, parents of youth, project staff and managers, and representatives of partner organizations, were given the opportunity to provide feedback about their experience with inREACH by means of either a survey or interview (or both). In addition, information about the project was gleaned through a review of the project database, an audit of the case files of youth receiving services from the Community Treatment Team (CTT), and a review of logs kept by the Youth Outreach Workers of the Community Mobilization Team (CMT).

Table 1 below provides a simple overview of the number of surveys and interviews completed.

Table 1: Number of Survey and Interview Participants

Surveys		
Survey Type	**Number of Surveys Completed**	**Response Rate**
Youth Survey (CTT version)	18	72.0%
Youth Survey (CMT version)	65	75.6%
Stakeholder Survey	68	45.3%

Interviews	
Interview Type	**Number Completed**
CTT Youth – Individual interviews	8
CMT Youth – Individual interviews	8
CTT Youth Focus Group	1 group of 4
CMT Focus Groups	1 group of 6; 1 group of 9
CTT Youth Drop-out – Individual interviews	3
Parent focus group	1 group of 3
CTT staff focus group	1 group of 3
CTT staff individual interview	1
Project Manager individual interviews	2
Project Partner individual interviews	9

The following is a more detailed description of the methods used in gathering information.

Youth

Youth Survey

The youth involved in both the CMT and CTT components of the project were given the opportunity to complete a Youth Survey. Eighteen youth (of the 25 then in treatment and reachable by staff) completed the CTT survey and 65 youth completed the CMT survey out of a potential sample of 86.

The survey administered to youth served by the CTT contained questions asking about their general satisfaction with inREACH (e.g., "inREACH met my needs") and the extent to which their participation in inREACH had improved their opinion of things such as the opportunities available to them in their communities and adults in their communities. They were also asked to indicate the extent to which their participation in inREACH enhanced their skills (e.g., "My involvement with inREACH helped me get along with other people"), improved their connections with others (e.g., "My involvement with inREACH made me feel more like I belong to this community"), gave them opportunities (e.g., "My involvement with inREACH gave me the opportunity to develop my talents"), helped them grow as a person (e.g., "My involvement with inREACH helped me develop better coping skills"), and enhanced their future (e.g., "My involvement with inREACH helped make it less likely that I will get into trouble with the law in the future"). The youth respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the 73 items making up this part of the survey, on a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The survey also contained open-ended questions that asked youth how they had benefited from their involvement with inREACH, and what they liked best and least about inREACH. The survey ended with background and demographic questions asking about their age, sex, school and employment status, ethnic background and living situation.

The survey administered to youth involved in the community mobilization (CMT) component of the project was very similar to that administered to the CTT youth; however, it had fewer items (41). It asked youth to indicate – on a five-point agree-disagree scale – the extent to which their involvement with inREACH had influenced their skills, connections, opportunities, personal growth, and future. The survey asked the same open-ended questions about how they had benefited from inREACH, and what they liked and disliked about the project, and contained the same background and demographic questions as had the CTT survey.

Youth Interviews

Youth involved in both the CTT and CMT components of the project participated in both group interviews and individual interviews.

Eight CTT youth completed an individual interview. In this interview, they were asked how they came to be involved in the inREACH project, what the intake process was like, what kinds of services they received (and whether these services were appropriate and timely), how they felt about program staff, and how their participation had affected them (in terms of their education, work, gang involvement, etc.). The youth respondents were also asked what aspects of inREACH they most benefited from, and what could be done to improve the program. The focus group interview, conducted with four CTT youth, covered many of the same topics as the individual interview. Youth were asked about their entry into the project, the services they received, their interactions with project staff, and how their participation in inREACH had affected their lives.

In addition to the youth who had completed programming with the CTT, it was considered important to interview youth who had not completed their service with inREACH, and had dropped out of the program before completion. CTT staff provided the names of nine youth who staff identified as not completing programming, and for whom contact information was available. Three of these individuals consented to participate in an interview with a research team member. The interview included questions asking respondents how they had come into contact with inREACH, what their initial impressions of the project were, whether project staff had connected them with the programs and services they needed, how their participation in the project had affected their lives, why they had "quit" inREACH, and what might have kept them involved in the project.

Eight CMT youth completed an individual interview with a member of the research team. The interview included questions asking youth what inREACH programs they had participated in, how they had first heard about inREACH, what it was like participating in inREACH programs, how decisions were made

about what kinds of programs and activities the project would offer, how they felt about inREACH staff, how their participation had affected their lives, and what aspects of the program they considered to be most important. Two focus group interviews were conducted with CMT youth, one from each of two of the designated neighbourhoods involved in the CMT component of the project. Six youth from one of the communities took part in the interview, and nine from the other. In the interview, youth were asked to describe the project activities in which they had participated, how they came to be involved in the project, what it was like being involved in project activities, and how their participation had affected their lives.

Parents

Parent focus group interviews

Three parents who were involved in a parents' group at one of the community mobilization neighbourhoods participated in a focus group at their community centre. The interview lasted approximately an hour. Parents were asked how they became involved in the parents' group in their neighbourhood, what kinds of discussions and activities took place at group meeting times, and what kinds of changes they had experienced themselves and in their children and neighbourhood, among other things.

Staff

Staff Interviews

Focus group interviews were conducted with staff of both the treatment and community mobilization components of the project. The CTT focus group interview was conducted with four CTT staff (three of whom participated in a group interview, and one of whom participated in an individual interview as he was unavailable at the time of the group interview). The group interview lasted approximately two hours, and the individual interview, approximately an hour. Participants were asked to describe their role in the project, the services they provided to youth clients (and the extent to which these services were appropriate, timely and effective), the extent to

which the project attracted gang-involved or high-risk youth, their perceptions of the way in which the project was managed and resourced, their work with community partners, and the impact they felt the project had on the youth who participated in it, among other things. The CMT staff focus group interview was conducted with three Youth Outreach Workers, and it, too, lasted approximately two hours. Among other things, the YOWs were asked to describe their roles and activities, how they felt those activities had made a difference in the youth participants and in the communities in which they worked, the impact of their activities on the agencies that they worked with in the designated neighbourhoods, their work with community partners, and the adequacy of the resources and support they had received while doing their jobs.

Project Managers
Project Manager Interviews

The Project Managers and the Coordinator of Community Development and Research were interviewed individually by a member of the research team. The interviews lasted two to three hours and asked about: their role in the project and the services inREACH provided to youth (including their effectiveness, timeliness, and appropriateness); the extent to which the project reached the intended population of youth involved in or at risk for becoming involved in gangs; their perceptions of the different phases or components of inREACH development; program attrition; the way in which the project was managed; and the impact inREACH had on youth, community partners and their ability to collaborate with one another, and the community as a whole, among other things. They were also asked about the extent to which the Project Advisory Committee added value and support to the project.

Partners
Partner Interviews

Nine core partners, all of whom were also members of the Project Advisory Committee, were interviewed individually by one of the research team

members. These interviews took approximately one hour. The questions asked in the interview were the same as those posed to the project managers in their interview.

Stakeholders
Stakeholder Survey

A survey was administered on-line to 150 stakeholders, who were involved in various ways with the inREACH project. These included project staff, lead community partners, other community partners, members of the Project Advisory Committee, youth, volunteers, and government officials. Sixty-eight (45.3%) of those invited to respond completed a survey. The survey consisted of several statements with which respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement on a 6-point scale (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree, or don't know). The statements had to do with: the extent to which stakeholders felt that inREACH had affected young people's access to programs and services, life and social skills, relationships, personal growth and gang involvement; how the project was implemented and managed; and how the core partners worked together in providing inREACH services and activities.

File review
Database Information

A database was kept with information collected at in-take, each service contact, and discharge (or exit) for all youth who received services with the CTT. Information collected at these times included: the referral source; the status of youth when they terminated services (e.g., did they complete treatment, or did they leave before completing treatment); how many hours of treatment service they received; the average number of weeks they spent in the program; their ethnicity, family composition, school status; the presence and severity of any addictions; and their police status (e.g., were they confirmed gang members, "known to police", suspected gang members, etc.).

File Audit

Case files of 37 CTT youth clients were reviewed. The main focus of this review was the issues that the youth presented with (e.g., addiction issues, criminal justice involvement), their background, the number of weeks in the program, the services provided, the youth's strengths, and the outcomes at discharge or completion of service.

Transcription and Analysis

All interviews, both individual and focus group, were transcribed word-for-word and then entered into a computer data-base and analyzed using a software package called NVivo. Analysis involved identifying key themes within each of several topic areas. One of the topic areas, for example, was "impacts of the project on youth". Each interview was reviewed, and any time the respondent mentioned any kind of impact on youth, that portion of the interview was "coded" or placed in the "youth impact" category. Some of the surveys contained "open- ended" or qualitative questions (rather than numerical scales) in which respondents indicated their answers in their own words. Qualitative responses from surveys were entered into an excel spreadsheet and were reviewed for major themes (e.g., the things that youth said they liked the most about the project in the open-ended questions on the youth survey).

Assessment of the Evaluation methodology

While much of the original plan for the process and monitoring evaluation of the inREACH project was implemented as initially laid out, several elements of the evaluation were changed, primarily because there was a change in the evaluation team half-way through the project. As originally planned, data were gathered at intake, treatment sessions, and discharge as part of a program data-base; surveys were administered to youth participants and program stakeholders; and key informant interviews were conducted with program staff, core partners and other stakeholders. Other elements of the

original plan were not implemented. For example, the original plan called for the administration of a Youth Tracking Form and a Gang Risk Assessment Instrument. When the new evaluation team began their work on the process and monitoring evaluation, they discovered that the Youth Tracking Form had never been used and the Gang Risk Assessment Instrument had been discontinued after the previous evaluator left.[2] It was determined that collecting the Youth Tracking Form only on youth who subsequently entered the program would not be useful, so other means (such as additional interviews) were used to gather information on things such as program fidelity. The new team also used a different, more collaborative approach with regard to the evaluation. For example, project stakeholders met to collectively determine the key goals and activities of the project, which served as the basis of a new logic model. Project stakeholders were also involved in the revision of the surveys and interviews administered to youth and project partners. Also, many more interviews (both individual and group) were conducted than had been set out in the original plan. While changes in the plan meant that certain aspects of the process and monitoring evaluation could not be carried out in the same way (e.g., program fidelity could not be ascertained as a percentage or numerical rating), the new evaluation plan attempted to address all the key questions that the process and monitoring evaluation was meant to answer.

Findings and Interpretation

Process and evaluation findings will be addressed in several sections, including: the Community Needs Assessment, the Community Treatment Team, the Community Mobilization Team, General Project Management, Partnerships, and Impacts of the Program – on youth, on the community, on staff, and on organizations. Please see each of the sections below. [A summary of findings is included in Appendix 4: Results Matrix.]

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2 The Gang Risk Assessment Instrument was copyrighted to the previous evaluator and could no longer be used when the evaluator left the project.

Community Needs Assessment

What was done?

The Community Needs Assessment was carried out in the spring and summer of 2010. Information collection included:

1. On-line survey with students in grades 6-12 from 21 schools (both the Catholic and Public school boards). A total of 947 youth participated from 17 Catholic schools and 194 youth participated from 4 Public schools.

2. On-line survey with school personnel from 21 schools (both the Catholic and Public school boards). A total of 188 school personnel participated in the survey.

3. On-line survey with community residents from Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and the Townships. A total of 1,141 people completed the survey; the majority were from Kitchener (48.2%), followed by Waterloo (21.4%), Cambridge (17.9%) and the townships (7.1%).

4. Individual personal interviews with gang-involved youth (ages 16-24). A total of 15 youths participated – all young men ranging from 16-23 years old (average age was 20). All were born in Canadian and most identified as White (60%); 40% identified as various races.

Therefore, close to 2500 people (2470) were surveyed and an additional 15 youth were interviewed for the needs assessment. In addition to this data collection, project personnel also consulted with representatives from the Waterloo Region Police Service, as they collected data (i.e., asking representatives if the results they were finding were consistent with their experiences) and compiled an inventory of all the services and resources available to youth in the Waterloo Region. The purpose of the inventory was to ensure against duplication of services.

Was the Community Needs Assessment Implemented as Planned?

According to key informant interviews with stakeholders, the community needs assessment was generally implemented as planned. The needs assessment was thorough, provided valuable information, engaged the community, and generally accomplished what was intended:

> *"I think there was a lot of consultation and I think it was well organized and well planned and that the key players who needed to be there were there. So I think just from a logistics perspective … that [it] was well handled."* (PAC Member)

> *"… I do think they got the right neighbourhoods… at the end of the day I think they identified the good, deserving neighbourhoods."* (Project Partner)

> *"I think it was a very thorough assessment and [had a] very high level of participation…. It was important for us to be able to say 'we didn't just dream this up or we didn't just guestimate'…. When we did the first report to regional council… it was important for us to be able to say to them that [the project] is based on some data."* (Project Partner)

However, the time taken to do the community needs assessment was raised as an issue by several of the partners/key informants. Two key informants (partners in the project) reported that this phase of the project seemed to take a long time – longer than perhaps anticipated or planned – and one felt that the process produced little and that many changes were made:

> *"The only thing, and I guess my frustration with my early participation in the project, was that [this] phase of the project took so long. We seemed to talk about stuff and talk about stuff..."*

> *"I think the whole needs assessment phase was really time-consuming with very little output…. I think there was a lot of frustration with that [phase] because there was an announcing, 'we have this funding and we are starting this program and this is what it's all about' [and] then the community waited and waited…. There were also a lot of things that got changed during that initial process."*

Contrary to the opinion expressed above, one of the partners felt that there was insufficient time for the needs assessment; this partner would have liked more

time to allow for more qualitative data to be included:

> *"I would have liked more time for the development phase. It was simply too short. You don't do a good job of gathering those kinds of data but there is always this time pressure. You got to get the money out the door…. Had we more time we probably would have added some qualitative data to it … but we didn't have time for it."*

A few of the key informants also commented that the implementation of the Community Treatment Team (CTT) phase of the project was being done concurrently with the implementation of the needs assessment which did not seem to make a lot of sense:

> *"… we used a lot of the needs assessment to sort of guide the next two phases, so the treatment phase and the needs assessment were happening concurrently which does not make any sense but that was just the way that the funder planned the project."*

It appears that the project was committed to a timeline to implement the CTT phase of the project, even though the needs assessment was not yet completed. This seems to have led to tension between inREACH and the project funder, as information from the community needs assessment (as well as from a few early clients) indicated that changes in the work plan were probably necessary. As one key informant explained:

> "… we were tied to the work plan that, in essence, was much of the big cause of the tension between inREACH and the funder…. We submitted a work plan that was essentially created in a vacuum, so when we actually get to boots on the ground and begin to implement the program and use some of the information that we learned from the needs assessment, as well as some feedback from some very early participants in the treatment phase, those changes [we wanted to make] weren't in the original work plan…. [The funder] … [was] saying 'you need to follow your work plan' and we're saying '… our needs assessment kind of tells us differently' …. [That] coupled with our first

experience working with clients … tells us that we need to be doing the work differently than what was proposed in the work plan."

In the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked if the community needs assessment phase resulted in sufficient information to ensure strong project development and implementation. Approximately two-thirds of respondents either strongly agreed (20.9%; n=14) or agreed (46.3%; n=31) with the statement. A handful of respondents (7.5%; n=5) were undecided and three respondents (4.5%) disagreed with the statement. One-fifth of the respondents (20.9%; n=14) were unsure.

Community Treatment Team
Target Groups

According to the work plan for inREACH: *"The priority populations are gang-involved youth between the ages of 13 and 24 and youth at-risk of gang involvement."* The project used the same definition of "gang-affiliated" youth employed by the Waterloo Region Police Service (WRPS). The WRPS considered a youth to be a street gang member if they met three of the following criteria (and must include criterion #1):

1. Direct/Indirect involvement in a gang activity
2. Self-admission to gang membership or association
3. Reliable source information
4. Observed association by police
5. Symbolic identifiers (hand signs, clothing, etc.)
6. Court findings
7. Physical evidence (e.g. photographs, documents, etc.) that speak to gang membership

The project used the definition provided by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development to define at-risk youth: "...children and youth 'at risk' are viewed as those failing in school and unsuccessful in making the transition to work and adult life and as a consequence are unlikely to be able to make a full contribution to active society" (OECD 1995).

Characteristics of Youth Served by the Program

Information from the Database and CTT Surveys

A total of 69 youth were served in the program as of March 31, 2013. Of those 69 youth, 40.6% (n=28) were confirmed gang members. Further, two-thirds of the youth (66.7%) had some involvement with the criminal justice system, including:

• Adult criminal record: 4
• Youth criminal record: 20
• Case before the courts: 12
• On probation: 10

As well, over one-half of the youth served in the program (53.6%; n=37) had addiction issues with drugs and/or alcohol. For the majority of those 37 clients (32 or 86.5%), their addictions were severe (n=29) or very severe (n=3).

In addition to the data presented above concerning criminal justice involvement and addictions, it also appears that poverty was a risk factor for many of these youth. There were 23 youth who indicated that they lived somewhere other than with their parents (e.g., on their own, with other family members, in foster care/group home, etc.); of those 23 youth, 18 (78%) reported an income of less than $10,000. Further, in the CTT survey conducted, youth were asked if they had enough money to meet their basic needs and enough money to allow them to do fun things they wanted to do. One-half of the youth indicated that they had money to meet their basic needs only "sometimes", "hardly ever", or "not at all". Close to three- quarters of the youth surveyed (72.2%) reported that they had money for "fun things" only "sometimes" or less.

Case File Review Results

The case file review also indicated that clients were presenting with multiple issues and risks. Some of the presenting issues included:

• Prior arrests and/or gang affiliation
• Substance use issues
• Learning disabilities
• ADHD
• History of neglect and domestic abuse
• Difficulties/absence from school
• Anger and anxiety issues
• Stressed/problematic family relationships

Identified needs included: housing, employment, support with school, counselling for different issues (e.g., substance use, aggression, familial relationships), and basic life skills. Please see Appendix 5 for more information on the presenting issues and identified needs of clients, based upon the case file review conducted.

Stakeholder Survey Results

In the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked three questions about the type of youth that were involved in the inREACH program – were they mostly gang-involved youth, high-risk youth, or low- or moderate-risk youth? Please see results on next page:

As shown in Figure 1, most respondents provided the highest ratings for "high-risk youth"; 70.1% strongly agreed or agreed that these are the types of youth mostly involved in the program.[3] About 30% of the respondents reported that gang-involved youth were mostly involved with the program (i.e., they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement). A little over 20% thought that it was low- or moderate-risk youth that were mostly involved in the program, whereas about 40% disagreed that these were the types of youth being served. It should be noted that there were a fair proportion who answered "don't know/NA" for each of these items.

Key Informant Interviews

There seemed to be general agreement amongst the key informants interviewed that the program had involved high-risk youth; although many were not

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3 As noted in Methodology, 68 stakeholders completed a stakeholder survey, 65 youth completed a CMT youth survey and 18 youth completed a CTT youth survey. However, not all respondents answered all items; therefore, where the sample sizes do not add to these figures (i.e., 68, 65 or 18) then some respondents left the item unanswered.

Figure 1: Stakeholder Survey Results – Types of Clients Served
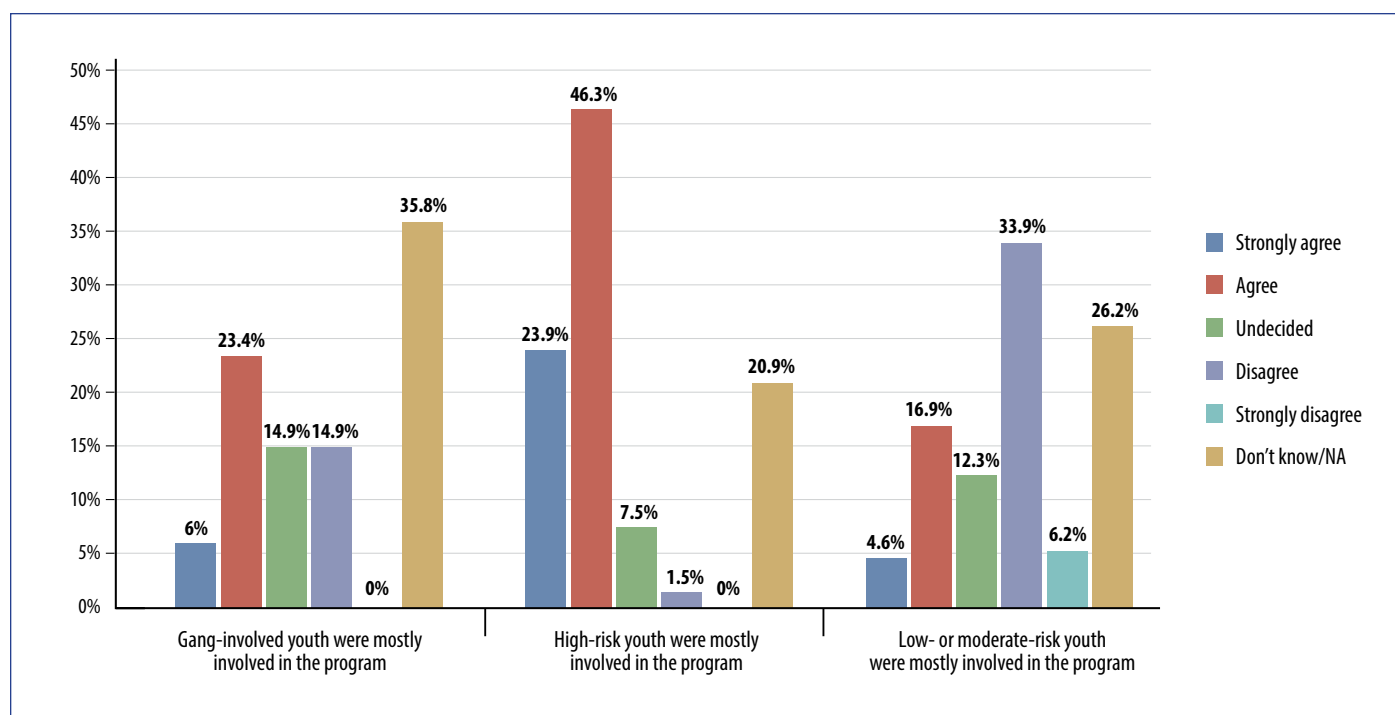
necessarily gang-involved, they were vulnerable to gang involvement or to other risk behaviours:

"I would say that the majority of the kids that we worked with, they were either [gang] affiliated or high-risk." (Project Staff)

"I think they are serving the population that the project intends to serve…. I know that those are 'at-risk' young people and so I think inREACH has done a good job of reaching the population that it was intended to reach." (Project Partner)

"Yes some of them are gang related and some of them are looking at going into the gang and some are surrounded with gang kind of activity but they may not themselves be directly involved." (PAC Member)

From the data presented above, it does appear that the inREACH program was successful in reaching gang-affiliated youth as well as youth at risk.

Intended Service Model

The program model for the CTT, as originally envisioned, involved:

- Conducting intake and risk screening to confirm participation;
- Individualized case planning and goal setting;
- Providing youth with other social, education and life supports, programs and resources including referral to other service providers; and
- Treatment of 60 primary participants per year composed of gang-involved and at-risk youth, consisting of a 12-week (108 hour) lesson plan in addition to provision of other customized supports (education, life skills, employment, family support, etc.)

Once the intake and assessment team determined that a case was eligible and suitable for the program, they would develop a case plan for each youth. The interventions provided were to address the risk factors demonstrated (e.g., substance use, socio-economic challenges, mental health conditions, etc.). Included in the case plan was a 12-week intensive cognitive- based lesson plan followed by the provision of customized supports. A high level of case coordination was envisioned between and among project partners.

Service Model as Implemented by inREACH

As indicated above, the original work plan envisioned the treatment of 60 youth per year which included a 12-week group program in addition to the provision of other customized supports (e.g., education, life skills, employment, family support, etc.). There was also a very extensive intake process that was to be implemented with youth referred to the program. Very early on, however, it became apparent that some modifications to the original program model were required. First, the intake process was considered an impediment to relationship-building with the youth, as it was too long and too intrusive. Second, program staff discovered that a group intervention would not work for most of the youth who were referred to the program. For these reasons, the CTT was not implemented exactly as planned, as changes – believed necessary by project staff and partners – were made.

Two of the key informants described how the initial intake assessment created an impediment for staff in developing a relationship with the youth:

"The initial one was utterly ridiculous and that is the only way I can put it. The staff called it the brick that they had to get through. Nothing like you know, putting people off to begin with and or making them feel like they were a walking bucket of issues, as opposed to having also capacities. It was purely put in place to please the funder…." (Project Partner)

"The intake process that was in place initially with the project was very invasive and the work that we do is very much relationship-based and the establishment of trust and rapport building and all those kinds of things are of utmost importance with young people and working with this population. And the tools that we found were sort of forced on us we felt got in the way of being able to build rapport and build trust. They were extremely invasive and required multiple meetings in order to get through and from a clinical…again we are talking treatment phase and from a clinical lens it didn't necessarily pull

out the information that our social workers would require. We felt as though and it was so lengthy and intrusive that it just turned some youth off and they were like 'I'm not doing this'." (Project Partner)

Over time changes were made to the intake assessment piece that made it much more amenable to the treatment process. One change was that when the outcome evaluation component was discontinued, some of the tools used in the initial assessment could be dropped. As well, the team refined the intake assessment based upon their own experiences with clients, and their own experience. In the end, the intake and assessment phase of the treatment helped to shape the case planning:

"Ultimately we made some decisions as a project team to alter our intake process and it wasn't as invasive and we developed our own assessment tool that looked at multiple dimensions in terms of what is going on in a young person's life and a skilled youth worker or social worker would be able to probe and dig and get the right information for the development case planning et cetera. It was a little bit more natural flowing in terms of conversation and rapport building. Once we made the change to our intake process it was much more client-centred and client-friendly and was not nearly as intrusive. I think that helped us increase the ability to do better case planning and bring young people in." (Project Partner)

"The impact evaluation was subsequently cancelled. But even prior to that cancellation we had made some modifications because we were observing that kids just couldn't get through it and it wasn't even getting us the information that we needed [and] it was getting [in the] way [of]… relationship-building and trust-building. So it became the tail wagging the dog; the evaluation became more important than working with the youth and again we had to make a … decision to say 'who are we here to provide service for?' and the answer was for the youth, at the end of the day, not the funder." (Project Partner)

Another aspect of the program, as initially set out,

that required changes had to do with the group work component. Several key informants discussed the changes that were necessary with respect to moving away from doing group work:

"… there was a lot of pressure to implement group programming and to have a consistent curriculum for the group programming and we were recognizing that it was a lot easier and more effective to work with clients individually…. There was lots of complaining about [the group programming] and knowing that it wasn't the right thing to do …. We ultimately decided that … we were going to go about it in a different way but still achieve the results that [the funder] was looking for…. So what we ended up doing is … through the intake process [the youth] would identify goals with the clinicians and then the clinician would take those goals back to the team and we would figure out a treatment plan and that would be brought back to the youth for approval…. With every individual client their goals are so different from each other and that's where it was difficult to lump them together in groups." (Project Staff)

"… it was very clear from the beginning that the youth weren't interested in [the curriculum-based group work]. They are not interested in structured programming and they are not interested in coming here three times a week. They have too many things going on in their lives to be able to say 'okay, Monday, Wednesday and Friday I'm going to be here 6 until 8.' It's not feasible for the youth that we work with. Their lives are chaotic and they have a hard time making it to appointments and I'm not speaking negatively about them, it's just the way it is." (Project Partner)

Although some changes were made to the service model as indicated above (i.e., a move away from the curriculum-based group work), the model implemented still stuck to a case-planning model, which included a wrap-around approach and case coordination. Project staff helped youth access resources and services in the community, and worked with their partners to ensure youth had access to supports and programs they required to reach their intended goals. Project partners and staff described these features of the treatment model:

"The case management [approach involves] … identifying those different areas that aren't going well so it might involve advocacy at school and working collaboratively with Family and Children's Services and Probation. [For] some of them [it involves] facilitating … a place to live and ODSP applications and getting their personal papers in place and that kind of thing. Then of course [project staff] … working very diligently in the whole area of job skills and job development and getting them on the road in that way. And the area of recreation. So a lot of collaboration…." (Project Staff)

"The treatment phase I think got implemented … as best to the plan as possible because like I said we developed a work plan and we developed a program that was approved by [the funder] but as we began to implement the program we realized that changes need to be made and we made the necessary program changes that we felt was best suited for the program…. [Less group work] and more case management …. [Originally] everything would have been done in-house. Part of the program is connecting youth to the adequate resources out there so we don't want to reinvent the wheel. We want to create some resiliency and … you know a safer community is a connected community so it was really important for us to ensure that youth felt safe going to other places that didn't necessarily have the inREACH brand on it. Once we began to go that route of program support I think we were bang on." (Project Partner)

Length of Involvement/Hours in Program

The length of involvement for the 66 youth for whom an intake date and discharge date (or the end date of March 31, 2013) was entered into the database ranged from 6 weeks to 104 weeks. The average number of weeks in the program was 49.7 (sd=26.3). The median number of weeks was 41.9.

Number of hours of service was tracked **only** for treatment hours; case management hours were not included in the database. This was raised as an issue early on by inREACH staff, but, unfortunately, the funder did not grant them permission to use some of their funding to alter the database to include the case management hours. Project staff believed this to be a major weakness of the database; case management was a large part of what they did and yet the many hours they spent on different cases were not reflected in service hours in the database.[4]

The number of treatment hours ranged from 1 to 124 hours. The average number of treatment hours was 37.6 (sd=35.6) and the median number of treatment hours was 21.8. The average weekly hours ranged from 0.1 to 3.0. The mean average weekly hours was .72 (sd=.55) and the median average weekly hours was .55.

Were Services Appropriate?

Stakeholders were asked two questions in their survey, regarding the appropriateness of services provided. Please see responses below:

As shown below, close to 80% of the stakeholders believed that youth received an appropriate level of programs and services. As well, approximately 70% believed the intake and case management process was effective in terms of providing a quality intervention.

In the key informant interviews conducted with stakeholders, respondents were also asked about the appropriateness of services provided by the CTT. Project partners, PAC members, and staff all reported that they felt that the CTT provided services that were right for the youth:

"I saw … [the] development of a more structured assessment that really met the needs of the youth. So picking out what it was that the youth [need], picking out their strengths, and then adapting a service to the youth. So it wasn't fitting youth into a box and then having the youth have to participate in a program that was provided for everybody. It was more tailored to their needs, whether it was employment needs or whether it was the need to meet with a counselor regarding substance abuse or other issues. I felt that the program was unique in that sense because it had a … variety of different resources and supports … that could be provided. It was more holistic for the youth." (Project Partner)

"Yes …. An emphatic yes. The youth that we work with have a range of issues… mental health and addiction, employment …. [It is] really important to get eyes on in terms of what is happening with the young people…. The key support … is the case management support. That's … making sure that the right hand is speaking to the left hand. You know if the kid is involved with probation or is needing to get an assessment done or there are things going on with in the school system or Family and Children's Services, not in all instances but in some cases the parties who need

Table 2: Stakeholder Perceptions Re: Appropriateness of Service

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
Program youth rec'd an appropriate level of programs & services	31.3% (n=21)	47.8% (n=32)	4.5% (n=3)	1.5% (n=1)	1.5% (n=1)	13.4% (n=9)
The intake and case mgt process was effective in terms of providing a quality intervention	20.9% (n=14)	49.2% (n=33)	6.0% (n=4)	3.0% (n=2)	0	20.9% (n=14)

4 Personal communication between inREACH staff and evaluators.

to be speaking to each other are not. So what we found a lot is playing the role of quarterback so to speak and just getting all of those people in the same room or keeping people informed and so that multiple services, who are working with the youth, are in the loop around what's happening with the youth and other systems. Everybody can be working towards the same kind of goal in terms of [helping] the youth get to where they need to be in life. From my vantage point that's the big piece that probably goes unnoticed or unreported and I hope this evaluation will be able to tease that out." (Project Partner)

"Nothing is prepackaged…. Yes I do [think the services were right for the youth]. I think probably the biggest strength of inREACH is people took on the role of community case manager…. I felt that we did good work in terms of direct service but also filling in gaps in service for clients and getting them connected to the appropriate services was just as important." (Project Staff)

A few key informants also reported on the level of service provided and if it was in keeping with the risk level of the youth. Key informants reported that the services provided were in line with their risk level:

"I think so because the lower risk youth would be more worked with directly in the neighbourhood with the neighbourhood centres…. They were more informal engagement efforts like recreation and art projects. While you are shooting hoops with somebody you get an opportunity to talk about that they might have broken up with their girlfriend and how it is affecting them on top of everything else that is going on. As opposed to young folks that are coming into the program presenting with outcomes of FASD and they are finding themselves in conflict with the law…. Shooting hoops with them isn't going to do it. You are going to need some appropriate counselling and intervention in the system. I think we tried to cater it as much as we could to the risk levels." (Project Partner)

"I think the service level was very much in line with their risk level…. Sometimes … they would

be complex and … staff as a project team … we … recognize … what we can do in-house and [what] we could not do in-house. So, support didn't stop at that point. It was 'who do we need to call to the table to be a part of the support team' and we would go about getting the appropriate folks at the support table so that the person who was at extreme risk would be getting … adequate services." (Project Partner)

CTT youth, in their survey, were also asked two questions about the appropriateness of services. Please see results below:

As shown below, more than 90% of the CTT youth surveyed believed that they received the right kind and amount of services from inREACH. Close to 90% reported that the intake process and the work they did with staff was worthwhile. No one disagreed with either statement, nor did they answer "don't know/NA".

The youth were also asked if the services they received were appropriate, and if they had the

Figure 2: CTT Youth Perceptions Re: Appropriateness of Service
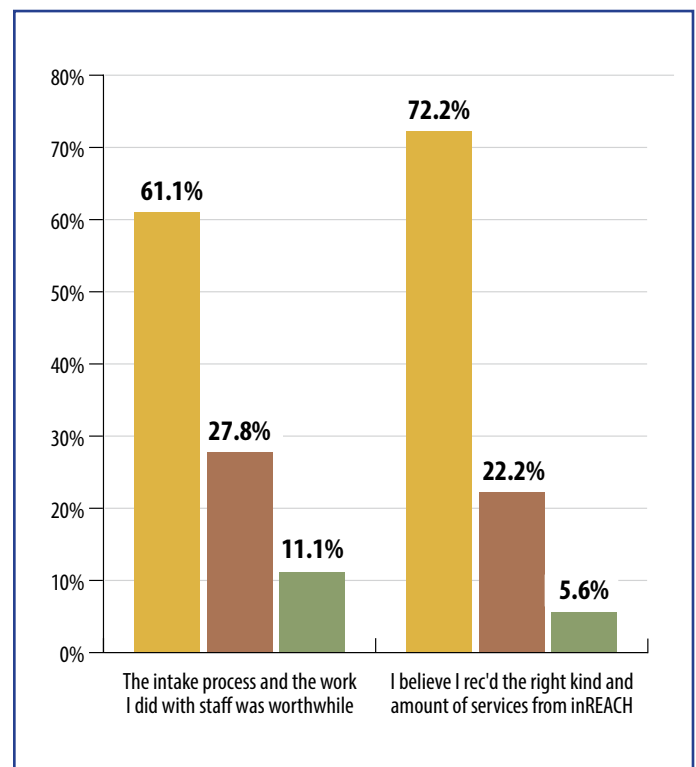
right amount of services, in the individual and group interviews conducted. Several of the youth interviewed commented positively on the services they received and their appropriateness:

"Yeah they didn't just go and hand me off to any other service. I have been through every service. Every different counselling place in the Kitchener/Waterloo region and I have been to that and I [had] just given up…. [inREACH staff] … don't look at you like you need help because they look at you and anything that you need they are going to help you get to that point. So like I said they helped me with school and my job and I really wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for inREACH…. They put everything in front of me and they laid it out …. They laid everything out and it is my choice to do it…. Even if I messed up on something they were like 'don't worry about it, we will get to it'. 'What do you want to work on? This is stressing you out so what do you want to work on now?' They just put everything in place for me and I would have to do the work to get to the places… I just had to take that step. They motivated me to do what I wanted to do and they inspired me to do what I wanted to do."

"Oh yeah, for sure! They treated me like family. Anything I needed help with. If I had a situation or anything they would be like 'call us and we will tell you what you could do or if you want to talk we will come and pick you up and go or for lunch or something.' It's not just like one of the staff, all the staff was like that."

Were Services Timely?

The stakeholder survey included one item regarding the timeliness of services provided: "Program youth received services in a timely manner." Over three-quarters of respondents (76.1%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Some were undecided (6.0%) or did not know (20.9%) and only two respondents disagreed (3.0%). In the key informant interviews conducted, all project partners, PAC members and staff felt that the program did provide services in a timely fashion:

"There seems to be a really quick response time in getting them either connected to somebody else or doing the work themselves." (Project Partner)

"I would say yes that they have received programs and services in a timely fashion." (Project Partner)

There was no similar question regarding timeliness of service included in the CTT Youth Survey. However, the CTT youth were asked about this in the individual and group interviews conducted. All eight youth in the individual interviews reported positively on the timeliness of services; for example:

"I never waited for anything."

"… the timing was good because first we had to build a relationship…. It wasn't just 'oh I'm going to start telling these people whatever'…. I think it was good because the way the program works is they first build the relationship and then they start really looking into how they can help you."

"… they … work around your schedule so if you want something you are not going to be waiting for an extended period of time… they won't ever make you wait too long…."

Attrition

The attrition rate for the CTT was 23.2% (16 of the 69 clients served). Stakeholder survey respondents were asked if they thought attrition was a problem for the project. About 15% of the respondents (14.9%; n=10) agreed that it was a problem with the inREACH program; 32.8% (n=22) disagreed. The remaining respondents either answered "undecided" (13.4%; n=9) or "don't know/NA" (38.8%; n=26).

Key informants were asked if they thought attrition was an issue or problem for the project. The staff discussed what "attrition" really meant; that is, were some of the youth really clients in the first place? And some seemed to leave and then come back. They also surmised that some youth are "pre-contemplative" and it's difficult to have time to chase them down. Further, they felt that systems

need to work together to address the difficult cases and not blame the youth when they "drop out".

> *"I think that's hard to say [whether] attrition [is an issue] … because one can look at like … if they left were they ever really here? If they came back did they ever really leave?"*

> *"The attrition piece…. A lot of our kids are all of a sudden off our radar and that has to do with communication amongst systems.... So those communication systems have been very difficult in terms of when kids go out of region or incarcerated or just AWOL."*

> *"When I meet a youth and I start an assessment and I start to build a relationship and that youth disappears I don't think of that as attrition …. I don't see it as opportunities lost, I think it is very much planting seeds and time well spent."*

> *"Unfortunately [with respect] to attrition … we either blame it on the kids … or we make the programming as such that you're not going to get attrition. Instead of working really hard on the skill sets to work with pre-contemplative and contemplative kids and not have the pressure of attrition and to take the risk with those kids and to get them where they are going. So we either create a program where we don't take the complex cases and complex situations or we just blame it on the kids. This is an adult systemic problem so that these kids don't get their services and the people get their funding."*

Project partners, when they felt they could comment on attrition, did not feel that it was a big issue for the project:

> *"I think it's just a product of the kids that they are dealing with, in the sense of 'here today, gone tomorrow'. And they are doing the best they can do …. I think it's just a symptom of the clientele that you are dealing with." (PAC Member)*

> *"[Attrition was] no more [an issue] than [in] other programs. You are going to win some and lose some and this is a very hard-to-engage population. So given that I think they have*

> *done quite well. Including stories that they came and left, came back and left … or sent a friend. If they dropped out, unless I am missing something, I don't think it was due to what the program provided." (Project Partner)*

As reported in the Methodology section, three interviews were conducted with youth who were considered to be "drop-outs". When asked why they dropped out of the program, two of the youth reported that their reasons did not have to do with the program; rather it had to do with other issues going on in their lives. One youth reported that he didn't have a phone at the time he was involved with inREACH and therefore found it difficult to reach staff. As well, there were personal issues going on (a sick family member) that also resulted in not having time for the program. However, this one youth wanted to get back into the program. Another youth reported that he had gotten a job, through help received in the program, and that he no longer had the time for the program. The third youth reported that he did not like the group counselling, thought it was too much time to devote, and felt that it was unnecessary since he had managed to exit his gang on his own. There was very little that these three youth had to say with respect to anything inREACH could have done so that they would have stayed. All three youth, in fact, reported that they would use the program again if they felt the need.

When asked what could be done to reduce attrition, one project partner commented that sometimes there is an issue of a lack of human resources when dealing with a large influx of referrals to inREACH. Other suggestions from the key informants interviewed included:

- Improve or increase collaboration with the community partners and referral partners in order to keep young people engaged (Project Partner).
- Improve communication amongst systems (Project Partner).
- Perhaps pay the youth or provide an honorarium (PAC Member).

Satisfaction with CTT Services

Results from the Stakeholder Survey

In the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked two questions about youth satisfaction with the program. Please see results below (Table 3):

As shown below, the results from these two items were quite positive – close to 90% strongly agreed or agreed that the program was a positive experience for the youth and close to 85% felt the program met the needs of youth. No one disagreed with the items, only one or two respondents were "undecided", and the remaining answered "don't know/not applicable".

Results from the CTT Youth Survey and Interviews

There were four questions in the CTT survey that related to general satisfaction with program services. Please see results below (Figure 3):

As shown below, the results were very positive; all youth, with the exception of one, agreed with all four statements. Further, the greatest proportion of youth answered "strongly agree" to each item. No one disagreed with any of the items, nor answered "don't know/NA".

In the survey the youth were also asked a few open-ended questions, three of which related to

Table 3: Stakeholder Survey Results – Youth Satisfaction with the Program

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
inREACH was a positive experience for program youth	60.3% (n=41)	27.9% (n=19)	1.5% (n=1)	0	0	10.3% (n=7)
inREACH met the needs of program youth	41.2% (n=28)	44.1% (n=30)	2.9% (n=2)	0	0	11.8% (n=8)

Figure 3: CTT Youth Survey Results – Satisfaction with the Program
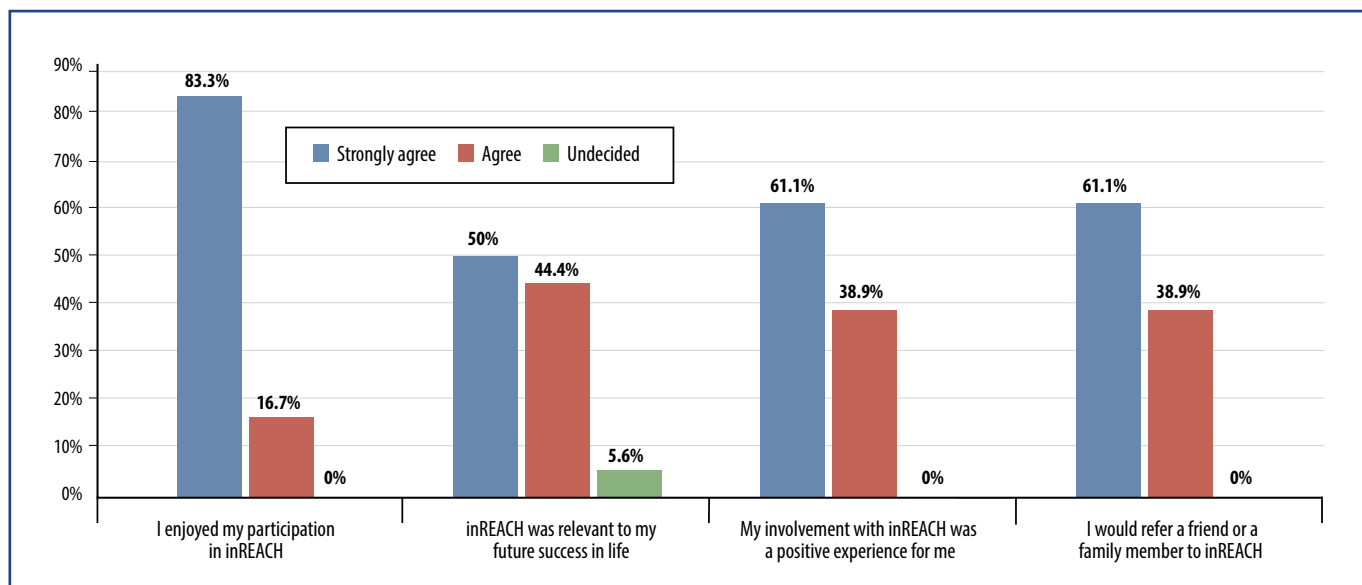
satisfaction with the program – what they liked best about the program, what they liked the least/ any changes they would suggest, and then any additional comments (in which they sometimes made further positive comments about inREACH).

When asked what they liked best about the program, the main theme that emerged was the staff – the support they provided and the way they interacted with the youth (e.g., respectful, helpful). For example:

"That they listen and cared about you made me feel much better about myself." "There is no other program like it; staff were respectful and helpful."

"The communication between staff and youth."

"The way they approach, treat/talk to you."

Youth also reported liking the support that was provided, the topics covered, and the activities in general; they enjoyed their time in the program:

"The type of support that was offered."

"Enjoyed the topics/information that was delivered through group/individual programming."

"The best thing to me was the counselling and variety of programs we had to choose from."

When asked what they did not like about the program, or things that they would change, the main theme that emerged from the comments was that they did not dislike anything about the program or that they thought the program was good as it was. Only a few suggestions were made. A couple of youth did mention the timing of the meetings, or the location, and suggested schedule or location changes (e.g., "inREACH office should be more centrally located"). As well, a couple of youth suggested that the program be expanded – more youth involved and more hours. For example:

"The least thing I liked about inREACH [is] if they can make it… longer."

"I felt like they didn't really have enough youth to get involved in activities. I think it would be so much better if they get more youth involved in all these great activities."

One youth also suggested that the program have an LGBTQ outreach worker for the program.

When asked for any further comments about one-half of the youth left the item blank, answered 'no' or 'n/a'. The remaining comments were positive and reflected how the youth felt the program was worthwhile:

"Program should continue; it is worthwhile. Program should continue to be voluntary." "I think they should all keep doing what you're doing because they're doing a great job." "Program was very effective; it changes people."

"This is a really good program for young adults like us and is really sad to see that this program is ending. I wish it would stay because it keeps us out of trouble."

"It helped me see the value of myself."

The satisfaction with the program was echoed in the individual and group interviews conducted with CTT youth. They talked about the staff and the support provided and the impact the program had on their lives:

"… they made you feel welcome …. [The program] did a lot to help me so think it would be helpful for others."

"They are not just there to do their work; they are there to help. That is what I got from each … of them. Every time I was down they were there. Every time I was pissed off they were there and they weren't scared of me when I was pissed off. Usually people back up like I would start swinging and breaking things and I would go wild…. Here I would start screaming and stuff and they would look at me and say 'hey what's up?'…. So my attitude changed. I don't blow up like that anymore. They are just really good people…. They make you feel cared about and

they make you feel loved and make you realize that they are there for you no matter what. They are not going to judge you for doing the wrong things and they are going to help you do the right things."

"They drive, they meet you, they take you out to dinner, they do volunteering, they will give you activities, they will give you your Smart Serve, your safe food handling and all this stuff and that is pretty unique. It is different and I liked it and I wanted to soak up every single resource that I could and so that is exactly what I did."

Community Mobilization Team
Intended Program Model

The original model outlined in the work plan for the Community Mobilization phase was to hire five part-time staff in Year 2 of the project to work in the five priority neighbourhoods identified by the Community Needs Assessment "in order to boost youth resiliency to street gang involvement with a focus on recreation and mentorship." The intention was to work collaboratively with communities, building on their strengths and capacities, to address gang- related issues. One objective was to provide education to approximately 750 people per year about topics related to youth gang prevention.

Program Model as Implemented by inREACH

Project staff involved in the planning of the Community Mobilization phase said they appreciated the flexibility they had in this phase of the project, as only a few elements had been pre-determined and outlined in the initial proposal and work plan:

"We were allowed to really develop that piece a little bit more organically and allowed to be more community driven." (Project Staff)

"What that would look like was not predetermined and that was the advantage and the flexibility of that particular phase because that was one where you were trying to connect with the youth." (Project Partner)

The plan was to "not parachute into communities but to work through existing community structures and assets" (Project Staff). Accordingly, in the spring and summer of 2011, inREACH developed partnerships with organizations representing community centres in five neighbourhoods in Kitchener and Cambridge, and provided funding for the organizations to hire a Youth Outreach Worker (YOW). YOWs were hired in October 2011. The YOWs, senior staff of partner organizations, and inREACH coordinators formed the Community Mobilization Team (CMT) and worked collaboratively to implement this phase of the project. (Activities in one neighbourhood were discontinued in the spring of 2012 and continued in four neighbourhoods).

The original plan for the community mobilization phase was to provide recreation and mentoring for young people in order to prevent them from becoming involved with gangs. The challenge was to find a way to involve adolescents and young adults in these neighbourhoods who were typically disengaged from community activities and settings.

"We would see these youth out in the parking lot or the bush and the creeks here and hanging at Mac's. We would see them out but we couldn't get them in and engaged." (Project Partner)

They decided to implement a youth engagement approach which meaningfully involves the young people themselves in creating and leading new programs and activities based on their strengths and interests. The first few months of program implementation focused on building trust and relationships with young people and discovering what they would like to see happen in their neighbourhoods.

"We didn't provide any programs at the beginning of the project because we have learned that providing programs that youth are not interested in doesn't work. They just don't attend so we thought that maybe we should flip it on its head and build relationships with the youth first and then ask them what sort of activities and programs they want to see in their community and that has worked extremely well." (Project Staff)

YOWs conducted a variety of intensive outreach activities in the neighbourhoods. For example, they brought boxes of pizza to share with youth hanging out at a housing complex parking lot and interacted with youth at parks, coffee shops, schools and community events. Establishing trust with young people, being non-judgemental and focusing on their strengths and interests was considered essential by project staff, partners and youth, to successfully engage young people.

> *"I think in the beginning it was starting off giving them some trust first. I think they are the kids that aren't normally given a positive outlook or they are not trusted to do things or to be places and so giving them that opportunity to have a little trust first. We essentially were coming in to where they lived…so just letting them be the experts and trusting them with stuff and eventually I think it over a very long time it turned into them trusting us."* (Project Staff)

One youth explained that the young people in his neighbourhood initially suspected the YOW might be an undercover police officer or Family and Children's Services worker and initially stayed away. But over time:

> *"They trusted us. Now we trust them."* (Program Youth)

> *"He doesn't judge you…you can tell he cares about the kids and if something bad happens he's not going to put you down for it, he's going to try and pull you up."* (Program Youth)

> *"I don't think that they have ever had an adult say "what are your dreams?" and "how are you going to achieve those?" and then try to help them. That is my biggest question when I first meet a kid… We have so many hours of conversations and then you get into those chats on Facebook back and forth and I think it gets them thinking and they haven't had that. Then believing in them too and showing them that you really care."* (Project Staff)

Other important strategies for engaging youth included: personal invitations to inREACH (from YOWs, friends, siblings, parents and teachers); the use of social media and technology (Facebook groups, texting, cell phones); and providing food.

> *"I first learned about it from a friend who said 'hey this is a cool program' and it's just a good place to go."* (Program Youth)

> *"I think inREACH approving our social media contact and the way we contact these kids where a lot of agencies would never approve the Facebook contact or the texting contact… that was a huge part of building relationships…. That's a huge part of why I think our programs are successful…It brings it back to meeting them where they are at."* (Project Staff)

> *"A lot of kids come…because they know they're going to get dinner. [They] don't get a really nice like actual good dinner other than hotdogs. So dinner's a big deal."* (Program Youth)

Recognizing that inclusion of young people in community life is something the whole community has responsibility for, the YOWs and CMT also encouraged and worked with many other organizations and adults to participate in creating more opportunities and more inclusive and youth-friendly environments for young people.

> *"I think helping connect the youth to the community as well. Being that bridge to make them feel like they belong and are heard and giving them a place to thrive in that community."* (Project Staff)

> *"The YOWs were able to connect with different community partners, schools, and police… [and a] number of different organizations and so there's been a lot of tying in and connections made."* (Project Partner)

Within several months, the YOWs in partnership with young people had together developed a number of successful and well-attended new programs in several neighbourhoods. The process of engaging and partnering with young people to develop programs and activities played out differently in each of the neighbourhoods in

response to the different interests and needs of the young people, the engagement of other organizations and settings, and the characteristics and resources of the neighbourhood, the community centre, and the YOWs. For example, where a van for transportation was available, initial engagement activities involved outings to community events such as a Community Conversation on Diversity at City Hall and Wilfrid Laurier University basketball games. A number of youth were keenly interested in a place to play basketball which led to the development of a drop-in basketball program at a nearby recreation centre. In a neighbourhood where many young people were interested in graffiti and art and the YOW was an artist, young people assisted in writing the proposal for an Art Studio program and a space to hold it was negotiated with a seniors centre. In the neighbourhood with the largest geographical boundaries, the strategy that was ultimately successful was to start a drop-in program with a few interested young people and use that as a base for growth (it grew within a few months to an average attendance of 25.) The YOW staffing the drop-in program used his musical talents to help young people write and record their own music.

Young people continue to play active roles in decision-making and leadership on an on-going basis. In addition to regular, on-going programs, a large and diverse array of activities, events, projects, community involvements and civic engagement has also taken place over time (such as photo-voice projects, youth-organized community dinners and barbeques, canoeing and paintball).

In addition to these programs and activities, the YOWs provided mentoring and a wide range of individual supports to young people which included help finding a job, getting a Y membership, volunteer hours, or support for an addiction, family or school issue.

Many young people have demonstrated a high degree of enthusiasm and commitment to their programs as evidenced by the delegation of 40 young people who attended a Regional Council meeting to advocate for continued funding for their programs.

A list of programs (as of March 2013) and a small sampling of the many additional activities and community involvements is provided in the chart below.

Table 4: Community Mobilization Phase – Programs and Sample of Activities

Neighbourhood	Courtland Shelley	Paulander	Preston Heights	Southwood / Galt
Partner	House of Friendship	Mosaic Counselling and Family Services	Preston Heights Community Group	Kinbridge Community Association
Programs Average Attendance (in brackets)	Drop-in Basketball (19) Youth Drop-in (11) Homework Club Yoga program	Girls Group (8) Boxing (7) Youth Drop-in & Art (10)	Art Studio (10) Youth Drop-in (8) Yoga program	Youth Drop-in (20) Boys Group (school based)
Community Involvement	Youth met with city staff and mayor and successfully negotiated improvements to community basketball court	Community BBQ (youth organized and distributed food)	Art exhibit of youth art at Public Gallery A program youth shares their story with young people at a police organized event	Youth painted park benches Holiday Dinner and Program – by youth for adults and youth in community

Neighbourhood	Courtland Shelley	Paulander	Preston Heights	Southwood / Galt
Collective Opportunities and Community Involvement	Attending a Raptors Game – Toronto Community Justice Dinner – Youth attending, a youth in M.C. role, display of youth art. Youth Presentation to Regional Council (many youth attended, two addressed council in support of inREACH continued funding) inREACH: A Youth Perspective – A youth led event for the community sharing their experiences through story-telling, art and music. Organized by a Youth Advisory Committee (representing CMT and CTT youth, supported by staff) Note: This YAC won the Group Award from the Kitchener Youth Action Council.			
Individual Supports	Individual mentoring and supports for life challenges and achieving goals provided by YOWs and / or CTT and/or community resources Supports for life challenges (with school, addictions, relationships, staying out of trouble) Achieving goals: employment, recreation, volunteering, school			

There was wide agreement among staff and partners that the Community Mobilization phase and services that were offered were implemented as planned and many described the implementation of this phase as highly successful and effective.

"So I would say that everything from where I sat seemed to go as planned." (Project Partner)

"In terms of our in-house plan for the mobilization phase it did roll out the way that we intended it to… The intention was to not just provide programs but to kind of use a positive youth development perspective or framework in terms of working with the youth and developing leadership and we stuck true to that and that's exactly what we did." (Project Partner)

"I really think that the outreach phase going to where the kids are is really effective. I really think that they made a significant impact." (PAC Member)

"I just want to praise the efforts and the enthusiasm that was behind setting up the community mobilization phase of the program. That, I think, was the most effective, in terms of getting recognition and getting support and getting accolades for the inREACH program." (Project Partner)

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That, I think, was the most effective, in terms of getting recognition and getting support and getting accolades for the inREACH program." (Project Partner)

"It kind of exceeded my expectations quite frankly. In terms of the buy-in from the neighbourhood and the level of buy-in from the young people and the type of projects that came out of it." (Project Partner)

The project also planned for the community mobilization and the treatment teams to work together and "it was really clear that when we did work with both teams that it worked really well" (Project Staff). In addition to working together to support individual youth, a parent support group developed in one neighbourhood.

"[CTT staff] started running a group out of [neighbourhood] for the parents and that was just a really great connection 'cause the parents trusted [the YOW] and then the [the YOW] trusted [the CTT staff] and then the parents trusted [the CTT staff]. So having that in with the youth and with the parents is really important." (Project Staff)

There were several changes from the original conceptualization of the plan. Initially working in five neighbourhoods, the outreach activities in the Greenfield neighbourhood were discontinued after several months because of the small numbers of youth encountered in that neighbourhood. Staff and activities from an adjoining neighbourhood continued to support youth from Greenfield.

A number of changes in programs happened over time in response to many factors such as youth needs and interests, and new opportunities. For example, the Paulander boxing program was moved from the boxing studio to a recreation centre closer to the neighbourhood because of the lengthy bus ride for young people to reach the studio.

A number of staff transitions among Youth Outreach Workers was one of the major changes and challenges over the course of the mobilization

phase. In the earlier stages of implementation new staff were hired. In later stages of implementation, current staff took on additional hours and responsibilities. One neighbourhood in particular had several staff transitions, delaying the onset of programs and activities compared to the other neighbourhoods. Once existing staff were employed to work in that neighbourhood, a number of programs and activities were successfully developed within a short time frame.

"Our biggest challenge was finding and retaining suitable staff, the YOWs. We had a fair bit of turnover and that necessitated some adaptations that we hadn't planned for...So that was unanticipated but there are always these kinds of things that happen with projects that you can't foresee and you just adapt as you go along. So I think that it has worked out fine but I am sure that was not exactly in the plans." (Project Partner)

Staffing changes were also required for inREACH project administration. Early in the Community Mobilization Phase it was necessary for one of the staff from the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council to take on an expanded coordinating role for this component of the project.

Were Services Appropriate?

Most, if not all of these programs, did not exist prior to the inREACH project. Many of the community centre partners acknowledge there was a gap in programs and activities for this age group and population for various reasons. National data confirms this gap is prevalent in many communities. Involving young people in the development, leadership and decision- making for their programs and activities is widely perceived by project partners, staff and youth as having produced programs that are appropriate, appealing and beneficial for young people.

"It's gonna be for us, run by us, and gonna involve all of us right?...we had some say in what was gonna happen with it…it's like hey – what do you guys want to do…what do you want to see in your community, and what are your

personal talents or anything that is special to you that you kind of want to show everybody else, and maybe those people might like it too, right? It's not just to keep kids off drugs but for under-privileged kids, kids who may have never had a chance to be part of something like you know, go to the Raptors game or you know discover their love of art or anything like that, so it's giving everybody a chance to actually do those kind of things, do the things they want to do, so that's why I started coming." (Program Youth)

"The programs we offer…were the ones they asked for so there is some…desire or need for them to have those programs and they love them and we can tell that they love them because they keep coming back…" (Project Staff)

"The youth had one of their greatest capacities of input for program decisions that we've had at the centre in a long time and that was part of the plan…As you ask for something...we'll see if we can make it happen. The ultimate was when the youth planned an event and they told us what they needed." (Project Partner)

"…the only way they're going now is because the kids created them. So they asked for all this equipment for the drop-in, they helped me write the proposals, they come and run it right? The art studio, this is theirs and the ownership is a big part of it." (Project Staff)

"Young people know what other young people want…" (Program Youth)

Youth survey results indicate that many of the young people are receiving or can access supports in an appropriate and responsive way. Eighty percent of youth participants agreed or strongly agreed that inREACH gave them help with things that are important to them and 71% agreed or strongly agreed that inREACH provided them with people to go to for help with a problem.

There is a widely shared perception that this strategy of engaging young people in positive

Figure 4: CMT Youth Survey Results – Appropriateness
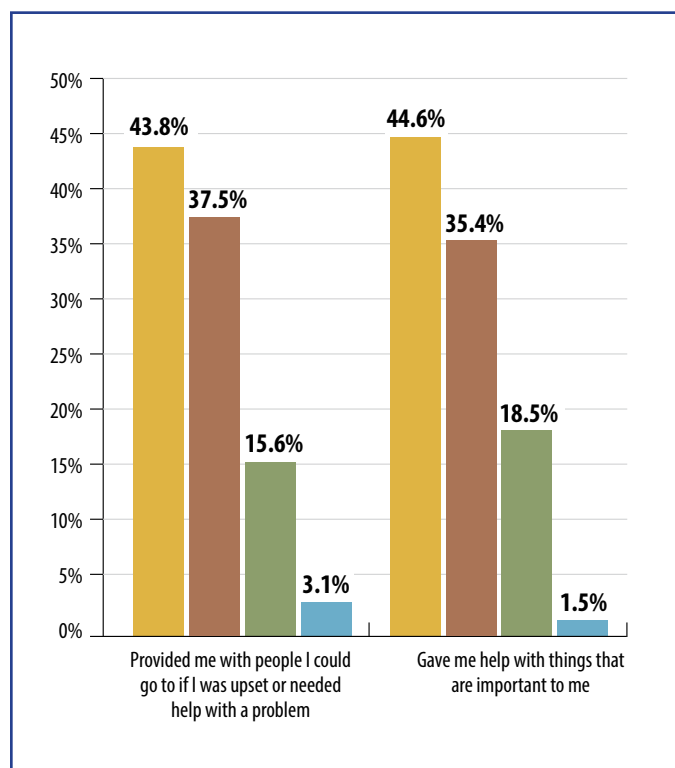
activities and supports in their neighbourhoods has been an appropriate and effective way to support the positive development of young people and to reduce and prevent problems such as gang involvement.

"I think the programs too whether it be art or the music or the basketball or whatever, it is something that they love and they want in their life and so if you keep them engaged in that they know that they have that and the drugs and the alcohol is not going to help that. It keeps them straight. They make reference to the older guys in the neighbourhood who used to be amazing basketball players but then started smoking and doing drugs and now they can't play and they don't want to be like that. So if you keep giving them those opportunities to play and to fill their time with something that they love then they don't want to go there. Keeping them engaged with things that spark their interest." (Project Staff)

"I think anything that engages kids and makes them feel a part of something is going to diminish that risk of them looking for that belonging somewhere else. So I think that right there is helping with that. Just giving them opportunities to get out of where their environment and where they come from and to see other opportunities and that things can be done different ways." (Project Staff)

Were Services Timely?

It was generally agreed that services were provided in a timely way. Staff noted that programs were offered on evenings and weekends to suit youths' schedules and inREACH coordinators were available for support. The extensive use of social media and technology (Facebook, texting, cell phones) provided very timely communication with youth and YOWs were able to respond quickly when needed as in the case of the death of a young person in one of the neighbourhoods. Additionally, the initial time allotted for the process of relationship building with young people and the neighbourhood was timely as defined by the project. It was considered timely in the sense of taking the time needed for meaningful and impactful youth and community engagement to happen.

"…and meet them where they are a – not just geographically but with timing too. It takes us six months sometimes but we get to be there and get to run these drop-ins and build these relationships. You are not just quickly referring them and giving up on them when they don't [come]. Six months later they do come around." (Project Staff)

A few partners and PAC members felt that it would have been beneficial to have implemented the community mobilization phase earlier in the life of the project, but acknowledged constraints that prevented it.

"But the CMT I think that was very late in starting but there were reasons for that, it was the timing with the federal and all the grant hoops and loops and red tape that you have to do, to do the

good work that needs to be done. Then you are left with very little time to do the heart of the stuff that needs to get done. I do think the mobilization piece needed to be a little bit earlier cause we are talking about intervention and prevention and although these are 'at-risk' youth and it's kind of a prevention piece – it's an intervention piece. We are preventing it from becoming further risk. So it's not the treatment phase risk but it's hopefully all in between that so. Yeah it would have been nice to have that started much earlier in the program." (Project Partner)

Did it Reach the Right Youth?

Many project staff, partners and youth agreed that the CMT programs were reaching many of the intended youth. The CMT sought to engage youth who were disconnected from community activities, faced life challenges that put them at risk, and could benefit from supports and opportunities.

"The recreation programs that we have been able to offer at [neighbourhood] and also at the other sites… these young people would not have been connecting to those and we've developed new ones specifically for this target population at their request. They are involved in the design of things and what they are interested in and what would meet their needs. So there definitely was a gap there before that wasn't being met but now there are things available for them to do and they are able to get connected to employment support services and other forms of counselling, addiction treatment if they need it and lots of supports that they had no access to before and probably didn't know how to access." (Project Partner)

"I go in there and hang out with the CYW in her classroom and along with that I talk to the kids that are in there for in school suspensions or whatever. I connect them to the services that [neighbourhood] provides and a lot of these youth that I connect with in her classroom they end up coming to my drop-ins and being regulars." (Project Staff)

"I think demographically where we are all located is obviously areas that the kids don't have the opportunities that other kids may have. So I think that it is the demographics itself, I think make those kids higher at risk." (Project Staff)

One of the benefits of the collaborative nature of the project was the ability to connect young people with additional supports and services where needed.

"…the proactive youth engagement. Catch kids before they really are struggling with significant issues and also we claim a referral because when you cast a wide net you are going to catch some participants in that net that really have some significant challenges and became a referral source with the treatment team as well…." (Project Partner)

At the same time, consistent with the strengths-based approach, the project was inclusive of all young people in those neighbourhoods (within the program age ranges) and avoided labeling young people.

"Exactly. It is not separating them at all – it is welcoming all youth. Even if you are not the best type of person it will change you with the welcoming and positive energy that is always around in this community." (Program Youth)

Satisfaction with CMT Services
Results from the Stakeholder Survey

Results from the stakeholder survey were reported previously in the section "Satisfaction with CTT Services". Most questions in the Stakeholder Survey did not differentiate between CTT and CMT program youth. Results from the Stakeholder Survey indicated that close to 90% "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that the program was a positive experience for the youth and close to 85% felt the program met the needs of youth.

Results from the CMT Youth Survey and Interviews

There were three questions in the CMT Youth Survey that related to general satisfaction with program services (see Table 5):

As shown below, the results were very positive. The greatest proportion of youth answered "strongly agreed" to each item. Over 90% of youth agreed or strongly agreed with all statements. Just one youth strongly disagreed with two of the questions and several were undecided.

Several open-ended questions in the survey related to satisfaction with the program – what they liked best about the program, what they liked least/suggestions for changes, and additional comments. When asked what they liked best about the program, the main themes from all of the programs taken together were that young people liked the staff (caring, respectful, listened, supportive); liked

Table 5: CMT Youth Survey Results – Satisfaction with the Program

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
Felt well treated by staff and volunteers	64.1% (n=41)	31.3% (n=20)	3.1% (n=2)	0	1.6% (n=1)	0
Gave me an experience in which adults listen to young people and care about what they say	60.0% (n=39)	32.3% (n=21)	7.7% (n=5)	0	0	0
Was a positive experience for me	73.8% (n=48)	20.0% (n=13)	4.6% (n=3)	0	1.5% (n=1)	0

spending time with friends (hanging out, meeting new people); and enjoyed the activities and the opportunities (learning new things).

Young people were also invited to comment about what they liked least or would like to change. Overall, the most common theme was that they had nothing negative to say or would change nothing. A number of youth made additional positive comments such as "I love this place/program." A few expressed concern that inREACH programs may end. Other themes included suggestions to expand the program (dates/times) or activities.

The high degree of satisfaction youth expressed about their experience with the programs was reflected in the recently conducted individual interviews with youth from the Paulander and Kinbridge neighbourhoods and in focus groups conducted in the spring of 2012 with the Courtland Shelley and Preston Heights program youth. All of the young people interviewed expressed appreciation and high regard for the staff. Many mentioned receiving support or advice, feeling accepted and cared for. Most young people said they enjoyed spending time with their friends and meeting new people. In addition, quite a few young people said they liked the activities, the opportunities, being involved in the community, and the accepting, welcoming environment.

> "…and the staff. They treat you here with respect and everybody gets respect back. There is nothing to be worried about; it is a safe place for us to come."

> "The inREACH staff in general is all just a great group of people that always seem to have a smile on their face and always welcoming. Whenever I see one of them they always ask me how my day was and I will ask them how their day was and then we just sort of talk and connect as well as we can joke around too or get really serious about other things as well. So I think it is kind of like not like staff to me more as friends in the community."

> "I come here and it seems like all the stress that I have kind of goes away…I can tell

[YOW] anything and he is there and he gives me advice and it works, it really works."

> "I've made new friends and I've made new close friends like I would consider like sister, brother wise you know. Normally it takes a while to get that status but we just connect with new people and in a snap of an instant. It is like love at first sight but family at first sight, right?"

> "I like how all of our friends come together like a big happy family and some play games… and some just talk and make jokes."

> "It gives us experiences we may not ever have been able to have."

> "I get to plan stuff for the community and I get to help out…and I like how we get to decide what goes around in the community and if there is an upcoming date we can help out… So we can get more of a chance to… get more involved in what is happening so you seem like a leader."

Project Management

In this section of the report we will address the overall management of the project and people's perceptions of how the program was managed before moving into project governance, resources, staffing and supervision, the involvement of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC), and the relationship with the funder as it had an impact on overall program management. Collaboration and partnerships will be addressed in the next section of the report.

Was the Program Well Managed?

In general, project partners and stakeholders felt the project was well managed. In the stakeholder survey, 82% (n=55) agreed that the program was well managed; only 3% disagreed (n=2). The remaining respondents answered either "undecided" (6.1%; n=4) or "don't know/NA" (11.9%; n=8). Key informant comments on the management of the project echoed these results:

> "I believe it was very well managed…. From my viewpoint, sitting at the PPT [Project Partner

Team] meetings … I would have to say they put strategies in place to ensure that they were becoming a well-oiled machine. So … lots of team meetings and lots of discussion and allowances for discussion. [The project manager] really utilizing people's strengths from my perspective." (Project Partner)

"I think [the project manager] did an excellent job and I think he remained patient …and he just carried on steadfastly and kept his eye on the ball and he is very motivated by his values and doing the right thing…. I think … the proof was in the pudding. I think at least from a project perspective I think the work that we've done with youth has been successful… [and] the management of that project had to have some kind of influence on that I would like to think. The other part is the partners stayed at the table. Nobody ran for the hills. Everybody stayed engaged and all the project partners stayed engaged…. And I say again the management of the project would have had some influence on that. Lastly from my observation, staff was energized to do their work. From my observation the staff, by and large, gave 100% all the time and was dedicated to the initiative and the supports to the youth. Again, if the project was poorly managed, you don't see that. So those are a few reasons why I believe it was well managed." (Project Partner)

However, there was one partner who believed that the project was not well managed in the beginning. It appears she was disappointed by the initial delays:

"I don't feel that it was well managed initially…. I think there were so many other things that could have been done to get things up and running much quicker. I think part of that was possibly the administration of the project through [the funder] where they didn't have experience with clinical programming. I think that was probably a detriment, that had this been managed by another organization that had a lot of experience with clinical programming, I think it probably would have gone a little bit smoother. There were issues regarding policies and procedures. There

were a lot of things that weren't in place because people didn't have the experience with that. I was concerned about liability issues and that kind of thing, for example. At any rate there were lessons learned and certainly things got into place and I would really value the efforts by the clinical team because they identified where there were issues and they stepped up to the plate to make that happen." (Project Partner)

Project Governance

As described previously, the project was managed overall by a Project Manager. Each team of workers (those from the Community Treatment Team and the Youth Outreach Workers) was also managed by a team of supervisors from their home organizations. The Project Partner Team (PPT) consisted of management from each of the treatment organizations involved in the CTT. The Community Mobilization Team consisted of management for each of the organizations involved in the Community Mobilization Phase and the Coordinator of Community Development and Research. Each of those teams met monthly; as well, the two teams would periodically meet together, as they saw fit. The two teams of workers also met on their own regularly, as well as together periodically – again, as they saw fit. Further, there was a Project Advisory Committee that oversaw the whole project. The project was administered by the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council who had fee-for-service agreements with all project partners. When asked if the governance structure worked well, and if the agreements put in place were sufficient for program purposes, key informants generally agreed that the governance model put into place worked well.

"From my perspective I thought it worked fairly well. I think it made sense for the CMT to meet and focus on the area they were working on… and the CTT to have their meetings and then at times we would meet jointly. We had good access to [project management/coordination staff]. They were very responsive and I think there was good communication there." (Project Partner)

"I think the management was good. Everybody had their representatives at the PPT… and

for the most part everybody was cordial and everyone was there with the best interest of the kids at heart. I believe that the project needed a manager and [the person selected] was a good selection for that." (Project Partner)

"To be honest I haven't looked [at the agreements] since I signed them a year and a half ago. An agreement is there, to some degree, if an issue becomes an issue or if there is a challenge around things. They were certainly adequately explained, we signed them, the Board signed them and they're in place…." (Project Manager)

When stakeholder survey respondents were asked whether the agreements were satisfactory, close to one-half (46.8%; n=29) agreed that they were. Only one person disagreed, the remaining respondents answered "undecided" (11.3%; n=7) or "don't know/ NA" (40.3%; n=25).

Nonetheless, there were challenges in working with so many partners. One partner reported that there were some issues that were not well thought out (e.g., situations where there was a potential conflict of interest):

"We over-relied on good common sense… instead of making some rules around it…. So some of those things if I had to do those again I would probably put some more guidelines in place."

Another key informant reported that the project management process was adequate but not "fantastic":

"I'm going to say they were adequate but not fantastic [and] not inadequate. The reason why I say that is you bring so many project partners together, it takes a bit of feeling out time to figure out who makes the call when, who's responsible for what, who has final say on a particular issue…. I think that we got it eventually. We got it right or we got to a place where we could live with decisions and it was good enough to keep the project and the initiative going…."

One staff person felt that the governance structure could have been improved by having a coordinator for the CTT team, in parallel to the CMT which was coordinated by the Coordinator of Community Development and Research, in addition to the Project Manager. No other suggestions for alternative governance structures were provided.

Resources

Were they Sufficient/Well Used?

Stakeholder survey respondents were asked if they felt that the resources allocated to inREACH (human, financial and other) were sufficient to meet the goals and objectives of the program. About two-thirds of the respondents either "strongly agreed" (23.9%; n=16) or "agreed" (43.3%; n=29). Twelve respondents (17.9%) disagreed. The remaining respondents were either "undecided" (4.5%; n=3) or answered "don't know/NA" (10.5%; n=7).

Many of the key informants felt that the resources, particularly financial, were great and that they were well used. The financial resources allowed the program to work in ways, and provide opportunities and things, that their own organizations could not:

"[The] financial resources were incredible. The person who wrote up the proposal initially did an absolute great job in terms of looking at so many different variables and the cost of all those different variables … so … the funding was huge … the resources were certainly more than adequate…. Most of the organizations don't have access to that kind of financial resource. For example, taking kids to different places, recreational activities, buying things and all the food and everything like that. No other organization has resources like that so …the kids at inREACH really got a great deal… wonderful benefits for them." (Project Partner)

"I would say they had lots of resources, a lot of stuff that could be accessed…. I think [the resources] were used appropriately. You know it is a nice comfortable office and it is not dingy. You don't want kids to be coming to a hole…. That is important and they managed to get an office that is accessible to downtown." (PAC Member)

"Overall I would say there was really good resources…. We had the flexibility to buy materials and food and resources." (Project Partner)

Community centres, as part of the community mobilization phase, were able to use resources to enhance programming through purchases of equipment (TVs, games, recording equipment) and supplies (art materials) and to enable new experiences for young people outside of their neighbourhood. Partners noted that they did not otherwise have the resources or capacity to do this work.

Key informants, including program staff, recognized the importance of having the resources to provide food for the youth and their families (where applicable). Being able to feed the youth meals (and not just snacks) was important to the relationship-building that occurred. Those resources were greatly appreciated – as were having resources that allowed staff to do different activities with the youth. For example,

"… we've been able to [provide food] and it's been huge. I mean these kids are hungry and it means a lot to them to be offered food and it's about engagement and relationship building and hospitality. So we've been very lucky to have money to spend in some areas…." (Project Staff)

"When we would do big meetings or big celebration events there was always lots of food available and when we were going out in the community to meet with kids we were able to buy meals for them. One thing that I have taken away from this project is just how important food is in terms of relaxing kids. And when we would bring their families in, we would sit around a table and eat a meal before we got to the more formal parts of the evening. It was really good for relationship building and I think because I have worked in other programs where we never had the luxury of being able to spend a lot of money on food or refreshments I've never really appreciated how important that is." (Project Staff)

"We were resource rich in terms of staffing and financial resources. I think we had the opportunity to do a lot of really … cool, innovative stuff with the youth that a lot of projects don't have the ability to do." (Project Partner)

Resource Gaps/Limitations

Two project partners reported that their in-kind contributions were significant. One of these partners did believe that the resources were, perhaps, insufficient in this regard:

"Well you can always use more resources…. I think one area that we feel … was a little bit slim on would be the financial support for our role in it. Which I guess is normally called admin. We had some funds that were allocated for rent, so to speak, but that was not nearly enough to cover our actual costs so it would have been nice to have more in that to come close to our actual costs for our role in the project. But I understand those are the prescriptions and the limitations of the funding and that's set out by the funder…. So my time and the coordinator's time at the community centre and our mileage which is not huge but every bit helps. The time that we have to do the reporting… the payroll and finance people, human resources. So all those pieces together that there would be recognition that there are real costs associated with doing those pieces."

One key informant felt that the resources were not sufficient for the community mobilization phase:

"No they weren't sufficient enough. The mobilization phase was part-time and it needed to be full-time staffing. When we had the dollars there, because [the project] started late, we were able to have that full-time staffing for a brief period of time and that was so key. Then it went down to part-time and the needs don't go part-time. In fact, when you are doing this thing you are learning more [about] the needs and you need more time then to respond to the needs and to work with the youth." (PAC Member)

Many project partners and staff agreed that the project would have benefited from having full-time hours for outreach staff for the duration of the project. This also would have allowed the YOWs to work in pairs. For a period of several months early in the community mobilization phase, outreach staff worked full-time, which was viewed as "tremendously beneficial" (Project Partner) and "laid a really solid foundation" (Project Partner) for youth engagement.

Another gap, identified by a PAC member, was that

"Looking at it now, having a psychologist connected to the group for consultations might have been a helpful resource … having someone to consult with case managing and case planning might have been helpful. But … I don't want that to reflect negatively in the sense that I don't think that kids were not serviced well as a result, but it might have been something to consider."

Although staff and those closest to the project reported that the financial resources were plentiful, they also reported that it was often difficult to access those resources for the things that the youth needed. As staff explained:

"Yeah so the money was there but we weren't allowed to massage it and use it in [certain ways]. …. If we ran a recreation program it was at a fairly high cost … but as soon as kids hit the age of 18 the pockets change. … There [are] not the funding pockets and we are not allowed to use our funding to do it. We couldn't take a kid down to a gym and get them a full membership… that was not okay. Same with some of the things around getting jobs… to try and get them some specialized training, let's say forklift …, there were just huge barriers. So we could spend a fortune on pizza but … some basic skill set development and that kind of thing [we couldn't do]. So the money was there but it was held in such a way that we couldn't really give some of the kids a step up that they needed around certain things and that was very, very frustrating for me. The way the money was allocated we were up against the same deficits as the kids constantly face between

that of [ages] 18 to 24…. So there were a lot of constraints around how we could access the money to give the support the kids needed to remove the barriers so that they could be successful. That was unfortunate."

Thus, although the project itself was well-funded staff experienced frustration in how the money could be spent. As well, and related to this, was that some staff reported there were gaps in service because of how the money could be spent. They could not use the money for specialized training, as mentioned above, or for psychological assessments, or for emergency funds for medication. As well, CTT staff reported that they had no direct supervisor – there was no funding allocated to hire someone for that role and they felt that they could have used that extra support:

"… we never had somebody with a skill set or specialty to manage us as a team and that was very onerous on us. Very stressful on us."

"We had to … negotiate a lot of things amongst ourselves as a team which … added to the difficulty when the team members were coming in and out… and we don't have anyone overseeing things to say 'okay guys this is how it's going to be.'… We had to do all that ourselves. We were forced to work above our pay grade a lot as a result and do things that we didn't want to."

Staffing and Supervision

As mentioned earlier in the report, staff consisted of the Project Manager, a Coordinator of Community Development and Research, 5.5 CTT staff[5], 4 YOWs[6], and a project assistant. The CTT staff persons were all full-time, with the exception of the 0.5 position from ROOF. The YOWs began their positions as full-time (from October 2011 to March 2012) in order to allow for greater outreach and program development, and then dropped down to part-time in April 2012.

As reported previously, it was recognized that addressing the needs of gang-involved and high-risk youth required the active collaboration of key

community agencies and organizations. Therefore, those key agencies and organizations provided the staffing to the project. Initially they were not going to be co-housed, but as the team began to develop the work plan it became obvious that to provide effective services to the youth, the treatment staff needed to be in one place. There were challenges, early on, about how this could work: some organizations had collective bargaining agreements, while others did not. Some had issues with transporting youth, other did not. The practicalities and logistics of working together was a challenge. Further, early on, there was confusion around staff roles and some staff turnover. As staff explained:

"It was pretty hard when we started, we didn't know what we were doing and we were really starting from scratch. I think … we've come quite a long way in understanding what role we could play that is helpful and how we can work together as a team. I think one of the challenges … at the beginning … is the way the different roles were described…. I think that lead to a lot of difficulties in terms of role clarification among us on the team. Our original person from St Mary's was not an MSW and then we got [another staff person] who was an MSW. Then from John Howard we initially had an MSW and then we have had a couple of people who didn't have MSWs. And that changed the nature of your work…. We have really had to figure that out as we went along…. It has been more or less difficult depending on the particular complement of the team. I think we've gotten to a point now where our specialties are really complementary to one another."

Staff were selected, and supervised by, their home agency. The Project Manager for inREACH did not supervise the staff, nor was he responsible for staff selection from the project partners. As one partner explained, that came with some challenges:

"[He] was not actually the supervisor, he was the Project Manager and he was able to give day-to-day direction and suggestions but he wasn't formally the supervisor. That too is a challenge because that meant that the project partners got to send us their staff and [the Project Manager] didn't get to pick his team. He didn't get to go to [name of agency] and say I want you and you. He got sent two staff. Great. But you know that wasn't the case right through and there were challenges with some of [the staff]."

This same partner felt that the supervision provided by the home agencies sometimes varied:

"I think that really varied. There were some services that took their supervision of their own staff very seriously and regularly came to the project and they saw themselves as a king of support behind their staff; to set them up to succeed and do the best for the project. There were other situations where other partners were all about them and themselves. They didn't necessarily come to the project with a very collaborative … spirit and more 'what's in it for me' and when there wasn't something in it for them they weren't interested."

However, the Project Manager did feel that, generally speaking, the staff was provided with adequate supervision from their home agencies:

"They received supervision and support from their respective managers at their home agencies…. As the project manager, [I] was given the green light to direct day- to-day activities as it related to the project. I think it was important for the project partners to sort of relinquish some of that power. It wasn't ten different messages from ten different places that people were getting. It was a pretty consistent message that folks were getting. All of the staff on the project still went to supervision and team

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5 There was one staff person each seconded from John Howard Society, Lutherwood, and St. Mary's. From ROOF there was one full-time staff person and one half-time staff person involved on the team. From the Crime Prevention Council there was a full-time staff person seconded.

6 This included one staff person each from each of the four main Community Mobilization Partners: House of Friendship, Mosaic Counselling & Family Services, Preston Heights Community Group, and Kinbridge Neighbourhood Association. As well, there was a half-time coordinator seconded from the Crime Prevention Council.

meetings with their home organizations so that they could continue to receive that supervision and be aware of what was happening at their home organization and then also ensure their home organization was well informed about what was happening with inREACH. I think that was key to receiving effective and good support."

Project staff did identify some gaps in staffing. As reported in an earlier section, initially a clinical supervisor providing supervision and guidance to the CTT was recommended. However, in the final contribution agreement, the approved budget did not include this position.

"I think just from other programs that I've been attached to, there is usually a clinical coordinator and I felt like that was something that was missing because that is not [the Project Manager's] area of expertise…. We had two clinicians on the team who reported to their own supervisors in their home agencies. So there wasn't one person directing clinical work, so that was a bit confusing…. So that was the one gap in terms of managing the program … initially there was supposed to be [a clinical supervisor] and I wish they had kept it." (Project Staff)

Another project staff person felt that there should have been an overall Project Manager (as there was) but also a coordinator for each of the teams. This key informant felt that too much of the Project Manager's time was taken up in coordination and answering questions about the treatment piece of the project.

Regardless of possible staffing shortages, project staff had very positive things to say about the overall management of the project and the leadership they were provided:

"inREACH's biggest strength is being flexible I think, especially with our approach… just allowing us to do what we do and not micro-managing a lot of it." (Project Staff)

"I thought [the Project Manager] did an incredible job. There were so many moving

parts to the project and it required a lot of coordination and I think he did very well in terms of managing so many things happening at the same time and him having such a wide range of responsibilities." (Project Staff)

"We were very fortunate to have [the Project Manager] … because he has the laid back attitude but also is really knowledgeable about this area and is really trusting of his staff. So the only time you really need to check with him is when it has to do with the budget or if it has to do with media or politics or anything like that. Other than that, make your own decisions. People were hired because they have a certain skill set…. He trusts each person to do their job and if you have questions, cool, ask him. But if not, just go and do your thing. Leadership sets the tone for the entire project. If we had a leader who was more a micro manager this program would not look the way it does…. [The Project Manager] has done a really great job of leading this project and of being the face of inREACH…." (Project Staff)

The Role of the Project Advisory Committee

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) provided support, guidance and advice to the project as a whole. The Committee consisted of representatives from the project partners as well as wider stakeholder group. The PAC met quarterly to provide guidance and direction to the project, and they were able to spread the word about the project and be advocates in their own respective agencies. Key informants generally thought that the PAC operated effectively and provided the guidance needed for the project:

"I think [the PAC] has added value overall to the program and provided direction. It offered feedback when questions arose whether it was program specific or resource specific. Because of expertise in the group and you had people in the group who … were decision makers as well. Having that expertise, I think, provided some direction and insight and maybe even

at times, food for thought for inREACH itself and its group members who are working with kids. What was out there and what could or couldn't occur. I think having the PAC was valuable…. Utilizing the PAC for brainstorming and using the expertise in the room is a benefit to any organization. When they have a good core group who are invested in it and willing to share, I think it offers good information…. *I think the PAC provided some direction and assisted [the Project Manager] and senior group in determining a direction. I think that is helpful to have and I think it has supported them as they moved forward."* (PAC Member)

"Because of the volume of partners and the breadth of partners there was a wide representation of partners dealing with youth directly, indirectly, and some front line…. The meetings were always functional…. I think the key contribution is that it gives it credibility because even though we are doing great things, if you don't have certain partners on board then you don't get heard and that's just the reality of the system…. I think also they have influence and recommendations because they see what in their system needs to be changed." (Project Partner)

"It was very important to have an advisory committee… so you can get a really wide and broad perspective and you can get feedback through a different lens. So I think that's very important." (Project Partner)

"The PAC certainly assisted in mobilizing the community because it was a forum to spread the word…. The key contributions of the PAC [were] that open forum to work on issues and to seek the expertise especially as the knowledge of the inREACH folks grew as they were responding to needs in the community." (PAC Member)

As indicated above, the key contributions were reported to be the guidance/feedback provided and having influence out in the community and within their own agencies. A couple of key informants also believed that the PAC was important in

educating its members and perhaps influencing how organizations work with youth:

"… there was as much education at PAC, I think, as there is education for those actually requiring the help. I think that was necessary because it really educated our community about the needs and so helped inREACH do their work and it helped the police do their work." (PAC Member)

"I think the most beneficial thing for them is just taking the information and our learnings… taking that back to the community and their organizations and trying to implement … change in those places…. I think that is the most beneficial role that they play. That systems change stuff." (Project Staff)

Very few weaknesses were reported by key informants. Two key informants reported that there were fewer partners/collaborators at the table now than there were at the beginning of the project:

"… towards the end of last year or so some of the partners were there consistently but I think a great number of them ended up falling off… so I'm not sure it was as effective as it could have been. I think you need all of the voices and all of the ideas and the collaboration." (Project Partner)

Other limitations or weaknesses were not reported by more than one individual. One project partner thought that sometimes people's own agendas had an impact at meetings. Another partner felt that inconsistent attendance was sometimes a challenge. And, finally, one staff person thought that the PAC's role should not be to guide operations of inREACH and this person felt the individuals on the PAC had insufficient knowledge about inREACH to do so:

"I think, in theory, it's great to have the PAC because it's a whole bunch of different sectors who aren't necessarily partners on the project. But at the same time I don't think the PAC has the knowledge about what inREACH actually does. I don't think they have the in-depth knowledge to be making big decisions or guiding the project or anything like that. I think it is good

for them to hear about inREACH and then take that information back to their organizations to advocate on behalf of inREACH and I think that has made a huge difference."

Another key informant, a project partner, reported that once the PAC expanded to include more of the partners, as well as staff, that it helped bring everyone together. This partner also reported that when the project parted ways with the previous evaluator, that also helped the operation of the committee:

"Well towards the end of the project we brought staff, project partners and PAC together and I would do that more frequently than we had done previously …. I believe that the magic was in bringing us all together and we should have thought that out a little better in the beginning of the project. It wasn't a divide and conquer thing, it was 'how do you ever bring thirty plus people together?' It is tough but we should have just gone with whoever can attend…. [Also] I think the PAC got going really well and really found their feet … after we parted ways with the impact evaluation, because that was just taking them over. They were baffled by what was expected and they were baffled by what they were hearing and they were trying to wrap their heads around what the expectation from the evaluator was, then what the expectation from the project was …. You couldn't merge the two because they couldn't be merged but it was very confusing for community members."

Relationship with the Funder

Several key informants reported that the overall management and implementation of the project was negatively affected by the relationship they had with the funder. Key informants reported that it took many months to have the work plan approved; this delayed the implementation of the project which had a negative impact out in the community – for example:

"I think there was a lot of frustration … because there was an announcement, 'we have this funding and we are starting this program and this is what

it's all about.' Then the community waited and waited and so that was the problem. I think initially it just was really frustrating for community members because it didn't get started even though the announcement was there." (Project Partner)

Further, when the work plan was finally approved, it was not viewed as a living document by the funder (as inREACH partners would have liked), but rather as a contract that inREACH was obligated to follow.

"There was a work plan that we had to provide in the development phase of the project and … it took months and months to get approved and that work plan very quickly became set in concrete… rather than what it should have been – a living document." (Project Partner)

Key informants reported that the work plan was developed "in a vacuum"[7], in some ways, and that it needed to be revised as the project team realized that some of the elements they had put in the work plan were not going to work (e.g., group work turned out to be inappropriate and ineffective, as described previously).

As well, they reported that they felt there was too much time spent on reporting and they felt micro-managed, which took unnecessary time away from the project:

"There is a lot of staff time put into copious amounts of reports for [the funder]. Whether it be financial or narrative or having to provide multiple versions of the work plan that was originally approved…. Copious amounts of hours like I couldn't even begin to quantify how much throughout the three years of reporting and re- reporting and all of that sort of stuff to help [the funder] get a better idea of the work that we were doing and how we were doing the work and why we were doing the work. So much micro-managing and I think that was such an inefficient, ineffective bad use of resources and peoples time. It was just absolutely ridiculous…. I think a significant challenge was working with the funder. The funder was a significant barrier to the progress of the project I think."

Partnerships

A significant element of the inREACH project was the partnerships that were developed to provide services to the youth. In this section we will discuss the contributions that partners made, how the partners and staff worked with each other, satisfaction with the collaboration, and lessons learned.

Overview of the Partnerships and Collaboration and Contributions Made

As described earlier in the report, both the Community Treatment Team and the Community Mobilization Team included partnerships with agencies from whom staff were seconded. The partners involved in service delivery for the CTT included: the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, Lutherwood, John Howard Society of Waterloo Wellington, ROOF, St. Mary's Counselling, and Waterloo Regional Police Service. With the exception of the Waterloo Regional Police Service, the other partners all seconded staff to the project.

The Waterloo Regional Police Service involvement included chairing the PPT and the PAC, and a member of the Guns and Gangs Unit was involved with CTT providing information and consultation. They also provided information pertinent to the success of the program, provided referrals, and provided the program and the community with training and information on topics such as gangs and narcotics.

The community mobilization phase of the project included partnerships with the House of Friendship, Mosaic Counselling & Family Services, Preston Heights Community Group, Kinbridge Community Association, and Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council. Each of these organizations provided supervision for staff who were hired as Youth Outreach Workers.

In all cases where staff was seconded, or new staff were hired for the project (but supervised by a partner organization), those organizations entered into fee-for-service agreements with the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council (the

administrative body for the project). In addition, these organizations provided in-kind contributions such as:

• Staff supervision;

• Furniture;

• Use of facilities and meeting space;

• IT and financial supports;

• Information and expertise in their specific area of focus; and

• Ability to leverage supports from their home organizations to be able to support inREACH youth.

As well, both the service delivery partners and the collaborators on the PAC, provided the following in-kind contributions:

• Promotion of inREACH internally to their organizations as well to the broader community;

• Training opportunities;

• Support/consultation for the overall direction of the project; and

• Referrals.

How Well the Partners and Staff Worked Together

In the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked to report on a number of items with respect to the success of the collaboration and partnerships that occurred. Please see results on next page (Table 6):

The results on these four items were quite positive. Respondents reported that the inREACH team worked well with community partners: close to 90% either strongly agreed or agreed. Over 70% reported that i) the inREACH team was effective in mobilizing the community to address the issue of youth involvement in gangs; ii) there is now greater inter-agency collaboration and cooperation in Waterloo Region as it pertains to the delivery of programs and services to gang-involved or high-risk youth; and iii) because of the program, there is greater service coordination in the region as it pertains to the needs of gang-involved and high-risk youth.

These positive results were reflected in comments made by various key informants. All key informants voiced that the collaboration amongst stakeholders and the partnerships worked very effectively. They believed the right people were involved and they had very positive things to say about the contributions made by partners, the collaborative spirit of those involved, the flexibility with which people worked, and the way project staff worked with partners:

> *"I think the first thing I wanted to say is … I think the players that needed to be part of this group were there."* (PAC Member)

> *"I think a key element was the flexibility on the part of everyone involved. We were all very committed to making it work and we had the same goal of wanting to serve this population.*

The awareness that the need was there and wanting to make sure we found ways that would be effective and would work…. We adapted things along the way and I think we just worked really well together." (Project Partner)

"The project partners really got together quite often and would discuss their concerns and would discuss challenges, what's effective, and what's going well. We … supported each other…. We did not have issues. The community partner did not have issues." (Project Partner)

 "There's been good communication on a consistent basis whether it is something significant as a policy change shift or seeking opinions or [something as] simple as … 'we are open for referrals at this point or we have some availability.' There has been really good

Table 6: Stakeholder Survey Results – Effectiveness of the Collaboration

Question agree	Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree disagree	Strongly	Don't know/NA
The inREACH team worked well with community partners	56.7% (n=38)	31.3% (n=21)	6.0% (n=4)	1.5% (n=1)	0	4.5% (n=3)
The inREACH team was effective in mobilizing the community to address the issue of youth involvement in gangs	32.8% (n=22)	38.8% (n=26)	9.0% (n=6)	9.0% (n=6)	1.5% (n=1)	9.0% (n=6)
As a result of the program, there is greater inter-agency collaboration and cooperation in WR as it pertains to the delivery of programs and services to gang-involved or high-risk youth.	32.8% (n=22)	43.3% (n=29)	10.5% (n=7)	6.0% (n=4)	0	7.5% (n=5)
As a result of the program, there is greater service coordination in the WR as it pertains to the needs of gang-involved and high-risk youth.	31.3% (n=21)	41.8% (n=28)	14.5% (n=10)	4.5% (n=3)	0	7.5% (n=5)

communication…. Not just senior management but all of the inREACH staff…. [As well] I've been to a number of planning and plenary sessions that included both inREACH staff as well as community partners and … there is an acknowledgement by all the inREACH staff of understanding some of the limitations that agencies have around information sharing or referral sources. Because of that understanding … it has developed …[into] a really good working relationship." (PAC Member)

Because of the effectiveness of the collaboration and partnerships there was general consensus that this had contributed to the success of the program. For example, in the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked if the involvement of the community was responsible for the success of inREACH. Please see Figure 5:

As shown approximately 80% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that community involvement was responsible for the success of inREACH. The remaining respondents were either "undecided" or did not know. No one disagreed with the statement.

And, when stakeholders were asked if they had received the support they needed to be effective with respect to the program, approximately 70% (71.2%; n=47) agreed that they had.

An additional 15 respondents either were "undecided" (9.1%; n=6) or answered "don't know/ NA" (13.6%; n=9). These results were quite positive, but there were a few individuals (6.1%; n=4) who did not think they received the support they needed to be effective.

When asked about the strengths of the program, many of the key informants reported that the collaboration among stakeholders and partners contributed, in large part, to the success of the program:

"I would say the key strength [is] collaboration. I mean the agencies working together with the benefit being the youth that go through the

program and come out successfully. It doesn't happen if we don't work together and I think that in a nutshell is the one word – collaboration." (Project Partner)

"I think a key strength is the partnerships and it is the flexibility … the buy-in at the levels of where differences can be made." (Project Partner)

"The partnership is it! That was the whole part of the success. Not just saying 'okay well you have x amount of organizations around the table'. We had the right organizations around the table and the commitment and investment of folks being on the project and the investment that they were making to the initiative. That was a key ingredient to how the partnerships helped the project to be successful. When folks did more than simply have their staff on the project, but really looked at how they could begin to leverage the supports that their home organizations [could use] to help this initiative and vice versa." (Project Partner)

Figure 5: Stakeholder Survey Results – Community Involvement and the Success of the Program
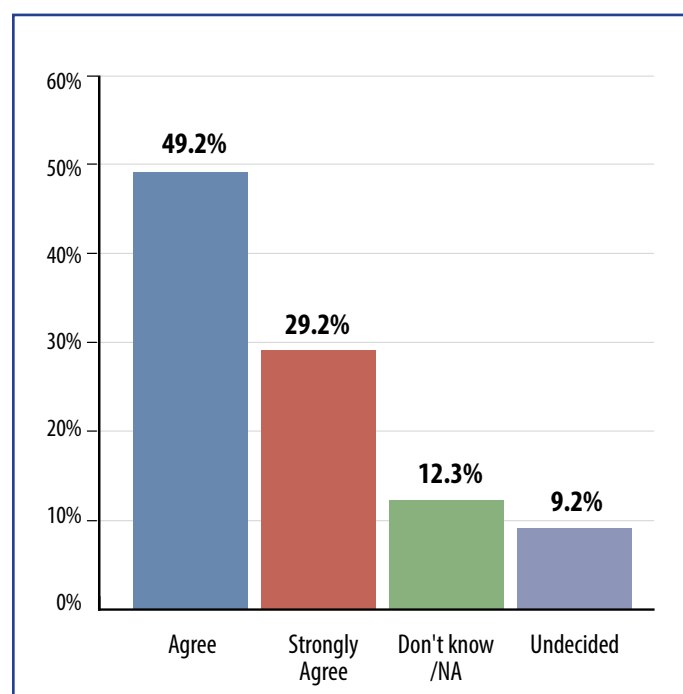
The successful collaboration and partnerships developed over time and were not without challenges, such as not everyone being committed to collaboration, having staffing/representative turnover, and having different values and level of buy-in. Some key informants acknowledged these challenges but still felt that the issues faced were worth the effort:

"I don't want to create the picture that [success] happened in every instance because it didn't. Some project partners … being a part of this was collaboration was difficult. I don't think you're ever going to have 100% of the people who all play well. … But by and large everybody played really well and was very supportive and engaged. If you didn't have collective buy-in and engagement I think the whole project falls apart." (Project Partner)

"… one of the challenges when you are dealing with multiple organizations and different unions and contracts is the evolution of personnel and the lack of continuity and that's out of the control of everybody, but it worked well. Even with the movement of people in and out of the program from the various agencies they were able to adjust and I think it worked well." (Project Partner)

"I think it wasn't a good fit sometimes and at the very least when you pick who you are going to play with over the next three years, it is good to be able to put your cards on the table and say 'here's how we work, here are my values and here is what I expect, can you do that? And if you can't then it's not a good match…. We didn't get to pick the team … [but] I think [the community partnerships] have been instrumental [to project success]." (Project Partner)

"The strength is in the collaboration that we have with all the different sectors … nobody can do this by themselves. It has to be everybody coming together ... while that is a huge challenge because of all the different policies and the different cultures, it has been worth it to fight through those challenging times." (Project Staff)

Satisfaction with the Collaboration

Stakeholder survey respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of each of the major partners in the collaboration. There was a sizeable proportion of respondents (ranging from 21% to 33%) who answered "don't know/NA" to these items, but for those who did respond, the ratings were quite positive. Fifty percent or more (up to approximately 70%) agreed that each of the organizations performed well in the program. Of the 10 organizations queried, only 4 had respondents who disagreed that the organizations performed well. With the exception of one organization who had 7.6% (n=5) respondents disagree, all other organizations had fewer than 5% disagree (in two cases it was only one individual). In the interviews that were conducted, no key informants pointed fingers with respect to who may not have performed well in the project. Indeed, as reported above, the key informants were very positive about the collaboration that occurred and pointed to it as a key reason why they believed the project was a success.

Stakeholder survey respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction and association with the inREACH project. Please see Figure 6 on next page for results:

The results from the stakeholder survey with respect to satisfaction with being involved were quite positive: over 85% reported having a satisfactory experience and approximately 90% enjoyed their association with the program.

These results were echoed in the interviews conducted; for example:

"You know what if I was to give you an answer on a one to ten scale I would probably say twelve. Simply because for me it has been an opportunity to meet and work with very good dedicated people where you actually get to read and see some tangible outcomes that are very successful and it has opened my eyes to agencies and programs that I didn't know existed." (Project Partner)

"Very satisfied. I think it has worked out very well for us organizationally. It has met a need that we had identified in that neighbourhood for a long time already so we were thrilled when this project came along and we were able to actively participate in it. In terms of our role and our involvement at the CMT and the PAC, I think that has been a very positive experience. So I am very satisfied with them." (Project Partner)

"We've been very satisfied…. The inREACH initiative so far has been viewed from our perspective as a positive and necessary resource for a lot of our higher risk kids." (PAC Member)

Impacts of the Program

In what follows, we present the impacts that the inREACH project has had on the young people who have taken part in project services and activities, the organizations who partnered together to form inREACH, the staff who worked with youth, and the communities in which the project operated.

On Youth

This section presents the results of the surveys, interviews and group interviews which provide information about the changes or impacts the inREACH programs had on the CTT (Community Treatment Team) youth and the CMT (Community Mobilization Team – or neighbourhood program) youth. The results will be presented within the five thematic categories of intended youth outcomes as outlined in the Program Logic Model. The areas of impact to be examined include: Skills; Personal Growth; Connections and Relationships; Opportunities; and Enhanced Future.

Stakeholder survey results will be presented first for each outcome category since many of the items in the survey may refer to either CTT or CMT youth or both. Next the CTT youth survey results and relevant interview findings will be presented, followed by the CMT survey results and interview findings.

Overall, the survey and interview results from all sources provides robust evidence of many very positive impacts on the CTT youth and the CMT youth for all the types of changes inREACH was seeking to achieve in young people as a result of

Figure 6: Stakeholder Survey Results – Satisfaction with Collaboration
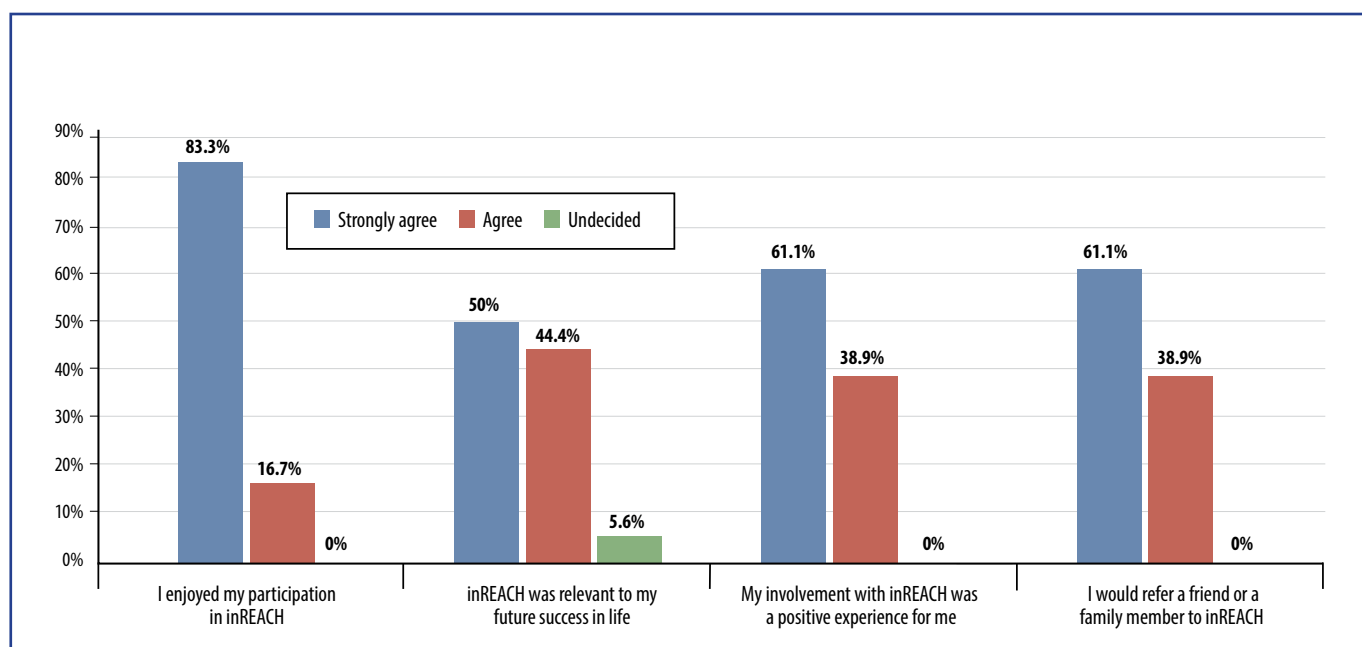
their participation in inREACH programs. There is strong evidence that young people improved their skills, demonstrated personal growth, enhanced their connections and relationships, had more opportunities available to them and have enhanced futures as a result of improvements in such things as school or employment.

Skills and Personal Growth

The following discussion combines information on the first two outcomes of the Program Logic Model – skills and personal growth.

Skills and Personal Growth – Stakeholder Survey Results

Overall, stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that there were many positive changes for program youth in their personal growth and skill development. In particular, stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that youth improved in their life skills, self-confidence, self-esteem and outlook on life (approximately 85% or more agreed or strongly agreed).

The highest degree of uncertainty (combined "don't know" and "undecided"; 42%) was with regard to the reduction in frequency and seriousness of gang involvement, and use of drugs and/or alcohol. Nonetheless, the majority of stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that youth experienced positive impacts in these areas as well. A high percentage of stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that youth improved their understanding of the dangers and

Table 7: Stakeholder Survey Results – Skills and Personal Growth

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / NA
Helped youth reduce the frequency of their involvement in gangs	31.4% (n=21)	44.4% (n=8)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped youth reduce the seriousness of their involvement in gangs	27.9% (n=19)	44.4% (n=8)	0	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped youth reduce their use of drugs	25.0% (n=17)	35.3% (n=24)	14.7% (n=10)	0	0	25.0% (n=17)
Helped youth reduce their use of alcohol	25.4% (n=17)	34.3% (n=23)	14.9% (n=10)	0	0	25.4% (n=17)
Improved youth's life skills for future success	45.6% (n=31)	39.7% (n=27)	1.5% (n=1)	0	0	13.2% (n=9)
Improved youth's self-confidence	48.5% (n=33)	36.8% (n=25)	1.5% (n=1)	0	0	13.2% (n=9)
Improved youth's self-esteem	47.1% (n=32)	36.8% (n=25)	2.9% (n=2)	0	0	13.2% (n=9)
Improved youth's outlook on life	47.1% (n=32)	35.3% (n=24)	4.4% (n=3)	0	0	13.2% (n=9)
Improved youth's ability to handle challenges	38.2% (n=26)	42.7% (n=29)	2.9% (n=2)	0	0	16.2% (n=11)
Improved youth's ability to handle conflict	32.4% (n=22)	41.2% (n=28)	8.8% (n=6)	1.5% (n=1)	0	16.2% (n=11)

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / NA
Improved youth's ability to handle peer pressure	30.9% (n=21)	41.2% (n=28)	8.8% (n=6)	0	0	19.1% (n=13)
Improved youth's decision-making abilities	38.8% (n=26)	44.8% (n=30)	3.0% (n=2)	0	0	13.4% (n=9)
Improved youth's ability to set and achieve goals	32.8% (n=22)	47.8% (n=32)	4.5% (n=3)	0	0	14.9% (n=10)
Improved youth's employment skills and readiness	37.3% (n=25)	40.3% (n=27)	3.0% (n=2)	1.5% (n=1)	0	17.9% (n=12)
Improved youth's school/ education skills and achievement	30.3% (n=20)	39.4% (n=26)	9.1% (n=6)	0	0	21.2% (n=14)
Improved youth's leadership skills	31.8% (n=21)	43.9% (n=29)	7.6% (n=5)	1.5% (n=1)	0	15.2% (n=10)
Improved youth's understanding of the dangers and consequences of gang involvement	35.8% (n=24)	44.8% (n=30)	4.5% (n=3)	0	0	14.9% (n=10)
Improved youth's understanding of the dangers and consequences of drugs/alcohol	37.3% (n=25)	38.8% (n=26)	7.5% (n=5)	0	0	16.4% (n=11)
Improved youth's problems with drug and/or alcohol use	35.8% (n=24)	37.3% (n=25)	7.5% (n=5)	0	0	19.4% (n=13)

consequences of substances and of gang involvement (ranged from 73.1% to 80.6%). In all other areas of personal growth and skills surveyed, approximately 70% to 85% of stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that youth experienced positive impacts.

Skills and Personal Growth – CTT Youth Survey and Interview Reults

As shown on Table 8 and 9 (next page), the results are very positive. Most youth agreed or strongly agreed that they improved their life skills (coping, confidence, etc.), reduced drug use, were able to distance themselves from gangs, and improved their skills in employment.

Youth most strongly agreed that it allowed them to express their ideas and concerns and helped them learn to make good decisions, solve problems, and handle challenges. Combined agree/strongly agree proportions for these statements ranged

from 88.9% to 100%. The lowest percentage of agreement was for education skills, dealing with depression, and reduction in alcohol use (61.1% to 66.7%), but a majority agreed they benefited in these areas. For all other questions relating to personal growth and skills, the percentages of agreement (combined agree/strongly agree) ranged from 77.8% to 100%.

The many positive changes that CTT youth experienced in the areas of personal growth and improvement in skills are clearly reflected in the comments made by youth in the individual and group interviews. All of the youth said they experienced several positive benefits as a result of the program. Young people talked particularly about the importance of learning to manage their anger, emotions and stress, learning to deal with situations in more positive and productive ways, and feeling better about themselves and their lives:

Table 8: CTT Youth Survey – Skills

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
Allowed me to express my ideas, concerns and opinions	72.2% (n=13)	27.8% (n=5)	0	0	0	0
Taught me how to treat others with more respect	38.9% (n=7)	44.4% (n=8)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Taught me how to be better at listening	33.3% (n=6)	55.5% (n=10)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me develop more leadership skills	38.9% (n=7)	38.9% (n=7)	16.7% (n=3)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me get along with other people	22.2% (n=4)	66.7% (n=12)	0	0	0	11.1% (n=2)
Showed me how to work better with others in a group	27.8% (n=5)	50.0% (n=9)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	11.1% (n=2)
Showed me how to make good decisions	44.4% (n=8)	44.4% (n=8)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me solve problems in a healthy way	61.1% (n=11)	33.3% (n=6)	0	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me learn to better express my ideas	38.9% (n=7)	55.5% (n=10)	0	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Showed me how to better handle the challenges in my life	66.7% (n=12)	27.8% (n=5)	0	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me improve my decision-making abilities	61.1% (n=11)	27.8% (n=5)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me improve my ability to set and achieve goals	33.3% (n=6)	61.1% (n=11)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	0
Improved my ability to handle peer pressure	33.3% (n=6)	50.0% (n=9)	11.1% (n=2)	0	5.6% (n=1)	0
Helped me develop employment skills and be more prepared for employment	50.0% (n=9)	27.8% (n=5)	22.2% (n=4)	0	0	0
Helped me develop school/ education skills	27.8% (n=5)	33.3% (n=6)	27.8% (n=5)	0	5.6% (n=1)	5.6% (n=1)

Table 9: CTT Youth Survey – Personal Growth

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
Made me feel better about myself	44.4% (n=8)	44.4% (n=8)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me be more confident	50.0% (n=9)	44.4% (n=8)	0	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me to deal with my stress and anxiety	50.0% (n=9)	38.9% (n=7)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me stay out of trouble	50.0% (n=9)	38.9% (n=7)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Helped me consume less drugs	50.0% (n=9)	33.3% (n=6)	0	0	0	16.7% (n=3)
Helped me consume less alcohol	27.8% (n=5)	38.9% (n=7)	16.7% (n=3)	0	0	16.7% (n=3)
Helped me to deal with my depression	27.8% (n=5)	33.3% (n=6)	16.7% (n=3)	0	0	22.2% (n=4)
Helped me to develop better coping skills	44.4% (n=8)	44.4% (n=8)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me reduce the frequency of my involvement in gangs (e.g., how many times I get involved in gang activities)	55.5% (n=10)	33.3% (n=6)	0	0	0	11.1% (n=2)
Helped me resolve problems without fighting	50.0% (n=9)	33.3% (n=6)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	11.1% (n=2)
Helped improve my health and wellness	44.4% (n=8)	38.9% (n=7)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me understand the dangers and consequences of gang involvement	50.0% (n=9)	33.3% (n=6)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me reduce the seriousness of my involvement in gangs (e.g., the types of gang activities I get involved in)	33.3% (n=6)	50.0% (n=9)	11.1% (n=2)	0	5.6% (n=1)	0
Helped me understand the dangers and consequences of drug and alcohol use	50.0% (n=9)	27.8% (n=5)	22.2% (n=4)	0	0	0
Helped me reduce the seriousness of my involvement in gangs (e.g., the types of gang activities I get involved in)	50.0% (n=9)	38.9% (n=7)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Helped me understand the dangers and consequences of drug and alcohol use	50.0% (n=9)	38.9% (n=7)	0	0	0	11.1% (n=2)

"They taught me to actually think before I acted really. Before if I was in ... a bit of an altercation [I would be] focused on one thing. Kind of counting down to when I was going to hit them or not and so they kind of taught me to distract myself from that thought and actually think, is it worth it or is it not worth it. They helped me out with that and just keeping my cool overall and staying relaxed and not being so stressed out."

"I was a stressed-out kid and I had a lot of anger issues and inREACH helped me to deal with all that stuff. After dealing with inREACH I realized that pressure kind of is in your head and as long as you are able to space things out and plan things out and think ahead and stay organized then that pressure is not going to be as heavy on your head."

"I feel like to myself that I am more valuable and I feel better about myself cause I can acknowledge that I have done stupid things but now I have gotten the help that I needed and people have helped me come to a more positive place."

Many young people said that the practical assistance they received with employment skills was very beneficial and some were able to get employment:

"…honestly, I looked at my resume and it was as blank as the back of this paper right here. Then through inREACH I did different volunteer work and I got certificates and I have been trained to be a bartender… Now I've got a … really good job and it is important and I care about it a lot. Without inREACH I wouldn't be there at all."

"They kind of did job search with me…and they got me a …subsidized contract...So I…basically worked my ass off, made a good impression and…they signed me on full time…That job probably is the reason that I'm not in and out of jail anymore. You may not be making as much as you were selling drugs but you also don't have to worry about people trying to rob you and people pulling knives on you or whatever all the time. It is kind of worth it."

"Through all the tools that they gave me I ended up being successful in finding full-time employment… It got me prepared because I knew what I had to do and what I had to wear and how I had to act and I knew all that shit from doing the program."

Some youth received various kinds of assistance with their schooling and talked about the way that support enabled them to experience success at school, and staff also commented on this impact of the program:

"…I was having difficulty with studying math …I was really shy to ask for help. So [CTT staff] went to the school and … spoke to my guidance counselor…So they got me a personal tutor and he helped me with my homework…and then I did really good on my exams and I passed it. If I didn't get involved with inREACH I wouldn't get that. It helped me a lot with my school stuff and now I am… good at math."

"School – Short answer is yes! Many, the majority of referrals came to us through the school boards and I think we played a big role in helping students get settled, or get them stable – whatever crisis that was going on that put them on school's radar…We helped folks get re-engaged back with school even going back, getting registered and repairing bridges that may have been dismantled... kind of the whole gambit." (Project Staff)

Many young people also said they now understood the impacts of substance use and how helpful that understanding was in assisting them to reduce or to stop their use of substances:

"I was a huge drinker… After the breach and them just helping me and with court and everything, so much help, why would I go back and do the same mistakes when they are helping so much? No, so I stopped drinking after that. I did snap the one time because I had stopped all the hard drugs and just smoked weed. It is hard just to stop everything… they would tell me about things that I didn't even know would affect me.

Real details to me and it kind of freaked me out what was happening every time I took a puff of that crap. I procrastinate when I am on it and put everything off and now that I am not on it I am on the ball and working…I do stuff and I am happy about it and I feel better about myself and I'm not always lazing around… they were like 'would you rather help yourself or would you rather slowly hurt yourself?' and I would rather help myself. So they showed me how to and they taught me about pros and cons."

"Helping me by telling me what drugs do to your brain has helped me with my choices and my actions and not to just do things because I have buddies that do them."

Quite a few young people described how they were able to reduce or prevent criminal justice involvement and gang involvement through their work with inREACH. These stories and others also illustrate the theme that change is a process that often takes time and multiple attempts and demonstrates the insight young people gained from their work with inREACH:

"I found that it was helpful cause before I entered the program I was just doing a lot of drugs and hanging out with gang members and shit. I was getting arrested quite a bit so it kind of kept me out of trouble. I didn't smoke as many drugs and I think I only got in shit once since I started the program."

"I was in a gang and there wasn't really more to life than banging your set and selling some drugs…There was so much stuff I never really even knew about myself. inREACH taught me about our anatomy and what we are like inside and what we are like outside. The work was around us doing it ourselves kind of, they showed us the outline of what to do and we figured out everything in between the lines… I didn't just go in there and they said gangs are bad and I said that I am going to get out of the gang that I had been in for six years. It didn't happen like that. Once you are in a gang it is hard to get out… and that's what kids don't

realize. They think it is all fun and games and you are going to go in there and make some money and there are not going to be any problems well you are going to get some black eyes and you are going to get some stitches and you are going to get in a lot of trouble over the course of being in a gang and that is what people don't realize. inREACH really really helps you make yourself realize that."

"I was big on selling drugs but I was drinking alcohol and that is what got me into trouble with the criminal justice system. So when I did that everybody supported me. They wrote letters… My volunteering they hooked me up with and they had a legit lawyer to help me… I don't even have an adult criminal record and I thought how is that possible. A whole bunch of neat things and they helped me go through the criminal justice system and they helped me with the drinking, they knew that was a problem…They just helped me with all this… and I have a clear slate…Then I got caught again on my birthday… and boom went to jail. They still supported me… They knew I was there, it was weird. I don't know how they knew it, they just did and they were there to support me. And then they worked on my drinking. They were like okay so we know how you are, you drink and do drugs and you get in trouble. Let's take out this and you probably wouldn't do the drugs and you probably won't be getting in trouble because you wouldn't be hyped and drunk and getting in trouble right. Then they went through it all and helped me out."

Skills and Personal Growth – CMT Youth Survey and Interviews

The next section presents the results for CMT (neighbourhood program) youth in the areas of personal growth and skills. The youth survey results are presented first, followed by findings from key informant interviews. It is important to note that for all CMT youth surveys, when they were administered, the "neither" (agree nor disagree) column was also indicated to youth to include "not applicable."

As shown in Table 10 & 11, the results are highly positive indicating that most CMT youth experienced benefits in all areas of skills and personal growth surveyed.

A high percentage of CMT youth (ranging from 82.8% to 89.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that their involvement with inREACH helped them stay away from drugs, alcohol and gangs. Nearly 100% of youth agreed or strongly agreed that participating in inREACH allowed them to express their ideas and opinions. The lowest percentage of agreement was for assistance with employment and school (which

is an optional support offered), but a majority (63% to 67.2%) agreed that they improved their skills in these areas as well. All other statements regarding skills and personal growth were agreed or strongly agreed to by 75% or more of the young people.

The positive impacts on skills and personal growth for CMT youth as a result of participation in inREACH activities was echoed in the individual and group interviews conducted with youth. All young people spoke very positively about their program experiences. Most listed multiple ways in which they had benefited. Young people talked about

Table 10: CMT Youth Survey – Skills

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Allowed me to express my ideas,concerns and opinions	54.0% (n=34)	44.4% (n=28)	1.6% (n=1)	0	0
Taught me to treat others with respect	49.2% (n=32)	44.6% (n=29)	6.2% (n=4)	0	0
Showed me how to become a leader	36.9% (n=24)	44.6% (n=29)	16.9% (n=11)	1.5% (n=1)	0
Helped me get along with other people	42.2% (n=27)	53.1% (n=34)	4.7% (n=3)	0	0
Showed me how to work with others in a group	46.2% (n=30)	41.5% (n=27)	12.3% (n=8)	0	0
Showed me how to make good decisions	44.4% (n=28)	44.4% (n=28)	11.1% (n=7)	0	0
Helped me solve problems in a healthy way	25.0% (n=16)	50.0% (n=50)	20.3% (n=13)	4.7% (n=3)	0
Taught me how to listen to others	41.3% (n=26)	38.1% (n=24)	17.5% (n=11)	3.2% (n=2)	0
Helped me learn to express my ideas	56.3% (n=36)	29.7% (n=19)	12.5% (n=8)	1.6% (n=1)	0
Showed me how to handle the challenges in my life	47.7% (n=31)	35.4% (n=23)	13.8% (n=9)	3.1% (n=2)	0
Helped me develop employment skills and be more prepared for employment	20.0% (n=13)	43.1% (n=28)	32.3% (n=21)	3.1% (n=2)	1.5% (n=1)
Helped me develop school/education skills	25.0% (n=16)	42.2% (n=27)	29.7% (n=19)	3.1% (n=2)	0

Table 11: CMT Youth Survey- Personal Growth

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Made me feel better about myself	44.6% (n=29)	40.0% (n=26)	13.8% (n=9)	1.5%	0
Helped me be more confident	53.1% (n=34)	31.3% (n=20)	15.6% (n=10)	0	0
Helped me stay out of trouble	52.4% (n=33)	28.6% (n=18)	14.3% (n=9)	4.8% (n=3)	0
Helped me stay away from drugs	68.8% (n=44)	20.3% (n=13)	9.4% (n=6)	1.6% (n=1)	0
Helped me stay away from alcohol	65.6% (n=42)	17.2% (n=11)	17.2% (n=11)	0	0
Helped me stay away from gangs	70.3% (n=45)	14.1% (n=9)	12.5% (n=8)	3.1% (n=2)	0
Helped me resolve problems without fighting	51.6% (n=33)	31.3% (n=20)	12.5% (n=2)	3.1% (n=2)	1.6% (n=1)

the benefits they received from the group activities (making new friends, social skills) as well as the ways in which they benefited from individual mentoring and supports (help/advice with a problem). For example:

"You can meet new people and you get to be social and it teaches you social skills. It teaches you manners and how to be respectful and everything like that…"

"It has helped me to grow and it helped me with my first job."

"Some kids would not go to school and then those kids would meet [YOW] and end up going back to school because they feel good about themselves now which is good for the community cause… if they are happy then everybody else is happy and it is just a big circle."

"When I started coming here I started thinking more about if I am going to hit someone, I'm going to get in trouble so there are better ways… to deal with situations. If someone doesn't want to listen, then they don't want to listen and I'm out of here then. I'm not going to escalate things and

make things worse. Maybe it's not their day and maybe there is another day that I can talk to them about it…."

"Ever since [YOW] and [service agency] got introduced to the community, everyone's actually been starting to go to rehab and stop doing drugs."

Key informants all agreed that many young people have increased their skills and positive development as a result of participation in program activities. Comments by staff also confirmed the findings from youth interviews, that many benefits resulted from the ability and flexibility of the YOWs to provide individual mentoring that is responsive to the needs of young people.

"They have given us room to assist these kids in practical things for example: helping them get a job and meeting their families. These kids were kicked out of other drop-ins and I think working for inREACH – it just gives so much leeway to build these meaningful relationships. Especially kids who struggle with addictions and stuff. We've seen them get jobs and get clean and I think we have tons of examples of that" (Project Staff)

"…they are carrying conversations on with each other respectfully and I know that might sound silly but they are always on the defensive all the time – and they are socializing well, doing some healthy socializing – which then sets you up for that next piece of going out and being healthy skilled adults. So I think it's giving them a feeling of 'we deserve this' and 'we can do this' and 'we don't have to be a label.' The confidence has just been huge!" (Project Partner)

Connections and Relationships

Connections and Relationships – Stakeholder Survey

As shown below (Table 12), most stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that young people had improved access to opportunities and services and improved relationships with others (74% to 90% agreed with these statements; no one disagreed).

Connections and Relationships – CTT Youth Survey and Interviews

As shown on the next page (Table 13), the results are very positive. CTT youth indicated that they benefited from access to positive role models

(staff), experienced a greater connection to their community and improved relationships, especially with their families. In particular, all youth strongly agreed (83.3%) or agreed (16.7%) that they were treated well by staff and were provided with people to go to for help with a problem (61.1% strongly agreed, 38.9% agreed).

All youth interviewed spoke very highly of the inREACH staff and many described the critical importance of that relationship to their participation and learning in the program. Many young people also described the various ways they had increased their connection to community activities such as sports and volunteering. Consistent with the lower survey results regarding friends, some talked about the challenges of disassociating from their friendship networks. Several mentioned learning from staff to differentiate "real" friendships.

The positive impacts of the inREACH program on young people's connections to the community, staff, and their relationships are reflected in the interviews with youth:

"…my life is more positive. Before I didn't like getting involved in the community and getting involved with things like youth meetings and

Table 12: Stakeholder Survey – Connections and Relationships

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ NA
Program was effective in helping reduce the barriers program youth face in their community	44.4% (n=8)	36.8% (n=25)	5.9% (n=4)	0	0	8.8% (n=6)
Program improved program youth's access to services	58.2% (n=39)	32.8% (n=22)	3.0% (n=2)	0	0	6.0% (n=4)
Program improved program youth's access to opportunities in their community	52.9% (n=36)	38.2% (n=26)	2.9% (n=2)	0	0	5.9% (n=4)
Improved youth's relationships with their peers	35.3% (n=24)	39.7% (n=27)	5.9% (n=4)	0	0	19.1% (n=13)
Improved youth's relationships with their family	26.5% (n=18)	48.5% (n=33)	7.4% (n=5)	0	0	17.6% (n=12)

Table 13: CTT Youth Survey – Connections and Relationships

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ NA
Helped me improve my relationships with friends	27.8% (n=5)	33.3% (n=6)	27.8% (n=5)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me improve my relationships with family	44.4% (n=8)	38.9% (n=7)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Allowed me to learn from inREACH staff (N=17)	64.7% (n=11)	29.4% (n=5)	5.9% (n=1)	0	0	0
Was one in which I felt well treated by staff	83.3% (n=15)	16.7% (n=3)	0	0	0	0
Gave me an experience in which adults listen to young people and care about what they say	72.2% (n=13)	22.2% (n=4)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	0
Provided me with people I could go to if I was upset or needed help with a problem	61.1% (n=11)	38.9% (n=7)	0	0	0	0
Gave me help with things that are important to me	38.9% (n=7)	50.0% (n=9)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me become more engaged or involved in my school	27.8% (n=5)	33.3% (n=6)	33.3% (n=6)	0	0	16.7% (n=3)
Made me feel more like I belong to this community	33.3% (n=6)	55.5% (n=10)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Made me want to get more involved in my community	44.4% (n=8)	33.3% (n=6)	16.7% (n=3)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0
Allowed me to make more friends	38.9% (n=7)	38.9% (n=7)	11.1% (n=2)	0	5.6% (n=1)	5.6% (n=1)
Was effective in helping reduce the barriers I face in my community	27.8% (n=5)	44.4% (n=8)	22.2% (n=4)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me become more engaged or involved in my faith	22.2% (n=4)	44.4% (n=8)	22.2% (n=4)	0	0	11.1% (n=2)
Helped me become more engaged or involved in sports, recreation and other pursuits	50.0% (n=9)	22.2% (n=4)	16.7% (n=3)	5.6% (n=1)	0	5.6% (n=1)

when I joined it was really good… And how to get involved in those things and how to get involved in the community by helping out and volunteer work."

"Now that I have been with inREACH I feel like it is okay to give other places a shot because

through inREACH I have learned about a whole lot of other different places."

"We would go boxing... and then they would talk to us... and see what was going on with our lives… and see how we could change it… because I have a very bad relationship with

my mom and then they helped me talk to my Mom and then tell her what is wrong… they pretty well helped me with my family. I have a better relationship with my Mom and at the time they were helping me in school, getting me into good programs and stuff. Trying to lead me away from the gangs."

Many key informants agreed that inREACH had significant impacts on assisting youth to improve their access and connections to community services and resources and in helping them to improve their relationships.

"My perception is it's not because the program wasn't out there or available – I think the young person and/or their family or whoever has been working with them may not have been aware at times of what's out there and what might fit their needs and I think that's where the expertise of having a group as diverse as the inREACH group because they do connect to various agencies with different mandates. I think they are able to pinpoint what's available quickly and be able to access it if it seems reasonable. For sure I think that's made a big difference." (PAC Member)

Connections and Relationships – CMT Youth Survey and Interviews

As shown below (Table 14), the results are highly positive. Over 95% of youth respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more comfortable at the community centre because of inREACH, and over 85% agreed that their involvement with inREACH made them feel more liked they belonged to the community. In addition, over 90% agreed or strongly agreed that their participation allowed them to make more friends.

Youth interviews confirm the positive impact inREACH experiences have had on young people's sense of belonging to their communities, relationships, and in providing people to go to for help. All youth interviewed spoke very highly of the YOWs and commented on how much they enjoyed their company and speaking with them. A number of youth also spoke of feeling more positive about their neighbourhoods and community centres since becoming engaged in programs:

"Staff are good people and you can joke around with them as well as have serious conversations with them. Sort of tease each

Table 14: CMT Youth Survey – Connections and Relationships

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Allowed me to learn from inREACH staff and volunteers	49.2% (n=32)	46.2% (n=30)	5.9% (n=4)	1.5% (n=1)	0
Provided me with people I could go to if I was upset or needed help with a problem (N=64)	43.8% (n=28)	37.5% (n=24)	3.0% (n=2)	3.1% (n=2)	0
Made me feel more comfortable at the community centre	63.1% (n=41)	32.3% (n=21)	2.9% (n=2)	0	0
Made me feel more like I belong to this community (N=64)	64.1% (n=41)	21.9% (n=14)	5.9% (n=4)	1.6% (n=1)	1.6% (n=1)
Made me want to get more involved in my community	50.8% (n=33)	36.9% (n=24)	7.4% (n=5)	1.5% (n=1)	0
Allowed me to make more friends	49.2% (n=32)	41.5% (n=27)	4.6% (n=3)	4.6% (n=3)	0

other too, like you're friends not just a staff member and a youth."

"We are all being nice to each other here so you go home and you take that to your friends and you will sort of rub off on them and they will rub off on other people and sort of like a chain reaction."

"[YOW] will tell me 'you know what, if something happens just go through it and talk about it to somebody.' …because of him I went to [agency]...and now me and my Mom do counselling together."

"Last summer we had a… barbeque…There were police officers and people from other communities…. I like the fact that there are little kids there and they come to me and ask do you know where the bathroom is or can I have another hot dog. I like how they know that I am a leader and how I'm in charge or involved. To know that I'm a person who works… 'cause people would know that I am a leader and it is good to feel that way."

These positive impacts were also reflected in stakeholder interviews. Some noted that community perceptions of young people are also enhanced in this exchange. For example:

"You can see them become a part of the community more than they were before… in return I think you see the adults respecting them more." (Project Staff)

"Usually you say hi to them and they scatter and that was a huge difference coming here... when the project was first here… they would come in the door and soon as you went to say hi they quickly ran down the stairs…and now they are in here and you get the high five…Now they are – 'come and look what I learned or look at this' and they make sure they say hi or they don't run away anymore...now they know they don't have to have that guard on. Now they hear you coming down the stairs and they open the door... it has had impact. They are

relating to adults now without thinking that they are being judged…." (Project Partner)

Youth Impacts: Opportunities

Opportunities broadly refer to young people's awareness of and willingness to participate in positive activities and supports that can help them build their strengths, skills and connections.

Opportunities – Stakeholder Survey

Only one question was asked of stakeholders with respect to opportunities: the inREACH team was able to increase opportunities for gang-involved and high-risk youth. Over 85% (86.6%) either agreed (40.3%) or strongly agreed (46.3%) with the statement. No one disagreed and about 13% were either "undecided" (4.5%) or answered "don't know/NA" (9.0%).

Opportunities – CTT Youth Survey and Interviews

The results, as shown on the next page (Table 15), are quite positive. Nearly 90% of the CTT youth respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their involvement with inREACH gave them the opportunity to learn new skills and develop their talents. A large majority of youth also indicated that they learned more about other programs and things they could do in their community, and about where they could go for help if they needed it.

Young people interviewed described a great variety of supports and positive opportunities that they experienced with and through the inREACH program. The experiences they described were often transformative in nature:

"I loved it [Kitchener] because it was a great place to sell drugs…Then I got connected with them [inREACH] and I swear I don't know what the hell happened. I started going to programs. Art programs and video programs… I performed live rapping at the church…I realized there are a lot of other fun things to do… I didn't know that was there until they showed me… there is a graffiti thing on Friday and I am going to go…

Table 15: CTT Youth Survey – Opportunities

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ NA
Gave me a chance to try new things	55.5% (n=10)	27.8% (n=5)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Gave me the opportunity to develop my skills	50.0% (n=9)	38.9% (n=7)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Gave me the chance to do things I was interested in	50.0% (n=9)	33.3% (n=6)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Gave me the opportunity to develop my talents	44.4% (n=8)	44.4% (n=8)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Helped me learn more about other programs and things I could do in my community	50.0% (n=9)	33.3% (n=6)	16.7% (n=3)	0	0	0
Helped me learn more about where to go for help if I need it	50.0% (n=9)	27.8% (n=5)	16.7% (n=3)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0
Gave me the chance to do things that make my community better	22.2% (n=4)	61.1% (n=11)	11.1% (n=2)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0

at City Hall and it is going to be cool… instead of spray painting on walls I am getting put in the gallery… So instead of illegal I get to make it legal. They helped me to find out a whole bunch of different things that I get to interact with without selling drugs… and it is all free and I'm just having a good time... it changed my mind about Kitchener 'cause I wanted to leave."

"The other programs from other places like the yoga that I did, that blew my mind. I never seen myself doing yoga and it was ridiculous and they make opportunities for kids like me that could never afford to make something of myself but they made something of me."

Opportunities – CMT Youth Surveys and Interviews

Responses of the CMT youth to survey items (Table 16) relating to the kinds of opportunities inREACH provided them were as positive, or more positive, than the responses of the CTT youth to these kinds of items. Over 90% of the youth agreed or strongly agreed that inREACH had given them a chance

to try new things in which they were interested. Over 85% agreed or strongly agreed that their involvement with the program had helped them learn about other programs and things they could do in their community, and where to go for help if needed.

Interviews with young people confirmed that they had access to, and greatly enjoyed participating in, a diverse range of opportunities including such things as organizing dinners and dances, outings in the community, volunteering, civic engagement, art, music, guest speakers, sharing meals, employment certificates, photo-voice projects and so on:

"[YOW] does this recording thing so people that want to sing a song or their own song… and you get to record it and replay it and they get to choose how they want it to sound."

"[The YOW said] 'we will try out some of your recipes that you've learned' and it's actually happened. I've actually got to try a… sweet Hungarian sauce… put over noodles and it was apparently really great to everyone. I find it interesting that I got a chance to let people

Table 16: CMT Youth – Opportunities

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Gave me a chance to try new things	55.4% (n=36)	38.5% (n=25)	4.6% (n=3)	1.5% (n=1)	0
Gave me the opportunity to develop my skills	50.8% (n=33)	36.9% (n=24)	9.2% (n=6)	1.5% (n=1)	1.5% (n=1)
Gave me the chance to do t hings I was interested in	55.4% (n=36)	36.9% (n=24)	6.2% (n=4)	1.5% (n=1)	0
Gave me the opportunity to develop my talents	35.4% (n=23)	36.9% (n=24)	23.1% (n=15)	3.1% (n=2)	1.5% (n=1)
Helped me learn more about other programs and things I could do in my community	46.1% (n=30)	43.1% (n=28)	10.8% (n=7)	0	0
Helped me learn more about where to go for help if I need it	49.2% (n=32)	36.9% (n=24)	10.8% (n=7)	1.5% (n=1)	1.5% (n=1)
Gave me the chance to do things that make my community better	50.8% (n=33)	35.4% (n=23)	13.8% (n=9)	0	0

actually try my food. At a youth centre, I find that really interesting."

"The YAC was…a group of youth and a couple of staff members just sort of monitored the planning committee to plan this event to show people in our community as well as friends… what inREACH really is about. As far as working in it, I thought it was actually really fun because not only did we get a lot accomplished we also had fun doing it."

Key informants enthusiastically agreed that young people had many opportunities and did participate in a wide range of programs and activities. Further, many key informants were impressed with what the young people were able to accomplish:

"The youth feel very empowered when they help plan something and then they implement it and they see the success. So, for example, the art exhibit in September was a huge success for our youth and all of them showed up for the grand opening. Twenty five or thirty youth standing beside their art and some of them sold their art to people… So for the youth to be selling their

pieces was a really big moment for them and that just gives them self-confidence and that is huge for these young people. They don't have any self-confidence. They've never been told that they are good at something so when they have strangers telling them that this is really great, this is so good that I want to pay money for it, that is a huge confidence booster for a youth. So I think empowerment and increased confidence is a really big outcome of the mobilization phase." (Project Staff)

"Absolutely massive!... I just learned this past week two of our inREACH youth have been accepted to go to the Me To We over to Kenya for a month … the fact that they're ready to be able to do that is absolutely massive. These youth, who don't get involved in anything… I've been to a lot of regional council meetings and that night when the inREACH youth walked in to that regional council to ask for… why they need to be supporting this program. I have never seen such a turnabout at a budget meeting ever before… Their heads snapped up and they paid attention… and so if that's not an impact that

the youth had the courage to come and do that when they normally don't engaged in anything." (Project Partner)

Youth Impacts – Enhanced Futures

Enhanced Futures– Stakeholder Survey

As shown below (Table 17), the majority of stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that program youth have dealt with the factors that got them into trouble (82.5%), are less likely to be in trouble in the future (76.1%), have increased positive involvements, particularly in the community (77.6%) and recreation (72.7%). A large majority of stakeholders (over 75%) also agreed or strongly agreed that participation in the inREACH project had reduced youths' risk of gang involvement, though respondents were less certain about whether the project had caused youth to leave their

Table 17: Stakeholder Survey – Enhanced Futures

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
Program helped program youth deal with the factors that got/get them into trouble	48.5% (n=33)	33.8% (n=23)	7.4% (n=5)	0	0	10.3% (n=7)
Program youth are less likely to get into trouble with the law in the future	34.3% (n=23)	41.8% (n=28)	9% (n=6)	1.5% (n=1)	0	13.4% (n=9)
As a result of program, I believe at-risk youth are less likely to join a gang	38.2% (n=26)	38.2% (n=26)	14.8% (n=10)	1.5% (n=1)	0	7.4% (n=5)
Program help improve youth's situation with the criminal justice system	35.9% (n=24)	38.3% (n=26)	9% (n=6)	0	0	16.4% (n=11)
Because of program, youth left their gangs	16.4% (n=11)	28.4% (n=19)	13.4% (n=9)	3% (n=2)	0	38.9% (n=26)
Youth are now MORE engaged in their gang or gang activities	0	3% (n=2)	9% (n=6)	29.9% (n=20)	32.8% (n=22)	25.4% (n=17)
Youth are now more involved in their school	6% (n=4)	53.7% (n=36)	10.5% (n=7)	3% (n=2)	0	26.9% (n=18)
Youth are now more involved in their community	32.8% (n=22)	44.8% (n=30)	6% (n=4)	0	0	16.4% (n=11)
Youth are now more involved with their family	6% (n=4)	52.2% (n=35)	15% (n=10)	0	0	26.9% (n=18)
Youth are now more involved with their friends	4.5% (n=3)	53.7% (n=36)	13.4% (n=9)	0	0	28.4% (n=19)
Youth are now more involved in sports, recreation and other pursuits	24.2% (n=16)	48.5% (n=32)	6% (n=4)	0	0	21.2% (n=14)
Youth are now involved with their faith/the faith community	0	14.9% (n=10)	23.9% (n=16)	4.5% (n=3)	1.5% (n=1)	55.2% (n=37)

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
The CTT was effective in reducing the risk factors associated with gang involvement	29.9% (n=20)	46.3% (n=31)	6% (n=4)	1.5% (n=1)	0	16.4% (n=11)
The CMT was effective in reducing the risk factors associated with gang involvement	32.8% (n=22)	43.3% (n=29)	7.5% (n=5)	0	0	16.4% (n=11)

gangs. Only two respondents agreed that the youth were now more involved in gang activities since participating in inREACH.

Enhanced Futures – CTT Youth Survey and Interviews

As shown below (Table 18), youth involved in the CTT felt that they had benefited substantially from the project. Nearly 95% agreed or strongly agreed that their involvement with inREACH had helped them deal with the factors that got them into trouble, and helped them move in the direction in life that they wanted to go in. Nearly 90% agreed or strongly agreed that the project had made them more hopeful about their future. Combining agree and strongly agree responses demonstrates that 80% to 95% of youth believed they

Table 18: CTT Youth Survey – Enhanced Future

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
Helped me deal with the factors that got/get me into trouble	44.4% (n=8)	50.0% (n=9)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	0
Helped make it less likely that I will get into trouble with the law in the future	61.1% (n=11)	22.2% (n=4)	5.6% (n=1)	5.6% (n=1)	0	5.6% (n=1)
Is helping me move in the direction in life that I want to go	38.9% (n=7)	55.5% (n=10)	0	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Improved my ability to handle whatever comes my way	55.5% (n=10)	33.3% (n=6)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Showed me how to take more responsibility for my actions	44.4% (n=8)	44.4% (n=8)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped me make better choices	61.1% (n=11)	22.2% (n=4)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	5.6% (n=1)
Helped improve my situation with the criminal justice system	27.8% (n=5)	50.0% (n=9)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	11.1% (n=2)
Helped me leave my gang	33.3% (n=6)	11.1% (n=2)	27.8% (n=5)	0	0	27.8% (n=5)
Made me more hopeful about my future	61.1% (n=11)	27.8% (n=5)	0	0	0	11.1% (n=2)

were better prepared for a more hopeful and positive future as a result of participation in inREACH.

More young people responded "don't know/NA" (27.8%) or "neither" (27.8%) to the statement "helped me leave my gang" than agreed with it (44.4 %). However, not all young people were involved in gangs in the first place (perhaps reflected in the NA response) and none disagreed with this statement. A clearer interpretation would have been provided by asking young people to first indicate whether they were involved in a gang, and if so, whether they had left their gang as a result of the program. In earlier results, a majority of young people agreed they had reduced the seriousness and frequency of their involvement (88.9%, 88.3%).

Despite the multiple challenges faced by these young people, they clearly believed they were better prepared and have a more positive and hopeful future as a result of their participation with inREACH.

The youth survey also asked the question "in what ways, if any, do you think you have benefited from being involved with inREACH?" The main themes that emerged from this question were: distancing from gang, reduced drug use, improved relationships, and improved life skills (e.g., coping skills, self-confidence, social skills). Some also mentioned help with school and employment.

> "It helped me understand the community I know [and] live in."

> "It helped me be more aware of what would happen if I was in a gang and taught me about drugs and alcohol."

> "… encouragement to make positive lifestyle choices. Program felt like a 'second home'." "I think I have benefited from inREACH in many ways. inREACH is a great program. It helped me make new friends, find jobs, get involved in my community."

> "It helped me see the value of myself."

> "Helped me gain tools I needed to better myself."

Throughout the interviews, young people illustrated the meaningful impacts they experienced with the program – and which will support their future success. For example:

> "You set your goals and then you get those goals and then you set new goals that is what they taught you. It is all about educating yourself to get to the next point."

> "They helped me get through a lot of my challenges because I would be like "this is too big to handle man and screw this" and they would be there to help. Here's a hand and here's a hand and they were full of helping hands."

> "I had an awful lookout on myself and once I started with inREACH they don't even mention the things that you do wrong. All they do is throw everything on the table that you do right so right now they tell me you are going to school and you are working and doing night school and you are doing well for yourself. You did all this for yourself. You put yourself here, we didn't do it, you did. That just makes me feel so good about myself and makes me feel proud of myself and like I have a sense of being on this earth."

Project staff also spoke about the journey they have been on with these young people and about what it took to support young people in building a more positive future for themselves:

> "… you bring them in and they start doing employment stuff and then… say you know you can get a job but your substance use really, they don't want to work on that, they're not giving up the drugs. Then you have the conversation of what would it mean to reduce your use and learn to understand the substance that you are using and learn to know what it means to not have it interfere with the possibility so that you can do what you need to do and all of sudden they're in the saddle dealing with the substance abuse and dealing with harm reduction and getting it to a place where they're employed and all of a sudden they're back at school… We've had the privilege of walking with kids and seeing

them move along in extraordinary ways but what I've noticed with it is – it takes time.

The kids that have walked with us that have done extraordinarily well – we haven't worked with them not under a year. It's been a year or two years of them moving along and doing piece by piece by piece and them knowing that we're not going away." (Project Staff)

Enhanced Future– CMT Youth Survey and Interviews

The survey of CMT youth (Table 19) indicated that these youth also felt more positively about their future as a result of their experience with inREACH. Over 95% agreed or strongly agreed that their involvement with inREACH had helped them move in the direction in life that they wanted to go. A large majority of youth also felt that inREACH had helped them make better choices and handle things that came their way.

Youth were asked an open-ended question about how inREACH has benefited them. Fifty-seven of 65 youth provided a response. The main themes were: improved life skills; learning new things; meeting new people and making new friends; access to caring/supportive adults or people they can go to for support/advice; staying out of trouble; and getting more involved in the community. A few people mentioned that it helped with their creativity/talents

and that they had gained volunteer hours. A sample of comments is provided next:

"I have been benefited by meeting new friends, staying away from boredom, I learned new things that you don't learn in school."

"When I was going through some tough times they helped me by giving me someone to talk to and by giving me advice on how I can improve."

"Gave me a place to go besides being at home and being lonely and people to listen how I feel and give me advice."

"I think I have been benefited by being involved with inREACH, is that it made me be more active and be involved in the community and I'm very grateful for that."

"Help me stay out of trouble."

"It got me out of doing drugs and helping me to hang out with girls. I got to meet new people and make friends."

Young people echoed the wide range of benefits they experienced in the youth interviews and focus groups:

"It has helped me see who I want to be."

Table 19: CMT Youth – Enhanced Future

My involvement with inREACH:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Is helping me move in the direction in life that I want to go	47.7% (n=31)	47.7% (n=31)	4.6% (n=3)	0	0
Improved my ability to handle whatever comes my way	36.9% (n=24)	52.3% (n=34)	9.2% (n=6)	1.5% (n=1)	0
Showed me how to take responsibility for my actions	52.3% (n=34)	35.4% (n=23)	12.3% (n=8)	0	0
Helped me make better choices	58.5% (n=38)	33.8% (n=22)	6.2% (n=4)	1.5% (n=1)	0
Made me more hopeful about my future (N=65)	50.0% (n=32)	31.3% (n=20)	15.6% (n=10)	1.6% (n=1)	1.6% (n=1)

"I do think that it has helped people become better in themselves as well as acting better towards people. Being nicer and how they treat them."

"It makes me feel accomplished and that I have actually done something."

"I have been a better person by getting involved in activities … and in the art studio and the drop-in."

All key informants believed that inREACH helped to facilitate very meaningful change and positive development for young people in the neighbourhood programs, as documented throughout this report. A few additional examples of how these changes can enhance young people's futures appear below:

"Here they get all the good stuff like the conversations and the direction. Hey [CTT staff] … is coming tomorrow [to the neighbourhood drop-in program], did you want to fix up your resume or… get your WHMIS, and it's like 'hell yeah, I would love that.' So that is another day they are off the streets and they are getting their resume done and the next thing you know two weeks later they have a full-time [job] and their life is turned around. … So this place has really worked." (Parent)

"I think it has opened doors for them and has broadened their horizons and given them access to supports and services that they needed and didn't have access and didn't know about. Didn't know how they would go about accessing them and maybe didn't even have a strong desire at that point to access them because they were caught up in other behaviours, but when they were offered these opportunities they took advantage of them and so it's been a great deal of personal growth and development on their part. A lot of them have made quite significant changes in their lives and behaviours and setting new life goals for themselves. I think a really key piece is that it has given them hope that maybe they didn't have before." (Project Partner)

Improved Opinion – CTT Youth Survey and Interviews

There was one additional set of questions in the

CTT youth survey which pertained to the opinions young people held about adults and community opportunities. These results are presented on the next page (Table 20).

As shown, the inREACH program had positive impacts on the opinions young people held about others in their community. Nearly 90% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their participation in inREACH had improved their opinion of the opportunities available to them in their communities. The majority of young people also indicated that their opinions of adults, other youth, and businesses and employers in the community had also improved. About 40% of respondents indicated that their participation in inREACH had improved their opinion of law enforcement officers in the community.

CTT youth interviews included a similar question about their perceptions of programs and services in the community (discussed previously) and law enforcement officers. Mixed reviews regarding law enforcement officers were reflected in the interviews, with some reporting a change in opinion and others not:

"No I still don't like the police. It's just like talking about a race, you can't say one race is this way you know what I mean. It is the same with police you just can't say all police are bad but from my experience most of the police that I have dealt with; it is like they have a point to prove or something."

"Yeah, actually. 'Cause before I used to hate cops and they are crazy but now they had us meet some police and stuff 'cause we were doing this one project, a video and we met a couple of police officers and stuff. Also we went to a Crime Prevention Meeting and we met a couple of officers and talked to them and that kind of stuff. I guess I seen it from their perspective and so yeah."

Case Audit – Outcomes for Youth

The case file review, or audit, also demonstrated many of the impacts that were described above.

Table 20: CTT Youth – Improved Opinion

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
The programs and services available to me in my community	16.7% (n=3)	72.2% (n=13)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
The opportunities available to me in my community	44.4% (n=8)	44.4% (n=8)	11.1% (n=2)	0	0	0
Adults in my community	27.8% (n=5)	33.3% (n=6)	33.3% (n=6)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0
Law enforcement officers who work in my community	5.6% (n=1)	33.3% (n=6)	33.3% (n=6)	16.7% (n=3)	11.1% (n=2)	0
Other youth from my community	16.7% (n=3)	66.7% (n=12)	11.1% (n=2)	5.6% (n=1)	0	0
Safety in my community	16.7% (n=3)	50.0% (n=9)	33.3% (n=6)	0	0	0
Business and other employers in my community	22.2% (n=4)	55.5% (n=10)	11.1% (n=2)	5.6% (n=1)	0	5.6% (n=1)

Files indicated the skills that were developed, the many connections that were made, as well as the opportunities that were provided. For example, many or most of the youth participated in employment training (e.g., resume building, interview skills) and some completed certifications and training (e.g., WHMIS, Safe Food Handling and Smart Serve). As well, some of the youth also started volunteering or found part-time or full-time jobs. Many youth were connected with different recreational opportunities (e.g. boxing, go-carts, ziplining) and some were involved in the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). Youth were provided with support in seeking or securing housing, reconnecting with the schools, as well as counselling for substance abuse or other issues.

On Organizations

Collaboration and Coordination Among Organizations

1) Enhanced Collaboration

Interviews with youth, staff, partners and other program stakeholders indicate that inREACH has had an impact on the way community agencies connect, coordinate and collaborate with one another. The connections that formed among agencies through their partnership in inREACH enhanced the way they collaborated, not just with regard to inREACH, but in other domains, as well:

"Well from my understanding there has been a lot closer working together between inREACH staff, particularly from the CTT and school personnel and the counselling agencies and other stakeholders at the CMT table. I think they have all been working much closer together to meet the needs of this particular population and the police would be involved in that as well. So to my knowledge the project has brought all of those stakeholders together in a way that hadn't happened before around this particular population." (Project Partner)

"I think it has been a good way for connections to be made. So it's made me more aware of some of the things that family and children's services and different pieces of the puzzle.

Being at the PAC I'm not sure how everyone gets the information but I think it is an awareness thing. I think it has been good… There are different people there and it is amazing how the connections go ... good connections and I think one of the good connections is WRPS [Waterloo Region Police Services] and me we connect well and that's good. I work a lot with our school resource officers and which connects me with the youth sergeant better 'cause he is inspector for Waterloo so he can just say something off-handed to somebody and I get a phone call real quick." (PAC Member)

"You know if I go to a meeting and I see those other people I have a relationship with them. If we are having a concern about a youth, it doesn't have to take place in that meeting. It can now take place outside or if we want to explore something specific to and I assume any of the mobilization areas, if you have a concern, there is now someone on the board that I can call to say 'you know when we are at one of the sites and we are dealing with this, can you tell me why this aspect is happening in your organization? Can you advocate for me for this? So we have connections that we can take advantage of in an appropriate way to advocate on behalf of our sites and our youth. The same goes for them for that because one agency doesn't have the knowledge, the capacity or the power to make a change." (Project Partner)

"I think it drew agencies together in a way that they haven't worked before just because you had a multi-disciplinary team and I don't know of any other situations in the past ten years where they have had that. I think generally agencies working together look like representatives on a committee. To have a team made up of people from so many different agencies is different and unique so it forced them to work differently with one another and I think when the program really hit its stride people could see that there was a great deal of benefit to working this way." (Project Staff)

"I think there was none [i.e., no collaboration] before, it simply didn't exist. These young people got passed around like a hot potato that nobody really had all of the skills to deal with. Now we have more of a hub model integrated approach where agencies have a greater understanding of each other's skills. So rather than say 'I have done all I can, over to you.' 'It's well I can do this part can you assist me with that part?' So I think it has definitely improved, in fact, in the whole discussions in the community about hub model development and integrated service delivery." (Project Partner)

2) Greater Awareness of Resources

Among other things, the enhanced connections that inREACH has produced has resulted in greater awareness among community organizations of the services that other agencies provide, and other resources available in the community. This has produced more and better referrals when young people are in need of help, and more effective help for them:

"It gives youth and agencies a place to refer people who otherwise wouldn't have that opportunity. By doing that whether it be one person or a hundred people that we're able to help and move into a different direction then as far as I'm concerned the project has been successful." (PAC Member)

"I think the beauty of it is that it allows organizations to know that there's an avenue to go to refer people and there is a collective resource there that can deal with it. In the absence of inREACH some of these individual organizations will provide some of these services but I don't know that the services will be as detailed and I don't think that it will be as efficient and thereby I don't know if it would be as effective. I can tell you going back to what our role is, I view our role as the police as being a source of referrals; if it weren't in place and we didn't have that referral option, do we have the time and the resources to work with these kids to

get them the help that they need. In most cases I don't think we have the time or the resources to do that effectively." (PAC member)

3) Improved Access and More Appropriate Services

The enhanced collaboration has also resulted in access to needed and appropriate services that each of the partner organizations could not have provided on their own:

"I think we utilized the strength of each of the different agencies and put together a package for youth that most other service providers can't. I think that's what made the project unique. I know from where I sat that, the number of the agencies that were collaborating together and contributing to the project was certainly unique." (Project Partner)

"I think having the ability to access services from other organizations is going to enhance anything you do. So for the outreach workers in the community knowing that they've got access to people who can come and talk about employment and people who can talk about addiction counselling and those sorts of things and the issues that the kids are having in their schools or homes. You can get a hold of the school board reps and you can get a hold of the police and that's just a benefit to everybody I think. Within the communities the outreach workers might have some tools in the tool box and people that they could call but because it's established and it's at a high level it's much easier to access those things and get them in a timely manner. I think that's the whole key to success in this is knowing that they exist and knowing who you call and knowing that you can get them when you need them and there are no hurdles and there's not barriers and that is how you would achieve success." (Project Partner)

The young people served by the project experienced this enhanced collaboration in the seamless way that they receive the assistance that they need:

"I have different places helping me out, not just inREACH but they are all connected and they are all working as a team. Everybody that was helping me just did a really great job." (CTT Youth)

Changes Within Organizations

One of the key goals of inREACH was to produce systemic change – changes in the way systems and organizations in the community approached the problem of gangs and at-risk youth. There were varying opinions among those interviewed about the extent to which community organizations had changed as a result of inREACH's activities.

1) Little Change Seen by Some

Some of those interviewed did not see much change in agencies. A number of treatment staff, in particular, were pessimistic about the possibility of organizational change in the way young people are treated, partly due to the pressures agencies operate under to maintain their funding:

"I don't think the experience of inREACH has been integrated at all into [staff person's home agency] from what I can observe. People are still funded to run programs in a particular way. They are for butts in seats and funded for product in and product out and the difference that has been made. That's still the way programs are designed." (Project Staff)

"There are some programs that are more community-based and my supervisor oversees those ones and they are already doing work that is similar to this but then you've got still a lot of people working in offices with clients who walk through the door and working with what they've got in front of them at that moment as opposed to looking at the big picture of what's happening to that kid and how can we be piecing things together. I don't mean that as a criticism of individual staff. I just think it's the way…you take people and you put them through a division of labour kind of thing and everybody adds their little bit as opposed to looking holistically at what's going on." (Project Staff)

"The kids and the family system have got to respond to it [standard form of treatment] or [be labeled] non-cooperative or oppositional. If you look at some of these kids, there's school, probation, FCS you know there are so many things involved in their life and everybody having an expectation and none of it being managed in such a way but all in isolated little pieces." (Project Staff)

"In fairness to those institutions the government comes with this… presentation of here's the dosage and here's the program, product out. Human beings don't function like this and dealing with inter-generational trauma addiction doesn't work like this but doesn't mean that these systems can't be healed and worked with. We know that they can be, but if there is this continued pressure to produce it this [way], they look at our program and look at the stats and think that somehow this wasn't successful. Oh My God! They couldn't be more wrong if they tried. We have clear learnings and successes and collaboration and best uses systems for these kids and none of this is going to come through. We can't take those learnings and transfer it back to our agencies and our systems because nobody is going to fund that. Nobody is going to fund that! Well, then keep building your prisons because if you don't have kids that belong to the community then become agitated and violent and protective and non-trusting and violating. That's what happens at the end of the day and these kids are a product of our community living and at the end of the day it is the communities' responsibility as a whole to hold them. So this is not about what's wrong with the kids, this is about what's wrong with us and not isolating parents either. If there isn't a place for these kids, that's our problem. These kids are not so difficult. They've got good reason to not trust us. We target the kids. The kid needs to change. Who has the best capacity for change? – the adults! Do we ask any of it from them? No! Any accountability? No! Kid, out you go!"* (Project Staff)

Some of the representatives of partner organizations also acknowledged that funding and regulatory requirements prevent them from taking a more flexible approach in working with at-risk youth:

"Staff is not allowed to drive youth or any community members. It's part of the insurance base that we are insured through the city so we have to follow that mandate until we have funds to have our own insurance. But even then, it's fairly expensive so I don't know that we'll get there that you can go ahead and drive." (Project Partner)

2) Greater Organizational Awareness

Others felt that the presence of inREACH had produced changes within the region's agencies and organizations. One kind of change had to do with organizational awareness. One partner, for example, talked about how agency understanding about gangs had increased through their contact with the police, and how police perceptions about ways of dealing with youth had changed, as well, through their involvement with the project:

"They [the police] have been excellent in terms of teaching and saying these are the signs to look for and this is what it's all about. This is the population in our community and this is what we see. So having that information, knowledge and that training from the police and having the police understand and soften a little bit more regarding the whole clinical aspects of it. Not seeing it in just one lens, but seeing it in a broader view, I think that has been a wonderful collaboration as well. It's been necessary and it has been important and I know that the police work well in organizations that have sexual assault, domestic violence and those kinds of things that there is that kind of understanding but that is a certain selection of the crown or the police officers or whatever. Now I think when we look at youth in the context of gang involvement there seems to be a little bit more understanding and a sense of let's try to help these youth rather than using the enforcement aspect one hundred percent." (Project Partner)

3) Changed Approach in Working with Young People

Interview respondents also talked about how a number of agencies had changed their approach in working with young people, because they recognized that a more flexible and youth-centred approach, in which young people were engaged in deciding what they needed and wanted, would be more effective:

"I think it has taught the groups that ... it is not nine to five, we have to be flexible to ... the reality of their lives. That is what the partners are understanding; we have to be more responsive to the people who use our services and adapt to that 'cause you can't put a square peg into a round hole. Doesn't matter that you have counselling, if no one is going to come. Why aren't they coming? Well that's not how you approach it. You need to be with them first and you have to gain trust. Just because it is there and you know they need it and they know maybe I do, they're not ready." (Project Partner)

"I feel that the region as a whole has mobilized around supporting young people in a different way than we usually do. So as a whole I think that the region is starting to get on the train with that one and then in individual communities I think they really embraced inREACH and the communities we're in and really embraced the way that we operate and the way that we work with young people. It was a really big paradigm shift at first when our YOWs were hired and the agencies were asking what are their hours going to be and what programs are they going to be running? We said we don't know and they are going to find that out when they talk to the community and it was a huge shock to them. They had just never done something like that before but they've embraced it and they've really rallied around their youth." (Project Staff)

"Even the police, yeah some of the cops were just very surprised at the way we did things and they were letting them do community service hours instead of serve time and even probation

officers are saying yes if this kid comes in and does his hours there instead of going to the traditional place to do your hours cause the kid wasn't going anyway right but I went alongside this kid and he cleaned up the art studio instead of going to clean a church or something. Thinking different and teaching them to think differently." (Project Staff)

"One example is going into the seniors centre 'cause it was the only space that we could get downtown and at first for an art studio they said they can't let anyone in under the age of fifty. But then after a couple of meetings they were like okay let's try it. Encouraging them to think different! Meeting with a principal and he says he doesn't know what to do with this kid who is struggling with addictions and he said he would give him a school credit if I meet with him at the studio and he completes an art project whereas he don't done that before." (Project Staff)

"I think it has shown the agencies and the centres that kids do want to be involved. I think it is really easy to be like they are teenagers and they don't want to come to a program at the community centre or they don't want to this or that but I think it is shown that they do and they will be involved as long as you invite them and you make it belong to them." (Project Staff)

"Yeah showing the community centres a bigger picture. The reason a kid not coming to drop-in is because most of the other kids can afford to buy the snacks that are there and meanwhile this kids got an empty fridge at home and they never gave any of these kids food at drop-ins. Just looking at it a different way and a different approach right." (Project Staff)

"Part of the objective of inREACH was always to change the landscape of system provision, such as in education, or even how you are handled by security guards at the bus station. So what we have done is we've looked for those opportunities to kind of educate. Kind of say 'this is the approach that you are taking with this particular population you are going

to alienate them and it is going to potentially backfire and you are going to lose them and you know we strongly suggest you take this approach.' After a while the system started hearing us and so I would hope that was one of the successes of inREACH that systems that previously just wanted to kick them to the curbside and now are seeing an opportunity of how to work with them." (Project Partner)

"I think lots of systems have started to make that shift towards building relationships with youths instead of just kicking them out if they act against their policies or whatever. I think having inREACH as a resource really is a beneficial thing for people in the school system because instead of just expelling the kid they call inREACH and say can you help support this young person while inREACH is not the magic cure we do have some knowledge as to how to support young people who are marginalized and excluded." (Project Partner)

4) Use of Social Media

One way in which agencies began to connect more effectively with young people is through the use of social media. inREACH has made extensive use of social media, and this was an idea taken up by some of the partner organizations:

"We've got Facebook up with that piece now and it's new for us 'cause social media is not an area that we have expanded in 'cause that's not what our work is but we have to get going that way cause that's where the young people are so we had to purchase a phone. We've never had a staff phone purchase before so this is the first thing that we had to do." (Project Partner)

"I think organizations are slowly starting to get that and inREACH uses a lot of social media to connect with youth so we use Facebook and we use texting a lot and lots of organizations are really afraid of that and they don't allow that. But I know the city of Kitchener is now starting to look at implementing the use of Facebook and Twitter and all that stuff to

just connect directly with youth. I like to say inREACH had a small role in that 'cause they see that it is working for us. Our staff person who used to be a YOW here is now in charge of the youth programs over there and she is the one trying to implement that so it's kind of good." (Project Partner)

5) Enhanced Ability to Attract Young People to Programs and Services

The changes in approach that organizations made as a consequence of their involvement with inREACH resulted in their being able to attract more young people to their services and activities, and being more effective in meeting their needs. This happened particularly in the community centres in which the Youth Outreach Workers operated:

"I think there has been a change in the sense that we have community sites, who by and large they didn't see these young people. They weren't accessing the community centres and they weren't accessing the supports provided at the community centres. Because of inREACH and the youth workers' ability to engage the youth they weren't seeing, the youth who are difficult, challenging and scary and the youth who are involved at the local youth gangs et cetera and bring them into the centre. Then the youth workers have been able to get them involved in the life of the fabric of the community centre. These community centres are seeing that they are not so scary, in fact, they're pretty good people. And, in fact, I think here's what we can continue to do to help. So our community centres are now tremendous advocates and tremendous supporters of the project and supporters of the youth. Two years ago they might have been scared of these same youth." (Project Staff)

6) Changes in Policies and Procedures

Organizations partnering in the project also sometimes made changes in policy, as well as changes in practice, as a result of their participation:

"We are supposed to be working with kids who struggle with making poor choices. This is just one example where it was probably one of the hardest things I had to deal with. Brought on a student placement and he had a criminal past so they said no he can't volunteer in your program. Right there that kind of policy shows why these kids can't get jobs and why nobody can work with these kids. They ended up changing that and letting him come on and that guy now actually speaks to these kids and from a real life example right, that there is hope. If you can create hope or a sense of hope in these kids I think that is a big thing and it is so hard to in these environments where you have to follow these rules." (Project Staff)

"Even agencies like the school board who don't have someone sitting on the CTT they got involved at the PAC level and were very much a part of making referrals to us and considering recommendations made by our team when they would meet with students at school and meet with their teachers and CYWs and things like that. You know they developed a … protocol with the school board so that they knew when to utilize our service and we had clearly defined ways of working with one another. That honestly wouldn't have existed if inREACH wasn't around and so they developed new ways of working with students." (Project Staff)

"I think that it has had an impact and so just let me give you a couple of examples. We had a relationship with the bus terminal and the transit system here. When youth got into trouble they wouldn't ban youth from the bus terminal. They would also hand out our business cards so that youth knew that here is a project that you can access. We had folks from the Crown's office refer youth to the program, and although not say 'if you do this program, we'll reduce your charges or not make any charges be on your record. If you do this program and you do this program successfully we'll take a look when we're considering sentencing or whether or not we're going to go forward with the charges or

drop them'. We've had schools look at providing inREACH as an opportunity before they suspend them or kick them out the door or anything along those lines. So we've had community partners who because of inREACH they've started to look at working with the population differently and making their own internal processes, making them so it's more accessible for resources for the young people." (Project Staff)

"[Policy change is] a slow process definitely and they are all open to the conversations so whenever we bring up or challenge some of their policies they are very open to it and some of them do change them. For example some of our youth wanted to play poker, no gambling or anything but that's just what they do. [Community Centre] policy was that they didn't allow it but then after some time and some conversation back and forth [the Centre Director] allowed it because she just saw the benefit of it and so it's just all about the conversation and just the relationship with the organization with inREACH is equally as important as the relationship with the YOW and the young people. I would say that we have very strong relationships with our neighbourhood partners so I think that's a really big benefit to helping them to shift policies and just the environment that they work in." (Project Partner)

On Staff

Interviews with staff and managers of the project indicated that their experience working with inREACH had a profound impact on them:

"I wouldn't leave the team. If I was given another option, I wouldn't leave."

"I can't imagine working any other way and I think it's probably permanently damaged me to go back into any other job."

"These two years going into my third year [working with inREACH] have been the best years of my professional life."

Improved Skills

Staff talked about facing significant challenges in learning how to work with the youth and families, but found that addressing these challenges had improved their clinical skills substantially:

> *"I think my clinical skills have been pushed to the limit … the most that I have learned and I feel my competency has really been strengthened through the whole experience."*

Their experience with inREACH also affected their understanding and empathy for the youth and families they worked with:

> *"I just feel the kids and their families have been just such a gift and a privilege to work with. I have such respect for them and a lot of my own myths have been torn down and shattered and thrown away."*

"It has been a tremendous gift and it has been the most frustrating and painful journey at times just in terms of realizing how difficult it is out there for those families and those kids."

Increased Ability to Work Collaboratively

Staff members also acquired an increased appreciation for and skill in working collaboratively with other staff, each of whom had unique and valuable skills to offer:

> *"The knowledge, experience and skill set on this team and I haven't seen anywhere else with another agency. Not in terms of the collaboration and process and understanding and the openness and willingness to share your ideas and to consult with each other to come up with the right idea. My idea is not always going to be right and their idea is not always going to be right but if you work together to come up with a better solution and you can't beat that and I'm not sure you can find that sort of level of working relationship elsewhere."*

Staff thought that the skills that they acquired by working with inREACH would be taken with them to any other organizations or settings they worked with after leaving inREACH, and that, through them, those other organizations would begin to change:

> *"I really valued the time I had there and knew that in the years to come I'd be talking about when I used to work at inREACH."*

> *"I think I'm an asset and so it's going to be very difficult to transition out of this but I know that the skill sets and learnings will go with me."*

> *"I know I'll take what I've learned from working in that program and I know certain things like the value of having multi-disciplinary teams and I know value of collaborating with a large network of agencies as opposed to trying to do everything yourself. So I take that learning with me wherever I go."*

Personal Satisfaction

Finally, staff experienced a great deal of personal satisfaction from the work they were able to do with inREACH:

> *"It's been really great and we are doing the work that we are supposed to be doing. When I go and talk to the youth they just tell me that inREACH has made a significant difference in their lives. When the youth say that then I just know that we're doing the right thing."*

On Communities

The results of the stakeholder survey on next page (Table 21) indicates that stakeholders believed that the inREACH project had an impact on the community as a whole. Nearly 85% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that, as a result of inREACH's presence, Waterloo region was better able to deal with the problem of youth gangs. Nearly two-thirds of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that inREACH had increased the community's understanding of the youth gang problem, and that having inREACH had made the region a safer place to be. Somewhat fewer respondents (about 50%) agreed or strongly agreed that inREACH improved the quality of social control with regard to gangs, or that the gang problem had improved.

Changed Perception of Youth

Data from the interviews supported the survey results indicating that the project had had an impact on the community. One of these impacts had to do with the community's perception of young people, particularly "troubled" or "marginalized" young people. One of the major community events undertaken by inREACH was a community celebration at a local community hall (Victoria Park Pavilion). The event was planned and hosted by youth from both the CTT and CMT parts of inREACH, and featured art-work and music that had been produced by youth. Family members, friends, teachers and community members were invited to the event, and were impressed by the young people's art and music, and how articulate they were in making presentations:

"I remember when we first started that February 12th YAC [Youth Advisory Committee] event I thought this is going to be a small thing, some friends coming out and just something for the potential funders to come and see but not being in the chairs that we are in and seeing what we see and hearing some of the comments and seeing who was there. It wasn't a small thing, it was a big massive thing. Not just for the youth, not just for friends and family but for the community. I think it was a big punch in the shoulder saying 'this is big, these kids can do it' and they have to have the chance to do it. Some of the comments and feedback that we've heard as a team directly from different community people. They were a little stunned, they were a little shocked. They didn't realize…they were like wow you guys did all that? We didn't the

Table 21: Stakeholder Survey Results – Impacts on the Community

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/NA
The community awareness component of the program was successful in increasing the community's understanding of the youth gang problem	28.8% (n=19)	36.4% (n=24)	15.2% (n=10)	4.6% (n=3)	0	15.2% (n=10)
inREACH improved the quality of social control and suppression in the community in regard to gang-involved and high-risk youth	19.4% (n=13)	32.8% (n=22)	20.9% (n=14)	4.5% (n=3)	0	22.4% (n=15)
As a result of inREACH the Waterloo Region is a safer place	22.4% (n=15)	41.8% (n=28)	20.9% (n=14)	3.0% (n=2)	0	11.9% (n=8)
As a result of inREACH the gang problem has improved	11.9% (n=8)	35.8% (n=24)	22.4% (n=15)	4.5% (n=3)	0	25.4% (n=17)
Overall, as a result of inREACH the Region of Waterloo is better prepared and able to deal with the problem of youth involvement in gangs	37.3% (n=25)	46.3% (n=31)	11.9% (n=8)	1.5% (n=1)	0	3.0% (n=2)

kids did! We did some of the logistical stuff but the ideas and the speaking, the production and the work and the success was all them." (Project Staff)

"Yeah that's a fragment of what they've done and that's a fragment of who we work with. They were talking about kids who come from stereotypical troubled neighbourhoods and they did it. They were the ones who got the certifications and they're the ones who are now working and the community saw that." (Project Staff)

The event at Victoria Park Pavilion, and other events that show-cased young people in a positive way, contributed to a more positive perception of young people among community members:

"Some of the youth have been attending their AGMs at the centres and they have been featured as part of the main guests at those particular activities. The [community centre] art exhibit and the Cambridge community wrapped their arms around the youth and so many people came out and they were featured in the paper and just really good positive stories about the youth. That was part of our goal to shift the attitudes and the way that youth were reported about in the newspaper and the media. Usually what we hear about youth is oh this youth got arrested and this youth did this and we really wanted to shift the way people reported so we have been featured in the paper quite a few times on talk local and just talk about the positive stories that youth who aren't usually seen in a positive light and showing them the community that yes youth who have drug use and have justice involvement they have strengths too and look at this they put on a week-long art exhibit." (Project Staff)

"I think that the community is just looking at young people in a more favourable light. We had lots of positive comments after the inREACH event and after the art exhibit. Wow these youth are amazing and inspirational!" (Project Staff)

The visibility of inREACH in the community also served to show community members that youth – even so-called "troubled" youth – could be engaged in a positive way in the community:

"Even one of the city councillors [name of councillor] was talking to me at that [Victoria Park Pavilion] event saying 'wow this is really great! We've been trying to engage youth in downtown Kitchener for years and we've really struggled.' [CMT staff] have both been to the downtown community centre since then to talk about youth engagement and I think it's not rocket science, for some reason some people really don't get it. So that's provided an example that this can be done and youth can be engaged even youth who are really struggling." (Project Staff)

Greater Acceptance of Youth

Community residents also became less fearful of young people who often looked "different" and spoke more roughly. As these young people came more frequently to the neighbourhood centres and to neighbourhood events, residents began to see them in a more normalized, less fearful way:

"The communities have really provided a supportive environment for us to do our thing and for the youth to come into their centres. People are afraid of youth, marginalized youth I should say – not youth in general – but marginalized youth may look a little different and they may talk a little different and people are afraid of them. Adults are particularly afraid of them so when they come into the centres it's normalized now. We have thirty youth coming into [community centre] every Wednesday night is normal now so it's just getting the neighbourhood folks used to it and they are. I think the community is starting to understand that marginalized youth are not scary and they are not bad people and that you just need to get to know them." (Project Staff)

"I understand that in particularly, one of neighbourhoods there was a situation where

just about everybody was accessing the neighbourhood centre except for youth. There was a community level fear of young people being there so they took a whole load of policy and procedural efforts to keep them out. Now that has become under the guidance of the outreach staff in that neighbourhood and is a very mobilized community that kind of see the young people as having capacity and as an asset, rather than a risk and something to be feared. I can only assume that kind of is true in some of the other neighbourhoods as well." (Project Partner)

Greater Safety

Changes were particularly evident in the designated communities in which the Youth Outreach Workers operated as part of the community mobilization component of the project. Parents who participated in the parent focus group saw several changes taking place in their neighbourhoods as a result of inREACH's presence. These included a reduction in the presence of drugs, and a greater feeling of safety among neighbourhood residents:

"I've seen a big change in the neighbourhood in the past year. There were a lot of the kids that were doing the drugs and behaving … and even if they came [to an inREACH program] once [staff member] was able to give them information and he hooked them up with [another inREACH staff member] for employment and shelter and all different kind of things." (Parent)

"I have been in this area for fourteen years and this is the first time that something like this has come up. In fourteen years! If I would have had this before maybe my whole life and my kid's life would have changed. Because it is making such a difference now and I see it and I believe it and I really believe that it would have made a big difference years ago if we would have had this in our community." (Parent)

"Parent 1: [name of community] is one of the worst areas and there was other one in

Kitchener. I did read that in the paper. I think it has changed quite a bit since that. Interviewer: So the whole reputation of the community you mean?

Parent 2: I think it's starting to turn around.

Parent 1: Well [name of community] has always had a bad rep for drugs.

Parent 3: Because the low income housing too and everybody is almost on top of each other when they built these places. When you have a lot of kids together there is going to be trouble sometimes somewhere but I think it has turned around quite a bit 'cause people aren't afraid anymore to go out and walk down the street. For a while it was I'm not walking down there someone might jump me or I can't walk through the woods."

Partner organizations that worked in these neighbourhoods also saw a difference in terms of reductions in negative behaviours such as vandalism, and an increase in the participation of young people in community events:

"There has been less of that [vandalism] as a result of youth having constructive things to do with inREACH and there have been some positive examples of some of the youth who had been involved in the vandalism and intimidating and threatening people. One example would be, I think it was last spring, some of those youth approached the coordinator at the community centre and offered to provide a barbecue for the community. They had a barbecue for the neighbourhood and that was totally on their initiative and that was something that was unheard of – we had never experienced that before. I don't know that all of the vandalism issues have disappeared and I mean spring is coming so with the warm weather there will be more people outside so there may still be some of that but it's not to the extent that it had been. Yeah there has been a positive impact there!" (Project Partner)

More Resources

Another positive outcome for communities included the fact that inREACH helped bring more resources, improvements and activities to the neighbourhoods. For example, the basketball area at one of the community centres was improved and refurbished as a result of inREACH's advocacy.

> *"We had been having issues in the [designated] neighbourhood for years with youth vandalism and groups of youth hanging out in the parking lot intimidating residents. They didn't have anything constructive to do and so this project has provided an alternative for them and really built the capacity of that neighbourhood to more effectively deal with those kinds of issues and challenges."* (Project Partner)

Awareness that Communities Need to Address Gang Issue

A final outcome for communities that the inREACH project produced was an awareness that gangs and the marginalization of some young people can pose a risk to communities, and that communities need to be aware of this risk and do something about it:

> *"I think it's brought sort of gang involvement and gang risk out of the back page and put it literally on the front page."* (Project Staff)

> *"I think the biggest things is some people didn't even realize there was gang activity. I think on one level they know in every community there is but they really didn't know what it was or why the youth engage in gang activity. What is missing? What are they looking for? So I think there is a real education that is going on and so then it is enabling the community to mobilize in that and be much more open. An example is if two or three years ago, people would have suggested around supporting inREACH and what not I think it would have a much more difficult time getting the support. I know right now there is so much support out there because of the greater level of community awareness and willingness to mobilize. It's brought the gang difficulties*

more to the forefront and we are more aware that youth are pressured in that respect." (PAC Member)

> *"With the work that inREACH has done and not only with youth but the copious number of information sessions that we held about inREACH and youth gang involvement and strength, protective factors and risk factors, coupled with our promotional campaign, the community is more aware of the youth gang issues in Waterloo region."* (Project Staff)

Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned in the implementation of the inREACH program that emerged from this evaluation, including:

Planning – Invest Time in the Process

When building a community project such as inREACH it is important to build in time up- front to conduct a needs assessment to inform program development, and to build relationships among partners. The Community Needs Assessment should include a representative cross-section of respondents and stakeholders, and partners involved in the assessment should understand the process. Time spent in the planning process is well worth the investment as stakeholders can ensure that they are indeed responding appropriately to community needs, and that they can work well together.

Programs Must Be Allowed to Change and Develop

Even with the best planning, based on best practises and solid research, programs have to be allowed to adapt to their local context and the needs and characteristics of those that the program is designed to help. Consequently, programs cannot, and should not, adhere rigidly to their initial design. The most recent research literature on knowledge diffusion and program evaluation suggests that when an attempt is made to adopt a successful program model in a new setting, the program must balance "fidelity" – being faithful to the original

design or model of the program – with "adaptation" – the need to adapt the program to meet the needs and characteristics of the local setting, and particularly to the individuals that the program is attempting to serve (Patton, 2008). With inREACH, for example, the original plan for a course- like curriculum that involved youth coming to group sessions three times a week did not suit the kinds of youth that the program was trying to help. If inREACH had followed the original plan to the letter, and had not adapted some of its activities, it would have failed.

Relationships are Key to Success

What was absolutely evident from the information collected in the process and monitoring evaluation was that relationships were clearly critical to project success.

Paramount among the relationships built was the relationship between the staff and the youth. Key informants, including staff, partners and youth, reported on the importance of these relationships. Without the trust and rapport built, youth would not have experienced the successes and benefits they did. Also important were the relationships among partners and between partners and staff. Key informants identified the need to share values, philosophies, and ways of working, as well as being flexible, and committed to the project.

Conversely, the relationship that developed with the funder was seen as a negative influence on the project. Project staff and partners felt micro-managed and not trusted. That relationship seemed to be antithesis of the successful relationship that developed between the staff and the youth with whom they had the most success.

"…I think a significant challenge was working with the funder. The funder was a significant barrier to the progress of the project I think…. In terms of it being a community initiative … to not only provide supports to the community and to youth but also mobilize a community around a particular issue. It seems those are secondary to [the funder] and it was like trying
to drive a car with the emergency brake on. That's what working with the funder was like. It was like 'hey your numbers say this' but we are going to ignore everything else. Never once did they comment on the amount of time that inREACH has had [on] TV, [or in the] media …. The funder really wasn't concerned about anything that didn't relate to frequency, dosage, intensity or whether or not it was in the original work plan. It was a constant struggle with the funder and I think that needs to come out in the story. [They're] not bad people and not to say that we're not grateful for the resources that were provided and did come to the community. But systemically, the way they're set up, it is not conducive to community, and in fact I would say it's harmful." (Project Partner)

Given the relationship that did develop between the project and the funder, it is probably important to have discussions, up front, about expectations. Perhaps this might have prevented some of the challenges and difficulties that subsequently occurred.

Listen to the Youth and Involve Them in Decision-Making

Listening to the youth was identified as critical and related to other lessons that were learned. For example, in the planning phase, it is important to ensure that you have broad representation of youth, and that you listen to what the youth need and want. The message was clear from all key informants: start where the youth are at. As well, youth made it clear that the intake and assessment phase, early on, did not work for them – and, again, it was critical that staff listened and made changes to ensure that trusting relationships could be developed. Youth also reported that the group intervention did not work well for them for a variety of reasons: the youth were functioning at different levels, some had learning disabilities which made this type of intervention difficult, they were not comfortable in a group environment, and their lives were too chaotic to allow them to be there three times per week. Again, the staff listened to the youth and adjusted the

program accordingly.

Recognize Youths' Strengths, Skills, Capacities and Interests

This evaluation demonstrated that so-called marginalized youth have considerable strengths, skills and capacities. When given the opportunity, these young people showed a myriad of skills – in public speaking, music, art, sports and other areas. When these skills were allowed to develop, and when youth were asked what their interests and passions were, they experienced many positive outcomes, including enhanced self-esteem, greater connections to their community, and a desire to work towards a better future.

Partnerships and Collaboration Are Important to Project Success

It was clear that stakeholders felt that the partnerships and the collaboration that occurred were responsible for much of the success that the project experienced. As many key informants reported, the collaboration of the partners, and being able to contribute and work with youth in different ways, allowed youth to have access to different services and resources they required. Although challenging, the collaboration was worth the effort:

"The strength is in the collaboration that we have with all of the different sectors…. Nobody can do this by themselves; it has to be everybody coming together. I think that while that is a huge challenge because of all the different policies and the different … work cultures it has been worth it to fight through those challenging times." (Project Staff)

As one key informant summed up,

"Individually as an agency we are not going to do anything but collaboratively with the expertise and the skills and the resources that we all bring to the table we can do great things and I truly believe that." (Project Partner)

Among the lessons learned though is that who your partners are is important. In some cases, key informants reported that not all partners "played well". As reported above, to ensure the greatest success you need to ensure that the partners who work on a project such as inREACH need to be a "good fit". Frank and open discussion should occur about values, philosophies and approaches to working. When you have multiple players at the table those individuals need to be committed to a collaboration, which often means, being flexible and open to new ways of working. You need commitment from the organization, but also the individual – because it is the individual who is at the table. But those individuals need the backing of their organization as well. An individual might very well be committed to a collaborative initiative; however, if they do not have the support of their organization, they probably will not be very effective.

Evaluation and Monitoring Needs to be Appropriate

There were some lessons learned with respect to the process and monitoring evaluation. First, the project (and the current evaluators) inherited the database as developed by the previous evaluation team. The database was developed based upon the program model as describe in the work plan. However, there were changes made to the program model as described previously in the report, and these changes were not reflected in the information gathered in the database. Only treatment hours were included in the database; the many hours project staff spent in case management were not captured. This presents a skewed picture of actual intervention hours and does not reflect the actual amount of time staff spent on behalf of the youth in the program.

As far as the current team could determine, there were no pre-set reports developed in the database that would have allowed staff to generate information that might have been useful to them, such as the number of youth referred from different organizations, demographics, or time spent in

providing service or case management. A staff person would have to have been knowledgeable about Microsoft Access to generate this helpful information. Further, had they been able to generate such simple reports, they may have recognized times when information was missing or inaccurate. As it was, when it came time for the evaluators to generate information for purposes of the process and monitoring evaluation, there was missing and inaccurate information and time was wasted in tracking this data down.

The second lesson learned was that early on, the evaluation seemed to be driving, or at the very least having an impact on, the way in which the intervention was implemented. This led to difficulties in building relationships with the youth. As one key informant reported,

> *"It became the tail wagging the dog, the evaluation became more important than working with the youth and again we had to make a conscious decision to say 'who are we here to provide service for?' and the answer was for the youth, at the end of the day, not the funder…. I would not have been able to sleep soundly at night with the other outcome of pleasing the funder and not providing good service and intake processes which leads to trust building."* (Project Partner)

It is now considered common, and even required practice among those doing evaluation research, that the program's key stakeholders be involved in making decisions about how the program is to be evaluated. Indeed, the Guiding Principles of the American Evaluation Association stipulate that "Evaluators should negotiate honestly with clients and relevant stakeholders concerning the costs, tasks to be undertaken, limitations of methodology, scope of results likely to be obtained, and uses of data resulting from a specific evaluation. It is primarily the evaluator's responsibility to initiate discussion and clarification of these matters, not the client's" (Yarbrough et al., 2011). This means that the program stakeholders – the program staff and management, organizational partners, funders

of the program, community agencies and groups that may be affected by the research, and those served by the evaluation – should be consulted on every aspect of the evaluation, from the choice of general approach to be employed, to the specific tools and measures to be used, to the way in which the results are interpreted and communicated. This ensures a more complete and accurate portrayal of the program and its impacts, and makes it more likely that the information will be used.

Funders Should Work in Partnership with Stakeholders and Project Personnel; Funding Requirements Should Be Negotiated, Not Dictated

The relationship between the funder, the National Crime Prevention Centre, and the project, was problematic from the start. inREACH managers and partners felt that the reporting requirements, targets, and expectations about program fidelity were unrealistic, given the population of youth that the project was working with, and the fact that some of the program elements they tried initially were not working. This produced delays in the project beginning to deliver services and in the receipt of funding, and prevented the project (at least, initially) from adapting its services to meet the needs and characteristics of the youth it was serving:

> *"I do think a lot of agencies are stuck because they do have to provide numbers and figures associated with their funding. So I think that what actually has to happen at a larger systems level is that funders need to realize this is not the way a community works and it's not all about numbers and getting x amount of youth through the program and then graduating. They just need to provide organizations with money and within some parameters obviously but not to dictate what their outcomes need to be because that doesn't allow for those unintended outcomes. We've had so many unintended outcomes that would have never been captured if we had been stuck in that very specific outcome evaluation. Bad kid comes into inREACH and we apply this dosage and good kid*

comes out. It's not the way it works, no program works like that. I think funders need to really [consider] the way that they fund organizations and agencies because we could be doing so much more innovative and effective work if we weren't pigeon-holed into meeting these outcomes. I see agencies at the end of the fiscal year saying OMG we need to increase our numbers or we're not going to get our funding next year so we are going to do this and we are going to deliver this to this many people here and they are just in a scramble. That's not the way you should be working and they are forced to work like that they have no choice or else they won't receive their funding. On a broader systems level I think the funders really need to shift the way that they measure success and they measure outcomes or else we are never going to make any progress." (Project Staff)

To address these issues, funders and program personnel should negotiate funding requirements as equal partners in the funding process. Funding requirements should be negotiated, not dictated.

The Youth Are Worth the Effort

Key informants reported that the inREACH program was worthwhile and necessary, despite some of the challenges they may have faced. Project staff, in particular, argued that the resources expended for the youth were well worth the effort:

"I think people in the community have seen what can be done. It has been an example potentially to people to show that when you think outside the box and you work collaboratively and you try to wrap around kids that you can actually get somewhere with them. Nobody has to be thrown away and nobody has to be too difficult to serve. It's a matter of resources. Probably a lot of the time when we're overwhelmed by the need and the limit of resources that we're working with we do say that people are 'not cooperative' and 'resistant' ... which is really our excuse to say, 'they're not worth the effort because we don't have the resources' … I hope that we will have demonstrated that some of those kids if you put the resources into them are very, very much worth the effort."

Conclusions

The results of this process and monitoring evaluation show that inREACH is a unique and successful program, one that is much needed by both the youth that it serves, and by the community in which it operates. It is unique in the approach used to help young people and in the way in which community organizations have partnered to implement the program. It has been successful in the way in which it has engaged and helped youth who are gang-involved or at-risk, and created new connections among community organizations. It is needed because it serves a population – marginalized youth – who are underserved in the region, and who have the strengths, skills and capacities to become contributing members of society if they are given the support and opportunities they deserve.

In January of 2012, the major stakeholders of the inREACH project met to outline the major activities that the project was expected to undertake in order to achieve its major goals. These activities were divided into two categories: activities designed to help young people directly, and activities designed to produce changes in the organizations and environments that affect their lives on a more systemic level.

The first category of activities included changing systems so that they were more supportive of youth, providing treatment, giving young people access to resources, giving young people a voice in making decisions about programs and the kinds of support they receive, and engaging youth in meaningful activities. The process and monitoring evaluation indicates that the project has engaged in all of these activities. It has worked to achieve system change by engaging organizations such as schools, police services, neighbourhood organizations, the criminal justice system, mental health centres and other organizations in a process of collaborative problem-solving and advocacy for at-risk youth. It has provided treatment to distressed youth in a way that other services have not been able to. It has improved young people's access

to resources, providing them opportunities for training and education, connecting them to needed services, and giving them the chance to follow their passions for things like art, physical activity and music. Finally, it has engaged young people who had previously been labeled as "hard-to-serve" or "hard-to-reach", demonstrating that, with the right approach, these individuals can establish positive, lasting connections with their communities.

The second category of activities in which the project was expected to engage had to do with systems – providing resources, engaging communities, working towards changing attitudes and advocating for youth, and having community organizations partnering and collaborating to support distressed and at-risk young people. Again, the process and monitoring evaluation indicated that inREACH had successfully engaged in all these activities. inREACH worked to provide new resources and opportunities for young people, giving them employment support, collaborating with education officials to find ways of re-connecting youth with their schools, and seeking out meaningful positive activities for them in the areas of art, music and recreation. The project was also successful in engaging communities in connecting with their young people, by bringing them into their community centres and reducing the fears that some residents had of young people. inREACH was active in advocating for youth and trying to change attitudes toward youth that often prevent their integration into their communities. The project did this through presentations in the media and to community groups, and by speaking on behalf of youth to school officials, the criminal justice system, and others. The primary means through which inREACH worked on a systemic level was through the active partnership and collaboration among representatives of key sectors of the community – education, police services, mental health, neighbourhoods, criminal justice and others – who shared resources, expertise, staff, and a vision of what they were trying to do for at-risk young people.

While the primary purpose of process and monitoring evaluation was to assess the way in

which the project was implemented, the data we collected also allowed us to examine some of the impacts that the project had, at both a youth and a systems level. The results of the many surveys and interviews we conducted indicated that the project had a profound effect on the young people that participated in inREACH. The meeting of stakeholders held in January 2012 outlined five major goals for youth that the project was attempting to achieve. These were: enhancing youths' skills, improving their connections with others, helping them take advantage of opportunities, achieving personal growth, and enhancing their futures. The results confirmed that all these goals were achieved. Results indicated that youth participating in the project had: improved their skills in decision-making, problem-solving and the ability to resist peer pressure, among other things; established more positive relationships with their peers, families and community; taken advantage of opportunities to develop their skills and talents by trying new things; felt more self-confident and had greater self-esteem; and were less likely to get into trouble and more able to work toward a positive future.

The results of the evaluation also indicated that the project had an impact at the systems level. Interviews with staff indicated that working with inREACH had improved their skills in working with youth, and their ability to work in a collaborative way with other treatment providers who had different skills. They also found the work personally satisfying and rewarding. At the organizational level, the results indicated that inREACH had enhanced collaboration among community organizations and produced greater awareness of resources available in the community; this resulted in improved access to services among young people, and more appropriate and timely services for them. inREACH also had an impact on the partner organizations themselves. While some inREACH staff thought that little change had occurred within partner organizations, some of the partners thought that inREACH had produced greater organizational awareness of the gangs problem in the region, a different approach in dealing with at-risk youth,

an enhanced ability to attract young people to programs and services, and changes in policies and procedures which allowed them to work more effectively with at-risk youth. At the community level, the results suggested that inREACH had produced more acceptance of and a more positive attitude towards young people, more resources for youth, and greater neighbourhood safety.

In addition to assessing the extent to which a program has performed the activities it set out for itself initially, a process and monitoring evaluation should answer other questions. One of these questions has to do with the fidelity of the program activities with regard to the way in which they were initially designed, and with the way they were set out in the program model. As indicated in the "lessons learned" section above, some key elements laid out in the initial design of the project were changed. These changes were necessary to engage the youth whom the project was trying to help. But the Spergel model was still followed, even with the changes the project made. All the major components of the Spergel model – the provision of opportunities, social intervention with services and support, community mobilization, organizational change and development, and (to a lesser extent) suppression – were all key elements of the inREACH project.

Another question had to do with whether the youth served by the project were those that the project was originally designed for. The research indicates that the project did reach those youth who were gang-involved or at risk for gang involvement. Over 40% of the youth served by the treatment team were gang-involved, over two-thirds had been involved with the criminal justice system, and more than 50% had addiction problems. The evidence suggests that the community mobilization team also attracted the youth that the project was designed to serve. Interviews with staff, partners and parents indicated that the project was drawing in youth who were not previously engaged in their communities, and had a high likelihood of being involved in negative behaviours such as drug use and criminal activity. In addition, the evaluation results indicate

that once youth were involved in treatment with the CTT, very few left the program. Of the 69 youth registered with CTT, only 16 (23.2%) dropped out, and interviews with staff suggested that many of these youth who leave the program come back at a later time. Interviews with youth who had dropped out of the program indicated that reasons other than the quality of the program accounted for their leaving.

Process and monitoring evaluations also address the question of whether the services provided are appropriate and sufficient (i.e., is the "dosage" or amount of treatment sufficient).

There is no question that the services that inREACH provided were appropriate, as they were tailored to the youths' needs and interests, for youth involved in both the treatment and mobilization parts of the project. Interviews with project managers, partners and staff indicated that the youth in both parts of the project received sufficient amounts of service, as well. Indeed, the treatment workers and youth outreach workers went far beyond what is normally provided by service providers working in more standard service environments, being available to the youth they served through channels such as Facebook and texting, and in the communities, rather than always working out of an office setting.

Recommendations

Most of the recommendations below come out of the lessons learned about project through the process and monitoring evaluation. It is hoped that additional recommendations, and changes to those listed below, will come after program stakeholders have read the evaluation report, and have had a chance to meet together to discuss their ideas about how the program should develop in future.

Planning for the Future

With the end of the current funding in December of 2013, and the exit of the project manager, staff and others at that time, the project will need to plan for its future. As the project experienced when it began, this planning process takes time. Consequently:

- The project should begin planning immediately for the way it will be constituted after December of 2013.

- All key stakeholders (partners, staff, youth) should be involved in some manner in planning the future design of the project, and adequate time should be allocated for this planning process.

- While planning is taking place, however, as much continuity as possible should be maintained for youth who are currently participating in the project. This means that as many staff as possible who are currently working with inREACH should be retained.

Allowing for Program Change and Development

As mentioned in the "Lessons Learned" section above, programs must maintain a balance between being true to the original design of the program, and adapting the program to current needs and environments. This means that:

- The project should begin monitoring the implementation of services and programs when it is newly constituted in January of 2014, and be prepared to make any changes that are necessary when new management, staff, and sponsoring organization are involved.

- At the same time, the program should remain true to the principles that have made it successful, such as focusing on relationships, involving youth in decision-making, having organizations work in partnership, and maintaining a strong presence in the community.

Relationships

Relationships are key, and should be the most important consideration in developing practices, policies and procedures, both for clinical intervention and community mobilization. This means that

- Intake procedures for clinical intervention should be informal and streamlined. Youth should not need to complete lengthy forms or evaluation measures until they have had a chance to form a solid, trusting relationship with workers. Formal procedures and requirements in the initial stages of the youth-worker relationship inhibit the formation of relationships.

- Policies that obstruct the building of the worker-youth relationship (e.g., not allowing workers to drive youth to appointments) should be reviewed and, if possible, revised.

- The establishment of relationships takes time, and visibility within the community.

Intervention and community mobilization workers should be given the time and flexibility to establish a presence in the community, and to develop relationships with youth. Staff, both clinical and outreach, should be hired for full-time positions.

- Staff turnover makes it difficult for youth to form trusting relationships. Staff should be hired full-time and adequately paid, to ensure that turnover is minimized. They should also have clinical and management support for their work, which involves regular meetings of their team and with their manager.

- The ability to establish relationships in an unstructured environment is a critical skill that not every worker has. Those responsible for hiring workers should look for evidence that candidates have these skills and workers should be supported by their agency and managers in developing these relationship skills further.

- Funding must be adequate and flexible so that workers can provide services and activities that are necessary to promote relationships. For example, the provision of food and the act of preparing meals and eating together aids tremendously in establishing and cementing relationships, so funding must allow for the purchase of food.

Engaging Youth

Listening to youth and involving them in decision-making was essential to the success of the inREACH project. This means that:

• Youth should continue to be involved in deciding what kinds of activities will be planned for and implemented.

• Youth should be a part of the planning process for the future design of the project.

• In hiring new staff, careful attention should be paid to their philosophy of working with youth, and their ability to attend to what the youth themselves say that they want and need.

Recognizing the Strengths, Skills, Capacities and Interests of Youth

Even the most troubled, at-risk youth have strengths, skills, capacities and interests. By engaging these passions and interests, the direction of young people's lives can be changed. In order to recognize these capacities:

• Youth must be given a wide range of opportunities to try new things, develop new skills, and have new experiences.

• Young people's accomplishments should be celebrated and recognized (as they were in the Victoria Park Pavilion event).

• Youth must be given the opportunity to develop and demonstrate leadership through planning activities and events, and doing service for their communities.

Reaching out to Youth

Many of the youth who are at risk do not have the money or resources to get involved in education programs, employment training programs, recreational programs and other activities. Even if they want to get involved in such activities, they are often reluctant to do this on their own. In order to reach out to these young people:

• Programs and activities need to be free of charge.

• Programs and activities should be accessible (geographically close).

• Workers need to go out to where the youth are, rather than expecting them to come to an office.

• (as mentioned above) Food and activities that youth want and are interested in should be provided to attract them to programs and events.

Staffing and Management

By and large, with minor exceptions, the organizational structure of inREACH worked well. Staff were given the freedom to do what they felt necessary to reach out to youth and provide them with necessary and appropriate services and activities. Staff of the treatment part of the project felt that more supervisory support at the beginning of the project would have been helpful. As the project developed, staff from the treatment and community mobilization parts of the project began to realize how they could collaborate with one another, and use each other's skills. Consequently,

• Staff should continue to be given the freedom to go out into the community and engage youth where they are, with appropriate accountability.

• Joint meetings of treatment and community mobilization staff should be held regularly.

• There should be someone who, at least for part of his/her job description, serves as supervisor for each of the two groups of workers.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Partnerships were a key to the successful development of the inREACH project. With regard to the future of the project:

• The PAC should continue to function, though a review of membership should be undertaken, considering the new sponsoring agency and any changes that may occur in the design of the services and activities.

- The Project Partner Team and Community Mobilization Team should continue to function, though, again, membership should be reviewed as necessary.

- A wide range of sectors should be represented on the PAC.

Research and Evaluation

The process and monitoring evaluation, as initially laid out, was problematic. The evaluation procedures were cumbersome, but of greater concern was the fact that they were a barrier to engaging youth. The best solution to this is that:

Program stakeholders, particularly the project management and staff, should be involved in all aspects of any evaluation process set in place. The approach employed, measures and methodology to be used, and analytic and reporting procedures, should be negotiated among the researchers and stakeholders. Working in partnership applies to program evaluation, as well as to program development.

Relationships with Government and Other Funders

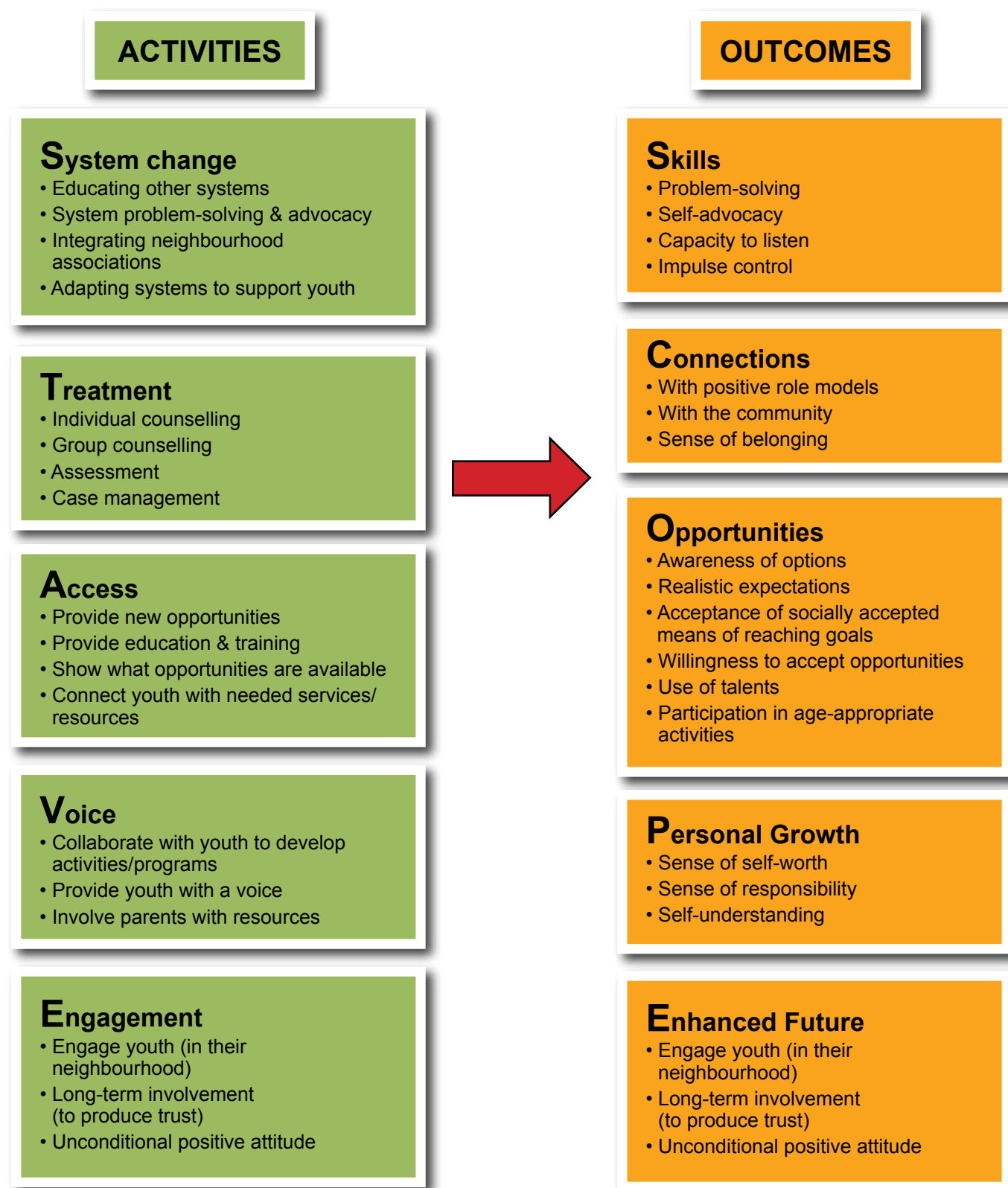As mentioned in the "Lessons Learned" section earlier, the project experienced many problems with its funder. The project felt that it was being prevented from adapting the project to meet the needs of the youth it was serving. These experiences suggest that

- Funders and program personnel should negotiate funding requirements as equal partners in the funding process. Funding requirements should be negotiated, not dictated.

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Appendix 1: Youth Component

ACTIVITIES

System change
- Educating other systems
- System problem-solving & advocacy
- Integrating neighbourhood associations
- Adapting systems to support youth

Treatment
- Individual counselling
- Group counselling
- Assessment
- Case management

Access
- Provide new opportunities
- Provide education & training
- Show what opportunities are available
- Connect youth with needed services/resources

Voice
- Collaborate with youth to develop activities/programs
- Provide youth with a voice
- Involve parents with resources

Engagement
- Engage youth (in their neighbourhood)
- Long-term involvement (to produce trust)
- Unconditional positive attitude

OUTCOMES

Skills
- Problem-solving
- Self-advocacy
- Capacity to listen
- Impulse control

Connections
- With positive role models
- With the community
- Sense of belonging

Opportunities
- Awareness of options
- Realistic expectations
- Acceptance of socially accepted means of reaching goals
- Willingness to accept opportunities
- Use of talents
- Participation in age-appropriate activities

Personal Growth
- Sense of self-worth
- Sense of responsibility
- Self-understanding

Enhanced Future
- Engage youth (in their neighbourhood)
- Long-term involvement (to produce trust)
- Unconditional positive attitude

Appendix 2: Systems Component

OUTCOMES

ACTIVITIES

Resource Provision
• Provide resource & opportunities
• Connect youth & parents with resources
• Job development

Engagement of Communities
• Being present in neighbourhoods
• Engaging communities

Attitude Change & Advocacy
• Instilling a "don't give up" philosophy
• Conveying project messages & understandings (e.g., inREACH posters)
• Focus on providing solutions
• Helping youth find their voice
• Providing youth support in interacting with systems

Partnering & Collaboration
• Partnering of neighbourhood organizations
• Making communities aware of youth
• Building relationships with systems
• Collaboration & information exchange

Relationships/Collaboration
• Between neighbourhoods & large systems (e.g. schools)
• Among systems
• Participation infrastructure (committees, joint programs)

Intergenerational dynamics
• Improved experiences with authority
• Interaction between generations (youth/adult/seniors)

System sensitivity
• School staff understanding
• Inclusiveness
• Decreased exclusion ("those people")

Engagement
• Youth ownership of community & schools
• Youth participation in program planning

Sense of Community/Social Capital
• Reduced sense of parents' isolation
• Capacity to support one another in crisis
• Neighbourhood pride
• Acceptance & inclusion of different cultures

Opportunities/Resources/Supports
• Neighbourhood opportunites
• Supports for schools & groups
• Supports for transitions
• Enhanced resources (e.g., money, program facilities, free Y memberships)
• Extracurricular activities, options

Acknowledgement & Appreciation
• Acknowledgement of what the program is doing
• Support for program in community
• Awareness of & respect for program

Realistic goals/expectations
• Recognition of small successes
• Understanding that it is not a simple solution

Appendix 3: inREACH Organizational Chart

Community Mobilization Team	Community Treatment Team

Project Manager — Project Assistant

Community Mobilization Team
- Kinbridge Community Association
- Preston Heights Community Group
- Mosaic Counselling and Family Services
- House of Friendship

- Youth Outreach Worker (P/T)
- Youth Outreach Worker (P/T)
- Youth Outreach Worker (P/T)
- Youth Outreach Worker (P/T)

Community Treatment Team
- Lutherwood
- John Howard Society
- St. Mary's Counselling
- ROOF

- Case Manager
- Employment Counsultant
- Case Manager
- Case Manager
- Outreach Worker

Researcher (P/T)

Mobilization Partner Team

Project Partner Team

Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council (Administrative Lead)

Project Advisory Committee

Process and Monitoring Evaluation Team (Mark Pancer & Karen Heyward)

National Crime Prevention Centre (Funder)

Appendix 4: Results Matrix

Project Participants			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
How many participants were involved in the project? Were targets met?	Total number of participants referred Total number of participants accepted Total number of participants accepted but withdrew (attrition)	Database	• A total of 230 youth were referred to the program • Total of 69 youth were served in the program as of March 31, 2013 • Of the 69 youth accepted and served in the program, 16 withdrew from the program (23.2%) • Targets were no met for reasons previously disclosed in NCPC in Process and Monitoring reports.
What was the intended target group of project?	Narrative description derived from program documentation	Program documentation	• According to the work plan for inREACH: "The priority populations are gang-involved youth between the ages of 13 and 24 and youth at-risk of gang involvement." The project used the same definition of "gang-affiliated" youth employed by the Waterloo Region Police Service. • The project used the definition provided by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development to define at-risk youth: "...children and youth 'at risk' are viewed as those failing in school and unsuccessful in making the transition to work and adult life and as a consequence are unlikely to be able to make a full contribution to active society" (OECD, 1995).
What was the target group actually reached by the project?	Gender Age Ethnic classification Family composition Language spoken at home Income	Database Information received from staff	**Demographics:** • Gender: Male - 94.2% (65 of 69); Female – 5.8% (4 of 69) • Age: As of March 31, 2013 the age of the 69 participants ranged from 14.6 to 28.2. Only 3 participants were above the age of 24 and that was at the end of the project; all were within the age range at the beginning of their involvement. The average age for all 69 participants was 18.7 (sd=2.74) and the median age was 18.8.

Project Participants			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
What was the target group actually reached by the project?	Residency Employment/ education Marital status/ dependents Gang involvement/ criminal justice involvement Addictions	Database Information received from staff	• Ethnicity[8]: predominantly Caucasian (38.6%; n=22); African or African-Canadian (17.5%; n=10); Mixed Race (15.8%; n=9); Hispanic (10.5%; n=6); Aboriginal (5.3%; n=3); Other (12.3%; n=7). • Family composition[9]: Majority were from single parent families (42.2%; n=27); two parent families (31.2%; n=20); living with other family members (14.1%; n=9); other – including foster care, step parents, adoptive parents (12.5%; n=8). • Languages spoken at home[10]: Majority spoke English only (67.8%; n=40); English and one other language (22.0%; n=13); English and more than one other language (6.8%; n=4); only one language other than English (3.4%; n=2). • Income[11]: Majority had an income of less than $10,000 (65.5%; n=38). One had an income of between $10-24,999 (1.7%). The remaining answered "don't know" (32.7%; n=19). • Residency[12]: Majority lived with parents (65.7%; n=44); lives with other family members (13.4%; n=9); lives on own (10.4%; n=7); lives in foster care/group home (6.0%; n=4); homeless (1.5%; n=1); other (3.0%; n=2). • Employment[13]: Majority were not employed (93.8%; n=60); 4 were employed (6.2%). • School status[14]: Majority were still in school (63.1%; n=41). Twenty were not in school (30.8%), and of those 20 only 4 had completed high school. One person was expelled (1.5%) and 3 remaining clients (4.6%) were in "other" arrangements (e.g., adult learning centre). • Marital status: all were single. • Dependents: 3 clients (4.3%) had 1 dependent.

8   Information was missing for 12 clients; proportions based upon 57 youth.

9   Information was missing for 5 clients; proportions based upon 64 youth.

10 Information was missing for 10 clients; proportions based upon 59 youth.

11 Information was missing for 11 clients; proportions based upon 58 youth.

12 Information was missing for 2 clients; proportions based upon 67 youth.

13 Information was missing for 5 clients; proportions based upon 64 youth.

14 Information was missing for 4 clients; proportions based upon 65 youth.

Project Participants			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
			Criminal involvement/addictions: • 40.6% (n=28) were confirmed gang members • Two-thirds of the youth (66.7%) had some involvement with the criminal justice system (e.g., adult criminal record (n=4); youth criminal record (n=20), case before the courts (n=12), on probation (n=10)). • Over one-half of the youth served in the program (53.6%; n=37) had addiction issues with drugs and/or alcohol. For the majority of those 37 clients (32 or 86.5%), their addictions were severe (n=29) or very severe (n=3).
To what extent did actual program participants match those intended? If there was a discrepancy, what are the reasons for the discrepancy?	Narrative description	Database Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey Observation	• Respondents to the stakeholder survey generally agreed that the program was serving high-risk youth; many were not sure if the youth were gang-involved. Key informant interviews echoed these findings. • Given the information from the database – that many were gang-involved (41%) and the majority had some involvement with the criminal justice system – as well as the results from the stakeholder survey and key informant interviews – it does appear that the project was successful in reaching their intended target group (i.e., high-risk youth and those who are gang-involved).
What were the most productive sources of participant referrals?	Referral source information	Database	• The most productive sources of referrals seemed to be the schools, self-referrals, the criminal justice system, and outreach.
Project Management			
Were project management processes adequate for the size and scope of the intervention? Was the project well organized and managed?	Project management activities	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• Stakeholder survey: 82% (n=55) agreed that the project was well managed. • Key informants, in the interviews conducted, reported that the project was well managed. Only one key informant had a negative comment; this key informant felt the project was not well managed in the initial stages.

Project Management

Process Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources	Results
Were staff and partners satisfied with the quality of management and supervision? What was the quality of staff morale/ was turnover an issue?	Staff satisfaction Human resource statistics	Key informant interviews Information provided by management Stakeholder survey	• In general, key informants felt that the staffing was adequate for the project. Staff themselves, although very satisfied with their experience at inREACH, did report that it would have been helpful to have a clinical supervisor (as originally planned). One key informant also thought it would have been helpful to have one coordinator for each team (CTT & CMT) in addition to the Project Manager. • Stakeholders and key informants reported that the partnerships worked very effectively. • In the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked to indicate if each of the partnering organizations performed well. Fifty percent or more (up to approximately 70%) agreed that each of the organizations performed well in the program. Of the 10 organizations queried, only 4 had respondents who disagreed that the organizations performed well. With the exception of one organization who had 7.6% (n=5) respondents disagree, all other organizations had fewer than 5% disagree (in two cases it was only one individual). • In the interviews that were conducted, no key informants pointed fingers with respect to who may not have performed well in the project. Indeed, as reported elsewhere, the key informants were very positive about the collaboration that occurred and pointed to it as a key reason why they believed the project was a success.
Were staff and partners satisfied with the quality of management and supervision? What was the quality of staff morale/ was turnover an issue?	Staff satisfaction Human resource statistics	Key informant interviews Information provided by management Stakeholder survey	• Over 80% of stakeholders (83.3%) agreed that the project was well managed; only two people disagreed (3.0%) – the remaining respondents (approximately 14%) answered either "undecided" or "don't know/NA". • For the CTT, 7.5 staff were initially hired including: Program Manager, Program Assistant, Mental Health Clinician, Substance Use Clinician, Employment Counsellor, Case Manager, Street Outreach Workers, and Research Coordinator (0.5).

Project Management			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
Did the program have sufficient resources (human, funding) to achieve the goals and objectives? What were resource gaps? Were resources well used?	Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• Approximately two-thirds of stakeholders (67.2%; n= 45) agreed that the resources allocated were sufficient to achieve goals and objectives. Some respondents did not agree that the resources were sufficient (17.9%; n=12). The remaining respondents were either "undecided" (4.5%; n=3) or answered "don't know/NA" (10.5%; n=7). • Many of the key informants felt that the resources, particularly financial, were great and that they were well used. The financial resources allowed the program to work in ways, and provide opportunities and things, that their own organizations could not. • Key informants, including staff, recognized the importance of having the resources to provide food for the youth and their families (where applicable). • Resource gaps identified included insufficient staffing for the CMT (i.e., YOWs should have been full-time), financial support for partners whose in-kind supports ended up being significant, lack of a psychologist available for consultations, the limitations on how the money could be used, and lack of a clinical supervisor (as reported previously).
Was the project's governance model appropriate and supportive of effective project management and implementation? What alternative structure would have been more suitable?	Narrative description	Key informant interviews	• Key informants generally agreed that the governance model put into place worked well. • Nonetheless, there were challenges in working with so many partners. Some issues regarding conflict of interest, for example, were not well thought out. And, it takes a fair bit of time to determine responsibility issues. • One staff person felt there should have been a coordinator for each team (CTT and CMT; not just CMT) in addition to the Project Manager. • No other suggestions for alternative governance structures were provided.

Project Management

Process Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources	Results
Did the program Did the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) function as planned and in an effective manner? Did the PAC provide value?	Narrative description	Key informant interviews	• The PAC met monthly to provide guidance and direction to the project and they were able to spread the word and be advocates in their own respective agencies. • Key informants generally thought that the PAC operated effectively and provided the guidance needed for the project. • Key informants also agreed that the PAC did add value to the project by providing guidance and feedback, having influence out in the community, as well as in their own organizations. • Very few weaknesses were reported, and only by one or two individuals. These included: fewer PAC members attending consistently as the project neared the end of funding, individuals' own agendas having negative impact at meetings, inconsistent attendance, and PAC members having insufficient knowledge about inREACH to make big decisions that impact the project.

Project Implementation

Process Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources	Results
To what extent were project activities implemented as planned in each of the three project phases? If there were variances, to what should variances be attributed? Did program participants receive the expected services? And if not, what were the reasons for the variances?	Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• **Community Needs Assessment:** generally implemented as planned. Was reported to be thorough, provided valuable information, engaged the community, and generally accomplished what was intended. Time taken to do the assessment was raised by two key informants – one thought it took too long, another thought it wasn't long enough. As well, the assessment was done concurrently with the implementation of the Community Treatment Team phase which did not seem to make a lot of sense. From reports, it appears that the project was committed to a timeline, as outlined in their work plan, even though the Needs Assessment had not yet been completed.

Project Implementation			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
Were staff and To what extent were project activities implemented as planned in each of the three project phases? If there were variances, to what should variances be attributed? Did program participants receive the expected services? And if not, what were the reasons for the variances?	Staff Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• **Community Treatment Team:** with respect to intended target groups, available data (key informant interviews, database information, stakeholder survey results) indicate that the project was successful in reaching gang-affiliated youth as well as youth at risk. **Most changes to the intended program model occurred with respect to the CTT intervention:** first, the intake process was considered an impediment to relationship-building with the youth, as it was too long and too intrusive. Over time changes were made to the intake assessment piece that made it much more amenable to the treatment process (i.e., when outcome evaluation tools were dropped and changes made based upon staff's experiences with clients). Second, program staff discovered that a group intervention would not work for most of the youth who were referred to the program. The youth were not interested in a structured curriculum-based program. The model implemented, however, did stick to a case-planning model which included a wraparound approach and case coordination. • **Community Mobilization Team:** There was wide agreement among staff and partners that the Community Mobilization phase was implemented as planned and many described the implementation of this phase as highly successful and effective.
What interventions and other services did participants receive?	Service delivery metrics Narrative description	Database Youth surveys Key informant interviews and focus groups Case file review	• **Community Treatment Team:** – Case management and wraparound approach implemented which involved identifying different areas with which the youth required assistance. This involved connecting youth to different resources (e.g., recreation, employment services), advocating for services where required (e.g., with schools, Family and Children's Services, Probation), and providing assistance where required (e.g., help in securing housing, help with ODSP applications).

Project Implementation

Process Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources	Results
Were staff and To What interventions and other services did participants receive?	Staff Service delivery metrics Narrative description	Key informant iDatabase Youth surveys Key informant interviews and focus groups Case file review	– Length of involvement ranged from 6 to 104 weeks (as of March 31, 2013). The average number of weeks involved in the program was 49.7; median was 41.9. Number of hours of service was tracked only for treatment hours; case management hours were not included in the database. Treatment hours ranged from 1 to 124; average number of treatment hours was 37.6; median was 21.8. – Youth, partners and other stakeholders agreed that the services provided to the youth were appropriate as well as timely. • **Community Mobilization Team:** – Implemented a youth engagement approach to meaningfully involve the young people in creating and leading new programs and activities based on their strengths and interests. YOWs spent several months doing outreach, building trust and developing relationships, and discovering what they would like to see happen in their neighbourhoods. – Within a few months the YOWs, in partnership with the young people, had developed a number of successful and well-attended new programs in four neighbourhoods. – Programs included: drop-in basketball, youth drop-in, homework club, yoga program, girls' group, boxing, youth drop-in and art program, art studio, and a boys' group. – Opportunities/special events: attending a Raptors game, Community Justice Dinner, youth presentation to Regional Council, and sharing their experiences through story-telling, art and music at a special event. – Individual mentoring and supports were also provided (e.g., with school, addictions, relationships, employment, recreation, volunteering).

Project Implementation			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
Were staff and To What interventions and other services did participants receive?	Staff Service delivery metrics Narrative description	Key informant iDatabase Youth surveys Key informant interviews and focus groups Case file review	– Involving young people in the development, leadership and decision-making for the programs and activities developed was widely perceived by project partners, staff, and youth as having produced programs that were appropriate, appealing, and beneficial for the young people.
Did the type of service vary by risk level? Were services in line with risk level?	Service delivery metrics Narrative description	Database Youth surveys Key informant interviews and focus groups	• Key informants reported that the services provided by the Community Treatment Team were in line with their risk level. Key informants reported that lower risk youth were provided with more informal engagement efforts. Higher risk youth, and those with complex issues, were provided with much more case management. Staff would assess what services could be provided in-house and what could not. When additional services were needed they would advocate to involve service providers that were required to deal with the different presenting issues.
Was the program's intake, assessment and case management approach effective, efficient and suitable?	Narrative description Participant and stakeholder satisfaction	Key informant interviews and focus groups Stakeholder survey	• Approximately 70% of the stakeholder survey respondents agreed that the intake and case management process was effective; about 21% answered "don't know/NA". The remaining respondents answered either "undecided" (6%) or "disagree" (3%). • Key informants reported that initially the intake assessment process was not appropriate – it was too intrusive and counterproductive to building rapport with the youth. After the outcome tools were dropped from the assessment, and other changes were made, key informants reported that the intake assessment worked very well. • Close to 90% of the CTT youth agreed that the intake process and the work they did with staff was worthwhile; 11% were undecided. • Key informants reported that the case management approach was very effective.

Project Implementation			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
Was program attrition an issue?	Participant attrition Narrative description	Database Youth surveys Key informant interviews and focus groups	• The attrition rate for the CTT was 23.2% (16 of the 69 clients served). • Stakeholder survey respondents were asked if they thought attrition was a problem for the project: about 15% agreed that it was a problem. About one-third of respondents disagreed. The remaining respondents either answered "undecided" (13%) or "don't know/NA" (39%). • Project partners, when they felt they could comment on attrition, did not feel that it was a big issue for the project. • Three interviews were conducted with youth who were considered "drop-outs". When asked why they dropped out of the program, two of the youth reported that their reasons did not have to do with the program; rather it had to do with other issues going on in their lives. The third youth reported that the did not like the group counselling (he was involved early on in the project when the group counselling was still going on), thought it was too much time to devote, and felt that it was unnecessary. All three youth reported that they would use the program again if they felt the need.
Did the community needs assessment phase render sufficient information and learnings to inform project development and implementation? Did the research render a clear view of priority neighbourhoods? Did the needs assessment build enhanced engagement in project?	Satisfaction with needs assessment Narrative description	Key informant interviews and focus groups Stakeholder survey	• According to key informant interviews with stakeholders, the community needs assessment was thorough, provided valuable information, engaged the community, and generally accomplished what was intended. • Key informants reported that the community needs assessment did identify the right priority neighbourhoods, as well, for the community mobilization phase. • In the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked if the community needs assessment resulted in sufficient information to ensure strong project development and implementation. Approximately two-thirds either strongly agreed (21%) or agreed (46%) with the statement. A handful of respondents (8%) were undecided and three respondents (5%) disagreed with the statement. One-fifth of the respondents (21%) were unsure.

Community Partnerships, Mobilization and Collaboration			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
As a result of program design, community consultation, project administration and implementation, what community partnerships were developed? Were these consistent with plans?	Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• The partners involved in service delivery for the CTT included: the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, Lutherwood, John Howard Society, ROOF, St. Mary's Counselling, and the Waterloo Regional Police Service. • In all cases, with the exception of WRPS, staff was seconded from each of the partners to the project. • The community mobilization phase of the project included partnerships with the House of Friendship, Mosaic Counselling and Family Services, Preston Height Community Group, Kinbridge Neighbourhood Association, and Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council. Each of these organizations provided supervision for staff who were hired as Youth Outreach Workers. • In all cases where staff was seconded, or new staff were hired for the project (but supervised by a partner organization), those organizations entered into a fee-for-service agreement with the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council (the administrative body for the project). • In addition, these organizations provided in-kind contributions such as: staff supervision, furniture, use of facilities and meeting space, IT and financial supports, information and expertise in their specific area of focus, and ability to leverage supports from their home organizations to be able to support inREACH youth. • As well, both the service delivery partners, as well as collaborators on the PAC, provided the following in-kind contributions: promotion of inREACH internally to their organizations as well as to the broader community, training opportunities, support/consultation for the overall direction of the project, and referrals. • Partnerships developed were consistent with plans.

Community Partnerships, Mobilization and Collaboration			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
To what extent did the community partnerships that were formed contribute to project success or failure?	Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• Key informants reported positively on the partnerships that developed and they believed that these partnerships were an important or critical component to the project's success. They believed the right people were involved; they had very positive things to say about the contributions made by partners, the collaborative spirit of those involved, and the flexibility with which people worked. • In the stakeholder survey, over 70% reported that i) the inREACH team was effective in mobilizing the community to address the issue of youth involvement in gangs; ii) that there is now greater inter-agency collaboration and cooperation in Waterloo Region as it pertains to the delivery of programs and services to gang-involved or high-risk youth, and iii) as a result of the program, there is greater service coordination in the region as it pertains to the needs of gang-involved and high risk youth. • As well, in the stakeholder survey, respondents were asked to indicate if they thought that community involvement was responsible for the success of inREACH. Approximately 80% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that this was the case; the remaining respondents were either "undecided" or did not know.
Was program staff able to work with community partner organizations? Was each party responsive to the others' needs?	Staff and partner satisfaction with partner relationships Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• Stakeholder survey results indicated that close to 90% of respondents (88%) agreed that the inREACH team worked well with community partners. Only one respondent disagreed with this item. • Approximately 70% of the stakeholders agreed that they had received the support they needed to be effective with respect to the program; 9% were "undecided" or answered "don't know/NA" (14%). There were a few respondents (6%) who did not think they received the support they needed to be effective. • Key informants also positively commented on the way in which staff worked with project partners.

Community Partnerships, Mobilization and Collaboration			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
Were community partnerships MOUs/ agreements sufficient for project purposes?	Staff and partner satisfaction Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey	• When stakeholder survey respondents were asked whether the agreements were satisfactory, close to one-half (46.8%; n=29) agreed that they were. Only one person disagreed, the remaining respondents answered "undecided" (11.3%; n=7) or "don't know/NA" (40.3%; n=25). • When asked if the agreements put in place were sufficient for program purposes, key informants generally agreed that they were.
Project Satisfaction			
Were participants satisfied with the services received? What did they identify as strengths and weaknesses?	Participant satisfaction Attrition rates Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Youth survey Key informant interviews (including youth) Focus group interviews	• Stakeholders were asked if the program was a positive experience for program youth and if the program met the needs of program youth. Results from these two items were quite positive: close to 90% strongly agreed or agreed that the program was a positive experience for the youth and close to 85% felt that the program met the needs of youth. • Four items in the CTT youth survey were applicable to satisfaction: enjoyment with participation, that inREACH was relevant to future success, that their participation was a positive one, and whether they would refer a friend or family member to the program. The results were very positive: all youth, except for one, agreed with all four items. Further, most strongly agreed with all four items. One youth was "undecided" about whether inREACH was relevant to their future success in life. • The CTT youth survey also included several open-ended questions related to program satisfaction – what they liked best about the program, what they liked the least/any changes they would suggest, and any additional comments. • When asked what they liked best the main theme that emerged was the staff – the support they provided and the way they interacted with the youth (i.e., respectful, helpful). Youth also reported liking the support that was provided, the topics covered, and the activities in general; they enjoyed their time in the program.

Project Satisfaction			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
Were participants satisfied with the services received? What did they identify as strengths and weaknesses?	Participant satisfaction Attrition rates Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Youth survey Key informant interviews (including youth) Focus group interviews	• When asked what they didn't like, most reported that there wasn't anything they did not like or that they thought the program was good as it was. Only a few suggestions were made. A couple of youth did mention the timing of the meetings or the location, and suggested schedule or location changes. As well, a couple of youth suggested that the program be expanded (i.e., more youth or more hours). One youth suggested having an LGBTQ outreach worker. • When asked for further comments, about one-half of the youth left the item blank. The remaining comments were positive and reflected how the youth felt the program was worthwhile. • The satisfaction with the program was echoed in the individual and group interviews conducted with CTT youth. They talked about the staff and the support provided and the positive impact the program had on their lives. • In the CMT Youth Survey, three items related to satisfaction with services – that youth felt well treated by staff and volunteers, that the program gave them an experience in which adults listened to young people and cared about what they said, and that their involvement was a positive experience. • The results to these 3 items in the CMT Youth Survey were very positive. The greatest proportion of youth strongly agreed with each item. Over 90% of the youth agreed or strongly agreed with all 3 items. • The same open-ended questions were included in the CMT youth survey as were included in the CTT youth survey. • When asked what they liked best about the program, the main themes from all of the different program sites was that young people liked the staff (i.e., that they were caring, respectful, listened to them, and were supportive), they liked spending time with friends, and they enjoyed the activities as well as the opportunities that their involvement afforded.

Project Satisfaction

Process Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources	Results
Were participants satisfied with the services received? What did they identify as strengths and weaknesses?	Participant satisfaction Attrition rates Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Youth survey Key informant interviews (including youth) Focus group interviews	• When asked what they didn't like or what they would like to see change, as with the CTT youth survey, most indicated that they liked the program as is and they had nothing negative to say. A few expressed concern that the inREACH programs may end. Others suggested expansion of the program (i.e. more time, more activities). • The satisfaction with the programs was evident in the individual interviews conducted with youth in two of the neighbourhoods, as well as the focus groups conducted in two other neighbourhoods. All of the young people interviewed expressed appreciation and high regard for the staff. Many mentioned receiving support or advice, and feeling accepted and cared for. Most young people said they enjoyed spending time with their friends and meeting new people. In addition, quite a few young people said they liked the activities, the opportunities, being involved in the community, and the accepting, welcoming environment.
Were community partners satisfied with the project and the nature of the relationship with the project partners? What did they suggest were strengths & weaknesses? Were partners and project staff satisfied with the project?	Staff and partner satisfaction Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey Focus group interviews	• The results from the stakeholder survey with respect to satisfaction with being involved with inREACH were quite positive: over 85% reported having a satisfactory experience and approximately 90% enjoyed their association with the program. • These positive results were echoed in the key informant interviews conducted. • Project staff, in key informant interviews, reported great satisfaction with their roles. They found the experience extremely rewarding and fulfilling. They enjoyed the flexibility and creative that the role offered, and felt like their skills had been strengthened through their experience. • It was clear from the key informant interviews conducted that most stakeholders felt that the collaboration/partnerships that occurred were a key strength of the program. They commented on the commitment of the partners to help the youth and to achieve the project's goals, and their flexibility to make changes and adapt, to achieve those goals.

Project Satisfaction			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
Were community partners satisfied with the project and the nature of the relationship with the project partners? What did they suggest were strengths & weaknesses? Were partners and project staff satisfied with the project?	Staff and partner satisfaction Narrative description	Key informant interviews Stakeholder survey Focus group interviews	• Related to the above point, key informants reported a strength of the partnerships created was that youth had access to many different services that were needed for the youth to achieve his or her goals. They didn't just access one service by being involved with inREACH, they accessed many different services and resources they required. • The commitment, flexibility, and expertise of the staff were also commented on by many key informants as a strength of the program. • Weaknesses identified by partners included the slow start-up and the tension/disconnect with the funder. Problems with the funder continued throughout the project. As well, the end of funding, and the tension that creates, was also identified as another weakness. • Another weakness identified was that sometimes there was not a good fit with certain partners. • Staff turnover, early on, was also identified as a problem by key informants.
Lessons Learned			
With respect to program design, implementation and management, what were key challenges faced?	Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Key informant interviews Focus group interviews	• Initial slow start up was identified as a main challenge. • The need to make changes to the CTT program model and the challenge in negotiating those changes with the funder was also identified. • The scope of the project, and the many partners involved, was also identified as a challenge; there were many organizations and people involved in the project – which was identified as a strength as well as a challenge.
What were key lessons learned re: implementation and management?	Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Key informant interviews Focus group interviews	• Planning – invest time in the process: it is important to build in time up-front to conduct a needs assessment to inform program development and to build relationships among partners.

Lessons Learned

Process Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources	Results
What were key lessons learned re: implementation and management?	Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Key informant interviews Focus group interviews	• Programs must be allowed to change and develop: even with the best planning, based on best practices and solid research, programs should be allowed to adapt to their local context and the needs and characteristics of those that the program is designed to help. • Relationships are key to success: paramount among the relationships built was the relationship between the staff and the youth. Without the trust and rapport built, youth would not have experienced the successes and benefits they did. Also important were the relationships among partners and between partners and staff. Key informants identified the needs to share values, philosophies and ways of working, as well as being flexible, and committed to the project. The relationship that developed with the funder was seen as a negative influence on the project. It is important to have discussions, up-front, about expectations; this might have prevented some of the challenges and difficulties that subsequently occurred. • Listen to the youth and involve them in decision-making: listening to the youth was identified as critical and related to other lessons that were learned. In the planning process, it is important to ensure that you have broad representation of youth and that you listen to what the youth need and want. Youth identified that the intake and assessment piece, as well as the group intervention, did not work for them. Staff listened to the youth and adjusted the program accordingly. • Recognize youths' strengths, skills, capacities and interests: when given the opportunity, so-called marginalized youth demonstrated a myriad of skills. When these skills were allowed to develop, and when youth were asked what their interests and passions were, they experienced many positive outcomes. • Partnerships and collaboration are important to project success: it was clear that stakeholders felt that the partnerships and the collaboration that occurred were responsible for much of the success that the project experienced.

Lessons Learned			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
What were key lessons learned re: implementation and management?	Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Key informant interviews Focus group interviews	• Funders should work in partnership with stakeholders and project personnel; funding requirements should be negotiated, not dictated. inREACH managers and partners felt that the reporting requirements, targets, and expectations about program fidelity were unrealistic, given the population of youth that the project was dealing with, and the fact that some of the program elements they tried initially were not working. This produced delays in the project beginning to deliver services and in the receipt of funding, and prevented the project (at least initially) from adapting its services to meet the needs and characteristics of the youth it was serving. Funders and program personnel should negotiate funding requirements as equal partners in the funding process.
With respect to evaluation, what were key lessons learned?	Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Key informant interviews Focus group interviews	• Inheriting the database was problematic: the database was developed based upon the program model as described in the work plan. However, changes were made to the program model that were not reflected in the database (i.e., hours spent in case management). The database, as inherited, also did not have pre-set reports that the staff could have used to generate information that might have been useful to them (e.g., number of youth referred from different organizations, demographics, or time spent in providing services). Had they been able to generate these reports they may have recognized times when information was missing or inaccurate. • Evaluators driving/having impact on the intervention: early on the evaluation seemed to be driving, or at the very least, having an impact on the way in which the intervention was implemented. This led to difficulties building relationships with the youth.

Lessons Learned			
Process Evaluation Question	**Indicators**	**Data Sources**	**Results**
With respect to evaluation, what were key lessons learned?	Narrative description	Stakeholder survey Key informant interviews Focus group interviews	• Involve project stakeholders in evaluation process: it is now considered common, and even a required practice among those doing evaluation research, that the program's key stakeholders be involved in making decisions about how the program is to be evaluated. They should be consulted on every aspect of the evaluation, from the choice of general approach to be employed, to the specific tools and measures to be used, to the way in which the results are interpreted and communicated. This ensures a more complete and accurate portrayal of the program and its impacts, and makes it more likely that the information will be used.

Appendix 5: Case File Review Results for 10 Random Clients – Presenting Issues, Needs and Strengths of clients

Client ID	Presenting Issues	Identified Needs	Identified Strengths
14	• Due to disabilities youth has difficulty securing and holding a job; and is prone to exposure to high risk activity due to the influence of peers • Daily demand of independent living propose challenges for him • Application in progress for ODSP	• Has a diagnosis of expressive language disorder and ADHD. • He identified he used a significant amount of cannabis daily in order to help him deal with his feelings of anger. • He wanted to reduce his substance use, increase his capacity to manage his emotions and work towards employability.	• Client was very open to being in group and his attendance overall was very good for group planning and counselling
22	• Was arrested just prior to inREACH involvement • Was a self-reported member of the "Bloods in Power" when youth was referred to inREACH	• Youth indicated that he wanted support with completing his community service hours, to access counselling support to address substance use and grief, and to find affordable housing.	• Youth was open to service; attended appointments etc.
28	• Youth suffered neglect and exposed to domestic violence when he was very young. • Youth also experienced multiple fostering placements. • Presenting behaviour: immature for the age of the youth. • Attachment style presenting as insecure with very weak internal working model.	• Needed assistance with: obtaining housing, registering for school, and to learn the basic life skills required for living independently in the community.	• Attended scheduled meetings regarding: counselling, substance use, and employment support.

Client ID	Presenting Issues	Identified Needs	Identified Strengths
36	• Referred to inREACH program by a detective from the Waterloo Regional Police Department. • Youth expressed an interest in using support from inREACH to gain support for his substance use, to obtain employment, and to generally make positive lifestyle choices.	• To get away from gang lifestyle • Psycho-educational • Employment counselling & job placement • Recreational – boxing	• Youth was willing to participate in a variety of inREACH programming
41	• Suspected gang involvement. • Youth presented with moderate risk factors including: conflicted family, family violence, history of sexual trauma, self-injury, suicidal ideation, school truancy, conflict with the law.	• Conflict with the law • Not in school • Unemployed	• Youth presented as open to services and family indicated support
80	• Youth wanted to address substance use, gain employment, emotion regulation. • Youth presented with substance use problems, history of difficulty at school, prone to aggression.	• Presented with significant substance abuse, disorganized attachment and learning challenges. • Caregivers, although supportive, presented as inconsistent with their management of his behavior. • Caregivers were open to coaching but had difficulty applying knowledge with youth. Youth would quickly move into suicidal ideation when overwhelmed	• Good insight into his behaviour • Able to identify and articulate his goals • Family active in supporting him
143	• Wanting to disengage with negative peer influences • Concerned about his anger issues and presented with difficulty regulating emotions • Wanted to reduce substance use • Desired job training and assistance with finding employment	• Youth had been significantly involved with negative peer activity and was presenting with an increasing manifestation of anxiety, which may have been impacted by his cannabis use	• Youth presented with good communication skills with ability to articulate needs and set goals

Client ID	Presenting Issues	Identified Needs	Identified Strengths
164	• Youth presented with risk factors including an older brother who was involved in criminal activity • Stressed relationships among family members • Youth had his own charges • Substance use • Difficulty both academically and behaviourally at school	• Does not want to be like his older brother (gang-involved) and, therefore, wants to start making more positive choices in his life. • Wants to gain insight into his own behaviour and increasing his capacity to manage it properly	• Youth presented as mature for his age and was open to education around substance use
174	• Wants support in making positive changes • Feels overwhelmed • Needs housing, employment help, substance information, stress management, counselling	• Youth was contacted through outreach; after a number of months he self-referred asking for services around substance use and employment	• He could articulate his needs but presented as younger than his biological age likely due to being out of school, work, and engaged in heavy opiate use over the last four years. • Youth has support of biological mother